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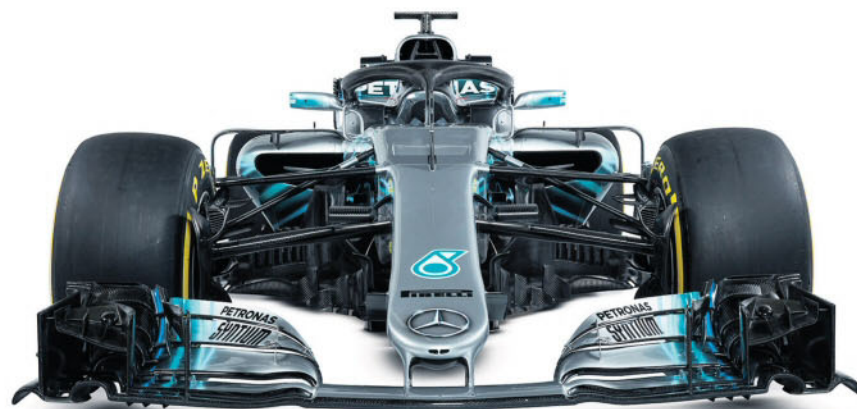
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Hamilton says he's "in awe" of what the Mercedes team has achieved so far in Formula 1



New F1 W09 is a step over its predecessor in all areas



New car is designed to suit both Lewis Hamilton's and Valtteri Bottas's driving styles

**By Robert Ladbrook**

**Lewis Hamilton says there are a "number of areas" where he can improve on from last year as he sets his sights on a fifth world title this season with Mercedes.**

The British superstar shook down his new Mercedes F1 W09 at Silverstone last week before heading to Barcelona for the start of this week's first pre-season test as *Motorsport News* closed for press on Monday.

Mercedes' new car is largely a development of last year's W08, which proved dominant in Hamilton's hands, carrying him to nine grand prix wins and a place in history as the first British driver to win four world titles.

Despite heading into the season as the leading tip for another crown, Hamilton said he felt there was still a lot of work to do to live

up to the favourite tag this year.

"I always want to get better and improve as a driver," said Hamilton. "Last year was perhaps the best year that I have had performance-wise. How can I top that? How can I improve on what was a very, very strong year? But there are lots of areas actually. And even still my relationship with the team is constantly growing. How do I use their genius to help me achieve my goal? And how do I interact with them to help achieve their goal? Ultimately utilising them to get my goal helps them get theirs.

"This is my sixth season with the team, and it's crazy to think that it's been that long. This car is a work of art, it's incredible. I'm in awe of the people in this team and I find myself just staring at the car thinking 'how do they do that?'"

A fifth world title would put Hamilton level with only Juan

Manuel Fangio in second in the all-time winners' list, behind only Michael Schumacher's tally of seven.

When asked if he expected repeat run-ins with title rivals this year – such as his spat with Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel at the Azerbaijan GP, Hamilton said: "Hopefully this year, if I am performing at my best, there will be some issues [for his rivals] and they'll get upset about it. But I don't play mind games, I just drive faster."

**All-new, but proven**

The new Mercedes aims to address the unpredictability of last year's car, which proved difficult to set up at certain tracks. Mercedes tended to suffer and slower-speed or more technical venues, such as Monaco, Hungary and Sepang in Malaysia.

Hamilton said the new car was more new than many will realise, and that it has been honed by the

*How do you improve on four titles? Hamilton has a plan*

# LEWIS: PUSHING FOR PERFECTION



Hamilton got his first laps in new F1 W09 last week

driving data of both he and team-mate Valtteri Bottas.

"What you see in this car is an evolution of both our driving DNA fused into one," said Hamilton.

"I hope that Valtteri is more comfortable in this car, because that can only bode well for the team. But it's definitely not moved away from me. My job is to explain the weaknesses and put a feeling into technical terms so the team can go and design something to fix it. I'm really hopeful that this year we've ironed out most of the creases.

"We had a very in-depth debrief after [Malaysia last year, when Mercedes fell behind both Red Bull and Ferrari]. Those debriefs were significant in making the new car.

"There's a different aerodynamic characteristic this year compared to last. We've taken some of the good from last year, but there were circuits that we went to where we weren't that strong, so hopefully

we've found a compromise which will favour the majority of the circuits.

"Some of the suspension, some of the roll issues that we had, some of the ride issues that we had, some of the floor characteristics, those things have improved quite a lot. Everything is brand new, all the suspension, everything's been redone."

#### Design 'no-brainer'

Despite the troubles at some tracks last year, Mercedes has opted to stick with its longer wheelbase chassis design, something that Ferrari has moved toward with its new challenger.

Mercedes technical director James Allison said sticking with the longer platform was a natural decision.

"The long wheelbase is something we decided very early on was an asset to us, and I'm pretty

sure we're still right on that," he said.

"It's much, much easier having a decision like that under your belt, because then you're not running two windtunnel programmes with two wheelbases, two models, two different things. You can be pretty certain the gains you got last year will be inherited by the car for this year. If you're sure the longer wheelbase is an asset, then it's a no-brainer to carry it over.

"The rake of the car is something you work on all the time. We try to make the mechanical grip part of our suspension work nicely with the aerodynamic package, and where we have a broad peak of our best rear downforce performance is a little lower in ride height than some other cars. The peak rear downforce moves up a little bit for this year's car, but we certainly won't be in the sort of rake territory that we saw the Red Bulls in last year."



Hamilton is the first Briton to lift four F1 world titles, and says he's keen for a fifth

# RACING NEWS

## F1 ROUND-UP

### Hello, Halo

Fernando Alonso says there shouldn't be any debate about the halo device, despite it stealing the attention of many of last week's car launches. Mercedes head Toto Wolff said he'd "take a chainsaw to it", while Red Bull's Max Verstappen said "It's very ugly. I'm not looking forward to it." However, Alonso said: "This is a safety device, for the protection of drivers, so there shouldn't be any debate on that. Yeah, aesthetics aren't great at the moment, but I'm sure people will find a way to make it look much nicer."

### One for one

Sergey Sirotkin says that Robert Kubica knew that F1 was "every man for himself" as the pair went head-to-head over the last Williams seat for this year. Sirotkin got the nod, with Kubica joining the team as reserve driver. The Russian said: "Robert's a really nice guy, and I understand his position and truly respect him. But we're not here to be the good kids yielding and giving way to each other. It's every man for himself, and he understands that just as well. It happened the way it happened, and I think we have a normal relationship."

### Quick Haas

Romain Grosjean says it's critical that Haas is within touching distance of the fastest car at this week's first Barcelona test. The American team struggled with an unpredictable car last year, and was 1.9s off the pace. Albeit that was an improvement from the 2.5s deficit it had in its maiden pre-season test in 2016. Grosjean says that gap must come down again. "Ideally we need to be within a second of the fastest car on track," he said. "I want to be happy with the car and I want to be able to know where we can improve. I want a good early set-up for Melbourne."

### Engine parity

The FIA has mandated that engine manufacturers must provide the exact same specification of power units to their customers as their works teams. A new instruction has been issued insisting that all engines from a brand are capable of being operated in the same way. An FIA technical directive said the governing body wanted to "ensure that all power units supplied by one manufacturer are identical in all respects, and we have good reason to believe this is not the case. All power units should be identical, and should be operated in an identical way."

### Palmer's new seat

Ousted Renault racer Jolyon Palmer will be part of the BBC's F1 radio team for this year. Palmer joins Jennie Gow and Jack Nicholls on the Radio 5 Live commentary team, and will also be an analyst.

# RED BULL LEADS THE WAY IN EARLY TEST

## Ricciardo fastest on day one in Spain



## Renault set to begin the 2018 season with limited engine power as it searches for better reliability

Renault will begin this season with compromised performance as it looks to play it safe with this year's stricter engine regulations.

With teams now only allowed to run three engines per car across the course of the season – down from four – reliability will be at a

premium and any early failures are likely to hit hard later in the campaign.

As such, Renault has said it will start the year with its engine in a slightly compromised mode to try and ensure longevity.

"We have decided voluntarily to make some

compromises for engine number one in order to make sure that we have the right platform," said Renault F1 boss Cyril Abiteboul. "If you come to the first race and you start with problems, then that is not just a race – it compromises the whole season. You cannot afford it.

"It is about setting the right baseline and building a plan for the season. The fewer engines you have the more rigid you need to be in the implementation of performance. So the focus is very much on reliability."

Abiteboul added that Renault's new R.E.18 engine

had undergone more testing than its hybrid predecessors.

"We have covered 11 times the mileage on the dyno that we had covered at the same point last year – and we are aiming to have 70,000km on the dyno by race one, which is huge. It is something we have never done in the V6 era."

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*"This is the extreme sister car"*  
Inside new Mercedes, p20



Photos: LAT

**By Rob Ladbrook**

**Daniel Ricciardo put Red Bull Racing top of the timesheets on the first day of testing at Barcelona, on an event that brought differing fortunes for McLaren and former engine partner Honda.**

On a day that was afflicted by changing conditions, Ricciardo's morning best of 1m20.179s – set on Pirelli's medium tyres – proved to be the benchmark for the day, as light rain and cold temperatures limited running in the afternoon as *Motorsport News* closed for press.

Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas was second fastest, with Hamilton sixth on his afternoon in the worst of the conditions.

Red Bull racked up 105 laps across the day to sit comfortably at the top of the mileage charts, but for once it was Honda that shone in its new relationship with Toro Rosso. New Zealander Brendon Hartley recorded a total of 93 laps in the new STR13, putting the team second best – a stat that proved a marked contrast for Honda-powered cars in pre-season testing since the firm's return to the series in 2015.

Despite not running Honda engines anymore, McLaren suffered its now-customary bad start to testing when Fernando Alonso's MCL33 was dumped into the gravel at the last turn when a rear wheel sheared after just five laps.

McLaren head Zak Brown played down what he described as "a wheel-nut issue" saying: "We're fine and it's an easy fix. That's what testing is for. I think all teams will have a variety of issues throughout testing, that's exactly what it's for. It was no big deal for us."

Alonso returned to the track for the afternoon, but recorded just 51 laps all day, setting the seventh fastest time on super soft covers.

When asked if Honda's upturn in form on day one brought any extra pressure to McLaren, Brown added: "I think this team is used to having public pressure and eyes on us. We enjoy that, we like to step up to the plate and thrive on opportunity. We don't feel any extra pressure that we don't already put on ourselves anyway."

"The mood in the team is great and we're excited for the new season. But we're paying attention to our programme. Obviously Honda, we wish them the best and Toro Rosso is a great team. But we're quite happy with where we're sitting today."

**TEST TIMES**

Date: Monday, Feb 26 Weather: Cold, occasional rain

POS	DRIVER	CAR/ENGINE/TYRE	TIME	LAPS
1	Daniel Ricciardo	Red Bull-Renault (M)	1m20.179s	105
2	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes (M)	1m20.349s	58
3	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari (S)	1m20.506s	80
4	Nico Hulkenberg	Renault (M)	1m20.547s	73
5	Carlos Sainz Jr	Renault (M)	1m22.168s	26
6	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes (M)	1m22.327s	51
7	Fernando Alonso	McLaren-Renault (SS)	1m22.354s	25
8	Brendon Hartley	Toro Rosso-Honda (S)	1m22.371s	93
9	Lance Stroll	Williams-Mercedes (S)	1m22.452s	46
10	Romain Grosjean	Haas-Ferrari (S)	1m22.578s	55
11	Marcus Ericsson	Sauber-Ferrari (S)	1m23.408s	63
12	Nikita Mazepin	Force India-Mercedes (M)	1m25.628s	22
13	Sergey Sirotkin	Williams-Mercedes (S)	1m44.148s	28



Alonso lost the time to a "wheel-nut issue" which "wasn't a big deal"



Toro Rosso-Honda racked up the testing mileage

**Force India close to name change, not sale**

Force India is highly likely to alter its name in time for the start of this season, but has rejected claims that it is set to be bought out entirely.

Force India has been evaluating a name change for several months, suggesting that removing the 'India' section may boost its sponsorship opportunities.

The title 'Force One' was registered last year, but it is understood that plan has fallen through.

Team chief operating officer Otmar Szafnauer told *Autosport*: "There's a high probability that it [the name change] will happen before the first race of the year."

"We're still working on it and we haven't quite pinpointed what the name change will be, but we always said a name change was coming."

"If it doesn't happen by Melbourne then it's not detrimental, there's always next year, but it would be a good thing to do earlier rather than later."

Last week the team also denied reports that it was on the verge of being bought out by the Rich Energy drinks company. Force India stated that there was "no offer from potential investors under consideration."

**QUICK LAPS THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP**

**Kevin Harvick won the NASCAR Cup race at Atlanta, despite an early pitstop problem dropping him to 19th. The Stewart-Haas driver suffered a wheelgun issue and had to make an extra stop, but it only took him 36 laps to reclaim the lead in a rain-delayed race. Brad Keselowski was second with Clint Bowyer third in a Ford 1-2-3...** Haas junior drivers Santino Ferrucci and Arjun Maini will both race for Trident in Formula 2 this season. Ferrucci joined the team midway

through 2017, while Maini finished ninth in the GP3 standings last year... **Toyota plans to remain in the World Endurance Championship for the 2019/20 season, provided it commits to building a new LMP1 car when new regulations are introduced the following year. Toyota's current commitment to the series runs until the end of the 2018/19 superseason. "We are interested in the 2020**

**regulations, which under the current discussions means GT Prototype cars," said technical director Pascal Vasselon. "At the moment we don't know enough about these regulations to really commit, but we are interested. If our interest is confirmed when the regulations are known,**

**naturally we will be there [in 2019/20]."**... A new endurance race planned at Monza next month has been cancelled due to a lack of entries. The Targa 6H Monza was due to be open to GT3/4, TCR and Group CN prototype machinery. "We believe an endurance race should not take place without a minimum starting grid of 20 cars," the organisers said... **World Touring Car regular Tom Coronel will compete in the new WTCR series this year with a Boutsen Ginion Honda Civic...**



**DTM set to run a night race for first time in its history**

The DTM is planning to host a night race for the first time in its history at Misano this year.

The Italian circuit is one of two new venues for the series in 2018 – along with Brands

Hatch – and organisers are currently working on a plan for at least one of the races to be held in the dark.

A spokesperson for series promoter ITR said: "We plan to organise the races in

Misano in the evening. That's the basic idea. But this is still a 'work in progress'."

The series has never held a night race, but qualifying did take place in the dark at the Nurburgring in 2003.



DTM could race at night

**Rowland secures Williams F1 support**

British racer Oliver Rowland has joined Williams in a young driver role for this year's F1 campaign.

Rowland, who finished third in Formula 2 last year, will drive current F1 machinery for the first time when he takes part in the first in-season test at Barcelona, and will also get simulator running.

"I'm really pleased," said Rowland, who will also race a Manor-Ginetta in the World Endurance Championship.

"I will be doing a lot of work at the factory and I will drive in the Barcelona test, and then possibly more throughout the season, depending on how that goes."

The 25-year-old was Renault's F1 development driver last year and had attempted to work his way into Williams' consideration for its vacant second race seat before Christmas, but admitted his chances had been a long shot.

# RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Mick Walker

## BOARDMAN RETURNS TO THE BTCC IN AMD MG

### One-time race winner to race in series for first time since 2011

By Matt James

Tom Boardman will return to the British Touring Car Championship this season at the wheel of one of the AmDTuning.com MG6 GTs.

The 34-year-old took part in the BTCC's top flight in 2010 and 2011 in his family-run Special Tuning Racing SEAT Leon, and took a victory at Knockhill in his second season. He finished 11th in the points that year.

He has also taken part in World Touring Car Championship events, and his last tin-top outing was in the TCR International Series in 2015.

Boardman, from Preston, said: "In recent months, I'd been looking into the possibility of a programme in TCR but when the chance came along to return to the BTCC in the MG, it was one I grabbed with both hands.

"I've always wanted to return to the series but until now, the right deal has never come along.

"From the moment we



Boardman previously competed in a SEAT Leon

started talking to the [AmDTuning.com] team, everything has just fallen into place and I'm absolutely delighted to have signed with AmD to make a comeback."

Team boss Shaun Hollamby said that Boardman's race-winning experience would help the team perfect the MGs, which it has taken over from Triple Eight Racing.

"When we agreed the deal to run the MGs, we were

keen to make sure we got the right drivers on board and in Tom, we feel we have someone who can do a very good job during the season ahead," said Hollamby.

"He has shown his ability to win races in the past, which isn't an easy feat in this series. To bring a driver with that level of experience on board is great for us as a team."

Hollamby said that he was still in talks regarding the second MG driver.



Boardman is AmD's first MG signing

## IN BRIEF

### James to Europe

The founder of the Walero base layers brand, Fiona James, will step up to the GT4 European Series in an Academy Motorsport Aston Martin Vantage. Experienced club racer James, who previously raced a Praga in the Dutch Supercar Challenge, will partner team owner Matt Nicoll-Jones, who finished second in the championship last year with Will Moore.

