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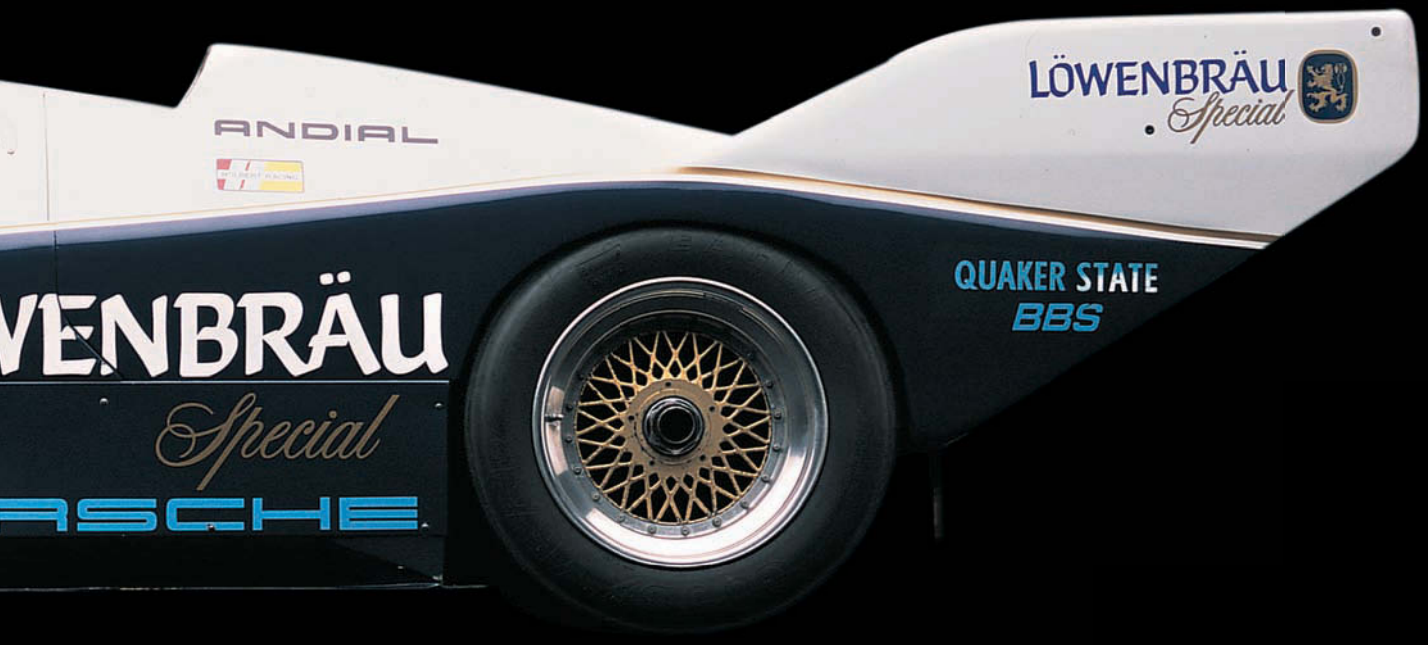
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MATTERS OF MOMENT



Nick Trott
Editor
@NickTrott27

A spark plug. A lowly spark plug. A link in the technical chain that, through its evolution, should be the most dependable of all. Its role is to make fire. The role of fire is to generate motion. For Ferrari, the failure of the spark plug lost it both metaphorical and actual motion, and Sebastian Vettel was left wondering if his Formula 1 championship aspirations were truly extinguished.

If you've deserted Formula 1 in recent years, you'll have missed the intense theatre that led up to the Japanese Grand Prix. Lewis Hamilton delivered a pole lap that made you bite the back of your hand in awe and, while he was four tenths quicker than Vettel in qualifying, the Ferrari's speed in race trim set the stage for the kind of battle that would be talked about for years. And all this at Suzuka – a true Emperor of a circuit.

I settled down to watch the race, fidgety with excitement. I didn't care who would win; I just thought that we were about to witness something special. Then images appeared of nervous Scuderia mechanics. Then a Ferrari engine cover being removed. Oh no.

Vettel made it to through the warm-up lap and made a decent start, considering he had lost about a sixth of his horsepower (or perhaps because of it). Hamilton even had to block. Game on. Then the world's first five-cylinder Ferrari started to reveal its true health and Vettel was swamped by the pack, his title hopes quite possibly all but snuffed out.

We make no apologies for featuring Lewis and Sebastian on our cover this month. Theirs is an era-defining battle and, while many will argue that Max Verstappen and Daniel Ricciardo should be included in any conversation about the fastest drivers in F1, their battle is for another day. Lewis and Seb is now. And perhaps crucially, or worryingly, theirs could be approaching its twilight.

Lewis and Sebastian, unlike other comparable drivers from history, have second lives. Lewis encourages us to be a voyeur; Sebastian does the opposite. Either way both have a rich existence beyond racing that makes you wonder how long they will stick around in Formula 1. Indeed, post-race at Suzuka Lewis almost, *almost*, said he was old. On being chased down by Verstappen at the end of the Grand Prix he said, "Jeez, the guy behind is so much younger than me, I've got make sure I kind of man up and show my age, make sure that I stay ahead, show that I'm actually still very young at heart." Perhaps, as many do, he's reached a point in his life where he's discovered comfort, rather than fear, in aging.

Vettel, now 30, has always exuded a maturity beyond his years (and looks), but it's Hamilton who seems to have balanced his *chi* – Sebastian is still susceptible to fits of petulance. This occasional trait should not be his spark plug – a temporary impairment that dominoes into a negative outcome. For the want of a nail a shoe was lost, for the want of a shoe a horse was was lost...



THERE'S A CHILLY WIND BLOWING ACROSS Silverstone, as it often does. Porsche has just revealed three new special-edition 911s – built to celebrate the successes of Richard Attwood, Derek Bell and Nick Tandy and we are podcasting from a back room at the Experience Centre.

I'm hosting the podcast, which I admit to finding rather difficult at the best of times, let alone when faced with a trio of heroes. I struggle to keep up with the wise-cracking, fast-twitching, anecdote-laden hour of chat, and realise afterwards that I should've pushed one particular subject harder – that the three of them should team up for a 'generations' race.

Think about it, a competitive series in which three drivers from three generations race one (single-make) car for three hours. A cross between an endurance meeting and Procar with a bit of Goodwood glamour thrown in for good measure.

The cars would be rear-wheel drive (of course), naturally aspirated (of course) and the drivers would need a 'connection' of some kind – like our Porsche Le Mans winners. What about Roberto Ravaglia, Bernd Schneider and Paul di Resta (DTM winners) perhaps? Or Fittipaldi, Villeneuve and Franchitti (Indy 500 winners)? I think I'd still put a bet on Attwood, Bell and Tandy.

Find the podcast at www.motorsportmagazine.com

FROM A FANTASY THREE-HOUR RACE TO A REAL ONE – THE Equipe Relay, also at Silverstone. Inspired by various races at Sebring in the 1960s, where a huge variety of machinery and a carefully considered handicap made for extremely close racing, the debut Equipe Relay event was a roaring success. And I can say that from the driving seat, having been drafted in to race a beautiful blue MGB owned by John Pearson.

I'm in no doubt that my presence in the race seat was for promotional, rather than performance reasons (I possess little of the latter), but I jumped at the chance nevertheless. I'll tell the full story next month, but suffice to say being surrounded by nearly 30 hard-charging pre-66 historics was an unforgettable experience.

As was, due to the handicap system in place, not knowing the result until well after chequered flag had fallen...

I can't say we've reached the heady heights of reporting from inside a car driven by Stirling Moss on the '55 Mille Miglia – but there's a real energy around the *Motor Sport* team at the moment and I can promise all sorts of wonderful adventures in the near future.

LASTLY, I'M SLIGHTLY STAGGERED by the number of people who have contacted us to offer kind words with regards to our recent 'refresh'; too few put pen to paper, or finger to keyboard, to offer positive thoughts these days, so I thank you sincerely. I try to answer as many emails as I can, so contact me via editorial@motorsportmagazine.com (FAO Nick Trott).

Our next issue is on sale from December 1

FERRARI'S FATAL FLAWS

In the space of two races the Italian team's challenge appears terminally damaged

Mark Hughes

Singapore had been disastrous of course, both for Sebastian Vettel/Ferrari and the championship itself. A non-score with Vettel's chief rival Lewis Hamilton taking the victory, so late into the season with so few races left to claw it back: well, that was a blow but not necessarily a disaster.

In F1's final visit to Sepang, just 180 miles across the water from Singapore, the redefined challenge of the remaining six races would begin. Vettel is a remarkable competitor and he arrived reset in Malaysia, positive and ready to begin turning around his fortunes. Yes, it was a 28-point deficit, but he had a great car beneath him, whereas Hamilton had a difficult, inconsistent one. Sepang, Suzuka, Austin, Mexico City, Interlagos, Yas Marina: the Ferrari was going to be fast around them all. That was a much less certain prospect for the Mercedes. So, just keep expressing the car's performance, maximising its great traits and the rest would look after itself. Just one mechanical retirement for Hamilton - like that he suffered in Sepang last year as the oil-burning technology bit - and, so long as Vettel won, they'd be back on level terms. No, the title fight was far from over. There was a long slog ahead - six races in nine weeks - but they were to be relished. Forget the media noise, forget the recriminations about Singapore, just retreat into the team and immerse into each weekend's task.

Easier said than done, of course. There's always a pressure at Ferrari, even into the new era. For all that the turnaround has been achieved partly through Sergio Marchionne's embrace of the 'high potential' personnel structure and the removal of blame culture, there's still no Ross Brawn figure present at the track, keeping everything pointed the right way. With the season threatening to get away despite the quality of the car, it was time for cool heads. Vettel would not be human if he couldn't feel that pressure brewing.

A win here - which the car was more than capable of delivering - would cool things down considerably.



FERRARI TERRAIN?

The only dry practice of Friday in the equatorial heat was in the morning - and the Ferraris flew, the Merc struggling horribly, the Red Bulls pitched about halfway between. Hamilton was a whopping 1.6sec adrift of Vettel in single-lap, low-fuel pace - and the Merc was degrading its rear tyres way quicker on the little long running we saw before the session was red-flagged. A drain cover at Turn 13 had flipped up, ripping open the rear tyre of Romain Grosjean's Haas and putting him into the wall. As a precaution, all drain cover welds - some 18 years old - were redone.

Between Friday night and Saturday morning, the Mercedes engineers had rethought a few things in an attempt at overcoming the W08's general reluctance around here. Any track on which the most important corners have a big spread of speeds from each other invariably catches the Mercedes out (see feature on the W08/SF70H elsewhere in the magazine) and is therefore a great boon to Ferrari. Sepang, with its two hairpins but a fast, interconnected middle sector, could hardly have been better configured to expose the W08's weakness. Finding a set-up that worked on slow and fast corners was much more difficult on the Mercedes than the Ferrari - and that is written into the very



ALL IMAGES LAT

DNA of their respective concepts. Even worse than that, a track surface in the high 40degC was only going to increase the Merc's rear tyre deg disadvantage. The Merc engineers had found around 0.5sec of that 1.5sec deficit into Saturday meaning that, with their qualifying engine mode advantage of about 0.15sec over Ferrari and 0.5sec over Red Bull, they might leapfrog Red Bull for grid positions. But that still left Vettel with a potential margin of 0.3sec or more, even in qualifying. Hamilton's acrobatics might see him vying with the second Ferrari of Kimi Räikkönen for a place on the front row - but even that would be an achievement and he'd be unlikely to hold that place in the race, given the greater long-run pace of Räikkönen and the two Red Bulls around a track where passing is relatively easy.

It began going wrong for Vettel in the last few minutes of Saturday practice, as his old high-mileage engine suffered a sudden loss of power. With just three hours to go before qualifying began, it wasn't practical to diagnose and correct whatever the problem might be. A brand-new upgraded spec of engine was sitting in the garage, already pre-fitted with the old extra components - turbo, ers-H etc - so as not to incur penalties. Slot the old one out, the new one in- manageable in the time and accomplished with great efficiency and calm in the sweaty heat. Vettel was one of the first on track in Q1.

His first flying lap began well enough, but exiting Turn Five the engine note suddenly changed and Vettel felt a drastic reduction in power. The turbo wasn't turning, nor therefore the ers-H. A carbon-fibre inlet manifold had cracked. A bought-in component, not particularly complex or trick, nor of a new design. But with no way of fixing it in time, Vettel would be starting from the back. The final Q3 shoot-out for pole was therefore a duel between Hamilton and Räikkönen. It was won by the former after a stupendous lap in a significantly slower car that shaded Räikkönen's by a few hundredths. On race day the Finn suffered an identical failure to Vettel's in qualifying and the front-row Ferrari was wheeled off the grid, leaving the team's hopes relying on Vettel, from the back. Predictably, he scythed through the field and was challenging Ricciardo's Red Bull for third with a few laps to go, his attack brought up short by a lack of fuel, the team having fuelled light to make the car quicker through the early traffic. On his slow-down lap he collided with Lance Stroll's Williams in a territorial misunderstanding. It could have been worse - fourth from 20th was a good result, Hamilton hadn't won but had been passed early on by a much faster Red Bull driven by Max Verstappen and, amazingly, Vettel's gearbox internals weren't significantly damaged despite a driveshaft having pulled out from the side of the 'box.

Singapore and Malaysia had, however, made for a remarkable sequence for Hamilton. At two tracks where the Merc in the dry was off the pace, circumstances and his own skills had gifted him a win and a second place.

LIMPING HORSE

Around Suzuka one week after Sepang, there was no reason to suppose the Mercedes wouldn't be back to its more usual super-fast self. The track characteristics and cooler conditions would surely suit the car much better - and so it proved. Hamilton secured his 71st pole, but Vettel was right there on the front row alongside. In this one-stop race, the Ferrari's way of being easier on the rear tyres seemed set to give Hamilton a real problem, even after he'd won the start. This had all the ingredients of being a repeat of Melbourne or China, with Vettel just following the Merc for the first stint, then - using its better end-of-stint tyres and greater tyre range - vaulting ahead at the stops. Except...



Ferrari contemplates Kimi Räikkönen's sickly car on the grid at Sepang. The Finn failed to take the start

"It began going wrong for Vettel in the last few minutes of practice"

Even before the start, there'd been drama in the Ferrari garages as Vettel's engine just wasn't running properly upon start-up. A misfire on one cylinder. They thought they'd cured it as they refitted the engine cover. But even as he drove down the pitlane Vettel could feel it was still not firing correctly. There were attempts at a cure on the grid, but the packaging of a 2017 hybrid meant nowhere near enough time to replace the suspect spark plug. So he began the race on five cylinders, made a good start, kept his second place to Hamilton off the line. But he was vulnerable as first Verstappen, then Esteban Ocon, Ricciardo and Sergio Pérez blew by.

After four laps he was brought in and retired. Hamilton won the race, under big pressure at the end from Verstappen, the Merc's tyre range not as good as the Red Bull's - and probably therefore not as good as Vettel's would have been in a faster car.

A spark plug, another externally supplied component. After appointing a new chief of quality control in the wake of Japan, team principal Maurzio Arrivabene talked afterwards of how in the chase for ever-more performance they had maybe taken their eye off the ball with quality control regarding internal inspections of external suppliers. Maybe. Or perhaps both failures were something to do with the continuing experimenting with oil burning - as Hamilton's was in Sepang last year. Or perhaps it was just the plain dumb luck of the numbers.

With a deficit of 59 points and four races left, the remarkable thing about the Scuderia's title challenge wasn't so much that it had happened, but the speed of its collapse.



WORD ON THE BEAT

Rumour and gossip from the F1 paddock

NICO ROSBERG, reigning world champion, is not only now Robert Kubica's driver manager, but also a SKY TV pundit, making a one-off appearance in the role at Suzuka. He had been in discussion with Liberty Media about an F1 ambassadorial role but we understand the deal fell through after the two parties failed to reach agreement on the number of appearances his $5 million fee would entail. Asked afterwards how his punditry role had gone, he said, "It was much more difficult than I thought."

ROBERT KUBICA'S tests for WILLIAMS at Silverstone and the Hungaroring confirmed he was very much in contention for a 2018 seat with the team, potentially as FELIPE MASSA'S replacement. Third driver PAUL DI RESTA was also testing at the latter venue, giving the team a baseline to judge the performance of the Pole, who last raced in F1 in 2010. The Scot remained a contender for the drive, with the Mercedes-backed PASCAL WEHRLEIN also being considered, now that he has been apparently ousted from Sauber by the latter's new Ferrari partnership.

When the FIA's technical chief (and former chief aerodynamicist at McLaren and Ferrari) MARCIN BUDKOWSKI accepted a job with RENAULT SPORT as executive director responsible for matters relating to chassis, after only three months of gardening leave, it created a storm from virtually every other team. In his FIA role he had access to the wind tunnel information and planned technologies from all the teams and, as such, the three-month period was felt to be much too brief. The teams presented a formal objection to the FIA's president JEAN TODT. Outside that, some of them were pressing for Budkowski's gardening leave to be extended to 12 months while others accepted it more pragmatically – but insisted that some control be put in place to prevent a repetition in future.



McLAREN delayed its FERNANDO ALONSO announcement until after Suzuka to spare Honda's blushes. He took a 35-place grid penalty on Honda's home ground after qualifying 10th. A fresh Spec 3.7 went in, meaning he'd have to take another engine penalty in future if they wanted to use the Spec 4.

On the other hand TORO ROSSO'S technical department is excited by the Honda engine's dimensions. "No wonder the McLaren is a good chassis," said one senior man after taking his first close look at the compact Japanese engine, which now shares its architecture with the standard-setting Mercedes unit.

With Haas chief race engineer AYAO KOMATSU in the FIA press conference on the Friday at Suzuka, there was no one at the team to return tyres to the FIA at the allocated time. As Haas is staffed by 150 rather than 800, such things can happen. The team was given a suspended $5000 fine.

LIBERTY MEDIA has conducted initial feasibility studies about hosting a DUTCH GRAND PRIX around a street circuit in either Amsterdam or Rotterdam, such is the huge following for the country's F1 sensation MAX VERSTAPPEN.



TURNS 3 & 4

TRACKSIDE VIEW

Why Suzuka's Esses showcase the very best of 2017-spec Formula 1

To motor racing's sacred place and the symbolic landscape that cradles Suzuka. The empty fairground wheel turns slowly, the flags flutter in the breeze and the ritual begins under an overcast sky. On this Friday morning those clouds are creating a tension, their threat - and the promise of an afternoon storm - meaning everyone is trying to squeeze their meaningful practice into half the time, or less. It's a race to find out as much as possible before rain renders the surface blank and useless, surrendering no relevant secrets for dry qualifying and race. With that equation of asphalt, downforce and elastomers to be solved, the cars charge out all of a group.

Looking down upon the Turn 4 exit, early into the most challenging sequence of bends on the calendar, the thunderbolt is not yet actual. But it's the realisation that even a Sauber looks fantastic through here, so much faster are the 2017 generation of cars. It's still slower than all the others, yet visually faster than even the best of last year.

Drivers now take sixth into Turn 3 and hold it all the way through the left-right squiggle, no brakes, just a feathering of throttle. The defining difference is only what momentum their grip allows them to carry. Hamilton and Vettel make you draw breath as they commit into T3, but the Red Bulls look like speeded-up film. The task of the Red Bull, Ferrari and Mercedes drivers at this stage of the lap is just to put the car on the right piece of track - and they no longer need to bother sweeping left to approach the right-hander of T4 because they can just carry the momentum into there from an acute angle, thereby allowing them to devour all the lap time that's available by only the slightest throttle modulation out of T3. There's no longer any wrestling with the car involved, not for those three machines at least.

Things are slightly more nervy for cars less well endowed with downforce, but the speeds are still immense for such an apparently tight and narrow section of track. Stoffel Vandoorne's approach in the McLaren is heralded by sparks and the scuff of skid plates upon the ground, all dramatic direction changes into T3, reluctant as he is to surrender even the tiniest drop of momentum that his engine will struggle to recover as the track heads steeply uphill, the orange car in the shallowest of oversteer as he exits T4.

There's a nice contrast between the Force India drivers, Sergio Pérez direct and dominant, Esteban Ocon using his car as a dancing partner by comparison, with smoother lines, less adamant about exactly where it will turn. Uniquely, Romain Grosjean leans his head to match the corner, Jean Alesi-style, as he hustles the Haas around.

The gentle breeze is carrying moisture and the odd rain drop, then progressively just the slightest and most delicate of drizzle. It's not enough significantly to change the grip of the track, but it's creating a building and unwanted hazard on the painted exit kerbs elsewhere. Eventually Carlos Sainz finds this out across at the hairpin - and a red flag falls. That's most of the dry-running done. The old track will yield no more secrets today.

CORNER COMPARISON



Other-worldly speed The Red Bulls might have been outpaced around a full lap, but looked like accelerated film through T3/4



Getting a grip The Esses have ever been spectacular, but look all the more so with current downforce. This is Kimi Räikkönen



Momentum drive Stoffel Vandoorne is desperate not to scrub off speed before the Honda-unfriendly ascent that follows

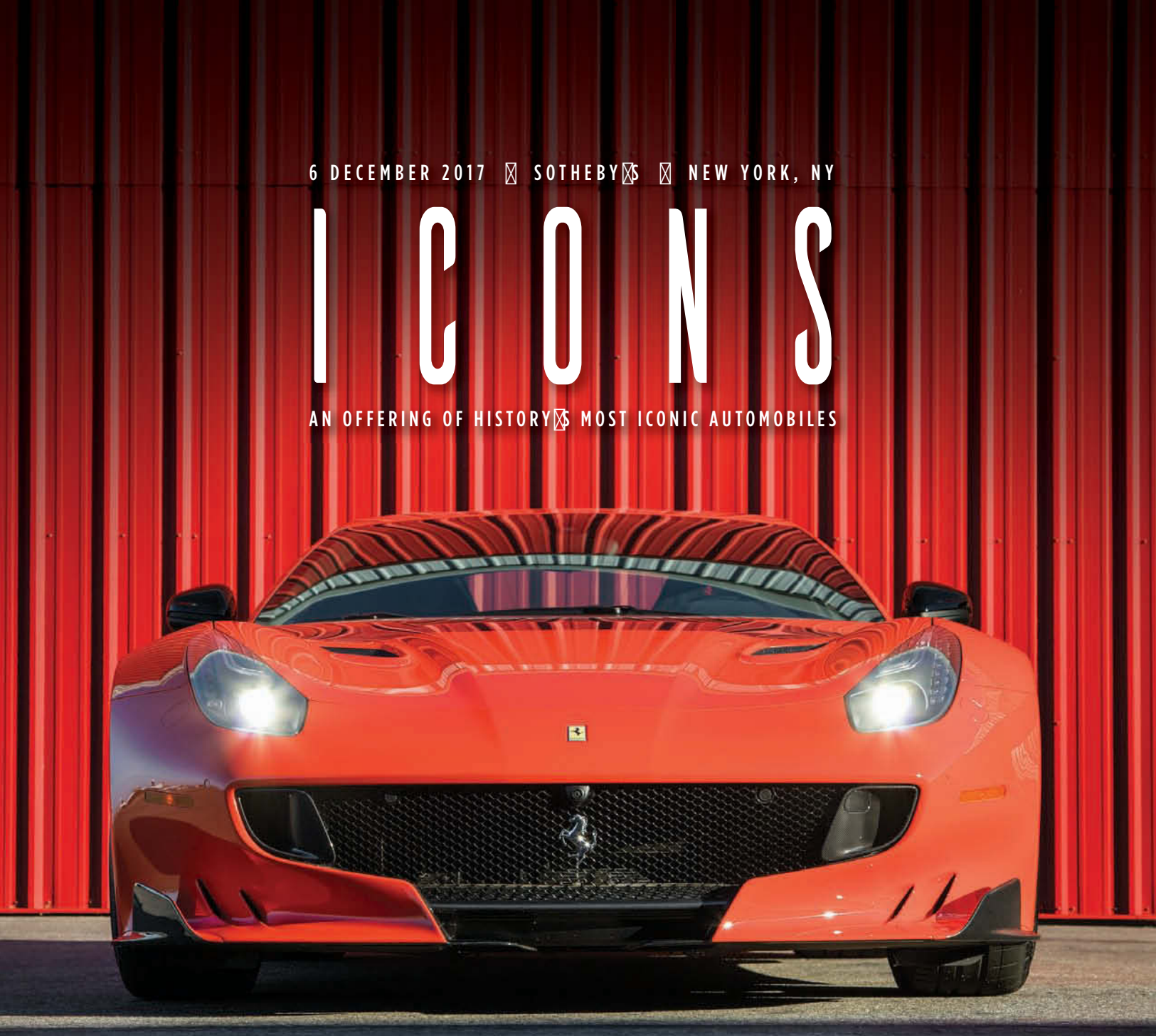


Tilt shift Head cocked in the manner of compatriot Jean Alesi, Romain Grosjean is a paragon of commitment in the Haas

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DRIVERS LOOK TO FE FUTURE

Formula E's rapid growth has helped to attract a wealth of talent to the electric series

Gary Watkins

Andre Lotterer was a bit sniffy about Formula E when the championship first started in 2014. A driver enjoying the thrill of racing high-powered LMP1 machinery in the World Endurance Championship - and turning out in Super Formula in Japan for fun on spare weekends - didn't see the attraction of the FIA's electric vehicle championship.

But times change. The three-time Le Mans 24 Hours winner, who will race for the Renault-powered Techeetah team in Formula E's fourth season, is part of an influx of top drivers from other disciplines into the series in 2017-18. It's partly a case of needs-must as drives in other championships, the WEC included, dry up. But there's also the ascent of FE to a position where it can be regarded as one of the top categories of racing outside Formula 1.

Formula E has become a destination for established names such as Lotterer and his Porsche LMP1 team-mate Neel Jani, but also for a band of younger drivers on their way up.

"The cars don't have 1000bhp, but they are very challenging for the tracks they race on," says Lotterer. "What it doesn't offer in terms of speed, it offers in competition. There are already a lot of top drivers and the series is only going to get stronger as more manufacturers come in over the next couple of years."

Their number includes Lotterer's current employer, Porsche, as well as Mercedes.

"My target throughout my career has been to race with a good team against other top drivers, the best drivers possible," continues Lotterer. "Formula E is the best place for me to do that right now."

Alex Lynn, who has won himself a full-time race seat with DS Virgin Racing after a season in a test and reserve role, has a similar view. As a young up-and-comer, FE was high on his agenda as he started to look beyond F1 when he came towards the end of his second season in GP2 in 2016.

"I made a conscious effort last year to make a beeline for a seat in FE," says the 24-year-old, who tested for Jaguar ahead of the start of season three. "The level of manufacturer coming into it, and the level of driver already in it, shows what the championship is becoming.

"For some of us like myself who didn't have the opportunity to go to Formula 1, it is our chance to make a name for ourselves in a championship that is hopefully going to become something huge. There is always a prestige where the big manufacturers are and that, firstly, draws you in and, secondly, drives you to become a force within it."

A DRIVER'S FORMULA

Lotterer was impressed and excited by the challenge of driving his Techeetah Spark-Renault Z.E.17 on his first acquaintance with the car at the official Formula E pre-season test at Valencia in October.

"The car keeps you very busy, and I'm sure it is going to be even more exciting when we are racing between the walls on the city tracks," he says. "These cars are pretty hands-on; driving one is much less of an exact science than driving an LMP1. The driver has a big input and perhaps can make much more of a difference."

Reigning Formula E champion Lucas di Grassi is thankful for that.

"The FIA has done a pretty good job in keeping it about the driver," says the Audi Sport Abt man. "For instance, FE doesn't have fly-by-wire braking like an LMP1. That makes it much more complicated for the driver. You have to turn the brake bias knob forwards or backwards during the race. It is extra complex. I would say these cars are more difficult to drive than an LMP1 car."



TOUGH FOR NEWBIES

Jani, who has joined the US Dragon Racing team for the coming season, reckons newcomers such as himself and Lotterer will be up against it as they compete with the established stars of the discipline when season four kicks off in Hong Kong at the start of December.

"An FE car is totally different from any racing car I have ever driven in terms of brake feel," says the Swiss. "It will be a very steep learning curve for guys like me and Andre.

"Every season of FE you've missed puts you further on the back foot. You can't give away two or three tenths any more - you have to be on it all the time. I have the utmost respect for the challenge I'm facing. It's going to be tough, but I'm looking forward to it."

Lynn agrees with those sentiments, even though he claimed pole for race one in New York on his debut for DS Virgin in the summer.

"The drivers who participated in season one, my team-mate Sam Bird being one of them, had it tough," he says. "The championship and the technology involved was in its infancy and they didn't have the systems we do now to help the drivers get to the end of the race on the power available. They were really free-styling it and that has given them a wealth of experience that makes them really good FE drivers."

Di Grassi, however, points out that with the advances in technology have come advances in simulation. That and the fact that half the tracks FE visits in the coming season will be new will, he says, help level the playing field.

"With the level of the teams now and the level of simulation and the amount of simulator work you can do, a driver should be able to adapt quickly," reckons the Brazilian. "The teams have optimised how to warm up the brakes, how to get the regeneration done, how to shift the brake distribution - all of those parameters. That means it should be easier for a newcomer than in, say, season two."

STATUS QUO MAINTAINED

The official Valencia test in October - the first and only collective pre-season Formula E run-out for the teams - proved little. Except, perhaps, that the old guard of the Abt/Audi team and e.dams, which is set to undergo a branding change from Renault to sister marque Nissan, are still on top, though with an ever-closer chasing pack.

The Valencia circuit - an FIA Grade 1, Formula 1-licensed track - has little to do with a temporary, and almost universally bumpy, Formula E venue, even with one and then two temporary chicanes inserted into its main straight. The high-grip surface also took a toll on the grooved Michelin FE tyres. That means few conclusions can be drawn from the three-day test.

"It is difficult to understand who is quick and who is not from what happened at Valencia, because it is a track so different from everywhere we race, except for maybe Marrakech," said di Grassi. "One thing we have learnt is that everyone is very close on the grid. We have at least seven teams that could eventually win a race this season."

For the record, Oliver Turvey was fastest on both track layouts in his Spark-NextEV NIO Sport 003. He ended up just one hundredth quicker than e.dams Renault driver and season two champion Sébastien Buemi on the faster of the configurations used on day one and then seventh hundredths faster than the Swiss driver on the two-chicane layout.



HOT TOPIC

GAINING SUPPORT

Jaguar is set to join the support bill at Formula E next year

Formula E will finally have a proper support series for season five in 2018/19. And about time, too.

Jaguar has stepped up to the plate with the launch of the I-PACE eTrophy. The one-make series for 20 of the British manufacturer's new electric crossover vehicle, due to go on sale in the second half of 2018, fills a void that FE appears to have been reluctant to plug since the championship started three years go.

FE may have a quick-fire one-day format - the double-headers are effectively two separate meetings - but the tracks have been largely empty when the FE grid pits. There was a one-off race for electric VW Golfs at Hong Kong a year ago and, in season one, the Formula E School Series, which was more of a slow bicycle race than a motorsport event.

FE has made much of appealing to a new type of motorsport fan, rather than a traditional anorak expecting a full support programme. But anyone who has paid for a seat needs entertaining.

Roborace, the company behind the autonomous racing cars currently under development, envisages a series of media-friendly challenges as oppose to races. A man versus machine shoot-out is planned for Hong Kong in December.

So the I-PACE eTrophy, coinciding with a freeing up of paddock space when car-swapping disappears in FE, will be a welcome addition to the show.



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BENTLEY IS BEST OF BRITISH

Morris and Parfitt retain points lead to clinch GT title at Donington Park

Gary Watkins

Bentley claimed its first British GT Championship title at Donington Park, Seb Morris and Rick Parfitt Jr holding their nerve to hang onto a slender points advantage during the series finale in September.

Team Parker Racing Bentley drivers Morris and Parfitt might have had a 10.5-point lead going into the two-hour mini-enduro, but they also knew that the victory previous time out at Brands Hatch came with a 20-second 'success' penalty to be taken in the pits. The Bentley Continental GT3 duo's rivals for the crown, Phil Keen and Jon Minshaw, were unburdened by any time penalties for their Barwell Lamborghini Huracán GT3.

The Lambo duo fought back from Minshaw's early spin to finish third, just ahead of the Bentley, though it wasn't nearly enough for them to overhaul their points deficit. Keen and Minshaw were subsequently excluded for a yellow-flag infringement, which promoted Morris and Parfitt to the final podium spot.

"It's not been a bad year!" said Morris.

"We've had a few wins, a few podiums, a few fastest laps and a big old pot at the end, which is always nice.

"To win this championship you have to put every link in the chain together and I think we did that this year."

Morris and Parfitt also won the pro-am title, while Parfitt was awarded the Gentlemen's Trophy as best amateur. The title for teams went to Barwell, with Parker in third place.

TF Sport Aston Martin dominated the Donington event on the way to a one-two finish for its pair of V12 Vantages. Derek Johnston and Jonny Adam, last year's champions, took the win by just under seven seconds from the sister car shared by Jon Barnes and Mark Farmer.

LAMBO CROWNED

Lamborghini collected an armful of silverware when the Blancpain GT Series climaxed at Barcelona in October. It claimed the Endurance Cup drivers title, as well as the overall prizes for drivers and teams.

It wasn't plain sailing for factory drivers Mirko Bortolotti, Andrea Caldarelli and Christian Engelhart, even though the Grasser team's lead Huracán GT3 qualified 27 places ahead of their only rivals for the Endurance crown. Bortolotti put the Lambo second on the grid, while Maxime Soulet could only qualify the best of the M-Sport Bentley Continental GT3s 28th.

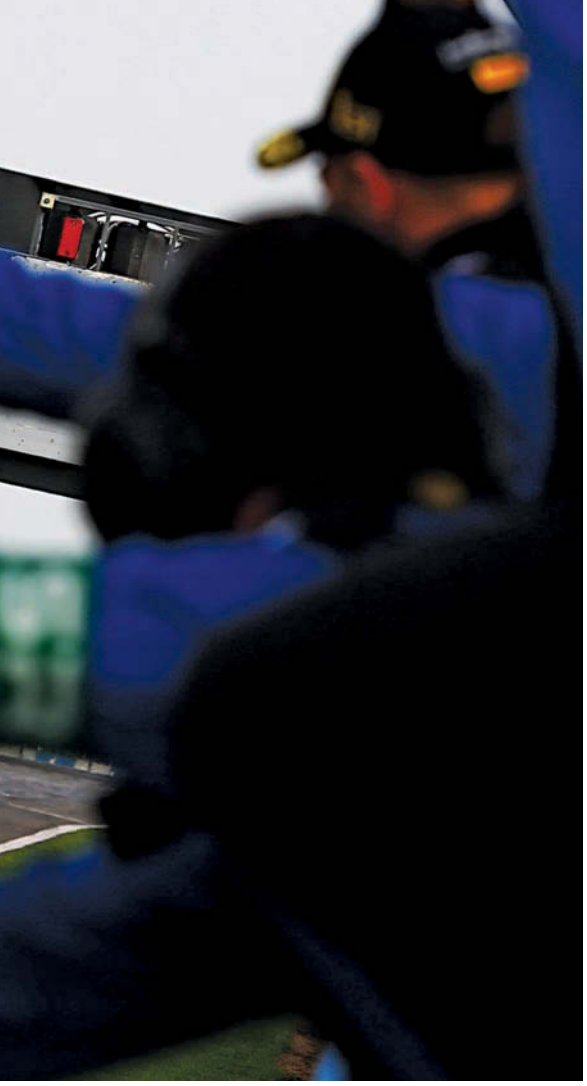
Engelhart went backwards at the start of the three-hour race, while Vincent Abril made progress in the Bentley he shared with Soulet and Andy Soucek. The title battle was finely poised until Caldarelli jumped from seventh to fourth in one swoop after a virtual safety car in the middle hour of the race.

The championship was heading firmly in the direction of the Lamborghini drivers when Soucek retired the Bentley with transmission problems shortly after half-distance. Despite failing to trouble the scorers, Bentley and M-Sport still wrapped up the Endurance Cup title for teams.

The race was won by the French Auto Sport Promotion team's Mercedes-AMG GT3, shared by Daniel Juncadella, Felix Serralles and Tristan Vautier.







"We've had a few wins, a few podiums, a few fastest laps, and a big old pot at the end, which is always nice"

MATURE PERFORMANCE

The British Wessex Vehicles team proved there is still life in its ageing Lamborghini Gallardo, on a rare outing in the International GT Open series. A car that can trace its origins back to the beginnings of the GT3 category in 2005 triumphed against the latest generation of machinery at Monza in September.

Craig Dolby and guest driver Seb Morris took victory for the Gallardo R-EX in race one at the home of the Italian Grand Prix. The pairing finished ahead of one of Lamborghini's latest Huracán GT3s and a McLaren 650S GT3.

"The Gallardo has got much less aero than the latest cars because it was aimed at amateurs like me," said team boss and car owner Nigel Mustill. "But when you put some top drivers in it at a place like Monza, you can show what it can do.

"We won in Lamborghini's backyard, so we probably upset a few people because we didn't do it in one of the latest Huracáns."

RATEL LIMITS PROS

GT3 founder and Blancpain GT Series boss Stéphane Ratel has moved to reinforce the place of the amateur in the championship.

He has placed a limitation on the number of cars with all-professional driver line-ups in the BGTS Endurance Cup for next season. A maximum of 26 full-season entries will be allowed in the Pro Cup from 2018.

"I've been down the route of an all-pro championship on two occasions in the past and I know it doesn't work," said Ratel, referring to the FIA GT Championship in 1997-98 and the FIA GT1 World Championship in 2010-12. "When we started the championship [as the Blancpain Endurance Series in 2011] we had 10 or 11 pro cars, now we have 30. If we continue this way, we could have 36 cars next year and no pro-am cars."

FELIX EYES DOUBLE

Formula E frontrunner Felix Rosenqvist is to bid to become only the second driver to win both the Macau Formula 3 Grand Prix and the Chinese venue's blue-riband GT3 event.

The Swede will be attempting to emulate Edoardo Mortara when he takes the wheel of a Ferrari 488 GT3 run by US entrant Scuderia Corsa in the FIA GT World Cup in Macau on November 18/19. Mortara, like Rosenqvist a two-time winner of the F3 event, took a hat-tick of victories in the Macau GT Cup in 2011-14 before it was awarded FIA world status for 2015.

Rosenqvist will head a strong World Cup line-up, which includes factory-supported machinery from race regulars Audi, Mercedes, Porsche and BMW, as well as from Honda with its NSX GT3.

FERRARI'S IMSA TITLE

The Scuderia Corsa Ferrari team cemented a IMSA SportsCar Championship double for Alessandro Balzan and Christina Nielsen in the season-ending Petit Le Mans enduro at Road Atlanta in October.

The Ferrari duo could only take ninth place in the GT Daytona class for GT3 cars, sharing their Scuderia Corsa Ferrari 488 GT3 with Matteo Cressoni, after a major delay for suspension repairs. But with nearest rival Jeroen Bleekemolen finishing fourth in his Riley Motorsports-run Mercedes-AMG GT3, the title was theirs for a second season in a row.

The German Land Motorsport Audi team added a class victory at Petit to its overall triumph at the Nürburgring 24 Hours in May. It triumphed with a GT Daytona class Audi R8 LMS shared by two of its winning drivers from the 'Ring, Christopher Mies and Connor De Phillippi, and Sheldon van der Linde.



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DYSON'S ELECTRIC DREAM

Vacuum company plans to clean up with battery-powered car

Andrew Frankel

News that Dyson is to produce a brand new all-electric car by 2020 has been greeted by a wide range of reactions, from qualified approval to something close to disbelief.

Sir James Dyson, the 70-year-old entrepreneur, whose inventions have transformed the way people go about aspects of life from cleaning their homes to drying their hands, has said little about the car beyond naming its launch date and that he's had 400 engineers on the £2.5 billion project since 2015. He has claimed it will be 'radically different' from current offerings and that it won't be cheap.

It is the sheer ambition of the plan that has got people talking. From what Dyson has said and what can be deduced, the car is a from-scratch design, as is a battery that apparently already exists and has accounted for £1 billion of the budget. Five years from project inception to delivery is an incredibly short period of time for a genuinely new design, even for an established player in the automotive market with the expertise, supply chains and, above all, somewhere to manufacture it. As of this month and with as little as three years to go, Dyson has no running prototype and no suitable factory.

It is this, plus knowledge of the immense legislative and regulatory hurdles required to be negotiated before any new car can be certified for use on the public road, that has caused some to doubt the timeframe. Then again, Dyson has spent his professional life delighting in proving the establishment wrong and has made himself a billionaire in the process. Moreover, while the project may only have started in 2015, it's been on Dyson's mind for rather longer, ever since 1998 when he abandoned plans to clean up the exhausts of diesel cars thanks to an apathetic response from the industry.

What kind of car can we expect? Dyson has said it will be neither a sports car nor a cheap car, which isn't telling us much: electric sports cars are inherently problematic because of their weight and lack of sound, while 'cheap' and 'electric car' are for now largely mutually exclusive concepts. So while Dyson says it will be a radical car, I expect that to be reflected in its design rather than its configuration. He has to go where the money is, which now and for the foreseeable future is likely to be the SUV market, where both vast sales and huge profits lie - just ask Porsche. There is also no great expectation of dynamism and a lack of noise is regarded as a bonus.

Expect the revolution to come in both the way the car is constructed and the kind of battery used. Solid-state batteries have enormous potential advantages over the lithium-ion batteries used in all modern electric cars. They weigh less, are more energy dense, generate less heat so therefore require less cooling and, most enticingly of all, are cheaper. The result is a more affordable, lighter, more efficient and safer electric car with far greater potential range as a result. In 2014 a company called Sakti3 said it was homing in on a solid-state battery with double the energy density of conventional batteries costing one fifth of the price. In 2015 Sakti3 was bought by Dyson.

NEW ASTON DROP-TOP

Aston Martin has completed the DB11 range by pulling the wraps of the new convertible Volante version. Featuring a new eight-layer roof design that can lower in 14sec, raise in 16sec and all at speeds up to 31mph, the Volante's bodywork is new from behind the doors rearward. Most notable are the deletion of the so-called 'aeroblades' that channel air through the coupé's C-pillars and onto the rear deck to increase downforce.



REX FEATURES

The Volante weighs 110kg more than the coupé, but it is still 25kg lighter than the DB9 Volante and five per cent stiffer. That said, the DB11 Volante is being launched with the 503bhp Mercedes-AMG 4-litre V8 under its bonnet, not the 5.9-litre V12 of the DB9, so a like-for-like comparison is not possible.

Interestingly, and despite this significant weight gain, Aston Martin says performance has hardly been affected, its 0-62mph time of 4.1sec trailing that of its hard-top sister by a scant tenth of a second. Top speed of 187mph (with the roof up) is unchanged.

Perhaps the biggest surprise is the decision not to offer the new 5.2-litre V12 in the Volante. It would certainly add even more weight - in coupé form the V12 DB11 weighs 115kg more than the V8 - which would bring the Volante version perilously close to two tonnes, but one wonders whether Volante customers are really going to be fussed by that. It would seem likely that, if offered the pinnacle engine, a significant number of clients would be only too happy to accept. So regardless of what you might read elsewhere about there being no plans for such a car, my every instinct says there are.

The DB11 Volante is on sale now, priced at £159,900, a £15,000 increase over the V8 coupé. Deliveries are expected early in the New Year.

RING CYCLE

Records have been tumbling this month. Firstly the new Alfa Romeo Stelvio Quadrifoglio set a new record for an SUV at the Nürburgring, which doesn't strike me as terribly important, then the new Porsche 911 GT2 RS smashed the record for any kind of standard-production car, which does.

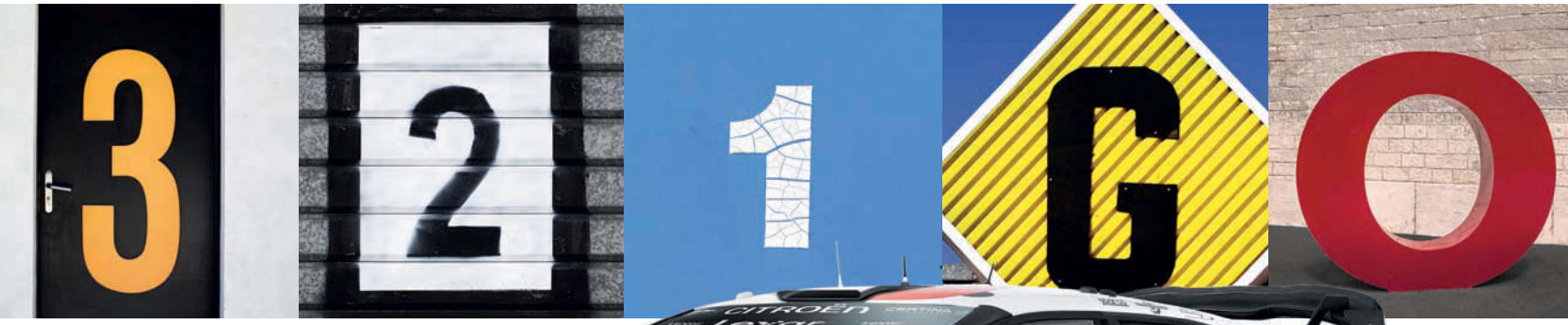
In lapping the track in 6min 47.3sec, the GT2 RS has suggested in the clearest possible terms that the hybrid hypercars that were perceived to have advanced significantly the limits of road-car performance might not have done so at all. Indeed the entirely conventional GT2 RS shaved 10sec off the time recorded by Porsche's own hybrid 918 Spyder, and it is an open secret that McLaren's 720S is quicker than its P1 hypercar. The question is whether the additional power provided by these hybrid systems even offset their increased weight, let alone added additional performance. On this evidence the answer appears to be no.

In other record-breaking news, Bugatti's record 42sec time for the 0-400kph-0 time we reported last month didn't last long. Those cheeky fellows at Koenigsegg wheeled out a customer's Agera RS and did the same in 37.28sec. What's more, bad weather caused a change of venue to a poorly surfaced, traction-limited airfield. The data showed the traction- control system on the 1340bhp monster was still active at more than 110mph...

MINI MARVEL

Remember the 1275GT? Mini does. In homage to its 1970s creation it has announced the 1499GT, to be sold only in the UK. It has no more power - 101bhp from its 1.5-litre three-cylinder engine - but comes with sports suspension, black or white paint, various John Cooper Works trim items and those crucial 1499GT side decals. Prices start at £16,990.

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THE BATTLE TO SIGN OGIER

The multiple champion would like to remain with M-Sport, but there's a financial hurdle

Anthony Peacock

Strange how one weekend in motor sport - even separated by a continent and eight hours of time difference - can define the shape of a season. The Japanese Grand Prix will be remembered as the moment when Lewis Hamilton (barring any kind of disaster) secured the 2017 Formula 1 title as Ferrari's challenge wilted again.

And during that very weekend, Sébastien Ogier effectively did the same thing in the World Rally Championship, in this instance by finishing second to Kris Meeke in Spain as the rival Hyundais ran into trouble.

Both these multiple champions are on top of their games, yet both acknowledge that they owe a lot to the misfortunes of their key rivals, who have not only stumbled with mechanical reliability but also suffered from fits of impetuousness that have led to premature retirements.

There's one big difference, though. Hamilton has generally benefited from having one of the best two cars, whereas Ogier's advantage - if there is one at all - has been less clear-cut.

Of course, the 2017 Fiesta RS WRC is a very good machine, otherwise there is no way that it would be leading both world championships. But it's equally clear that, without full manufacturer support, there are going to be disadvantages for M-Sport compared to its factory rivals, despite the wealth of experience that the Cumbrian outfit has accumulated. Imagine Hamilton leading the F1 standings in a Williams, for example, and it's probably a closer parallel.

The young Hamilton, of course, spent plenty of time in Cumbria in the past. He was good friends with Matthew Wilson (M-Sport team principal Malcolm Wilson's son) when they were both competing in Formula Renault, and used to pay visits to the Wilson family home in Cockermouth.

The Wilsons and the Hamiltons inhabit different worlds now, but both seem certain to become champions by the end of the year, albeit by very different means.

What happens after that, though, will be fascinating. Ford recently announced that the company would next year be suspending its factory involvement in the World Rallycross Championship, a programme that has been spearheaded by Ken Block. However, Ford's global performance director Dave Pericak was keen to reassure everyone that: "We remain absolutely committed to hot hatches and all things performance."

What the company *didn't* say was what Ford would be doing instead to demonstrate that commitment. But with a sizeable chunk of budget saved, and Malcolm Wilson lobbying hard to get Ford officially back into the WRC, could those spare dollars be on their way to Cumbria?

For now, Pericak won't be drawn.

There's a strong argument to suggest that Ford doesn't need to invest any money in



M-Sport because the company is getting so much positive publicity for free. But the stark truth is that 2017 is a one-off, and unless Ford puts something in, it is unlikely to see anything out again.

Ogier would like to stay and Wilson would like him to remain as well - but not at any cost. M-Sport's team principal has already categorically stated that he's not going to do anything that jeopardises the long-term future of his company. Because to keep M-Sport profitable, Wilson doesn't want - or need - to spend a lot of money on the WRC programme.

The real profit is made in Cockermouth by the plethora of R5 and R2 cars sold - and these are now sufficiently well established to stand on their own two feet, with or without the halo effect of a WRC programme. Look at Skoda: sales and performance of the Fabia R5 (the WRC2 class winner again this year) don't seem even remotely affected by the absence of a WRC equivalent.

Wilson had to dig very deep into his own pockets to get Ogier this year, with his heart probably ruling his head for once. You won't find anyone more passionately committed to rallying, but he's unlikely to sign Ogier again unless he can find some financial help.

And he can't even sell much sponsorship to recoup some of the cost, because part of the deal with the Frenchman is that Red Bull covers a huge chunk of the car. But, of course, he always knew that signing Ogier was a calculated loss leader: the bait to lure Ford back in. And now is the crucial moment when we see if that gamble has paid off.

Citroën is pushing hard to get the 2013-2016 champion into its car, and Kris Meeke's fantastic win in Spain showed that, under the right circumstances, the French team could be a tempting proposition if the price is right.

M-Sport's other driver, Ott Tänak - arguably the star of the season - is being courted elsewhere as well, so unless Wilson is given the financial wherewithal to fight back, there's a chance that he could lose both.

That would then probably leave M-Sport with a much cheaper driver line-up of Elfyn Evans and someone like Teemu Suninen: promising, certainly, but hardly the complete package that's proved so devastatingly effective in 2017.

As Citroën has demonstrated, success takes a long time to build up, but it can unravel surprisingly quickly - especially when a star driver departs.

For the Ford Motor Company, there's still a chance to become the most successful manufacturer in the history of rallying: they're currently on 86 wins compared to 98 for Citroën. But it has to act right now to hang onto its most prized assets - and stop the gap from becoming insurmountable.





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SILVERSTONE CLASSIC GP C RACE AXED

Newer sports-prototypes set to breathe fresh life into popular twilight fixture

Paul Lawrence

Sports-prototypes and GT racing cars from as recently as the 2011 season will give the Silverstone Classic a very different look next summer (July 20-22).

The landmark event in the British historic racing calendar has replaced the traditional Saturday evening Group C event with a race for the new Masters Endurance Legends series, which is for prototype and GT cars from 1995 to 2011. Never before have cars as up to date as these taken a lead slot in the programme.

The key feature of the three-day event will be a celebration of Le Mans with three grids racing through Saturday afternoon and evening to showcase more than 60 years in the story of the Le Mans 24 Hours.

The trio of headline races will start with the International Trophy for pre-1966 GTs and continue with the FIA Masters Historic Sports Car Championship for Le Mans-style sports cars from up to 1974. Then, as the evening heads into dusk, the Endurance Legends series will make its Silverstone debut in the twilight slot previously reserved for the Group C cars of the 1980s.

Changing Saturday evening's feature race is a gamble for the event promoters, but the shine has gone from the Group C feature in recent seasons and just 13 cars arrived for the 2017 race. Nine were running at the end of the weekend's second race – and they were covered by two laps. When promoter Patrick Peter announced a Group C race for the 2018 Le Mans Classic (July 6-8), it seemed highly probable that the category would not feature at Silverstone.

Instead, event promoter Nick Wigley has moved to agree a deal with Masters Historic Racing to host the fledging Endurance Legends series, which had a successful pilot race at Spa in September with an encouraging 21-car field of LMP prototypes and GTs. The new category will have a programme of races next season and Silverstone's is the first one to be confirmed.

The development fits well with Wigley's ambition to expand the Classic's audience by attracting younger spectators. "It's a really exciting new addition, providing a new dimension and new era, thus further broadening what we celebrate at the Classic," he said. "The LMP cars look absolutely phenomenal and are very different to everything else we have on track."

Although the later prototypes and GT cars are fairly complex to operate, Masters boss Ron Maydon says that there is a huge pool of



Endurance racing through the ages will be a major theme of the 2018 Silverstone Classic. Right, M10B, T332 and B37 made the earth tremble at Castle Combe









potential cars that have few, if any, other places to race. The concept is already well established in the USA.

The other major celebration at the Silverstone Classic will be 70 years since the circuit's first British Grand Prix, held on October 2 1948. That landmark race, on a rudimentary track set out on the runways of the World War II airfield, was won by the Maserati 4CLT of Luigi Villoresi.

In 2018, grids from the Historic Grand Prix Cars Association and FIA Masters Historic Formula 1 will trace the F1 story from the 1930s to the 1980s.

COMBE F5000 DEMO

Some of the most powerful cars ever to run at Castle Combe created the main spectacle at the most successful edition to date of the Wiltshire circuit's Autumn Classic.

Centre stage went to three Formula 5000s, including one of the most important single-seaters in the circuit's 67-year history.

In May 1970 the European Formula 5000 Championship paid the first of two visits to the circuit and the race was won by Peter Gethin in his Sid Taylor Racing McLaren M10B. That car, now owned by Martin Longmore, was back on track at the Autumn Classic in the hands of Matthew Wurr and was joined by two later F5000s for some demonstration laps.

Neil Glover (ex-Gethin Chevron B37) and Nigel Greensall (Lola T332) ran some brisk laps in close company. Greensall is a local hero as the fastest man ever to lap Castle Combe, at more than 130mph when racing a Tyrrell 022 back in 1997.

"I've always loved Formula 5000 but never had the chance to drive one until now," said Greensall. "As a kid I can remember going to Mallory Park and standing on the bank watching the start of an F5000 race. For me the Lola T332 is the ultimate F5000 and it's an incredible car."

Other notable cars demonstrated included the Lotus type 101 chassis number 3 with a 600bhp normally-aspirated Judd V8 engine. Now owned and driven by Steve Griffiths, the Lotus was raced by Nelson Piquet at the start of 1989 and then by Satoru Nakajima for the balance of the season.



CAPE CRUSADERS

The earliest years of the South African Grand Prix will be celebrated in November 2018 during the country's Historic Grand Prix Festival.