### Rishover/Spence back

LMP3 Cup pairing Jason Rishover and Jamie Spence will compete in the category again this year. The duo took four podiums in a part-season last year but will now compete with the 360 Racing squad. Elsewhere, Tony Wells will join reigning champion Colin Noble in the Ecurie Ecosse/Nielsen Racing line-up.

### Maldonado stays

Manuel Maldonado, cousin of ex-Formula 1 driver Pastor, will remain with Fortec Motorsport in BRDC British F3 this year. The Venezuelan finished 12th in the standings in 2017, taking a best result of sixth, and is the first driver confirmed with the team for this year. He was also 12th in the MRF Challenge this winter.

### Grady to GT5s

Former Ginetta Junior and Renault UK Clio Cup Junior driver Connor Grady will switch to the GT5 Challenge this year. Grady will compete as a privateer in the series after finishing 13th in Ginetta Junior last term.



Brown-Nutley has been testing

### Karting champion samples Clio car

Multiple karting champion Jordan Brown-Nutley is looking to move into car racing this season and had his first experience at the wheel of one of Team Pyro 20Ten's Renault Clios at Donington Park last week.

The current Rotax Max Winter Cup and Rotax European Challenge champion believes the time is right to make the move.

"I have done most of my racing in Europe and been doing it nine years," he said. "There's not much more to prove so we are looking at cars. I am not interested in single-seaters really, so we are looking at tin tops at the moment."

At present he has no firm plans in any specific series, but is favouring the Clio Cup.

### Ex-Hunter Abbott BTCC Audi to make return in Britcar

Former Ginetta Junior racer Alex Day will take part in the Britcar Sprint series this season in an ex-British Touring Car Championship Audi A4. Day, 18, has previously raced in Ginetta Junior. He contested the majority of the campaign in 2015 and finished 14th, but only took part in a single round in 2016. He will race in Britcar alongside his father Robert.

Day was coached in Ginettas by BTCC racer Rob Austin, whose team ran a pair of Audi A4s in the BTCC up until 2015. Austin's car was nicknamed 'Sherman' while his team-mate Hunter Abbott drove a car dubbed 'Panzer'.

"I still have Sherman in my workshop," said Austin. "But Alex will be in Panzer. We have done quite a bit of work

Austin was on hand for the car's first test

to the car too – it is different from when it rolled out of the BTCC paddock. We have been able to beef up some of the GPRM-supplied parts that the car had to run with in the BTCC.

"Stepping into a BTCC car is a big leap for Alex, but I went to his first test in the car at Donington Park recently and he did really well. I think I will probably be at a couple of his races this year too to check on his progress."

The Audi will be run by Reflex Racing and Tollbar Racing.



Team Dynamics' latest British Touring Car Championship machine broke cover during testing in Spain earlier this week. The latest Honda Civic Type R will be driven by Matt Neal and Dan Cammish – in for WTCR-bound Gordon Shedden – in 2018.

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WE'LL KEEP YOU ON TRACK



Returning team expands for 2018

## Two Aston Martins for Academy in British GT4

Academy Motorsport will expand to field two Aston Martins in this year's British GT4 Championship.

The team fielded a single car for Matt Nicoll-Jones and Will Moore last term, but will now double its efforts. Academy's entry brings the current number of marques in British GT4 this year to seven.

Danish racer Jan Jonck, 19, will crew the team's first car, alongside 15-year-old Ginetta Junior graduate Tom Wood.

Nicoll-Jones will race the second car alongside an as-yet-unconfirmed team-mate. "We were consistent in 2017 but couldn't demonstrate what the car is capable of until the final rounds," said Nicoll-Jones. "That laid the foundations for us to expand back to two cars. Everything is in place for us to have a good run at both titles [drivers' and teams]."

MN understands that Moore is still in talks with Academy over the vacant seat.

## Caldwell joins Prema for European F4 title bids

Italian and German Formula 4 racer Olli Caldwell has joined the frontrunning Prema squad for his first full season of single-seater racing.

Caldwell, who claimed his maiden win in the UAE series at Yas Marina at the end of last year, raced in Europe as well as Britain after turning 15 last June but has decided to focus on the German and Italian categories this term.

He has now joined the Prema squad – the team that powered Juri Vips and Marcus Armstrong to the German and Italian titles, respectively, in 2017.

"This is an amazing chance to make my international breakthrough and, with their superb on-track record, I can't wait to make it happen," said Caldwell.

Prema team principal Angelo Rosin added: "Olli already has a good amount of experience with different cars. That's quite impressive considering he is only 15. He has all that it takes to impress in 2018 – I can't wait to see our team on-track to start preparations for the season ahead."

# MAXIME MARTIN JOINS BRITISH GT GRID



Davidson makes switch to Aston



Martin left BMW for Aston in '18

Ex-DTM racer Maxime Martin will make it five Aston Martin factory World Endurance Championship drivers in British GT this year, after signing up to partner reigning GT Cup champion Graham Davidson.

Belgian Martin and Davidson will share a single Vantage GT3 to be run by the same Jetstream Motorsport team that ran Davidson's McLaren 12C GT3 to the GT Cup crown last term.

The team built its business running Nobles, and has also fielded cars in the Time Attack series.

Martin, 31, had been a fixture of BMW's factory DTM team in recent years before switching allegiance to become an AMR driver for the World Endurance Championship this term. He is the fifth works Aston racer to join British GT this year – following Jonny Adam, Darren Turner, Marco Sorensen and Nicki Thiim. With the WEC switching to a multi-year superseason, drivers have become available for national championships with no clashes between WEC and British GT.

Scotsman Davidson, 32, began racing

in 2013 in Scotland, and has since been a regular in club competition at the wheel of his converted Noble race car before moving on to his title winning McLaren.

"It's a big year for me as British GT will be a huge step up for myself and the team, but we feel ready for it," said Davidson. "The Aston is an ex-Motorbase Performance car.

"We opted for that as the Vantage is an older model and the parts are easier to source and cheaper, but it's still really competitive in British GT. I looked at getting a new McLaren, but

felt waiting a year was a better option.

"For a new team, Jetstream has a lot of experience and I think people will be impressed with what we can achieve. Having a driver of Maxime's calibre will undoubtedly help to extract the maximum from the package. I think I'll learn a huge amount from him and I couldn't ask for a better mentor for my first British GT season."

Martin will be unable to test the car at the series' media day at Donington next month due to existing commitments. Ross Gunn will substitute for that event.



Team Parker Racing won BGT with Morris and Parfitt

## Ex-BTCC driver Taylor-Smith gets Bentley drive in Blancpain Endurance Championship

British Touring Car Championship race-winner Aron Taylor-Smith will contest this year's Blancpain GT Series Sprint Cup with Team Parker Racing.

Taylor-Smith, who won four BTCC races using Ford and Volkswagen machinery, will share one of Team Parker's Bentley Continental GT3s with Briton Josh Caygill for the full Sprint Cup season. The pair will run in the silver cup class.

Taylor-Smith said: "Joining the Team Parker Bentley programme

is literally a dream come true and represents a milestone moment in my career.

"We completed our first test recently and it's apparent that everyone in the team is dedicated to achieving success. I feel extremely lucky to be learning from the best, while in the few days I've spent getting to know Josh it's clear how fast and dedicated he is. I'm really looking forward to seeing what we can achieve together.

"The car is a big step forward

from what I've driven in the past, and I think that's what excites me the most."

Caygill most recently competed in the single-make Audi TT Cup and Blancpain Endurance Series with the works WRT Audi team. The Yorkshireman said: "There's a really good atmosphere within the team and both myself and Aron are working well together already.

"I know first-hand how competitive Blancpain Endurance is, but I'm looking forward to the shorter Sprint races."

Team Parker Racing is also expected to enter the Blancpain Endurance category, with its driver line-up to be announced soon.

Bentley Motorsport head Brian Gush added: "With the M-Sport factory team switching its focus to the second-generation Continental GT3 and its development in the Endurance Cup, it was important for Bentley to retain a presence in the Sprint category. Team Parker's experience makes them an ideal candidate."

## Hutchison will get different team-mates for Blancpain and European GT4 effort

Scotsman Finlay Hutchison will mount a dual campaign in both British and European GT4 this season with the Equipe Verschuur Autosport team.

The 18-year-old from Dundee will race a McLaren 570S GT4 in both categories, but alongside differing team-mates.

For British GT Hutchison will

share with former Porsche Carrera Cup racer Daniel McKay, with the pair forming an all silver-graded entry.

For European GT4, Dutchman and 1999 Formula Ford Festival winner Ricardo van der Ende will co-drive the car.

"I'm really looking forward to racing in the UK as well as

Europe this year, it's a great opportunity to be doing a double programme with all of the extra seat time it will give me," said Hutchison.

"Dan has some good experience so it'll be great to work with him. I'm sure we'll be a strong pairing and we know Equipe Verschuur

will deliver a competitive car. The weather will be a lot colder at the British tracks, so I'll need to adapt my driving style a little bit to suit that, but it's a great challenge.

"Pairing up with Ricardo in Europe, last year's champion, is exciting and the plan is definitely to go for the title."



Ricardo van der Ende and Dan McKay share Finlay Hutchison's GT4s



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# RACING NEWS

Photos: Kerry Dunlop, James Roberts



Breck swaps Civic for five-litre Capri

## Mustang-engined Capri to race with CTCRC

Tin Top racer Alan Breck will swap from racing a Honda Civic to a Ford Capri powered by a five-litre Mustang engine.

He plans to contest the Classic Touring Car Racing Club's Blue Oval Saloon Series as well as some Classic Sports Car Club events.

The structural engineer from Herne Bay was at Lydden Hill earlier this month to try the car for the first time.

Breck, 47, said: "It's absolutely awesome to drive – a real monster. It's certainly a step up from the Civic Type R I raced last year."

At the start of the day Breck was crunching the gears when changing down but he solved the problem by swapping his racing boots for trainers with a wider sole so that he could heel-and-toe properly.

The first event for Breck and the Capri will be the CTCRC's season-opener on March 24/25 at Silverstone.

# TANNER COMES BACK IN MINI CHALLENGE

## Scot to race JCW machine after two seasons on the sidelines



Tanner has developed helmet-painting company while away

By Robert Ladbrook

**Scottish Mini Cooper Cup star Joe Tanner will return to racing this year, competing in the Mini Challenge JCW Championship with the Jamsport squad.**

Tanner was runner-up in the Scottish Cooper class in 2013, '14 and '15 but hasn't raced regularly since 2015 when he stepped back from the sport to build his helmet painting business.

He was also Scottish Formula Ford champion in 2005, and sporadically raced in the Duratec-powered British and Danish championships as part of the Aquila factory team.

The 34-year-old will now handle a JCW for Jamsport, which is planning a multi-car attack on the Mini Challenge, having already signed Ford Fiesta Junior champion Jack Davidson.

"It's a big year for me as I don't think there's a better

championship in the UK outside of touring cars than the Mini JCWs," said Tanner. "I've never driven one, but I know it'll be a huge step up in power and grip over the Scottish cars, which are pretty basic."

"Jamsport know what they're doing with a race car, and that's important as the JCWs are technical little things and seem quite closely related to a touring car, so having the right set-up is crucial."

## Collard is another to make to Mini move

Jordan Collard is aiming to win the Mini Challenge Rookie Cup in his maiden season in the series.

Collard, son of BMW works British Touring Car racer Rob, finished eighth in last year's Ginetta Junior standings. He will join former Mini Challenge champion Charlie Butler-Henderson and Rob Smith in the Mini UK team.

The 17-year-old has already conducted five test days, and has more running planned before

the opening meeting of the season at Oulton Park at Easter.

Collard said: "There is lots to learn, but it is a great car – every time I get out of it, I have a huge grin on my face."

"I am going from rear-wheel drive to front-wheel drive, and from road tyres to slicks. There is so much to get my head around, and the level of the championship is very high. I have my sights on the Rookie Cup, but it is going to be tough."



Glover has previously raced ST

## Glover to make Fiesta comeback after crash

Fiesta Championship podium finisher Tim Glover will return to the series this year after his 2017 season ended prematurely with a big crash at Cadwell Park.

Glover will campaign a Class C Fiesta ST prepared by Daniels Motorsport. He had switched to a Class D Zetec S last year, twice finishing second in class at the Brands Hatch opener. But the car was written off in qualifying at the next meeting after barrel-rolling in a 100mph accident.

"I think I've done enough racing for it not to affect me," Glover said of the accident. "It was good to have a few months out and regroup, but the lure of getting back into it is too much. I had a look at a few different series but I don't think there's a better front-wheel drive, club-level tin-tops championship than the Fiestas."

"I want to push myself against the best drivers. I felt that the ST class is the best to do that."

Glover will test the car for two days ahead of the opening weekend at Brands Hatch on March 24/25.

## Four SMRC series to head to Anglesey

Four of the Scottish Motor Racing Club's series will visit Anglesey this May as part of the club's largest away event in recent seasons.

The Scottish Legends, Mini Cooper Cup, BMW, Fiesta, and Hot Hatch championships will all visit the Welsh circuit as part of a British Automobile Racing Club meeting on May 26/27. In the past, series have often had away rounds individually at different circuits rather than all together.

The Scottish Legends will join up with the National series – as was successfully

done last year – the Minis will have two standalone races, while the BMWs, Fiestas and Hot Hatches will share a grid.

"Everyone seems to be looking forward to it," said club competitions director Steve Burns. "We canvassed the drivers and the Legends drivers wanted to go anyway because they enjoyed the event last year. We did a driver survey for the Minis to see where they wanted to go away and the majority preferred Anglesey so that fitted in well."

The club will also hold a Go Motorsport Live event



Minis will have away day

alongside its traditional pre-season test day on March 18.

"It's our main pre-season test day so we're using it as a way of encouraging new people into the sport," added Burns. "We'll have scrutineers on hand and doctors to carry out medicals as well as driver coaches. All the people they need to speak to will be there."

## Walker and Mansell to open Thruxton Centre

Nigel Mansell and Murray Walker will open the new Thruxton hospitality centre as part of the venue's 50th anniversary meeting in June.

The £2 million new Thruxton Centre is the latest part of the circuit's modernisation programme and will be opened by Walker and Mansell on June 3.

"I've been commentating at Thruxton since the early 1950s, notably at motorcycle races, the great Formula Two events and the thrilling British Touring Car Championship," said Walker. "I love its friendly atmosphere and am honoured to join my mate Nigel Mansell for the opening



Walker will open new building

of this superb new building." Mansell added: "I remember Thruxton very fondly from my early racing days, as a very fast, demanding circuit where I enjoyed several exciting and successful races."

The June celebration meeting will feature high-speed demonstrations from a 1983 Williams FW08C Formula 1 car while Mansell's title-winning FW14B 1992 car will be on display.

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# HISTORICS

'ERA challenge to run at Impney'  
One-make contest, below



Photos: LAT, Paul Lawrence

## DOWN THE WORKSHOP

### FORD ESCORT RS1700T

Restorer: Ian Gwynne from BGMsport

#### It's taken a while

"It's been a five-year project. We took delivery of a project in pieces and all the major components were there with the original bodyshell, Cosworth BDT engine, the transaxle and all four corners. All the important bits were there. It came back from South Africa and a guy in the UK bought it as a project but, for whatever reason, didn't follow it through."

#### It ran for the first time

"We bought it about five years ago and Race Retro on Saturday was its first outing. I don't want to think about how many hours we put into it. But it has been a worthwhile project and it is what we do as a business. To save a car that is so rare and so unique and to bring it to an event like Race Retro and demonstrate it is fabulous."

#### It has been totally restored

"We had to make quite a few bits but we had the major original components with the car. Everything has been rebuilt and it didn't look like the bodyshell had done a massive amount of work. There was nothing missing that couldn't be re-manufactured, either from drawings or from a pattern. The biggest part of these projects is the research and trying to put together the jigsaw of how the car should be. What we have discovered is that all 18 cars that were built are all potentially very different. It was a prototype and development car so none of them were the same."

#### Alister McRae drove it

"It is fabulous and Steve Rimmer, who we built the car for, came over from the States to see it running. He went out with Alister McRae on its first run at Race Retro and Steve got out of the car with a big grin."

#### It will be kept in running order

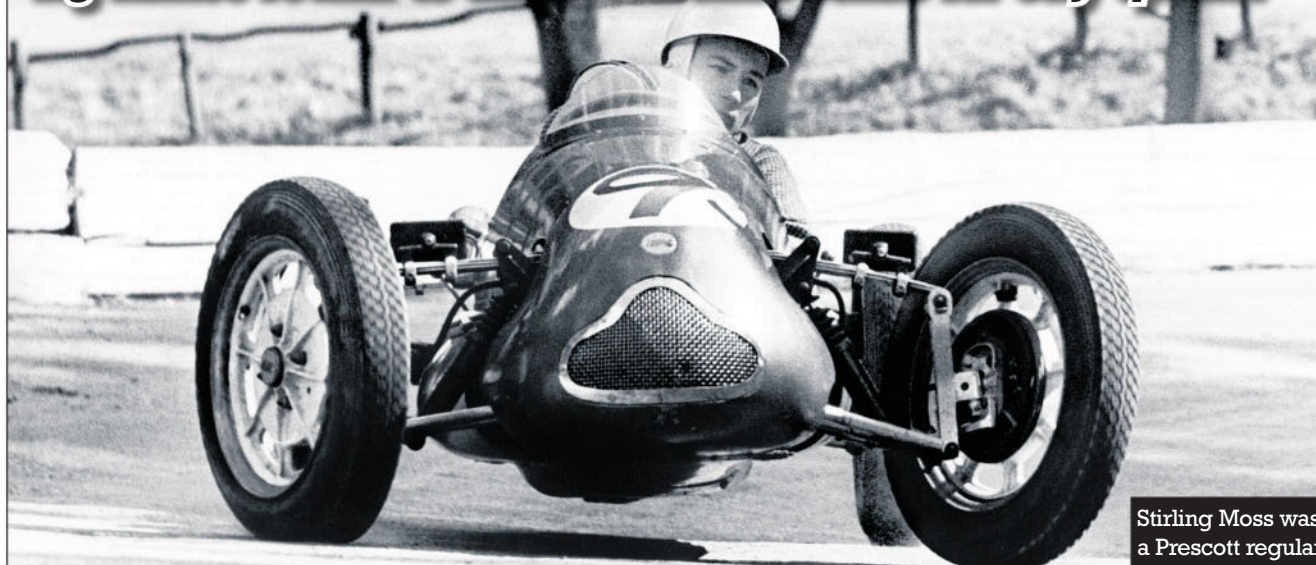
"At the minute the engine runs at about 350bhp but it is capable of a lot more. That's plenty for now. The BDT is the same as the RS200 engine but the Hewland transaxle is probably a lot rarer. All of the suspension components are unique to the car. We've built it properly and it needs running, but it also needs looking after."



Ford was a showstopper

# CHAMPS REUNITED FOR PRESCOTT CELEBRATION

## Big names return to Gloucestershire venue for July special



Stirling Moss was a Prescott regular

By Paul Lawrence

**Eighty years of the Prescott hillclimb course will be celebrated with a special event on Saturday (July 14) featuring a reunion of former hill record holders.**

As well as a full day of competitive action for 150 cars, a raft of former record holders will gather at the hill, which was first used on May 15, 1938.

The day's sport will take in a round of the Aldon Pre-'72 Championship and will feature a class of Bugattis. The hill has been owned and operated since the start by the Bugatti Owners' Club, which will mark its 90th anniversary next season.

Stuart Webster, general manager at Prescott, said: "It will be an event to celebrate the 80-year history of Prescott involving as many hill record

holders as possible. We've got more than 20 planning to come."

When an extended version of the hill was opened in 1960, lengthening it from the original 880 yards to 1128 yards, David Boshier-Jones was the first record holder and he is planning to attend along with his brother Peter. Also expected are hillclimb grandees like David Franklin, Martin Bolsover, Martyn Griffiths,

David Grace and Alister Douglas-Osborn, while Chris Cramer plans to compete in the Gould 84 and multiple British hillclimb champion Scott Moran will be there with his later Gould.

Some significant cars will be on static display including the Marsh 4WD and some record-holding Bugattis, while all the record holders will climb into suitable cars for a parade.



Can-Am to Cheshire?

## Cam-Am cars could feature at Oulton Park's Gold Cup meeting

Can-Am cars could race at Oulton Park for the first time in decades as the Pre-'80 Endurance Series joins the roster for the Gold Cup meeting in August.

New for 2018 is a class for Can-Am cars and this move could put the monstrous sports-racers onto the Oulton Park circuit, possibly

for the first time since the Atlantic Computers GT Championship races in the 1980s.

Also new is a revised race format of two 30-minute sprints per weekend and the schedule will include Silverstone GP (June 16/17) and Brands Hatch GP (June 30/July 1). The season

concludes with the chance to race at Spa-Francorchamps (14-16 September).

Grahame White of the HSCC said: "There are not too many places to race a period Can-Am car these days so we hope that some of them will join the Pre-'80 grid."

## Yorkshire to host Lombard retro run

The organisers of Lombard Rally Bath have unveiled a new retro event for Yorkshire at the end of April 2019.

Mintex Rally Yorkshire will be a non-competitive event celebrating Yorkshire's rallying heritage and priority will be given to those who missed out on an event for this October's oversubscribed Bath event.

The new event will be based in York, period HQ for the RAC Rally, and will follow a similar format to the Bath event with a tour on Saturday. The morning will include Harewood (hillclimb and house), Bramham Park and Esholt and the afternoon will include the asphalt military roads of Catterick Garrison.

## F5000 to rock Goodwood



## F5000 classics for Members Meeting

A spectacular line-up of as many as to 30 Formula 5000s will take part in high-speed demonstration sessions at the Goodwood Members' Meeting (March 17/18).

To mark the 50th anniversary of the US debut of the stock-block V8-engined single-seater category, a superb field of the cars from the late 1960s and 1970s will run at the Sussex track.

Cars from the category have never appeared in public at Goodwood and rarely, if ever, have 30 Formula 5000s graced one UK event.

Cars from famous makes including Lola, Chevron, Trojan, McRae, McLaren, Shadow, Surtees, Gurney Eagle, March and the rare Hepworth Ferguson four-wheel drive hillclimb car will be at Goodwood.

## Huff set for busy historic race season

Rob Huff will race at least four historic cars this season amid programmes in the World and Chinese Touring Car series.

Huff will race alongside Richard Meins in the Group C race at the Le Mans Classic in July. Huff will race a Spice while Meins enters his Silk Cut Jaguar. The season starts at Goodwood when he shares a Ford Capri with Meins at the Members Meeting.

They will also race the famous CUT7 Jaguar E-type and a classic Ford GT40 in the Spa Classic Six-Hours event.



## IN BRIEF

### Impney's ERA battle

The Chateau Impney Hill Climb and the Bugatti Owners' Club will be jointly awarding the ERA Challenge Trophy again this season. It will go to the best performance by an ERA or ERA-engined car at both La Vie en Bleu at Prescott and the Chateau Impney event, which run on back-to-back weekends in July.

### Streetwise Stratos

The sublime Lancia Stratos of Steve Perez will top the historic entries on the Rally Tending and Clacton on April 22. The Stratos is regularly used on events like Rally Mallorca, but will now contest the first closed-road event in England. Other historic entries include James Slaughter (Ford Escort Mk2), Peter Horsburgh (Mini Cooper S) and East Anglian ace Ben Friend in his Escort Mk2.

### Classic Saab on show

Blackpool-based Ian Clark showed his homage to the 1971 RAC Rally-winning Saab 96 V4 at Race Retro. The result of three years of work, the Saab made its public debut at the Castle Combe Rallyday last September when Stig Blomqvist drove it. Clark will now take part in October's Bath-based RAC Rally retro event.

### Willie's full year

Chris Willie is planning a full Historic F2 campaign in his Chevron B29 after a series of problems last year. The Cheltenham driver plans to start his season at Hockenheim in April. "I raced a kart on the old Hockenheim track in the 1980s," he said of his only previous visit to the German venue.

### New MG racers

Two young newcomers have committed to the MGCC Sprite/Midget Challenge this season. Abigail Witt, 22, who is new to racing, will follow her father Ian into the series in the Midget used by Peter Hiley to win the 1988 and '89 titles, while 18-year-old Edward Weston will join his father Dave in a Class A Midget.

### Hindley is back

Former TVR Tuscan Challenge champion and Porsche ace Phil Hindley will contest the new 2.0L Cup for pre-1966 versions of the Porsche 911 this season. Hindley will race a car owned by one of the clients of his Tech 9 Porsche business and hopes to tend another car for a customer. "The cars are great fun to drive," said Hindley of the new series created by Peter Auto in France.

### Classic F3 for hire

The 2017 Classic F3 championship-winning Ralt RT3 is for hire for this season via Peter Sneller's BIOS-sport operation. Gaius Ghinn owns the car and won last year's title but cannot commit to a full programme this year so the car is available with full back-up from former racer Sneller's team at a competitive price.

### FF2000 at Charade

The Historic FF2000 pack will have the chance to race at the famous Charade track in France at the end of May in a non-championship event. Series promoter Alan Morgan hopes to take enough cars for a stand-alone race at the track that is the modern iteration of the classic Clermont-Ferrand French Grand Prix track.

# RACE RETRO SPECIAL

Photos: Paul Lawrence

## Q&A

### MIKI BIASION

The former double World Rally Champion was a star guest at Race Retro



Biasion: Lancia supporter

#### Are you enjoying the event?

"I am among rally cars, rally fans and engines, so I am very well. The noise of the older engines is much better than the modern engines. The rally cars of the 1970s and 1980s, like the cars here this weekend, are fantastic. Motorsport without noise is not motorsport!"

#### How did you get into the sport?

"I have always loved cars and where I was born in northern Italy there were no circuits and the only way to see motorsport was to follow the rallies and we had many important rallies in the area. So I grew up with my heart in rallying. Sandro Munari was not so far away and so I followed his results and my ambition was to become a factory Lancia driver like him."

#### Why Munari?

"Munari was driving a Fulvia and then the best car ever, the Stratos. I never drove a Stratos in competition in my career because I was too young. There is a wonderful Stratos in the exhibition here at Race Retro. Today, if I could have a car in my dining room at home it would be a Stratos."

#### The Group B legend grows...

"I think that Group B was crazy. We had 500bhp and 900kg driving between two lines of spectators in the snow and ice with not so very good brakes and tyres. It was a crazy era of motorsport but it was also fantastic."



Champion drove a Fulvia

# RALLI22 COMPETITION TO HOST GROUP B CARS

## WRC monsters will battle for a new hillclimb showdown in the UK in 2018

By Paul Lawrence

**Group B rally cars will make a rare return to competition this summer in a new hillclimb competition called Ralli22.**

The three-round series will cater for rally cars from a 22-year period, spanning 1982 to 2004, and will include Group B cars that were banned from rallying in 1986. Many period Group B cars have not competed in UK motorsport for 32 years. However, speed event regulations allow them to compete and series promoter Steve Davis has arranged three dates covering Prescott, Chateau Impney and Shelsley Walsh.

"We're going to limit it to a maximum of 50 cars and will run up to 25 in each event," said Davis. "We want to focus on the right cars and most of them

will be original cars. There is a lot of enthusiasm for it."

There will be classes for four-wheel drive, front-wheel drive and rear-wheel drive and there will be scope for owners to take part in demonstration rather than competition runs if they prefer. But it is intended to be a serious timed competition.

Ralli22 builds on successful demo events at Chateau Impney and Shelsley Walsh last summer. "There is potential to grow beyond three events in 2019," said Davis, who added that the cars would be well-suited to any closed road hillclimbs that may be planned in the future.

The three dates take in Prescott's Midsummer Speed Festival (June 23), Chateau Impney (July 7/8) and Shelsley's Classic Nostalgia (July 28/29).



Group B will take to the hills in 2018

### STAR CARS



#### 1 McLaren M14A

This was one of only three McLaren M14As built for the 1970 Grand Prix season, and graced the feature display at Race Retro.

This was the final F1 McLaren that was conceived and raced by Bruce McLaren, who died testing a Can-Am car at Goodwood in June 1970, six weeks after taking his M14A to second place at Jarama.

Based around a monocoque and a Cosworth DFV engine, the M14A was the car that kept the McLaren operation racing after the death of the company's founder and guiding light.

McLaren finished fifth in the 1970 constructors' battle.



#### 2 Connew F1

With just one grand prix, the 1972 Austrian, under its belt in the hands of Frenchman Francois Migault, the sole Connew F1 car was put into storage in 1973 and stayed there for four decades.

Finally, the original design and build team of Peter Connew, Barry Boor and Roger Doran set about restoring this ultra-low budget F1 challenger.

After more than two years of work, the resplendent Cosworth DFV racer was ready to show at Race Retro.

Aside from a couple of European F5000 races in 1973, this was the car's first public appearance since its brief flirtation with grand prix racing.



#### 3 Mallock Mk3

Old racing cars are still being found in barns and that's the story behind the Mallock U2 Mk3 project on show with Mallock Sports as the marque begins its 60th anniversary season.

This Mk3 sports-racer, now nearing completion of a ground-up restoration, was unearthed from a collection in a barn in Wales and is likely to have been one of only a few such chassis built by Major Arthur Mallock in 1963, intended for use in the 750MC's 1172 Formula.

Its future is with new owner Chris Cullum who plans to field it in some French hillclimbs this season from his home in Lyon.



#### 4 Chevron B8

This is a big year for the Chevron B8 as Derek Bennett's sports-racer hits 50 years old. On the HSCC stand was the newly-acquired B8 chassis DBE/39 of Westie Mitchell.

Rarely, this was a left-hand-drive model for German racer Nikolaus Killenberg for racing in 1968 and 1969 before he sold it to Dutchman Kees Kwinkelenberg who raced it until 1973 and then parked it in the office of his transport company.

Leo Kemmer bought it in 2003 and restored it, racing it once in 2012. However, following his death in 2014, his family finally sold the car late last year and it is now back in the UK for the first time since 1968.



#### 5 Lotus 79

From the Richard Mille Collection was the striking British racing green/Martini-liveried Lotus 79, chassis 79/5, raced by Mario Andretti during 1979 when the Lotus 80 proved a troublesome project.

Colin Chapman's 79 was the dominant force in the 1978 season but the 80 did not keep Lotus at the head of the pack and the 79 was soon pressed back into service for a second season. Chassis 5 was the final 79 to be built and was raced by Andretti for much of the season with several decent results, but the opposition had upped its game and the 79 could never be the winning package it had been a year earlier.



#### 6 Austin 1800

To mark the 50th anniversary of the 1968 London-Sydney Marathon, several original cars were on show including the Austin 1800 'VLM 128G'. This was one of six works cars built for the 10,000-mile adventure and was entered by the Royal Navy. It duly finished 31st and was remarkably undamaged by this most challenging of rallies.

It was flown back to the UK straight after the marathon finished and has since been owned by Adrian Bonner for 38 years. It is a remarkable time warp car from one of the sport's most ambitious events and is on the button despite being locked away for most of the time.



MGs are popular in 2018

### Dolton ramps up Triple M interest

The oldest element of the MG Car Club's racing programme, the Triple M Register, is undergoing a renaissance and will feature four race dates this season.

The Triple M brand covers pre-war MGs and, a couple of years ago, was down to a single race meeting. But, inspired by 1935 MG PB racer Mark Dolton, support has been rekindled and there will now be four events this season, two at MGCC race meetings and two with the Vintage Sports Car Club.

Dolton and the MGCC race team have been encouraging owners to bring their cars back to the grid and want to get 30 cars at Brands Hatch (April 28/29) for the Mary Harris and Kimber Trophy races.

### London-Sydney Marathon to be remembered

The 50th anniversary of the 1968 London-Sydney Marathon will be celebrated at the Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon on Sunday July 29.

Event creator Ted Taylor hopes to attract original cars and crews from the first major competitive marathon of modern times and the day will include a parade of surviving cars.

Pride of place in the themed Race Retro display went to car number 1 from the 1968 event, the recently-restored Ford Cortina GT of the late Bill Bengry.

Just over half of the 100 crews who started from Crystal Palace on November 24 made it to the finish in Sydney on December 18 after covering 10,000 miles.



Cortina GT was a London-Sydney challenger

Dave Wright was one of the top performers on the rally stage at Race Retro with exuberant handling of his ex-works Ford Focus WRC



# RALLY NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Loeb feels sorry for Breen, but didn't make the call



Loeb has tested new car on gravel

# LOEB: I FEEL SORRY FOR DEPOSED BREEN

## French hero ramps up preparations for Rally Mexico

By David Evans

**Sebastien Loeb has apologised to Craig Breen for costing the Irishman his seat at next month's Rally Mexico.**

The nine-time World Rally champion is tackling three rounds of this year's series – Mexico, Corsica and Spain – when he will drive the French firm's second C3 WRC in place of Breen.

Loeb was talking to *MN* following his two-day Spanish test in preparation for next month's Leon-based WRC round.

Asked about Breen's position, Loeb said: "It must be frustrating for him. He did a really good rally in Sweden, but on the other side I don't decide anything. Citroen propose me a few rallies, I'm sorry that I am taking his car, but it's just like that."

Citroen is only funding two factory cars on each WRC round this season. Abu Dhabi's Khalid Al Qassimi will drive a C3 WRC on selected outings as a partner to the team and Mads Ostberg paid for his outing in Sweden. The decision to run a two-car team was taken by PSA chief Carlos Tavares. Tavares denied swapping Loeb for Breen, who is 16 years younger than the 78-time world rally winner, was a

contravention of the firm's lauded young driver development programme.