A maximum of 25 Grand Prix cars from the 1930s will travel from Europe to take part in a week-long event honouring the South African Grands Prix held at the Prince George track in East London between 1934 and 1939.

It will be the first time for 80 years that Grand Prix cars of the period will have run in South Africa, and the schedule will open with a commemorative race in East London on November 25.

UK-based event organiser Speedstream has been identifying and tracing as many original cars as possible from the South African Grands Prix of the 1930s.

Already confirmed are the Maserati 8CM that Whitney Straight drove to victory in the inaugural 1934 Grand Prix, ERA R4A (which won the 1937 South African Grand Prix with Pat Fairfield) and the Riley Ulster Imp that finished second in that race.

As well as the race there will be a parade around the original 11-mile Prince George circuit, plus a five-day tour taking in some of South Africa's most exhilarating roads between East London and the Western Cape.



LAT



NOMAD RETURNS

The unique Nomad BRM Mk3 sports-racer has been restored and is due to make its racing return at the Le Mans Classic next July.

Designed by Bob Curl in 1970, the third and final Nomad ran with a 2-litre BRM engine and was raced by husband and wife Mark and Gabriel Konig, who funded the project, and Tony Lanfranchi.

More recently Terry Davison used it in historic racing with a 3.2-litre Porsche engine, but it has now been totally restored for the current owner by Neil Fowler Motorsport in Bourne, Lincolnshire. Fittingly, the car has been rebuilt with a period-correct 2-litre BRM engine (originally from the same town).

The Nomad Mk2 went to Le Mans in 1969, but the Mk3 was conceived for the European 2-Litre Sports Car Championship. At the end of 1970, however, Konig reined in his spending and the project folded. Curl went on to build the Chevron-based Gropas with Andrew Mylius.

The Nomad has been in restoration for about a year and needed a considerable amount of chassis work, as well as a bodywork revamp and the fitting of the BRM engine. The ground-up rebuild has been substantially the work of race engineer and restorer Simon Ayliff and the car should soon be ready for shakedown testing.



HOT TOPIC

SEEKING INSURANCE ASSURANCE

Opinion from the world of historic motor sport

The entire future of our industry could hang in the balance following a ruling by the European Court in 2014 that might leave motor sport uninsurable.

The Vnuk ruling has been the focus of attention for some time now, after the court ruled that the requirement for compulsory insurance should cover any use of a vehicle, so long as that use is consistent with the normal function of the vehicle. The net result would be that all competition cars taking part in motor sport would need third-party insurance, and that it not considered possible.

The Motorsport Industry Association and the MSA, the sport's UK governing body, are lobbying in the interest of the sport, but the danger to the future of all branches of motor sport across Europe is very real. Chris Aylett (pictured above), CEO of the MIA and a former historic racer, said: "Our industry and sport face a serious problem. If we fail to secure the amendment we seek, the likely outcome is that all motor sport, in every EU member state, will cease.

"A new Motor Insurance Directive will require compulsory unlimited third-party liability insurance to cover personal injury between motor sport competitors and car-to-car damage during any competition. However, such widespread, unlimited new insurance is not currently available and, we understand, will not be in the future."

As *Motor Sport* closed for press, the MIA was leading the response to an EC consultation on the proposals. The implications for the sport, in the UK alone, are unimaginable in terms of loss of export earnings, jobs and enjoyment for participants and fans.

As one historic competitor pointed out, the ruling would not only end their passion for the sport, but would wipe out the value of period racing cars currently thought to be worth millions.

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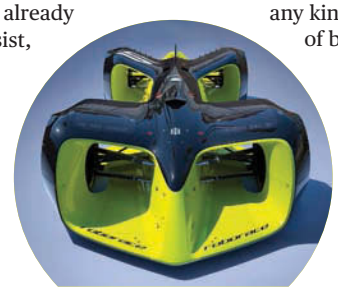
THE NEXT BIG STEP?

The motor sport of the future, or just a gimmick? Roborace is becoming serious

Jack Phillips

The start was inauspicious: a Ginetta-based mule crashed on its public debut. Since then things have certainly progressed for Roborace. It's easy to dismiss the project out of hand. It is, after all, a group of robots racing around a small pre-programmed street circuit. It is staged, some say - no better than wrestling. Or it's just life-size radio-controlled racing. But this is no theatrical gimmick. There's genuine engineering know-how here - and in time it should benefit all of us.

Autonomous cars are the future, and we'll all use them. In many ways we already do with parking assist, lane assist, cruise control, automatic braking and so on. Even hardy petrolheads will accept them because they can look after dull queues, dreary motorway commutes and tedious stop-start city traffic. The technology improved, perfected and developed within the confines of Roborace will therefore make our own lives easier. It's what Audi did so well at Le Mans, and what every other manufacturer wants to prove: that its racing directly benefits its road cars.



For Roborace that's less easy, for it's not a manufacturer series. Teams will code the car to win races without a driver and its role is to show technological progress on the support bill of racing's most progressive series: Formula E. 'Proper' race teams are interested, too, and Lucas di Grassi is now CEO. The current Formula E champion wants driver aids to be stripped from traditional racing and reserved for Roborace. He hopes it will make motor sport pure again.

Initially the tracks will be programmed in to the cars so they know where they're going. But like Formula E it's a long game and this will be phased out so the cars can drop onto any circuit and be expected simply to race. The road relevance is obvious.

One of the most interesting elements, from a racing point of view, is that this is making stars out of those normally deemed to be the extras. The men and women behind the scenes, the brains, who will be developing the cars' artificial intelligence. How much risk will it consider acceptable? How much of a racer will it be? The set-up can't be changed to get any kind of edge. It's purely a matter of building the racer within.

Many will ignore the series because the human element is 'missing', but it's there if you know where to find it. It's the racers behind the computer screens, and the computer-generated one behind the wheel. If, of course, it had one... ◘



HOT TOPIC

DRIVING AMBITIONS

WRC7 – pretender to the rally game crown

Colin McRae Rally is still the yardstick for rally games, right? Twenty years ago it had millions transfixed for hours, and reinforced the legend of the great Scot and his blue and day-glo Impreza. Sega Rally, too, with its amusement arcade chairs and death-wish gazelles on the Safari Rally, swallowed 20p after 20p.

But things have come a long way since and the latest new launch is WRC 7, the official game of the World Rally Championship.

It's a physical affair, which only adds to the entertainment as you hack at the wheel, the car sliding perilously from bend to bend, hand plunging down the side of the gaming chair - a GT Omega, in our case - for a non-existent handbrake. The feel and feedback work brilliantly through our Thrustmaster wheel.

The graphics ensure the cars look spectacular - as does the scenery (just as well, given how often we've plunged headlong through the bushes).

WRC 7 is an excellent game that will have you questioning the old mantra of 'if in doubt, flat out' every time you disappear towards the undergrowth.

Reviewed on: Sony PS4, Thrustmaster T150 wheel, GT Omega Racing seat



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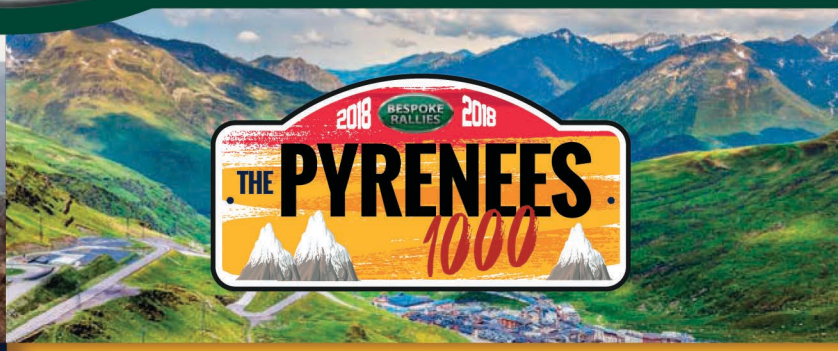
The Highland 1000 is a new competitive 4 day event around Scotland, starting and finishing in the beautiful town of Falkirk. As its name suggests it is a 1,000km drive through some of the most stunning scenery imaginable, along roads and byways that you would normally never take.

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The Pyrenees 1000 is a four day event ideal for all levels of experience from the novice to the most expert crews who want to brush up on their skills in beautiful surroundings or shake down their car for a longer event. For the novice it's a great introduction to historic regularity rallies in Europe.

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HSCC FINDS A WINNING FORMULA

Extra pep for the Gold Cup, MGBs out in force and a double dose of vintage whimsy

Simon Arron

The memory remains vivid and I suspect ever will: drenched clothes, irreparably soggy programme (replaced about 40 years later, for £7 via the miracle of eBay) and a bright red Bell Star with yellow tinted visor, both elements clearly visible through the murk. Its wearer? Niki Lauda, on his way to victory in the second round of the 1972 British Formula 2 Championship. Gerry Birrell and Tim Schenken were the only other drivers unlapped. Dave Morgan, fourth, was three laps in arrears – but Alan Henry's report in *Motoring News* explained how the Englishman had pitted to switch to a less fog-prone open-face helmet, only to find that his young son had wandered off with it to keep his head dry. Motor racing might be a touch more professional nowadays, but that's not necessarily the same thing as 'better'.

OULTON PARK

That race, on March 31, was hailed as the return of top-class F2 to Oulton Park after a five-year absence. The series reappeared six months later, but that would be it for the category in Cheshire – at least in contemporary terms. A pity, really, because such cars seemed dimensionally perfect for the venue's slender contours.

When the HSCC announced it was to implement a historic F2 race as the headline feature at its annual August bank holiday Gold Cup, I thought it a mixed blessing. A nice idea, certainly, and – as reported a year ago – the event needed a size 12 racing boot up its exhaust pipe. But F2? At a time of political fragility, with two rival series vying for entries?

The HSCC's instincts proved correct, with 24 cars pitching up. The disparity between heavyweight and makeweight might have been vast (as is frequently the case in historic racing), but they looked and, equally crucial, sounded the part. Mind you, that would have been true had double-winner Darwin Smith's March 722 been the only car on track. With



ALL IMAGES: SIMON ARRON

watched all season. Pole-sitter Andy Smith's fleet Formula Atlantic March was beaten away by the less nimble F5000 missiles of Neil Glover (Lola) and Greg Thornton (Surtees) and it took him a few laps to reclaim the lead, but he did so in style - passing both rivals in one move around the outside of Shell.

The only downside? Politics led the Guards Trophy sports and GT fields to be split, despite there being only enough cars for one strong grid. That created two weak, 40-minute races - on Sunday, when noise considerations meant racing couldn't start until midday and timetable pressure was already tight.

Many readers will associate the Gold Cup with such as Moss and Clark, and rightly so, but not much can be done (short of the Tardis becoming commercially available) to bring those days back. In a modern context the event has recovered some of its lustre and that, to me, is worth celebrating.

One week on, spectator banks that had been packed for the Gold Cup were all but empty - one man without his dog - for a low-key MG Car Club meeting.

Events like this still resonate, because there always seemed to be MG races on the card during my days as a cub reporter at Oulton (and Aintree, come to that) in the early '80s - and if anything it seems there are more Bs in action now than there were when the model was only slightly obsolete.

For the most part this was an illustration of club competition at its most pure - proof that a slightly battered Metro remains a fine basis for an effective racing car - but it also served as a reminder of the sport's potential perils.

On the opening lap of the first scheduled MG Trophy race, a couple of touches in the tightly packed midfield sent Gianni Picone barrel-rolling to the right of the Lakeside Straight while Adrian Wray was pitched off to the left before being launched from a barrier. I witnessed the incident from the outside of Cascades, but it was only when the dust settled that the full scale became apparent. Wray's car had struck a marshalling post, the occupants being fortunate to escape without serious harm - thanks in part to the debris grille that diluted some of the car's energy during its flight. Even so, the impact was sufficient to split Wray's crash helmet as his rollcage deformed: both drivers were hospitalised, but neither sustained serious long-term injuries.

As one marshal said to me later, "We always expect a quiet day when we're posted to Lakeside." Even at this level, though, our sport generates lots of kinetic energy - and it's impossible to predict the consequences when this is unleashed in an unpredictable manner.

Sometimes, it really doesn't take much.

SNETTERTON

The A11 had been shrouded in fog for much of its length, so it was pleasing to peel into a pool of sunshine in which Snetterton - uniquely, it seemed - was bathed. The paddock café's terrace benches were too wet to permit a comfortable *al fresco* fry-up, though, a dewy clue that autumn was not so much nigh as in full swing.

Introduced in 2012, 78 years after the club's formation, the VSCC's Snetterton fixture has looked a little wobbly of late. It was dropped in 2016 - due in part, I'm told, to a shortage of competitor support - but resumed on September 17... only for another thin entry to materialise. True, the Goodwood Revival had been a week beforehand and Snetterton clashed with the Circuit des Remparts meeting at Angoulême, but it's a shame to see drivers drawn increasingly towards the bright and shiny rather than being prepared to set co-ordinates in the general direction of Great Yarmouth.

Even so, the meeting drew a substantial







such a positive response, the HSCC committed during the weekend to support F2 again in 2018 - with a possibility of the series returning to Thruxton, a traditional F2 venue in the days when a large bag of chips cost 5p.

The F2 races weren't the only highlight. European Touring Car Championship winner in 1985, Gianfranco Brancatelli made his Oulton debut at the age of 67 and drove a Sierra RS500 with panache. Richard Attwood was out, too, the 1970 Le Mans winner still representing Porsche - albeit in a 928 (in '70s Road Sports) rather than a 917. Steve Soper made his first Oulton start in eons at the wheel of a Rover SD1 (winning the Historic Touring Car Challenge, with Chris Ward) and the opening part of the first Derek Bell Trophy race was among the most vibrant things I've





crowd and was ripe with glorious cameos. In the Redgate Mug race for Standard & Modified Pre-War Sports Cars (the only one with a full grid), the three-wheeled Morgans of Iain Stewart and Sue Darbyshire finished 0.19sec apart after outmanoeuvring Mike Preston's pole-sitting Bugatti T35B on a track rendered sodden by a cloudburst. And it was fun watching Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (Frazer Nash) overhaul Fred Harper's Kurtis Indycar in the damp, the latter not exactly blessed with traction.

An Archie Scott Brown 1950s Trophy Race was most appropriate, paying tribute to a driver whose name has long been revered locally, given his strong Snetterton connections. A pity it attracted only 10 entries, but it ended on a positive note.

In 1962, Julian Sutton won a sports car race at Snetterton's Archie Scott Brown Trophy meeting at the wheel of a Lotus Elite, XLD 121. Now owned by David Beattie, the car was back at the venue once more - though Beattie was away on vacation and thus unable to compete.

The solution? He entrusted the car to Colin Elstrop, who made good use of the Elite-friendly conditions to add another Snetterton success to its CV.

PRESCOTT

Two VSCC events within the space of six days? Proof, surely, that you really can't have too much of a good thing.

One is never sure what will first be heard as you unravel your belongings in the Prescott car park. An engine gently being primed? A steam train? In this instance it was actually a cow lowing in a nearby shed, further evidence - not that any were needed - of the venue's pastoral splendour.

The BBC's weather website had confidently predicted a zero per cent chance of precipitation, but that was wrong even before I reached the paddock. It mattered not: in the slipstream of a sausage bap and a pint of black coffee (a fine clubhouse cocktail for a fiver), the Cotswolds mist gradually dispersed to leave Prescott looking its best.

All VSCC meetings are clubbies by definition, but this - on the long Prescott course, as opposed to the celebrated two-day meeting on its shorter counterpart at the beginning of August - felt more so than most: smaller entry, smaller crowd, but the same capacity to enchant.

The timing equipment failed briefly - actually good news, because it obliged some cars (including Mark Walker's marvellous Thunderbug) to venture out for an extra run - but that apart it was a day of seamless delights.

Nick Topliss (ERA R4D) reached the top with competitive runs of 49.92 and 49.42sec, the only driver to dip below 50sec. For consistency and brio as an art form, look no further. ◘



CLUB RACING SPOTLIGHT

Rod Birley: more than 600 victories... and counting

Brands Hatch, August, 1965. Jim Clark's works Cortina reappears from the circuit's woodland loop. "He clipped the Clearways kerb and rose up on two wheels," says Rod Birley. "I turned to my dad and said, 'I want to do that'."

Within 10 years he'd be racing - and more than half a century later he still is.

Birley has been a familiar paddock presence since 1973. He was away for a while, taking up oval racing after what he calls "a run-in with the MSA", but on the day we chat he notched up his 620th success, a cocktail of class, outright and hot rod victories.

The journey began in a production saloon Hillman Imp with a George Bevan engine (the start of a long relationship - the Bevan family still looks after his Honda Integra, which he races when commitments with his 500bhp Ford Escort permit).

"Short ovals really sharpened my racecraft," he says. "You had to be aggressive, but as it was a non-contact sport that also had to be controlled."

He returned to circuit racing during the early 1980s and, now 62, has no plans to quit. "I love it," he says, "and the hairs on my neck still stand up when I venture out on the Brands GP circuit - it's up there with the best."

And there's another reason to continue, too. The Bevan family has reacquired its most famous Imp, which Bill McGovern took to three straight BSCC titles between 1970 and 1972. Once its restoration is complete, Birley has been invited to race it...





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NOVEMBER 2017

COMING ATTRACTIONS

IN THE UK *Nov 4 – Regent Street Motor Show* **Last year F1 roared up the capital's streets. This time Regent Street will showcase 125 years of motoring and the line-up for the 2018 Silverstone Classic. And admission is free...**

ON THE ROAD *Nov 5 – London to Brighton Veteran Car Run* **More than 400 pre-1905 vehicles take part in the world's longest-running motoring event, driving 60 miles from Hyde Park to Brighton.**

ON THE LOOSE *Nov 10-13 – Roger Albert Clark Rally* **Special stage rallying in the style of the bygone RAC, with four days of action across the breadth of the country. Starts at Shelsley Walsh, finishes in Kielder.**

IN THE USA *Nov 16-18 – Hankook 24H Series* **Last of seven rounds for an endurance series that is gaining ever more traction – and its first event at the United States Grand Prix's home venue.**

INTERNATIONAL *Nov 16-19 – Macau Grand Prix* **Four prestigious races on one of the world's most testing circuits. The F3 GP is the main draw, but the WTCC season will also conclude. There are bikes and GTs, too..**

FORMULA 1 *Nov 24-26 – Abu Dhabi Grand Prix* **The title might be decided before the year's end, following a run of Ferrari calamities, but a race beneath the desert twilight guarantees a photogenic send-off to 2017..**

3-5	WEC 6 Hours of Shanghai
5	BTRDA RALLYCROSS Croft
10-12	F1 Brazilian Grand Prix, Interlagos
10-12	MOTOGP Valencian Grand Prix
10-12	CLASSIC MOTOR SHOW Birmingham NEC
10-13	WORLD RALLYCROSS South Africa
16-19	WRC Rally Australia
17-18	FORMULA V8 3.5 Bahrain
18-25	HISTORIC RALLY CARNIVAL Barbados
19	NASCAR FINALE Homestead
30-DEC 1	WTCC FINALE Losail, Qatar
30-DEC 1	RACETECH SYMPOSIUM London IME



F&R RASTRELLI

SHORT BREAK

RALLY OF THE TESTS

A genuine blast from the past

The highways and byways of North Yorkshire will be buzzing to the sound of more than 100 classic cars this month, as one of Britain's most loved rallies gets underway.

The reborn RAC Rally of the Tests first ran last year and aims to recreate the period atmosphere of the original event, which began back in 1932. Its existence is thanks to a three-way association between HERO (the Historic Endurance Rally Organisation), RAC Motoring Services and the Royal Automobile Club.

The rally's history is almost as twisty as its route. The first RAC Rally featured more than 340 competitors, who drove 1000 miles across country before converging on Torquay. After the war, its focus on navigational challenges made it hugely popular with the new car-owning classes and it was renamed the RAC Rally of the Tests. In 1960, however, the organisers began using closed roads in forests, which allowed competitors to drive flat out and the name was changed to the RAC Rally of the Forests. That event evolved into the current Wales Rally GB.

Today's Rally of Tests aims to return the rally to its initial spirit. "We wanted to revive this great event, which is an important part of British motor sport history," says Tomas de Vargas Machuca, chairman and managing director of HERO Events. "We like to see it as an aristocratic event that should be viewed in the same light as the Monte or the Mille Miglia. The UK doesn't have a royal rally like that, but it should have and this event could be it."

According to Tomas, the charm of the event lies in the fact that it remains true to the original spirit. That means it isn't a doddle. "It's competitive, with some well-known navigators taking part, and it is a challenge," he says.

The event is open to cars from the 1950s, '60s and '70s. Although entries for this year's event are closed, the organisers are keen to attract crowds to the start and finish. If you can't make the start in Chester or the finish in Harrogate, the company will be livestreaming footage from its stand at the NEC Classic Car Show.

For more information visit: www.heroevents.eu/
Dates: November 9-12

HOW TO GET THERE

Although the actual route details remain a closely guarded secret (this is a test of navigation after all), spectators are encouraged to congregate at the start in Chester to watch more than 100 classic cars being flagged away.

WHERE TO STAY

There are dozens of hotels in Chester but if possible try to stay in the old town, inside the Roman walls (ideally near to the famous Eastgate Clock, said to be England's most photographed clock after the Elizabeth Tower, otherwise known as Big Ben).

DON'T FORGET

Chester has a long association with rallying, with the British round of the World Rally Championship sometimes hosting its ceremonial finish here. Make sure you visit Chester Racecourse, where Colin McRae became Britain's first world rally champion in 1995.

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Motor Sport *Hall of Fame* voting opens

The *Motor Sport* Hall of Fame returns for its glittering annual showpiece on June 4 at Woodcote Park, which means it's now over to you. This is your opportunity to ensure your motor sport hero joins the already illustrious stable of racing greats. After more than 21,000 votes, 2017's inductees were Nigel Mansell, Barry Sheene, Roger Penske and Brian Redman, while Murray Walker and David Richards inaugurated the Inspiration and Industry Champion awards. You can watch highlights of the 2017 event, including stirring speeches by each of the winners, by visiting www.motorsportmagazine.com/halloffame

Once again, you'll vote on the Formula 1, US racing, motorcycling, and sports cars categories, with the *Motor Sport* Industry Champion and the Inspiration Award winners chosen by our editorial team.

The four shortlists of 12 have been debated and – eventually – decided. New names in the running include Phil Hill, WO Bentley and John Cooper. The usual rules remain – namely no current drivers and riders allowed – which means Jenson Button has joined the F1 contenders, too.

To see the full list of names, visit ***www.motorsportmagazine.com/hof2018***

First partners join HoF 2018

The* Motor Sport *Hall of Fame is made all the more distinguished by the contributions of our partners and we are delighted to confirm the return of several companies that supported the event last year.

Christopher Ward

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Mark Hughes

The whole of Formula 1 benefits from Daniel Ricciardo's friendly persona, but critics and rivals should beware of underestimating the Australian

The toothy smiles and the jokes, the overwhelming sense of fun, the silly stunts, are rarely more than a look away when Daniel Ricciardo is around. An eternal 13-year-old in a grown man's body. It's refreshing in an F1 scene that has rarely projected the idea that the participants are actually having fun. But for Ricciardo it's not a show, it's his natural way; the only him he is capable of being. But, it's also his shield from the world. When his default face is silly wide grin it's impossible to know what's really going on inside, which is a valuable piece of armoury in a sport that is incredibly mentally demanding. Pressure is a constant in F1 and you're either on your way up and dishing it out or you've peaked – temporarily or otherwise – and are trying to withstand it. The talent and ambition help create the opportunities and, if you're of the right stuff and get the good breaks, you might end up in a title-contending car. The trick is not to let the momentum stall as you're on your way to that position – which isn't always in your hands.

Everything in Ricciardo's F1 career to date has been on this upward trajectory – HRT to Toro Rosso to Red Bull, to seeing off Sebastian Vettel and winning races with a wonderful blend of racecraft, smarts, audacity and speed – though it's happened a little slower than he'd have liked. It was unfortunate that his Red Bull chance coincided with the advent of turbo hybrids and Red Bull's consequent loss of title-winning momentum. But outperforming an incumbent quadruple champion surely answered any questions about his ultimate level.

This was the first time any significant check had been applied to Vettel's ever-upward career trajectory – and that pressure definitely told on Seb. Competitive with an intensity unusual even by F1 standards, Vettel was driving out of his skin to overturn things in 2014 – and still there would be the new guy from the other side of the garage going faster and taking less from his tyres. This couldn't be happening to him. But it was. What was surely making it worse was the new guy was making it all look so easy, big stupid grins, jokes with everyone – even Seb couldn't help liking him, damn him!

After hastening Vettel's departure to fresh pastures, Ricciardo dominated his young-gun replacement Daniil Kvyat to such an extent and so relentlessly that the gifted, brave Russian suffered something close to a mental breakdown after being stood down from the main team after just a season and a bit. Pressure. In came 18-year-old Max Verstappen alongside Ricciardo instead, the Dutch whirlwind with a huge reputation, a Gilles Villeneuve-like ability instantly to find the limits and an attacking style that blended supreme racecraft with ambush-style overtaking that matched even Ricciardo's. How would this play out? Daniel raised an inner eyebrow at the hype and fuss surrounding the youngster's arrival in the main team in time for last year's Spanish Grand Prix. Suddenly Ricciardo got a glimpse of how it might have felt for Vettel when he'd arrived there. But he was looking forward to it – to challenging the implicit assumption that the new kid would do to him what he'd done to Vettel. This was positive pressure – and he played it beautifully. Keeping his powder dry in the first two sessions made it appear as if Verstappen had instantly outpaced him – before then producing a single Q3 lap that left the youngster gasping more than 0.3sec behind. The screaming celebration in the cockpit on Ricciardo's in-lap told everything of the competitive reality behind the jokey exterior.

Verstappen went on to win the race, of course. But not really on merit. Caught between a strategic rock and hard place, Red Bull threw the dice – and it fell Max's way rather than Ricciardo's. He was unimpressed, but perhaps even more motivated. Which was the perfect state of mind coming into the Monaco weekend when he was in scintillating form, taking his first pole with a dazzling display of virtuosity between the walls. It made Verstappen look just like a talented but inexperienced kid. So when Ricciardo lost the race to his team not having his tyres ready at his pit stop, we finally saw the grin stop. He looked ready to punch someone on the rostrum, but kept it all together.

For 2019 he's a free agent for the first time in his F1 career and already there is talk of a bidding war building between Mercedes and Ferrari for his services. So it's a bad time to be getting outshaded by Verstappen, as he has been for the last few races. Which makes it all the more puzzling that the jokey demeanour hasn't clouded over in the slightest – in the Malaysia press conference there he was throwing water over the guy who had just soundly beaten him, then further joking in Japan after suffering another defeat to him. But actually, it's deflection of pressure.

If that grin suddenly soured up or the manner became in the least tetchy, there'd be an oncoming assault of questions about his form, and the more he either answered or didn't answer, the more it would be taken that the pressure had got to him.

He's an extremely clever operator – and there are many tricks in his book, not all of them jokes. While many talked of how Verstappen had definitively established the upper hand now, they should recall that it's very dangerous to write off 'the honey badger'.

> ***There he was throwing water over the guy who had just beaten him. Actually, it's deflection of pressure***

Since he began covering Grand Prix racing in 2000, Mark Hughes has forged a reputation as the finest Formula 1 analyst of his generation

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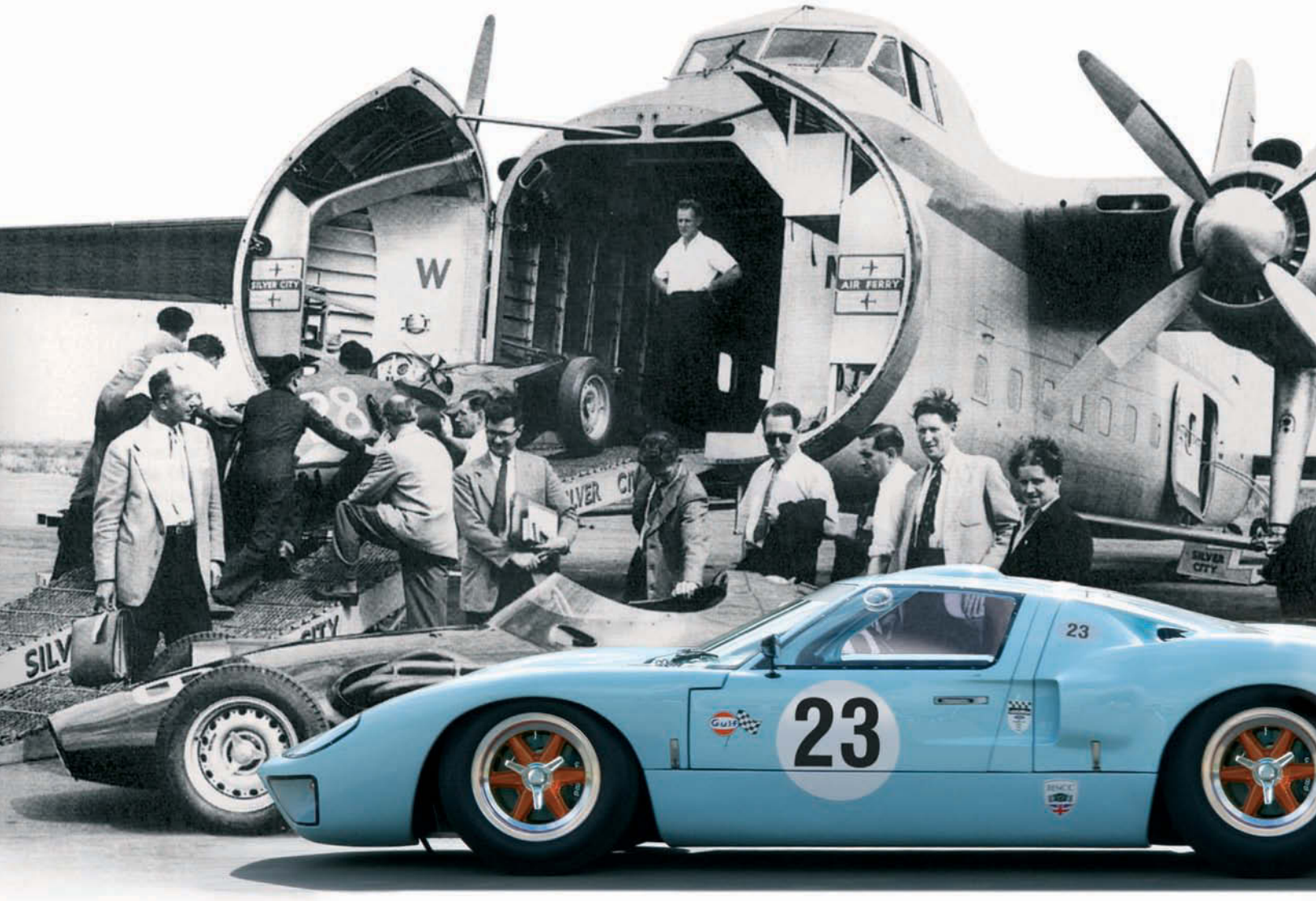
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Dickie Meaden

Motor sport's knack for innovation is being throttled down to 'one solution fits all', and it's not good for the sport's DNA

"The man with a new idea is a crank until the idea succeeds," said the great American writer Mark Twain. He is also credited with saying "There is no such thing as a new idea," which suggests even the best are prone to self-confutation.

Nevertheless in his neatly observed contradictions Twain could have been describing motor racing, for each quote neatly bookends the narrative arc of our sport, from the pioneering days of uninhibited creativity, to recent times when money, marketing and increasingly restrictive regulations ensure flights of fantasy remain firmly grounded.

In days past, instead of sweating over marginal gains the brightest engineers and designers explored revolutionary ideas to push boundaries. We're used to aerodynamicists creating grip, traction and balance through the power of over-wing and underfloor airflow, but the real mavericks - the Jim Halls, Colin Chapmans and Gordon Murrays of this world - looked at other ways of sticking their cars to the track.

Hall's Chaparral 2J sucker car and Murray's Brabham BT46 fan car were alternative attempts at augmenting mechanical grip. The thought process was similar, though Murray's was the more refined. It was withdrawn, of course, but not before Lauda's first-time-out Swedish win.

Murray also explored a low-drag concept with the so-called 'lay-flat' Brabham BT55, which tilted the engine onto its side and required the driver to assume a position similar to reading a book in bed. The car was clocked at 216mph at Monza, but wasn't a great success due to complications arising from the radical engine installation. Still, to see one of these cars today is to witness original thinking in the raw.

Some years earlier Derek Gardner's six-wheel P34 Tyrrell looked at minimising frontal area, while subsequent six-wheelers from Williams, March and even Ferrari explored other ways to reduce drag and improve traction. Only the Tyrrell would race (and win) before the FIA intervened and ensured cars with more than four wheels were prohibited.

Who or what is to blame? Fundamentally it's the tightness of the regulations, and a desire for parity and stability, that stymies the fantasy that once ignited our imaginations. Of course there's always room for the intellect of a Newey or a Brawn to steal an advantage, but these days a Eureka moment is restricted to finding a loophole. Think double diffuser in Brawn GP's title-winning season, not inventing ground-effect.

With such vast amounts of knowledge already banked and aero departments able to crunch through endless wind tunnel runs and CFD simulations, the teams are all aiming for the same numbers and arriving via much the same routes. Their breakthroughs are tortuous.

For years now if you sprayed the grid of F1 cars the same colour you'd be hard pushed to tell them apart. And this in a championship where individual teams focus many hundreds of brilliant minds and pour many hundreds of millions of pounds into creating unique, clean-sheet designs. Lower down, in FIA F2 and GP3, only one chassis constructor (Dallara) and one engine supplier is allowed. Next season all Indycars will run with identical bodywork clothing identical Dallara chassis. Diversity, it seems, is dead.

The modern era hasn't been bereft of curiosities, thanks largely to Ben Bowlby, who in the last 10 years has challenged convention with cars such as the remarkable DeltaWing, which explored a low-power, low-drag concept as a possible IndyCar design. When it was rejected, Bowlby's idea found new purpose as a Garage 56 entry at Le Mans in 2012.

It retired after an accident, but the thought-provoking concept showed genuine promise, evolving into the Nissan ZEOD RC (another Garage 56 entry in 2014) before tilting at the top-tier LMP1 class as 2015's Nismo GT-R LM. This brute of a front-engined, front-wheel-drive car added a potent KERS system to drive the rears, and was slippery as an eel down the straights. A proper Le Mans design, in other words.

It proved a disaster, largely due to the sub-standard hybrid system that ultimately had to be removed. Grappling with an unbalanced, traction-limited front-wheel-drive prototype, Nissan's hapless drivers never stood a chance. We'll never know if the GT-R LM could have worked given time and budget, but it marked a sad end to a rare spell of bold and provocative racing car designs.

What was profoundly disappointing about Nissan's and Bowlby's misadventure was witnessing a sport that likes to crow about technology and innovation preferring to scoff rather than acknowledge an effort that dared to push the limits and embrace the unknown. Motor racing has become a business that deals only in certainties.

So what are we left with? Cars that look the same, sound the same and all too often are the same. It's a sad state of affairs. Surely by starving engineers and designers of the creative oxygen they need for fresh ideas to breathe and flourish, the rule makers and overly controlling manufacturers do our sport a great disservice.

Cars that dominated their respective formulae and eras - the McLaren MP4/4, and Audi's Le Mans cars, for example - are rightly revered, but its the oddballs, revolutionaries and gallant losers that add colour to our sport's fabric and capture imaginations at today's historic festivals and race meetings.

Symmetry dictates I should end with another Mark Twain quote. I fancy none feels more fitting than this: "Explore. Dream. Discover." If only those who pull motor sport's strings could summon the inner steel to do just that.

> ***'Explore. Dream. Discover.' If only those who pull motor sport's strings could summon the steel to do that***

Dickie Meaden has been writing about cars for 25 years – and racing them for almost as long. He is a regular winner at historic meetings

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Mat Oxley

MotoGP riders sometimes seem superhuman – rising from their hospital beds to make a Lazarus-like comeback – but are they really?

Valentino Rossi's recent comeback from a broken leg is already the stuff of legend. Or is it? Rossi fractured his right tibia and fibula when he slid off a dirt-bike, just days after reigniting his 2017 championship challenge with a third place at Silverstone, when he'd finished 0.7sec behind winner Andrea Dovizioso.

His tibia was fixed with the usual surgical nail, inserted by drilling through the top of the tibia and hammering the nail through the bone. If the operation is successful, the leg should immediately be as strong as it was before the break. The pain, however, is another matter.

Motorcycle racers are used to dealing with pain. Rossi raced at Aragon 23 days after sustaining his injury, which isn't anything unusual. Most famously, Jorge Lorenzo raced in the Dutch round of the 2013 MotoGP championship less than 48 hours after he had had a broken collarbone pinned and plated.

"As a motorbike racer you're never fit, you've always got some sort of injury," says Cal Crutchlow, who won his first MotoGP race last year. "My worst was at the Sachsenring in 2013. Honestly, if you'd seen me; I shouldn't have raced. When I crashed on Friday there was so much blood that they loaded me with morphine. I was completely out of it. When I got up on Saturday morning I ended up flat on my back in the motorhome, pissing all over myself, with Lucy [now Mrs Crutchlow] screaming, because she thought I was dying. Then I went out, qualified second and the next day nearly won the race [he finished 1.5sec behind winner Marc Márquez]."

If you think this sounds like madness, perhaps you are right. The big question, of course, is how are riders allowed to race when their fitness is questionable?

There are four senior medics at every MotoGP event: the chief medical officer (appointed by the national federation), the medical director (appointed by rights-holder Dorna), the FIM medical officer (appointed by the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme) and Dr Michele Zasa (chief doctor at the Clinica Mobile). The medic who has the final say on a rider's fitness to race -which is judged via a series of strength tests - is the chief medical officer, who is most distantly connected to the championship.

But most riders are much more familiar with Dr Zasa, who runs the travelling hospital that has attended Grand Prix events since the 1970s. The Clinica Mobile was created by Dr Claudio Costa, son of Checco Costa, the man who helped create the Imola racetrack. The first rider Dr Costa helped was Geoff Duke, after a crash at Imola.

Zasa took over the Clinica Mobile a few years ago. He had previously worked with the East Anglian air-ambulance service, bringing pre-hospital emergency treatment to traffic accident victims. He knows more than anyone about how MotoGP riders cope with their injuries.

"I have the best job in the world, but also it can be a terrible job," he says. "When I worked with the air ambulance I would get to an accident where people had very bad injuries and might die, but I didn't know them, so I used my training and did my job. Here in MotoGP it's totally different. I was there with Marco Simoncelli after his fatal accident; also with Luis Salom in the resuscitation room after his fatal accident. It was really, really bad. I started working in the Clinica in 2011, so I'd only known Marco for a few months, but I knew Luis very well.

"In MotoGP I have two lives: one is the rush of adrenaline I get when I reach the side of a rider who's had a bad crash; the other is my job inside the Clinica, which is more like being a normal doctor: helping riders with broken bones, dislocations, flu and gastroenteritis.

"I know the riders are superhumans but, even if they have a higher pain threshold, for sure they feel pain and they don't want to feel it. Adrenaline helps a lot. They may have pain but when they get on the bike but the rush of adrenaline overcomes the pain, at least until they stop riding."

Riders do use painkillers, according to the WADA code, which bans cortisone, opioids and so on. Mesotherapy - a series of shallow injections around the injury - is effective because the painkiller isn't introduced to the bloodstream. Otherwise it's Ketoprofen, ibuprofen, paracetamol, plus electrotherapy and physiotherapy. In other words, a wide-ranging approach to managing pain and inflammation.

But ultimately, it's the rider that makes the biggest difference. "The best riders are the most motivated to do what they do, so even though they feel the pain, they always want to get back on the bike," adds Zasa. "When they get hurt they don't take a month off, instead they wait five minutes and then they ask to get back on the bike. Their talent makes them champions, but their motivation to let pain and other problems pass them by is vital.

"MotoGP is dangerous, so it's not enough to be fast and talented. You also need to be smart to manage every race without taking too many risks.

"I don't think many of them think about getting badly injured, otherwise they'd stop. They are fatalistic: if it's going happen, it's going to happen. You can have a bad accident on the way to work. At least they are doing what they love."

> ***"It's not enough to be fast and talented. You need to manage every race without taking too many risks"***

Mat Oxley has covered premier-class motorcycle racing for many years – and also has the distinction of being an Isle of Man TT winner

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Richard Williams

A chance encounter with a French automotive museum in which British flops are displayed alongside curios and aristocrats

I really wasn't on the lookout for cars. But while meandering around the Yonne, looking at châteaux and abbeys and other historic sights, it was impossible to ignore a large red sign beside the road from Vézelay to Avallon, directing the attention to a *Musée des Automobiles* just a handful of kilometres away. And experience says that a car museum in a remote bit of France sometimes has treasures to reveal.

This had first happened to me 30 years earlier, when a trip to the Benedictine abbey at Le Bec Hellouin in Normandy revealed, next to the monks' peaceful garden, a building containing a treasure trove: a 1947 Simca-Gordini *monoplace*, a 1932 Delage D8S with bodywork by Letourneur et Marchand, a 1937 Peugeot Darl'Mat, a late '60s Alpine-Renault A210, a Ferrari 250 Tour de France, several handsome roadgoing Bugattis and much more, all of them beautifully preserved and presented. Opened in 1968, and including cars from the collection inherited by Amédée Gordini's son, it shut its doors in 1991.

At Olivier Delafon's museum in Sauvigny-les-Bois, however, the treasures are not Delages, Bugattis or Gordinis. Delafon is a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. He likes to buy them cheap, and he seems to be disappointed if they don't come with a patina of dulled paint, pitted chrome and caked dust.

When I found my way into his premises the day's unconsidered trifle was sitting on his trailer: a Vanden Plas 1100 in that shade of brown that, carefully chosen to convey a sense of suave luxury back in the early 1970s, the era of the prawn cocktail and the black forest gâteau, could politely be described as chocolate.

My reaction was lamentably instinctive. "Horrible little car," I said, thinking back to the days when British Leyland – or whatever it called itself at the time – was collapsing under the weight of disasters like the Austin Allegro and the Morris Marina. The VDP 1100 seemed like a prime example of putting lipstick on a pig.

Olivier was mildly affronted. "It drives beautifully," he said, even though he had brought it home on his trailer. And perhaps, on reflection, I was being a bit unfair. With its Pininfarina-designed bodywork, Hydrolastic suspension and an east-west engine, this variation on Alex Issigonis's basic design would have had Connolly leather seats, a walnut veneer dashboard, decent carpets, picnic tables in the seat-backs and twin spotlights either side of an elegant radiator grille added at the Vanden Plas works in North London.

It even looked a little bit like the smaller sibling of the car sitting in the courtyard of the converted stable block of Delafon's Château de Montjalin: an S-type Bentley saloon, bought at auction in the UK for £7000. This was such a steal because it couldn't be started, having no ignition key, which deterred most of the dealers sniffing around it.

But Delafon knew a man who knew a man at Crewe, where Bentley keeps duplicates of the key to every car they have ever made, or so he told me. Now, although bearing the scuffs and bruises of an unrestored 1950s vehicle, it starts on the button and is in everyday use.

Its owner is the son of a man who sold his château to Mick Jagger in 1981, because it was too small. (Jagger still spends his summers there, and a corner of the museum devoted to Rolling Stones memorabilia reflects that somewhat tenuous connection.) A semi-retired hedge fund manager and former Lehman Brothers vice-president, Delafon bought his own 18th century home for £120,000 30 years ago, without roof or windows, and spent £4m on making it habitable.

Little signs by the path from the car park to the museum inform visitors not just that no hunting is allowed within the grounds, but that concern for the welfare of the estate's wildlife extends to small insects.

It also covers motor vehicles: the collection includes derelict or unrestored examples of the Simca 6 (a kind of French-accented Fiat Topolino from 1948), Panhard Dyna, Autobianchi, Renault Dauphine (in *policier* livery), and the inevitable Citroën 2CV (three versions, including an early one with canvas-and-tube seats).

Another recent addition, an exquisite little Cazenave 50cc moped, built like a miniature 1950s GP machine, cost Delafon 30 euros at a bric-à-brac sale.

The best story is attached to the most dilapidated exhibit of all: a Buick Electra 225 dating from 1961. Its first owner, a French film producer, was driving it south to the Cannes film festival when the car broke down near Avallon. Leaving it with a local garage, he continued his journey by hire car. Some time later the garage owner, unable to repair it, tried without success to persuade the car's owner to pay a storage bill. Then the garage man fell out with his wife and found himself living in a caravan close to the Château de Montjalin. He had taken the immobile Buick with him, and over the decades it sank into the earth and disappeared beneath a covering of fallen leaves – until being rescued by the museum's mechanics, who took three weeks to dig it out.

It is so far gone that you can't even tell what colour it once was, but you get the feeling that nothing could persuade Olivier Delafon to undertake a restoration. In the world of the barn find, he is the *Roi Soleil*.

> *Its owner is the son of a man who sold his château to Mick Jagger, because it was too small*

Richard Williams is a former editor of* Melody Maker, *was* The Guardian*'s chief sports writer and is the author of several books on Formula 1

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Doug Nye

It's two decades since Brawn, Byrne and Todt fired up a Ferrari steamroller – and 103 years since 'Australia's Brooklands' opened for business

As Ferrari's Formula 1 world championship challenge was imploding during September and October just past, the surprising thought occurred that it has been 20 years since 'the John Barnard era' at Maranello finally ended, and the Fiat-Ferrari corporate decision had been taken to engage the British/South African duo of Ross Brawn and Rory Byrne from the Benetton team to replace the highly individualistic, often abrasive - and in results terms underperforming - Englishman.

Brawn and Byrne certainly had a totally different style, which would flourish under the political and financial umbrella raised above them by Ferrari racing director Jean Todt. Their entire effort became focused upon providing Michael Schumacher with the tools - and the organisation - necessary to offer a genuine world title challenge worthy of the great marque's 50th anniversary year. Number two driver Eddie Irvine was willing to take the money, never mind the results, as second fiddle to leader of the orchestra Schumacher.

Although the then-new 1997 Ferrari F310B car was greeted as the first '*dopo*-Barnard' creation, it remained essentially a Barnard concept, pretty much completed before his departure, as Ross mentioned later that year when describing his partnership with Rory Byrne: "Rory is chief designer, but I work quite closely with him and have a reasonable influence on what sort of car we want to end up with. I understand the process of optimisation, how what decisions we make on weight distribution and the general configuration of the car affect its performance, so I know how we arrive at those decisions.

"On the other hand, with John's car, it is fairly different from what I'm used to; different weight distribution, different geometry and I don't know how John has arrived at those things. So we had a lot of unknowns and uncertainties, a lot of question marks hanging over certain aspects of the car. Nonetheless, we set about using our own ideas and implementing as many as we could. In some ways they have been better, in some ways not so good. But we've learned a lot..."

In the car developed that season Schumacher won in Monaco, Canada, France, Belgium and Japan, and took second places in Australia, San Marino and Germany. But despite even his firm right-lock assault upon Jacques Villeneuve's overtaking Williams in the deciding European Grand Prix at Jerez, he could not - quite - prevent championship defeat by the French-Canadian...

The Ferrari F310B's engine installation simply gave the car too high a centre of gravity, which was something the team had to live with all season. It was telling when Ross Brawn at season's end remarked that "Eddie Irvine's performances, I think, are a more accurate representation of the car's true potential. Michael just has that ability to take it the final mile..."

Paolo Martinelli's Ferrari engine department had produced a proven serial 046 version of the 75-degree V10-cylinder 40-valve engine for the car, and a revised EV2 variant was progressed as rapidly as possible, but it could not be raced until the French GP that June. And when fuel consumption indicated that the 1997 Ferrari had marginal capacity, the new design team developed a 10kg lighter variant with greater tankage. Did the team also run an electronic torque control system through that season, as their leading rivals loudly suspected? At the time Ross rejected the very idea, claiming that Ferrari would have preferred that such systems were not permitted, since their introduction "indirectly negated the benefit of our engines' smooth power delivery..."

But then he always was a master of saying just enough to answer a journalist's question very politely, and often engagingly, without offering wider unrequested enlightenment. Over 20 years little changes. And the Todt/Brawn/Byrne regime at Ferrari did - with Michael Schumacher's mastery - win six consecutive Formula 1 championships for constructors (1999-2004) and five for drivers (2000-2004). It's worth recalling the historic partnership's 20th anniversary.

I AM UP TO SPEED CREATING AND PRODUCING VERY LARGE, VERY imposing books on various aspects of motor racing history, but right now I am hobbling around cursing with the top of my right foot hurting like hell. I was pulling a wonderful Australian-published book from its shelf when I misjudged its (considerable) weight, lost my grip on its slippery dust jacket and dropped it - corner first - on my bare foot...

Now while I might be tempted, therefore, to ignore this foot crusher, I'd like instead to recommend it to our committed enthusiast readership. It's entitled *Red Dust Racers* and is the centenary history of one of the most obscure of all motor racing venues - Lake Perkolilli in Western Australia. Written by WA historian Graeme Cocks it's a lavish production and an early quote from *The Mail* newspaper, published in Adelaide, South Australia on July 4, 1914, describes the central subject matter.

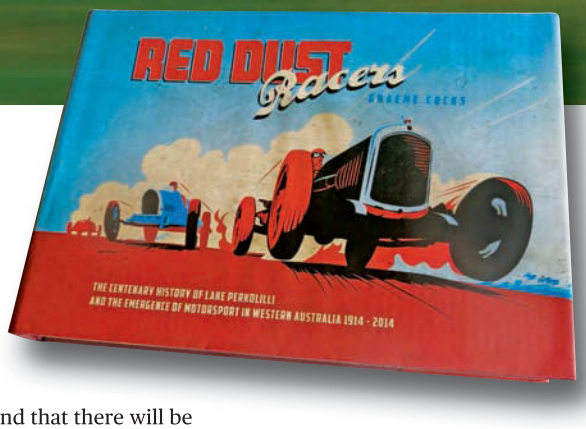
"Here we have all been calling out for a Brooklands track in Australia when there is already one a few miles out from Kalgoorlie (WA) but about which little has been heard. To be correct it is at Lake Perkolilli, which is about seven miles out from Kanowna, and those who have been out to it state that it is quite a picturesque sight, to see the lake with its vast flat and hard surface which is over a mile and a half in diameter, surrounded by a slight rise. It is fringed with scrub and small trees... It is a clay pan as flat as a billiard table, and one and a

> ***"We have been calling out for a Brooklands track in Australia when there is already one about which little has been heard***



Transition: 1997 Ferrari F310 was a Barnard concept, but the first Byrne/Brawn prancing horse

LAT



quarter miles long and one mile wide. A circular track three miles in circumference is provided, also a one and three-quarter-mile circular track, a one-mile straight track and a one and a half-mile straight track. When heavy rains of more than two inches fall a little water may be left on the track, but this quickly dries up. It is predicted that many records will be broken on this track in the summer time, and that there will be motorists from all the States visiting it...".

In great detail, Cocks relates how motoring and motor sport developed in Western Australia, driven (literally) by the local goldfields economy. In 1914 cattle station owner Joseph Ruttle suggested to the newly formed Goldfields Motor Club that Lake Perkolilli would be a great venue for a gymkhana. Members immediately began enthusing about the dry lake's potential to become Australia's 'Brooklands of the West'. An opening meeting "Programme of Thrilling Speed Events and Many Novelties" was promised, and the honour of being the venue's first race winner went to one Ernest Shaw driving a Studebaker in a 10.5-mile event.

Graeme goes on to relate how Lake Perkolilli as a motor race venue was used in the early years of World War 1, and then revived in the early 1920s. His book features dozens of fascinating photographs of colonial motorcycle and motor racing on the red clay surface, and his story widens to embrace all kinds of other pioneering Australian motoring competition which paints in a fascinatingly fresh picture of the gradual growth of the sport down under. We learn how Stanley Waldo Catlett, 'The Bunbury Boy' became a Lake Perkolilli motorcycle racing star through the mid-1920s - travelling to England as a speedway rider before in 1933 crashing fatally in an aero club aircraft, aged only 26.

The Perkolilli Sports Club took over Lake race promotions, and into the 1930s one of the stars there was Eric Armstrong, founder of the WA Sporting Car Club, whose Auburn Speedster had beaten the previously unbeatable Chrysler Silverwings of 'Perko' stars Arthur Colliver and Billy Attwood. Air racing also enters the story but in 1932 a short-lived one-mile Brooklands track had been opened at Subiaco in Perth, drawing much attention away from the remote dry lake. Once that interloper venue had failed, racing returned to Perkolilli in the mid-1930s and in September 1938 the last major event was run there before World War 2. A decade earlier the Speed Carnival would have attracted 6000 spectators, but this last event attracted nearer 600.

Interest in 'Perko' was revived postwar in 1947-48, but several wet seasons had softened the surface and very few meetings were held beyond very minor speed trials. The Lake seems to have seen more light aircraft activity than racing motorcycles and cars, before its unregulated skies helped it become a popular sky-diving centre.

The motor sport world's great breadth never ceases to amaze me, and I love books such as *Red Dust Racers*, which so unexpectedly draw back the curtains on little known - and often totally unsuspected - corners of vintage racing endeavour. I recommend Graeme Cocks's book highly to connoisseurs of the motor sporting obscure. It is a 'Motoring Past' publication, Inglewood, WA 6052 and its ISBN serial number - for the would-be buyer - is 978-0-9872808-1-7.

But just don't drop this weighty tome on your darned foot. My eyes are still watering...

Doug Nye is the UK's leading motor racing historian and has been writing authoritatively about the sport since the 1960s

Gordon Cruickshank

Viva Salmone! That mock-Italian moniker followed Mike Salmon through a racing life full of great cars – and great stories

Not every story you work on comes to fruition, and it's easy to find, among one's notebooks and recordings, material still waiting for its moment.

Some years back Mike Salmon was considering doing a book of his six decades of motor racing and there was a vague idea that I might be the one at the keyboard. I went along to see him at the Surrey home of his good friend and mine Nik Cookson (who supplies the Tetraboost fuel additive that lets those of us too idle to convert our classics to lead-free fuel continue to drive them). Although the book didn't happen before Mike passed away in January 2016, I recently turned up the recording of our conversation and it took me back to a day with this hearty Channel Islands gentleman racer who tried retiring but couldn't stay away from the track.

It didn't hurt that he was born into comfortable circumstances - his 21st birthday present in 1954 was an XK120 Jaguar and he took it straight to the track. He went on racing, barring that short retirement, until his 70s and even then was only flagged off because of what he saw as a footling medical quibble. His prolific racing took him around the international stage, sharing drives with Brian Redman, Roy Salvadori, Innes Ireland and Richard Atwood. He achieved 13 Le Mans starts, finishing an impressive fifth in 1963 with Jack Sears in a Ferrari 330LMB, as well as victories in the Martini Trophy and *Autosport* 3 Hours. A popular figure known for his smooth wheelwork, he was also an ebullient raconteur with a fund of stories, told in his slight drawl - and a good line in mimicry. Even if I didn't know the people I could hear the character.