"Loeb is a member of our family," Tavares told *MN*. "He [Breen] is out of the car for just three rallies, not six or seven."

Loeb returns to a gravel-specification World Rally Car for the first time since 2012 early next month, and admits he's as intrigued as anybody to find out where his pace will be.

"I don't know if I will be in the rhythm," he said. "I know I will have a good position on the road and that will help me on the first day, but for the rest, it's really difficult to make any plan. It's too long that I didn't drive in this level of rallying: six years and I didn't do a gravel rally. I am curious to know after the first stages how I am."

Loeb drove the C3 for two days in Almeria, southern Spain last week, admitting he was impressed with the development of the car since his last single day of running – also in Spain but close to Lloret de Mar in September.

He told *MN*: "The car feels a bit easier to drive since I tested last year, the feeling for me was better and the car was easier to handle. I didn't make any big changes with the car, I was trying to adapt the car to my driving, so there



Tavares says that Loeb is "family"

were some changes in the diffs and suspension. The car felt quite good from the start. How good? It's difficult for me to compare because I didn't drive another World Rally Car. But going back to the DS3, nearly everything is better – the car was easy to use and the engine was working well."

One of Loeb's only concerns about his return will be working with pacenotes again – he and co-driver Daniel Elena used a very different method of route guidance during the Dakar, the event which has been the focus of their rally effort for the last three years.

Loeb said: "I think the most difficult



Craig Breen was a star on Rally Sweden, but will make way for Mexico

thing will be to trust the notes and take as good notes as I had in the past. Especially I think the most difficult for me is that I didn't do these stages for six years, but the others have done two passes of recce and two passes of rally since – that makes a big difference."

Countering any lack of recent familiarity with the roads is Loeb's incredible success in Mexico. In his eight starts on the season's highest-altitude test, he scored six wins and remains unbeaten in Guanajuato since Petter Solberg won the 2005 event.

"I will try not to have some pressure on my shoulders for this rally," said

Loeb. "I have come back because I love the sensation of driving a rally car. For the [manufacturer] points, we didn't speak really about it. Citroen chose an old driver, so they know it can be complicated! But I will do like every time, I will drive like I feel and we will see where we are."

"The objective is to have fun. First of all, that's why we decided to come back; we knew it would be difficult to come back after six years without rallies and six years without being in Mexico. I really don't know what I can expect. The feeling was quite good in the test and I'm looking forward to being there."

**SILVERSTONE'S NEW WORLD RX TRACK IS READY FOR BUSINESS**

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**'Rokland will tackle Junior BRC in 2018'**  
Norwegian's challenge, p17



Photos: FIA ERC, parcferme.no

## INGRAM AIMS FOR TOP EURO HONOURS

Chris Ingram is ready to end Britain's European Rally Championship drought in 2018 – with the Manchester star in the running for a front-line R5 drive in the series.

The 23-year-old won last season's ERC Junior U27 title and pocketed €100,000 (£87,000) towards a shot at becoming the first Briton to lift the main European title since Vic Elford in 1967. Ingram has spent the winter chasing additional sponsorship in an effort to build his prize into a fighting fund for 2018. The ERC starts with Rally Azores on March 22-24.

"It goes without saying that we could always use more backing," Ingram told *MN*, "but things are looking really good for this season. I've still got a couple of options out there in terms of what car we're going to be using in the ERC, but the chance to finally be starting a full year in an R5 is so exciting – it's what I've been waiting for for a very long time."

Ingram has spent his entire career in front-wheel-drive cars – running with the Opel Rallye Junior Team in ERC for the last two years with Peugeot UK backing for the two before that.

"I definitely think I've got the hang of R2 now!" said Ingram. "The

important thing for me is to get some seat time [in the R5 car] before the first ERC round of the season in the Azores. While I haven't got much experience of four-wheel drive, the advantage I do have in the ERC is that I know the rallies quite well.

"Starting the season in the Azores is great for me, I've done the event for the last four years and won my class twice and finished second there twice. It's a rally I really enjoy and really sensible one for me to start the step up to R5."

Despite his lack of R5 experience, Ingram is ready to make his mark on the ERC and sets his sights on ending Polish driver Kajetan Kajetanowicz's three-year run of victories.

"I've got to be looking at a challenge for the title," said Ingram. "It's the next step in my career and it would be a good launchpad into the World Rally Championship. Like I said, I know the rallies, the backing and the car are coming, so things are looking really exciting. It's been a while since a Brit won the ERC, so to do that would be pretty amazing for me."

● Former Portuguese WRC driver Armindo Araújo has confirmed he will start the Azores Rally in a Hyundai i20 R5.



Ingram will step up in ERC

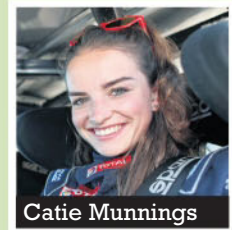
### Munnings chases Ladies' Trophy

Catie Munnings will return to the European Rally Championship to tackle the Junior U27 category in a Peugeot 208 R2 for a second year in succession.

The 20-year-old will return to Sainteloc's junior team for six ERC rounds starting with next month's Azores Rally. Forced to miss the final round of last year's ERC due to a lack of budget, Munnings admits she is still short of the cash required

to complete 2018.

Munnings, who will also chase this year's ERC Ladies' Trophy, said: "We are all proud of the progression we made in 2017. Even though we lacked budget for any testing or practice, we were getting closer to the fastest guys. It's like a dream to step into the car each time and I can't wait to get started. We are still looking for some of our budget, I'm working at it every day



Catie Munnings

and we will get there."

● Sainteloc has confirmed it will run Citroen C3 R5s once the French firm homologates the new car in the summer. Sainteloc has run Peugeot's 208 T16 in recent seasons.



Anders Jaeger enjoyed his challenge

### Jaeger enjoys a birthday outing – in the driving seat

Anders Jaeger and Andreas Mikkelsen swapped seats for Saturday's Numedalsrally, finishing the event 14th overall in a Hyundai i20 R5.

Mikkelsen organised the Norwegian outing for his co-driver's birthday present and admitted he was impressed with the way Jaeger stepped up in the left-hand seat.

"We have had a lot of fun," Mikkelsen told *MN*. "That's

what we expected. But he has also done some great stages. I'm impressed. Even though I fall out of the pacenotes a couple of times, I don't think he noticed!

And we only had one moment, which he managed quite well."

From the other side, Jaeger was delighted with his day behind the wheel, saying: "I only expected to keep the car on the road, but now I feel I want to do

this race all over again. The progression was huge and I went a little crazy on the section where a rallycross circuit was. Andreas started to laugh. It was a pleasure to end the race as we did."

Ole Christian Veiby won the eight-stage event in a Skoda Fabia R5, seven minutes ahead of the Hyundai stars.  
*Additional reporting by Simen Naess Hagen*

### Williams is sole WRC3 runner in Mexico

Briton Tom Williams is in line for a maiden World Rally Championship class win at next week's Rally Mexico.

The Ford Fiesta R2 driver is the only WRC3 and RC4 class entry on the Leon-based event, meaning a finish will translate into a win by default for the 19-year-old.

The Oxfordshire driver, competing outside of Europe for the first time, is driving in Mexico to further his WRC experience – but the event will also offer

more valuable seat time ahead of April's Tour de Corse, the second round of the JWRC.

Williams rolled his Fiesta on the JWRC opener in Sweden, but battled on to get through every stage and picked up a 10th place finish.

"We made good progress in Sweden," said Williams. "The main problem there was with the pacenotes – I couldn't believe how fast the straights were and my notes weren't quite right for the corners."

### Toyota boss praises Katsuta's Swedish glory

Toyota Motor Corporation president Akio Toyoda has praised Rally Sweden star Takamoto Katsuta for bringing his dream of seeing a Japanese driver in a Japanese World Rally Car in the WRC closer.

Katsuta dominated the WRC2 class in Sweden, clinching his maiden category success in the world championship. As reported in *MN* last week, the chances of Katsuta being elevated from the Toyota Gazoo Racing Rally Challenge Program into the main TGR team have improved on the back of his Torsby success. Team principal Tommi Makinen targeted a possible Rally Japan in 2019 as the likely date for either

Katsuta or his team-mate Hiroki Arai to make their debut in a Yaris WRC, but that could be brought forward.

Toyoda spoke of his pride in what his firm has achieved in helping develop Japanese talent.

He said: "When Toyota decided to come back to WRC, the first picture in my head was of a Toyota car running on WRC stages, and the next picture was of a Japanese driver and co-driver in the car."

"This was because if this became reality, I believed there would be more rally fans in Japan who understand how wonderful this sport and its culture is. It's a great job by Katsuta. He showed the possibility of my dream."

## GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

# DAVID EVANS

**"Armstrong is well ahead in the virtual world"**



**T**here's a pause. I'm talking to the championship leader about his win in Sweden and what it means for the year ahead. There's positivity and a real belief that this could be his year. He's seen last year's champion win once this season, but he beat him fair and square in the snow.

Not that Jon Armstrong saw much of that snow. He won Rally Sweden from his home in Northern Ireland. Nevertheless, like the other Swedish winner – Thierry Neuville – it was a result which moved him to the top of the eSports WRC table.

Armstrong, 23, is no stranger to gaming. He was introduced to Colin McRae Rally aged five and hasn't looked back since. Now though, he's beating the best in the world.

"I watched the [eSports WRC] final last year and thought I'd have a go this year," he said. "I was third in Monte, second in Germany and then I just won Sweden – it's going pretty well."

Germany?

"Yeah, the calendar's a wee bit different in eSports," Armstrong added. "We've got 13 rounds, but they're all done by the middle of the year – this year's final will be at Rally Finland."

Armstrong's early pace caught the eye of Thrustmaster, makers of all things gaming.

He added: "They sent me an upgraded wheel and pedals and now I'm part of the team – we're leading that championship as well. The top eight go through to the grand final in Finland, I'd love to be there and I'll keep working on it."

Armstrong is, of course, still better known for his success in the 2016 Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy, where victory in Poland and Spain were enough to land him a brace of Ford Fiesta R5 drives in last year's WRC2.

"I'd never driven an R5 car before Germany last year," said Armstrong. "I used the Richard Burns Rally game to get myself ready. That's the game I prefer, the physics engine is probably still the best out there and even though it's quite old now, other people are developing mods for the game – you can drive a 2017 World Rally Car on the events. I drove an R5 car and found lots of stages similar to the ones we knew were coming in Germany – it was really good preparation."

"It's never going to be exactly like real life, the sensations and the feelings from the car, you don't get those, but the intensity of competition and the driving [input] is needed just the same. When I've been doing these three rallies earlier this season, you still come off the stage keen to see what the times are like. I'm using it to keep the competitive focus. I want to keep going in the championship, but I'm pushing to do something in real life."

Armstrong's loving the virtual world, but he's still got plenty to offer, real time. Germany last year was proof of that: he slipped off the road on day one, but recovered to set a fastest time on the final day – beating the cream of the world's R5 drivers.

This year he's chasing a deal to drive in the British Rally Championship. Could he become the first man ever to succeed in BRC and WRC simultaneously? Virtually impossible is nothing...



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'Davies and Gilbey took an emotional win'

Rali Bro Caron, p27



Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Bogie debuted on spiked tyres

## BOGIE TARGETS RALLY SWEDEN AFTER SNOW RUN

David Bogie is planning a Rally Sweden bid in 2019 after competing on a full snow rally for the first time in Sweden last weekend.

Bogie, along with Cumbrian team CA1 Sport, went out to do a test in early February, joining Bogie's British Rally Championship team-mate and native Fredrik Ahlin in their Skoda Fabia R5s. The pair then did the Ostersund Rally last Friday and Saturday.

Bogie had been running as high as fourth and looked set to move onto the podium after

setting stage-winning times before retiring on the final stage when he became beached in a snow bank.

Asked if he would be returning to Sweden, the Dumfries driver said: "Definitely. I'm glad I didn't do Rally Sweden this year because I think it would have been too soon. When you go to that time and effort, I want to be competing at the sharp end. I'd love to have a go at Sweden now, hopefully we'll be back for that."

"I thoroughly enjoyed it. The stages are incredible, almost

like Ouninpohja [Rally Finland stage], on ice. There were real technical bits as well."

The tyre was what provided the biggest test for Bogie, given his inexperience of spikes.

"For me that was the first time I've driven competitively on a studded tyre," he added.

"Finding the grip levels was the hardest part for me, knowing how much you can lean on the tyre, the more the stud will then bite, the harder you push, the better the traction you get."

"It was a real learning

experience but I think it's made me a better driver."

Ahlin, who finished second in the BRC standings last year, took third on the event with the new DMACK snow tyre, having also won the opening round of the Swedish Championship on February 2/3.

For the second year in a row, former Prestone Motorsport News JBRC driver Mattias Adielsson won Rally Ostersund overall in his Pirelli-shod Skoda, run by reigning WRC2 champion Pontus Tidemand's eponymous team.

### BTRDA recommences with Bogie and Bird ready to do battle in Cumbria again

David Bogie will compete on this week's Malcolm Wilson Rally as a warm-up for the British Rally Championship opener, the Border Counties, the weekend after.

Bogie will be joined by fellow BRC drivers Matt Edwards (Ford Fiesta) and Rhys Yates (Skoda Fabia) on the event. The BTRDA charge will be headed by points leader and top-scorer on the Cambrian,

Paul Bird. Reigning champion Stephen Petch, and fellow frontrunners Hugh Hunter, Luke Francis and Julian Reynolds are in the top 10.

Russ Thompson, Pat Naylor and Tom Naughton will continue their battle for NR4 and Production Cup honours, while the R2 Rally Cup will be led by points leader George Lepley, Bob Vardy, Jack Leese and Charlie Barlow.

It has another strong entry for its second event.

Fiesta ST Trophy leader Zak Hughes has a target on his back after his Cambrian win, against five of the M-Sport-built cars.

Rally First 1.4 champion Bart Lang returns for the first time in 2018, and will be joined by two other entries in a class that was empty on the Cambrian.

The event is due to start with 105 cars.

#### LEADING ENTRIES

Malcolm Wilson Rally

March 3

NO.	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	David Bogie/John Rowan	Skoda Fabia R5
2	Paul Bird/Jack Morton	Ford Focus WRC07
3	Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod	Ford Fiesta R5
5	Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
19	Russ Thompson/Andy Murphy	Mitsubishi Lancer E9
30	Stuart Egglestone/Brian Hodgson	Ford Escort Mk2
45	George Lepley/Tom Woodburn	Ford Fiesta R2
56	Zak Hughes/Tom Wood	Ford Fiesta ST
74	Tommi Meadows/Shannon Turnbull	Ford Ka
92	Bart Lang/Sinclair Young	Nissan Micra



Wells will use the Fiesta once campaigned by Adam Bustard in BRC

### Wells upgrades to a Ford Fiesta R2T

BTRDA 2016 Rally First 1.6 champion Richard Wells will step-up to a Ford Fiesta R2T for the remainder of this season, starting with an entry into the BTRDA R2 Rally Cup on the Malcolm Wilson Rally this weekend.

Wells competed in the ST Trophy last year, and started this season in the class on the Cambrian Rally earlier this month. A driveshaft failure while leading triggered the change of car.

"I've wanted an R2 for a long time and the

opportunity to get one came up, so we decided to go for it," said Wells. "The initial plan was to do another year in the ST but we had a really testing year last year with a couple of mechanical breakdowns and some bad luck."

Wells is hoping to step up to the British Rally Championship in 2019.

"I want to push myself and the BRC is seen as the highest level," he said. "It would be good to say we've done it. Hopefully we can do that next year."

### GROUP NATIONAL EDITOR

# JACK BENYON

"Should we be looking for a Burton return?"



**I**t's been a couple of weeks since the dust settled, and it's great to see the debate still flowing around our state of national rallying special (MN, Feb 14).

The intention was always to stimulate debate. I don't declare to know everything about national rallying, and never have. On a weekly basis I speak to many competitors, and putting into context a lot of what I hear has hopefully provided new ideas and food for thought previously unconsidered, or thoughts that people may have previously disagreed with.

One element of rallying that is constantly discussed is Andy Burton's Peugeot-Cosworth. It's the iconic car of national rallying, and I read with interest David Evans' thoughts on said car in the rally special.

I was lucky enough to head into the forests just before its 'demise', and often indulge in watching cars like Alex Kelsey's New Zealand-based beast, which is effectively a Formula Renault-engined Peugeot 207, and there's myriad examples of such machines on the continent. In fact, shortly after reading Evans' column, I happened across a Peugeot 205 T16-Mazda rotary mash-up, which produced what I can only describe as a noise sent from the heavens.

The common factor with these machines is usually that they are built for off-road championships primarily.