"It just wasn't so costly then as a privateer," he enthused as we settled down to talk, me with my recorder, he with a small glass of something. "Free tyres, free petrol, starting money, the capital outlay wasn't huge - I never paid more than £3500 for a car." (And that was for a GTO Ferrari.) Working at Jaguar he'd been able to buy a C-type through Lofty England and then an ex-Ecurie Ecosse long-nose D ("smashing car, loved it to bits"), replaced by a DB4 Zagato. Quality of machinery was never an issue, and running a garage concern handling exotic cars was an advantage too.

In his Zagato or Ferraris and Jaguars for John Coombs and Maranello Concessionaires Salmon already had a fun portfolio, but in 1964 came a dream offer. "John Dawnay [later Viscount Downe], a friend who had bought Project 212 from Aston, said 'how would you like to race for me? You choose the car, I pay the bills. I don't want to race but I want to be involved.' "

It was a blissful partnership that would see Salmon right through to the 1980s, from the Aston Martin project cars via GTO Ferrari to the Nimrod project and back into historics, often with the same DP214 he'd raced in period.

All this is in the history books, but I wanted to hear about some of the people he encountered - and becoming sales director at Maranello Concessionaire Mike knew everybody in the patrician arena of British privateer racing. Before that, though, there was Jaguar and Mike's boss, competition manager Lofty England.

"One day Lofty called me in and said 'Salmone - I was always Salmone - what did we drive to work today?'

'I borrowed a friend's Volkswagen because my C-type is in the competition shop being prepared for a race.'

'And parked it in the works car park. Salmone, we don't drive German crap when we work for Jaguar cars. Don't do it again.'

He did, though. "Another time a friend of my uncle invited me to try his new 300SL Gullwing against my XK120, and the Mercedes just blew past it. Afterwards my uncle had a drinks party where we chatted about cars. On Monday morning Lofty called me in.

'Salmone, what did we do this weekend?' One of my uncle's guests had been Ian Appleyard, so of course Lofty knew all about it. 'We at Jaguar don't drive German motor cars. And if we do, we don't tell people what super cars they are. Get out.'

The antipathy didn't extend to Italy, though. "The reason I sold the D was because much later at Silverstone Lofty said 'Salmone, you've equalled Mike Hawthorn's lap record. It's time to move on.' I said, 'but you don't make the right car now'.

'No. Enough of sports cars. Buy a Ferrari GT.'

"I did buy a GT but it was an Aston Martin Zagato. After a disappointing test at Snetterton, I rang John Wyer [Aston's competition manager] who made a classic remark: 'I think this is more apparent than actual...' "

Still dubious, Mike and his wife Jean (Bloxham, an Aston racer herself) drove the Zagato to Spa for the 500Km where in a wet race ("I did seem to go well in the wet...") Mike finished fifth, triggering a call from Wyer. "I believe you have an entry for Le Mans? Bring the car to us, please."

"The car came back," Mike continued, "with a complete new engine, elektron gearbox, DBR1 brakes - the works. I thought, what in the world is all this going to cost? Eventually the bill came - £285, so I called Wyer and said there must be some mistake. 'We don't make mistakes at Aston.' "

There was further bargain to be had, too: once Aston withdrew from racing in 1964 Wyer offered the pair of DP214s and all remaining racing spares to Salmon and his business partner Brian Hetreed. "He wanted £15,000 but I said we could only scrape up £7000. 'Deal done', he said. Amazing."

After racing it at Daytona the 214 had to be collected from a port on the Clyde. Cue a tale of varied disasters as Salmon and mechanic ground north in their 38mph Dennis lorry, which ran out of water at 2am. "I'd noticed a public lavatory so I

> ***We at Jaguar don't drive German motor cars. And if we do, we don't tell people what super cars they are***

Mike Salmon – winner of 1961 *Autosport* 3 Hours in his D-type. Right, 1963 saw his best Le Mans finish – fifth, in Ferrari 330LMB



LAT

went in with big adjustable spanner and undid a brass tap. The only container we could find was a wellington boot, so I made several trips with that, and then a policeman arrived. "We've been watching you, sir. What are you doing with a spanner and a rubber boot? I said, I'm not as kinky as all that, officer."

The same lorry – so unreliable that at times it had to be towed by their Jaguar MkVII road car while Mike drove the 214 – took them to the 1964 Nürburgring 1000Km where Salmon's team-mate Hetreed was tragically killed in practice. "Obviously I went to withdraw the other car," recalled Mike, "and the man in charge – white and brown shoes, I recall – said 'This is understandable. The body will be flown back to England, everything will be paid for, and we hope you come back next year.' They were so used to it..."

Successful privateer entrant John Coombs was another who gave Salmon prize drives. "That fabulous 3.8 saloon... Very clever, John. He got those cars so quick." Another moment of mimicry: " 'Don't grub about for more power, just get the bloody thing to handle!', he would say. And my goodness they did. Although once I was invited to test his car at Goodwood and it was horrible. Couldn't even take Fordwater flat. I came in and said 'That's impossible to drive!'.

"'I wanted you to try the car like that,' John told me. "That is how Graham Hill likes it. I think it's completely impossible. Now we'll change it and I think you'll like it.' After that the car was wonderful."

As both an accomplished racer and an engaging personality Salmon slid smoothly into Col Ronnie Hoare's Maranello concern, selling road cars, driving racing cars, and selling those on afterwards – what a mix.

I never heard Ronnie Hoare talk, but Mike's languid nasal impression of the Maranello chief – 'look here, chaps...' – chimed beautifully with the image of the upright artillery officer. It triggered another chuckling memory in Mike, too: "When Ronnie took over the Ferrari concession after Hawthorn was killed he ran into Tommy Sopwith at the Motor Show who said 'Congratulation, Ronnie. Now you'll be the Prancing Hoare.' "

Did he get on with all the drivers he shared with, I asked?

"I had no trouble with anyone except Dickie Protheroe. He had bought the Maranello 330P but it wasn't ready for Reims so the Colonel said 'we'll lend him our 250LM and you're in charge of it'. We were at the same hotel and he was furious that we had wine at dinner before a race.

"After practice he insisted on driving the LM back to the Ferrari garage in Reims. You know he lost an eye in a stock car race? Well, he was obsessed with proving it made no difference. Very forceful. He turned into the garage in front of a car and it smashed into the LM. End of our race. We were due to go to a wonderful party in a château that night, too."

More than once that afternoon Mike interrupted himself to say "Oh, that's another wonderful story but I won't bore you with that now". As if. His career (barring the burning GT40 that marked him for ever, which he also talked about without flinching) looks like the perfect cocktail of employment and enjoyment. Today some would call it synergy; in Mike Salmon's language it was just bloody good fun.

Long-time staffman Gordon Cruickshank learned his trade under Bill Boddy and competes in historic events in his Jaguar Mk2 and BMW 635

LETTERS

Write to: Motor Sport, 18-20 Rosemont Road, London NW3 6NE
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Outing Formula 1

Editor Nick Trott's *Matters of Moment* piece in the November edition was absolutely spot-on with regard to fans getting more chances to see F1 cars on track, whether at race meetings, separate test sessions, or street demonstrations. Cars on track create publicity, publicity creates marketing opportunities, marketing opportunities create more money and everyone wins. If I can see that surely F1 can see it. The powers that be should make it their primary target to have the cars out at every conceivable opportunity, as this is what engages people with the sport. It could easily be done, but it's normally the unwillingness of various parties involved in the sport that prevents it happening.

By getting properly serious with cost control, by simplifying the cars and engine packages, F1 could save millions of pounds, some of which could be used to run the cars more. Liberty Media has its work cut out to enable this, but boy would it be popular if it happened. F1 teams must cast self-interest out of the window and put the fans first. After all, no fans means no F1.

Michael Skeet, Lordswood, Southampton

The future was orange

I thoroughly enjoyed the wonderful reminiscences about one of history's most significant race cars, the McLaren M6A, a sports racer so good that many believed it would also have won the championship the next year without modification. Nevertheless, the trajectory of Team McLaren's progress from year to year was at a very steep angle and not easily deflected.

The photograph in October's issue captioned "Emerging champ lends his crew a helping hand" - of Bruce McLaren and crew pushing his M6A to the front of the grid, I believe at Bridgehampton - overlooks that the anonymous crew member with one hand on the steering wheel is Tyler Alexander, who was, along with Teddy Mayer and Robin Herd, secondary only to the inspired leadership of Bruce McLaren in the team's early successes.

Tempus fugit - but not as quickly as a Can-Am McLaren with either Bruce or Denny at the wheel.

Carl Slate, Santa Maria, California, USA

You say disaster...

Both Francis E McNamara - then and now called 'Mac' and living a happy retirement life in the USA - and I had to chuckle when we read the line about the McNamara 'disaster' in your *Lunch with Niki Lauda*. Nevertheless, a few comments.

The first part of the McNamara 'disaster' took place when, in August 1969, Lauda finished second to McNamara works driver Helmut Marko in a Formula Vee race at the Nürburgring and there was a little after-race dispute between the two of them.

In the second part of the 'disaster' Lauda had seven races with a Bosch Racing Team McNamara MK3B-Ford in 1970, resulting in a 16th and two fifth places, with other McNamaras on pole twice.

One could comment that there are more disastrous results for a young driver in one of his first F3 seasons, and that the McNamaras were not as bad as Niki suggested. The former mechanics, living in the area and still proud of having worked for Mac, would strongly contradict him, even today.

Late in the season McNamara Racing put on hold its European programme in favour of the Granatelli/Andretti IndyCar programme of 1970-71. McNamara Racing came to a very sad end in June 1971.

Let me finish by quoting Mac: *'Thanks for sending me the Niki article. The only comment I have is that I smiled greatly when I was commented on in the same fashion as was Ferrari. Good, bad or anything in between is to be taken as a compliment if one is referred to as being on the same plane as Ferrari.'*

Peter Schroeder, Valley, Germany

Electrifying sport

Firstly, I have to say I enjoyed the new look to the magazine. Some old favourites and some new editorials made it an engaging read.

Secondly, two points regarding your contributor Dickie Meaden in the last edition.

I have zero interest in Formula E, nor in the electrification of motor sport. The aural thrill of an iron-fist Ford or Chevrolet V8 or the screaming wail of a Ferrari V12 *et al* cannot be matched by the dull and sensory-deficit FE. Therefore Mr Meaden's suggestion of restarting the old Can-Am series with hybrid/electric power is a great one - keep the rules as simple as possible and see what the manufacturers can really conjure up given *carte blanche*.

Perhaps the idea came from Dickie's drive in the Can-Am McLaren M6A. I read the report on driving this magnificent and legendary car - then went straight back to the beginning and read it again from start to finish. Exemplary writing, with a real passion and insight into the subject. You could feel the thrill and emotion of driving the car through the whole piece. Fantastic journalism, and totally enthralling to read.

Motor Sport magazine remains the only publication to get sensational stuff like this - keep it up!

Michael Turley, Altrincham, Cheshire

Brands exposure

I thoroughly enjoyed your recent pieces on the 1967 BOAC 500 and the winning Chaparral 2F.

Three of us travelled by train and bus from West Yorkshire to see this, arriving mid-afternoon the day before. The first memory is feeling the sound of the practising cars through our feet! We'd never heard seven litres at full chat before - amazing. We walked through the paddock just taking it all in, then pitched our tent. Pretty soon the field started to fill up. One particular car was a very battered Anglia out of which spilled three Americans, all of whom had a distinct likeness to Donald Sutherland in full beard and leather bomber jacket... They were as friendly as most of their countrymen and soon invited all around to share their beer and cigarettes.

We awoke next morning to the sight of a racing transporter inching its way into the paddock carrying all the Ferraris.

What a sight, what a day.

Jonathan Butterworth, Emley, W Yorks

Frazer dash

I thought the following experience might be of interest - it certainly left an impression on me.

I relish my early morning Sunday drives, when the roads are clear and you can push on in the knowledge that you're unlikely to meet much traffic. So you can imagine my frustration when, upon rounding a corner on one of my favourite roads in West Sussex in my aeroscreened Caterham R400, I was confronted by a small car with narrow tyres, clearly from a bygone era, pulling out in front of me in a cloud of oily smoke. Not wanting to be stuck behind the car for too long for fear of spoiling my entertainment, at the earliest opportunity I overtook said car and roared off into the distance.

At least, that's what I thought. Glancing in the rear-view mirror, I was a little shocked to realise the car was right behind me, being driven by a man who was clearly enjoying the thrill of the chase. I pushed on a bit more but still this car stayed with me. Now I'm thinking "I'm in a Caterham for heaven's sake and a quick Caterham at that - how on earth is this car keeping up?"

I went faster still, safely strapped into my modern car with racing harness, FIA roll bar, racing disc brakes etc, but now at a lick that was beginning to make me feel slightly uncomfortable. Astoundingly, my mirror was still full of this little car. After a couple of miles we came to a junction and he pulled up beside me. I was intrigued and peered across to find myself looking at a very old chain-driven motor driven by a smiling man wearing no helmet or goggles, in a car with no seat belts or roll bar.

I pulled out my ear plugs and shouted across "What on earth are you driving?"

The smiling reply was "A Frazer Nash. It used to lap Brooklands at 130mph, you know." And with that he was off in another cloud of smoke... It's an experience I won't forget for a very long time.

Tim Shaxson, Elsted, West Sussex

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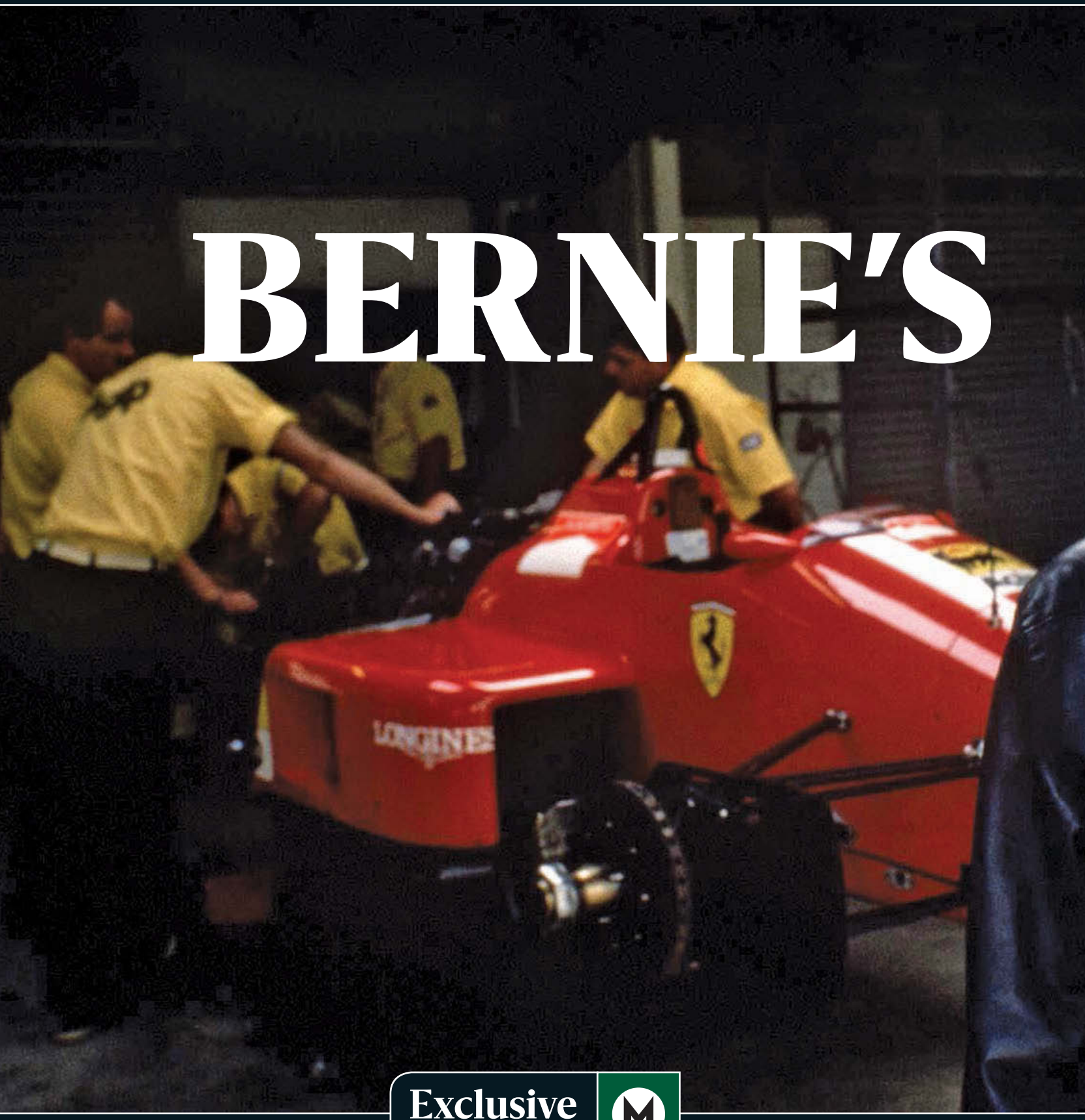
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BERNIE'S



Exclusive
INTERVIEW



REX FEATURES

WAY

In his most in-depth interview since being ousted, Bernie Ecclestone looks back on his reign and reveals why he doesn't go to races any more, what he really thinks of the new owners and why he wouldn't buy a Tesla

WRITER Richard Williams

The door of the little meeting room opens and in walks the familiar diminutive figure, his waistline perhaps just a little rounder since his dismissal from the job he had held for 40 years. But looming behind Bernie Ecclestone is an unexpected visitor: the much larger frame of Flavio Briatore, wearing a black crocodile-trimmed jacket displaying the logo of his Billionaire clothing company (slogan: "For mature men who are unafraid of what they are... dominant, virile and unapologetic"). Could this pair of old friends - the former joint owners of Queen's Park Rangers football club, among other things - have reunited to announce a plan to march back into Formula 1? No, it's just a social call.

Briatore still manages Fernando Alonso, who had started the previous day's Japanese Grand Prix with a 35-place grid penalty, imposed for a full power-unit change in his McLaren-Honda. "The terrible thing for me," Ecclestone says, "is walking down the back of the grid and seeing a two-time champion who could win the race and knowing he has zero chance. That's what's bad."

The long-time Formula 1 ringmaster had got up to watch the Suzuka race early the previous morning. "Obviously it was predictable. The race itself was a bit boring because there was nothing going on."



Bernie at Monza in 1976 with Brabham designer Gordon Murray and, right, with occasional backgammon rival Sebastian Vettel

LAT

Another disastrous day for Ferrari prompts Ecclestone to recall the Scuderia's catastrophe at the start in the previous race, in Malaysia, when an accident before the first corner put Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Räikkönen out, along with the hapless Max Verstappen. "I've watched it so many times," Ecclestone says. "Kimi made a good start. Max was doing nothing. He couldn't do anything. Seb quite rightly went across. But you shouldn't take chances like that. I'm surprised at Sebastian, the way he's been driving lately. It's not Sebastian. It was his fault in as far as he should have said, 'Okay, if you can go, go. It's a 200-mile race, we'll catch you'."

Had Ecclestone still been in charge, he would have taken Vettel aside for a quiet word. "I'd just say to him, 'You know, you've got to finish to win. If you want to win the championship, you've got to collect points. For example, [Nico] Rosberg's dad won one race and won the title. Look at all the champions. Look at Michael [Schumacher]. They used to collect points.' A danger with Verstappen, too, is that he's doing a fantastic job, but it's better to have a lot of second places than one big win and go off the road five times. But he's been bloody unlucky." Does Ecclestone see him as a future champion? "For sure. A hundred per cent."

Who else of the younger generation does he rate? "Maybe the Mexican [Sergio Pérez]. I think he'll turn out good. But there's a lot of guys a little bit down the field who, if you put them in Lewis's car, they'd be winning races. And if you put Lewis in some of those cars down the field, where would he be?" He'd still be quick, wouldn't he? "Of course, but it doesn't matter how quick you are."

HIS TITLE IN THE COMPANY THAT RUNS Formula 1 is chairman emeritus, conferred by Chase Carey, who headed Liberty Media's successful takeover at the end of 2016 and swiftly decided that he also wanted to be chief executive. So far this season Ecclestone has attended only a handful of races. What does his title mean?

"I'm so high in the company now, I can't see what's going on." He smiles a little wanly. Does he feel involved? "I feel involved with the promoters and the people who run the races. They're all very good friends and they're happy for me to go. But I just feel that I don't particularly want to be there as a spectator. If I go to Mexico, it's because I like Mexico City. In Abu Dhabi I know the people very, very, very well and I'll go to that race.

"I feel a little bit in a difficult position because Chase had sent me a message very early in the year more or less saying, 'Don't come to the races because we've got no office space. We've got three of us now and we've got a very small motorhome, so there's nowhere for you to be, really, and really you shouldn't be at the races.' Mercedes said, 'You have a table in our motorhome.' Same with Red Bull, and all of them. There's a table with my name on it in the Mercedes motorhome to use if I want to."

When the end comes after such a long and close involvement, surely it must hurt. "It was going to come anyway, wasn't it? But I tell you who was happy. The bank manager. He didn't care whether I was hurt or not because we sold a lot of shares." Does he no longer have any shares in F1? "Nothing at all."

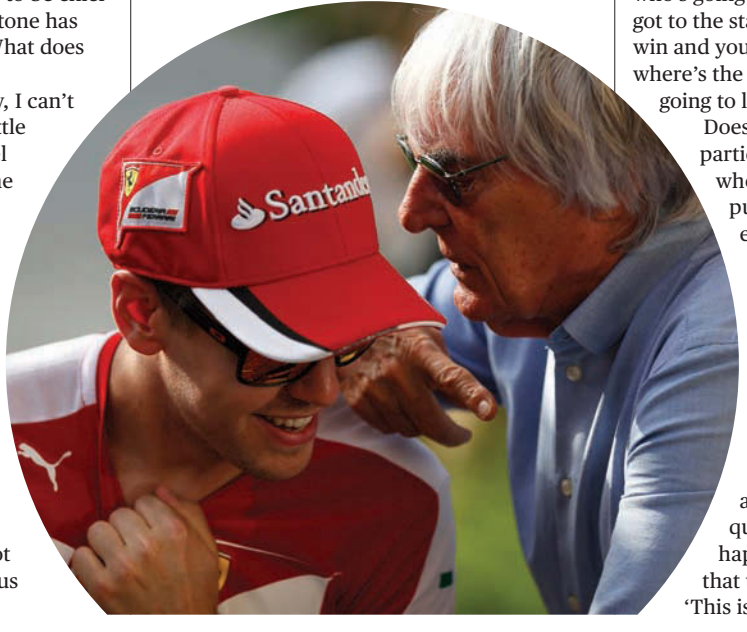
There's nothing wrong, he says, with the way Liberty has acted. "When they bought the company, Chase met me here – in fact he was sitting where you're sitting – and he said, 'You know we bought the company at the weekend?' I said. 'Yes, congratulations.' He said, 'There's just one thing. I would like you to stand down as chief executive because I would like that position.' I said, 'Okay, that's good. You've bought the car, you might as well drive it.' Obviously they thought I wasn't doing a good job. Or maybe the way I've run the business was different from the way they think it should be run. Why buy the company otherwise?"

Some years ago his old accomplice Max Mosley, having risen to the presidency of the FIA, announced that Formula 1 had outgrown its "entrepreneurial" era and was about to enter its "managerial" phase. Is that what we've finally been seeing in the past year, since Liberty Media paid £6.4bn to take over F1's commercial rights from CVC, the private equity firm on whose behalf Ecclestone had been running the sport as chief executive?

"I don't know. It's difficult for me to comment because I haven't seen what they've done, [compared] to what was normally done. I expected to see people going for six races a year in America, which is what I tried to do over the years, unsuccessfully.

"I ran the business for the last five or six years because CVC wanted to sell. That company doesn't keep things for ever. They buy companies, try and make them better, and then sell. All I was trying to do was set the stall up to sell it for the maximum price. I've no idea what they have in mind."

"My job was to convince the teams that my ideas were right and theirs were wrong"



BRIATORE GETS UP TO LEAVE. "YOU KNOW the way out," his friend tells him. As the door closes behind the man at the centre of the 2008 Crashgate scandal, Ecclestone says: "You need a few more Flavios. You need a few more team managers like him because he could see all sides of what's going on. Flavio understood what we were trying to do. I said we should really try to forget about the engineering. We're in the entertainment business. The minute we stop entertaining the public, the business is in big trouble."

Did he leave F1 with one big regret about anything he had or hadn't done during his decades in charge? "There must be thousands. If I had ideas, at least I'd run it past the teams. My job was to convince the teams that my ideas were right and theirs were wrong. And when I thought my ideas were wrong and theirs were right, we used to follow their ideas. As simple as that.

"In the last few years I used to complain that nobody wants to go to the race knowing who's going to win the race before they go. It got to the stage that Mercedes was going to win and you knew it was going to win and where's the excitement? In the end you're going to lose interest."

Does he regret having encouraged the participation of the manufacturers, whose vast resources and need to win pushed up the cost of competing for everyone? "Honestly, I never encouraged them. The only team that I ever encouraged was Ferrari, to stay. That's why I used to make sure that Ferrari was commercially beneficial [*sic*]."

Does he see any downside to giving Ferrari such a favourable deal? "Not at all." Don't you think they'd have stayed in the sport anyway? "I don't think people quite understood how that happened. I was the one who put that together and I said to the teams, 'This is what we're going to do.' There

were four or five teams who signed a contract to 2020. So I could say to a promoter, 'If you sign the contract, I guarantee these people will be there, performing.' All of them [the teams] would have signed – the difference is, they couldn't give the guarantee. So if they left, what do I do? Do I sue the team because they've disappeared? So I said, 'Okay, if you make this commitment and guarantee you're going to be there, this is how much you're going to get and these are the privileges.' A lot of these teams were in the positiion where they could have gone. One or two of them in the past five years have gone. So imagine if I'd had a commitment from them and they disappeared."

In a television interview the previous day, Sergio Pérez had remarked that a mooted 25-race season would "break everything". "He's right. I told everybody, a maximum of 20. Well, we had 21. I did the deal with France two years ago to come back in. Hockenheim, too, who have a contract they're going to honour. So we'll be back to 20 races again – unless there are new races put in. The idea was there are going to be six new races in America. I doubt that'll ever happen. America I think for F1 is not important. America is about the same size as Europe, and we have 10 races in Europe, so to make Formula 1 successful in America you'd need 10 races there. Whatever race we've had in America has been successful for a couple of years. Think about all the races in America that have come and gone. I always say to a promoter, 'Look, with what you've got to pay us, you're going to lose money. Unless you've got some other idea of why you want to race in your country, to bring in tourists or whatever, unless you want to do that, forget it'."

But in his free-enterprise, turbo-capitalist world, shouldn't everything pay for itself – as, say, the tennis and golf majors do? "Yes, absolutely. A hundred per cent." Didn't he contribute to putting that out of balance by accepting government-subsidised circuits? He pauses. "Let me see if there's a sensible way to answer that." His tone is that of a kindly adult instructing a willing but slightly backward child. "I suppose it's like a guy that's running a greengrocer or a fruit business, the same as if I had to get up in the morning and buy the fruit, make sure it's all okay, lay it out in a good way that made people want to buy, and sell it and take the money to the bank. That's what I was doing. Because I was going to sell the company. I was going to sell the greengrocery business. So I had to make sure that everything was working well and looked good and was producing good profits."

So the whole object of the exercise was to fatten up the sport before selling it as a going concern. "That was my job. I worked for CVC. I was employed by CVC. I used to own 100 per cent of the company, whenever that was, but after that, the idea was to build the company so it could be sold. Which was what happened. It's difficult for Liberty to make it work the way I made it work. This year the company has been lucky because Ferrari has been competing well. But I had five years of knowing full well that every time I went to a race, Mercedes was going to win.

"Now it looks so much like Mercedes wants to finish first and second in every race, and if they can bury a few people while they're doing it, so what? There's nothing wrong with that. That's not wrong. That's what they're there for. To win."

DOES HE MISS THE LIFE OF THE PADDOCK, the deal-making behind the tinted glass windows of Bernie's bus, the people he's known for half his 87 years, the power to exercise his disapproval or to get someone out of a jam with a benevolent gesture? The opening to his answer could have come out of a handbook of Zen riddles.

"I miss it so much that I don't think about it," he says quickly and emphatically. "I'm not going to say that I miss this, I miss that and I miss the other. Because you miss the whole lot, if you've been doing something for 40 years, the way Max and I used to do it to try and keep things together. We were very close. With the current FIA set-up, I think it's a bit different. It's good, I think, that the Liberty people have got very cosy with the FIA, because maybe they'll be able to do something. When I set up the strategy group, the teams and the commercial rights holders could have outvoted the FIA on anything. The



"If we were to go back to the old engines, 12 cylinders or whatever, it would make Formula 1 a million per cent better"

LAT

trouble was that the teams could never agree. Firstly it was Mercedes, and then Ferrari thought, 'We'd better get on the bandwagon,' so it became impossible, nearly. The FIA could always pick on one of the teams and offer them something, some nice goodies."

Dividing and conquering was one of Ecclestone's most effective tactics, along with a gift for disruption and the ability to sow confusion by contradicting himself with the straighest of faces. Did the governing body learn it from him? "I think it's so obvious that they didn't need to learn it from anybody. With me it was different, I think. We didn't have a strategy group, so nobody could outvote anybody. If the teams thought we were doing a good job, they supported us. If Max thought we were doing a good job, he supported things. Or if I thought the way Max was going was good, we tried to get all the teams together to follow Max. So we had meetings. I used to get hold of them and sit them down and have a chat. Christian Horner said to me the other day, 'We never have these meetings. We don't see the Liberty people or talk to them or anything'."

Of course many people are claiming that he's just biding his time until he can walk back in and repeat his trick of buying the commercial rights back for a lot less money than he received when he sold them. "No way. Lots of people come to me and say, 'Ooh I've got an idea - we could this or we could do that.' Like the people with Formula E. I've talked to them. But in the end Formula E is really owned by Liberty, so..."

With some of the biggest manufacturers, like Mercedes, Audi and VW, racing to turn their commercial range all-electric, is petrol-driven F1 on the brink of obsolescence? "I was always against the idea of electric road cars, but I think that was completely wrong. It's going to happen, whether we like it or not. It just needs our mayor in London or somebody in France to say, 'You can't come into the city unless you're in an electric car.' It'll take a lot of courage to come out and say that, but I think one or two will. Now that's good and bad for Formula 1, if you like. Because if we were to go back to the old type of engine, 12 cylinders or whatever, I think it would make Formula 1 a million per cent better than it is today. When we dropped all that, it was a very small percentage of difference in the power between the different units. What we've got now, why some are better than others, and a lot better, is because of the amount of money they've spent."

But isn't it right to want to make the sport more relevant to what's going on in the rest of society through the adoption of hybrid power units? "Maybe. I'll go back to when we started this conversation. We aren't racing technology. We should be entertaining the public. Walk into the crowd today and ask the people sitting there how many cylinders these engines have got. They won't know."

But you still get people staring in awe at today's Formula 1 cars. "There are a few people, and I'm one of them. I think the power we're currently getting out of this tiny engine is incredible. Would that make me buy a road car because it's electric? I don't know. I was talking to a friend of mine in Switzerland recently and he'd just bought a Tesla. I said to him, 'Bloody joke. Why didn't you buy a Volkswagen Golf, or something?' He said, 'This car's fantastic - come with me.' I got in the car with him. Went for a drive. Got out. He said, 'What do you think?' I said, 'Fantastic.' The only trouble was I didn't want to go too far. The danger with those cars is that if you turn the radio and the air-conditioning on, you could be in trouble. But they'll get over those problems, for sure. It's pretty obvious that the people who've spent all that money on this current F1 engine have learnt things. What they've learnt, if it's necessary, will be used."

He has never been to a Formula E race. "Not a lot of people have." But surely the city-centre venues are quite appealing? "You know full well that in Hyde Park if you have a bicycle race and it's free you're going to get a lot of people. It something to do on a Sunday. 'Let's go and have a look at that Formula E.' Maybe the second time they won't go."

IF HE WERE BACK IN SOLE CHARGE OF F1 now, what would be the first steps he'd take to improve the sport? "I'd have a good look at the technical regulations and not take any notice of the FIA or anyone, and I'd bring back the normally aspirated engine." Then he veers off into a discussion about F1's success in making the cars safer. "If I had to have an accident in a moving vehicle, I'd like to have it in an F1 car." With a halo around the cockpit? "No. Thank God now we don't have fires in cars, but think about trying to get out. Or if the car's upside down. We haven't really seen yet. It's a prototype. If it works, and doesn't cause any problems, and the drivers are comfortable with the visibility, okay. But I hope it doesn't happen that there's an accident and the guy couldn't get out of the car.

"I think also you need to look at the sporting regulations. At the moment all of our sporting regulations should be headlined: 'Don't race! Don't go over the white line, don't do this, don't do that...' and I'd stop all communication between the driver and the pits. It's a complete nonsense. People say to me who's the greatest driver of the last 50 years? And I say Alain Prost. Why do I say that? It's very simple. When the flag drops - or the lights go off, which is something I brought in -- you're on your own in the car, doing the best you can, making sure you look after the brakes and the gearbox, and Prost never had people in the team with him that were trying to help him win. He had people in the team perhaps who were trying to make sure he didn't win!

"It can't be right for someone sitting on the pit wall to be able to tell you what to do. When I bolt you into the car, you'd better get going and try to win the race. It's your problem if you've been heavy on the brakes or there's something wrong with the gearbox because you made a cock-up. And when you get out, you've won the race. These days, you'd have to say Lewis won with the help of an awful lot of people. I'm not saying if we went back to the old days he wouldn't still win. And it would be more enjoyable for the drivers. Apart from Nico Rosberg, most of the drivers when I tried to stop ship-to-shore radio were very happy. The world has changed in the last five years, for sure, and Formula 1 has changed as well. For the better? We'll have to wait and see."

What he did while he was in charge wasn't clever, he says. "It was obvious. I just had

Bernie and Max Mosley in 1977, left. Below, with wife Fabiana, Flavio Briatore, Lewis Hamilton and Chase Carey







LAT

the balls to do it. Whereas other people think of things and don't do them, if I think something's going to work, then that's it, that's what we're going to do. That's why I only want to deal with the people who turn the lights on and off. I don't want to deal with the messenger. Because the messages very often get lost."

SO WHAT WAS HIS HAPPIEST AND MOST fulfilling time in motor racing? "I think when we started FOCA in the old days, in the 1970s, with Ken Tyrrell and Colin Chapman and guys like that, and Luca [di Montezemolo] was running Ferrari. We all knew what we knew and didn't try to do things that we didn't know."

His formal connections with F1 may have been severed, but he claims to be busy. "Go and have a look at my desk. I said to my PA this morning that I've got more bloody things to do than when I had a proper job." What things? "Whatever I think will make me a few dollars and keep me occupied. A bit of everything."

Everything includes the extensive coffee farm a couple of hundred kilometres outside São Paulo, something he bought with his Brazilian third wife, Fabiana Flosi, who is almost 50 years his junior and whom he married in 2012. The farm now wins awards. "Fabiani looks after it," he says. "She's a lawyer, she's bright."

For him, it's a new adventure. "What I like is asking, 'Why do you do something that way?' And they say, 'Because that's how we've always done it.' What that means is that to change it means more work for them. The farm we bought, nothing is the same. Completely rebuilt, changed everything. I was hoping when Liberty came in, they'd do the same thing and say to me 'Bernie, why do you do things this way? Why can't we do it like this?' But they haven't. I'm supposed to be an advisor or whatever, but they've never asked for advice. And they shouldn't. They bought the company thinking I wasn't running it properly, so they're going to show how it should be run."

As he shows me out of the black-glass Knightsbridge office that was for so long the centre of the spider's web, he points out how quiet the place is now. I ask him what his former right-hand man Pasquale Lattuneddu, a Sardinian waiter who became one of the most familiar members of the F1 paddock cast, was up to now. "Nothing," he says. "Looking for something to do." He shrugs. "Idiots. They should never have got rid of him." He's talking about Lattuneddu, I think.

DATA TRACE

The rise – and fall – of Brabham

...a team that established Bernie in F1

Jack Brabham and Ron Tauranac formed Motor Racing Developments while the former was still racing for Cooper in Formula 1. The first car, the Formula Junior MRD, appeared in August 1961 and Brabham left Cooper at the end of the season to concentrate on establishing his own marque. That initially included running a works F1 concern and selling customer chassis in the junior categories.

The team recorded back-to-back world championship victories in 1966 and 1967 but suffered when 'Black Jack' retired from racing and returned to Australia at the end of 1970. Tauranac briefly ran the company on his own before selling out to Bernie Ecclestone before the 1972 season. Gordon Murray was soon promoted as chief designer and the team was winning races once more within two years. Four seasons with Alfa Romeo power stymied progress during the late 1970s although Niki Lauda did win twice in 1978, including his Swedish Grand Prix victory with the infamous BT46B 'fan-car'.

Nelson Piquet used a Cosworth-DFV to take the 1981 world title before Ecclestone brokered a partnership with BMW as turbocharging increasingly dominated the sport. Piquet snatched the 1983 title from Renault's Alain Prost at the South African finale – Brabham's fourth and final such championship success.



Instrumental in shaping GP racing's commercial future as chief executive of the Formula One Constructors' Association, Ecclestone withdrew Brabham after the 1987 season. It returned after a year's absence under new ownership and struggled on for four largely unsuccessful campaigns before closing its doors following the 1992 Hungarian GP.

GRAND PRIX WINS

Nelson Piquet	13
Jack Brabham	7
Carlos Reutemann	4
Denny Hulme	2
Dan Gurney	2
Niki Lauda	2
Riccardo Patrese	2
Jacky Ickx	2
Carlos Pace	1

DRIVERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Nelson Piquet	1981, 1983
Jack Brabham	1966
Denny Hulme	1967

F1 STATISTICS

Races	394
Wins	35
Pole positions	39
Fastest laps	41

OWNERSHIP

Jack Brabham and Ron Tauranac	1962-70
Ron Tauranac	1971
Bernie Ecclestone	1972-87
Joachim Luhti	1989
Middlebridge Group	1990-92

CONSTRUCTORS CHAMPIONSHIP

1966, 1967

'Data Trace' was born from Motor Sport*'s online Database, which includes results from around the world, from the mainstream to the obscure. There are full results for the main championships, while the history of others is detailed with race winners and champions, a feature that is expanding all the time*

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This year's duel between Lewis and Sebastian has been a long time coming. But what makes the two most successful drivers of the current era tick?

WRITER Mark Hughes

HAMILTON *vs* VETTEL

Their Formula 1 careers run broadly in parallel. Sebastian Vettel first appeared as a BMW Sauber test driver during the 2006 season and made his race debut at Indianapolis the following summer, standing in for the injured Robert Kubica and scoring a point. That was only Lewis Hamilton's seventh Grand Prix - and he won it for McLaren, his second F1 conquest in successive Sundays. Eight weeks later Vettel was promoted to a full-time race seat at Toro Rosso. At a rain-soaked Fuji (his sixth start) he ran third until sliding into the back of Mark Webber's Red Bull, but one week later in China he made partial amends by finishing fourth.

Hamilton had the greater opportunity to shine, with a potentially race-winning car at his disposal from day one, but some of Vettel's early performances were no less remarkable. Both have been part of the F1 landscape ever since.

Hamilton came within a point of being a rookie champion that season, but was unseated by Ferrari team tactics at Interlagos. He won the title one year later, during a campaign in which 21-year-old Vettel scored a remarkable lights-to-flag win at a sodden Monza - ensuring that Red Bull's nursery team became a winner before its senior counterpart.

In 2009 the German scored Red Bull's maiden victory, too, emerging as a championship contender before going on take four straight titles. Between 2010 and 2013 he scored 34 Grand Prix victories to Hamilton's 10, but the balance of power was reversed when the hybrid engine rules came in for 2014 and Hamilton had one of the best two seats in the house, at Mercedes.

Although Vettel's transfer to Ferrari made him a winner again in 2015, the competitive tension between the two has reached its highest level this season - a by-product of Ferrari becoming more consistently capable of challenging for victories.

So what makes both men tick? On the following pages we speak to those best placed to comment.

LEWIS HAMILTON



HE'S ONE OF THE MOST ENIGMATIC AND thrilling performers the sport has ever seen - for those prepared to be thrilled, at least, for his persona remains divisive among fans.

His abilities are all-encompassing. But his game is sometimes not. That's a unique combination. His speed over one lap or in the wet, the overtaking ability, the hard-edged commitment wheel to wheel, his talent for judging perfectly the balancing point between aggression and transgression of the rules, his feel for the tyres - all these things he has in rich abundance. But he's also quite capable of having a quiet weekend, where he just isn't a factor. Paddy Lowe saw it first hand at both McLaren and Mercedes and believes it's related to pressure - but in the opposite way to how it is with most drivers.

"The few times he underperforms are all when he's not under pressure. It's quite unique. Under pressure, he can be frightening and pretty much impossible to beat.

"The ability to handle extreme pressure is in any world-class F1 driver. There are many examples in history - when it was Mika versus Michael at Suzuka in '98 I thought Mika was the rightful winner for his ability to perform under that intense pressure you get at the climax of a championship. Another great example was Nico last year in Abu Dhabi [a reference to Hamilton trying his best to back Rosberg into the pack behind or tempt him into trying a pass that might have caused him not to finish]. Lewis very professionally and very, very skilfully, within the limits of the rules, put Nico to the most incredible test. It was the most difficult challenge you could give a driver and Nico passed it. But it nearly broke him. He retired immediately afterwards! Lewis has that. He just absorbs it all and delivers.

"But when not under any real pressure, you've seen over the years the odd lapse in concentration, lapse of commitment. But he'll then come back knowing he's got to get the job done and be completely unbeatable. In the remaining races I don't envy Sebastian facing a Lewis knowing what he's got to do. He's quite difficult to beat in that situation."

How fast is he? "I think he's one of the all-time fastest drivers in the history of F1," says his former team-mate Jenson Button, "maybe even faster than Senna. Fernando was in some ways a tougher team-mate because Lewis could have weekends where he just wasn't there. Not many, but occasionally. You never got that with Fernando, but in terms of speed, yes probably the fastest I've seen."

"Wheel to wheel he can be unreasonable – but just up to the point of plausible deniability. He's very skilled at treading that line"

Another former team-mate, Nico Rosberg, concurs: "He's one of the best of all time in qualifying, so it's always going to be difficult to beat him. His natural speed is just immense. He can go off the boil for no apparent reason now and again, but overall just immense. To race against he's incredibly tough because wheel to wheel he can be unreasonable - but just up to the point of plausible deniability. He's very skilled at treading that line of not quite breaking the rules."

Button's late father John once related a tale of what Jenson had told him shortly after joining McLaren and seeing Hamilton's telemetry. "He said, 'Dad, if he ever fathoms out how to work with his engineers, the rest of us might as well all go home. But don't worry, because that's not going to happen'." Although the years have built up his technical understanding, he's still quite capable of taking a wrong turn on set-up, something he admitted at Suzuka this year, saying. "I think the fact that Friday second practice was rained out actually probably helped me. I might have messed up the set-up if it had stayed dry."

That awareness of his weaknesses might even be construed as a strength. Back in 2014, his then-Mercedes colleague Jock Clear said of him: "Sometimes he'd have a problem and we'd talk it through and fix it. Then at the end of it he'd say, 'But you need to be aware of this, because I'll do it again'."

Just as going on a wild set-up goose chase is still something he's capable of doing, so is a refusal to accept the car's limitations, often over-driving in an attempt at getting around a chassis imbalance and going yet-slower. It manifests as a sort of stubbornness to accept limitations that are lower than they should be, no-compromise striving even when everything



is pointing towards a softer approach.

We saw this most notably this year in Sochi, where the front of the car just wasn't working. It was apparent to a lesser degree in Monaco and Hungary, where Valtteri Bottas's way of just accepting what the car was on the day, and driving within it, allowed him to shade Hamilton through doing less, not more. It's an underlying weak point in Hamilton's performances, but one that the 'diva' Mercedes W08 has revealed quite frequently. Conversely, there have been days when he's succeeded in dragging more from the car than it should by merit have been able to deliver - such as in Sepang, where Bottas could get nowhere near Hamilton's pole-winning pace.

The under- and overachieving of this year share a root cause: his refusal to accept that something is impossible. He has off-the-scale talent and 100 per cent confidence in it. Michael Schumacher, in an interview after his final retirement, said he pushed to be better because of a basic insecurity in whether he could drive faster than everyone else. Lewis does not have that insecurity. He may have others, but that total conviction that he can drive a car faster than anyone - and that there is something amiss when he's not fastest - is the centre of gravity of who he is as a driver.

So, a truly great driver with a couple of unusual flaws, only one of which - the occasional inability to resolve the conflicts arising from car imbalance and driving approach - has been apparent this year at the time of writing (post-Suzuka). The occasional quiet weekends seen in previous seasons (most notably in 2015, after clinching the title) have not been apparent at all; anywhere he's been off the pace this year it's been through over-striving.

The intensity of his competitive will inevitably shapes perceptions and the sometimes terse radio messages to his team as he manages his race have cast him as a demanding and unsympathetic persona. Which couldn't be further from the truth, according to those who work with him. He brings challenges to the team, certainly, but they are not borne of arrogance. James Allison: "It has been a considerable pleasure joining Mercedes this year for many, many reasons, but one of those was that it was my first opportunity to start working alongside Lewis... The experience of working with him is very different to what I imagined and I've found a racing driver of the sort of excellence that we can see from his statistics and the way he goes about his job. What has been particularly good is that I've found a guy that conducts himself as a man in a way that makes you happy to work alongside him."

As for how Hamilton and Vettel measure up, Allison - as one of the few to have worked with them both (and Fernando Alonso) - will not be drawn. "There's an impossibility of answering it because there's only one way to know for sure and it's to line them all up in exactly the same equipment on the same days and have a championship where you find out exactly. All I can tell you is that all three of them have got the victories and the achievements that they have, not by good fortune but by being brilliantly skilful racing drivers."

Hamilton is famous - to a degree beyond that of any other F1 driver. He's the only one whose fame transcends the sport and he lives his public life very much in its thrall, enjoying the celebrity lifestyle and bachelor status. That extends to his public persona, which is very much that of a showman - which looks great from a distance. An F1 star turning up at the track on his MV-Agusta and doing burn-outs for the fans at Monza? What's not to like? A lot of thought goes into projecting that image but up close, it can occasionally fall down and leave him sounding naïve. Which seems to be the root of the divisiveness he induces. He's a complex character, but an intrinsically good person - and a truly fantastic racer.

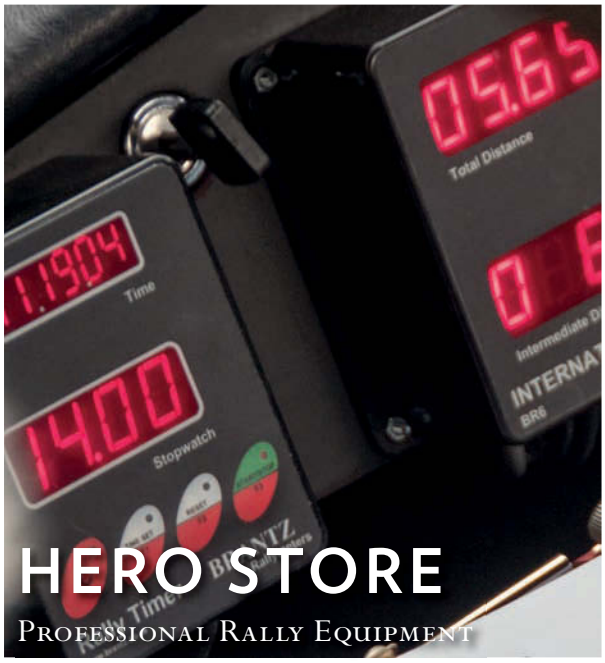
SEBASTIAN VETTEL

AN EXTRAORDINARY COMPETITOR FOR the 10th straight year, Vettel quite unfairly still has the stigma of 'Adrian Newey car advantage' attached to his greatest achievements. But several times earlier in the year, even Hamilton acknowledged the phenomenal level of Vettel's driving. That was during the tentative entente cordiale, before Baku when a remarkable loss of personal control from Vettel led him to throw his car at Hamilton's during a safety car period. The compliments rather dried up after that, but that little incident - and his part in a startline crash from pole at Singapore - effectively did for his championship chances. It meant he had nothing to cushion him from the unreliability Ferrari suffered in Malaysia and Japan.

But for much of the season Vettel and the Ferrari were the gold standard, delivering more consistent performances than Hamilton/Mercedes in the first half of the year. It's impossible to decouple a driver's performance from that of his car and team, but there seemed a definite sense of Ferrari throwing everything it had in the way of technical innovation at what was a supremely sound and raceable car, but that the programme was perhaps too intense for the team to retain full control of every aspect. The operation was less of a well-oiled machine than that at Mercedes, the pressure upon it to achieve title success vastly greater - and it's difficult not to see a connection between this and Vettel's competitive snapping point in those two crucial incidents.

It's perhaps not so surprising - for he assumes a responsibility for his team, feels himself to be much more intrinsic to it than does Hamilton, who has more the demeanour and outlook of a gun for hire. Vettel's competitive intensity extends far further out of the car than does Hamilton's - sometimes to a level that made the team uncomfortable as it under-performed in 2016. Maurizio Arrivabene fired by-proxy public warning shots across his bows late last year, almost certainly under instruction from Sergio Marchionne. 'Stop getting so involved in the running of the team' was the message, 'Just concentrate on being a driver'. Which was to totally misunderstand why he is such a great driver. With a competitive car in '17, the nature of the pressure changed as real success became







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Hamilton and Vettel were all hugs and smiles in Australia, but their relationship later deteriorated

tangible and that ratcheting pressure upon the team surely permeated the state of mind of a driver with such an outlook.

Vettel's approach has more depth than Hamilton's and even if his raw talent is not quite so extraordinary, as a combination he might even be better - in the right circumstances. But Vettel has been trying to operate as a Schumacher at Ferrari, but without the same supporting foundations. There is no equivalent of Michael's Ross Brawn or Jean Todt. According to a very well placed source in the team, Vettel tried very hard to leave the Scuderia last year, following the departure of James Allison. That there was no contractual way out became a blessing once it became apparent just what a great job the technical department - with enhanced input from Rory Byrne - had done with the 2017 car.

This is all necessary background in understanding Vettel's season. There was definitely an element of them being partners of convenience, each serving the ambitions of the other but with the little underlying affection. As they succeeded together, so relations between Arrivabene and Vettel began to thaw - but such incestuous turbulence surely played a part in activating the emotional hair trigger that resides within Vettel. It was first seen at Istanbul 2010 and his collision there with team-mate Mark Webber, who'd induced Seb's rage by deliberately backing him into reach of the chasing McLarens. It was on display again in Mexico last year after Max Verstappen backed him into Daniel Ricciardo. And the trigger snapped again at Baku this year. It's a sort of momentary competitive blindness and it's his biggest - maybe his only - weakness. It made for an unfortunate combination with the emotional undercurrents and personal dynamics at play inside the team as the holy grail came within its reach.

"He puts more work into the job than any other driver," says his former boss Helmut Marko. "Even now when I'm on the same flight, I will see him making notes, analysing data the whole time. He is unique in this. He leaves absolutely nothing on the table. I will go to sleep, wake up - and still he is working."

Yet the intensity is combined with a personality that has a lovely lightness of being, a very natural and human touch. He's genuine and friendly, impossible not to like out of the car. He will shake everyone's hand even after a bad race. He was inspirational in the whole engine failure thing in Malaysia. He's much more fully engaged with those around him than Hamilton, who is friendly enough but more contained, with a tougher protective shell around him. Vettel's persona is more down-to-earth, he's a family man and doesn't inhabit the weird low-oxygen world of celebrity where Lewis exists. He's low key, under the radar even. In contrast to Hamilton's fan-pleasing MV-Agusta burn-outs, Vettel will turn up disguised in a hoodie on an ancient 175 Yamaha - or by bicycle, riding down the Montréal cycle paths with his trainer, just another 'hat-and-shades' cyclist among many.

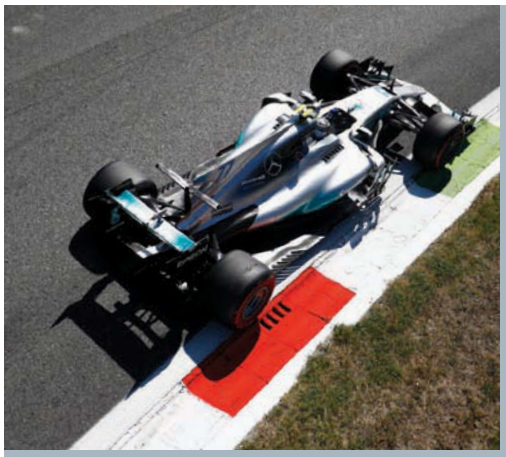
While his demanding ways may have made the senior Ferrari management uneasy, his genuine manner with everyone else on the team makes him hugely popular. James Allison mentioned it in 2015, saying: "He's a lovely guy and a great communicator. When he has a tough thing to say, he does it in a constructive way that helps everyone move forward."

"What marks Seb out is his attention to detail, his work ethic in terms of focusing on his own performance," says Christian Horner, the man who partnered him to those four championships. "He could always extract the absolute maximum from himself and the team. He'd be here long into the evening, his debriefs were endless."

Interestingly, Horner cites his ability to deal with pressure as a major strength. "In China 2009, we had a leaking driveshaft boot on his car, all the grease was coming out and the chief mechanic said you've got one lap. He did one lap, went quickest in Q1, squirt a bit more grease in it, quickest in Q2, more grease, one lap in Q3 - pole. He gave us our first victory the next day. In the championship he was effectively out of it in 2010, out of it in 2012 and still he refused to give up. In those big pressure races of Abu Dhabi 2010, Brazil 2012, his mental resilience was amazing." That, however, was in a team that he felt was always in his corner. Thereby relieving a whole layer of pressure. At Ferrari, he has operational priority in the way the team's races are run, but that public under-mining of his efforts last year will have created a scar, broken a bond - perhaps before it had even been established. He will say all the right things about the team in public and he very much sees bringing the title back to the Scuderia as an ambition worthy of further sacrifice and tolerance, but performing with people who were publically critical will always ramp up that internal pressure.

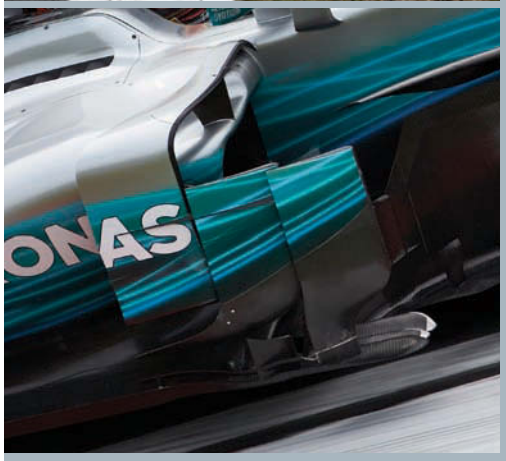
Nico Rosberg has an interesting take on Vettel: "He believes he is never wrong. This can be a fantastic strength in so tough an environment as F1. There's a hot-headedness there too and this combination has benefited him in the past. But it can also blind you, and I think that has happened a couple of times this year. Apart from those lapses though, he brings great consistency at a very high level."

Whenever Hamilton breaks another record and is asked about when he might retire, his response invariably includes Vettel. "He's not so far behind me in the numbers. If I stopped and he carried on, he could get back ahead of me." So very different, then, but so similar in terms of end result.




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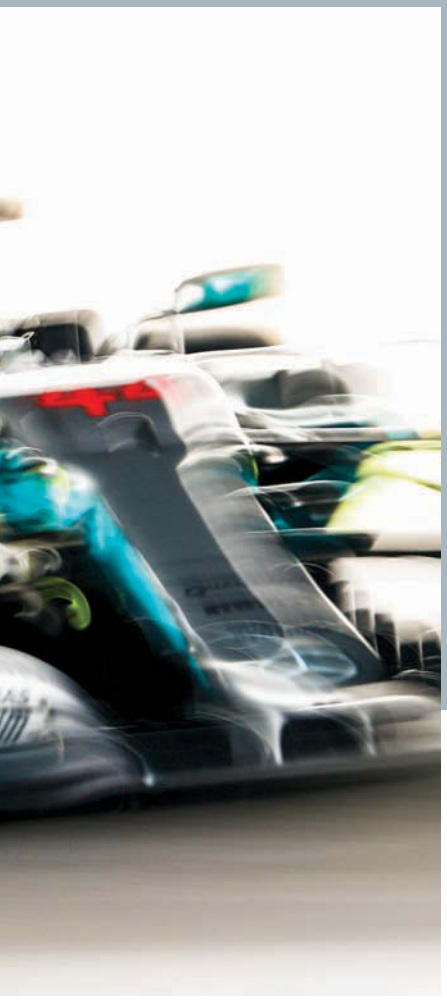

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Their performances are similar, but the outstanding Formula 1 cars of 2017 followed very different routes to the same destination

WRITER Mark Hughes ILLUSTRATOR Paolo D'Alessio

MERCEDES *vs* FERRARI

The competitive timbre of the 2017 season has been very different from that of the last few years, in that the title contenders have come from opposing teams. The race-to-race variance in the duel that has raged between Lewis and Sebastian has only been amplified by the sharply contrasting traits of their respective cars, the Mercedes W08 and Ferrari SF70H. They behave just as differently as the drivers, but their variation from each other's performance is greater. Any fluctuations we've seen from one track to the next have been far more to do with cars than drivers. Two machines with totally opposing solutions to the new regulations of 2017, they came from different circumstances, philosophies and specialisations and work in very different ways. Intriguingly, they were also designed around two different interpretations of a key part of the technical regulations.

If two leading cars were ever going to be so different in concept and behaviour, it was in 2017, the year of a major redrawing of the technical regulations, with wider, more aerodynamically powerful cars running on fatter tyres. With the parameters redrawn and a virtual infinity of solutions, even F1 software cannot define the optimum ones in advance, especially when the black art of tyre performance is mixed in. So the two teams came at the problem from opposing sides and delivered two very different machines. Only as the regulations remain unchanged will we see more signs of a technical convergence.

As a generalisation, the Ferrari's speed has proven more robust, more easily accessible, whereas the Mercedes has enjoyed arguably higher peaks of performance (especially in final qualifying where an engine mode advantage of about 0.15sec has frequently been decisive), but been more inconsistent across different types of track, tyre compounds, track temperatures and so on.

Here in detail are the factors that have been driving those differences.

CAR CONCEPTS

Mercedes - uniquely - continued with its low-rake concept while every other team has been following Red Bull's lead of introducing ever more rake into their cars. With the SF70H Ferrari went further towards Red Bull's extremes, typically running at about 1.55 degrees (Red Bull 1.58, Mercedes 0.9), nose down/tail up (ie a greater rear ride height than front).

Historically, Red Bull had led the way on exhaust blowing, sending it further down the high-rake path that everyone but Mercedes has since followed. Mercedes, by contrast, had a fairly basic exhaust-blowing system but was an early pioneer of FRICS (front-to-rear interconnected suspension). Both technologies have long been banned, but they sent the teams in aerodynamic development directions that probably led them to their differing concepts. Ferrari was a late adapter to both.

Almost all the outward differences we see between W08 and SF70H (long wheelbase vs short/intricate aero detail under the nose on the Merc but around the sidepods on the Ferrari) are just consequences of that divergence in rake philosophy, one that under these regulations dominates all else. The major long-lead hard points of the car - monocoque length, wheelbase, gearbox case length - are determined by the implications of pursuing low- or high-rake aero philosophies. Hence two fundamentally different cars.

HIGH RAKE

The principle of running the car with rake is that it gives a greater expansion area to the underfloor. Using the principle of ground effect, the air enters the under-floor through the small gap between the floor's leading edge and the ground. Because the area behind that gap opens out (even more so with rake), it lowers the air pressure there. Air rushes towards any low pressure to fill the vacuum, and so the low pressure beneath the floor sucks the oncoming air through the gap faster. The faster the air moves, the more downforce it creates.

This has an effect on the front of the car (the air being sucked hard through the gap pulls it back over the front wing and other aero devices faster) and also at the back. The faster the air flows beneath the floor and through the diffuser, the faster the air exiting the diffuser can be directed to the underside of the rear wing, increasing the speed of the oncoming air onto the wing (again because of the pressure differential created, this time between the wing underside and its top surface).

But high rake isn't all upside. When the ride heights increase as the car slows and the downforce acting upon the suspension reduces, the rear ride height increases *more* relative to the front than on a low-rake car - ie a high-rake car becomes even higher rake at low speeds. This is almost the opposite of the ideal, in that as the downforce bleeds off with the reducing speed so the gap between diffuser and the ground increases to the point where the air seal is broken (ie the airflow is no longer fast enough to maintain a seal around a gap that is getting bigger). So the reduction in downforce in itself brings about a yet-bigger reduction in downforce as the diffuser stalls. It's therefore difficult to maintain good low-speed aero grip at the rear of a high-rake car (which is what led Red Bull to revisit exhaust-blown diffusers a few years ago, reviving a concept first used by Renault on the RE30 of 1983). The lower the speed at which you can prevent the diffuser stalling, the greater rake you can run. Diffuser stall sets the limitation upon how far you can go with rake - hence why teams cannot just put ever-more rake on their cars and watch them go faster. They won't, not without hugely intricate working of the rear bodywork, especially around the tyres.

High rake also tends to increase the drag resistance of the car, lowering its terminal straight-line speeds.

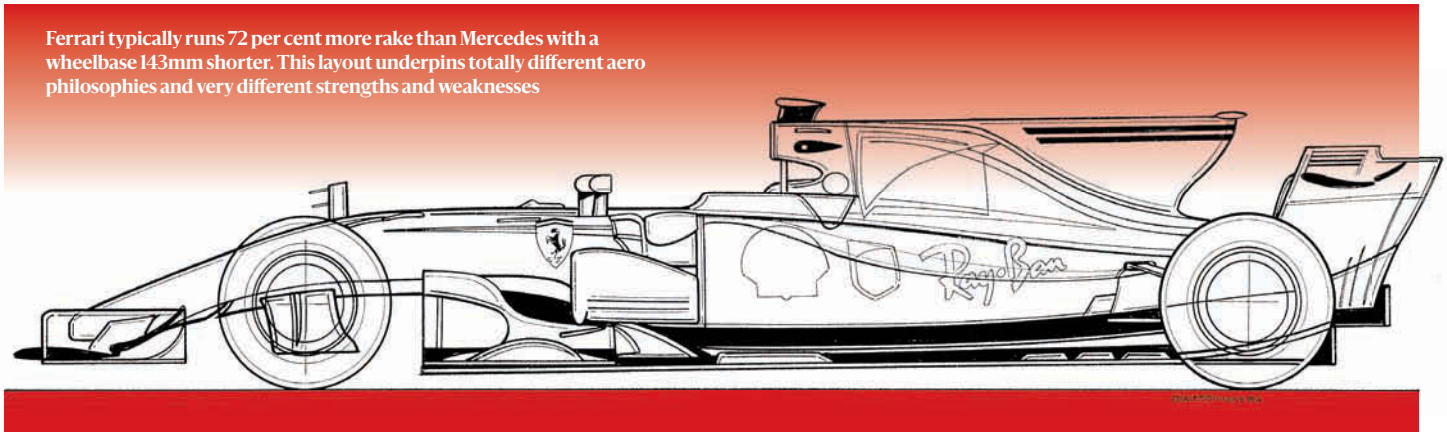
This all means that the underlying trait of such a car will be that its centre of aerodynamic pressure will move forwards as speed reduces (initial understeer, then neutrality as the speed falls - exactly as Vettel likes it). This trait in theory is a good match with the general conflicting demands from an F1 car for high-speed rear stability but a responsive low-speed direction change.

LOW RAKE

All other things being equal, an optimised low-rake car will not produce as much total downforce as an optimised high-rake car. But there are ways of ameliorating that - and the Mercedes aero team opted for the most obvious: increasing the length between front axle and leading edge of the floor. In this way the aerodynamic power of the floor's leading edge can be boosted by accelerating the air harder before it gets there, thus at least partly compensating for the lower expansion angle of the floor. In that increased length, there is an intricate array of guide vanes below the nose artificially to boost the speed at which the airflow hits the floor's leading edge. So although the air isn't being sucked as hard from behind by the underfloor (because its lower angle means less expansion and less pressure differential), it's being accelerated towards it by other means.

This arrangement has given a powerful effect on the front of the car, but been less effective at maintaining high-speed flow beneath the floor and out to the rear. To combat that, the rear axle has been sited well back so as to increase the total floor area. The idea is that the greater floor area can compensate for the lower specific pressure (per square inch) to give a similar total.

In underlying traits such a car will tend to have a very strong front end at high speeds, but the centre of pressure will move rearwards as the speed falls (initial positive front, progressing towards understeer as downforce bleeds off more at front than rear), ie the opposite of the Ferrari. This is not ideal in that it narrows the set-up window. Rear entry stability is essential in high-speed corners and



Ferrari typically runs 72 per cent more rake than Mercedes with a wheelbase 143mm shorter. This layout underpins totally different aero philosophies and very different strengths and weaknesses

so the chosen set-up needed to take the edges off that will make the car less responsive in slow turns. So long as the circuit in question doesn't have too big a spread of corner speeds, a happy medium can usually be found. But, occasionally, that spread can leave the team without the tools to keep it balanced at all points on the track.

The requirement of plenty of length between front axle and floor and that of increased floor length - both measures to compensate for the low-rake floor's reduced expansion angle - has entailed a very long wheelbase on the Mercedes (at 3738mm it's just short of the longest wheelbase available in a current Ford Transit, 143mm longer than the Ferrari, 200mm longer than the Red Bull).

A longer car means greater weight and the W08 could not even get down to the minimum limit at the start of the season (it's believed to have been running 8kg over until Spain). This in turn means the static weight distribution is frozen and ballast cannot be used better to match the weight distribution to the demands of a particular track, further narrowing the set-up window. The Ferrari, incidentally, can run with up to 7kg of ballast.

EFFECT OF 2017 REGS

Generically, the new wider, fatter-tyred cars of 2017 made the heavy hybrid cars even heavier - and the minimum weight limit had to be increased to 722kg. But the W08, with its extreme layout born of trying to maximise the downforce-inducing surfaces so as to overcome the increased power of high-rake from the new regs, was particularly heavy.

The wider 2017 cars (and the complication of fatter tyres at big steering angles) have not been friendly to the low-rake concept. It made high-rake more powerful. But also in terms of balance, it makes for a greater balance change on a low-rake car between low/high speed as ride heights change and at big steering angles (because it loses more front relative to rear than before).

1) The wider floors were more aerodynamically powerful - but by a greater amount for high-rake than low (the specific pressure per square inch was now multiplied by a greater surface area in both cases, but the high-rake car had greater specific pressure).

2) The wider floor made for a greater balance change on a low-rake car across varying speeds and at big steering angles. It loses more front downforce relative to rear than before as speed falls.

Mercedes, having developed its cars for years around low rake, was reluctant to begin at the bottom of the mountain on a whole new philosophy that would require years of catching up. So it went extreme in layout to compensate. The reason it felt comfortable doing this was it had a new tool that was going to get around the traditional downsides of low rake.

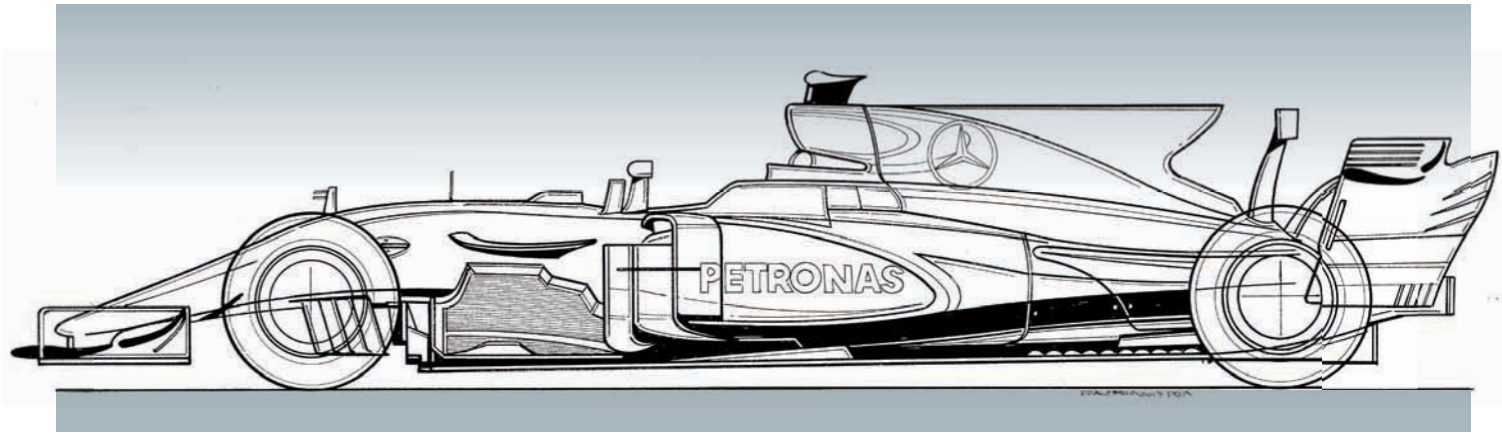
LOW-RAKE SAVIOUR BAN

For several years Mercedes had a very tasty R&D project that it believed would allow it to have its low-rake cake and eat it. It would allow the lower drag and other advantages of a low-rake car, but without the concomitant smaller balance range. It would allow it a powerful front floor even as the speed and downforce bled off, compensating for the lack of expansion angle in the floor.

This was the hydraulically-operated front heave damper. Introduced on the W07 last year, but only at a selected few tracks, what they learned from that was incorporated into the design of the W08 - a car conceived to take full advantage of the technology. Generically, heave dampers resist the vertical forces on the cars to give a more stable aero platform. When such a component was actuated hydraulically, asymmetric valving would allow it to store the energy, allowing the car to dive instantly low at the front when braked but retain that low ride height into and through the corner despite the downforce loads bleeding off it. The valving would allow the front of the car to rise back up only slowly after being braked - for long enough to keep it low into and through the corner. That got around the tricky balance change inherent in the low-rake concept, but without the disadvantages of high rake. It did much of what the banned FRICS technology had formerly done and was essentially a mechanical computer that controlled ride height for aerodynamic purposes. It allowed a low-rake car to have many of the high-rake advantages. The only downside was that it added even more weight to an already heavy car.

It was Ferrari who made the query to the FIA, not long before the start of the season. It outlined how it believed such a system would work and queried whether it would contravene article 3.15 regarding whether such a component would be 'wholly incidental to the main purpose of the suspension system' or 'have been contrived to directly affect the aerodynamic performance of the car'.

The FIA's Charlie Whiting then issued a technical directive which informed all teams that, in his opinion, such a system would be considered against the regulations (effectively banning it). Mercedes had been running the system in the first pre-season Barcelona test. It was removed mid-week - and the performance of the car was suddenly much less impressive.



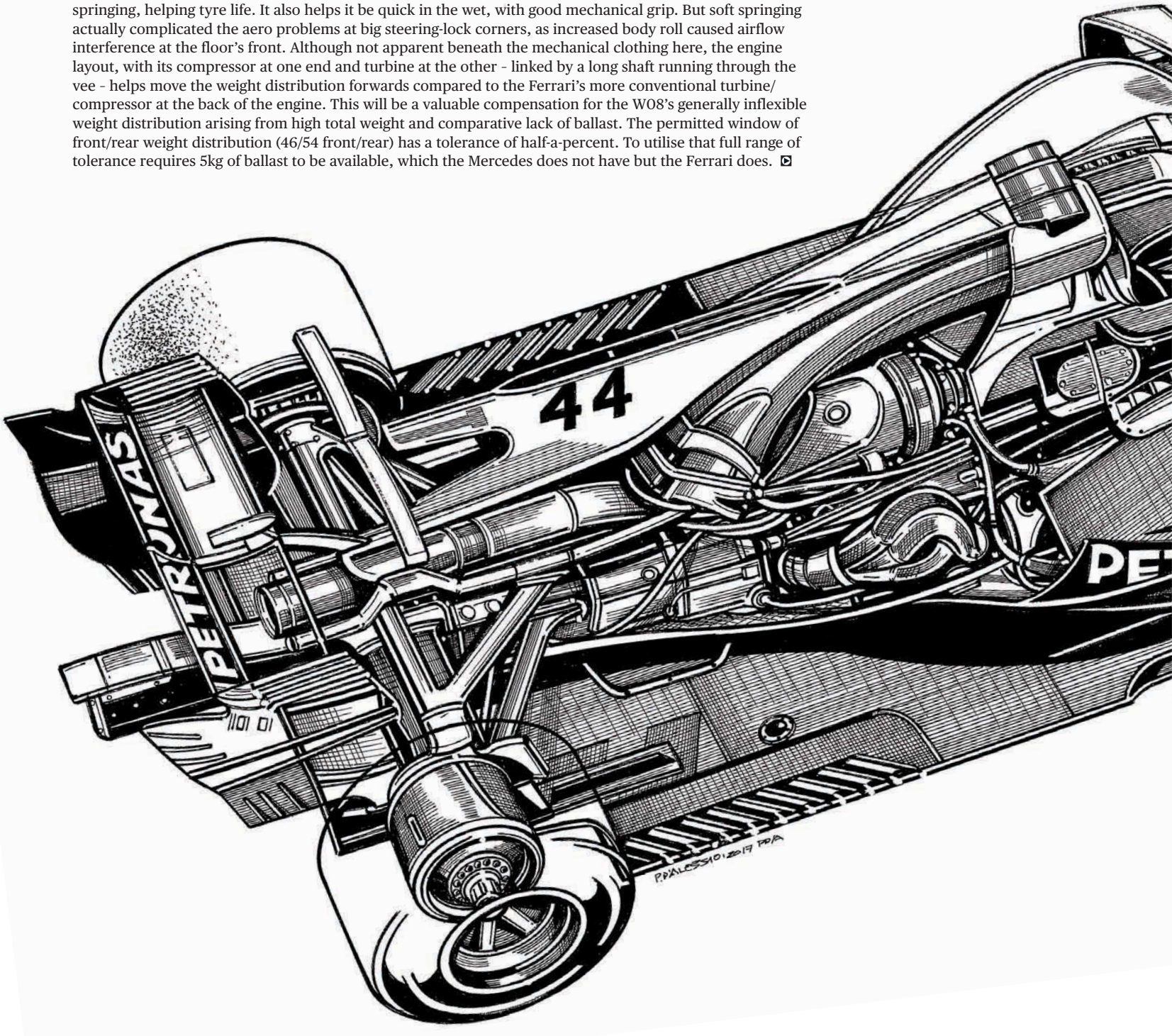
Former Mercedes engineering chief Paddy Lowe said of Ferrari's query: "Ferrari has been sending missiles for a while but they hit the aircraft carrier with that one."

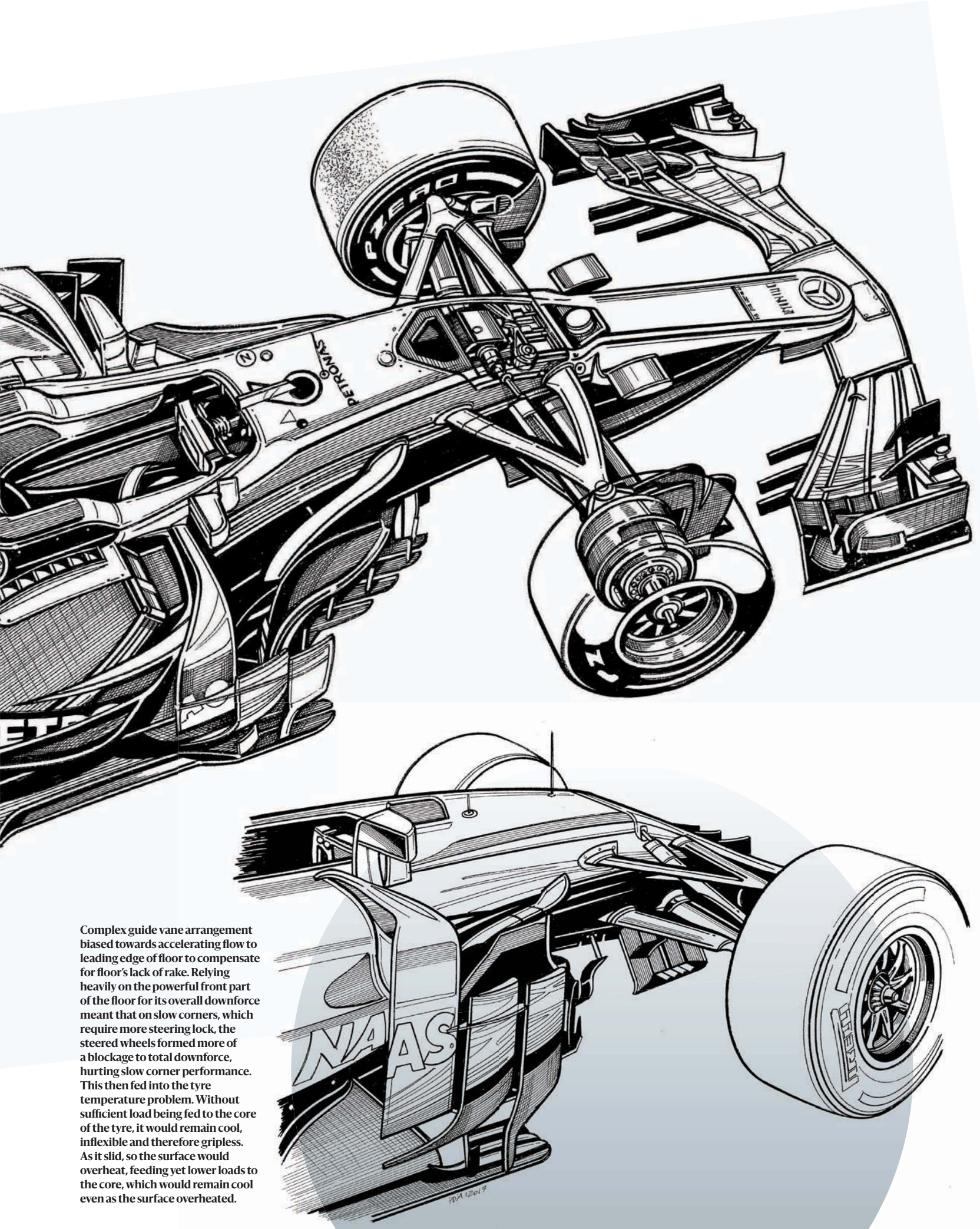
A lot of intense work was done in the weeks between the tech directive being issued and the start of the season in Melbourne, to bring the W08 back into the ballpark - sufficiently so to allow Hamilton to take pole. But the fact remained that the technology around which the car had been conceived was no longer allowed.

Given a clean sheet of paper in the knowledge of the hydraulic heave spring ban, it seems improbable that Mercedes would have conceived such a dimensionally extreme car. It might not even have conceived a low-rake car. That hydraulic-heave spring ban was actually a devastating blow to Mercedes. Without it, we might well have had another season of silver domination.

MERCEDES-BENZ F1 W08 *in detail*

Low rake means less variation in the aero platform across different ride heights. The aero platform does not therefore need to be held by the suspension in such a narrow window. This has allowed the W08 softer springing, helping tyre life. It also helps it be quick in the wet, with good mechanical grip. But soft springing actually complicated the aero problems at big steering-lock corners, as increased body roll caused airflow interference at the floor's front. Although not apparent beneath the mechanical clothing here, the engine layout, with its compressor at one end and turbine at the other - linked by a long shaft running through the vee - helps move the weight distribution forwards compared to the Ferrari's more conventional turbine/compressor at the back of the engine. This will be a valuable compensation for the W08's generally inflexible weight distribution arising from high total weight and comparative lack of ballast. The permitted window of front/rear weight distribution (46/54 front/rear) has a tolerance of half-a-percent. To utilise that full range of tolerance requires 5kg of ballast to be available, which the Mercedes does not have but the Ferrari does.

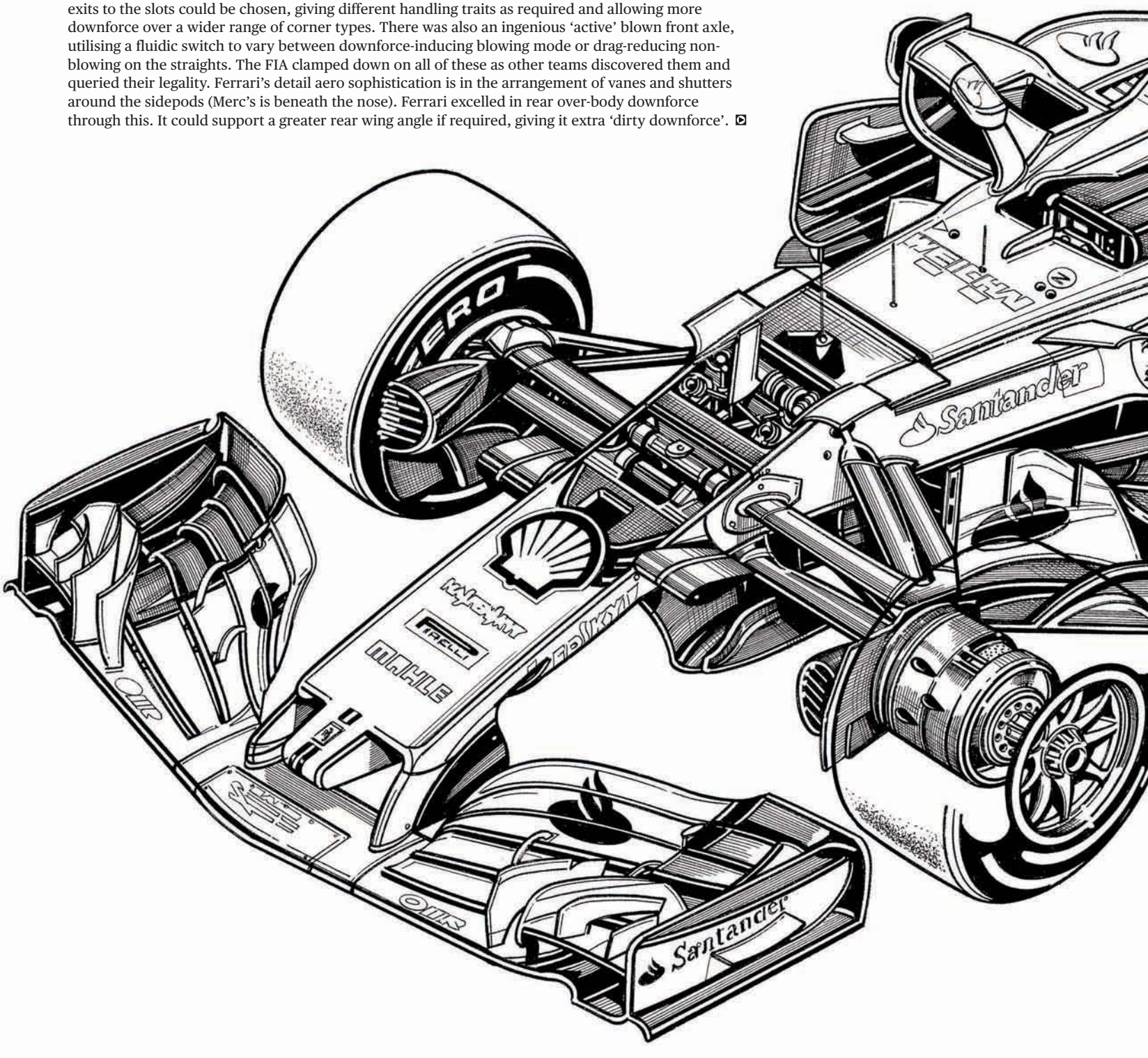


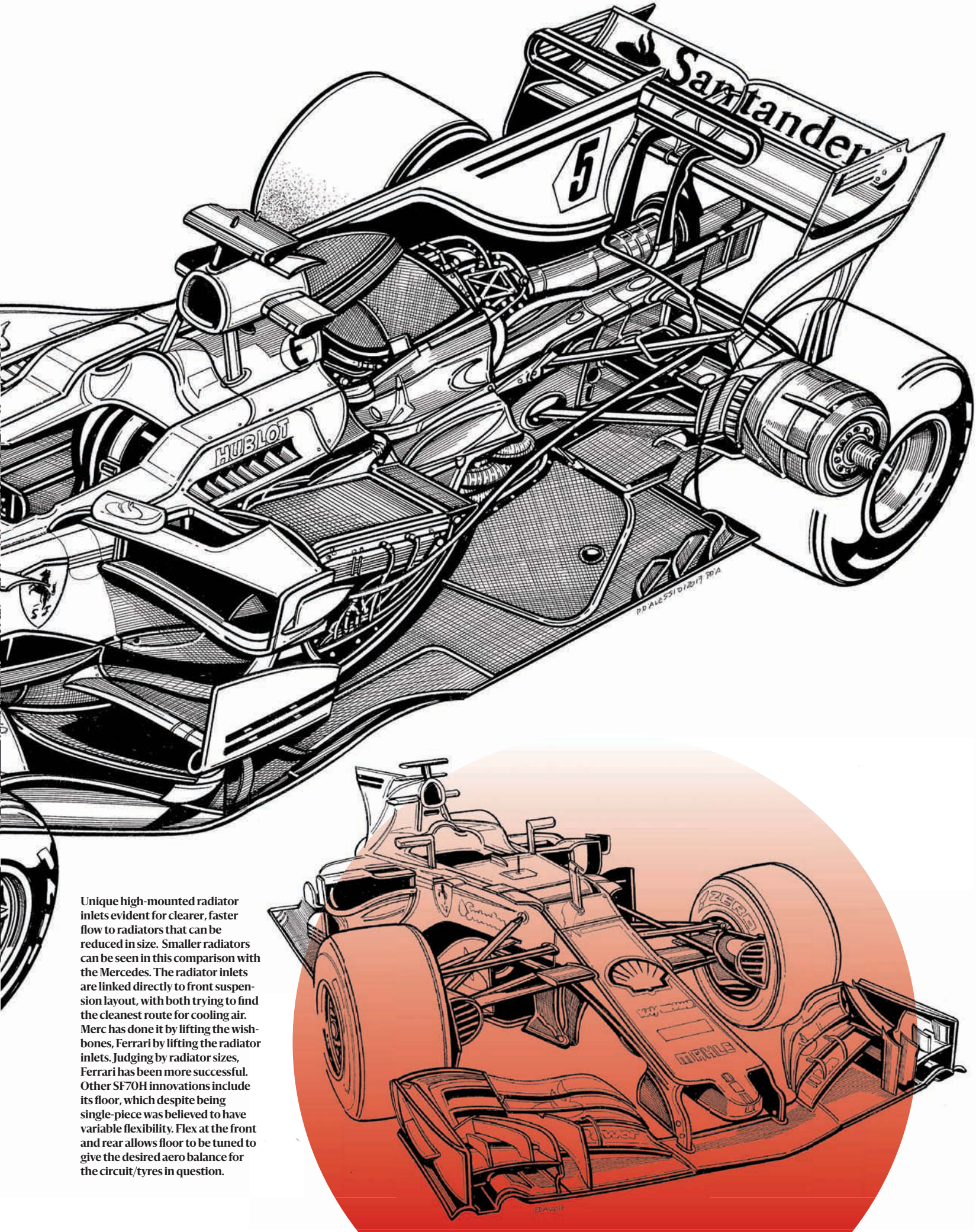


Complex guide vane arrangement biased towards accelerating flow to leading edge of floor to compensate for floor's lack of rake. Relying heavily on the powerful front part of the floor for its overall downforce meant that on slow corners, which require more steering lock, the steered wheels formed more of a blockage to total downforce, hurting slow corner performance. This then fed into the tyre temperature problem. Without sufficient load being fed to the core of the tyre, it would remain cool, inflexible and therefore gripless. As it slid, so the surface would overheat, feeding yet lower loads to the core, which would remain cool even as the surface overheated.

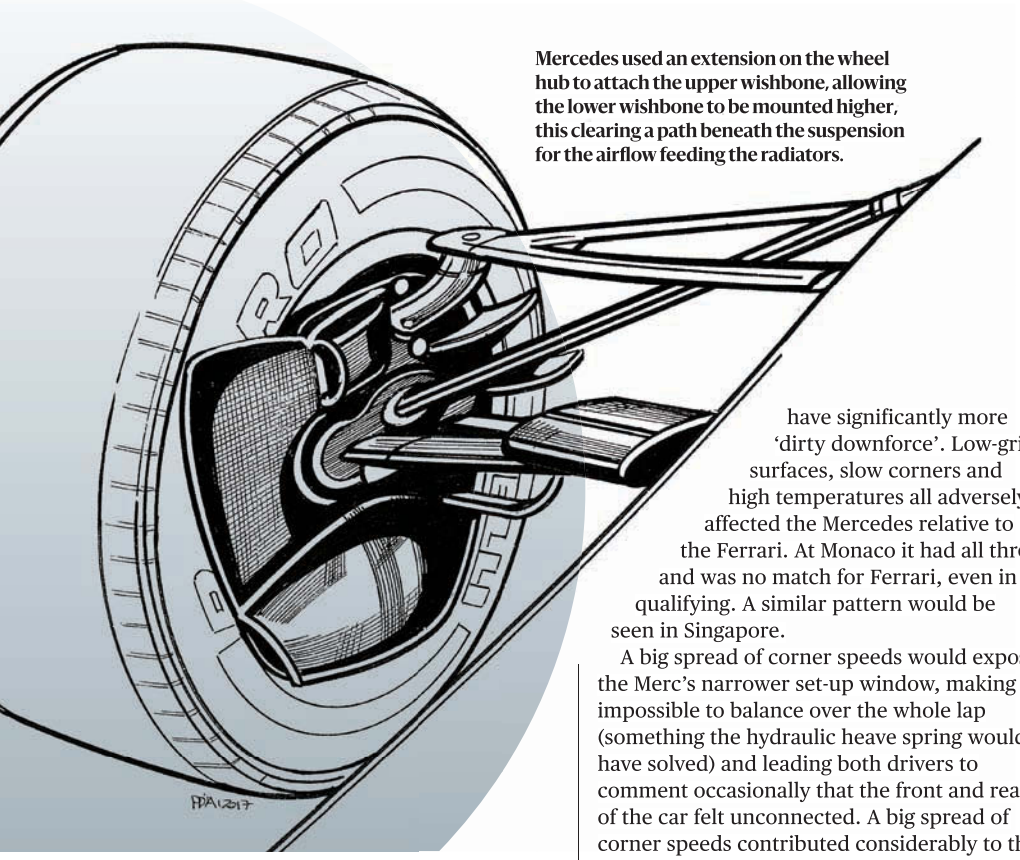
FERRARI SF70H *in detail*

The high-rake Ferrari SF70H – compact, conceptually simple but with lots of trick detail – was a classic Rory Byrne type of car. The radiator openings are uniquely high-set, allowing much of the oncoming cooling air a more direct passage, without having wound its way past the front suspension, helping towards a smaller radiator. There was innovation, too, in the way the bodywork ahead of the rear tyres flexed downwards beyond a certain speed threshold (through trick carbon lay-up) and this was linked to how the leading edge of the floor would flex, controlled by slots at each edge of the floor. Different exits to the slots could be chosen, giving different handling traits as required and allowing more downforce over a wider range of corner types. There was also an ingenious 'active' blown front axle, utilising a fluidic switch to vary between downforce-inducing blowing mode or drag-reducing non-blowing on the straights. The FIA clamped down on all of these as other teams discovered them and queried their legality. Ferrari's detail aero sophistication is in the arrangement of vanes and shutters around the sidepods (Merc's is beneath the nose). Ferrari excelled in rear over-body downforce through this. It could support a greater rear wing angle if required, giving it extra 'dirty downforce'.





Unique high-mounted radiator inlets evident for clearer, faster flow to radiators that can be reduced in size. Smaller radiators can be seen in this comparison with the Mercedes. The radiator inlets are linked directly to front suspension layout, with both trying to find the cleanest route for cooling air. Merc has done it by lifting the wishbones, Ferrari by lifting the radiator inlets. Judging by radiator sizes, Ferrari has been more successful. Other SF70H innovations include its floor, which despite being single-piece was believed to have variable flexibility. Flex at the front and rear allows floor to be tuned to give the desired aero balance for the circuit/tyres in question.



Mercedes used an extension on the wheel hub to attach the upper wishbone, allowing the lower wishbone to be mounted higher, this clearing a path beneath the suspension for the airflow feeding the radiators.

CASE STUDIES

The differing traits of the two cars has had a major impact upon the outcome of many of the season's races. Not being able to vary the weight distribution narrowed the Merc's set-up window and meant it often couldn't get both tyre compounds working. Usually with too much of a rearwards bias, the fronts could take too long to reach working temperature, by which time the rears could already be too hot. Playing with the set-up to alleviate that tended to mean it worked only with one tyre compound, taking it out the range of the other.

The Merc tended to suffer higher rear tyre degradation, especially when the track temperature was high. The first signs of this came in Melbourne as the pole-winning Hamilton could not shake off Vettel's Ferrari, which combined greater race day pace with better tyre usage and went on to win.

The Mercedes was often only winning races through the track position advantage that pole position brought, as in China - and a crucial part of that was the greater power boost of its engine in Q3. At the power-sensitive Bahrain track, pole-winning Bottas was 0.5sec faster than Vettel but the Mercedes did not work the super-soft well and Vettel was again able to undercut ahead to victory.

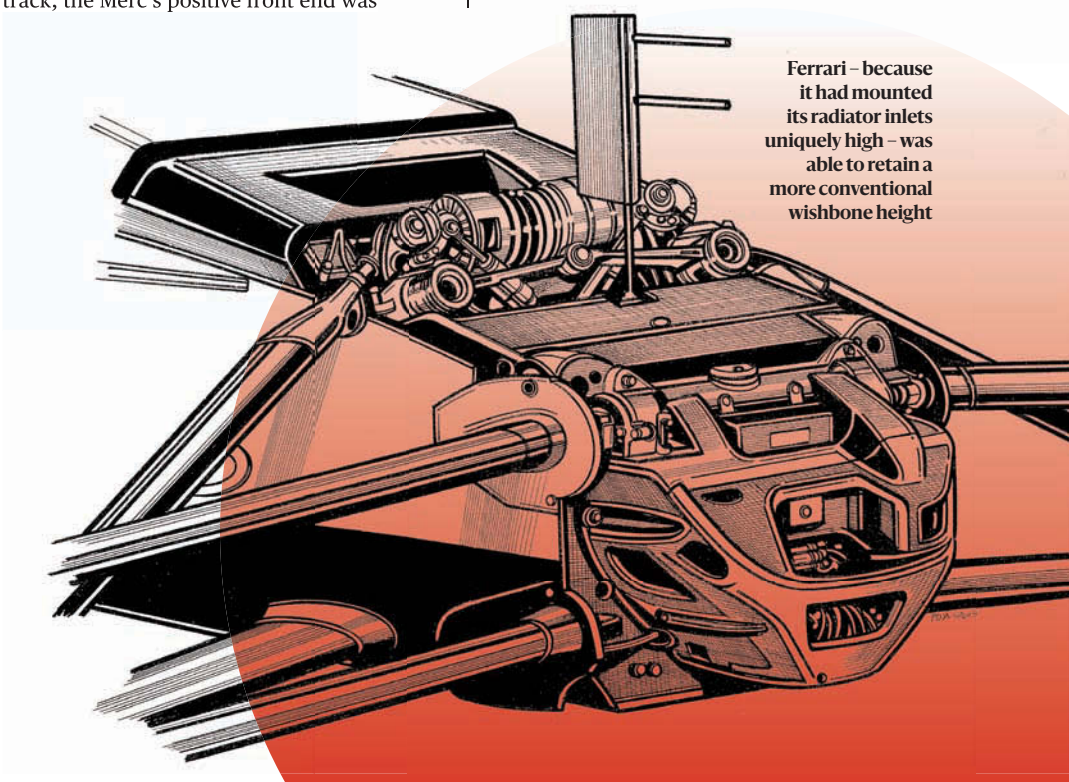
Mercedes had greater aero efficiency, the Ferrari greater total downforce. At slow circuits where aero efficiency was not an issue and it was all about putting on as much downforce as possible, the Ferrari proved to have significantly more 'dirty downforce'. Low-grip surfaces, slow corners and high temperatures all adversely affected the Mercedes relative to the Ferrari. At Monaco it had all three and was no match for Ferrari, even in qualifying. A similar pattern would be seen in Singapore.

A big spread of corner speeds would expose the Merc's narrower set-up window, making it impossible to balance over the whole lap (something the hydraulic heave spring would have solved) and leading both drivers to comment occasionally that the front and rear of the car felt unconnected. A big spread of corner speeds contributed considerably to the W08's difficulties at Hungaroring and Sepang.

Silverstone was an interesting case study in that the FIA had insisted Ferrari's floor front be stiffened and the ducts on the floor's edges were no longer functional. It left the team running out of set-up options to balance the initial understeer inherent in its aero philosophy - contributing to both cars running out of front tyre tread late in the race. For that track, the Merc's positive front end was perfect and it duly dominated. Ferrari was able to reconfigure its floor by Hungary, giving it once more a wide range of set-ups.

James Allison, Mercedes technical director: "If you look at the season as a whole, it has been divided into three types of experience. There have been a few races where we have come out and crushed everything in front of us. There have been a few where we've had the other end of that deal, where we have definitely come off second-best. And then a whole lot in the middle where it has been pretty much a 50/50 slugging match.

"It's not always easy to get the best from the car. It's been a challenge this year to achieve the results we have, but nevertheless we have achieved some pretty decent outcomes with it, so it's not been a bad machine for us. However, we would like a car that is easier to throw at the racetrack and easier to guarantee that every time we'll get every last little bit from it. We hope that next year we'll make something with a slightly sweeter temperament." ◘



Ferrari – because it had mounted its radiator inlets uniquely high – was able to retain a more conventional wishbone height



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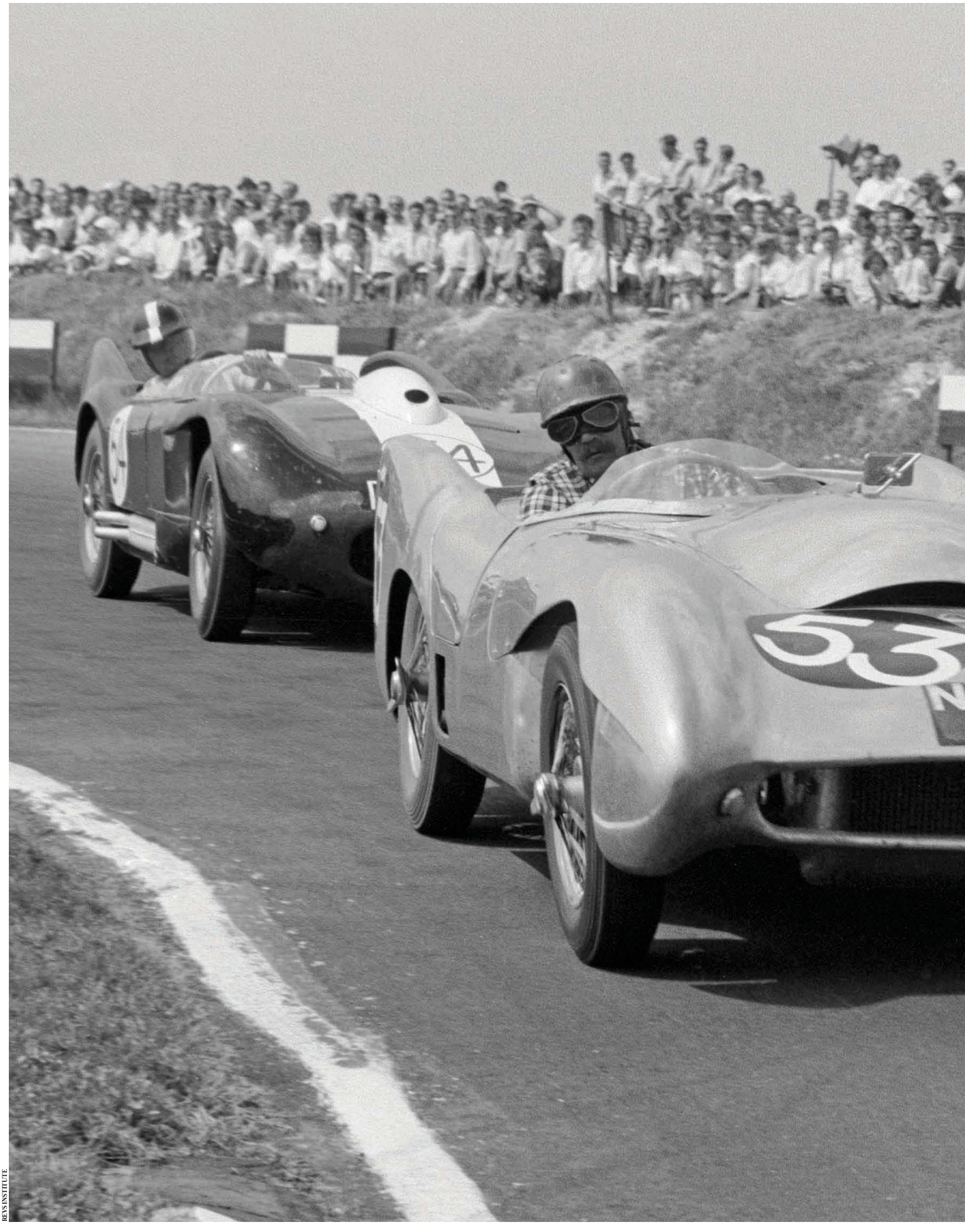
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The X files

Colin Chapman's reputation as an innovative genius endures, but some of his cars performed less well than others. The imperfect 10 was one such, but modern thinking has eliminated some of its design flaws

WRITER Nigel Rees

While Jaguar monopolised the sports car racing headlines during the 1950s, as a consequence of its Le Mans 24 Hours successes, a youthful Colin Chapman was honing his engineering skills on the aerodynamic, full-bodied Lotus MkVIII and IX sports cars. These were the forerunners to many a successful Lotus - and also the less celebrated, often overlooked MkX.

Introduced in 1954, the Lotus MkVIII had been powered by an 85bhp MG engine while the following year's MkIX was available with a range of options, though most were delivered with an 1100cc Coventry Climax. These were successful cars and achieved many class wins, but they were not contenders for major honours at international level.

Responding to client requests for more power, to compete in the popular class for cars up to 2.0 litres, Chapman built six 2.0 Bristol-powered cars. Assigned the MkX designation, these were based heavily on the MkVIII but had a large power bulge to clear the relatively tall Bristol engine. The first MkX, registration PCD13, was delivered to Mike Anthony and also broke fresh ground for the marque by featuring disc brakes.

Despite the greater power and light weight, the MkX did not set the world alight. Anthony scored three class wins and three second places in national events during 1955, but international results were disappointing. In the sports car race supporting the 1955 British GP at Aintree, Aston Martin DB3S models took the first three places and Cliff Davis finished 15th in a MkX. Davis also finished 12th in the Goodwood 9 hours and sixth at Crystal Palace. In the 2-litre class, Archie Scott Brown's Lister Bristol regularly beat the MkX.

In period the best MkX result was Anthony's third place at Goodwood in May 1955. After 35min he was 27sec behind Duncan Hamilton's winning D-type – and the MkX always struggled to get on terms with the Jaguar.

Fast forward to May 2012 at Brands Hatch, however, and the one-hour Woodcote Trophy for pre-1956 sports cars. In their ex-Anthony MkX, Malcolm Paul and Rick Bourne held the lead for 11 laps and finished a strong second, splitting the highly developed D-types of Gary Pearson/Carlos Monteverdi and Nick Adams/Robin Ward. Paul and Bourne also took the second-fastest lap of the race, only 0.8sec shy of the winning Jaguar.

In the hands of Paul and Bourne, the MkX has become a regular class winner and is often on the overall podium in the Woodcote Trophy, particularly at the twistier circuits.

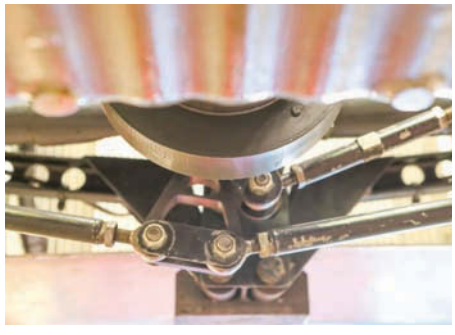
So why is a car that wasn't particularly competitive in period – and certainly didn't compete seriously with D-types – now able so to do? In order to understand this, we will take a detailed look at the MkX and D-type – and a brief glimpse at the Lister Bristol. We will also look at circuits then and now, to see whether they have a bearing on competitiveness.



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"The Lister's superiority over the Lotus has sometimes been attributed to Archie Scott Brown, but that is only part of the story"







THE LOTUS CHASSIS IS A FULLY triangulated spaceframe with semi-stressed aluminium panels around the cockpit area. The chassis is very well designed and quite sophisticated for its time. GSD RaceDyn has run torsional rigidity tests on the chassis, which is surprisingly stiff at 1464Nm/degree (1079lb ft/degree). This is slightly stiffer than the 1962 Lotus 24 F1 spaceframe – but less than half the stiffness of the monocoque Lotus 25.

Rear suspension is by De Dion tube with vertical concentric coil spring/damper units and lateral location by Panhard rod, giving a roll centre height of 263mm – higher than ideal. Four radius rods provide longitudinal location. The De Dion tube keeps the wheels and tyres vertical when cornering and ensures that engine torque is reacted directly through the rigidly mounted final drive casing into the chassis. There is no rear anti-roll bar.

Front suspension is a fairly crude low-pivot swing-axle arrangement, with angled concentric spring/damper units. There is no front anti-roll bar. This swing-axle is the car's main weakness, formed by cutting a Ford 10 or rigid front axle in half and welding on 'ears' to form lowered pivots. Angled compression struts react to braking loads. This gives a very high (196mm) front roll centre, massive camber change with bump (1.04deg negative per 10mm bump) and excessive track change/contact patch deflection at 3.04mm per 10mm bump. The high front roll centre causes a jacking force of more than 70kg when cornering at 0.95g. This causes the chassis to lift by 22mm on the soft springs used in period – and therefore applies more than 2.2deg of positive camber at the front, causing a reduction in grip of more than 23 per cent and consequent understeer.

Steering is by means of a worm-and-peg box operating long track rods via a steering arm,





LAT

Nick Adams exits the Goodwood chicane in PCD13, en route to second place in the 2011 Freddie March Memorial Trophy



drag link and central idler. Not an ideal arrangement for a racing car... Dunlop hydraulic disc brakes are fitted, outboard at the front, inboard at the rear.

The Bristol straight six is a 1936 BMW design manufactured under licence. Combustion chambers are hemispherical, with angled exhaust and inlet valves opened by rockers operated by pushrods. In 1955, the engine developed 135-140bhp at 5750rpm.

The engine drives through a Bristol four-speed gearbox via a short propshaft to a Salisbury 3HA final drive and differential unit in a lightweight Lotus aluminium casing, bolted rigidly to the chassis. The differential is free - there is no limited slip.

Designed by aerodynamicist Frank Costin, the aluminium bodywork is quite efficient. Drag is approximately 116kg at 120mph, giving a theoretical maximum speed of 136mph. The car weighs circa 740kg with driver and distribution is surprisingly good at 47.8 per cent front, 52.2 rear.

GSD's vehicle dynamics analysis shows that, as configured in period, the car suffered from excessive pitch under braking, relatively poor transient response at turn-in, then strong but inconsistent understeer at the apex, caused by the jacking and camber change previously described. Under power in the corner exit phase, the lack of front roll stiffness caused oversteer, partially countered by understeer due to nose lift under acceleration.

MOVING ON TO THE D-TYPE, THIS CAR WAS designed specifically to win Le Mans, which meant that straight-line speed on the pre-chicane Mulsanne was an absolute priority. Aeronautical engineering practice was used in both body and chassis design, led by Malcolm Sayer. His low-drag body had a very low frontal area, but later tests show that it was not quite as efficient as it appeared, yielding a drag coefficient of 0.45-0.49. He was successful in minimising frontal area, though, achieving very low drag levels and high top-end speeds. Analysis suggests that drag at 120mph is 121kg and the car's theoretical maximum speed with 250bhp is 169mph.

The chassis used an advanced aluminium monocoque cockpit section, and a square-tube spaceframe to carry the engine and front suspension. GSD has not measured torsional stiffness, but assesses it to be significantly stiffer than the Lotus.

The car weighs approximately 1071kg with driver and weight distribution is poor at 53.2 per cent front, 46.8 rear.

Front suspension is by dual unequal length wishbones with interposed telescopic dampers. The lower wishbones operate torsion bars, which are the sole springing medium. A front anti-roll bar is fitted. Suspension geometry and kinematics are generally good, giving minimal track change/deflection, sensibly small camber change with bump and an appropriately low roll centre. Roll camber is less than ideal at 26 per cent, but not really a problem. Rack-and-pinion steering is fitted.

Rear suspension is by live axle with dual trailing links/radius arms per side, in the form of steel blades. Lateral location is by an unusual double A-bracket arrangement. This is quite good, giving a 184mm roll centre height - higher than ideal, but much lower (better) than Watts Linkage or sliding-peg systems. This also avoids the large differential case loadings imposed by single A-bracket systems. Geometry and kinematics are generally good, except for the high roll centre.

The lower trailing blades operate short transverse torsion bars (the sole springing medium), concentric with the trailing arm pivots. Two different rear anti-roll bar designs are used, 'customer' and 'factory' versions.