In fact, I'm fairly sure Mr Burton's Peugeot-Cosworth would be eligible for a number of off-road championships in the UK, not least the MSA British Cross Country Championship.

Having spoken to drivers of machines more powerful than Burton's in the BCCC, it appears it is the place to go if you have a home-built or modified machine for the loose with a bigger engine than the three-litre buffer in rallying.

But back to Burton's Peugeot: if that is the most synonymous machine within national rallying, why isn't it competing?

The BCCC competes – in some cases – on identical stages to national rallying. Or at least uses similar sections. They also complete multiple runs over said stages.

So if Burton's Cosworth is allowed in that, why aren't we encouraging something similar in stage rallying? Many people link the popularity of national rallying with the likes of Burton's Peugeot-Cosworth. "The glory days," they say.

If a car is safe enough for the BCCC, how is it not safe enough for a stage rally using similar roads?

It's probably a lost cause, but if Burton's car is that well remembered and highly-rated, why aren't we campaigning properly for it – and others like it – to return? Or looking for a compromise that would allow something similar? Or maybe we should all give up and go and watch the BCCC?

On a final, happier, note – huge congratulations to Michael Gilbey, who is essential in providing MN with information, mostly – but not limited to – road rallying. He's started the season with three-straight wins co-driving for Andy Davies, with the latest on the Rali Bro Caron. Davies dedicated his win to his late father-in-law, who used to organise the event. Bravo.



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# RALLY NEWS

Photos: FIA ERC, chasingthecars.com, Jakob Ebrey, Mark Watkins

## ROKLAND JOINS MN JUNIOR BRC AND 208 CUP

Norwegian driver expected to run at the front



Rokland will return to the BRC stages

By Jack Benyon

**Norwegian driver Steve Rokland will compete in the Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship in 2018, bringing the class entry for the first round up to 13.**

Rokland competed in the BRC in 2012 and 2013, but hasn't returned to the series since, having competed in the European and Norwegian championships.

"It [the BRC] has good rallies and I have a low budget," said Rokland. "I don't want to compete in the Norwegian Championship, I want to compete outside of Norway. I think the British Championship is looking strong."

Rokland will be joined by British navigator Tom Woodburn, who has competed with Rokland on multiple rallies early in 2017. They will campaign the driver's usual Peugeot 208 R2 with the aim of challenging for the championship win.

"That's the target of course,"

added Rokland. "I don't know how fast the competition will be yet. I think it will be strong. I will do my best."

"We [Rokland and Woodburn] did two rallies last year and a few reces so I think it will be really good with him, we get on very well."

Rokland is one of seven 208s on the entry list for the season opening Border Counties Rally in Jedburgh on March 10/11.

It has also been announced that the 208 Cup, based around the BRC for the R2 car, will award over £20,000 in prizes this year with the winner of each round receiving £2500. More prizes are also on offer further down the order.

The overall JBRC winner will receive the prize of a test in a Hyundai i20 R5 machine, while talks are ongoing over other prizes.

The JBRC had nine starters for the first event last year while just six crews started every event across the season.

### Scottish frontrunner Macbeth steps up to BRC

Scottish junior frontrunner Scott Macbeth will step up to the Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship for the first two events of 2018.

The Citroen C2 R2 Max driver is hoping to make an impact on the championship. He only competed on a handful of events last year.

On the RSAC Scottish Rally last year, Macbeth set a stage time faster than the Prestone Motorsport News JBRC runners in his outdated Citroen C2 despite not having a recce.

"We've got the budget to do the Borders and Pirelli [in the BRC]. I don't know what will happen for the rest of the year," said Macbeth. "I'm too old to be a junior next year and I've got the car, so it's kind of now or never really. The competition is good."

"I don't have expectations to go and win it, I just want to see how we get on against some of the guys in the best [junior]

championship in the country. I think Cameron Davies will be the man to beat."

● Kevin Horgan has also confirmed his intention to compete in the Prestone Motorsport News JBRC, bringing a Skoda Fabia R2 to the series for a first appearance. Horgan won the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship Junior title in 2016. Like Macbeth, 2018 is Horgan's last chance to compete in the JBRC.



Macbeth: rapid in Scotland

### IN BRIEF

**Purcell heads forestry Irish Forest Rally Championship leader Andrew Purcell tops the entry for the Limerick Forest Rally this weekend. He will have strong competition from fellow Ford Fiesta R5 runners Josh Moffett and Barry McKenna. The 1982 Irish Tarmac champion, John Coyne, will drive a Subaru Impreza S14 WRC on the event making a gravel return. He competed in a R-GT Tuthill-prepared Porsche last year.**

### Bovington Stages

A clash with the latest round of the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship event at Donington Park means the Bovington Stages will be without its top three finishers from 2017: Chris West, Ian Woodhouse and Mark Kelly. The event features a number of historic championships. Josh Payton and Marcus Mizen (Ford Escort Mk2) start the event among the favourites.

### Nuts for rallying

The Rallynuts Stages, previously the Severn Valley, opens for entries this week. The Builth Wells-based counter is the third round of the BTRDA, returning to the championship for the first time in 27 years. The event runs through the Cefn, Crychan, Gwibedog and Radnor forests, with 31 of its 45 miles single-usage.

### Donington Park

Last year's winner Ian Woodhouse has been seeded car number one on the road for this Sunday's Donington Rally, one spot ahead of Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship leader Chris West. The event is the sixth round of the eight-event championship. West leads car three on the Donington event, Mark Kelly, by 29 points. Woodhouse is a further two points adrift.

### Kirkaldy back in R5

Alan Kirkaldy's R5 debut has been rescheduled for this weekend on the Donington Rally. The Scottish Tarmac Championship frontrunner was awarded the drive in a Ford Fiesta by Peter Smith. It was due to be on the Jack Frost Stages in January, but the entry was withdrawn due to bad weather. Also getting prize drives from Swift Caravan's Smith this weekend is Dan Mennell on the Malcolm Wilson Rally and Ben Friend on the Mid Wales Stages, both in a Fiesta R2.



Newman (c) passed BARS last year

### UK top 40 artist John Newman to make debut on Newtown's Rally North Wales

Chart-topping music artist John Newman is set to make his rallying debut on the Mid Wales Stages this weekend.

The 27-year-old from North Yorkshire, who has three number one singles, will drive GwynneSpeed Rally champion Ross Leach's Subaru Impreza. Leach runs the Forest Experience testing venue where Newman has been preparing for his rally debut.

Newman has tested a Ford Escort extensively, but has only done limited testing in the B13-spec Impreza.

"I think this year, if not next year, he will do some BTRDA events," said Leach. "It

all depends what he's doing with his music. He has a couple of mates interested in having cars built as well.

"I'm building another Subaru for him. He's using mine until his is done. He's done a fair amount but he hasn't driven this car much yet: I think he may have done one lap in the Subaru. He went in the car for five minutes and loved it."

Newman will be partnered by MSA Academy co-driver Keaton Williams, who is no stranger to helping people outside of rallying. He has previously co-driven downhill mountain bike world cup winner Gee Atherton in his Ford Fiesta.

"It will be good for the British rallying scene if he does do some more events," said Williams. "I just have to make it as easy as I can and make sure that he enjoys it."

The Mid Wales Stages returns for 2018 having cited financial reasons for not running in 2017. The event features 45-miles of stages in the Hafren forest and Sweet Lamb in Mid Wales.

The event has garnered 65 entries, with Martyn England and Sacha Kakad's Ford Fiesta R5s set to headline the entry. British Rally Championship frontrunner Tom Cave also competes in an older-spec Impreza.

### Darrian driver Ashley Field returns to head six of the machines in MSA Asphalt

National rally frontrunner Ashley Field will return to the MSA Asphalt Championship in 2018, leading a strong field of fellow Darrians.

Field dominated single venues in late 2015 and 2016 while the Asphalt Championship was on hiatus. He spent most of 2017 training for the Etape du Tour cycling race while also supporting

son Fred, who took part in the German ADAC Rallye Cup for Vauxhall Adams. Despite Fred returning to Germany for another year, Ashley Field will make a comeback to competition. "It's not the Epynt and Otterburn challenge anymore!" said Field of the contest. "It's got a good spread of events and new events. I had the car up for sale, but I

thought we may as well get out and use it. We haven't taken the new car over Epynt so that will be interesting."

Field will be joined by the Nissan-powered Darrian of Andy Fraser and others of Huw Reed, Tony Rees, Paul Culverwell and Richard Merriman in the series which kicks off on the Tour of Epynt on March 10/11.



Field last competed in 2016 having taken 2017 out to cycle around Europe



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Our *MN* reporter tackled his ARDS

## What you need to know and what not to do when sitting your ARDS. By Stefan Mackley

**W**hat kid interested in motorsport doesn't fantasise about becoming a Formula 1 driver? Or standing on the top step at Le Mans? Or even just racing at circuits all around the globe?

For anyone in the UK dreaming of these lofty heights they all must start at the bottom, and that bottom involves getting your Racing National B Licence by passing an Association of Racing Driver Schools assessment – more commonly known as ARDS.

Split into two parts – written and practical – the test is recognised by the Motor Sports Association (MSA), which governs motorsport in the UK.

In other words, if you want to race competitively in the UK, you're going to need to do this test.

Prior to the big day you'll need to order your Go Racing pack from the MSA, most importantly containing a DVD and booklet, as well as the blue form that you must take with you on the day.

The booklet sets out what the ARDS test is, the steps needed to pass it and the different disciplines of motorsport available, while the DVD reaffirms what is said in the booklet.

An ARDS test is split into two parts – a written test and a driving assessment.

Perhaps the most important part of the booklet and DVD, though, are the flag signals, which you need to know. You're tested on them in the written part.

"When I started racing in the late 1980s there was no ARDS test so you literally went straight into racing having obtained your [road] licence," says Alan Wilshire, a senior instructor at MotorSport Vision's Brands Hatch Circuit, which is just one of 17 ARDS schools available to take the assessment at, ranging from Knockhill and Croft to Lydden Hill and Pembrey.

"They then introduced the ARDS assessment, obviously on the basis of safety making sure everyone was fully up to speed with the flag signals, how to respond to them and what they meant."

Knowing the flags is a must, from what a stationary blue flag means to the difference between a single and double-waved yellow.

It's easy to trip up here and with a 100 per cent score needed on this part of the test

you need to be on the ball, so there's no harm in brushing up once or twice prior to the exam.

The remainder of the test consists of basic multiple-choice questions, often looking for you to show common sense and an awareness of safety.

But even something that seems obvious can trip the unprepared up.

"Usually it's a lack of preparation [that leads to failing]. It's quite rare now that people fail the written test as long as they watch the DVD at home once or twice," says Wilshire.

"If people haven't watched the DVD and don't listen to us then yes, you would probably expect them to fail."

Test completed with a 100 per cent score, it was then time to do the practical. There was a mixture of nerves, excitement and anticipation about getting out onto the Brands Hatch Indy Circuit for the first time, but the drive to the venue hardly helped to settle my nerves.

Torrential rain on the M25 made the thought of driving an unknown car on a general trackday, with other drivers – who were no doubt faster and in quicker machinery – a dreaded prospect.

The car in question was a Peugeot 308, just a standard road car with a manual gearbox – the latter a requirement of all ARDS tests.

Wilshire took to the circuit with me alongside to show the racing lines, where to brake, what gear to be in, where my eyeline should be. It's a constant stream of information and a lot to take in, all while making way for quicker cars.

Then it was my turn. Driving at a steady pace and avoiding cars ranging from other road-spec vehicles to a Radical within four laps, I'd been given the OK that I wasn't a complete liability behind the wheel and that I'd passed.

The drive wasn't without its dramas, though. Three people in three laps had found the limit of their abilities and spun, two at Graham Hill Bend and the final one as I entered the pits – it certainly kept you on your toes.

Wilshire says it's not about raw speed on your ARDS. In fact, it's quite the opposite.

"I think the worst thing they can try and do is go fast on the day," he says. "I know personally I've failed people who have had spins because they have just simply tried too hard on the track at that point."

"We very much recommend an 80 per

cent approach, keep the car on the circuit, you're fitting in with the rules of the day often a trackday ruling and just showing you have got a good awareness of what is going on around you, you're responding to any flag or light signals and fitting in with any traffic whether they are overtaking or being overtaken."

Drivers are also based individually, being asked before the test what they plan to race and this is considered when they are completing the test to make sure they are ready to drive such a vehicle.

Something which became apparent, if it already wasn't before the test, is how much motorsport costs.

The racing pack will set you back £104 and the fee for your licence every year is £62. Add to that the £250 cost for the ARDS test itself and then up to £150 for a medical, which tests blood pressure, eyesight and a urine sample. This is before you've bought a car or even any of your equipment, so it's little wonder why so few young people are involved in the sport.

"As much as possible we're trying to help new drivers in their first few races have a good time, which is what the MSA want," says Wilshire.

"They don't want people spending a lot of money on the assessment, buying the kit and then not enjoying their racing and disappearing after perhaps three or four races. They want people in the sport for the long term."

Doing the ARDS won't make you the world's greatest driver, but with constant changes to rules and regulations, knowing as much as possible will not only make you more prepared but even give you an advantage compared with your competitors.

As Wilshire says: "We have people coming back to racing and I'll give you Steve Soper as an example. He retook his ARDS test after a 12-year break when he finished touring cars and was going back to historic motorsport."

"We were more than happy to say to him 'look this is what's changed, you've passed' but he stayed for the whole classroom session and had some very good input with the actual novice drivers and after said 'I didn't know that, I learnt probably two or three things here'."

"So I think everyone regardless of their experience does learn something from these ARDS tests so I think they are a very positive step." ■



Learning the circuit, racing line and gear for each corner



How not to do it: ARDS test is not about speed or laptime



Stamp of approval: Our *MN* reporter passed his ARDS

# F1 LAUNCH SPECIAL

We run down the new-look Formula 1 grid for 2018. By **Robert Ladbrook**

# EVOLUTION IS THE KEY

## MERCEDES

### TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** F1 W09  
**Engine:** Mercedes M09  
 EQ Power +  
**Drivers:** Lewis Hamilton  
 (GBR), Valtteri Bottas (FIN)



New Mercedes is pure optimisation

**M**ercedes bosses have described its new F1 challenger as the “extreme” sister car to last year’s world title-winning F1 W08.

This year’s Silver Arrow – the F1 W09 EQ Power+ – was wheeled out at Silverstone for a filming day last week, where it turned laps in the hands of both Valtteri Bottas and four-time world champion Lewis Hamilton.

Last year’s Mercedes was the outright fastest car on the grid, carrying the team to 12 wins from the 20 races. However, the car did prove unpredictable at certain tracks as Mercedes sought to find a balance. The temperamental car earned the nickname of “the diva”.

Mercedes head Toto Wolff said the W09 was largely an evolution of its predecessor, but with heavy development.

The new car retains the same wheelbase dimensions but runs increased rake, a set-up solution pioneered by Red Bull last season. The sidepods’ leading edge has been smoothed over last year’s design and the bodywork is now much more tightly packed around the engine and transmission.

“We’ve tried to stay true to our design philosophy and develop on an already solid base,” said Wolff. “We hope that we have kept all of the good characteristics from the diva. We all like divas, but sometimes she was difficult to understand and this is the area we have worked on most – trying to understand and preserve the speed and find more driveability.”

“Because the regulations have remained stable, there is not a lot of

difference. The most visible change is aerodynamic and how tight the packaging of the car is and how closed up the bodywork is.”

Mercedes technical director James Allison said: “Last year’s car was never easy to work with, even at tracks where we were strong. Hopefully this year’s car will speak to us as engineers and to drivers a little more clearly.”

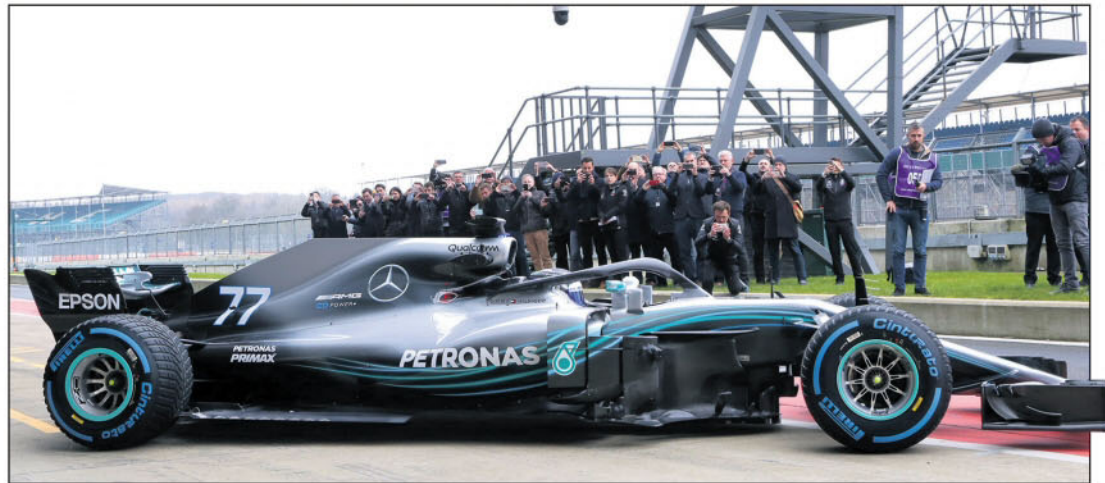
“Across the board this design is more elegant than last year. Last year’s regulations were brand new and we weren’t quite sure which direction they would take us in. Last year’s car had a lot of wiggle room to adapt if we found that we needed to change certain aspects. This year, being more confident of what we’re aiming for, we’ve been able to commit fully to certain concepts. We have the packaging much tighter and have taken things to more of an extreme.”

To make the W09, over 7,000 bespoke parts were made and 40,000 components stringently tested.

Mercedes has also worked hard on its power unit development, with the FIA’s mandated three engine and two energy recovery systems per car limit for this year demanding a 40 per cent increase in longevity over last year.

“The amount of change on the power unit was quite considerable,” said AMG engine chief Andy Cowell. “The biggest challenge is lifting durability. We focused on trying to increase the life without losing performance.”

“We also wanted to change the packaging of the power unit to benefit overall car performance, finding the best integration into the chassis. We’ve also been working on combustion efficiency and hardware friction reduction.”



The new Mercedes F1 W09 broke cover at Silverstone for a filming day last week in front of big crowd



Bottas turned the first laps in the W09



Bottas (left) and Hamilton have high hopes for new car

Photos: Mercedes AMG, Ferrari

# FERRARI

**T**his year's Ferrari has been designed to perform better at high-speed circuits as the team aims to take the fight to Mercedes more consistently this season.

Ferrari's new SF71H has been built on the foundations of last year's car, but has many noticeable differences aimed at making the chassis more versatile.

The wheelbase has been lengthened, although Ferrari neglects to say by how much exactly, and the sidepods have been dramatically redesigned. With many other teams adopting the high radiator inlets used by Ferrari last season, the Italian squad has gone a step further by splitting the ducts into two, with one now being located on the top of the sidepods' leading edge. The remaining area on the outside has been used to duct air around the new sidepods.

The bodywork has been slimmed heavily, with the Ferrari adopting a narrower stance than its predecessor.

"The new car represents an evolution of last year's car," said Ferrari technical head Mattia Binotto. "We try to retain the strengths and aggression we had from our concepts at some tracks last year, while finding a step forward from some others."

"The car was performing strongly on some tracks, mostly the lower-speed ones, so we've worked hard on aero development to be strong and perform on high-speed circuits too."

"The main differences for this year are that the wheelbase is longer and the sidepods and radiator ducts are more impressive and more aggressive than last year. Everybody seems to be copying our concept there from last year, but this year we've made another step forward from that. The packaging of the car is also very tight now and the body is very narrow, and that's been a big challenge."

"Integrating the halo has been tricky as it is a big weight in the middle of the car and changes a lot the centre of gravity so we had to do a lot of data for the design of that to make sure everything is working as it should."

"With the power unit we worked on reliability and overall power and the packaging of it. We also worked on the rear suspension to better accommodate the new tyres for this year."

Sebastian Vettel added: "We started this project very early last season, and the attention to detail on this car is amazing, the work has been put in in so many areas that I asked to improve. The real magic happens underneath this car. Every little part can make a difference and this is definitely a step up in every area of last year's car."

"We always have positive expectation with a new car, and so much work has gone into this one. In terms of expectation it's always difficult and the next few weeks will be critical for us to evaluate and understand if all the things we thought about are making sense. I'm sure we've worked in the right way."

Team head Maurizio Arrivabene said: "There are no challenges plural this season, there is just the one challenge—the final challenge to be world champion. The work to achieve that goes in race by race, not just over the first few. Everybody has worked very hard on the details of this car."



This year's Ferrari is longer, and slimmer, than 2017's

# MORE VERSATILITY

## TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** SF71H  
**Engine:** Ferrari 062 EVO  
**Drivers:** Sebastian Vettel (GER), Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)



New sidepod inlets are shown in head-on view



The halo integration caused a change in centre of gravity



Ferrari's packaging has become tighter, so bodywork has slimmed

# F1 LAUNCH SPECIAL

## TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** MCL33  
**Engine:** Renault R.E.18  
**Drivers:** Fernando Alonso (ESP), Stoffel Vandoorne (BEL)



# McLAREN

## PAPAYA RACER WITH NEW POWER

New McLaren will be powered by Renault

**M**claren bosses say Renault's engine concept has the potential to give it the leap up the grid the squad needs, despite the short timeframe it had to redesign its new challenger.

The Woking team headed straight for Navarra Circuit in Spain for a shakedown filming day after releasing images and technical details of its new papaya orange MCL33 last Friday.

The new car will house a Renault unit for the first time in the team's history after it ended its troubled relationship with Honda after three fruitless seasons. It is the first time McLaren has used a French engine since its short relationship with Peugeot in 1994.

With the switch to Renault units only confirmed last September – after a complex four-way negotiation involving McLaren, Renault, Honda and its new partner for this term Toro Rosso – the team was left with little time to make adjustments for the new powertrain.

"The change [in power unit supplier] was a big deal," said Tim Goss, McLaren's technical boss. "Even though the regulations state that the front and rear engine mounts need to be the same for every manufacturer, the layout of the engine, and its architecture, is very different.

"There are two families of engine concept out there; the Mercedes and Honda concept, with the compressor at the front of the engine, turbine at the back, MGU-H sat in the vee [of the engine block]; and the Ferrari and Renault approach, where the turbocharger is sat at the back and the MGU-H sits forward into the vee.

"Each of these approaches has its pros and cons, but I'm actually quite a fan of

the Renault approach. Making the switch has had a big impact on the installation of the engine. The advantage of the Renault engine means we can push the engine forwards, but then you have the compressor at the back of the engine, so you've got the outlet pipes forward without impacting the packaging.

"We had to redesign the back of the chassis, the gearbox and bell-housing area, the rear suspension and the cooling layout. That was two weeks of intense effort to get right. Now we have a very tidy packaging solution – the gearbox and rear suspension designers did an unbelievable job. This year we wanted a neat and tidy packaging solution. That gives the aerodynamicists more scope to play with the bodywork."

McLaren boss Zak Brown claimed he saw this as "the year McLaren will move closer to the front, fighting teams and drivers as we improve our fortunes".

McLaren Racing director Eric Boullier said: "The design, engineering and aerodynamic departments have done an incredible job delivering a new car, with a new power unit in an extremely short timeframe. We never took the easy route or looked to shortcut a process or solution, and the result is a car that is neat and well-resolved.

"We are under no illusions that it will be difficult to splinter the hegemony at the front, and the midfield will be full of well-funded, experienced outfits with plenty to prove. We are humble about the challenge ahead, but we've prepared well, have a solid package that we can build upon and exploit as the season goes on. Plus we have two excellent drivers who can prove the difference in the races.

"At McLaren, we are racers – pure and simple. We're going to come out pushing from the start."



Papaya livery was led by fan engagement

New car was designed in a short timescale



Photos: McLaren, Red Bull Content Pool, Renault Sport

# RED BULL

## TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** RB14  
**Engine:** Renault R.E.18 (TAG-Heuer)  
**Drivers:** Daniel Ricciardo (AUS), Max Verstappen (NED)



The RB14 carries high hopes

# CRASH WON'T HURT PROGRESS

**R**ed Bull heads insist that its pre-season testing programme won't be affected by Daniel Ricciardo's filming day accident at Silverstone last week.

Ricciardo was at the wheel of the new TAG-Heuer-Renault-powered RB14 when he slid off in difficult wet conditions, hours after the team launched its new chassis online.

Ricciardo went off with the rear of the car hitting the barriers at low speed before he completed the team's full 100km [60 miles] quota of allotted filming day running.

Despite being a low-speed impact, it was enough for the car to sustain damage to the front end, including the suspension, nose, the front wing and the floor.

With all of this year's crop of F1 cars being completely fresh, spare parts are usually in short supply. However, Red Bull insists that the accident won't have any knock-on effect for its Barcelona test.

While the day was cut short, Red Bull did complete most of its programme at Silverstone, including some pitstop practice.

Ricciardo said of his first impressions of the car: "It's hard to tell from a couple of laps but the initial feeling in the car is good. I can already feel that the rear feels pretty settled, even in

these pretty poor conditions. Those are encouraging signs. It's been a long day trying to complete the filming, but better to have that [the accident] here than during testing at Barcelona.

"With the halo, so far I can see fine with it. I'd only done a couple of installs [laps] with it before so it was pretty new today, but I really didn't notice it was there, which is pretty good. Honestly, unless there's stuff above, up high, then I don't see any issues with [using] it at flat tracks."

Red Bull unveiled its new livery at the Barcelona test (see right), despite many of the team's fanbase calling for the blue and black camouflage colours seen at launch to remain for the season.



Red Bull's new colours on show



# RENAULT

## TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** R.S.18  
**Engine:** Renault R.E.18  
**Drivers:** Nico Hulkenberg (GER), Carlos Sainz Jr (ESP)

New car runs reworked Renault power unit



# RELIABILITY AIM FOR THE R.S.18



Renault wants a lot of early laps

**R**enault chiefs have set a target of being inside the top three in terms of mileage during this week's first pre-season test as it pushes to iron out any flaws in its new R.S.18 challenger. Renault didn't give much away on the launch of its new car last week, with the machine looking largely like an optimisation of the car that finished 2017 as a regular points-scorer. Where Renault has reportedly

made significant gains is in its engine department, with sources suggesting both power and reliability gains from the unit. The team's technical head Bob Bell said: "We need a strong reliability record, and we have worked hard on that area over the winter. We need the car as reliable as we can make it. That's a huge challenge, even more so than performance development. "To improve reliability you have to accept nothing less than perfection. Anything that ends up on the car must be built to the highest possible standard. Reliability is not something you

can flick on like a switch. "We want a trouble-free test programme to validate the performance of the car and then move forward." Renault Sport engine head Remi Taffin added: "We did see our power unit on the top step of the podium three times last year [with Red Bull], so it's clear we have the potential to achieve our aspirations. We need to raise our game across the board, and all the elements to do this are here. Our first priority is reliability. We started designing the 2018 engine in 2016 and have completed more hours on the dyno than ever."

# F1 LAUNCH SPECIAL

## MALLYA: POINTS A TARGET



### TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** VJM11  
**Engine:** Mercedes M09 EQ Power+  
**Drivers:** Sergio Perez (MEX), Esteban Ocon (FRA)

## FORCE INDIA

New car leans on 2017 model



Ocon puts in early mileage

**F**orce India's new car will be a disappointment if it is not challenging for points in every race this season, according to team head Vijay Mallya.

The Silverstone-based squad has earned itself a reputation for punching above its weight in recent years, having finished fourth in the Constructors' Championship in both 2016 and 2017, regularly beating teams with much larger budgets and resources.

The new car is again an evolution

of what the team had last season. It continues with the 'trident' style nose design, and will run current spec Mercedes power units.

Force India's chief operating officer Andrew Green said that while the new car looks broadly like the 2017 version, heavy upgrades would be made before Australia.

"The DNA of the car is still very much that of last year's car. We took the decision, quite a while ago, that the launch specification of the 2018 car would be based around our understanding of the 2017 car, but with all new structures required by the regulations in place," said Green.

"It is a starting point, a good reference from which to introduce changes quite quickly; it gives our aerodynamics department more time to develop a car for the first race in Australia, rather than having to release parts early for testing."

Team owner Vijay Mallya said: "I see no reason why we cannot consolidate our position and improve. Yes, F1 is a very tough and competitive environment, but we are an established team with continuity in all areas of the company."

"We don't take anything for granted, but we will be disappointed if we are not fighting for points at every race this year."

# FERRARI CUES TO HELP SWISS TEAM STEP UP

**S**auber is aiming for a leap up the F1 pecking order with its heavily redesigned, Alfa Romeo-backed C37.

The Swiss team has entered into a new marketing and technical partnership with Alfa Romeo for this year, with its car featuring heavy branding from the Italian marque. The deal will also lead to a closer technical partnership with engine supplier Ferrari – a sister brand to Alfa.

The new car features a very different aerodynamic concept to the troubled C36. It has adopted Ferrari-style shorter sidepods with a twin cooling inlet. There's also a new rear suspension design, with the top wishbone mounted higher, and the halo features an innovative slotted-gap trim to help reduce turbulence from the new device.

The team will also run the new-spec Ferrari power unit, instead of the year-old engines it used last season.

Sauber technical director Jorg Zander said: "The car philosophy is much different this year. The aerodynamic concept has changed significantly, and the C37 has several new features."

"We are positive that the overall concept offers us more opportunities and will help us make improvements during the season. The 2018 Ferrari engine will also give us a boost in performance. We hope to make a lot of progress."

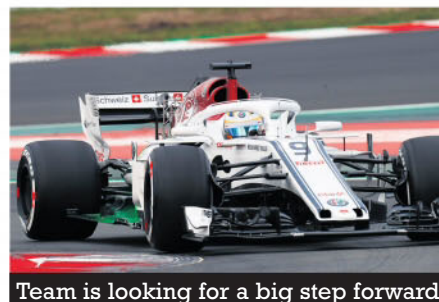
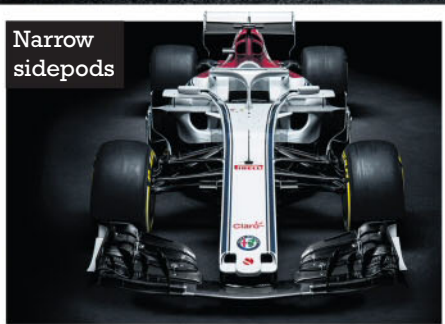


### TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** C37  
**Engine:** Ferrari 062 EVO  
**Drivers:** Marcus Ericsson (SWE), Charles Leclerc (MCO)

Alfa Romeo backing for 2018

Narrow sidepods



Team is looking for a big step forward



Sauber's solution to the halo device



# HONDA RELATIONSHIP CAN REAP REWARDS

**T**he new relationship between Toro Rosso and engine supplier Honda has grown strongly over the winter, according to both sides – despite the two factions only having a few months to prepare for 2018.

The deal to take Honda power to Red Bull's B team was only struck last September, after a complex negotiation to extract the Japanese brand from its exclusive deal with McLaren.

Toro Rosso's Renault engine supply went the other way as part of the deal, meaning the Faenza team had to make sweeping adjustments to fit the new Honda engine into its chassis, while also building a relationship with its new technical partner.

"I am really looking forward to begin this new season and enter a new era for our team, working with Honda," said Toro Rosso boss Franz Tost. "It's an exciting time for Toro Rosso because we have never had our own engine supplier before, so to partner with a manufacturer, with the history that Honda has, will be great."

"It is a completely new car, with a new power unit, which has been nicely integrated with support from Honda. I would say that we will have a competitive package this year. We have two drivers new to F1, but they have driven for us in the past and I am sure that if we give them a competitive car they will perform at very high levels."

Honda's Katsuhide Moriyama said: "I am delighted that the new car is here and ready to start testing, having been designed and built to a very tight schedule. That is tribute to the dedication of the Honda and Toro Rosso personnel who have already learned to work very well together, developing the STR13 chassis and RA618H power unit package over the short winter months. Now we have eight days to evaluate our progress on the track."

## TORO ROSSO



### TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** STR13  
**Engine:** Honda RA618H  
**Drivers:** Brendon Hartley (NZL), Pierre Gasly (FRA)

The Honda relationship started on track on Monday



The reworked STR13 now has a Japanese powerplant

## HAAS



### TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** VF-18  
**Engine:** Ferrari 062 EVO  
**Drivers:** Romain Grosjean (FRA), Kevin Magnussen (DEN)

Haas hopes to be closer to the performance baseline of technical partner Ferrari with its VF-18 this year. The new car is a refined version of last season's challenger, which Haas hopes will be more stable and more predictable. Haas uses Ferrari engines and other components. Team owner Gene Haas said: "It's no secret that we use a lot of Ferrari equipment, so we're using them as our baseline. We need to be within a half-second for them to be competitive. We need to knock about a second off."



## WILLIAMS



### TEAM INFO

**Chassis:** FW41  
**Engine:** Mercedes M09 EQ Power +  
**Drivers:** Lance Stroll (CAN), Sergey Sirotkin (RUS)

Williams has tipped its rookie driver line-up to spring some surprise results this season. The team has pinned its hopes on rookie Sergey Sirotkin and Lance Stroll, who has just 20 grand prix starts under his belt. The team's new car marks a big direction change in terms of aerodynamics, with both young drivers and Robert Kubica tasked with leading its development. "If we didn't think they would do the job, we wouldn't put them in the car," said Claire Williams when asked if she had any concerns over the lack of experience of the drivers. "It's quite nerve-wracking when you bring in new talent, but we have been doing it for years and it's always paid off. Lance has been working really hard and Sergey did a phenomenal job for us in testing last year. I think he'll surprise some people."