While the rear suspension looks reasonably good, it is actually, together with the forward weight distribution, the limiting factor in


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the D-type's cornering performance, particularly under power in the exit phase. The live axle brings two key problems – large unsprung mass and engine torque reaction through the rear tyres. The latter is much more significant. Whereas a De Dion system transfers engine torque loadings directly into the chassis via the rigidly mounted final drive casing, the live axle relies on tyre loadings to react to engine torque loads. This is true of all live-axle cars, but particularly problematic in the case of the D-type because of its very narrow track and the torquey XK engine: when full throttle is applied in second gear, vertical load on the left rear wheel increases by 32kg while that on the right rear wheel reduces by 32kg – quite enough seriously to affect handling balance and traction.

The second issue relates to the four trailing arm blades. When the car rolls, it rotates around the dual A-bracket pivot, which is 184mm above ground. The blades are significantly higher than this and are mounted in rigid bushings, not spherical bearings, so as the car rolls, the blades bend into an S shape and twist, causing a non-linear increase in roll stiffness. This, again, has a significant effect on handling balance and traction.

The D-type has outboard Dunlop disc brakes all round. Aircraft practice was again followed in the use of Marston 'bag' fuel tank bladders.

No introduction is required for the legendary 3.4-litre twin overhead camshaft six-cylinder Jaguar XK engine. In 1955, this delivered 250bhp at 6000rpm. Drive was transmitted through a four-speed Moss gearbox via a short propshaft to the rear axle. A ramp-and-plate limited slip differential was also used.

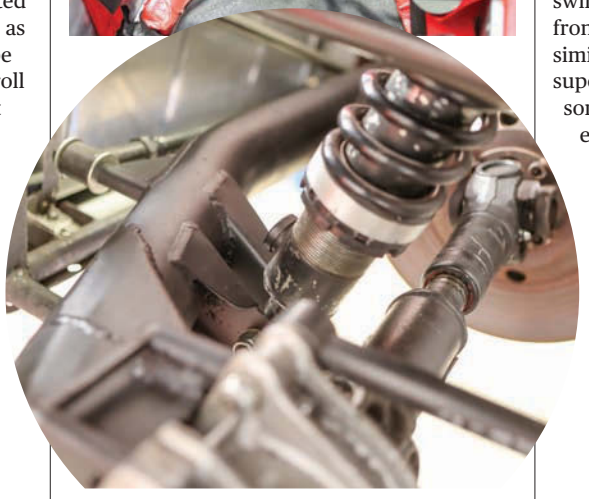
SUMMARISING, THE D-TYPE WAS immensely quick in a straight line, but suffered when the road turned due to the forward weight distribution, live rear axle and blade trailing arms. These caused understeer at turn-in and apex, followed by unpredictable power oversteer in the corner exit phase. To compound the problem, torque reaction meant power oversteer was much worse in right-hand corners. In his book *Jim Clark at the Wheel*, the Scot described the D-type as a handful – a very difficult car to drive.

Making direct comparisons, the Jaguar's power-to-weight ratio is 25 per cent better than that of the MkX and its power-to-aerodynamic drag ratio a staggering 74 per cent better. So the Jaguar is much quicker in a straight line – and the faster the circuit, the bigger its advantage.

The Lotus would have stood no chance whatsoever at Le Mans.

Given the Jaguar's forward weight distribution and live rear axle – and the Lotus's 14 per cent advantage in load per unit tyre area (see table), the Lotus should have been significantly faster in the corners, but those advantages were lost by its swing-axle front suspension.





Although some elements of the MkX's suspension are rudimentary, the car was advanced in other ways – not least its use of disc brakes





GSD ran simulations at Goodwood and the current Le Mans to compare the Jaguar and Lotus in their 1955 specifications. These showed the Lotus to be 1.76sec per lap (2.1 per cent) slower than the Jaguar at Goodwood, but more than 16sec per lap (5.18 per cent) slower at Le Mans. The Jaguar pulls 156mph before braking for the first Mulsanne chicane, the Lotus 133mph. With its front suspension fixed in the simulation, the Lotus's deficit is reduced to 9.37sec at Le Mans... and 0.2sec at Goodwood.

Now let's take a brief look at the Lister Bristol. It is slightly heavier than the MkX, its twin-tube chassis is less sophisticated than the Lotus's spaceframe and its weight distribution is slightly worse at 50/50. It has proper double wishbone front suspension, however – and while not perfect (it lacks roll camber correction) it is vastly better than the Lotus's swing axles, giving at least 12 per cent more front grip. The Lister has a De Dion rear, quite similar to that of the Lotus. The Lister's superiority over the Lotus in 1955 has sometimes been attributed to the undoubted excellence of Archie Scott Brown's driving, but that is only part of the story. The Lister had better grip, balance and traction than the Lotus due to its wishbone front suspension and front anti-roll bar. With equal drivers, the Lister would still have beaten the Lotus.

Returning to modern times, the MkX now generally beats the Lister Bristol and gives the D-types a very good run for their money. Let's look at the reasons.

LONG-STANDING FRIEND AND CLIENT Malcolm Paul phoned GSD in 2012 to report that he had bought PCD 13 and would like the handling to be sorted out. Given what it already knew about the car, GSD's enthusiasm was firmly under control...

Upon analysis, however, the car was found to be generally very good. The only major problem was the swing-axle front suspension. Steering system play and structural issues with the De Dion tube were resolved through a great deal of hard work and sound engineering from Ian Grimes and, early on, Rob Wells.

Solving the front suspension problem while staying within the regulations and maintaining the car's originality was a challenge.

GSD could not reduce either the large jacking forces, or the large camber change inherent in the geometry. The solution was to set the static ride height to give the desired static camber (the car has no camber adjustment, short of heating and bending the axles) and using quite stiff front springs and large damping coefficients to contain front suspension movement within reasonable limits. Jacking was reduced from more than 22mm to less than 10mm.

Once the problems at the front had been



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resolved, rear spring rates and damping force curves were specified to give a reasonable compromise between transient response at turn-in, mid-corner understeer and appropriate balance and traction in the corner exit phase.

Engine development, better materials and fuel and lubricant improvements mean that the Bristol engine now develops 160bhp, the Jaguar 300bhp. Though basically similar to those used in 1955, the Dunlop tyres are also better.

GSD has run simulations incorporating the improvements made to the Lotus's front suspension and the engine and tyre improvements already mentioned. These suggest that the Jaguar ought to be 3-4sec per lap faster than the Lotus at Spa and 2-3sec per lap faster on the Silverstone Historic GP circuit. At Brands Hatch GP the Jaguar and Lotus should deliver virtually identical times.

During 2017, actual performance has mirrored the simulation - except at Brands Hatch, where the D-type of Gary Pearson, a very accomplished driver, is still about 0.8sec per lap faster than the Lotus.

In conclusion, the Lotus MkX was potentially a good car, marred by very poor front suspension design. With its much better power to weight and power to drag ratios, the Jaguar was - and is - much quicker than the Lotus on fast circuits with long straights. With the front suspension problems under control, the Lotus is now faster than the Jaguar wherever the road turns. Modern circuits are smoother than those of 1955, with far more slow corners and chicanes, placing a premium on handling and traction and allowing the Lotus to close the gap dramatically. The Jaguar's live rear axle impairs cornering and traction, a disadvantage on modern circuits but no problem at all in 1955, because the car's *raison d'être* was Le Mans, with its long straights and (then) very few corners.

Finally, Colin Chapman must have known that the swing-axle front suspension was a major handicap compared with its rivals double-wishbone systems.

The ubiquitous Alford and Alder upright was available, so it should have been cheap and easy to produce double-wishbone front suspension. It is difficult to understand why he didn't plump for that option, but then nothing is much cheaper than a Ford 10 axle chopped in half.

Nigel Rees is founder of GSD RaceDyn - a vehicle dynamics analysis firm. GSD has analysed more than 560 cars, many notching up victories and championship titles in historic racing.

TECH SPEC



HOW THEY STACKED UP

	1955 LOTUS MkX	*1955 JAGUAR D-TYPE*
Weight inc driver	740kg	1071kg
Power	135-140bhp	250bhp
Aero drag at 120mph	116kg	121kg
Power-to-drag ratio at 120mph	1.185bhp/kg	2.06bhp/kg
Power-to-weight ratio	186bhp/tonne	233bhp/tonne
Theoretical maximum speed	136mph	169mph
Front tyre load/unit area (static)	931kg/m2	1059kg/m2
Rear tyre load/unit area (static)	878kg/m2	889kg/m2
Wheelbase	2230mm	2300mm
Front/rear track	1275/1240mm	1288/1230mm

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SIX OF



THE BEST

It doesn't look like the BMW 635s that raced in Europe, but this Australian Black Beauty was a crowd favourite when it faced the home-grown V8s

WRITER Dickie Meaden
PHOTOGRAPHER Lyndon McNeil

Black and gold. With the possible exception of pale blue and orange, is there a more evocative colour combination than the livery of John Player & Sons? Right at this moment I very much doubt it.

We're in Silverstone's cavernous 'Wing' pit complex amongst the hustle and bustle of preparations for the coming weekend's Silverstone Classic meeting. The place is packed with all kinds of race cars, from semi-lightweight E-types and Cobras to DFV F1 cars and Le Mans prototypes, yet all eyes appear to be on us. Or rather the mouth-watering BMW 635 CSi we're here to drive.

Everyone loves a 6-series touring car, but to fully understand the frenzy surrounding this particular example you need to rewind to the early 1980s and travel to the other side of the world, for it was in Australia that this unique car was created and made its name.

As you doubtless know, tin-top racing in Australia revolved around the bitter rivalry between the home-grown Fords and Holdens. However, much like any good pub brawl, outsiders were welcome to join the punch-up. BMW got involved through its association with Allan Grice Racing, who switched from being Holden's most successful privateer team in the late Seventies to running a BMW 318i Turbo in 1980, then becoming BMW's factory touring car effort in Australia for the 1981 season.

This was the last few years of the Group C era. No, not the FIA's sports prototype regulations revered by fans of endurance racing, but the Confederation of Australian Motorsport (CAMS) Touring Car regulations, which were introduced in 1973 and ran until the worldwide adoption of Group A regs in 1985.



As ever, Ford and Holden teams were intent on knocking seven bells out of one another with their big-banger V8s, but added spice came in the shape of challengers from Nissan, Mazda and the Grice BMW squad, which had recently been acquired by team manager Frank Gardner, and assumed the name JPS Team BMW on the back of a new sponsorship deal for the '81 season.

Performance parity between the main V8-engined ATCC protagonists wasn't an issue, but when the Mazda's rotary, Nissan's turbo-six and BMW's naturally-aspirated straight-six rocked-up, achieving anything close to a level playing field became a perennial problem. All of which explains Gardner's reticence to pitch the outgunned 635 CSi into a full-on ATCC campaign in the team's first season.

As a result the Group C 635 swerved wheel-to-wheel combat with the Falcons and Commodores, preferring instead to compete in the 1981 AMSCAR series, which was open to touring cars with engine capacities no greater than 3.5 litres. With the big capacity Fords and Holdens barred, and the BMW just squeaking under the capacity limit, Grice (who remained as the team's development and race driver) bagged an encouraging second in the championship in the Group C 635's debut season.

Grice left the team altogether in 1982 and was replaced by Kiwi tin-top ace Jim Richards. A new Group C 635 was built, with the original JPS Team BMW car (which was converted from a 1980 European Touring Car Championship Group 2 car) retained as a spare. Once again the team dodged the unequal battle in the ATCC, but Richards and the 635 – by now nicknamed 'Black Beauty' by the team, fans and media alike – made a one-off ATCC appearance at Surfers Paradise, scoring an impressive third place.

BY 1983 THE 635 BENEFITED FROM A MAJOR homologation breakthrough in the shape of BMW's new M-power 24-valve motor. First seen in the M1 road-going supercar and Procar racer, power leapt from circa 300bhp to anywhere between 400bhp and 440bhp depending on who you talk to. This gave the 635 the poke to at least try to get on terms with the V8s.

Still the team preferred AMSCAR and the Australian Endurance Championship to the ATCC, though like any touring car team worth its salt, JPS Team BMW would contest Bathurst, the jewel in Australian touring car racing's crown. Like so many cars that promised so much, the Group C BMW would prove to be a frustrating tale of ifs, buts and what might have beens.

"I've got fond memories of the old girl. She still looks fantastic – and there's still not much to touch the sound of that motor!"

Not that this matters at this present moment in time, for having tried the driver's seat for size I'm waiting patiently for my shot behind the wheel. While Black Beauty is prepped I grab the opportunity to chat with Jim Richards, who's here to race the car this weekend. True to his 'Gentleman Jim' nickname he's a genuinely lovely bloke, happy to talk about a car and a period for which he clearly holds a great deal of affection.

"In Australia, Group C was the rule framework for touring cars right through from the early '70s until Group A took over in the mid-80s. The BMW was up against the Commodores and Falcons. To be honest we were well outgunned by them for power, even when we got the 24v motor. We had a pole position in the rain and a couple of podium finishes, but the car's natural finishing spot was usually fourth or fifth place.

"Funnily enough it always felt best at Bathurst. It suited the track every bit as well as the Fords and Holdens so we were genuinely in with a shout. We qualified fourth in 1983 and were running fourth in the race, but we had a dodgy batch of fuel and some grit or another contaminant seized the fuel metering unit after just a few laps. We went back the following year, but the motor dropped a valve, so we retired from both Bathurst races. It was a real shame as we could have done well.

"When things switched to Group A in 1985 I got a brand new car built by the factory in Germany. My Group C car was converted to Group A spec in Australia and did one race in the hands of my team-mate, but I never drove it. I enjoyed much more success in the Group A car than the Group C car, but I've still got fond memories of the old girl. She always looked fantastic – still does as a matter of fact – and there's still not much to touch the sound of that motor!"

SPEAKING OF WHICH, THE RHYTHMIC punch of barely silenced six-cylinder being revved interrupts our confab in the finest possible manner. A friendly wave from the mechanics suggests I ought to put balaclava, HANS and helmet on, so I scurry towards the car and jump in.

Like all touring cars from this golden period, the Group C 635 looks and feels very much like a race-prepped road car and not some freakish silhouette racer created by Computational Fluid Dynamics, Finite Element Analysis and Tenuous Marketing Spin.

Yes, the colossal wheel arch extensions and jutting chin spoiler (I hesitate to use the term splitter as I'm not sure it had been invented in the 1980s) are fabulously OTT, but they are very much bolt-on items. Open the driver's door and there's a simple, hefty roll cage, race seat, some supplementary instruments and a distinct lack of carpets. But the road car door trims, full-width soft-touch dashboard and other recognisably showroom-spec items cement the fact that you're strapping yourself into a car that anyone familiar with a BMW 6-series would recognise. Albeit one that has nipped into a telephone booth to put on a cape and wear its underpants on the outside.

As a consequence the driving environment is an incongruous mix of the prosaic and the purposeful. The seating position is straightforward, placing you unfashionably

Brawny arches and shovel spoiler mark Gp C spec. Below, Jim Richards on the edge, Sandown, 1983



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high compared to today's c of g-obsessed norm, but perfectly positioned to work the big steering wheel and slot the gear lever through its dog-leg five-speed gate. The pedals aren't ideally set up, at least for me, but I suspect the floor-hinged throttle pedal is something to do with that.

The star of the show is unquestionably the 24v straight-six. From the moment you place your right foot on the loud pedal you know you're sitting behind something special. Throttle response is instant, each twitch of my right foot filling the garage with an angry, serrated brrapp that crinkles the faces of bystanders into a graphic wince of pleasure and pain: something only car nuts like us can explain or claim to enjoy.

With some warmth in its bones and vital fluids I get the thumbs-up to head out on track. Deep breath. Depress the weighty clutch, pull left and back on the surprisingly light gear lever to slot first gear, bring the revs up until the side-pipe snorts out a steady holler, then feed the clutch in and we're away in this precious one-off.

It's always a strange feeling as you burble down the pit lane in an unfamiliar car. Of course there's the anticipation, signalled by a gentle adrenal effervescence in your gut, but there's also a heightened sensory connection as your dial yourself into how the car feels, sounds and smells. It's like a strange courtship process: speed dating in the literal sense.

ONCE UP AND OUT ONTO THE CIRCUIT THE sound is immediately something remarkable – a honeyed howl that masks a steely edge. It pops and bangs on the overrun and emits a delicious snort as you slot the next gear home. It feels quick too. Not the instant thump of a large-capacity engine, but a fabulous ever-increasing rush as you wind in the revs to 8000 and beyond. A few laps in and it's already confirmed itself as one of the best naturally aspirated race engines I've ever had the pleasure of experiencing.

Given the size of the slick tyres I'm expecting it to turn with a bit more enthusiasm, but it has a tendency to push wide of your chosen line, especially once you try and chase the throttle. Richards mentioned it was a bit nose-heavy, and you can feel that at every turn, most frustratingly in Silverstone GP circuit's slower, tighter corners.

With a bit more heat in the rubber and a growing confidence that, understeer aside, there are no nasty vices it's possible to push a bit harder. Not with more aggression, but with more intent, working the brakes harder and deeper into the corners to keep the nose pinned as much as possible, then feeding in the power so as not to immediately work through the front-end's limit of grip.

You also need to be mindful of the tail, for although the cornering attitude is largely governed by the front end, you can get the tail sliding if you're too quick with the throttle. Clearly the trick is to try and tread the line between those two states, balancing front-end grip and rear-end traction so that you can carry good speed and maintain some balance from turn-in to corner exit.

Focus on that and almost imperceptibly the 635 begins to go well, holding and then catching cars that earlier in the session seemed to fill the mirrors before bullying their way by. Driven thus you can appreciate why this car was more suited to the longer-distance races, where tyres and brakes would need to be carefully managed. It's a satisfying process to chip away, especially when you find ways of carrying speed while remaining smooth, though the temptation to hang the tail out must have been devilishly hard to resist. I return to the pits with a big smile and wishing I could have another go.

The elephant in the room is that despite its winning looks and seductive soundtrack, Black Beauty didn't enjoy significant success in period. Indeed as Richards described earlier, it wasn't until 1985 when the JPS team switched to Group A that the 635 CSi and Richards really hit their stride, with a winning streak that took him to the ATCC title in record-breaking style.

Black Beauty remained in Group A spec for the next 30 seasons, passing through successive owners (and liveries) before ending up in New Zealand having been acquired by touring car aficionado Peter Sturgeon in 2006.

It's at this point the story takes a fantastic twist, as Sturgeon – also present for the Silverstone adventure – explains: "I bought the car in Group A spec, but it wasn't until I called Jim to see if he'd be willing to race it for me that the whole Group C thing came to light. The JPS cars are famous back home, having had such tremendous success in the Group A days, but when I looked into the Group C version I was hooked! It looked so good, and ▶

"The JPS cars are famous back home, but when I looked into the Gp C version I was hooked! It's not so competitive, but that didn't matter"



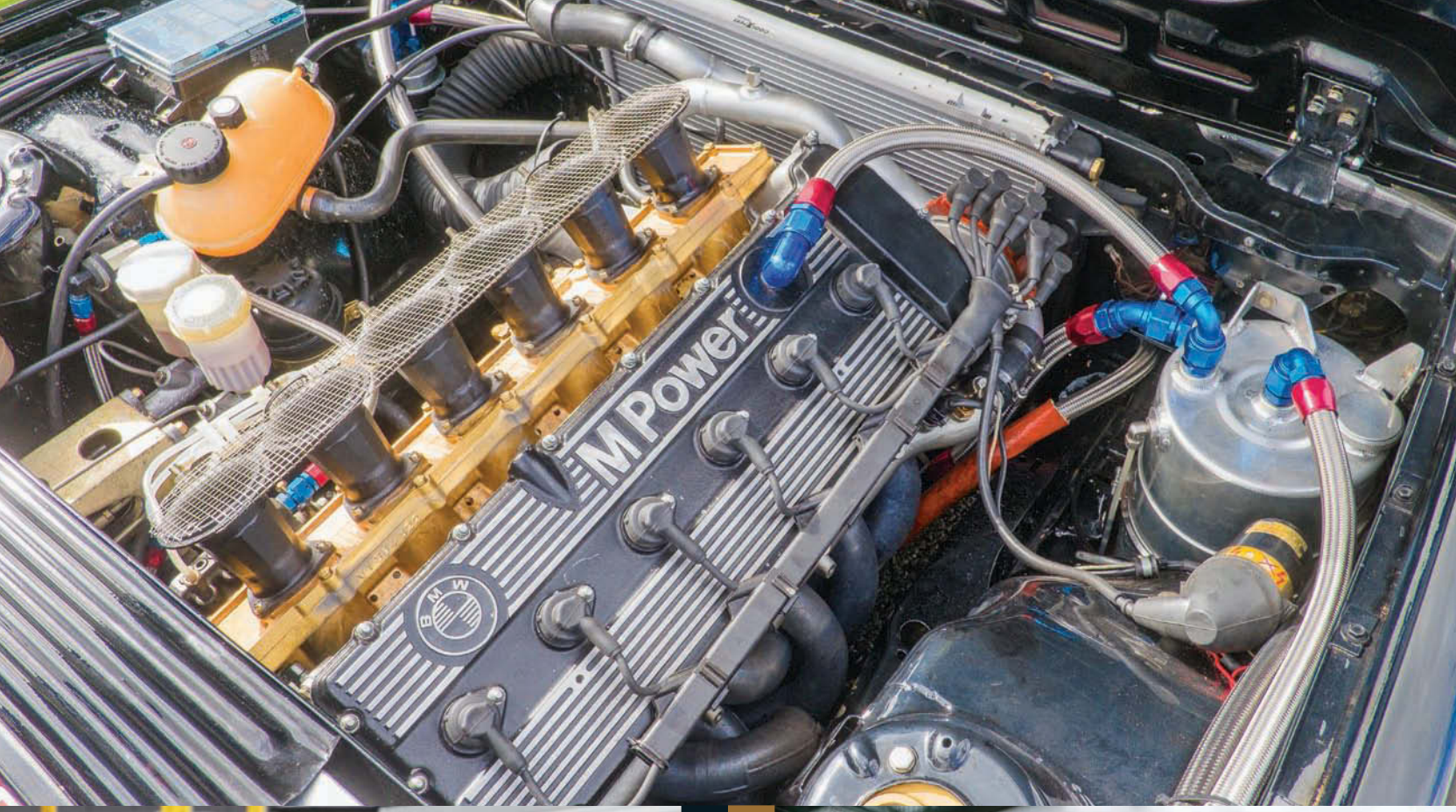


Black Beauty hits the track. Right, Meaden reports back excitedly to the car's period pilot Jim Richards


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everyone who saw the car race said it sounded even better. I knew it wasn't so competitive in that spec, but that didn't matter so much to me. It was the chance to make something unique and bring a much-loved car back to life. Having Pip Parker work on the restoration project is the icing on the cake. He worked on it in period for Frank Gardner and the JPS BMW Team, and I really don't think it would have been possible to do if it wasn't for his knowledge and contacts. Finding all the right bits - particularly for the motor - was a hell of a job, but we got there.

"It's been a real labour of love for all involved. I love seeing it race, Pip loves working on it and Jim gets a kick out of driving it. Bringing it to the UK for the first time is something really special. It's great to see it get so much attention from the fans, and for you blokes at *Motor Sport* to drive it and tell its story.

"I suppose if you're being brutal there's no great significance to the car results-wise, but it was the only Group C 635 ever built with the 24-valve motor, so it's unique in that sense. I thought the ultimate evolution deserved celebrating, so when the time came to decide on how to restore the car we felt we had to put it back to its Group C glory."

And that right there is the magic of this car, for it bewitches people who would ordinarily want a car in its most competitive form. Motor racing is an emotional sport, but the pursuit of pace is cold and calculating. That's why cars only ever tend to move forwards development-wise. Given its disappointing performances in the 1983 and 1984 seasons the Group C 635 could, no, *would*, have faded to a distant memory, a machine lost to mists of time.

Thankfully Sturgeon didn't subscribe to that logic, preferring instead to resurrect and celebrate this car for its looks and soundtrack alone. After a painstaking restoration process it has been racing for five seasons back in Australia and New Zealand, and now for the first time in its life, in Europe too.

It might have fallen short of its potential, and ultimately been overshadowed by its less powerful, better balanced successor, but this mysterious, magnificent machine is an absolute joy, not to mention one of the most charismatic and curious BMW competition cars of all time. Ⓜ

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1965 Ferrari 275 GTS (LHD)

This USA supplied 275 GTS was delivered in April 1965 to California in its current fitting Rosso Cina with a rare factory hardtop (which also remains with the car). The car has been owned by some great USA collectors, around 10 years ago the car was totally restored by Ferrari expert Bob Smith after which the car was shown at the prestigious Amelia Island Concours D'Elegance. The car has enjoyed limited use since the restoration and a further very recent major service has brought the car back to a stunning 'needs nothing' condition. This car has been shipped to the UK and is available for viewing at DK Engineering. **£POA**











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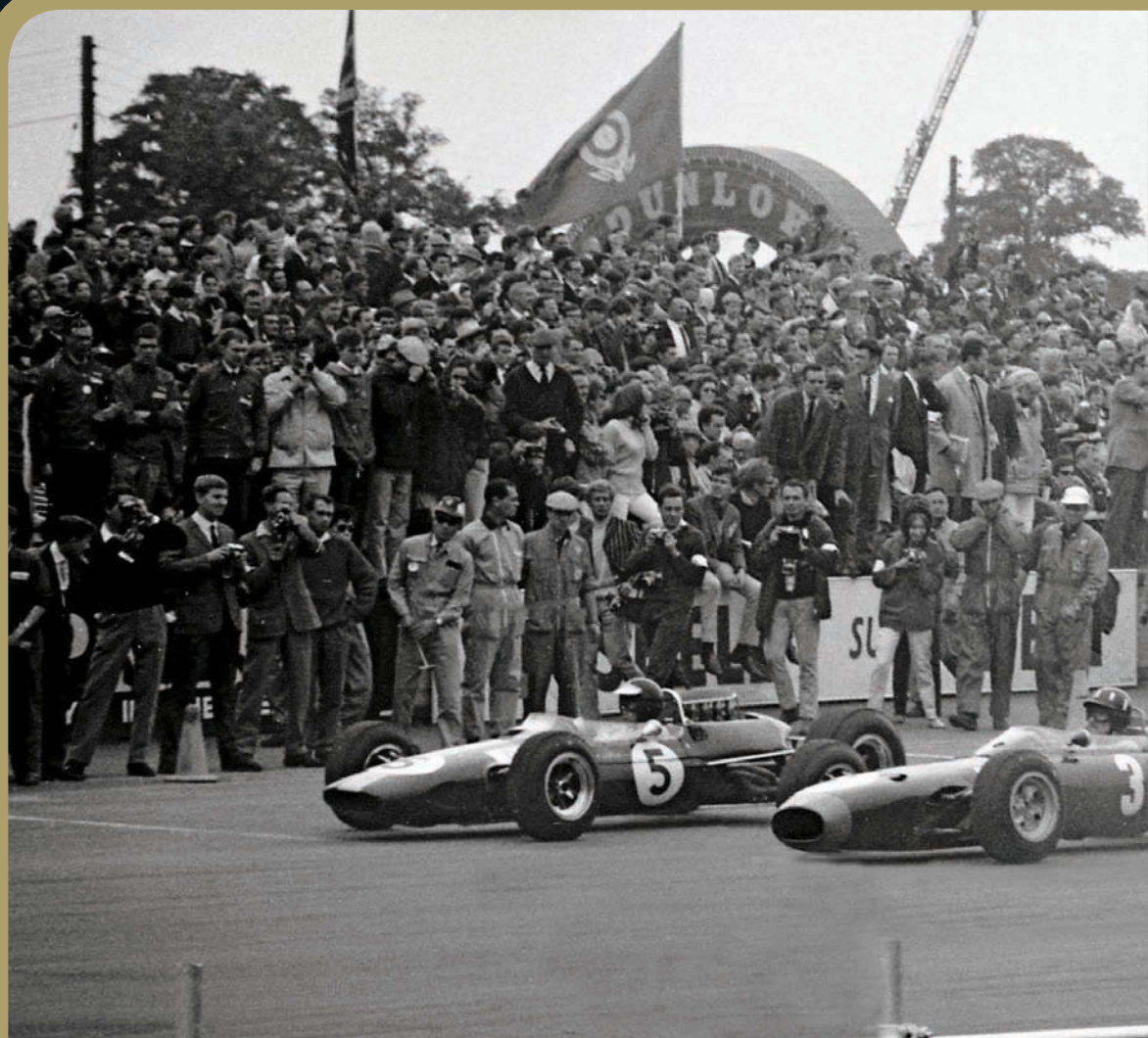
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Clockwise from below Lorenzo Bandini at the 1966 International Trophy; Jim Clark; Mike Spence confers; Denny Hulme's early F1 days; Spence pauses for another chat; '65 GP field primed for launch



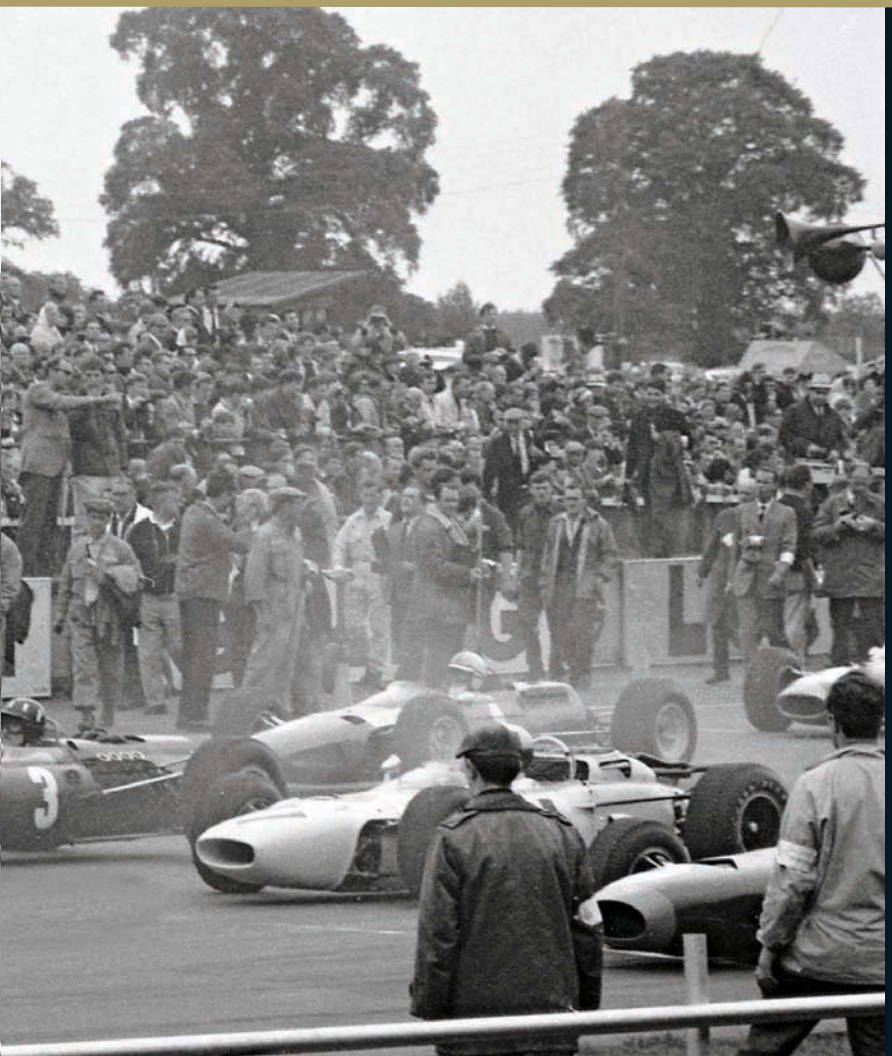






You were there
SPECIAL

Tim Reid went to school within earshot of Silverstone – very handy for a young enthusiast



"I could hear cars testing through the classroom window," writes London-based Tim. "Whenever the noise sounded promising I was on my bike as soon as school finished. I usually headed for the inside of Abbey, which the teams used as a base rather than the pits. If it was a race weekend I'd head for the pits or the inside of the circuit. We schoolboys knew where to find all the holes in the hedges..." He was also conveniently located for landing potential scoops. "I got shots of John Surtees testing a Cooper for the first time after he'd left Ferrari in the middle of 1966," he writes. "I'm not sure there was anybody else with a camera present." The images here are from tests and a selection of local F1 events (plus two from Brands Hatch) between 1965 and 1968. Such easy access, such simple pleasures: Silverstone might not have had the facilities it does today, but it dripped with atmosphere that many think has long since faded.



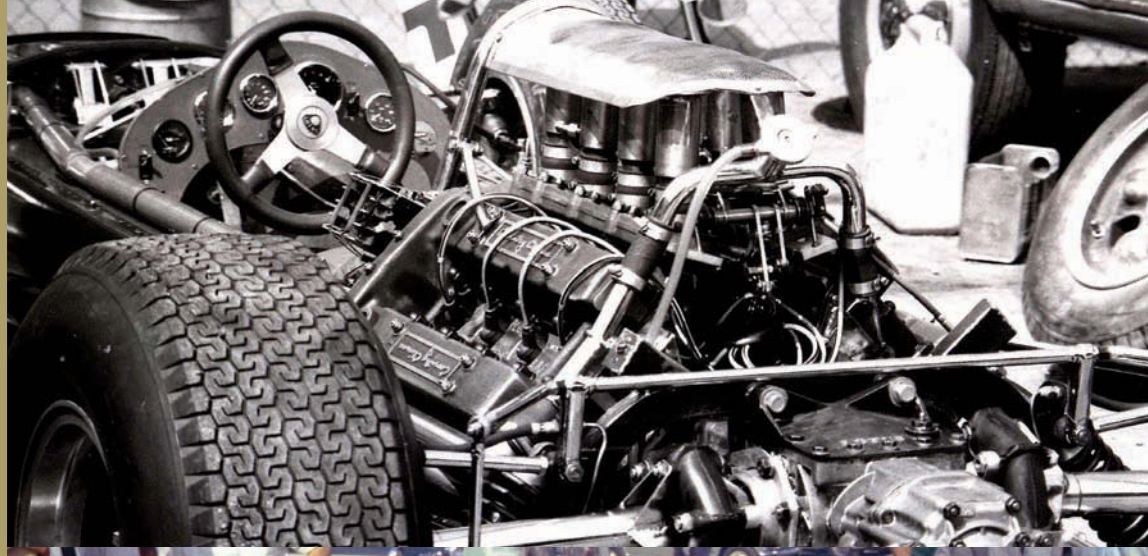


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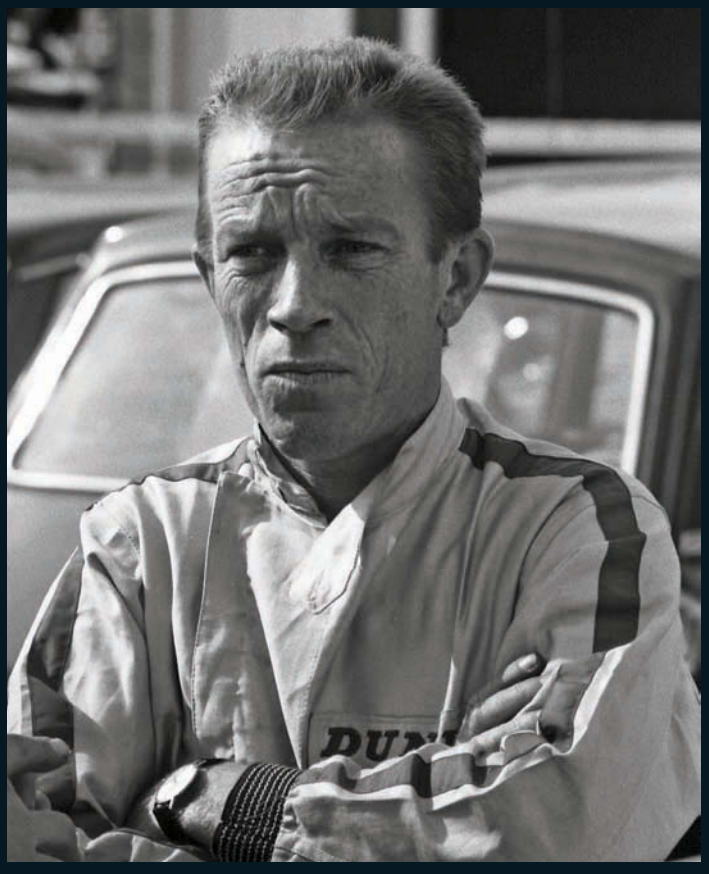




Clockwise from above John Surtees; Coventry Climax 1.5 V8 nestles in Lotus 33; Pedro Rodríguez prepares to try a Lotus ; Richie Ginther; a double helping of Mike Spence – note that teams weren't always based in the pitlane during mid-week test sessions







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Clockwise from left Chris Amon has a trial run in a Cooper; several shots of John Surtees, one with his Lola T70 and the rest from his first day of testing in a works Cooper T81, following his split with Ferrari during the summer of 1966







Clockwise from above Rob Walker poses with Jo Siffert's Cooper; before the divorce, Surtees's Ferrari 312 at the '66 International Trophy; Spence's Lotus-BRM at the same event – engine failure put him out; future Formula 1 entrant Guy Ligier in his Cooper, '66







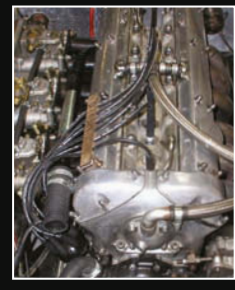
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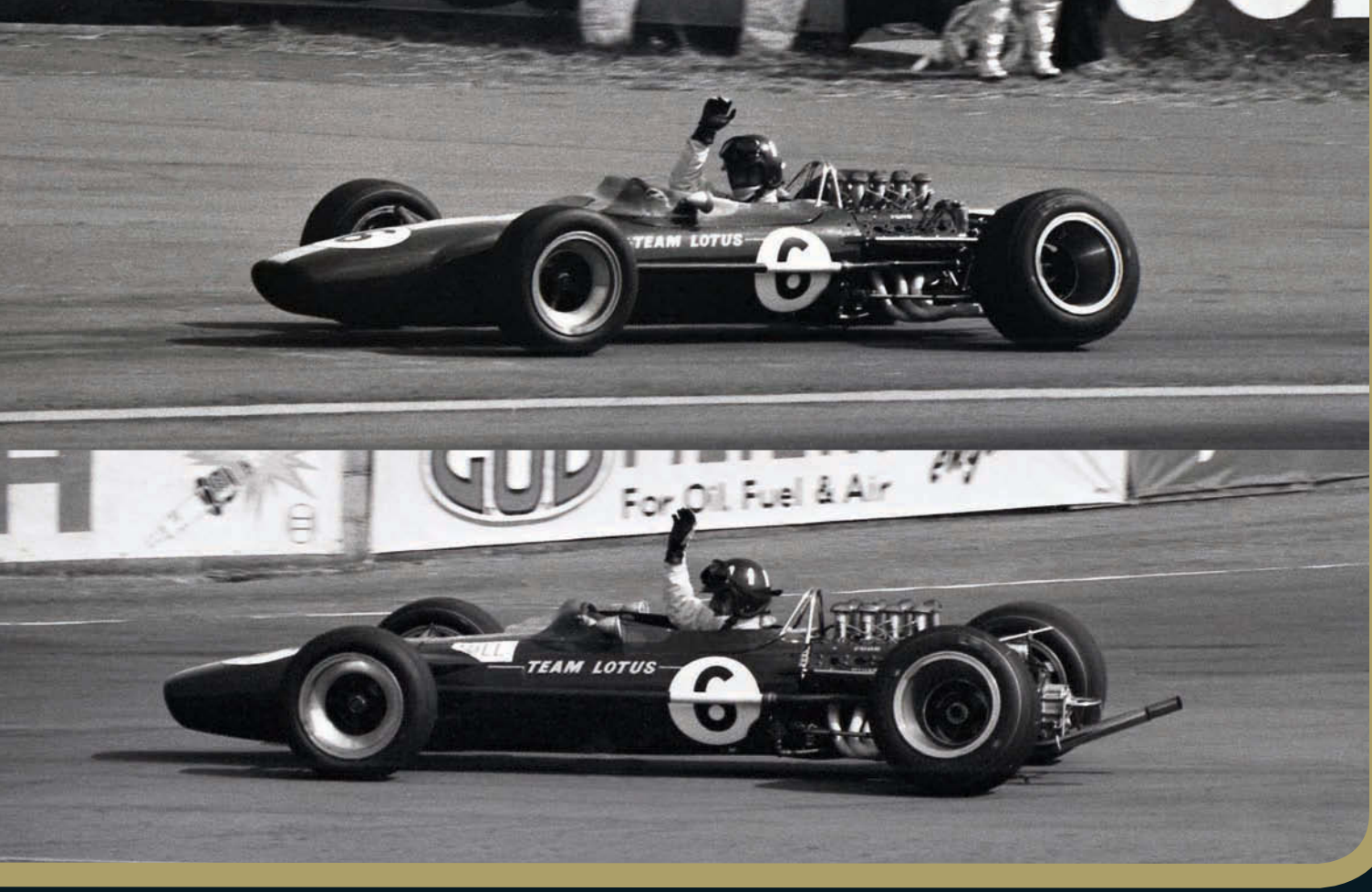
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Clockwise from below a youthful Jochen Rindt; Graham Hill peels in with a wobbly wheel in '67; the lone non-Silverstone shots – Chris Amon (Ferrari 312) and Denny Hulme (McLaren M7A) at the 1968 British GP meeting, Brands Hatch







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	XAB I	BAY I34F	BRII KER	CI34 NER	DEX 70N	F3I LOW	G234 VES	HUA IIG	LAN 44A	MAR I5S	MOY 7A	PAR 5I3Y	R66 BOK	SOU 54A	TRU IIE
I MUT	A8I0 DUN	BEA 66H	BI20 OOK	CLO 53E	DIII XON	F32 RET	G2 EET	HUG 9H	BI ANE	M42I ENA	MOY 3R	PAS 64L	REN 44A	SI0 UTH	TRII STS
	A824 HAM	MRB 34N	BR66 KER	CI07 HES	DOII OPS	FER I2IE	GRE 3G	HUL 832T	LAN 670N	M42 THA	MII6 HAL	P45 TOR	REP 900	SPE 6K	TUC IK
ANN I8	ACT 700R	B387 LES	B2 USH	CII0 UGH	DOM 4N	FI66 GHT	GRE 66S	HUII AND	M455 SON	P45 I6A	MUR 244Y	PAT 2I6A	REP 7IIE	SPR 477T	TUG 3
	ADA 4N	B33 TON	B22 YAN	COA 70N	DON 394N	FLA 66G	G2I3 VES	HUN IIG	M444 TES	PAT 2I6E	MUS I64L	REU 883N	SPR I7	TUR 270N	
DOU IG	ADR 2I4N	B3II DER	B27 ANT	COA 7S	DOII KEY	FI4 XEN	GRU II0Y	HUI2 LEY	MAII LDA	PAT 27K	MUS 73R	RI64 RDO	STA IE	TU5I CON	
	AGA 2R	83 NN	B27 DEN	COII TER	DOR 64S	FIII EUR	GUII NER	HU6I ERS	LAU 233N	MAU 2A	I MUT	PAT 73N	ROB IIIA	S74 LEY	UNC IIIE
C42I SON	AGA 7A	BEN II3T	B27 DON	ROY 600K	DOI2 OTA	FLI6 KER	GUT 73R	HUX I3Y	LAW 4L	MAY 32S	MUT I3Y	P47 TON	ROG 3I2S	S777 AMP	UUN I7E
	AGA 7E	I3 ENT	82 YN	COO 7E	DOS 4I7J	FLO 47S	GWE IIT	HYS 5I0P	LAY 3R	M64 DAM	MYR 7IE	PAT 7Y	ROII ERX	STA 2K	URE 3N
MUR 244Y	AHE 2N	B3II TON	BUN I30Y	COI2 NES	DO5I BAG	FLO 6K	H46 KER	I55 LER	L424 RUS	M64I EER	NAD 33N	P34 ACE	RO54 NNA	STE 2N	USH 32R
	AI DOO	B32 THA	BUR 263R	COR 2R	DOU IG	FLO 2IN	HAL IIIL	I YER	LAZ 3333	M647 EER	NAD IIIE	PEA 2S	RO5I YNS	S7I LTS	UTT I3Y
B22 YAN	AIII EEN	BES 55IE	BUI2 ROW	COS 57A	DOU 94N	FLII KES	HAL IIIA	J46 GER	LA5I ZOE	MCB 4IIN	NEA 2Y	PED I3Y	ROU 7E	S77 ORK	V4 USE
	AI77 KEN	BE57 BED	BUR 270N	600 COT	DUC 6K	FOX 70N	HAL I37T	JEL IIIY	LEA 2R	MCB 2I0E	N34 VES	PEE 7T	RI0 WDY	STR 4IID	VEG 6E
HUG 9H	ALD 23D	BET 55Y	BUS 777Y	COU I70N	DII0 LEY	FRA 73R	HAM 3S	JEI7 NER	L34 SED	MCC 602D	NEE 3D	PEN 38	I ROX	STI2 ANG	VEG I5
	ALM 4N	BEY II0N	BUT 70N	COU 246E	DUII HAM	FI28 NCH	HAM I3T	FJE 57	L333 EKS	MCC 24E	NEI3 DLE	P60 PLE	RUB IIIA	STR 44W	VER 4A
VER 4A	AMA 22R	BHA 7I4A	BII XOM	COU 5IIN	DUN 574N	FRII DAY	HAN 44A	JOG IT	LEM II0N	MCC 23A	N377 LES	PER 207T	SAG 6E	S72 ONG	VER 2I7Y
	DAM 3S	BII4 NCA	BYA 77T	80 COW	DUN 570N	FI2 OUD	H444 NDS	JOII KER	L3II NON	MCC IIE	NEW 80ID	PI6 FAC	SAL IIIH	S777 UMP	V32 NON
USH 32R	AME 7Y	BI6 MGB	BYE 2S	CI2 AGG	DUP I3X	FRO 23N	H42I AND	JOL IIIY	LEN II0X	MCG IIIN	NEW 80N	PI76 HER	SAM 5	SUE 4	VI3 ENA
	AND 23S	BI6 PEA	C4 DET	CI2I CKY	DWA 7IIE	FRY I	H4I2 PER	JOY II3R	LE5I BOY	MCH 4IIE	NEW 64R	PI4 GUE	S4II EER	TAN IIK	VI0 YGR
MAR I5S	AND 26W	BIII NGO	CAI2 NSY	C2I PPS	DI YKE	FUR 83R	HAR 220D	KAM 422A	LE55 ELS	MCK I3E	NI ALL	PIII UME	S4II UEL	TAP 555S	VYN I
	ANH 4R	BI46 KER	CAII VER	CI20 SSY	EI4 RLY	GAB 80R	HAS 7E	KAR 2IIN	LEV I7T	MCL 823N	NII6 HOL	POII ACK	S4II KEY	T45 TER	W4I NES
GLO 22IA	ANN I8	8I END	CAII ELS	CRII TEN	EA03 RTH	GAB 2I6L	H47 DON	K4II SAR	L37I AND	MCN 6E	NOO I2R	POL I7T	SII SSY	TEE 5S	WAII LET
	ANS 5I0W	BLO 473R	CAII HAM	CRO 77Y	E8 SON	GAL II3Y	HAY 773R	KAU 53R	LEY 770N	M3I LOR	NOR 233N	POO I3Y	SAV 463E	T3 SSA	WAM 29
C422 MEN	4II TON	BIII OOM	CAN 7T	CI20 UCH	EA5I TER	GAM 88IE	H33 EAD	K47 LEY	LOC 6K	MEI2 OSE	NO5I BOY	POP 6E	SAV 3I0Y	T3 STS	WAN 7T
	APR 2IL	80 DDY	CAR 2D	CUR 2L	EA5I JCT	GAII TRY	HEA 4IY	KEE I3R	LOT 7T	M3I TON	NUG 3I7T	PI00 RCH	53 EA	TEX 7	WAS 533M
KAM 422A	AP55 LEY	BOG 42T	CAI2 DEN	CUI2 NOW	EDG 9E	G42 TON	H34 RSE	K3II ETT	LOV 47T	M3II VYN	OBE 2I	POR 2I7T	S37 TER	THA 4IN	W444 TCH
	A2I ENE	BOL 63R	C42I SON	CUI2 WEN	EDII UND	GI4 UGE	H34 TER	KEI5 ALL	LUC 6IE	MEN 5	OFF I6E	POR 2T	SEW 42D	THA 76H	W4 TES
S4II UEL	ARII OTT	BOO 555H	CAR I7IE	CYR 2IL	EGE 270N	GEII EVA	H347 HER	KEII SEY	LUK 3R	MER 6IA	OMA 22R	SPO 73	SHA 42P	TII3 DOC	W34I THY
	ARR 24N	BOS 706K	C422 MEN	DAL II4S	EIII WYN	GEZ I	HED II3Y	KEN 4	LUS 73D	MER 6Y	OOII AGH	P23 TTY	SHA 29E	THO 2N	WED 64R
PUM 4A	ARII RON	BO55 WEL	C4I2 NEY	DAM I4N	EMM 377T	GHA 24IA	H6I GHT	K3II NEY	LYA IL	MER 2I7T	ORG I85	P2II NCE	SHE 42D	THI2 USH	WEL I70N
	ASH II6Y	BOT 770M	C420 LAN	OAM I0N	E6 ROS	GIII HAM	HEII ERS	KER 2R	LYN 37E	MER I2Y	OSII CAR	P2I ORY	SH66 HAN	7I GHE	W37 TON
BR66 KER	A578 URY	BOU 2IIE	CAR 22IE	D4 NNO	EVE 235T	GI SBY	HEII MUT	KER 22IE	L7II SAY	M355 AGE	OSM I4N	PRII ZES	SHE 233N	TIII KKA	WHY 820W
	AUI6 UST	966 BOW	C4I2 VER	DAR 2I3Y	E7 LES	GI AND	HEN 27K	KE55 ELL	M49 KAY	MII0 RED	OWA 4IIN	PRO IIT	SHII RTS	7I NYS	WIII COX
AND 26W	AYR 2E	80 WER	C45 SON	D4 SEY	FAC 7S	GI3 NYS	H3II SON	KES 50N	M46 KEY	MOD 357Y	OXL 3Y	PUD 5IE	SHII GUN	7I7 LEY	WOK 773
	BAL 7IC	BRA 44D	C474 LAN	DAV II0E	FAII ACY	GLO 22IA	HER 237T	KII3 RAN	MAC I34N	MOII DAL	OYS 70N	PUII LEN	SII0 VEL	I TOE	WOII DER
B24 NCH	BAII HAM	B240 LEY	C477 ELL	DAW IIID	RFA II0N	GLO I2Y	HEW I5H	KI25 TEN	M46I EOD	MOII DAY	PAC 3E	PUM 4A	SI3 RRA	TON 6IIE	WO05 NAM
	BAN 70N	B24 NCH	CAV 3E	DEA 4R	FAN I	GOA 7IE	HII GAN	KII2 TON	M466 OTS	MON I64S	PAD I3Y	PUI2 VES	SLE 3I6H	TON II3R	WOI2 GAN
GI2 APE	BAR II4M	BRA 555S	CAW I3Y	DI3 ARY	FAN 6G	GI0 DLY	HOI2 OYD	KI2 TON	MOO 23S	PAL 46E	RAF 4L	SLI6 HTY	TOO I3Y	WOR 23IL	
	BAR 58Y	BRI3 EZE	CEC IIIL	DEE 64N	FAR 976	GI0 OLD	HOP 600D	K2I5 HAN	MOO I2S	PAM 3I4A	SMA II3Y	TOT I	Y420 LEY		
RO54 NNA	BAR 7I3Y	8I2 ENT	CEL IIIE	DEI2 DRE	F42 HAN	GOL IIIE	HOR II8Y	K275 TAL	MOR I2E	PAI7 TER	RAM 463E	CUE IX	7 OUT	TRE 8IE	I YEH
	BA5I AFC	BI2I DES	CHA II3L	DEL IIIA	FAR 2R	GI0 UGH	HOI2 NER	KYT 7E	MAII ORY	PAII TRY	RAM 503N	5 NUF	TRE 8IE	TI2 OLL	YEL 85
HYS 5I0P	BAS 2A	BI2I LL	CHII EER	DEL I3R	F47 GUY	GOW 3R	HOU 5I3Y	LAM IIIB	MAII TLE	PAR 2K	RAII SOM	SON IIG	TRII PHY	YEO II4N	
	BAT I3Y	820 CK	CHE 322Y	DEN I3Y	FAU IIX	GI2 APE	HOW IL	LAM 8E	MAR 6I4S	MOT 7T	PAR I20T	R342 DON	REI4 DER	SOR 47A	YOR I2K










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The very essence of Vatanen: fast, sideways and carrying battle scars on the 1981 Welsh Rally

LAT

LUNCH WITH

Ari Vatanen

World rally champion, failed FIA presidential candidate, successful European politician... the France-based Finn is a man of many parts

WRITER Joe Dunn

"Life without sideways is monotonous," shouts Ari Vatanen as he slaloms up a dirt track towards his local restaurant. "We need salt in life and, for the rally driver, gravel is the salt of life. You can improvise more, you can play more, you can have more fun, you can do more sliding. People say I was not particularly good on Tarmac. I had some good Tarmac events but of course I like sliding. And of course you need to be spectacular, you need to give fun to yourself and your audience."

Vatanen is at the wheel of my Fiat Tipo hire car - proving PJ O'Rouke's adage that the fastest car in the world is a hire car - fiddling with the air-con as we shoot upwards between Provence lavender fields. It is a breath-taking setting but I'm just happy to be here. A week previously it had looked unlikely that an interview would happen with the rallying legend. Despite being 65, Vatanen's diary is busy enough to keep a man half his age on his toes: as well as personal appearances in Finland and France, he is due to visit Estonia, where he is president of the Autosport Union, it was his wife Rita's birthday recently and he is trying to travel to rounds of the World Rally Championship, where his son Max competes in WRC2. "I'll not be home any weekends," reads one email... "I don't know what has happened - my diary is full of holes."

Just when hope was fading of pinning him down, the phone rang: "Can you do next Tuesday," said the voice on the other end "Good. Come to my house for 12 o'clock. Write this down. Take the A51 out of Marseille. When you come to the town called Oraison, come off. Drive along the D*** for 2km then take the left onto the D***. Then stop the car. Set the milometer to zero and drive for exactly 2.6km. Stop. That is my house." (Later, when I mentioned that I'd driven past his front gate on the first attempt he exclaimed: "Aha! You didn't do as I instructed! 2.6km exactly!")