# INTERVIEW

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Bushell will race Team Hard VW

## HOW BUSHELL HAS FOUGHT BACK INTO THE BTCC



Bushell was often at the front of the 2017 Clio pack

**Clio champion didn't expect to be racing this year until landing Team Hard deal. By Stephen Lickorish**

**H**e had just clinched a second Renault UK Clio Cup title in style. And by *style* read *domination*. No driver other than Mike Bushell ever looked like winning the title last season. He was better in qualifying. He was better in the races. He was better at consistency. And yet, despite all that, Bushell did not think he would be racing in 2018 – let alone in the British Touring Car Championship.

“As far as I was concerned when I finished Clios, that was my lot,” he says. “I honestly didn't think I was going to be continuing racing this year. I've got a little girl on the way, I'd become a two-time British champion and thought 'I'm quite content with that' at the time. But three or four weeks later it starts to mull in your brain what you really want to be doing and you just can't lose that buzz.

“I sampled a TCR car and shared the driving with Ash Sutton – it was good to go up against a guy who is the most rated driver in the country at the moment. It was good to compare against him and it brought my confidence back.”

He proved to be more than a match

for Sutton on that day – and that did not go unnoticed. Just days later he had a deal in place to drive for Team Hard in the BTCC. Some turnaround from thinking he wouldn't be racing.

“I think I had written it off in my own mind that I wasn't going to come back because I thought I had missed the boat,” says the 28-year-old. “The most important thing to make it all happen is Tony [Gilham, team boss]. He's been the single most enthusiastic man I've ever met – and that's not just because of his pink attire! He lives motorsport, it's his business and in the space of three weeks I learnt so much.”

Bushell is confident about the season ahead. Team Hard has recruited top engineer Geoff Kingston – who has most recently worked with 2017 Independents Trophy winner Tom Ingram – and he has set about a programme of updates to the team's fleet of Volkswagen CCs. Bushell says the team has been flat-out over the winter working on the cars with testing beginning last week.

“Really all the pieces of the puzzle are coming together,” he says. “I'm really excited for it, the team have put so much time into it – they only had New Year's Day off and the two days for Christmas.

“Everyone's sort of holding their breath – a lot of people are watching.



VW CC has been modified for '18

The car is already proven and with the input of a new fresh mind it's interesting to see what's possible.”

Bushell is certainly hoping a lot more is possible than the first time he graduated to the BTCC after winning a Clio title. Back in 2015 he moved into the series with the AmD squad in what proved to be an uncompetitive older-spec Ford Focus. It was a disappointing year, blighted by his massive crash in qualifying at Thruxton with Simon Belcher that left him with severe ligament damage and a hefty repair bill. He ended the year with a best result of only 10th.

But that was not his first experience of the series. He actually made his debut in a one-off appearance in a Chevrolet Cruze at Knockhill in 2013.

“That was when the seed was first sown,” Bushell says. “A drive came about through Andy Neate so that was great. Then obviously at that time I didn't really think of myself

as being a particularly good driver – I hadn't won anything. After winning the Clios in 2014 the next step was to make the jump into British Touring Cars.

“Ultimately that [Thruyton] crash was a massive setback. In my naivety coming into a top level of motorsport [the approach] is to go gung-ho 'I want to get a result', 'I want to get a top 10'. Yes, that's part of the goal but it's also a business and the business is to stay in it. In my naivety at the time I missed that opportunity and ultimately I thought 'I need to go away and regroup', which is why I dropped back to Clios.”

Moving back down the racing ladder was perhaps a bold move but it worked a treat for Bushell. It allowed him to focus on his weaker areas and get him in a position to reclaim a place on the BTCC grid – even if 2016 didn't go to plan after crashing with eventual champion Ant Whorton-Eales in the finale.

Bushell felt it was important for him to return to winning after that difficult 2015 season.

“I had my confidence knocked because of that crash at Thruxton – that was the first time I had ever been hurt in a car so it does have a knock-on effect to your own self-belief,” he says. “So coming back into Clios I wasn't the dominant force. It was a case of I really had to knuckle down

and improve and iron out the flaws. Ultimately I missed out on the Clios by the narrowest of margins [in 2016] but the way it ended was one of the biggest PR buzzes I've ever had because of crashing out of the finale and taking a bow to the crowd worked out brilliantly!

“That set me up for the next year. In modern single-make championships it was quite unheard of [to win so dominantly] and it's a series filled with a grid of top names from other formulae so it was a monumental achievement for me – I think the only thing that will top that would be a win in touring cars.”

Bushell's realistic enough not to expect that this season, but reckons a podium could be possible.

“I think the ultimate goal I have for this year would be to luck in to a podium on a reverse grid, that would be a monumental achievement,” he says. “It's a realistic goal – I think coming back to it as a two-time Clio champion, with an already proven car and the input of Kingston – it's now down to me.”

And having become only the second driver to take more than one title in the incredibly competitive Clio Cup, he has the credentials for his second spell in the BTCC to be far more successful than the first. All thoughts of not racing this year have certainly been banished from his mind. ■

### CV

#### Mike Bushell

From: Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Age: 28

2017: Renault UK Clio Cup (Team Pyro), champion

2016: Renault UK Clio Cup (Team Pyro), second

2015: British Touring Car Championship

(AmDTuning.com Ford Focus ST), 23rd

2014: Renault UK Clio Cup (Team Pyro), champion

2013: Renault UK Clio Cup (Westbourne Motorsport/SV

Racing/Team Pyro), 11th; British Touring Car Championship

(Team Club 44 Chevrolet Cruze), three races

2012: Renault UK Clio Cup (MBR), 11th

2011: Fiesta Championship (WDE Motorsport), part season



Bushell claimed nine Clio wins last season

#### Crash derailed first BTCC spell



# RALLY REPORTS

Photo: John Fife, Gary Jones



Marshall: strong start to Tarmac bid

## REDEMPTION FOR MARSHALL AND TEG TO TAKE KNOCKHILL WIN

### Knockhill Stages

By John Fife

**Organiser:** Border Ecosse Car Club **When:** February 25 **Where:** Knockhill, Fife **Championships:** Scottish Tarmac Championship, North of England Tarmac Championship, Borders Rally Challenge, Border Ecosse Car Club Championship **Stages:** 8 **Starters:** 59

**A week after an engine failure at Snetterton, John Marshall and Scott Crawford came out on top at the Grant Construction Knockhill Stages Rally after an enthralling day-long tussle with David Hardie and Mark McCulloch.**

At the half way point of the eight-stage event, there were just five seconds separating the two Subaru Imprezas.

Running first car on the road was a serious disadvantage to the top seed Marshall. "There was ice all the way around the track," he said. "I had to decide whether to follow the tracks left by the course cars or take the

proper racing line and drive on the ice!"

Marshall's exploratory run was therefore a very cautious affair, and yet he shared second fastest stage time with the Subarus of Ian Paterson and Gordon Morrison. Five seconds faster than these three was the Mitsubishi Lancer of ninth seed, James Gibb, while Hardie was a few seconds further back.

As the sun rose into the clear blue sky, conditions improved for the second stage with Marshall and Hardie equal fastest, but there were perils aplenty awaiting.

First to find that out was Morrison whose Subaru smacked a gatepost and John Rintoul got his Millington-engined Skoda Fabia stuck in a ditch when it slithered off the road.

Even though conditions were perfect for the third and fourth stages, and cars were even kicking up dust on the gravel section, Gibb lost the rally lead when he

spun the Lancer on the third test leaving Marshall and Hardie to go head-to-head to the finish.

Hardie was fastest over SS5 and SS6 but the car stalled twice on SS7 allowing Marshall to open up the gap with one stage to go. On the final test, Hardie's Subaru hiccupped again. The car caught a tyre marker and slid off the road just 100 yards short of the finish line.

Marshall's win was sweet, especially for engine builder TEG which worked all week to make sure the car was ready for the Scottish Tarmac Championship opener at the Fife circuit.

With Hardie's issues, Paterson took second place overall running his Subaru with the same rear tyres all day. "I only had four softs for the front," said Paterson, "and two wets for the rear. The car was sliding about quite a bit – but it was good fun."

Lee Hastings therefore scored a

surprise third in his Subaru Impreza. "If it hadn't been for an ECU problem on the first stage, I might have been more in the mix," he reckoned.

Just missing out on the podium was Donnie MacDonald, back in his Lancer E9. "I was far too cautious on the first stage, I dropped half a minute to the other boys, that was just too much to pull back," he said.

Gibb recovered from his earlier indiscretion to take fifth overall with Tom Blackwood rounding off the top six and scoring top two-wheel drive in his Ford Escort. First time out in his new Mk2, Iain Wilson was seventh while first time in a rally car for over 12 years was Willie Paterson finishing eighth.

Scoring a mighty impressive ninth overall was the 1400 class-winning Vauxhall Corsa of Joe Cunningham. Having scored two class wins at the two recent Winter rallies at Croft,

Cunningham found himself in the overall lead of the North of England Tarmac Championship. "I had no intention of doing the full championship," he said, "but felt I just had to come to Scotland after that, and I've won the class again." He's now having to rethink his rallying plans for the rest of the season.

Completing the top 10 was the 1600 class-winning Vauxhall Nova of Stevie Irwin which prevailed by eight seconds from Michael Harbour's Citroen C2.

### Results

1 John Marshall/Scott Crawford (Subaru Impreza) 41m56s; 2 Ian Paterson/Alan Paterson (Impreza) +34s; 3 Lee Hastings/Cole Hastings (Impreza); 4 Donnie MacDonald/Alison Horne (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 5 James Gibb/Paul Tonner (Lancer E8); 6 Tom Blackwood/Gordon Winning (Ford Escort Mk2); 7 Iain Wilson/Chris Williams (Escort Mk2); 8 Willie Paterson/Euan O'Neill (Mitsubishi Lancer); 9 Joe Cunningham/Marc Fowler (Vauxhall Corsa); 10 Stevie Irwin/Ian Middleton (Vauxhall Nova). **Class winners:** Cunningham/Fowler; Irwin/Middleton; Chris McCallum/Richard Stewart (Escort); Blackwood/Winning; Marshall/Crawford.

### Escort ace Ross Le Noa wins first ever closed-road rally on Guernsey

#### Guernsey Rally

By Ian Harden

**Organiser:** Guernsey Kart and Motor Cycle Club **When:** February 24 **Where:** Guernsey, Channel Islands **Stages:** 16 **Starters:** 25

A faultless display of mistake-free driving over roads never used for rallying before gave Ross Le Noa/Domonic Volante victory at the first-ever Guernsey Rally.

The Ford Escort Mk2 pairing led from SS1 and set 12 consecutive fastest times to beat fellow Jersey pairing Jeremy Baudains/James Ollivro (Escort Mk2) by 20.8 seconds.

Guernsey's inaugural closed-road rally consisted of four loops of four stages, and with each test around one-mile long the lead battle stayed close all day.

Dry, sunny conditions made

for a constant high pace and Baudains sat right on Le Noa's tail. Even with a mid-rally alternator problem he never dropped below third fastest on any stage. But, the narrow lanes also claimed two potential frontrunners; Kevin Rumens/Kay Taylor (Escort Mk2) ended the rally in a field after an overshoot and Guernsey crew Karl Robert/Christian Pommier (Peugeot 205) hit a wall.

Third-placed Simon Le Noa/Katie Le Blancq (Ford Anglia 2300) ran neck and neck throughout the rally with Darryl Morris/Ollie Duquemin (Escort Mk2). Simon Le Noa eventually broke the stalemate by going overall fastest on SS13 and 14, allowing him to hold Morris's late-rally charge at bay by 1.4 seconds. Dale Crowsley/

John Vaudain (Mazda MX-5) challenged for third early on but an eighth-stage spin cost them 10 seconds and dropped them to fifth.

Nissan Micra driver David Ginn made the long journey from Cambridge and, partnered by Guernsey co-driver Michael Timms, they overcame two overshoots and a minor gearbox problem to finish 15th overall and first in class.

### Results

1 Ross Le Noa/Domonic Volante (Ford Escort Mk2) 19m3.1s; 2 Jeremy Baudains/James Ollivro (Escort Mk2) +20.8s; 3 Simon Le Noa/Katie Le Blancq (Ford Anglia 2300); 4 Darryl Morris/Ollie Duquemin (Escort Mk2); 5 Dale Crowsley/John Vaudain (Mazda MX-5); 6 Mark Syrett/Chris Fox (Escort Mk1); 7 Dave Oliveira/Kevin Irving (Escort Mk2); 8 Neil Cotillard/Helier Le Brun (Subaru Impreza); 9 Matthew Leggett/Garry Toy (Escort Mk2); 9=Paul Trebert/Will Rutherford (Peugeot 206). **Class winners:** David Ginn/Michael Timms (Nissan Micra); Trebert/Rutherford; Morris/Duquemin; Le Noa/Volante; Cotillard/Le Brun; Craig Robert/Karl Marshall (Honda Civic).

### ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

Michael Gilbey maintained his 100 per cent winning record for the year when he guided Andy Davies to victory on the **Rali Bro Caron**; it was Gilbey's third win of 2018.

The initial pace was set by Rhodri Evans/Max Freeman on the second round of the Welsh Road Rally Championship. In treacherously icy conditions they had built up a lead of almost a minute by the petrol halt. However they crashed soon after the restart, blocking the road and causing the section on which the incident occurred to be cancelled.

This left Daniel Jones/Gerwyn Barry chasing Davies/Gilbey, but Jones hit a ditch on the final section and had to cut the route to make the Finish. The winners had also hit a gate, damaging their lighting, but still came home with a 34-second victory margin. Kevin Davies, partnered on this occasion by Alan James, had to be content with the runner-up spot.

Einion Williams/Rhodri Evans put in



a notable performance to win the Expert Class and take fifth overall. The last-minute pairing of Chris Hand/Aled Richards had been level on time with Jones/Barry at Petrol, but retired in the second half with a dry sump pump failure.

Tomos Parry/Michael Jones won the Anglesey-based **Valentine Rally** in their Peugeot 106, with the Beginners crew of Meirion Gadd/Ffion Alaw Parry securing the event's premier award, the Valentine Trophy.

Matt Flynn/Rob Bryn Jones took their maiden win on the **John Robson Rally**, while Dan Willan/Niall Frost won the **Hexham**

**Historic.** Both of these Hexham MC events ran alongside each other. **Ian Mills**

### Results

**Rali Bro Caron** **Organiser:** Lampeter & District MC **When:** February 24/25 **Where:** West Wales Championship; WAMC **Route:** 95 miles **Starters:** 87  
1 Andy Davies/Michael Gilbey (Subaru Impreza) 4m23s; 2 Kevin Davies/Alan James (Ford Escort) +34s; 3 Simon Summers/Diwyon John (Escort); 4 Mark 'GT' Roberts/Dylan Jenkins (VW Golf GTI); 5 Einion Williams/Rhodri Evans (Escort); 6 James Davies/George Eadon (Proton Compact GTI); 7 Teler Pugh/Ian Beardon (SEAT Ibiza); 8 Matt Barker/John Connor (Peugeot 206 GTI); 9 Gari Evans/Arfon Griffiths (Escort); 10 Paul Morgan/Rhys Griffiths (Honda Civic Type R). **Class winners:** Williams/James; Rob Stephens/Nathan Summers (Escort); Rhys Davies/Llyr Davies (MG ZR).

## INSIGHT

Photos: Hal Ridge, fiaworldrallycross.com

# HOW SILVERSTONE CREATED A NEW WRX CHALLENGE



The Stowe Circuit area has been reworked

The jump has The Wing as backdrop

With three weeks to go, Silverstone's brand new rallycross track is ready for action. By **Matt James**

**T**he new rallycross circuit at Silverstone will be used for the first time in three weeks when it hosts the opening round of the British Rallycross Championship.

It will be a dress rehearsal for the arrival of the World Rallycross Championship in May, the headline event which will be a real test for the brand-new venue.

Silverstone bosses could more-or-less start with a blank sheet of paper with the design. The area behind The Wing housed the Stowe Circuit, which has been used for school sessions and minor events before. It was a perfect site for a purpose-built track.

World Rallycross Championship coordinator Tim Whittington was a prime mover in pulling the new circuit together, and he says that initial discussions at the Autosport International Show in 2016 had identified the Stowe track as ideal.

"One of the key assets of having the Stowe Circuit area is that the rest of the venue can remain unaffected by rallycross at Silverstone," explains Whittington. "We go to some other places, like Hockenheim and Barcelona, and we are compromised. While it is great

to have these iconic tracks, access can be limited because you are on what is, for the rest of the year, a race circuit. At Silverstone it is self-contained. Also, it means that in the future, bosses at Silverstone can add the rallycross track to its driving experiences if it wants and it can also be used for testing – which is something quite rare in the UK. It is an asset."