Vatanen is more used to receiving pace-notes than giving them. Throughout the 1970s, '80s and '90s he blazed a trail across the world of rallying, winning the British championship in 1976 and 1980 and the world title in 1981. He took the helm of arguably the greatest of the Group B cars - the Peugeot 205 T16 - before partnering Colin McRae



at Subaru. He took on Paris-Dakar, winning the gruelling event four times, and completed Pikes Peak in record time at the wheel of a Peugeot 405 T16, a video of which has made its way onto YouTube and made the Finn an internet star to a new generation of racing fans.

More recently he has carved out a successful career in politics, as an MEP in Brussels, and at one point he stood for the presidency of the FIA against his old Peugeot team boss Jean Todt. "I love to be alive," he says of his busy diary. "It is hard for me to say 'no' to things."

In person he is not as you may imagine a typically taciturn Finn - perhaps as a result of nearly three decades in the south of France. Over lunch he is garrulous, fluent and open. "I am not like Kimi, or Juha Kankkunen. But they are not ice men really, just shy. We have a saying that an introverted Finn is one who looks at his own feet in a railway carriage; an extrovert Finn looks at the feet of the person opposite."

Back in the car, the restaurant hoves into view and is entirely empty. La Campagne de Pêtre is only open at weekends during winter months, but has made a special exception for Vatanen, who shrugs off the compliment as no big deal. Nonetheless we will be dining alone under the cloudless skies of Provence.

"I don't want to talk solely about motor sport and rallying, I want to talk about life!" he says as we take our seats.

ARI VATANEN WAS BORN IN 1952, IN THE EASTERN AREA OF Finland known as Tuupovaara. According to Wikipedia, the rural area has a population density of 3.7 people per square km, which is comparable with the Western Sahara ("No! It is not Greenland!" he roars when I mention this.)

He had a brother and two sisters, but his childhood was dominated by his father, Aarne. He remembers his father one day taking him to Helsinki in the family car, a Borgward, bought because the car his father really wanted - a Citroën DS 90 - was impossible to get in Finland.

It seems he inherited his passion for engineering and sense of adventure from his father, too. "In the Second World War my father was a bomber pilot flying Bristol Blenheims. He was the only person over 20 years of age in the aeroplane, to give you an idea of how stretched Finland was against Stalin. And he loved to fly low, even in a big plane, so there must have been a rally driver in him.

"It actually got him into trouble. Once when he was coming in to land, he flew so low over a lake just before the runway that the radio antenna [which was a metal wire hung under the plane] hit a boat. The man in the boat swam to shore, called the base and my father was ordered to go to the man's house and apologise.

"Another time he went out in such bad weather that two or three other planes crashed and my father was the only one left. He kept on flying in the middle of the night with no idea where he was until he ran out of fuel.

"I know a bit about aviation because I fly helicopters, so I can imagine him in the middle of the night in a big Bristol Blenheim, unable to locate any airfields. He must have had some moonlight though, because he managed to land on a lake - and I know how difficult that must have been because it would have been all white. He survives, the crew survives, the plane survives. He went to the nearest house - they thought it was the Russians at first - and stayed the week. Then they made a runway, refuelled and he took off and flew back to base."

Vatanen is animated as he tells this story, but he is more measured when asked what his most vivid childhood memory is. "October 15, which was a Saturday. My father goes to the garage to get a new wedding ring, because being a farmer his old one was wearing out. At the same time he got two seat belts fitted. The following day we go to the funeral of one of my mother's friends in a neighbouring village. It is less than 40km away and just before we arrive at that place, over the brow of a hill comes another car and so my father brakes and we go

Ari Vatanen

A career in pictures



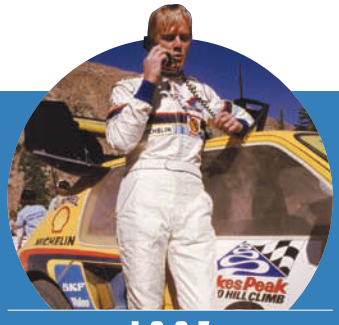
1974

Co-driven by Alf Krogell, Vatanen made his WRC debut on the 1974 1000 Lakes. Their Opel Ascona retired after losing a wheel



1981

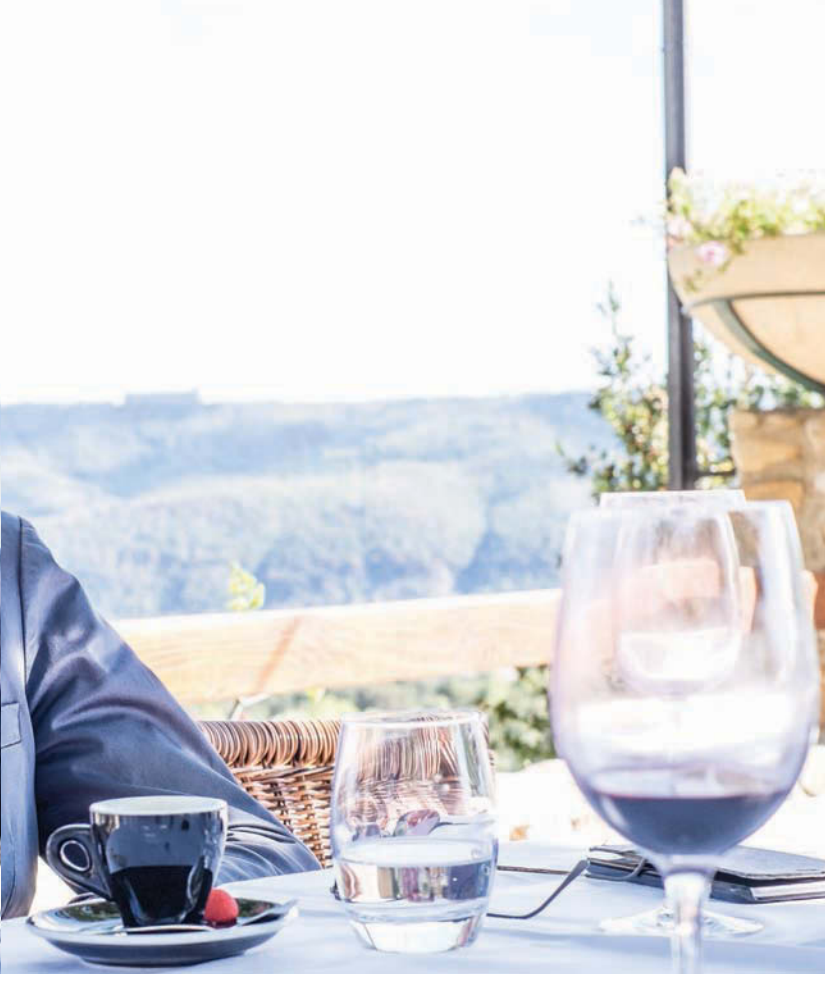
After scoring his maiden international win on the 1980 Acropolis, he went on to take the following year's WRC title



1987

After a serious accident that almost claimed his life, Vatanen returned to action in '87. He won Paris-Dakar and, here, tackled Pikes Peak in a 205 T16

LAT & McKLEIN



slightly to the left-hand side and then boom. Head on.

"We four children were all in the back and I remember we all tumbled around together. My mother broke a few ribs and hurt her leg, but my father's head hit the solid steering wheel and it breaks his neck. So he dies on the spot. And I remember seeing him leaning against the wheel and he doesn't move and someone - a bystander - says 'Well, the driver has lost consciousness.' I thought: 'Ah, he has only lost consciousness,' but he was dead."

He says that if his father, who was 42, had been wearing a seatbelt he would have survived. His mother never remarried.

The accident had a profound impact on him, but also an unusual one: "Apparently, I said afterwards that I will tame the car," he says. "And maybe I did go on to tame the car. But I learnt also that you may be able to tame the car, but you can't tame life. Life will tame you."

As a child he remembers being obsessed with rallying. "The first time I saw a rally was 1964 in the middle of June, when one came for the first time to Tuupovaara. At 2am, in Tuupovaara in June, it is a fantastic light, half night and half day... and in that fantastic light they came...

"I waited until 10pm when the rest of the family had gone to bed then went by bicycle. I got to a bank on a long left-hand corner and waited four hours before the first car came. And then in the summer Finnish light the first Volvo 544 comes with the drum brakes glowing hot as it goes around sideways. That night my spirit went with the car and my body stayed on the bank."

His mother was not impressed with his rallying ambitions, but did not stand in his way, and he passed his driving test on his 18th birthday. And in October 1974, while studying at technical college, he gained his first taste of proper competition. "There was a rally in my home town, and I entered. Hannu Mikkola was also there, with Timo Mäkinen as his co-driver. After the first stage, Mäkinen asked who'd been second fastest and someone replied: 'You were. A young guy called Vatanen was quickest.' They couldn't believe it. After that Mikkola took it more seriously and won the rally while I came second, but that was the start."

Later that year, he went one better. "There was another rally in the area and on that occasion Hannu Mikkola came and I beat him by seven seconds in my Opel Ascona. He was in a Ford Escort. After that rally I didn't go to college on Monday morning, I didn't go at all any more. I thought I'd just stay close to the telephone and they'd start calling me from various parts of the world.

"They did not call. Nobody called."

It was a tough time for him, he says now. He had quit college to gamble on a professional rally career that appeared to have backfired. His girlfriend had split up with him leaving him, as he says, "broke heart wise and money wise". He had been forced to take a job selling books door to door in the Finnish winter. "I was in a hole. I remember I stopped at the side of the road one day and cried. Then in early 1975 I came home to my flat and there was a letter waiting; a hand-written letter from a man called John Thomas."

> *Dear Ari,*
>
> *Having spoken to Gerry Phillips of* Motoring News *about your lack of sponsorship, he has told me to write to you regarding the Welsh International Rally, run from May 9th to 11th 1975.*
>
> *After speaking to the local Opel dealer about sponsoring yourself and I in your car for the event, if of course you should be prepared to have myself as your co-driver, they would be very interested in backing us for the said event, providing it would be within their budget. When they asked what sort of cash would be required I said about £250 to £300 for this event. The Welsh entry being £60.*
>
> *Yours faithfully,*
>
> *John Thomas*



1988

One year on, Vatanen returned to Colorado and this time conquered Pikes Peak at the wheel of a Peugeot 405 T16



1998

When Nigel Mansell made one of his early comebacks, in the Chamonix 24 Hours, Vatanen was assigned to co-drive their Ford Escort



2009

At the end of Max Mosley's FIA presidential reign, Vatanen pitched for the role but lost out to Jean Todt – formerly his Peugeot team boss



2017

Like father, like son – Ari with Max, who made his World Rally Championship debut in 2014 and has been competing this year in WRC2

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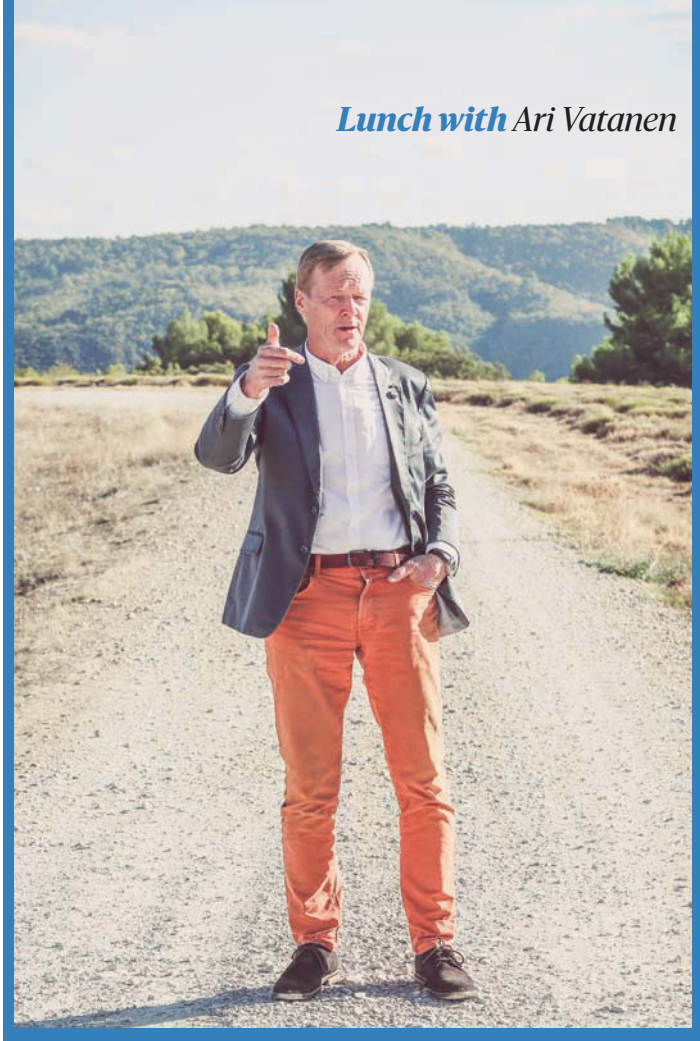


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Vatanen didn't need to be asked twice. "I put my battered Opel on the boat and went to the Welsh Rally. That is thanks to John Thomas. We only did one rally together, but without John Thomas I would not be here. He is Mr Nobody in the who's who book of motor sport, but he is crucial. John made the difference. I still speak to him every month."

Thomas may have lured Vatanen to the UK (the pair finished 24th in the Welsh Rally, won by Roger Clark and Jim Porter in a Ford Escort RS1800 MkII) but it was Vatanen's relationship with David Richards that would come to define his early career. He first met the man who would go on to run Prodrive in a bar in Jamaica in 1975, during his first international rally: "I'll never forget it. He said: 'I'm David Richards, professional co-driver,' and I thought to myself, 'Wow, even the co-drivers are professional'."

The pair hit it off and together entered the Scottish Rally, going up against Mäkinen, Mikkola and Clark and running in the top three for much of the event. In his biography, Richards recalls, "This car should have been far behind everybody else's but Ari was just extraordinary. But it did rather fall to bits. It had holes in the floor, which meant we were hit by stones coming through. I think we finished seventh or eighth and Ari got the man of the rally award."

Vatanen had also caught the eye of Stuart Turner, Ford's motor sport boss, who offered him a drive for the 1976 season. "I will never forget seeing the three cars and one said Roger Clark, one said Timo Mäkinen and one said Ari Vatanen. I thought such things did not happen in real life. It was very much a learning curve, not just as a driver but also as a human being. Everything was a novelty."

At the wheel of the Ford Escort RS1800 Vatanen quickly became a favourite of British fans. His temperament and penchant for going sideways made him a cult figure. It is a time he remembers fondly. "I don't know why British rally fans liked me so much. Maybe it was because I was committed and liked to slide. I do remember that in those early years, even when I was starting about 25th, the crowds would stay at the best bends to wait for me, rather than move along with the leaders. The Escort was fantastic to drive too - you took it fast in to the bends, brake late and see what happens. You needed to push. Very often I didn't finish rallies; it meant I had a rich life but poorer contracts."

Despite his frequent mishaps Vatanen rewarded Turner's faith by winning the British championship in 1976 with Peter Bryant as co-driver, then again in 1980 with Richards. His first international win came that same year with victory on the Acropolis Rally. His relationship with Richards was blossoming, too, with the two men and Richards's future wife Karen forming a close bond. Looking back today, he says that he always knew Richards would do more than just compete. "He is the Richard Branson of rallying. He was always dynamic in that way of spotting opportunities that others didn't. For example at that time in Finland we had rally jackets, I think called Happy Times. They were well made from cotton, but in England everyone was wearing these plastic jackets that were really horrible and squeaked when you moved. The next thing I know he had done this big deal to import them. I said: 'You could have told me about it!'

> *"An introverted Finn looks at his own feet; an extrovert Finn looks at the feet of the person opposite"*

"Once we saw a fighter pilot going fast through a Welsh valley and David and I both share a passion for flying. I said 'Wow, that must be fantastic going that fast.' And I always remember David sayng: 'Yes, for a while. But not in the long run.' Because David wants to have a project to run, rather than just flying. He is a man who wants to build something."

The pair soon became a force to be reckoned with in the world championship, too, winning the 1981 title in the last rally of the season. "Before the start Jean Todt was leading the championship as co-driver for Guy Fréquelin - because of my mistakes - and we had to win that last event [the RAC]. It had happened so quickly, too, because it was only in 1980 that I won my first rally, the Acropolis."

Vatanen and Richards came in second behind Hannu Mikkola's Audi Quattro, but it was enough to take the championship after Fréquelin and Todt crashed out. "I have a picture at home of David hugging me at the end of the last stage - it was only after that point that we could be sure that we had won and that I wasn't going to make a mistake."

Because Ford had pulled out of the world championship the previous year, the Rothmans-sponsored Escort RS1800 MkII was technically a private entry. It means that Vatanen has the distinction of being the last privateer to win the world championship. He is also the last Ford driver to win the championship - a record he'd like to lose: "I hope Sébastien Ogier takes away the burden this year. It looks promising."

Richards and Vatanen parted ways the following season, with Vatanen choosing not to defend the title but compete in the British championship instead. The two men's paths would cross again a decade later - but the parting then would be less amicable.

VATANEN ORDERS THE MUSHROOM RAVIOLI, DUCK BREAST AND plum sauce and a bottle of Château de Rousset. He says that Richard, the restaurant owner, once ran a Michelin-starred establishment in Paris before relocating to Provence with his wife. "You can see why," he says. "It is the most beautiful place. The weather, the light..."

He had said something similar earlier when we met at his beautiful house. Standing on the balcony overlooking vineyards he had gestured to the surroundings and proclaimed it the most perfect place in the world. It made him feel the joy of being alive and of life. Then he added, from nowhere, "It is a long way from the *couloir de la mort*," - death row.

Couloir de la mort is the phrase uttered by Jean Todt, team manager for Peugeot, when he visited Vatanen in an Argentinian hospital in 1986. The Finn was drifting between life and death after a horrific accident.

Peugeot had signed Vatanen to a works contract in 1984, for its new

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Kicking up dust on the 1984 Acropolis, when engine trouble forced him out

LAT

all-wheel-drive 205 T16 – one of the greatest Group B cars. It and Vatanen were a potentially combustible mix. Their first rally together was Corsica 1984. On the final day he was leading Markku Alén by two minutes and contemplating winning a French rally in a French car on its first run. "We came to a left-hand bend at about 90mph and on one side the tyres were aquaplaning and on the other they were not. I swerved to the side of the cliff and we went off over the edge. The car rolled over and over and came to a rest on its wheels. I said "we're alive" and we scrambled out, just as the car started to catch fire – because the fuel tanks were under the seats. If we had lost consciousness it would have been over immediately."

But when it went right, the Finn and the 205 were unstoppable. Between the 1984 1000 Lakes Rally and the 1985 Swedish, Vatanen and co-driver Terry Harryman won five rallies. He was flying, and on course to win the title for a second time. Then things started to go wrong.

"Before Argentina I had had five victories. I reached Portugal and thought I'd have six, but I had a puncture and the suspension broke. We go to Safari and there was a mechanical problem and I don't think we finished. Then came Corsica and we had two punctures on the right-hand side after I cut the corner – another big crash. On the Acropolis the steering column wasn't attached so on the first stage the steering wheel comes off. Can you imagine?"

"People now don't like taking risks, we want to forbid everything. That is crazy. Life is full of risks"

A second place in New Zealand set up Argentina as a must-win rally. "That's real attack – and when you are in real-attack mode then there is no room for error."

Speeding down a long straight the car hit a concealed dip at 120mph and somersaulted off the road. The force of the crash meant his seat broke free and Vatanen was thrown around inside, suffering severe leg injuries and potentially fatal internal bleeding. He was airlifted to hospital, gravely ill. As well as being visited by Todt, the archbishop of Finland, who happened to be in South America, also came to see him.

Vatanen made a remarkable physical recovery, but the mental scars didn't heal so easily. He fell into a deep depression and became convinced that he had been infected with the AIDS virus during a blood transfusion and that he had infected his family.

The subject is plainly still unsettling. "You don't overcome a crash like Argentina. You may look physically healthy, but who is to say that you are really healthy? Even the following summer I was still taking 20mg of valium a day. Occasionally I thought: 'OK, I am not dying.' Most of the time I thought I was dying, though, and I thought my family was dying because at that time you didn't know how AIDS was transmitted. I thought the doctors were in a conspiracy against me. I would feel OK, but then I would revert to my surrealistic fears."

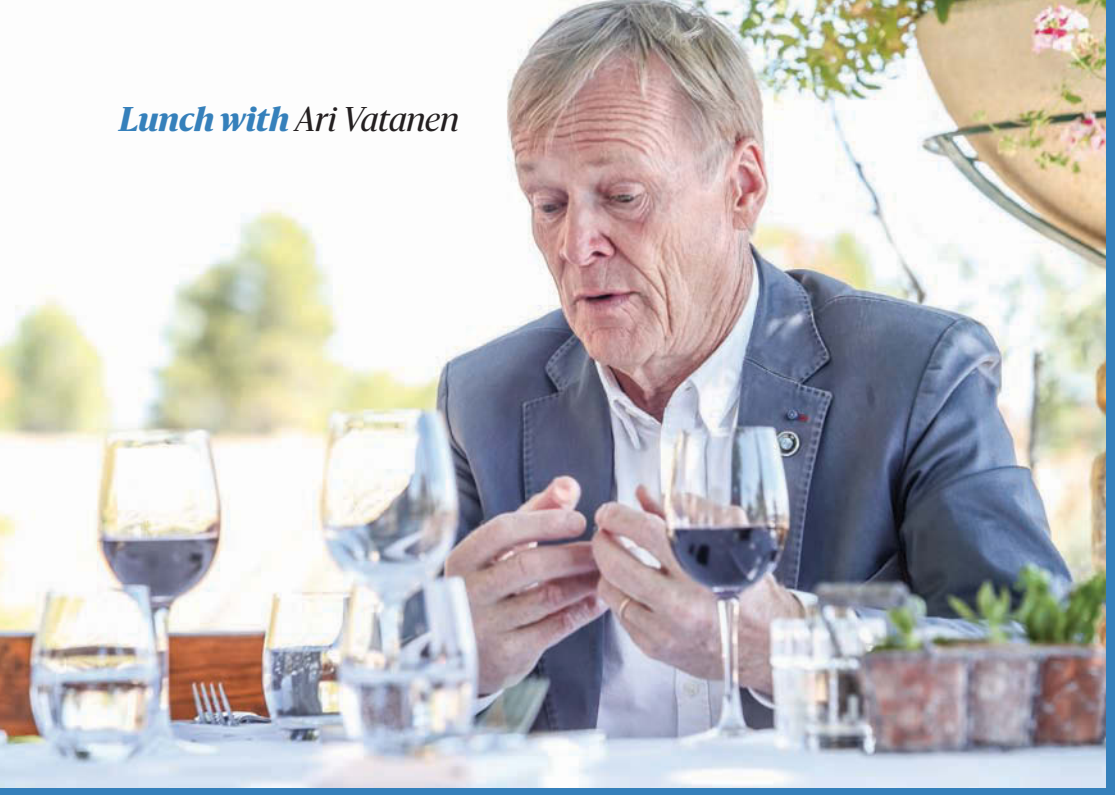
Asked if he ever fears falling back into depression he says he doesn't, but that young men should learn to be more open about their mental health. "I awoke from that world and left it behind me. Men should talk more about mental health because you don't benefit from hiding. Everyone has moments... Mine was probably worse because I was under extreme stress and I was also very weak after such a bad injury. I am confident that it was part of my accident."

He is equally clear-eyed about Group B, saying that it was right to ban it but that it was a good thing that the regulations had existed. "Group B was not reasonable but it had to be done. You can't stand still because you then go backwards. You only find added value by taking risks. People now don't like taking risks, we want to forbid everything. That is crazy. Life is full of risks. Group B was one of the ways we learn. But we need to protect the people watching. The crowds parting like a sea and touching the car... totally unacceptable. Totally unacceptable."

For the record, the last two words are said with a shake of the head and a nostalgic smile.

EIGHTEEN MONTHS LATER, VATANEN WAS BACK BEHIND THE wheel of a Peugeot. This time, though, it wasn't for a rally but the Paris-Dakar. Taking on the most gruelling event in the world isn't the most obvious comeback option, but Vatanen feels it made perfect sense. "It was so popular, and when it went through Africa it was an amazing event. On the section from Paris the road was lined with people. It was incredible and I was there thinking: 'I am alive, I am alive!'

"I knew I had a bit of a reputation, especially after the accident and







so I said to myself that I'd drive slowly, I was overtaken by someone and I thought 'let it go'.... And then suddenly the front of the car collapses and I could see people in the crowd saying 'Look at this Vatanen, he must be crazy this is a 13,000km race and he has broken the car after 2km.' I crawled to the end of the stage and everyone passed me.

"Jean [Todt] asked what had happened. I didn't know but pointed out that this time it wasn't my fault. They found out later that clips hadn't been fitted to ball joints in the front suspension, so on the first bump the socket popped out. Result? I was 275th or something. Every truck and bike was in front of me and it meant I had to overtake, which is dangerous because if you leave the track to pass you don't know what will be there - holes, rocks anything. But I had no choice, little by little I moved up and eventually I won the event."

It was an amazing achievement, and testament to Vatanen's bravery as well as skill. In fact, he went on to win the Dakar a further three times. He also conquered Pikes Peak, the American hillclimb, in record time at the wheel of the monstrous 600bhp 405 T16. The award-winning film of the attempt, *Climb Dance*, is still the definitive account of the famous ascent. Even today, he says, people in the street hail him by placing their forearm over their eyes, mimicking the breath-taking moment he takes one hand off the steering wheel to shield his eyes from the sun, just as another sheer-drop bend approaches.

But rallying has always been his first love. Although he was never to win another world championship rally, he competed hard with Mitsubishi in the late 1980s and then with Subaru, between 1992-93, when he was Colin McRae's team-mate.

"Colin was not a polished talent. He was very much like myself in driving style, not very calculated and professional in that sense. And that is why people like him - and me. They can watch him rise, crash and rise again. You can respect a perfect champion, but not love them."

Ari Vatanen career in brief

***Born 27/4/52, Tuupovaara, Finland* 1970 First rally start 1974 WRC debut, 1000 Lakes 1976 British rally champion 1980 First international win, Acropolis; British rally champion for a second time 1981 Wins WRC, co-driven by David Richards 1983 Safari Rally winner, Opel 1984 Joins Peugeot, three wins in 205 T16 1985 Two more victories, but season curtailed by serious accident in Argentina 1987-91 Four Paris-Dakar Rally wins in five attempts, Peugeot 1998 Final WRC podium, Safari 1999 Elected to European parliament 2007 Last WRC start, Finland 2009 Beaten to FIA presidency by Jean Todt**

His time at Subaru is remembered more painfully for the manner of his departure, however. The move had initially seen him reunited him with his old co-driver Richards, whose Prodrive business was running the Subaru world rally team, but the relationship was not to last. After 11 events, he was unceremoniously dropped.

"At the end of 1993 David took Carlos Sainz, not me, and I was out in the cold. That is one of those frozen frames. I was staying in Banbury when David told me and was supposed to be meeting Rita in London but I could not tell her; I didn't want to spoil the evening. In the morning Rita finds me crying and then I had to tell her. But that is what happened. It was more painful because of my history with David of course, but *c'est la vie*. There are no hard feelings."

Later, he is effusive in his support for Richards in his new role as chairman of the MSA, saying that he will be the best thing to happen to British motor sport.

IT IS ALMOST TIME TO LEAVE THE DESERTED RESTAURANT. THERE is much we haven't discussed, not least Vatanen's political career, his challenge - shortlived and ultimately doomed - to Jean Todt's appointment as FIA president and his role in Estonian motor sport. But it is not hard to see why Vatanen enjoys mixing with the great and good. He has an easy charm and a finely tuned political antenna that covers a lot of ground: our conversation embraces everything from tomato import duties to immigration and Brexit ("a slap in the face of history").

One thing has been nagging, though: it so happens that two days before our lunch Ari's son Max had been involved in a serious accident during the Rally of Spain. He had hurt his shoulder but was not seriously injured. What does Ari think of his son's career choice? "I never encouraged nor discouraged him," he says.

And for someone who talks so often about how important his family is, does he ever think about what he put his family through during his own driving career - knowing as he does what it's like to grow up without a father? "It is a justified question. Living without a father takes its toll and I find it still catches you out. Of course it leaves a mark on you. Maybe you are not as complete as a human being.

"Am I selfish to put family though it? I made mistakes but I never did any foolhardy things. If I had tried to learn to be a responsible father and husband... Of course, rallying is selfish in some ways but on the other hand it is how life calls you. If I was to judge my life purely on how many victories I had then you could call me selfish, but I don't, I judge myself by my family. I don't regret what I have done."

Pause.

"But yes, perhaps I should have braked a bit earlier."

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A fish out of water?

The Penske PC22 was designed to lap Indianapolis at 220-odd mph, among other things, yet one has recently been active within the statelier confines of Prescott and Goodwood...

WRITER Simon Arron **PHOTOGRAPHER** Lyndon McNeil



Fashion sense was as diverse as the entry at Prescott: Jeremy Smith prepares to venture out in the family-run Penske

By tradition, this is the kingdom of the diverse. Nestling close to the small village of Gotherington (population 1200), Prescott customarily welcomes everything from Austin 7s to the muscularly aero-efficient Goulds and suchlike that proliferate in the British Hillclimb Championship. Even so, a Marlboro-liveried Penske PC22 looks slightly out of place. It's not just the striking looks, either, but the little details - a fading Dymo label that confirms the cockpit padding once supported the head of Emerson Fittipaldi, or a note on the steering wheel that confirms it was previously gripped by Al Unser Jr. A car, then, of some provenance.

Built at Penske's old UK factory in Poole before heading off to its career in the States, the PC22 is here for a demonstration run at the Gloucestershire hill's annual US-themed Autumn Classic, its third appearance since it returned to Britain two years ago. Earlier in the summer it had been shaken down during a high-speed parade at Brands Hatch's American SpeedFest, while driver Jeremy Smith took it to second overall at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, beaten by Justin Law's Jaguar XJR-12D for the sake of 0.09sec. At Prescott, though, there are a couple of hurdles: it can't run in the rain, as it has but one set of rubber with very limited tread, and it doesn't have enough steering lock to negotiate the tight left-hander leading into the return road at the course's summit. Nor is it fitted with a reverse gear... In the end the weather relents and a compromise is struck, Smith completing a few short runs via a figure-of-eight loop at the bottom of the hill so the crowd can at least watch and hear the car in action.

BUILT BY ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST motor sport corporations, and believed to have been tested by works drivers Fittipaldi, Unser and Paul Tracy before being sold on to Bettenhausen Racing (for whom Stefan Johansson finished 11th in the 1993 Indy 500 - a race Fittipaldi won), PC22 chassis no1 is now operated by a team running out of a garage attached to a family home in Selby - so how did it find its way from Indiana to Yorkshire?

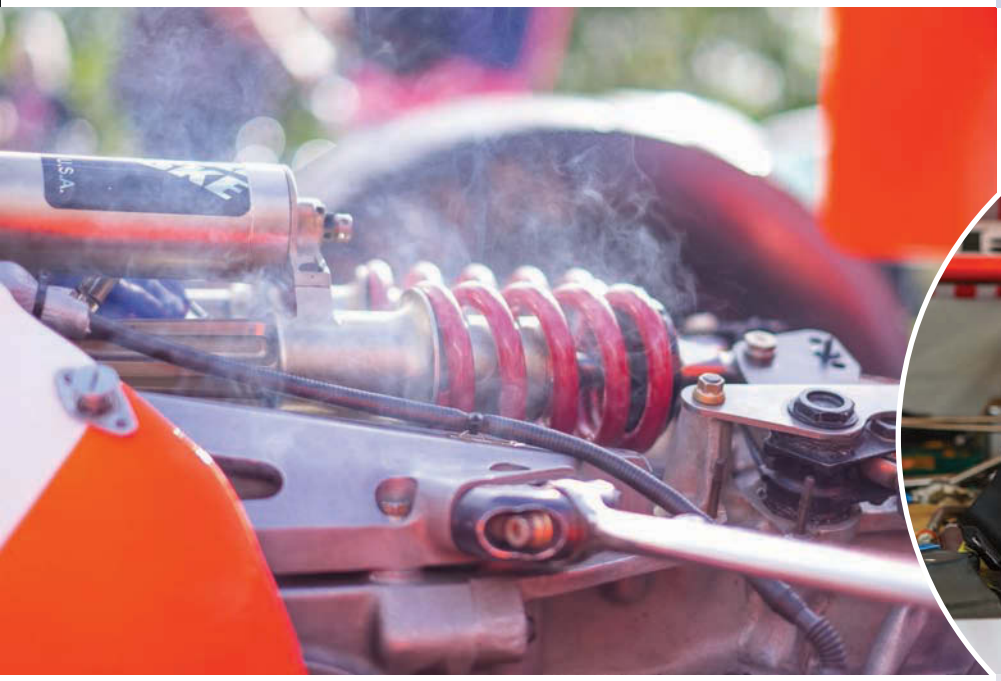
The car is owned by Jeremy's father Anthony - known to all and sundry as 'Taff'. Steeped in the art of vintage aircraft restoration, but with a strong leaning towards historic cars (he currently races a Formula Junior Elva), Smith Sr was friends with the late Paul Morgan, co-founder of Ilmor Engineering, and knows his son Patrick, whose company Dawn Treader Performance restored the Penske PC26 featured in the February 2010 edition of *Motor Sport*.

"I've always admired the shape of Penske's cars," he says, "and have long thought the PC22 looked best of all. Patrick helped a great deal when I was looking around and an opportunity arose two years ago to buy one from a dealer in Indianapolis. It came as a show car, having belonged to Anthony Edwards - the actor who appeared in *ER* and played Goose in *Top Gun*. I believe it was in his front room for about 20 years. It came without an engine, so we had to buy that separately and Paul Knapton at XTec Engineering gave us a great deal of assistance.

"The original turbo was a Garrett, designed for trucks, but we've gone for a BorgWarner that's the same size and is used on current Indycars. The way Paul has mapped the engine, there are no nasty surprises and the torque curve is quite linear. One of the things we couldn't do was run the original Gen4 ECU, because it's a slow system and you need old computers to talk to it. ECUs have come a long way since 1993, so through Paul we converted



"We weren't used to the heat the exhaust generates – as soon as we switch off we have to cover the engine with wet towels, to prevent the paint blistering"



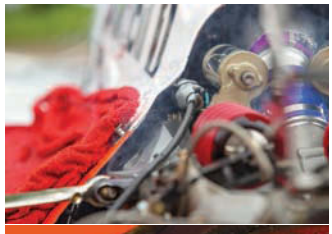


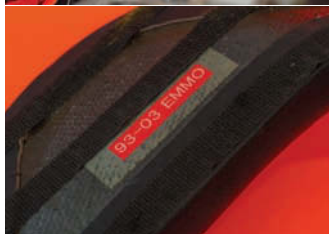
the engine to run with a MoTeC system, which is much easier from our perspective. We are doing this very much as a fun, family thing - myself, Jeremy and my sons-in-law, James Dean and Mark Herbert.

"I like building and running cars and get as much of a buzz from that as I do from actually racing. It might be a disadvantage in some respects, because once I've finished a new project I really don't want to abuse it - but you have to do that if you want to be competitive. With the Penske, the arrangement is that Jeremy drives and I'll be the grease monkey and team patron. We are also building a Group C2 Spice, though, and the plan is to share driving duties in that."

There were one or two teething troubles during the Penske's restoration, but to Anthony such things belong in the realm of the straightforward. "The engine wasn't the same as the original," he says, "and didn't quite marry up to the gearbox, so there were a few things to change. But as our main interest is aerospace, we have access to all kinds of appropriate expertise when we need it.

"It took about a year and a half to get everything right, because this is a serious bit of kit - it will do 100mph in first gear and the 2.65-litre Ilmor-Chevy V8 puts out 790bhp at







14,000rpm, though we've limited it to 12,000 for the sake of longevity. It was important to do the job thoroughly and everything has been stripped down and rebuilt to the correct specification. The Penske shocks have all been serviced and everything is as new as we can make it. There are lots of similarities between how you assemble racing cars and aeroplanes, because you can't afford to have anything go wrong, and Dawn Treader has given good advice that has been gratefully received.

"We're getting accustomed to running on methanol, which is something we haven't done before - I've sourced a supplier in Scotland and he delivers it to us. We reckon the Penske returns about two gallons per mile, so it has quite a thirst. We certainly weren't used to the heat the exhaust generates when running on methanol - as soon as we switch off we have to cover the engine with wet





towels, to prevent the paint blistering.

"We have run a couple of late 1970s Formula 1 cars in the past, but nothing that comes close to this. We used to own the March 2-4-0 six-wheeler, which I found as a bag of bits in Rotherham. It took a bit of time to get that running properly. We did the Festival of Speed twice with it, Jeremy taking one class win, and a few of the Historic Sports Car Club's Derek Bell Trophy [Formula Libre] races. It was starting to become more competitive, but we felt we'd reached the limit of what we could achieve. When a Swiss collector made us an offer, we decided to accept and that helped us to fund the Penske."

Have there been any significant obstacles to restoration?

"Not really," he says. "It has just been a series of little things - a matter of keeping our heads down and paying attention to detail, then one day you look up and it's all done. We're short of wheels - we have only four and they built eight PC22s in all, so I'm sure there must be a few in the States - if anybody has any PC22 wheels, let us know! There is a chance we might in future be able to acquire chassis no5, which would help us build up a parts inventory. These aren't particularly expensive cars in America, but what you get for your money in terms of performance and build quality... it's amazing. Look at the suspension welding, for instance: it's beautiful."

Spoken like an engineer.





Owner and team patron Anthony Smith was drawn to the PC22 by its poise and high-grade engineering

JEREMY IS SIMILARLY POSITIVE ABOUT the way things feel from his perspective. He competed in junior single-seaters (and placed third in Class B of the 1999 British F3 Championship) and the UK Porsche Carrera Cup before later stepping up to historic F1 cars, firstly with a Surtees TS20 and then the March, but nothing quite prepared him for the current challenge.

"It does feel insanely fast," he says, "a bit like sitting at the front of a rollercoaster and holding a steering wheel. It has loads of torque and spins its wheels in most gears, despite which - and this is going to sound like a contradiction - it actually feels quite tractable, and very forgiving. It's awesome and has loads of grip once it gets into its stride, even at somewhere like Goodwood. We crossed the finishing line at about 150mph at the Festival of Speed and probably pulled about the same along the top straight at Brands."

He's smiling as he talks.

"I feel like I'm grinning every time I get in it," he says. "At the kind of cornering speeds that would cause the March's back end to step out, this doesn't. I'm sure I could have gone quicker at Goodwood, but it's a matter of building confidence. I was a bit gutted afterwards - it was great to finish second, but to come so close with not much preparation... We don't get many opportunities to test and each time we go out we discover something new. It is a very steep learning curve."

Despite the bewildering array of motor racing championships in the UK, there isn't an obvious slot for a Penske PC22. "We could do the BOSS GP [Big Open Single Seater] series in Europe," Anthony says, "but that's not really the objective. I bought this car because I love the engineering and the way it has been built.

"We weren't expecting a great deal at the Festival of Speed - we had no idea how the car would perform and Jeremy hadn't raced for a couple of years - but we were delighted with the way things went, especially as we're a very small team and there are a few professional outfits there. To mix with them and do well was great - but we're sure it can go quicker.

"We've been invited to take part in an exhibition event at next year's Indy 500, which we're looking at, and then a week later there's a competitive race for historic Indycars on the infield circuit at Indianapolis. We'd like to do that, too, and then it will be a matter of hurrying back to the UK for Goodwood - if we're invited again, of course.

"I'd also like to run the car competitively at Harewood next season, if an opportunity arises, because that's a reasonably local venue for us and would be very convenient. British hillclimbs are mostly rather tight, though, as we've seen here at Prescott, so we'd have to make sure it can negotiate all the corners. Steering lock is obviously limited and we have to bear in mind that this is a 200mph car - a bit of a guided missile."

Or, as Jeremy puts it, "I'm fairly sure ours is not a typical family garage."

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DEM DROME



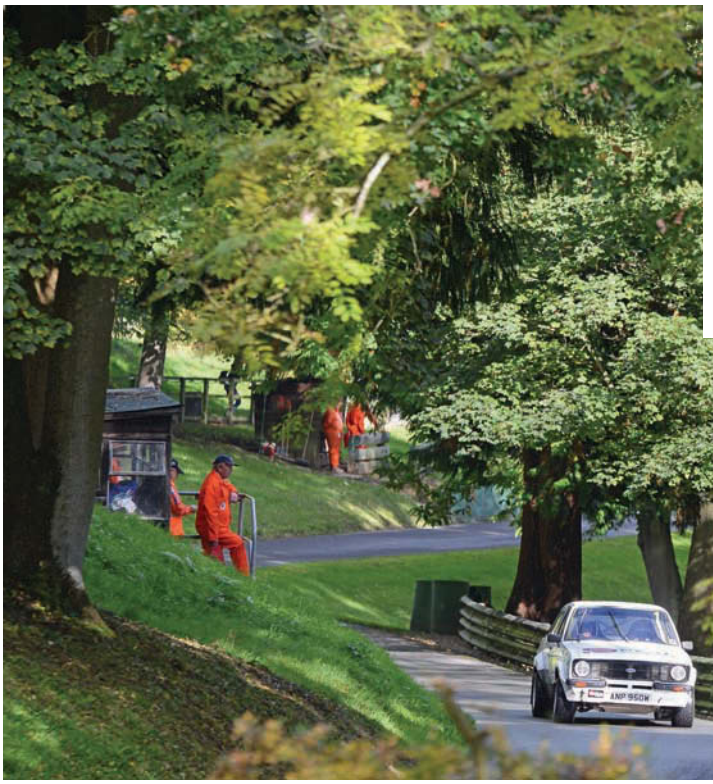

DEMON DROME







For all the imported Americana, the hillclimb also featured homely staples such as the Escort Mk2





A postcard from Prescott

The Autumn Classic concluded the local hillclimb season with a cocktail of US muscle and traditional British whimsy

PHOTOGRAPHERS Lyndon McNeil & Simon Arron

Given the theme of the weekend, it was a little odd to walk into the paddock on Saturday morning and come face to face with a Hillman Imp, rather than a Chevrolet Camaro, but such are the delights of any hillclimb paddock. The weekend might have had an American theme, but the entry was laced with everything from Austin A35s to ferocious UK hill specials via flat-head Ford Model Ts and Gillian Goldsmith's Daimler V8-powered Cooper.

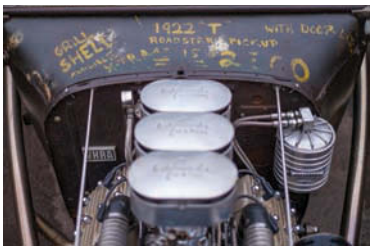
Although the hillclimb – actually two separate events, one on each day of the weekend – provides a central motif, the Autumn Classic is enriched by live music, dancing, car and bike displays and sideshows that included a wall of death, originally a feature of UK carnivals in the late 1920s.

The 2018 event is provisionally scheduled for October 7/8.









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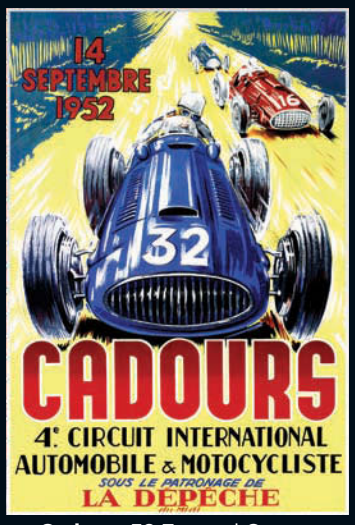
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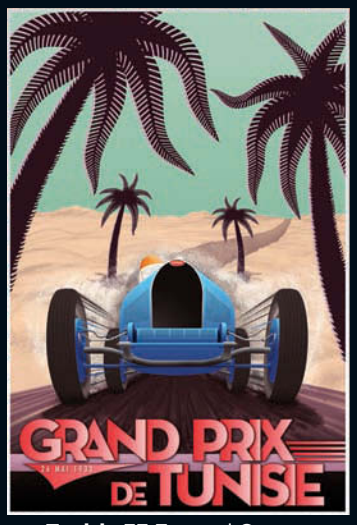


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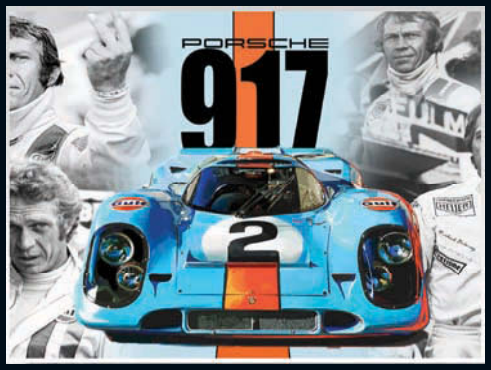
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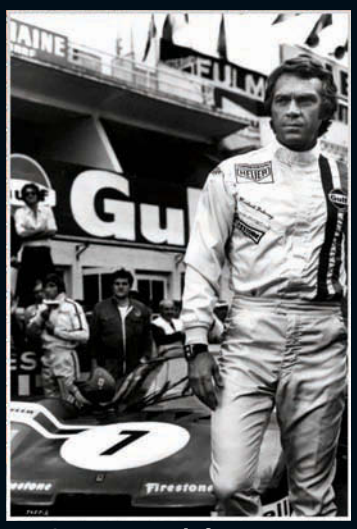
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Timing is everything

EDITOR Richard Holt

PRECISION

WINTER 2017



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RESERVOIR

The classic analogue watch face has existed for hundreds of years. The earliest clock faces - which appeared more than half a millennium ago - had just an hour hand, that was later to be joined by a minute hand and much later still a second hand. Today, the vast majority of buyers remain loyal to this watch layout - it is familiar to them from when they learnt to read as a child and reading it becomes as natural as knowing when to breathe. But in a resurgent watch market it is not surprising that some companies want to try and shake things up a bit.

New French company Reservoir has a range of watches based around the theme of instruments from cars, planes and submarines. Each watch has a 43mm case and a dial featuring a retrograde minute hand. The hand moves from zero on the left to 60 on the right, before clicking back to zero again at the end of the hour. As it moves back to zero the number in the little window below it jumps on to indicate the next hour. Below that a fuel-gauge style indicator shows how much more power the watch has before it runs down.

All Reservoir watches are water-resistant to 50 metres and are powered by a Swiss automatic movement. *From £3500, www.reservoir-watch.com*

The Reservoir GT Tour pays tribute to 1960s sports cars. Case in satin-finished steel, or steel with black PVD coating



The Reservoir Supercharged pays tribute to pre-war-era racing cars, and comes with either a black or a white dial



The Reservoir Tiefenmesser (German for depth gauge) is submarine-themed and comes with either a stainless steel case, or a solid bronze case with a titanium caseback



The Reservoir Airfight, inspired by aircraft cockpit instruments, has either a black PVD-coated stainless or a titanium case

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BREMONT







Britain's watchmakers were once the best in the world. In the mid-1700s finding ever more accurate ways to tell the time was the pinnacle of technological progress, and Britain was miles ahead. In 1759, the Yorkshireman John Harrison finally solved a conundrum that had been eluding his rivals for years - he invented a marine chronometer to determine longitude at sea. This revolutionised navigation and played a vital role in Britain's dominance of the oceans.

But while many of the great watchmaking inventions came from Britain, the processes of large-scale production were handled much better elsewhere, most enduringly in Switzerland. By the time battery-powered watches appeared in the late 20th century, British watchmaking had gone the way of the Empire.

Nick and Giles English are the best-known faces of a 21st-century drive to get the British watch industry going again. In 2002, the brothers abandoned careers in finance and founded the watch brand Bremont. The aeroplane-obsessed Englishes began by making pilots' watches and have since diversified into beautifully made diving watches, sailing watches, and even pieces inspired by Norton motorbikes and Jaguar E-Types.

The brand's rapid growth has been driven in no small part by the ability of the brothers to sell a narrative of a family firm driven by passion. This year, as part of their novel approach to publicity, Nick and Giles embarked upon a 3500-mile drive across the US in a 1973 Porsche 911 that Giles has owned for more than 20 years, and a Jaguar E-Type that their father bought for their mother more than 30 years ago (below).

The trip took them from New York down to Washington DC, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma and finally to San Antonio in Texas. The idea was to get to know more of their retailers and buyers in the US, their second-biggest market after the UK. Along the way they also found time for a spot of fundraising, campaigning to raise money for victims of Hurricane Harvey, which struck shortly before they embarked on their trip.

"We had a really touching response from everyone we met," says Giles English. "Two beautiful cars get a reaction anywhere in the world, but the English number plates, right-hand drive and Globetrotter British cases on the racks initiated many conversations. What we realised was that road trips are in the American blood - they get it and understood why we were doing it."



ANDY WILSON



Bremont 40mm Supermarine S301 £2995



Bremont Jaguar Mark II £5195

They naturally had a few mechanical issues along the way, particularly with the E-Type. "It had been with my mother for many years with few miles on it and that caused many issues with the brakes and clutch," says Giles. "In hindsight we should have put more miles on it before the trip and changed some of the older components. The 911 was great but then I have always used it regularly. Mechanical things hate to be left unused."

Giles says that a love of cars and watches often goes together, because as well as both being all about "cogs and gears", they also share "great engineering and ageless beauty". He adds: "If a mechanical watch is well serviced it will still work in 200 years, and so will a classic car. Few other possessions offer this."

Bremont is increasing the amount of manufacturing that is done at the firm's facilities in Henley-on-Thames and Silverstone, but they still have to rely on Switzerland for many watch components. But could a large-scale revival of the British industry be on the cards?

"We are working hard at this and that has always been our aim - to play a significant part in the revival," says Giles. "Whether it is investing in training watchmakers, CNC machinists or movement designers, Bremont is investing considerably to bring these skills back. Nothing is quick in watchmaking and a revival will take time - it is a marathon that we are on here."

www.bremont.com





Christopher Ward C7 Rapide Date COSC Ltd edition £905



Christopher Ward C1 Morgan Aero 8 £2795



Christopher Ward C1 Morgan 3 Wheeler £2250



Christopher Ward C1 Morgan Classic £2250





Christopher Ward
co-founder
Mike France



CHRISTOPHER WARD

They said that it could not be done. The business model would not work because nobody wants to buy luxury watches online. But Mike France, co-founder of the online-only watch brand Christopher Ward, is not one to be held back by conventional wisdom.

In the 1990s, following a successful series of retail jobs with some of the British high street's biggest names, France was brought in to turn around the struggling Early Learning Centre, much of which he did by developing it as an online business. When he sold the business to Tim Waterstone for £62 million in 2004, France found himself wondering what challenge to take on next.

He undertook a forensic examination of the watch industry, helped by the insights of some well-connected friends, and thought that he spotted an opportunity. France found out that he could have access to the same watch movements and components that are used by the vast majority of the dominant Swiss companies. By selling online he realised that he would be able offer watches at a greatly reduced mark-up than those of these competitors.

"Everyone said that you can't sell a luxury product online because potential buyers will want to see it for themselves before they buy it," he explains. "Well, they said the same thing about climbing frames when I was running the Early Learning Centre, but they were wrong."

He founded the company in 2005 along with former Early Learning Centre deputy Peter Ellis and Chris Ward - a friend and fellow businessman who gave the firm his name. "Our passion was to produce high-quality desirable watches at reasonable prices," says France. The rest of the market was sceptical, but not any longer. Selling Swiss-made, British-designed watches Christopher Ward has thrived, and only now are other brands catching up to the idea that online is a viable outlet for luxury watches.

But France is modest about the success. "Through a series of lucky breaks we were able to get through those early years. Now we have our own *atelier* in Switzerland and in 2014 we became the first British brand in 50 years to produce our own movement on a commercial scale."

France has a lifelong love of cars, which he puts down to early memories of handing spanners to his father as he repaired a series of old cars on their driveway on a housing estate just outside Liverpool. When talking about a Renault GTA A610 Turbo that he used to own, France shows the signs of being a true enthusiast. After several attempts to track down his original car and buy it back, he laughs as he describes how he is "desperately trying to recapture a feeling of joy at owning such a brilliant car when I was younger".

The collaboration with Morgan, therefore, seemed like a perfect fit when it was announced last year. Morgan approached Christopher Ward and it transpired that the two companies already had a number of clients in common. A design partnership has now produced three watches, one for each of the cars in the Morgan range: the 3 Wheeler, the Classic and the Aero. Each watch contains a custom version of Christopher Ward's hand-wound in-house movement.

The Morgan watches are made available "exclusively to current and former owners of a Morgan motor car" and are sold through the Christopher Ward website and at Morgan dealerships. For non-Morgan people there is an ever-growing range of watches, both quartz and mechanical, all designed in the company's Maidenhead headquarters and lovingly put together in the Christopher Ward *atelier* in Biel, Switzerland.
www.christopherward.co.uk



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FREDERIQUE CONSTANT

A lot of Swiss watchmakers are a bit coy about prices. It is almost as if it is a touch impolite to talk about anything so obvious as how much something costs. Not so for Frederique Constant, which has always made a point about producing what it calls "accessible luxury". It makes an impressive range of watches, from quartz-powered dress watches to moonphases, in-house chronographs and even a very Swiss take on the connected watch. Across the board they keep prices as competitive as possible, without compromising on quality.

FLYBACK CHRONOGRAPH MANUFACTURE
A flyback chronograph - in which you can restart the stopwatch with one push of the button - is a desirable complication that dates back to the 1930s. The new in-house movement in this watch took Frederqiue Constant six years to develop. The case design is also inspired by chronograph designs from the 1930s, with rectangular pushers for the start/stop and reset functions. Available in stainless steel, with or without a rose-gold plate. You can admire the movement, complete with its fancy gold winding rotor, through the sapphire caseback. From £3495

HOROLOGICAL SMARTWATCH
Frederique Constant got in on the smartwatch game early. But there are no blank mobile phone screens here - in this second incarnation of its connected watch, there are various smart functions hidden beneath the face of a classically styled dress watch. It tracks your activity during the day and night, providing feedback via your smartphone to tell you how well you are exercising and sleeping. And there is no need to charge it - it runs off a regular watch battery that lasts several years. The functions are controlled by a single pusher on the crown and there are discreet icons on the screen to let you know when you have calls and messages. Anything that cuts down on the number of times you have to get out your phone and look at it has to be a good thing. £980

SLIMLINE MOONPHASE MANUFACTURE
One of watchmaking's more whimsical complications, there is something pleasantly daft about having an indicator on your watch that tracks the waxing and waning of the moon. Like everything Frederique Constant does, the Moonphase watch is priced at a level that can make certain competitors look a touch on the pricey side. It has an in-house automatic movement and a date subdial on the left nicely balances the moonphase indicator on the right. With a 38.5mm case in either rose-gold plated or polished stainless steel. *£2595*
www.frederiqueconstant.com



BLANCPAIN

Blancpain is known to many motor racing fans because of the GT series that bears the its name. While Blancpain is now firmly embedded in the world of motor sport, the Swiss company has been making watches since before the age of steam, let alone the arrival of the motor car.

In 1735 a man called Jehan-Jacques Blancpain set about producing watches in a workshop in an upstairs room of his house in the Swiss mountain village of Villeret. Blancpain and his descendants built a pioneering watch company that remained in family hands for almost 200 years. It is now part of the Swatch group and is one of the luxury jewels in the watch giant's line-up.

One of Blancpain's best-known watches is the Fifty Fathoms, a diving watch produced in 1953 following a design brief from two commanders of a French navy diving unit. The Fifty Fathoms was the first diving watch to have a rotating bezel to record elapsed time under water and the first to have an automatic movement. As the name suggested it was water resistant to fifty fathoms - around 300 feet. The watch was immortalised in the 1956 film *The Silent World* when it appeared on the wrist of Jacques Cousteau.

Blancpain has played a key role in the resurgence of the mechanical watch market in the late 20th century and under Swatch ownership it has revisited pieces from the back catalogue, including modern takes on the Fifty Fathoms as well as making new pieces like the motor sport-oriented L-Evolution range.

www.blancpain.com



Blancpain Tribute to Fifty-Fathoms MIL-SPEC. Released this year as a tribute to one of the original 1950s Fifty Fathoms watches that was made to strict military requirements. The modern watch has a four-day power reserve and a water-tightness indicator at six o'clock on the dial. In the unlikely event of water seeping into the mechanism, the indicator would change colour. Limited edition of 500 pieces. £10,310

The Blancpain L-Evolution Chronograph Flyback Rattrapante has a carbon-fibre bezel, caseback and dial, and is equipped with a split-seconds column-wheel chronograph with a rattrapante lap-timing function. Look closely and you will see that the hour counter at nine-o'clock is shaped like a Lamborghini badge, reflecting Blancpain's GT series commitments. £40,600



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More information on **frederiqueconstant.com**







MEISTERSINGER

Having a watch with only one hand may seem a bit unusual at first. But in fact it is a glimpse back to an earlier time in horological history. The earliest clocks, on churches and town halls, had just one hand for the hours with minute hands not added until later. The German brand MeisterSinger has made a speciality of handsomely designed one-handers. The clear dials mean you can read the time accurately enough if you need to. But it is also a reminder that life does not always need to be a rush. The MeisterSinger No. 03-40mm has a slim 40mm steel case and an automatic movement.
£1645, www.meistersinger.com

FARER

Farer is one of several British brands getting a name for itself in the resurgent 21st century watch market and has an expanding range of handsome, classically styled watches. The company ethos is adventure and the line-up includes automatic watches that take their names from great explorers' ships - Beagle, Hopewell and Endurance. The Farer Beagle has a 39.5mm stainless steel case and a Swiss-made automatic movement.
£875, www.farer.com

JUNGHANS

Max Bill was a Swiss architect, artist and all-around design genius of the Bauhaus school in Germany. In the 1950s he was asked to design watches and clocks for Junghans. His Junghans wall clock remains a brilliant example of a simple, classic design. The Max Bill watches are such an important part of the Junghans back catalogue that the German firm decided to re-release the range in 2010. They are available as quartz, automatic winding and hand-wound. The Junghans Max Bill Chronoscope has an automatic chronograph movement with a 48-hour power reserve.
£1630, www.junghans.de

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HAMILTON

Hamilton began life making railroad pocket watches in Pennsylvania, USA, in the 1890s, and later during the two world wars created wristwatches for soldiers and marine chronometers for the US Navy. Famous in the 1950s for making Elvis's beloved triangular Ventura watch, Hamilton is now Swiss-owned and headquartered, and makes a wide range of designs, many of them playing on the brand's rich heritage. The Hamilton Broadway Auto Chrono has a screw-down crown and is water resistant to 100 metres.
£1600, www.hamiltonwatch.com



CERTINA

Swiss brand Certina has been around since the late 19th century and is known both for its pioneering work in the early days of the wristwatch and latterly for its involvement in a whole range of sports, from boxing to Formula 1. It has been the official timekeeper of the World Rally Championship since 2013. The Certina DS Podium Chronograph 1/100 sec has a 44mm stainless steel case and is powered by a high-precision quartz movement.
£670, www.certina.com

BRM

Bernard Richards is a French watchmaker with a lifelong enthusiasm for motor racing. He began training as a watchmaker in 1974 before starting his own company making precision parts. In 2003 he began producing motor racing-themed watches under the name Bernard Richards Manufacture, or BRM. At an *atelier* near Paris the watches are made by following the belief that it is "from the excellence of the details that the performance is born". The BRM V12-44-BN-AG has a 44mm brushed stainless steel and black PVD case, plus a high-quality Swiss automatic chronograph movement.
£5345, www.brm-manufacture.com



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CARTIER

Back when the skies still existed to be conquered, a gentleman wore his watch on a chain. But this can make checking the time difficult when both hands are busy. The pioneering aviator Albert Dumas-Santos wanted to be able to time how long he was keeping his experimental planes in the air, so in 1904 he spoke about it to a friend by the name of Louis Cartier. Cartier's solution was one of the first watches that was designed to be worn on the wrist. A wide range of variations on that original watch exist in the Cartier collection today. The Cartier Santos 100 comes in a variety of case materials including steel (left) and ADLC carbon. *From £6200, www.cartier.com*

HUBLOT

Any company that has a watch called a Big Bang in its collection is unlikely to be known for its shyness. And Hublot watches are bold, statement timepieces. Previously these pages have shown not only the Big Bangs, but Hublots that shout even louder such as the audacious engine-like LaFerrari watch. But Hublot does also make some very nice watches of a more sober variety, such as the Classic Fusion. That said, with its 45mm case it is never going to pass entirely unnoticed, but then what would be the point of that? The Hublot Classic Fusion Titanium has a polished and satin-finished titanium case and is powered by an in-house automatic movement with a 42-hour power reserve. *£6400, www.hublot.com*

AUDEMARS PIGUET

The Royal Oak was a game changer for Audemars Piguet. A steel sports watch introduced in the early 1970s with a price tag to match contemporary gold watches, the Gerald Genta design took a while to be fully accepted by the buying public, but it ended up being a massive success and became the face most readily associated with Audemars Piguet. Genta would later describe the Royal Oak as his masterpiece. There have subsequently been countless evolutions and incarnations of the watch. The new Royal Oak Chronograph in titanium is part of a range celebrating 20 years since chronographs were added to the Royal Oak range. It is a limited edition of 500 pieces and has platinum links in its titanium bracelet. *£35,900, www.audemarspiguet.com*

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TUDOR

The first official Tudor watches appeared in the late 1940s. The company was founded by Hans Wilsdorf, who had earlier founded Rolex. Wilsdorf conceived Tudor as a brand that would share the same dedication to quality as Rolex, but at a more accessible price. In the last few years Tudor has seen a surge in popularity due to a range of beautifully updated takes on the company's early watches. The Tudor Heritage Black Bay Chrono has an in-house automatic movement and comes on either a riveted steel bracelet or an aged leather strap.
From £3330, www.tudorwatch.com





ROLEX

Rolex's reputation stretches so far that most of its Swiss neighbours are filled with a mixture of jealousy and awe. But there has never been a sense of Rolex resting on its laurels. Like all companies it draws on past models for inspiration, but Rolex also continues to innovate both in terms of design and manufacturing processes, and makes watches in a wide range of styles, some of which look very different to how the casual observer expects a Rolex to look. One of the best-received recent releases is the Yacht-Master II, which features a chronograph specially designed to time regattas. An esoteric complication, for sure, but one that is presented in such a handsome and ergonomically pleasing way that you don't need to be a yachtsman to take a shine to it. The Rolex Oyster Perpetual Yacht-Master II is available in either stainless steel, yellow gold, white gold, or a combination of steel and Everose gold.
From £13,700, www.rolex.com



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OMEGA

Omega will forever be known as the company that put its products forward for a series of rigorous Nasa stress tests, and was then selected to put watches on the wrists of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin for the Apollo 11 space mission. Aldrin's watch even made it down onto the moon's surface, while Armstrong's stayed in the landing module. Even though the Speedmaster was chosen as the moon watch, it was not designed for that purpose. It was first made in the late 1950s as a racing chronograph. The Speedmaster is still one of the best-loved watches in the Omega range. The Omega Speedmaster Racing Master Chronometer has a 42.25mm case in either stainless steel or Sedna gold.
£6240, www.omegawatches.com

JAEGER-LECOULTRE

If you asked a group of watch-obsessives to name the best companies of all time, the Mount Rushmore of horology, your patience would come to an end long before the debate did. One name that any sane person would include, however, is Jaeger-LeCoultre, which has been making ingenious, beautifully presented watches for close to 200 years. Even if you know nothing about the inner workings of a watch, there is enough to admire in the aesthetics alone. Take this Master Geographic, for example. Normally world timers have the names of 24 cities written around the dial. With a watch this deliberately uncluttered that risks ruining the look, so the simple solution has been to cut an elegant section out at the bottom so the wearer need only look at the cities needed. The Jaeger-LeCoultre Master Geographic has a stainless-steel case and an in-house automatic movement.
£8250, www.jaeger-lecoultre.com



RADO

The power reserve is an interesting feature on a mechanical watch, acting like a fuel gauge that tells you how long it is before it needs winding. With a manual-winding watch, this is simple - you just take it off and wind it. With an automatic-winding watch like this Rado, however, the watch is wound by the movement of your wrist. So if the eight-day power reserve is getting low, it is probably a sign to get up and move around a bit more. The Rado Diamaster Power Reserve has a monobloc ceramic case and a PVD-coated titanium caseback.
£1670, www.rado.com

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GLASHÜTTE ORIGINAL

The Saxon town of Glashütte is the hub of German watchmaking. But being in the former East Germany meant that for many years the town's creativity was compromised by the smothering influence of Soviet occupation. While you would think that a Communist regime would result in dreary generic products – the watch equivalent of the Trabant – in fact an interesting if restricted range of watches continued to come out of Glashütte during those years. The fall of the Berlin Wall, however, and the international revival in the mechanical watch market, has seen companies like Glashütte Original really come into their own, making luxury watches that look forward while paying tribute to those that were made behind the Iron Curtain. The Glashütte Original Seventies Panorama Date has a 40mm case, an in-house automatic movement and comes on either a black rubber strap or a stainless-steel bracelet.
£9900, www.glashuette-original.com

PANERAI

Panerai was founded as a workshop and watchmaking school in Florence, Italy, in 1860. In the early 20th century it began supplying the Italian navy with tough, easily legible watches that divers could read underwater. From necessity grew the style that can still be seen on Panerai watches today. Since the brand was revived in the 1990s it has grown to become one of the few that almost everyone has heard of, even if they take only a vague interest in watches. It helps that the distinctive Panerai look is unmistakable. The Panerai Radiomir 3 Days Acciaio 1940 now comes with a green dial.
£7700, www.panerai.com

RICHARD MILLE

And now for something completely different. Motor racing fan Richard Mille began making watches under his own name at the turn of the 21st century. From the start he was not afraid to aim at the top of the luxury market and ignore everything in the rule book along the way. In terms of pricing, innovation, materials and design he is constantly making pieces that are impossible to ignore, winning the respect of press, peers and plutocrats. The company is involved in a range of sports, from F1 to Formula E, and Alain Prost is among its many brand ambassadors. The RM 70-01 Tourbillon Alain Prost is not a driving watch, though, but a cycling watch made in collaboration with the four-time F1 champion and keen cyclist. It features a mechanical mileage counter within a curved tonneau case that's angled to make it easier to read while on the move.
£POA, www.richardmille.com



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BAMFORD WATCH DEPARTMENT

When George Bamford started customising luxury watches in 2004 he made a lot of friends but also upset a few people along the way - the watch industry takes its products very seriously and does not always take kindly to having people mess around with them. But Bamford is a fully committed watch lover and nobody could ever accuse him of mere tinkering. One of his signatures, making black versions of a wide range of luxury watches, involves a proprietary process called MGTC (military grade titanium coating) which makes a deposit of 4-5 microns on the surface of the watch but also penetrates into the steel, so the look will last as long as the watch. This is the year that Bamford is welcomed into the establishment. It earlier announced a partnership with Zenith and has now done the same with fellow LVMH brand TAG Heuer. As a result it will be producing customised versions of some of TAG's most popular watches. The Tag Heuer Autavia by Bamford Watch Department is a customised version of the 2017 Autavia, a re-release of the celebrated Heuer chronographs worn in the 1960s by the likes of Jo Siffert and Jochen Rindt.
£7000, bamfordwatchdepartment.com

ZENITH

There has been much change at Zenith recently, with LVMH watch supremo Jean-Claude Biver publicly giving it a clip around the ear and telling it to up its game. Outwardly, though, things look strong. Zenith's watchmaking heritage is very strong, with the 1969 El Primero automatic chronograph considered to be one of the most ground-breaking movements ever made. Evolutions of that same movement are core to Zenith's range today. The El Primero was unveiled in the same year as Land Rover revealed its Range Rover prototype. The two companies are celebrating this coincidence with a Velar special edition of the El Primero. The Zenith El Primero Range Rover Velar has a 42mm ceramised aluminium case and a chronograph with central seconds and tachymeter scale.
£7200, zenith-watches.com

BULGARI

Bulgari launched the first Octo Maserati in 2014 as a celebration of the car maker's centenary. The Octo, available in many other iterations, takes its shape from an ancient wall carving in the Basilica Nova in the Roman Forum. The Maserati version features a retrograde minutes-times-ten hand that rises from 0 to 6 like a rev counter and then snaps back to zero as the hour jumps on. The Bulgari Octo Maserati Grandsport has an automatic movement and a DLC case with exhibition caseback.
£10,400, bulgari.com







PATEK PHILIPPE

The grand old Genevan firm Patek Philippe has been operating non-stop for almost 180 years. It is without doubt a watchmaker that commands respect from all others as it continues to make wonderfully engineered, beautifully designed watches with not a hint of compromise. As with all its watches, this annual calendar is given a reference number that might not mean much to the casual observer, but which reads like poetry to any true Patek-obsessive. The Patek Philippe 5396R has an annual calendar and moonphase complications, and comes with a new blue sunburst dial with applied gold hour markers and a rose-gold case.
£36,720, www.patek.com

CHOPARD

Just as Mercedes has AMG, Chopard has L.U.C. The initials stand for Louis-Ulysee Chopard, the man who founded the brand in 1860. Just over 20 years ago, L.U.C was set up to make the company's haute horlogerie watches, the most complicated, experimental and lovingly hand-crafted pieces. The Chopard L.U.C Lunar One is limited to 100 pieces and the platinum case houses an automatic in-house movement with annual calendar and moonphase indicator.
£55,910, www.chopard.com

PARMIGIANI

Parmigiani Fleurier has been around for just over 20 years and in that time has gained a reputation as watchmaker that stands with the very best. Parmigiani has just revealed its latest collaboration with Bugatti in a partnership that stretches back well over a decade. The new Type 390, with its brand-new cylindrical 'engine block' and auto-inspired 'bodywork', is a tribute to the equally off-the-wall Bugatti Chiron.
Parmigiani Fleurier Bugatti Type 390
£26,200, www.parmigiani.com

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IWC

The International Watch Company was founded in 1868 in the pretty little Swiss town of Schaffhausen on the banks of the Rhine in northern Switzerland. The founder was an American man called Florentine Ariosto Jones, who was looking for a skilled workforce to make watches for the US market. Now part of the Swiss luxury goods giant Richemont, IWC has a long history of making top-quality watches for pilots and engineers. The Portugieser family has been around since the 1930s when two Portuguese businessmen commissioned IWC to make wristwatches that could match the accuracy of marine chronometers. This new Portugieser Chronograph has a stainless steel case and a blue dial.
£6550, *www.iwc.com*





MONTBLANC

For a company that is known for making pens, Montblanc certainly does make some very nice watches. But then it has taken the whole enterprise seriously, particularly in acquiring - via parent company Richemont - the respected watchmaker Minerva. That gave it excellent watchmaking facilities and know-how, as well as adding some all-important gravitas to a company trying to make its way in a crowded watch market. The last few years has seen the watchmaking establishment take notice of Montblanc, and it looks like one day it could be just as well known for watches as it is for writing instruments. The Montblanc TimeWalker Automatic Chronograph has a red-gold case and a matching chocolate dial and strap.
£POA, www.montblanc.com

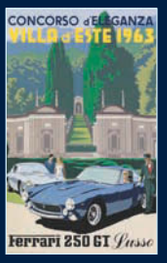
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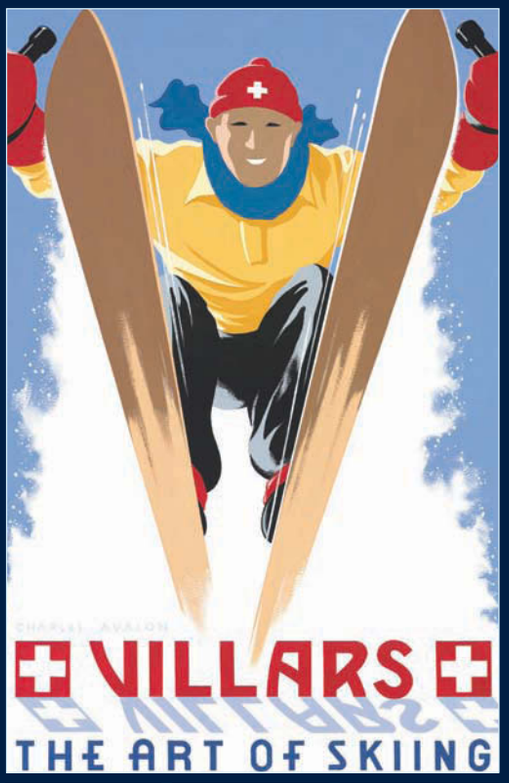


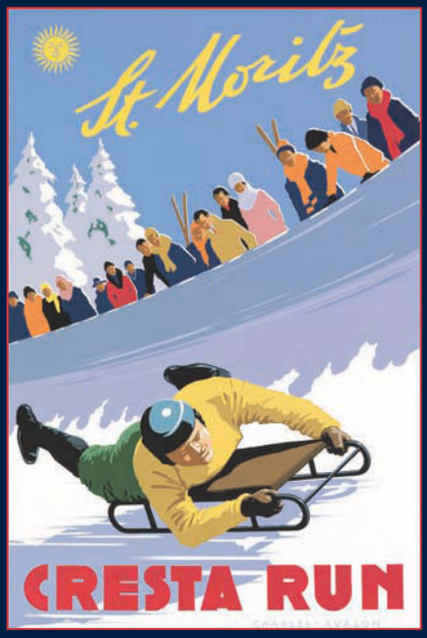


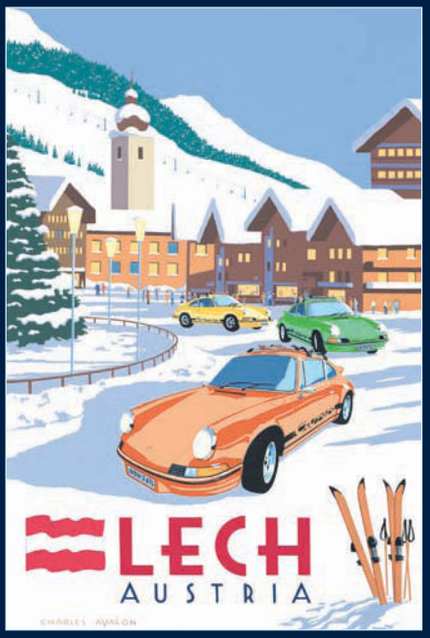




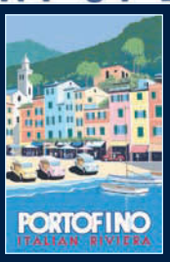














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LUXURY SPECIALS









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Tim Layzell is a talented painter of serene landscapes like Caribbean beaches and Tuscan fields, but he is best known for pictures that are far less peaceful but no less beautiful. A staple at Goodwood for years, Layzell has a unique pop art style that manages to capture the sense of speed at which cars are travelling around the track or up the hill better than a photograph ever can. His pictures are available as both originals and prints.
www.timlayzell.com

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Barrington single-watch winders £125; Quad-watch winders £595
barringtonwatchwinders.com

DEAKIN & FRANCIS

Deakin & Francis has been making jewellery in Birmingham since the late 18th century. The seventh-generation family business is now run by brothers James and Henry Deakin, qualified gemmologists who also learnt on the job from their father. The company is known for innovative handmade cufflinks and accessories that use precious metal, enamel and gemstones. The Deakin & Francis Sterling Silver Hexagonal Dress Stud cufflinks have a hand-cut mother of pearl inlay and blue sapphire centre.
£595, www.deakinandfrancis.co.uk

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- Set up floor with twin flight case kit

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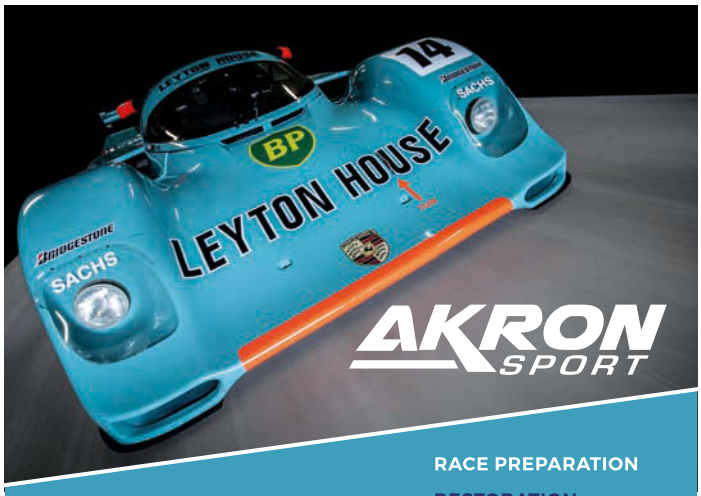
One case holds four scales and pad levellers, whilst the second case holds the remaining floor components.



Typically stock items, with kart and bike set up floors also available and existing pad leveller to floor conversions also available.

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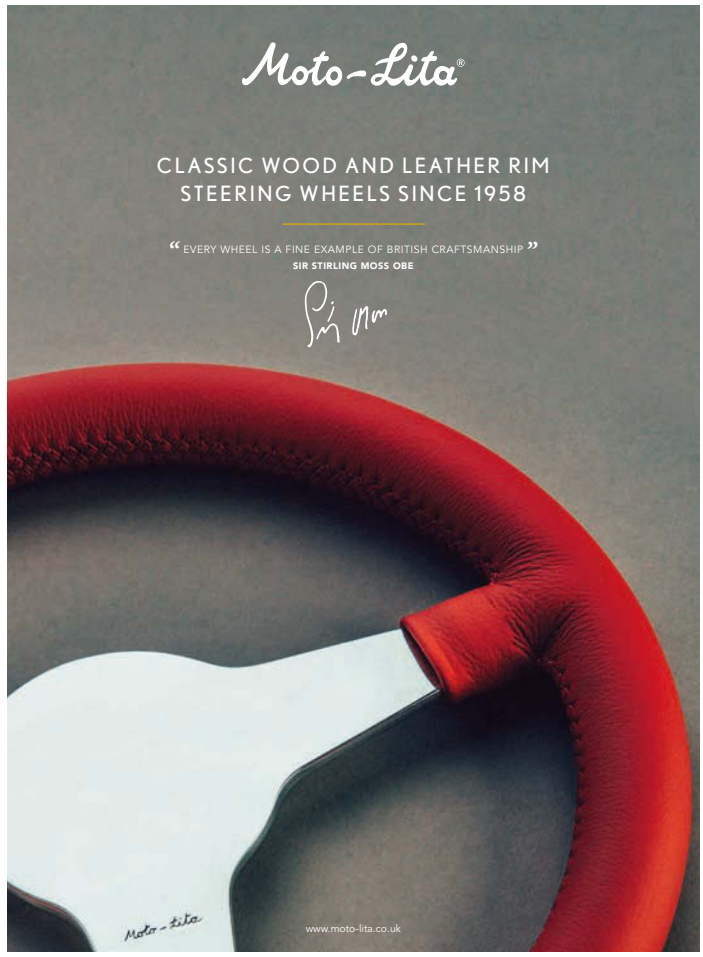
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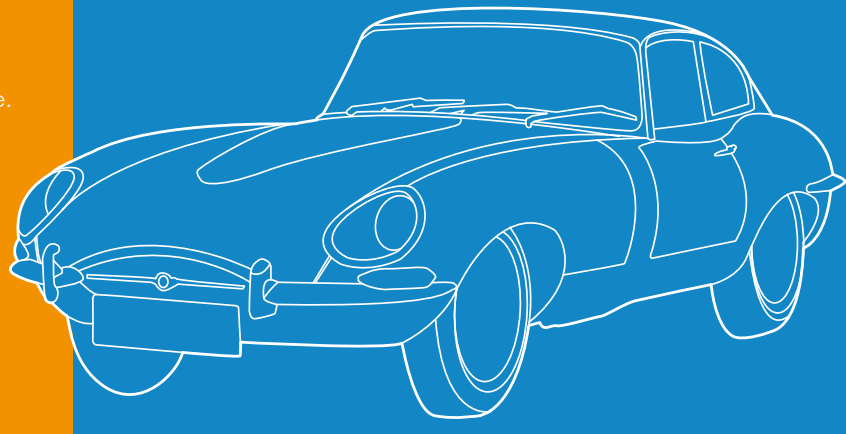
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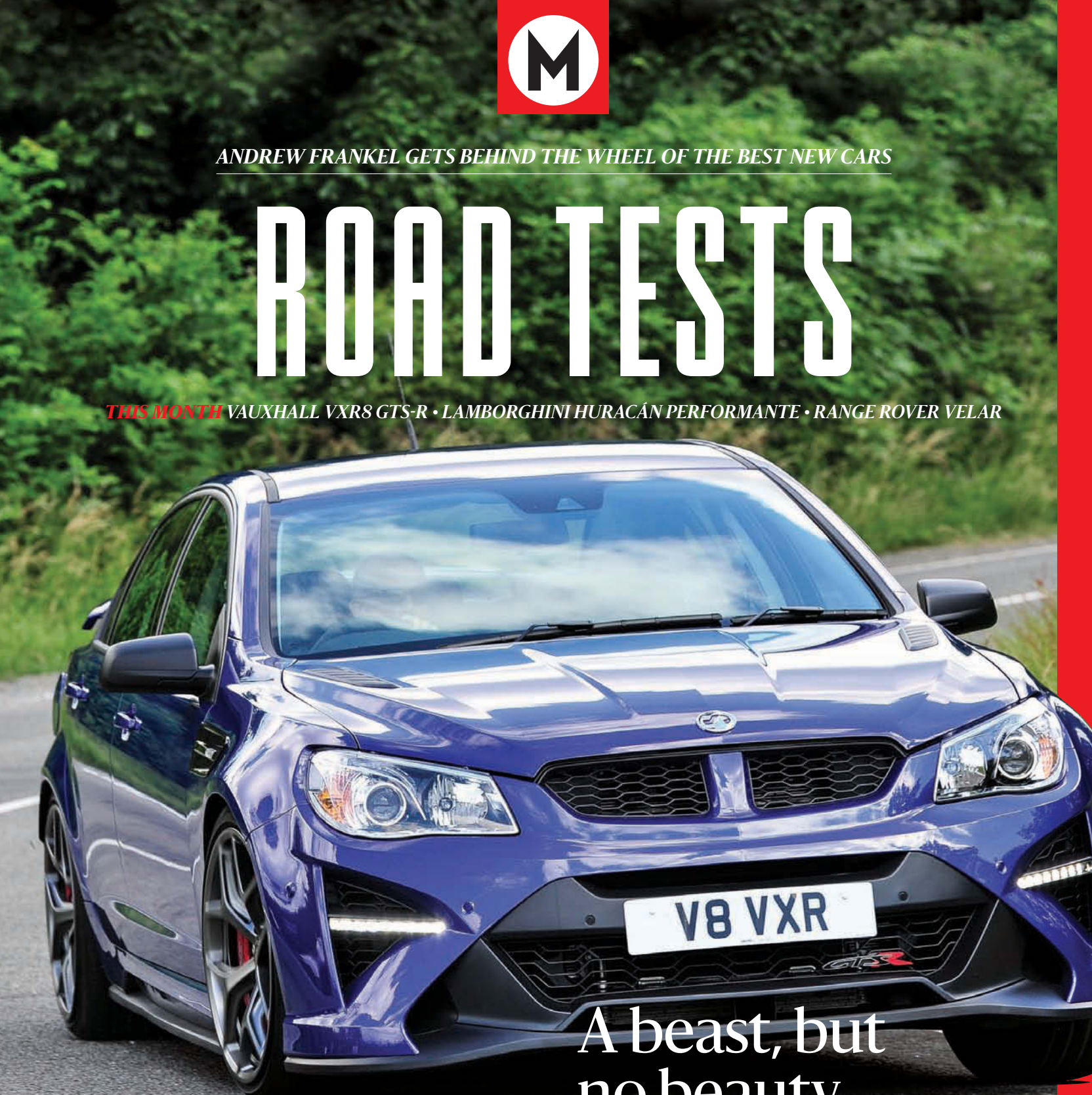
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THIS MONTH *VAUXHALL VXR8 GTS-R • LAMBORGHINI HURACÁN PERFORMANTE • RANGE ROVER VELAR*



A beast, but no beauty

It's the end of the line for Vauxhall's traditional performance yardstick

A big Holden masquerading as a Vauxhall has been such a long-time presence in back-of-mag listings that I must have subconsciously presumed it would go on forever. I think I drove my first back in 2004, when it was an enormous coupé called the Monaro, but ever since the formula has been the same: take one big Aussie V8 bruiser, plant a Griffin on the front and sell it to the Brits. And rarely has there seemed much wrong with that.

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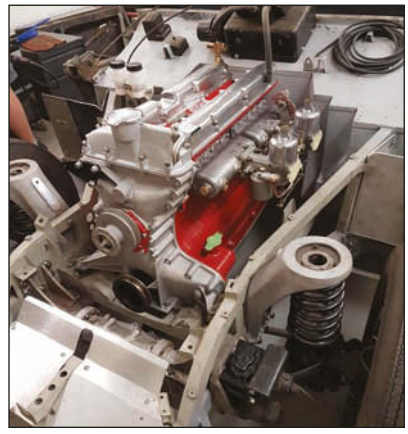
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But now it really is all over, or is soon to be. The double whammy of Holden giving up car production in Oz by the end of this year, and Vauxhall being sold to the PSA Group (whose Peugeot and Citroën brands wouldn't know a V8 from a flat 12), means what you see here is the very last of the line.

In the UK it's called the VXR8 GTS-R, which sounds like something spat out by the Enigma machine. In fact it denotes a limited edition model - limited, indeed, to just 15 cars, making it more than twice as rare as a Ferrari 250 GTO - with some fairly predictable accessories, such as a new front bumper and splitter, rear diffuser and a carbon rear spoiler. Somewhere deep in the electronics a further 11bhp has been found, bringing the total output of GM's supercharged 6.2-litre LSA crate engine to a still pretty lazy 587bhp.

It is a car that withstands little cold scrutiny, and that's without considering the absurd £74,500 price. Vauxhall has managed to make an ugly car even uglier, and that's before you open the door and see an interior with all the plushness of a brick privy. The six-speed gearbox has seven-league ratios and a rather awkward shift quality, while the chassis serves up an only adequate ride and handling that requires quite a lot of management if you are to progress only reasonably quickly from one point to the next. But if you commit the road tester's only cardinal crime and park your objectivity, you'd not believe how much fun you can have here.

The engine is not smooth, it is not sophisticated, but if when the exhausts open up at 4500rpm you don't find yourself hooting with laughter at the sound of Santa Pod's greatest hits turned up to 11, you might want to check your pulse.

It's comically fast too, its 4.2sec 0-62mph time being massively traction limited. It feels like a 3.5sec car. And despite the fact it's not that capable in corners, that's not to say it has no capacity to entertain. Indeed the very fact that you have to get stuck in and wrestle with it makes it far more fun than if it were pin-sharp on turn-in, beautifully damped through corners and capable of accepting full throttle from the apex. It is none of those things. Instead, if you disable the traction control it is every inch the old-fashioned oversteer addict its shape and specification suggest, inclined towards the lurid unless kept on a very tight rein.

It offers a sense of achievement you just don't get in a hot-rod BMW or Benz. A day in the VXR8 is like meeting up with one of your dad's old beer buddies, the one who had everything required to make something of life but decided to go to the pub instead. The years have not been kind to him: he's no longer as handsome as once he was, he's put on quite a bit of weight and next to today's young and ambitious types you might think he cuts a slightly forlorn figure. But put him in the right environment and he can still be the life and soul of the party, the one with whom you'd most like to share a pint. For all its failings I, for one, am going to miss it.

"It denotes a limited edition model, just 15 cars, making it more than twice as rare as a Ferrari 250 GTO"





FACTFILE

Vauxhall VXR8 GTS-R

Price **£74,500** ***Engine*** **6.2 litres, 8 cylinders, supercharged** ***Power*** **587bhp@6100rpm** ***Torque*** **546lb ft@3850rpm** ***Weight*** **1880kg** ***Power to weight*** **312bhp per tonne** ***Transmission*** **six-speed manual, rear-wheel drive** ***0-60mph*** **4.2sec** ***Top speed*** **155mph** ***Economy*** **18mpg** ***CO_2*** **373g/km**



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A geing curmudgeon that I am, I always approach cars like this new Lamborghini Huracán Performante with a degree of healthy scepticism. In my experience these ultra high-performance versions of startlingly quick cars are as good at detracting from their appeal as adding to it.

So I can look at its on-paper specification and I will very shortly, but when I get behind the wheel I try very hard to think beyond the actual driving experience presented, usually on clear roads in ideal conditions, to the realities of life beyond. And sometimes they come up short. Perhaps the best example was the Ferrari 458 Speciale, which was a simply phenomenal thing to hurl around a track or a deserted Welsh mountain but was so loud and uncomfortable on the way there and back I found myself yearning for the scarcely less brilliant standard car, which was a delight to drive whatever the conditions. Others, like the McLaren 675LT, have been more successful.

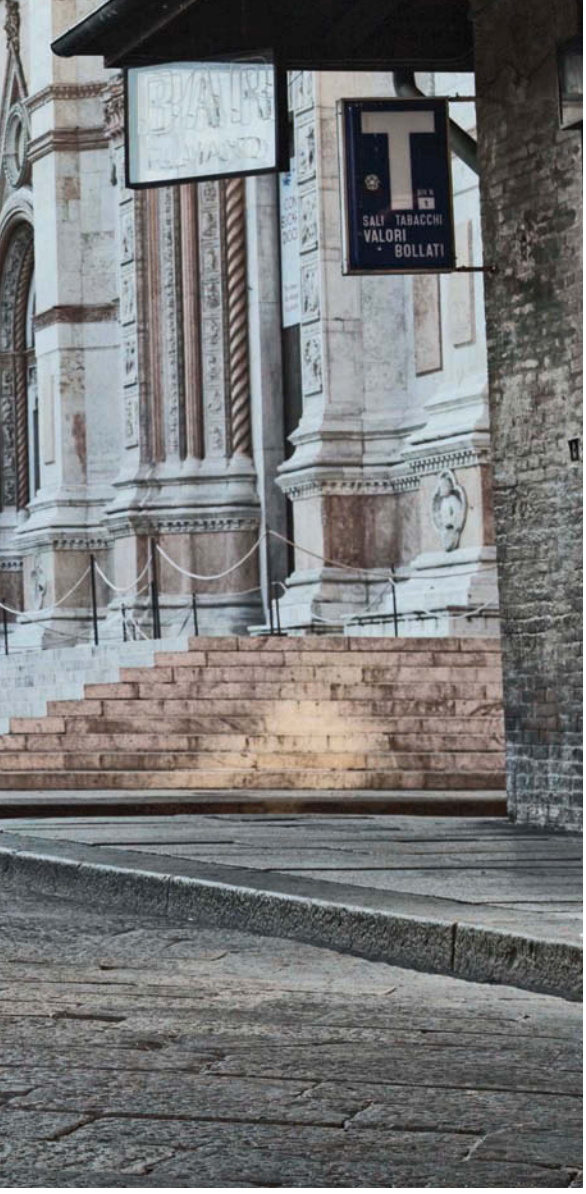
The Performante is very clearly cut from this kind of cloth and one thing no one will argue is the lengths to which the factory has gone to optimise its performance. We will start with the engine, now the only one of its competitors set to keep faith in the old adage about there being no replacement for displacement. Eschewing the turbochargers adopted by others, revised inlets, exhausts, titanium valve springs and higher lift cams raise the power of its 5.2-litre V10 engine from 602bhp to 631bhp, still developed at a screaming 8000rpm. There's more torque, though still nothing like as much at its 6500rpm peak as a Ferrari 488 develops at fewer than half those revs: turbos may not be an elegant fix, but they get the job done. The seven-speed double-clutch gearbox has been reprogrammed to provide quicker shifts, too.

On the chassis side, Lamborghini has made magnetorheological dampers available

FACTFILE

Lamborghini Huracán Performante

Price **£215,000** ***Engine*** **5.2 litres, 10 cylinders** ***Power*** **631bhp@8000rpm** ***Torque*** **442lb ft@6500rpm** ***Weight*** **1382kg** ***Power to weight*** **457bhp per tonne** ***Transmission*** **seven-speed paddle shift, four-wheel drive** ***0-60mph*** **2.9sec** ***Top speed*** **202mph** ***Economy*** **20.6mpg** ***CO_2*** **314g/km**





(though to be fair this tech could be found on Audi TTs 10 years ago), stiffened the suspension by about 10 per cent and reprogrammed the steering to offer more resistance and sharper feel. Obligatory track-day tyres complete the picture, in this case a bespoke Pirelli P-Zero Corsa specification, though if you're planning on very serious trackwork you'd be better off with optional Trofeo R rubber, at least while the surface is warm and dry.

But what most pleases Lamborghini is its new aerodynamics system called 'Aerodinamica Lamborghini Attiva', which is Lambo-speak for active flaps in the front spoiler that can direct airflow through ducts in the engine cover over the rear spoiler when downforce is needed, and underneath it when not. Cleverly these flaps can also operate independently, producing asymmetric downforce and generating a vectoring effect into quicker corners.

And finally, no such workover would be complete without a quick diet, in this case 40kg having been shed by replacing the front and rear spoilers, rear bumper, diffuser and engine cover with items of composite, carbon-based construction. This might or might not be a good time to point out that not only is this quite a modest saving compared to the 90kg lost by the 458 Speciale and 100kg cleaved from the 675LT's waistline, but that also the cheapest Huracán on sale, the LP580-2 is a mere 9kg heavier than the Performante because it does without four-wheel drive and costs £60,000 less.

UNRECONSTRUCTED

Of course up until very recently the Performante's greatest claim to fame was to be the world's fastest production car around the Nürburgring, its 6min 52sec blitzing by five clear seconds the time of Porsche's 918 hypercar, though Porsche has now repaid the compliment with its new 911 GT2. Even so, as anyone who's tried even to do an eight-minute Nürburgring lap in an extremely fast car will vouch, this was quite an exceptional performance from car and, lest we forget, driver. The question in search of an answer was how a car capable of putting in such a performance on a circuit might feel and behave on the public road.

It annoyed me at first. I hate the fact that Lamborghini is still happy to fob off its customers with last-generation Audi switchgear with little or no attempt to disguise it. I like the *Top Gun* instrument display very much, but it clashes with such state-of-the-ark ancillaries. I still don't like the seats, I hate the steering wheel-mounted switches even more than I do those in a Ferrari, there's little stowage space on board and the boot is too small. Minor considerations? Not if, unlike a motoring journalist, you have to live with such things for extended periods of time, not to mention spend your own money buying them.

Even so, when conditions are right, the Performante does have a certain knack for making all such considerations seem briefly but entirely irrelevant.

Of course it's the engine you notice first, because it is so unreconstructed, so unlike any other out there these days. To me a V10 is at least as desirable as a V12 because, whatever it might lose in layers of symphonic harmony, it makes up in its interesting off-beat voice and naked aggression. And the Performante's engine is unusually animalistic even by V10 standards, and especially if you are in 'Sport' or 'Corsa' driving mode. Yes it needs revs before it'll do its thing but that's no hardship: you want to rev this engine, again and again – up past 8000rpm as often as you can, because while the thrust may be repeated and exceeded elsewhere, that sound cannot. Make no mistake, for those who love to drive, this is a far more characterful engine than that fitted to any current V8 McLaren or Ferrari.

But after quite a short period of time, your focus shifts. Plenty queried the veracity of what was achieved when the Performante did that 'Ring lap, not least because the car was much slower in a straight line yet quicker over a lap than its big brother, the fully 100bhp more powerful Aventador S. Watching the in-car footage, how the Huracán found the time remained unclear to me, but where it found it was not: apex speed. That car was on Trofeo Rs and this one on standard Corsas, but I still wondered if was possible to get some sense of the effect that the reduced weight, stiffer springs and radically modified aero had on the car's cornering ability. And it was.

I knew it not because I had instruments that could measure lateral acceleration, but because a standard Huracán feels slightly overpowered, so the chassis has its hands about as full as it would like dealing with about 600bhp. But despite the power hike, the Performante chassis has moved up to the balance point and perhaps a bit beyond. Grip levels are befuddling for a street car on a fairly gentle road/track hybrid tyre. I never found the understeer of the standard car as severe as some of my colleagues, but now it's been reduced to being a vestigial and, frankly, welcome presence. Traction is absurd, the steering usefully sharpened and more full of feel than a Ferrari's. All I didn't much like were brakes that lacked feel.

Point to point, then, the Performante is stunning: the modifications to the engine and chassis have had a genuinely transformative effect and the result is a Lamborghini more for driving than being seen in. As such it provides the perfect riposte to those who say Lamborghinis are only for posing.

But that's not to say it's perfect or close to it: in addition to my reservations about the seats and interior, the ride is a little lumpy and noise levels at a steady cruise higher than I'd like. No question there is a price to be paid for raising its game across the dynamic board, and it's not just the £34,000 added to the list price of the standard Huracán.

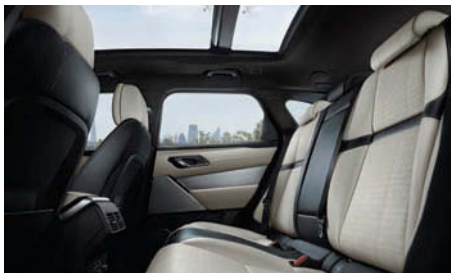
I think it's worth it. It's not a 675LT for sure, but it forces fewer compromises upon you than did the 458 Speciale. And because the starting point was so much lower than those of McLaren or Ferrari, the impression left is far more of what has been gained than lost.

Even so, while I'd categorise the Performante as a good car, I can see a great one trying to get out. Keeping the powertrain but adopting the rear-drive chassis of the LP580-2 would not only shed dozens more kilogrammes but allow softer front suspension, even better balance and an improved ride. It might not lap the Nürburgring quite so quickly, but when you were having so much fun, you'd probably neither notice, nor care.



A Land Rover GTi?

Not quite, but the Velar is the marque's sportiest model yet







It was, I guess, inevitable. While every manufacturer seems hell bent on invading Land Rover's traditional turf, the time when it would seek to repay the compliment was always going to come. And this new Range Rover Velar is it.

It is Land Rover's most sporting car to date, a £70,000 Range Rover as tested here, with no low-ratio transfer box and a tonne's less towing capacity than many bigger yet cheaper models. And for all its badges, it sits on the same platform as Jaguar's XE and XF saloons.

Actually the car with which it has most in common is the Jaguar F-Pace SUV, whose runaway sales - at least by Jaguar's historically modest standards - prove very well that breaking out of your traditional comfort zone is no bar to success if the product is right. The Velar shares not only its platform, but its powertrains and suspension too, though the latter has been tuned to provide additional wheel travel and ride quality more becoming a Range Rover.

To my eyes the Velar looks stunning and will likely prove a source of considerable relief to those who thought, after the Horlicks made of the back of the Discovery, that Land Rover's design studio had lost the plot.

But does it work? There are aspects that concern me, particularly how long it will take for use of the all-electronic touchscreen interior to become truly second nature: I did 600 miles over a weekend and was only starting to come to terms with it by the end. I didn't much care for the seats, either.

But the bigger picture revealed a car of immense class in both appearance and operation. Others have been very critical of the 2-litre four cylinder diesel that will populate most Velars, but I've not driven it yet; what I can tell you is that the 3-litre V6 diesel provides effortless progress aided by a near-perfect eight-speed automatic transmission. Noise levels in the cabin are limousine low while the ride quality on optional air suspension was superb at speed albeit a little lumpy around town.

More than anything, however, the Velar felt finely judged in the distance Land Rover has allowed it to stray from its core competences. Its handling is just about good enough to make it worth taking the old road next to the new dual carriageway and, while I'd say a Porsche Macan or even a Jaguar F-Pace are more involving, people with modest expectations of Range Rovers in this regard will be impressed and perhaps even a surprised at how composed and accurate the Velar feels.

A pity, then, that it is so very expensive, this model costing more than a bigger, vastly more potent, Porsche Cayenne Diesel S V8. Even an 'S' model Velar - the next-to-bottom trim level - costs more than 50 grand with a 177bhp four-pot diesel or, put another way, more than Porsche asks for a class-leading Macan Diesel S, with a 254bhp six cylinder motor. But Land Rover's aspirations for the Range Rover brand are not just to push it further out, but up as well, a point well proven by the Velar. Is it worth it? For those looking for a car of genuine substance matched to unparalleled style in this sector, I'd say an unquestionable 'yes'.

FACTFILE

Range Rover Velar R-Dynamic HSE D300

Price **£70,530** ***Engine*** **3.0 litres, 6 cylinders, turbocharged** ***Power*** **296bhp@4000rpm** ***Torque*** **516lb ft@1500rpm** ***Weight*** **1959kg** ***Power to weight*** **151bhp per tonne** ***Transmission*** **eight-speed automatic, four-wheel drive** ***0-62mph*** **6.5sec** ***Top speed*** **150mph** ***Economy*** **44.1mpg** ***CO_2*** **167g/km**


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SPEEDSHOP

***THIS MONTH** An affordable option for Aston GT racers • Title-winning Schumacher Ferrari heads post-Monterey sales • A 430 Scuderia that lives up to its nickname • Your fast track to a factory racing Porsche*



TOP STORY

V8 advantage

Race-ready Aston Martin Vantage GT2 is your ticket to Le Mans

Little wonder GT racing has been enjoying such a revival in recent years - the cars look spectacular and sound great, while close-fought battles between Ferrari, Porsche, Aston Martin, Mercedes and many more hark back to the glory days of sports car competition. And with new series like the Masters Endurance Legends for cars raced from 1995 to 2011, interest in eligible contenders is increasing.

So what better way to join the action than with a racing Aston Martin? Beautiful to look at and with proven race-winning pace, the cars built by Prodrive for Aston Martin Racing score for both emotional appeal and raw speed. Take this 2010 Vantage GT2 for instance. Offered by marque specialists Nicholas Mee & Co for just shy of £300,000, the price includes a spares package worth another £100,000 and the knowledge that the car is ready to race.

Launched in 2008, the Vantage GT2 followed the success of the V12-powered, DB9-based DBR9. First raced in 2005 it had launched Aston Martin's return to top-flight competition in fine style with David Brabham, Darren Turner and Rickard Rydell taking the GT1 victory at Le Mans in 2007 after the car's previous success at Sebring and in the ALMS. This was followed by another class win in 2008. The rising costs of GT1 also saw the DBR9 joined by the GT3-ready and more cost-effective DBRS9.

Nicholas Mee's commercial director Neal Gerrard knows a thing or two about these cars, having moved from a similar role

at Prodrive where he was closely involved with the Aston Martin Racing programme. And while the DBR9 and DBRS9 were successful racing cars he says they were - and remain - costly and intimidating for privateers. Which is why as GT1 waned Aston Martin switched its frontline effort to the more user-friendly V8 Vantage, giving rise to the car you see here and the basis for the current Vantage GTE that won a hard-fought LMGTE victory at this year's Le Mans. Not bad for a car in its dotage.

This Vantage GT2 - chassis number 007 no less - is one of 10 built and was campaigned

(1) Vantage GT2 007 was first in the 2012 Aston Martin Racing Festival. (2) The Vantage V8 is a more affordable option for would-be GT racers

extensively in the 2010 International GT Open championship by Villois Racing, scoring a win at Brands Hatch in the process. It ran again in 2012, first in the International GT Series and then at the Aston Martin Racing Festival at Le Mans where it took first place. More recently, and following a full overhaul at Prodrive, it has raced in this year's inaugural Masters Endurance Legends at Spa, winning its class and once again proving its credentials as a competitive car.

For Gerrard its appeal is clear. Where a DBR9 with factory and race-winning provenance could cost into seven figures, the entry price for this GT2 car is much more realistic. And for those priced out of racing historic Aston Martins or stepping up from the popular Vantage GT4s it's a sensible progression, especially if the more cut-throat world of frontline GT racing looks a little too serious. With events like Masters Endurance Legends, or the chance to race in front of the Le Mans crowd in the Aston Martin Racing Festival, the opportunities for privateers to sample the glamour of modern-day GT racing are increasing - and with it the interest in eligible cars like this one.

www.nicholasmee.co.uk



1



2

In the market for extreme GT racers

Alternative choices for a racer with a roof



2006 Ferrari F430 GTC

£POA

Run by ASM Team from 2006-2009; winner of GT Espagna title 2009. Fresh engine and ready to race

www.jeremycottingham.co.uk



2010 Audi R8 LMS Ultra

€228,000

Raced in Blancpain and French GT series; 570bhp V10; overhauled and ready to run; ideal trackday car

www.jeanlainvintage.com



2013 Porsche 911 GT3 R

£POA

Being sold by the US-based specialist founded by Jim Taggart - an amateur racer, not the Glaswegian inspector

www.taggartcars.com



1997 Porsche 993 GT2 Evo

£POA

Raced three times in Le Mans 24 Hours, then FIA and French GT series. Kevlar panels, 600bhp motor, recent rebuild

www.dhrofgo.com

After a somewhat febrile period are values of classic road and racing cars cooling, or even starting to drop?

Research from specialist finance broker Moneypod paints a potentially alarming picture for those betting the farm on historic metal, their figures claiming a 10 per cent drop in values over 2016.

Specialist dealers are more sanguine, and demand for the most desirable cars remains strong. "The classic car market has levelled off," says Porsche road and race car specialist Lee Maxted-Page, though in his view this isn't necessarily a bad thing. "Short-term speculator enthusiasm has thankfully disappeared and the market has returned to a more stable pace.



Classic values - up or down?

Demand for the best cars remains strong despite a dip

Current buyers are prospective long-term owners, looking for quality at the right price."

James Cottingham at DK Engineering is also optimistic: "There's no evidence of a drop and people need to be more sophisticated at how they look at the market." Quality of stock - and the way it is sold - is everything, auctions in particular sensitive to venue, timing, audience and the draw of the cars on offer.

In terms of growth areas Cottingham's knowledge of the Ferrari market has him tipping F40 values as on the rise to equal those of 288 GTOs, F50s and Enzos, while in competition cars interest is growing in '90s GT cars as more opportunities arise to race them - the F40 GT/LM for sale with DK now embodying both trends. Maxted-Page has enjoyed interest in Group C cars while pre-66 2.0-litre Porsches are also on the up, given their - in his words - relative affordability.

The common theme? While some sectors may be 'stabilising' demand for the best cars is still strong. Less that the market is souring, more that the cream is rising to the top.

DEALING



HAVE I GOT MEWS FOR YOU

London's only Morgan dealer proves location counts

If the rolling Malvern Hills are the ideal setting for appreciating Morgan's quintessentially English identity, it seems a cobbled mews in South Kensington is a perfect place to be selling them. Indeed, as the capital's only dealership Morgan London sells more cars than any other and has won dealership of the year for two of the three it's been in existence.

"I think it does give a very Morgan atmosphere," says dealer principal Anthony Barrell. "A lot of the people coming here like the location and the ambience of the mews compared with one of those glass showrooms. Nearly three-quarters of our sales go abroad to Russia, Japan and all across Europe - clearly many of our customers have second or third homes here in London and they enjoy the ambience."

Good for setting the tone but surely test drives are a little more complicated when you're based in London? "We're not far from the bigger roads to get out of town," says Barrell, "and we offer to take anyone who's interested in a car to the factory in Malvern."

Back in the day there were stories of Morgan customers being held for years on waiting lists. Given that, are most people crossing the threshold already sold on the brand or are they waiting to be converted? "I think it's both," says Anthony. "You get people who've seen them driving around and are curious to find out more, and others who have done the research and know exactly what they want. Interestingly, we've not yet sold to one existing Morgan owner - they're all conquest customers."
www.londonmorgan.co.uk



Morgan Plus 4
£43,500
Delivery miles and a classic combination of black paint and tan leather make this the perfect entry to Morgan ownership.



Morgan Aero 8
£107,250
Previously Morgan London's biggest seller, the fact the Aero 8 has been discontinued hasn't dimmed demand. One of three in stock.



Jaguar XK120
£95,550
Similar money to a nearly-new Aero 8, this 1951 XK120 is an interesting alternative if even a Morgan is just too modern.

A European outpost

Not far from New York is a haven for Continental classics



"I grew up inspired by European cars, and it fired a tremendous passion for the period"

The Californian classic car scene dominates our European view of the American car world but it's worth remembering the Stateside awakening to post-war European sports cars started on the East Coast. From his Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Manhattan showroom Max Hoffman introduced brands like Jaguar, Mercedes, Porsche, Alfa Romeo, BMW, Austin Healey and more to the American market. His influence such that he was able to convince manufacturers to build cars specifically for him to sell. The most famous example of that is the Mercedes-Benz 300SL roadster but he was instrumental in many others.

About an hour north of Manhattan that East Coast passion for European classics is being kept alive by specialists such as Westchester County-based Motor Classics & Competition Corp. It is run by Nick Soprano who has been putting his love of '50s, '60s and '70s sports cars at the heart of a business he's run for 40 years. "I grew up inspired by European cars," he says, "and ever since it's fired an enthusiasm and a tremendous passion for a period when these cars were pretty much unknown apart from among a small cadre of enthusiasts."

Things have changed, not least with a growing interest in classics from an ever-expanding audience. "In the old days it was a group of people who knew each other from racing," says Soprano, "but today more people are exposed to the cars through the media, through TV and there are a lot of younger people interested in these cars. They buy contemporary icons like Lamborghini Aventadors or Ferrari 488s and although they haven't grown up with the same inspiration they are turning back and saying the supercar of today is somewhat soulless and doesn't have the intensity of the older cars."

So, what's hot on the East Coast classic scene? "We do anything of interest," he says, "but Ferraris of the '50s, '60s and '70s are a focus. There's a sustainable market in those cars. We could say the same for air-cooled Porsches but by the same token there's interest in British sports cars like E-Types, the Aston Martin DB4s, DB5s and DB6s ... there are centre points in this market where the attention is focused but there's only a fixed number of cars and an increasingly worldwide demand."

Certainly his current stock reflects that. The Mistral SR 'Silver Bomb' racer is a particularly interesting mix of American hot-rod culture and European club-racing, with a custom-made bodywork of glassfibre and aluminium over a Chevrolet V8. Offered alongside Healeys, Morgans, Jaguars and even more modern metal like a Porsche Carrera GT, it makes for an interesting and eclectic stock list.
www.motorclassiccorp.com



SPEAKING TO NICK SOPRANO

The founder of Motor Classics and Competition on his home-made Italian classic

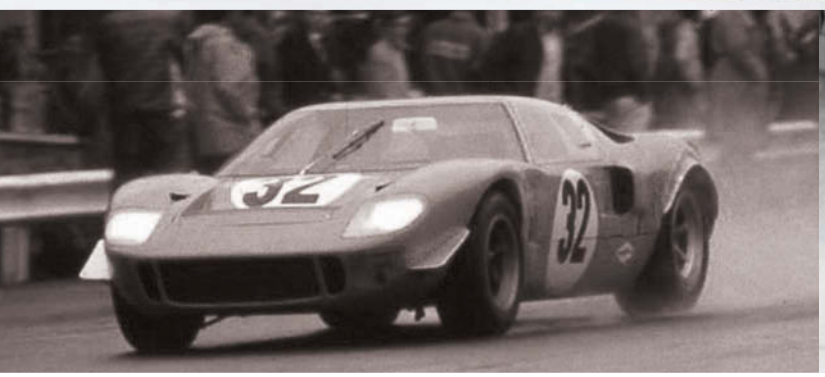
The Sensuale is the culmination of everything that initially inspires me. I wanted to build something in the same way as the icons of the '50s, '60s and '70s combining all the magnificence of the period into a current sports car exemplifying the craftsmanship of the time. It's a one of a kind prototype and powered by a 4.4-litre V12 Ferrari engine, with a tubular chassis and a hand-formed aluminium body. It's taken us over 20 years and it's been an adventure – built by creative men for creative men!

DUNCAN HAMILTON ROFGO

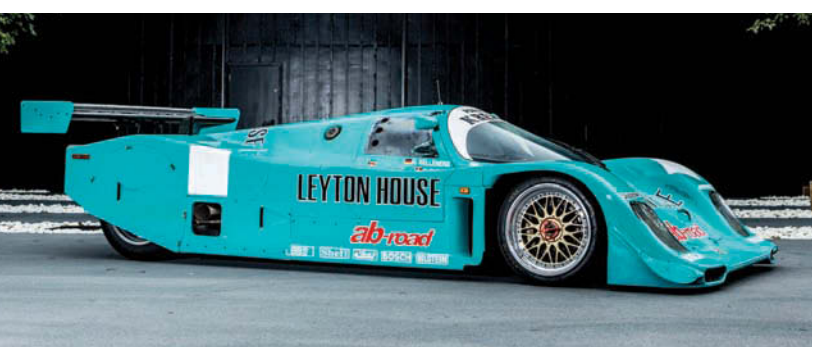
1968 FORD GT40 - CHASSIS 1079

Le Mans history, still equipped with its original tub, fresh from pole and 2nd place in the Whitsun Trophy. Currently in 1965 specification. Current HTP Papers.









1988 PORSCHE 962 CK6

Extensively raced by Leyton House in 88/89 in Japan inc a win at 89 Fuji 500 miles. Competitive entrant for Patrick Peters Group C series ready for Le Mans Classic 2018.



1963 AC COBRA '39PH'

Chassis CSX 2131. Works 1963 Le Mans Class Winner and legendary Willment Racing Team, Jack Sears car. The most significant European Cobra of them all.



1965 LOLA T70 MK1

Competed in '65 Sebring 12 Hour and Can-Am , freshly race prepared by Rofgo Racing with new HTP papers. Perfect car for the Goodwood Revival Whitsun Trophy

£350,000



1969 JAGUAR E-TYPE 4.2 FHC

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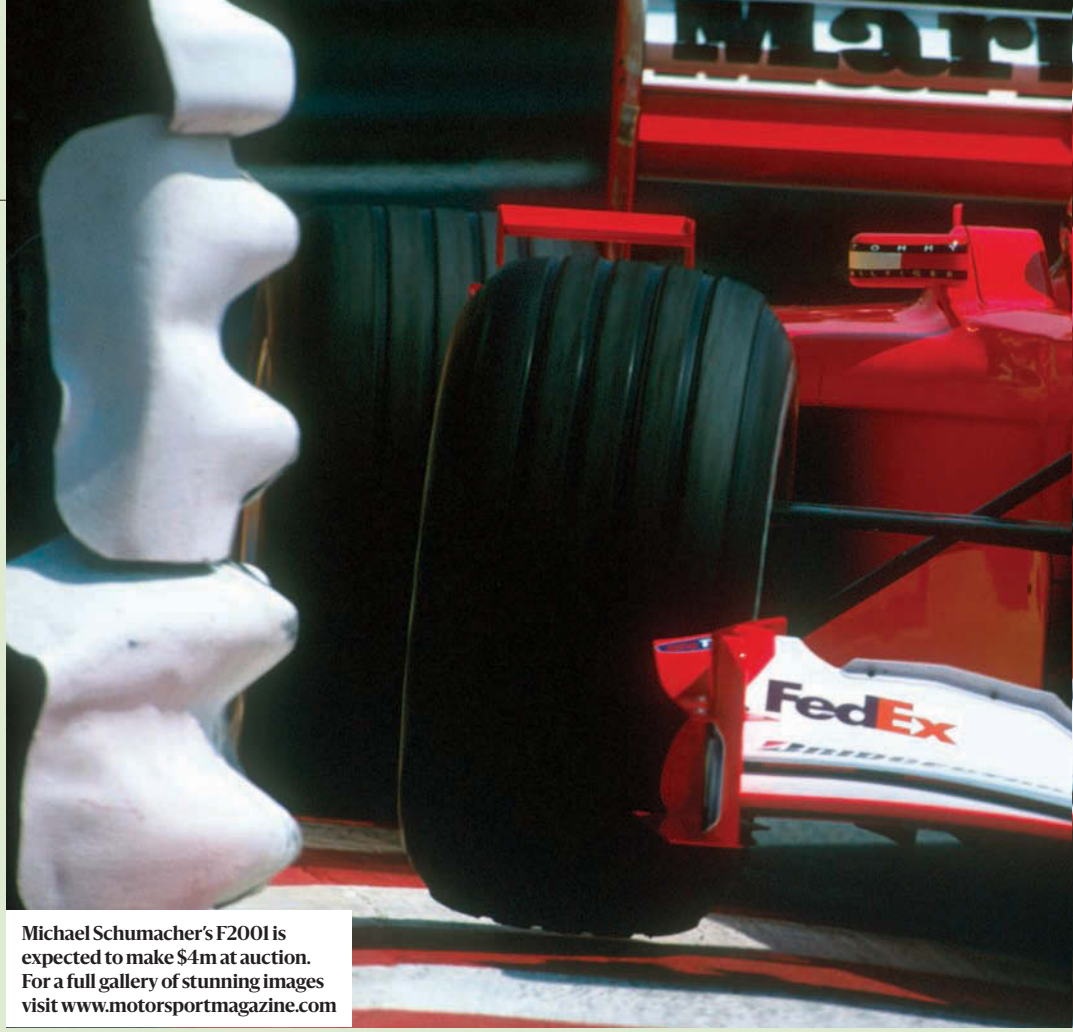
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Back on the gas

After a post-Monterey pause, sales of classic road and racing cars are hotting up again

Following the jamboree of Pebble Beach and the various gatherings around Monterey in August there was, as always, something of a vacuum in high-level sales. So many prime cars are saved for that week that in September the market takes a breather.

By October the machinery was in gear again and tying in with the massive annual Hershey autojumble, RM Sotheby's sold several collections of mainly US vehicles, from the Orient Buckboard, a solid-tyred 1907 attempt to offer basic motoring for the masses which went for a lightweight $7700, to a unique



Michael Schumacher's F2001 is expected to make $4m at auction. For a full gallery of stunning images visit www.motorsportmagazine.com





Belgian-bodied Duesenberg Model J cabriolet (right), a 1935 attempt to soar as far from the masses as possible. It went for $1.45 million, while one of three extant 1933 Pierce Arrow Silver Arrows (above), with bizarre streamlined bodywork, achieved $2.3m. Among examples of top-end US luxury, a Cadillac V16 convertible brought $715,000 and a rare 1957 Dual-Ghia convertible reached $341,000.

Bonhams chose the Simeone Automotive Museum in Philadelphia for its October 2 'Preserving the Automobile' sale (originality being a proud boast of the museum), where a London-Edinburgh Rolls-Royce Ghost scraped past the $1m mark by $1000 to top the list. Fiercest bidding was over a remarkably original 1910 Regal Underslung, advanced for its time and soaked in patina, with a characterful monocle windscreen. The victor paid $165,000 to claim it.

A keen veteran enthusiast could purchase a London-Brighton vehicle on Friday November 3 and head for Madeira Drive on the Sunday, if the car came with an entry slot. Bonhams's pre-Run veteran sale includes reputedly the oldest British car, the 1894 Santler (estimate £200-250,000), plus the awe-inspiring 1896 Salvesen Steam Cart, which has decorated previous Runs. Estimate: £150-200,000.

A few days on, the firm sells the extensive Lindley Bothwell collection in which the stars are the 1913 Peugeot L45 Indianapolis entry, a seminal machine, and a pair of 1908 racers, a Benz Prinz Heinrich and a 60HP Mercedes Simplex. The Peugeot is the Lotus 49 of its time, recasting racing car design permanently with its high-revving twin-cam engine. It ran at Indy twice, in 1916 and 1919.

> *"It's an opportunity to possess one of the pinnacles of Formula 1 engineering... Bidding is expected to reach $4m"*

You could barely have better provenance in a racing car than the name Michael Schumacher, and in New York on November 16 RM Sotheby's will auction one of the most significant of all the seven-time champion's mounts. Chassis F2001 no211 (top) brought the German ace his final Monaco Grand Prix victory in a season where he clinched his fourth world title, the car bagging him an astonishing nine victories in 2001. He scored the decisive win, at Hungary, in this chassis.

Powered by a screaming 900bhp 3-litre V10, the F2001 sprang from that magical synergy of Schumacher, Ross Brawn and Rory Byrne that won Maranello five championships in a row.

So good was the 2001 that it opened the 2002 season with victory in Melbourne before



giving way to the equally successful F2002. Whether or not a new owner will stretch it to all 18,500rpm, it's an opportunity to possess one of the pinnacles of Formula 1 engineering. Unusually, the car is being sold at the partnership's Fine Art sale rather than a dedicated automobile event, but no doubt the same potential buyers will attend. Bidding is expected to reach the $4m region.

Also blurring the line between autos and art, RM Sotheby's holds its third Icons sale, featuring prime examples of motoring design, at its Manhattan HQ as part of a week of Sotheby's Luxury Division events starting on November 30. It's said to offer "an unparalleled experience across multiple platforms" - a further sign that buyers are coming from a wider reach. Observers see a gentle slackening of the classic market, but the top end seemingly remains ever-buoyant.

Preview & Calendar

NOVEMBER

3 Bonhams
London, UK

11 Silverstone Auctions
NEC, UK

11 Bonhams
Los Angeles, USA

15 H&H
Duxford, UK

16 Mecum
Las Vegas, USA

25 Historics at Brooklands
Brooklands

30 Mecum
Kansas City, USA

DECEMBER

2 CCA
Leamington Spa, UK

3 Bonhams
London, UK

6 RM Sotheby's
New York, USA

6 Bonhams
London, UK

11 Bonhams
Los Angeles, USA

12 Barons
Sandown Park, UK

JANUARY

5 Mecum
Kissimee, USA

17 Russo & Steele
Scottsdale, USA

18 RM Sotheby's
Phoenix, USA

18 Bonhams
Scottsdale, USA

19 Gooding
Scottsdale, USA



BONHAMS

1913 Peugeot L45 *Estimate: POA*
Grand Prix breakthrough which reshaped racing car design; 4.5-litre 16-valve twin-cam, four-wheel brakes; one of four built for the 1914 French GP; third in 1916 Indianapolis 500. Part of Bothwell collection.



HISTORICS AT BROOKLANDS

2008 Porsche 997 GT3 RS
Estimate: £115-140,000
First GT3 variant of 997 line; lighter RS spec; 3.6-litre 409bhp engine, electronically adjustable suspension.



BONHAMS

1908 Prinz Heinrich Benz
Estimate: POA
Built to mark a Benz win in the 1908 trial in Germany promoted by Prince Henry of Prussia; capable of 90mph.



H&H

1955 Jaguar XK140 SE FHC
Estimate: £55-60,000
Special Equipment spec; converted to RHD, upgraded to discs, power steering, five-speed manual and air conditioning.



SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS

1988 Ford Sierra Cosworth RS500
Estimate: £100-150,000
Rare example of an unspoiled Cosworth, boasting a remarkable 6000 miles only on the clock; never tweaked or tuned.



THE EXPERT AUGUSTIN SABATIÉ-GARAT

Auction manager and car specialist, RM Sotheby's

While the overall market volume has dropped a little, we see a strong split along quality lines. If this E-type has dropped, that E-type has risen. We had two 'Plexi' Daytona Ferraris in the Maranello sale; one went at £530,000, the other at £1.6m, because it was a barn-find alloy car. The market gets excited by unusual things. Investment buyers came out of the market in 2016 because the market was no longer dynamic enough, so we're seeing more buyers from the committed end, who are prepared to pay over estimate, and over last year's market peaks, for prime history and originality. Also there are a lot of new players - a new client at our Milan sale last year has now spent £40m with us.

Ferrari 430 Scuderia

A taste of the dark side with Ferrari's 430 Scuderia

Price new: £172,500
Price now: £135,000 -160,000 (LHD)
Rivals: Porsche GT3 RS; Audi R8 GT; Lamborghini Gallardo Superleggera
Heritage: On the fine line of thrilling, track-honed V8 Ferraris





Abbreviated nicknames for cars aren't always attractive, but in the case of this silver-on-black 430 Scuderia the colloquial 'Scud' seems an appropriate description for Ferrari's F430-based low-flying missile.

Convincing customers they're but one step removed from racing stardom is something Ferrari has successfully traded on for decades. But in the 360 Challenge Stradale, 430 Scuderia and 458 Speciale it's taken this to extremes. The 2003 360 CS is perhaps the most hardcore of these cars, the 110kg weight saving and uprated 419bhp 3.6-litre V8 indicative of an ear-bleeding intensity to its character.

By the time the 458 Speciale arrived a decade later Ferrari had expanded on the



knife-edge thrills but maintained the sensibilities of the standard model. Sitting between the two the 430 Scuderia could well be the perfect balance, not to mention a bit of a bargain.

Against the tape measure these are not small cars, but tightly harnessed into the carbon-backed, Alcantara-trimmed seats the Scuderia feels as compact and chuckable as a Lotus Elise. Albeit far faster and more exotic. With settings signed off by Michael Schumacher himself, the Scuderia introduced new calibration for the 'Racing *manettino*' switch on the wheel and revised controls for the electronically controlled E-Diff and F1-Trac traction control. Short version? The Scuderia does everything in its power to make you think you're a seven-time F1 champion too.

Some 90kg trimmer at the kerb than the F430, the Scuderia feels lighter still on the road, the light but direct steering and searing throttle response combining with whip-crack shifts from the single-clutch F1-SuperFast2 gearbox. In an age of turbocharged engines, the sound and response of the 503bhp 4.3-litre V8 is truly a standout feature, and it is equally happy to haul from low revs or howl to 8000rpm and beyond.

With Challenge Stradales starting at £200,000 and Speciales beyond £350,000 this left-hand drive Scuderia is arguably something of a bargain. Indeed, tempting as a Porsche 911 GT3 RS of equivalent vintage might be, the fact that you can have a similarly track-honed Ferrari for the same money is astonishing.



SPEAKING TO TOM HARTLEY JR

The supercar specialist on why the Scuderia is one to catch before it flies

The Ferrari 430 Scuderia gives an amazing experience. It's a track-developed car for the road with simple controls, fantastic sound and great usability. It's not too expensive to maintain and retains value, even at 30-40,000 miles. You could buy a good Scuderia and have five years of fantastic motoring and it should still turn out to be a good investment. The one we have for sale (pictured above and for sale for £139,950) is LHD but the same car in RHD would be nearer £200,000, and with half the miles it would fetch another £20,000. But at the current mileage the next buyer needn't feel concerned about racking up the miles and can use the car how it was intended.

ASTON MARTIN SPECIALISTS
NICHOLAS MEE
& COMPANY LTD

ASTON MARTIN
HERITAGE

A SELECTION OF OUR CURRENT STOCK

2010 ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE GT2 £299,950



The Vantage GT2 was launched in 2008 to compete in series such as the FIA GT Championship, ELMS, Asian and American Le Mans Series and of course, the Le Mans 24 Hours itself. Based heavily on the superb Vantage road car, a total of just 10 Vantage GT2s were built before the car was evolved to become the Vantage GTE in 2012.

The car we now offer, chassis GT2-007 was built by Aston Martin Racing in 2010 and racing in the 'GT Open' category in that year. GT2-007 sat out the 2011 season but was back in action at the start of 2012 where it was entered for the AMR Festival event at Le Mans. It completed the race without incident to score a commanding victory, finishing more than a minute ahead of the next car.

Since acquisition in 2015 the current owner has had the car professionally prepared including a full engine rebuild by Prodrive and had a new gearbox. Vantage GT2-007's last outing was at Spa in September 2017 where it competed in the inaugural round of the Masters Endurance Legends, where it finished first in class.

Now offered in race ready condition with both engine and gearbox mileage being at a minimum having only been used for one day of testing and race win at Spa. The Vantage GT2 is eligible for the Masters Endurance Legends series, confirmed for 2018 and the 2018 AMR Festival at the Le Mans 24 hours.

All the equipment required to run the GT2 is supplied with the car, comprising of a laptop; data cable; air jack connector; and a water heater to warm the engine for starting from cold. Accompanying the car is a substantial spare parts package, the full details of which are available on request.



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Factory-built customer race cars have been core to Porsche's business from the very start. Many dream about competing in something 911-based, but the realities of doing so can be prohibitive.

Buying your way into the fiercely competitive Carrera Cup will cost about £180,000, including car and entry, while a new 911 GT3 R will cost close to half a million before it turns a wheel in anger. Making the most of a racing 911 isn't necessarily something for the rookie driver, either, race-winning speed demanding skill and experience wherever you're competing.

GT4 represents a less intimidating route into the sport, the category attracting more and more manufacturers and a tempting array of factory machinery in which to compete. McLaren, Mercedes-AMG, Aston Martin and BMW are among many with new products ready to race, the likes of Ginetta offering a more pure-bred and cost-effective option. Porsche needed to be involved and its choice of the Cayman as its entry-level GT4 car makes total sense, not least given a critically acclaimed road car of the same name on which to base it.

Like the street version of the Cayman GT4, the Clubsport benefits greatly from 911 hardware. At its heart is a naturally-aspirated 3.8-litre flat six from the pre-turbo Carrera S while suspension parts are a direct carry-over from the 911 GT3 Cup car. Unlike the manual-only road car, the Clubsport uses a six-speed PDK dual-clutch transmission, smooth shifts and protection from over-revving being among the benefits over the more expensive race sequentials used by equivalent 911s.

From a starting point of less than £100,000, you can pick from a range of options to set the car up for your championship of choice, up to and including the £30,000 GT4-ready MR package from Nürburgring specialist Manthey.

Used GT4 Clubsports list in specialist dealers for around €120,000 - but they are popular and dependable cars and hence don't come up very often. When they do, check that items such as the race seat, a 100-litre tank (if you're going endurance racing) and a spare set of wheels are included.



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"I would recommend some kind of fully adjustable suspension and the MR anti-roll bars to take it from an excellent track-day car to a race car," says Martin Braybrook of Porsche race specialist Brookspeed. "To be competitive within all GT4 European series you need to have the MR kit." Ease of use, parts support to match any Porsche factory race car and relatively low running costs all count in the Cayman's favour, too. "The substantially higher engine and gearbox life of the Cayman GT4 are the biggest factors. The PDK works well under race conditions - we have had drivers leave it in the auto setting when they do their first stint in the cars." ***www.brookspeed.com***

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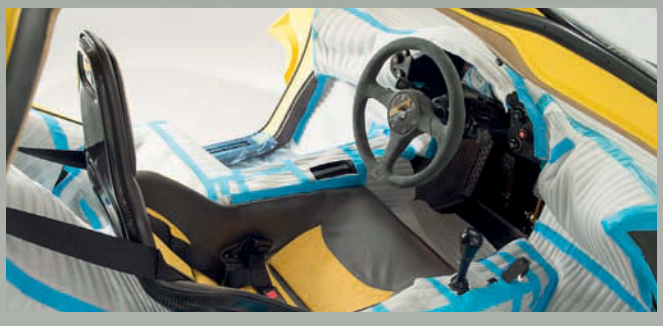
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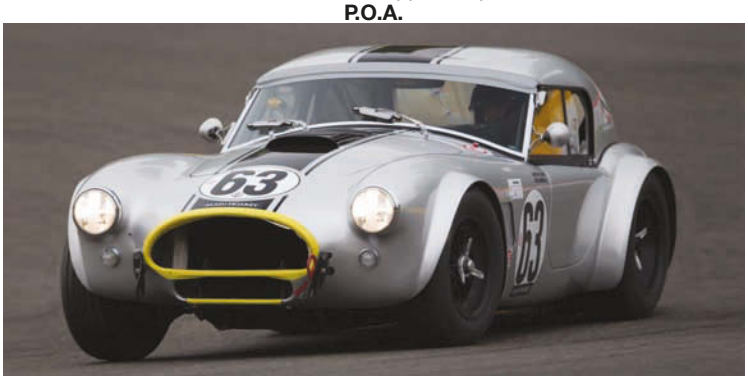
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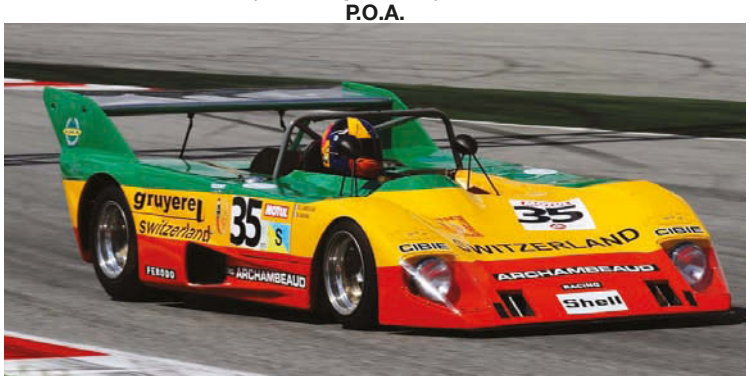
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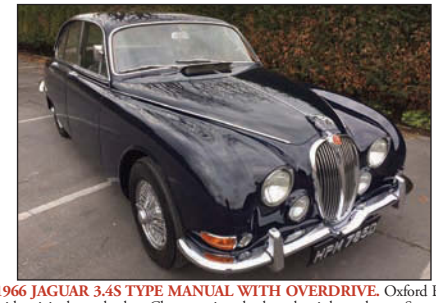
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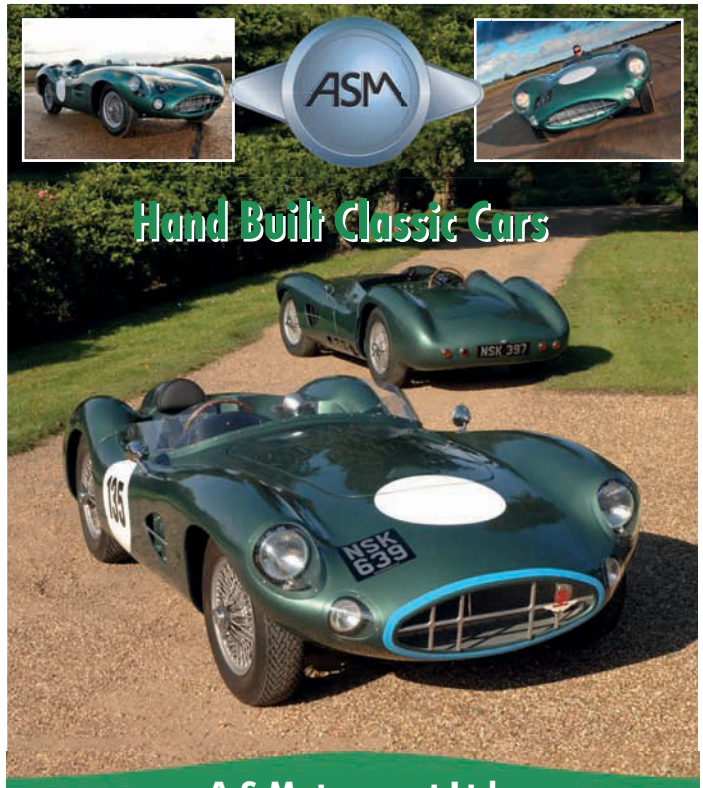
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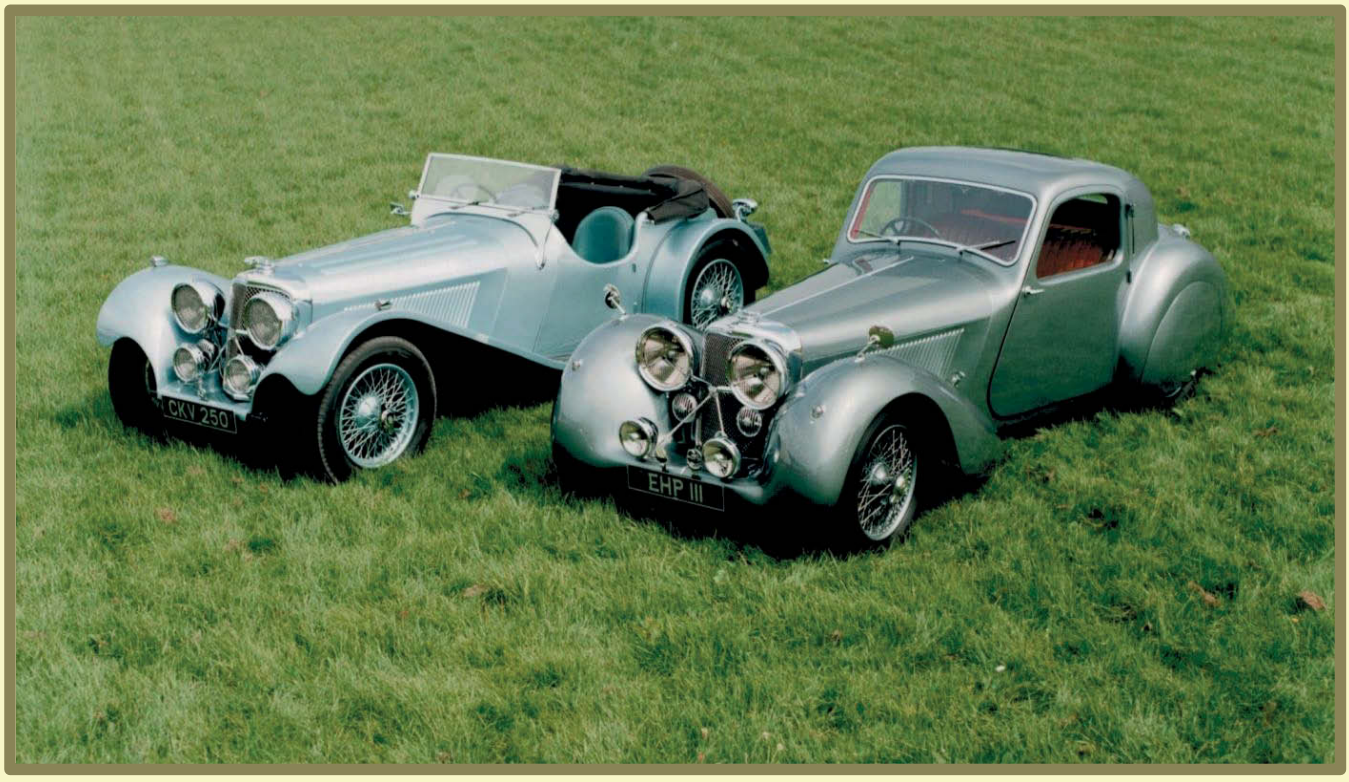
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F1 RESTORATION

Jordan 195

Component testing is vital, but some parts can't be tested. Warren Stean opted for new, and replaceable, made-to-measure alternatives

When I finally took the plunge and started down the path to acquire, restore and ultimately drive a Formula 1 car, I made the conscious decision to do everything possible to try to avoid seriously injuring myself, or worse. Some might say if you don't want to get hurt, don't drive a racing car, but there are things that can be done to bring risk levels down. This was one of many reasons why I chose a mid-1990s F1 car in the first place and bought the Jordan-Peugeot 195.

Besides the sheer noise and drama of this period of Formula 1 machinery, they also come with the benefit of safety measures that followed the tragic weekend at Imola in 1994, as well as the improved composite construction techniques of the time. I personally think some of the F1 cars from the early 1970s are among the most beautiful and purposeful machines ever built, but I just can't get past the sheer danger those cars present with the location of the fuel tanks and the driver's ankles sticking out forward of the front axle line.

Huge respect to the drivers of the day – and even more to those who race them now, because they have a choice. Those cars aren't for me. But there are also things that I can do to my ex-Rubens Barrichello Jordan to reduce the risks to a level I find acceptable. Some 22 years after the car ended its competitive career, areas that need looking at are





"These blade-type joints are notorious for failure, and hard to test. In the end they will fail – not an enticing prospect"

crack-testing the components and trying to understand where there may be inherent weaknesses, and then looking at what solutions may be available.

Known areas of concern are the carbon wishbones and the titanium integrated flexures that replace the traditional spherical rod-end mountings on the monocoque. These blade-type joints on the inboard side of the front suspension are notorious areas for failure and are also difficult to test reliably in a non-destructive manner. In the end, as with any component, they will fail. Not a particularly enticing prospect.

I also don't have any new replacements for these parts and at some point they are going to have to be replaced, ideally before they fail. That means considering alternatives to the system of carbon wishbones with integrated flexures.

After some careful consideration and consultation with Matt Faulks at Tour-de-Force Power Engineering, who are restoring the Jordan, we made the decision to remove the original carbon wishbones and re-engineer and manufacture steel wishbones with spherical bearing inboard joints. Doing this now rather than later - or after a potential spill - means that the originals can be kept and used for any static displays, so the originality of the car is not lost. For testing, racing and demos, the car will be able to be run without compromising the suspension dynamics on brand-new and, therefore, safer wishbones and pushrods all round. Spare sets can also be manufactured, which will lower unit costs and give the car a useful spares package.

The design process for manufacturing the double wishbones and pushrod suspension in steel rather than carbon is complex because there are differences in flex and weight. In addition there are other complex material science issues that need to be addressed in order that the functionality of the suspension remains intact.

Tour-de-Force is undertaking this design process in-house using an Autodesk Fusion 360 CAD system to perform FEA (finite element analysis) on the drawn part before any metal is cut. This allows us to ensure that the component strength is a suitable order of magnitude stronger than it will ever need to be.

In F1 the part would be refined from here to reduce weight to the minimum, but for cars such as my Jordan 195 in private ownership - and therefore not trying to win F1 races – the additional strength and longer life of a component designed in this way makes more sense from a cost and reliability perspective. The spherical joints in the wishbones are staked to allow for easy replacement. Additional tooling has been produced to allow for the stripping and inspection of the uprights and driveshafts etc. Inspection and crack-testing of these parts is underway.

Retaining original flexure joints would invite problems, so carbon suspension arms will be replaced with new matching steel units and spherical joints







Next month: All change in the gearbox: reverse engineering the internals

Thanks to: Tour-de-Force Power Engineering, Bedford; Engine Developments, Rugby

RACER REBUILD

Alfasud Sprint Veloce

In an ideal world Geoff Gordon's restored 'Sud would have raced by now, but motor sport is very rarely straightforward

I guess the reality of the situation dawned just after the Raceworks Motorsport guys returned from a busy weekend at the Hungaroring in early October. I said that we'd have to make a decision about taking the 'Sud to Paul Ricard a couple of weeks before the event - and [Raceworks partner] Pete Johnston replied, 'There are only a couple of weeks to go before the event!'

That pretty much confirmed that we wouldn't be able to make it, but I knew that was always a possibility because the team had to cope with a string of racing events that came up thick and fast towards the season's end. On one hand it's disappointing not to have travelled to Ricard, but on the other I have the whole winter to look forward to racing the car next spring. And it would have been a mistake to rush things - you really need to do a bit of testing to make sure that everything is running correctly before you dash off to any race meetings, particularly when they're a long way from home.

The car has been progressing since my last report and all the bits are now in situ for assembly to start. We are really pleased with the way the oil tank has turned out, given that we started with only a grimy old black-and-white photo. From that, Pro Alloy Motorsport created a polystyrene mould and the finished article looks fantastic - particularly when you bear in mind the shortage of decent reference material.

The building process will accelerate now that the season is winding down and, once that's done, the car will be taken to Brunswick Racing's rolling road to get the engine set-up properly. It's the first dry-sump boxer engine that Brunswick's Dave Ashford has prepared - and that was another reason not to rush things. We all want to make sure things are done properly.

I don't yet have a date for our first test, but in all likelihood we will shake the car down at Donington Park. It's an ideal location for chassis set-up, because it has a good range of very different corners. Test days are sometimes unsilenced, too, which is a bonus, though that aspect doesn't matter too much. We do have a straight-through exhaust, but we also have a couple of add-on bits that enable us to restrict it to 105 decibels.

Beyond testing, there was talk of a Peter Auto event at Marrakesh in January, but that seems to have gone quiet and as we speak the 2018 calendar has still to be confirmed, so I don't yet know where our Heritage Touring Cup campaign will begin. It would be easy to relax as the racing season unwinds, but I'm not going to use that as an excuse to throttle back - it's the perfect time to press on and get the car finished. By this time next month, I hope it will at the very least have been on the rolling road.



Next month: Patience (probably) rewarded and looking ahead to the 2018 Heritage Touring Cup season
Thanks to: Geoff Gordon; Raceworks Motorsport
www.raceworksmotorsport.com

Oil tank was crafted using only information from a tatty mono image. 'Sud features Brunswick's first dry-sumped flat-four









It would be easy to relax as the racing season unwinds, but I'm not going to use that as an excuse to throttle back

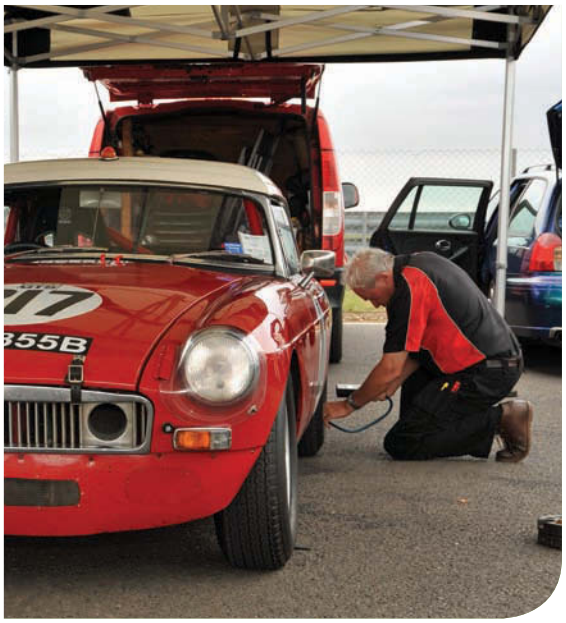
HISTORIC RACER

MGB Roadster

A messy debut at Silverstone, and a chance to live out a dream at Snetterton. Or is that nightmare, Nick Trott?







So how did we fare on our race debut at a Classic and Sports Car Club meeting at Silverstone? Well, it was fun, but not without frustration. Oh, you want to hear more? Okay, in race one Ed made contact with another car (the first time in more than 16 years of racing) and I was way off the pace. We finished 17th overall having overestimated the amount of fuel we needed for the 45-minute event - we were carrying 15 litres at the end...

The hour-long race two revealed signs of improvement, in that we didn't crash or overfuel the car. However, 20 years of driving and road-testing modern machinery has left me woefully underprepared for a car with no brakes, no grip and no horsepower (at least that's my excuse, and I'm sticking to it). We finished 15th.

The next race was a round of the Equipe GTS series, but Ed had to pull out at the last minute. Nevertheless, he generously offered me the car and I immediately thought 'Now's my chance to live that life!' Which life? The life I love reading about. That of a '60s F3 driver - heroes travelling all over Europe, towing their race car, sleeping in vans, spannering the car themselves, pocketing prize money and moving on to the next race meeting. The freedom. The open road. The girls...

"It truly was a band of brothers," said features editor Simon Arron when I mentioned it to him. "Imagine it; you're racing at Monza, crash, so you visit the Brambilla brothers to get your car welded up before the next race. Then back on the road to Karlskoga or wherever."

The location for my solo race? Montjuïc? Spa? Karlskoga? No, I would be heading east to... Snetterton. Not a glamorous location - but hey, I had a van (an absurdly posh borrowed Mercedes Marco Polo), a trailer (an even posher Moetefindt) and like my heroes I would be self-sufficient for the weekend. In all areas that is except for spannering. And the prize money. And the Brambilla brothers. And the girls....

So, late one Thursday night I packed the van, loaded the car and fell asleep. The alarm sounded at 4.30am and I headed off carrying a giddying sense of excitement. I was under no illusion that I was experiencing maybe one per cent of that life I love reading about, but to me that sliver felt as effervescent as any point in my life.

I was greeted at the circuit with knowing smiles from John Pearson and Rob Cull - Equipe GTS organisers. They knew exactly how I was feeling - nothing new to these experienced racers, but they appreciated that it was very real to me. They then introduced me to Roy Gillingham of chequeredflagclassics.co.uk, who would look after BRX 855B for the day. OK, so I was straying from my idealistic 'nomadic racer' fantasies, but this can be a dangerous game and I was no longer prepared to take the risk on spannering and driving - driving solo would be a big enough challenge in this, only my 11th race in 15 years.

Testing went well, although if you're a regular reader you'll have noticed the word 'but' crop up quite a lot. And on that cliffhanger... ◘



Next month: ***Double yellows, safety cars, heart-in-mouth moments, glimmers of hope...***

Thanks to: ***www.equipegts.uk, www.fyshe.com (Adidas racewear), Roy Gillingham***

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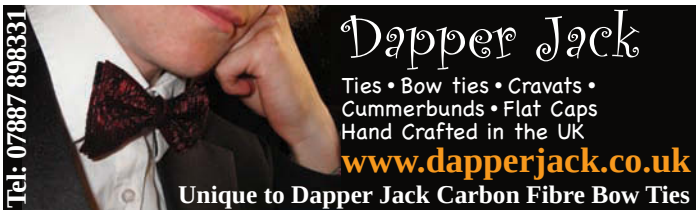

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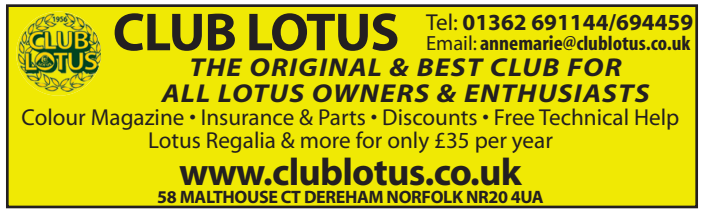
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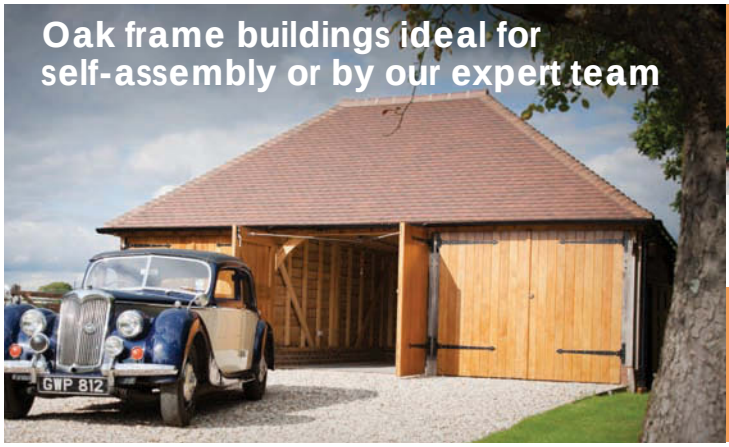








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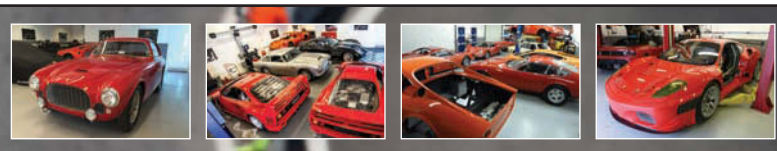
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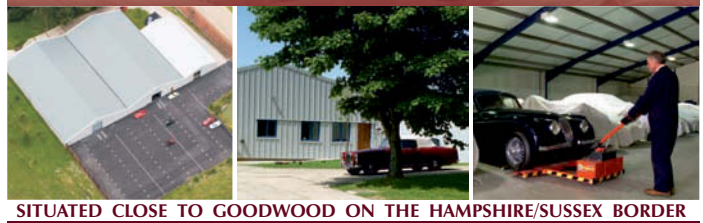
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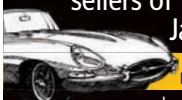


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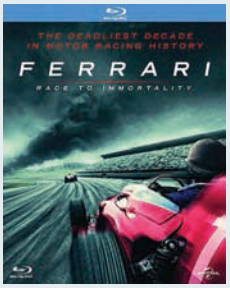
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Ferrari: Race to Immortality

Racing fans as well as admirers of the sport's great team owners have been spoiled over the past few months, with biopics of Frank Williams and Bruce McLaren hitting the big screen. And now for the *padre* of them all: Enzo Ferrari.

Billed as the story of Ferrari's tumultuous early years, the film wisely focuses on the human actors behind the Scuderia's success in the 1950s. The story and the era provide a rich seam to mine and, as with the other two films mentioned above, tells that tale by stitching together archive footage from the time. So here we have Peter Collins and Mike Hawthorn larking around on water skis, racing wheel to wheel, and off-duty on the side of a dusty track. There's moving footage of the doomed Luigi Musso on the eve of the 1958 French Grand Prix, and more of Eugenio Castellotti and Alfonso de Portago. The film's narrative is driven along with erudite contributions from - among others - two of this magazine's contributors, Richard Williams and Doug Nye. But the real star is Richard Wiseman, who appears in the end credits as film archivist: it is presumably he who managed to dig out the incredible footage that make this film worth seeing.

Ironically, the one person who remains for the most part off-camera is Enzo himself. Instead, the Old Man maintains a spectral presence throughout with fuzzy audio of his disembodied voice playing over key sequences. Then again this is perhaps fitting for a film that, despite its exquisite archive footage of events that defined Ferrari, never quite manages to get beneath Enzo's skin. Who is the man who, we are told, on being informed of Castellotti's fatal crash asked: "And the car?" It's a question this film ultimately fails to answer. ***JD***

In cinemas Friday November 3. On Blue-Ray and DVD from Monday 6 November.

Special Obsessions

Les Brown

In post-war Britain there were more pressing matters than designing or building small, affordable sports cars. The solution was for the terminally industrious to construct their own.

This thorough examination of the cottage industry that spawned many a special from 1947-62 fuses the histories of familiar names (including Lotus and Cosworth) with many that you are unlikely ever to find on *AutoTrader*.

The author's passion is obvious and his prose is well illustrated with photos, technical illustrations and period press cuttings - including a few from *Motor Sport*, wherein Bill Boddy and Jenks were vocal supporters. Vanwall and Cooper are often credited with spearheading Britain's emergence as the world's most potent motor sport hub during the late 1950s, but the seeds of that transition were perhaps sown a few years before by those wielding spanners and welding torches in suburbia. ***SA***

Published by Kirkdale

ISBN: 978-1-872955-36-0, £30

Powered by Porsche

The Alternative Race Cars

Roy Smith

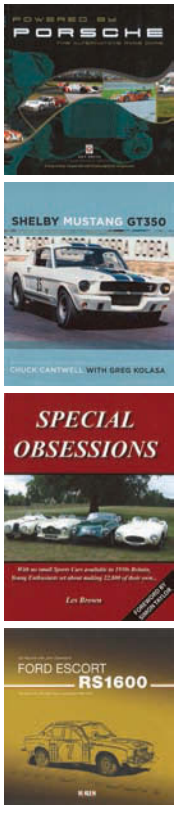
Powered by Porsche can probably be filed under the 'books we didn't know we needed.' The premise is simple: document as many cars not built by but powered by Porsche.

There's little flourish in the writing, and it's all rather matter of fact, but there's some genuine interest here: the Glöckler products, which started it all, and Pete Lovely's Pooper, for example. The Kremer era and the '80s become rather bogged down, and the book often falls into the realm of information rather than entertainment. But the photo research has been done meticulously, unearthing some fascinating shots; it's yet another work that has used Porsche's copious archive to great effect.

All the right names are on board: Jürgen Barth and Reinhold Joest are among many who provide forewords, and the investigation has been thorough for every car. They're not all pretty, but they're all here. Except the Seat Ibiza... ***JP***

Published by Veloce

ISBN: 978-1-845849-90-0, £100



Shelby Mustang GT350

Chuck Cantwell with Greg Kolasa

Chuck Cantwell ought to know about Shelby Mustangs: he was project manager for creating the 'Mustang GT' - its name before the 350 was added - out of a cheap, fun car that was actually advertised as suitable for secretaries. In this lengthy and detailed memoir he recalls the double task of not only making a race-winning car from the base model but also the parallel task of making a viable production run of the hot version, and his book is packed with facts about the people, the racing and the specification alterations, huge and small, he had to factor in.

Here are the background stories to the Hertz rental GT350Hs, behind-the-scenes memories of title-winning racing, the astonishing overnight rebuild of a seemingly totalled car at Green Valley. Much has already been written about this American idol, but this, with additional background from Mustang expert Greg Kolasa and David Bull's usual high production standard, is a valuable contribution. ***GC***

Published by David Bull

ISBN: 978-1-935007-29-6, $49.95

Ford Escort RS1600

The Story of RWC 455K

Ed Heuvink & John Davenport

There are countless tomes about the original Escort, with or without numbers on the flanks, but this limited edition covers the individual history of the 1972 Safari Rally winner, crewed by Hannu Mikkola and Gunnar Palm.

It's a perfect excuse - not that any should ever be needed - for McKlein to trawl its immense and sumptuous archive to provide a bit of photographic context to Ford's pre-Escort Safari history. As a result, there are shots of a 100E Anglia on the 1956 Safari, Cortinas, Capris and much else as the story evolves towards its engaging core.

As with any McKlein project, lavish production values and wonderful images are included as standard - so it's rather better equipped than many a basic Escort of yore. ***SA***

Published by McKlein

ISBN: 978-3-927458-98-7, €79.90

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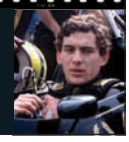



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1955 MILLE MIGLIA

by Michael Turner

Driving the fabulous 300SLR Mercedes, 25 year old Stirling Moss scored one of his greatest victories in the gruelling Mille Miglia of 1955.

Partnered by Dennis Jenkinson, whose pace notes helped to guide him round the treacherous 1000 mile course, Moss took victory in the fastest time ever recorded.

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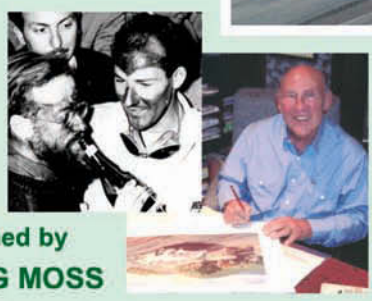
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ART

FEATURED ARTIST

Hans Sures

Old boards and cheap paints make for unusually rich results



It takes a special eye to see beauty in a grubby electric drill or a worn hacksaw. Yet alongside images of vintage drag bikes or dirt-track riders, such tools are one focus of Hans Sures' art.

With a background in commercial art and advertising, Hans's own interests often had to take a back seat to commerce. London-based since graduating from art college in Germany in the 1990s, he also works in the USA – including commissions for Carroll Shelby – but now he is making his art available in print form. His subjects range across bikes, bikers and racing cars to portraits and armoured knights, and he has developed an unusual technique.

"I paint on MDF board," he explains. "I paint a 'dirty' layer, then sand it down, varnish it and paint onto that with cheap acrylics, which are a bit translucent."

Painted on a large scale, the images highlight the aged, worn quality of the tools. "Metal is remarkably easy to paint," he says casually. Cars too he paints onto MDF. "I find modern cars harder, with so much sponsorship. I like to see what the thing is made from." Like his drag bikes, almost monochrome, with the sheen of old muck recently cleaned. "I did some bike drag racing myself in my 20s," he explains, "and I'm kind of happy they're not so fashionable."

Hans likes to start with specially taken photos which allow him to manipulate the light, and he recently lined up a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine to paint large-scale. "But I need a client for that!" Meanwhile he is looking for more old tools on eBay. "That takes longer than painting them!"

www.hanssuresstudio.com

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1948 Targa Florio winner's trophy

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1968 Rhein-Pokalrennen Hockenheim F2 trophy

CDN$1995

Awarded to Chris Amon in F2 race at Hockenheim. He finished eighth in a Ferrari Dino 166. Brass and copper jug-style trophy stands 12in tall.

www.collectorstudio.com

FEATURED MODEL MAKER

Diecasm, USA

Marcus Nicholls examines some esoteric models from Diecasm's Automodello line

Most of us love the famous and successful marques, but a significant contingent appreciate more unusual vehicles. For a model manufacturer, pursuing this path can be risky as sales will inevitably be smaller. But then it's unlikely other makers will offer the same subjects, so a solid reputation can be built by providing 'must-have' rarities for the discerning collector.

This was in the mind of Jim Cowen when he launched 'Automodello' in 2009 to offer scale models of overlooked marques, and the team has created some extraordinary high-end miniatures.

Automodello's first model was the 1:43-scale 1964 TVR Griffith 200, hand-signed by Jack Griffith. In 2011 Automodello released the 1938 Phantom Corsair in 1:24, the first example in that scale. If you're looking for a satin-yellow 1954 Kaiser Darrin 161 Cabriolet in 1:24, Automodello has it. How about a 1965 Buick Riviera Gran Sport in the same scale? Yours for the sum of $365.95 (about £280), a remarkably good price for a hand-built, high-grade replica with flawless paint, sparkling chromework and a fully detailed interior. Most modellers would struggle to compete with this if commissioned to build something similar from a kit, even if such a kit existed.

Automodello also offers some fabulous hardware in 1:43, the 'traditional' scale for model car collectors, including a brace of Boundary Layer Adhesion Technology Gurney Eagle Challengers from the 1981 Indycar season. But new to Automodello's burgeoning product line is something really special. Due for release in summer 2018 is the Eagle Gurney-Weslake V12 Formula 1 car in which Dan Gurney won the 1967 Belgian GP at Spa, the only post-war US driver to win an F1 Grand Prix in an American car.

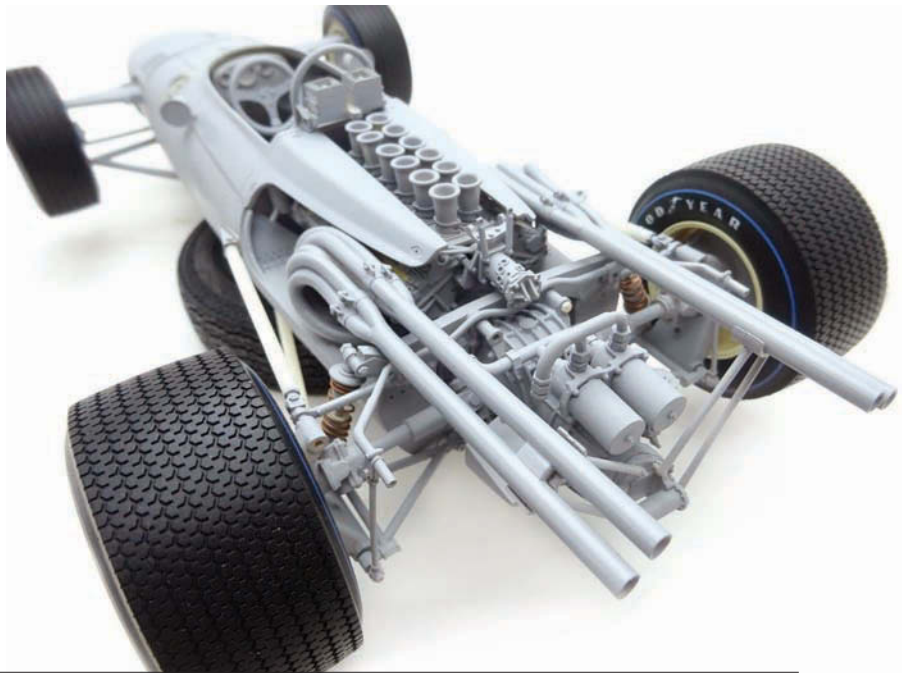
Automodello sells direct from www.automodello.com, and through www.diecasm.com

Not only is this a wonderful subject, but the model is in 1:12 scale, allowing it to incorporate significantly more detail.

An edition of 150 will be signed by Dan Gurney, while a 'Pure Edition' (below) will come without decals or signature, for collectors who want to apply different decals or just display the car without the distraction of markings. Both are priced at $1499.95 and include a display case.

All Automodello models are hand-built, not just hand-assembled as with more mass-produced lines, which means there is always a human element involved in each build. Thus each model may have its own unique character, though all share the staggering quality and accuracy displayed across the range of the company's model cars.

Parent company Diecasm also sells complementary brands including BBR 1:43, Ignition, Kyosho and Minichamps. International markets are served by Automodello/Diecasm directly (especially for 1:24), plus a few select dealers such as Kyosho Japan and GP Legends UK for 1:43 and Lotus 1:12.



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Parting Shot

July 25, 1921

Le Mans, France

What would contemporary FIA track inspectors say? André Boillot (Sunbeam) heads for fifth place in the 1921 French GP – a race won by Jimmy Murphy (Duesenberg) after 30 laps of the 10.726-mile circuit. The American finished almost 15 minutes clear of Ralph de Palma (Ballot), with Jules Goux and André Dubonnet completing the top four.



LAT


Spidoléine





Clockwise from left: Porsche drivers Dan Gurney and Jo Bonnier chat during the 1961 British Grand Prix meeting; future inspiration; 1961 BGP winner Taffy von Trips puts pen to paper; Clark and Chapman with Lotus 30, 1964; *Ferraristi* Hill, Ginther and Baghetti confer, 1961; Zerex Special at the 1964 Aintree 200 meeting, Bruce McLaren in the background









You were there

Resident in Auckland, New Zealand, since the late 1960s, David Greeney was raised in Liverpool and had a camera to hand when his local track Aintree hosted major motor races

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