Once the site had been identified, there was the job of designing the track. While the layout was drawn with a free hand, there were some aspects that had to be considered to start with.

"Because rallycross starts with five cars side-by-side, there is a minimum track width of 14.5 metres to begin with, and that stretches for 100 metres," explains Whittington. "That means we had to have the startline on the straight behind The Wing paddock. It is an old runway, and it was the only part that could accommodate that necessity."

Beyond that, there are other factors that have to be featured on a World Rallycross Championship-standard circuit. There is a requirement that at least 40 per cent of the track must be on a loose surface – but Silverstone has gone beyond that and will feature 60 per cent on the loose. Then there are the



Track is 60 per cent on the loose

dimensions of the track itself. Rules dictate that a circuit should be between 800 metres and 1400 metres. A lap of the Silverstone track will measure 972m.

"It is quite a short lap, but that is deliberate," says Whittington. "Many of the newer tracks on the calendar are at the upper end of the lap length requirement, but we wanted to create something a little bit different. Also, the grip on the loose surfaces change from venue to venue and that is important. If they were all the same, then the engineers would quickly get a handle on car set-ups and there wouldn't be much of a challenge."

"Some of the older venues, like Estering in Germany, are proper old school rallycross circuits and some of the newer ones are smooth.

Silverstone will have a hard surface in general, and that will present a different feeling for the drivers."

There will be a 2500-seat grandstand alongside the main start straight, towards the first corner, and race control will also be created in that area. The WRX paddock will be laid out in the concrete area behind The Wing pits, while the International Circuit, which circles the Stowe venue, will be used by other elements of the weekend's festival of racing called Speed Machine.

Silverstone's managing director Stuart Pringle has also been one of the driving forces behind the initiative to bring the World Rallycross Championship to the F1 venue. The track design firm Driven was employed to devise the layout.

Pringle explains that there were several factors that he particularly wanted to be included in the blueprint of the track.

"The Silverstone F1 circuit is known for being fast and flowing, and although the rallycross track is much shorter, we wanted to include that culture and I think we have done that," he says. "Also, we wanted there to be a signature shot, an iconic image that photographers could get so we placed the jump very carefully. We wanted a shot with the cars in the air with the suspension

fully extended, just like the 1000 Lakes Rally. We have created it so that The Wing is in the background of the shot."

The British RX Championship round on March 17 is likely to get several visitors from the World Rallycross Championship looking for a bit of handy testing before their showpiece event in late May.

"Drivers are always going to have their own views," says Whittington. "We'll have to wait and see what their reaction is, but I think it will be a great little circuit – it has all kinds of corners on it, from slow ones to fast ones and there is the jump as well, which is an unusual feature for national runners."

"It is a double-edged sword opening with a higher-profile event like a British Rallycross meeting."

"It is a one-day event and the timetable is full-on, so the pressure will be on the organisers straight away for things to run smoothly."

But, because it is a packed programme and a top-level championship, it will be a good dry run to make sure that all the systems are in place to cope with a round of the World Championship."

The proof of the new rallycross circuit will come very soon indeed, and it is an exciting new development for rallycross in the UK. ■

## Jordan: new layout can create a challenge for WRX drivers and joy for fans

British Touring Car star Andrew Jordan is Britain's only podium finisher in the World Rallycross Championship and the former British Supercar title winner has a good insight into what makes a good venue.

Silverstone is owned by the British Racing Drivers' Club and it looked around for a member who had suitable rallycross experience to help with the creation of the new mixed surface layout at the track.

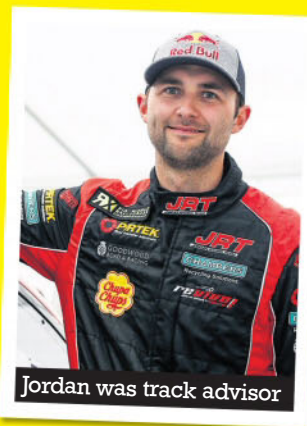
Jordan finished on the podium at

Lydden in 2014 in an OlsbergsMSE Ford Fiesta, and has since taken part in three other rounds of WRX. He had an input into the design tweaks of the track once the basic format had been created.

Jordan says: "I was shown the plans once they had been drawn up, and I was asked for my input from a drivers' point of view. I think it has a good mixture of corners, but it is one of the shorter tracks."

"Some of the others that we go to in Europe are what you would call

traditional venues through the trees. That's impossible for a new venue like this, but they have tried hard to incorporate lots of interesting features to keep fans happy. No one will know exactly how it works until there is the first race meeting there. That is the test for a venue and it'll be interesting to see what happens when the British championship goes there in March. Given the work that has gone on behind the scenes, it should be a real hit with drivers."



Jordan was track advisor



WRX will switch from Lydden

# SPORTING SCENE

## ROUND-UP

Already assured of his first **Hewison Autotest** title, Ian White led from start to finish despite enormous pressure all day from seven-time champion Steven Ferguson.

White was quickest on six tests to Ferguson's three with two more shared between them, and the final margin of victory was just 0.8 seconds. Robin Lyons beat Guy Foster to third place, 1.6s behind the winner.

Derek Tohill heads the entry for this Sunday's opening round of the **Irish Rallycross Championship** at Mondello Park, hoping to make it a hat-trick of Irish titles. His Ford Fiesta won six of last year's seven rounds and has been rebuilt for the new season. Among the other former title holders in action are Michael Coyne (Vauxhall Nova), his brother Willie (Opel Corsa), and Derrick Jobb (Ford Escort Cosworth).

Windwhistle Motor Club will host the opening round of the **MSA British and BTRDA Car Trials** championships for the first time this Saturday, with the second round following at Woolbridge the following day. Seventeen competitors have entered, half of which are former national champions. Reigning British champion Rupert North will return in a borrowed Citroen Saxo, having failed to finish painting his infamous yellow Mini. He will be joined by Barrie Parker, Henry Kitching and BTRDA Gold Star champion Shawn Franklin.

**Results**  
**MEC Hewison Autotest**  
**Organiser:** Motor Enthusiasts' Club **When:** February 25  
**Where:** Mondello Park, County Kildare **Starters:** 23.  
1 Ian White (Mini Special) 576.6s; 2 Steven Ferguson (Mini-Nova Special) +0.8s; 3 Robin Lyons (Mini); 4 Guy Foster (Mini Special); 5 Eamonn Byrne (Mini); 6 Darren Quille (Westfield); 7 Paddy Power (Mini Moke); 8 Chris Grimes (Mini); 9 Liam Cashman (Nova); 10 Norman Ferguson (Mini).  
**Class winners:** Lyons; Ferguson; Quille; Cashman; John McAssey (Starlet). Novice: Christopher Grimes Jr (Mini).



Photos: Tom Banks, Loic Abras, mkpics.net

VW drivers tested tweaks

## KRISTOFFERSSON AND SOLBERG KICK OFF PREPARATIONS FOR 2018

### Factory-backed VW drivers sample developments on new-look Polo

By Hal Ridge

**World Rallycross champions Johan Kristoffersson and Petter Solberg began testing Volkswagen Motorsport's latest development of its Polo GTi rallycross Supercar at Mettet in Belgium last weekend.**

In the first test of the year for the Hanover-built car, the two Scandinavians shared driving duties to complete approximately 25 laps at an open test day.

The revised 2017-specification

Supercar featured a new front bumper, different front wings and a more elaborate rear spoiler, similar to that seen on the final incarnation of Volkswagen's still-born 2017 World Rally Car.

"After driving some rally cars in the winter and so on, it was a nice feeling to get back into such a car," Kristoffersson told *Motorsport News*. "It was a good day, but there were quite a lot of cars so we didn't manage to do so many laps. It's always nice to do a shakedown for the team and also for the drivers though."

The Swede appears set to remain with Solberg's Volkswagen-backed PSRX squad for the defence of his title, although no official announcement has been made.

Speaking about updates to the car rolled out at Mettet, Kristoffersson explained: "We are always trying to develop and work on details, but basically it is quite similar. But, it's still at a very early stage in the testing programme."

"Maybe [the aero will make more difference] on the tracks that are a

little bit more high speed, but also in rallycross it's very difficult to say because the grip level changes so dramatically from when you are on the track to the next time. It would be possible to feel some differences if you did a back-to-back comparison."

Andreas Bakkerud also made his debut in an EKS Audi S1 test car, while the G-Fors team shook down its new Clio RS RX Supercar. Ulrik Linnemann won the opening round of the Belgian Rallycross Championship on Sunday in an ex-Marklund Motorsport Polo.

## Renault backs Silverstone Speedmachine Festival

French marque Renault has pledged its support to the Speedmachine Festival, the British round of the World Rallycross Championship set to take place at Silverstone on May 25-27.

Renault Sport will showcase its new Megane RS, while fans will have the opportunity to take part in test drives and passenger rides in the car on the Silverstone International circuit during

the event. The Megane RS will be present in World RX this season, with the GCK team. Frenchman Guerlain Chicherit will lead a two-car effort with the new Prodrive-built cars.

Renault UK marketing director, Adam Wood explained: "The first ever Speedmachine will mark the UK debut of new Megane RS – and visitors will get to have a taste of Renault Sport's expertise."

## O'Donovan changes focus for British title attack

Former British Rallycross champion Ollie O'Donovan will step back from a twin assault on the British and European Championships in the last few years, but we had to make a decision for this year. We looked at all the options and decided that what I want to do is try and win the British again.

"We've shown we've had the pace year-on-year, but often luck hasn't been on our side. Sometimes we've had problems because our truck has been abroad between European events and we've had a limited spares package. The level will be higher than ever this year, having names like Mark Higgins in the championship is fantastic."

O'Donovan said: "I've had a brilliant time competing in both the British and European Championships in the last few years, but we had to make a decision for this year. We looked at all the options and decided that what I want to do is try and win the British again."

"We've shown we've had the pace year-on-year, but often luck hasn't been on our side. Sometimes we've had problems because our truck has been abroad between European events and we've had a limited spares package. The level will be higher than ever this year, having names like Mark Higgins in the championship is fantastic."



O'Donovan will race in the UK

## LAST-MINUTE FIX BOOSTS HAIRD'S CHANCES

### Points leader eager to kick start 2018 running. By Matt James



Haird (l) tops the table

Reigning National Hot Rod World Final winner Chris Haird only unloaded his Vauxhall Tigra B from its race transporter last week.

The National Hot Rod mid-season break began in November 2017, and he hadn't touched the race car in the intervening months. The dust will be firmly blown off the cars at Birmingham Wheels on Saturday night.

It was a good job Haird was reacquainted with his car too: a test at Foxhall Heath in Ipswich last weekend revealed that there was work to be done if he wants to maintain his position at the head of the points chase.

"I have been so busy I haven't had any time to spend on the car," said Haird. "It is just as well we ran at Ipswich though: we found that we had a bent axle and there was a small issue with the brakes too."

"We had a spill at Ipswich last year, in the penultimate round before the break. We scrambled to put the car back together in time for the last meeting at Hednesford, which we won, but there was still something wrong with it. After running last weekend, we have realised that



Chris Haird

the axle was damaged."

With that rectified, Haird will go into the second half of the season with renewed vigour. He is the only two-time meeting final winner in the 2017/2018 contest, which will finish at Aldershot on June 10, but knows the job is only half done.

"I just need to make sure I finish all the rounds – consistency will be the key," says Haird, who has won the English points on five straight occasions.

He only missed out on a chance of battling for another success in 2016/2017 when illness struck just days before the Northampton showdown and rival Kym Weaver scooped the honours.

"When you look at the drivers who are behind me in the title chase, you can't really count any of them out," adds Haird. "Billy Wood is behind me and Carl Waller-Barrett. They will keep the pressure on, and you have guys like Shane Bland coming back out for Birmingham too. The threats are coming from all angles."

After the season finishes at Aldershot on June 10, the top 17 in the English points will join racers from around the globe in the World Final at Ipswich on July 7/8.

## STANDINGS

### National Hot Rods, England 2017/2018

P	DRIVER	CAR	PTS
1	Chris Haird	Vauxhall Tigra B	279
2	Billy Wood	Vauxhall Tigra	252
3	Carl Waller-Barrett	Vauxhall Tigra	232
4	Kym Weaver	Vauxhall Tigra	212
5	Billy Bonnar	Vauxhall Tigra	204
6	Stuart McLaird	Ginetta G40R	196

## ROUNDS SO FAR

### 1 Aldershot, July 23, 2017

1 Billy Wood (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Chris Crane (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Aaron Dew (Ginetta G40R).

### 2 Ipswich, August 28, 2017

1 Gavin Murray (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Stuart McLaird (Ginetta G40R); 3 Mikey Godfrey (Vauxhall Tigra B).

### 3 Birmingham Wheels, September 23, 2017

1 Jack Blood (Vauxhall Tigra B); 2 Kym Weaver (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Carl Waller-Barrett (Vauxhall Tigra).

### 4 Northampton, September 30, 2017

1 McLaird; 2 Blood; 3 Shane Bland (Vauxhall Tigra).

### 5 Hednesford, October 15, 2017

1 Chris Haird (Vauxhall Tigra B); 2 Waller-Barrett; 3 Wood.

### 6 Ipswich, October 21, 2017

1 Billy Bonnar (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Wood; 3 Murray.

### 7 Hednesford, November 5, 2017

1 Haird; 2 Jason Kew (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Bradley Dynes (Ginetta G40R).

## REMAINING ROUNDS

### National Hot Rods, England 2017/2018

R	VENUE	DATE
8	Birmingham	March 3
9	Hednesford	March 18
10	Northampton	March 30
11	Ipswich	April 2
12	Hednesford	May 7
13	Ipswich	May 28
14	Aldershot	June 10
	World Final Ipswich	July 7/8

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*MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters*

### MN SAYS...

## Working out what F1 testing means

There will be some headline-grabbing lap times, but wait for the fuller picture

**This is probably one of the most exciting weeks of the season so far: F1 is back, and it is back on track. All the runners were at Barcelona this week for four days of testing and there will be anticipation and disappointment in equal measure.**

All the teams have made bold claims and not all of them will live up to their proclamations. Now it will be a case of reading between the lines to see who has a hit and who has a miss on their hands. It is time to turn detective and, with the help of *Motorsport News*, we will be able to get to the bottom of who is likely to shine in the season ahead. Look out next week for our full analysis of the opening sessions.

Spain is clearly the go-to place for testing, as a bunch of British Touring Car Championship teams have decamped to the country too to bank some pre-season running, and you will be able to read all about that next week too. Circuit racing is, finally, waking up from its hibernation. The questions about the year ahead are being answered, albeit slowly. Expect things to accelerate as the new campaign approaches.

**Matt James, Editor** (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



### YOUR PICS



LETTERS@MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK

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



**ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S  
FAVOURITE OF  
THE WEEK!**

Rich Cranston unearthed this beautiful Mercedes testing at Donington Park recently



Goodwood prep, taken by Rich Cranston



Will Jones braved the weather on the Cambrian



MN Circuit Rally, taken by Sam Nudd



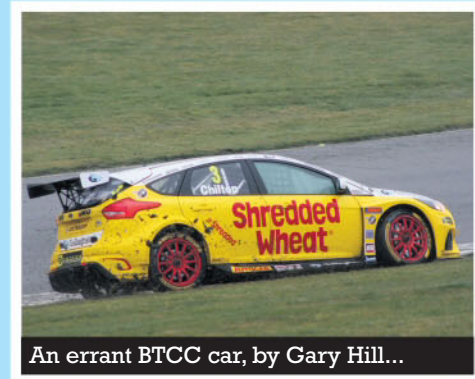
Jack McCarthy pushing, by Neil Kirby



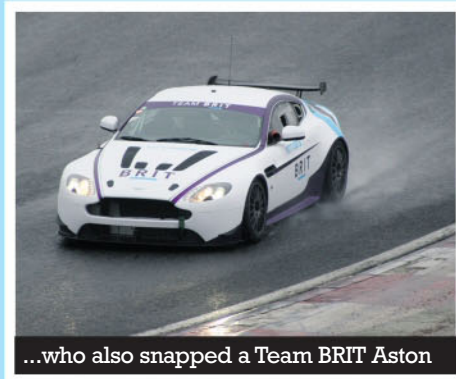
Josh Jones, aged, 16 was on the Cambrian



Gerallt Price's photo of Ollie Mellors



An errant BTCC car, by Gary Hill...



...who also snapped a Team BRIT Aston



Another from Sam Nudd at Snetterton



GT testing thunder, by Neil Kirby

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## TV GUIDE



The 1972 Le Mans 24 Hours is revisited this week

As you may have noticed, Formula 1 is back. But if all the hype surrounding the new car launches and the opening days of testing is too much for you, then why not put all that to one side and enjoy some brilliant archive sportscar footage?

Motorsport.tv's long-running **The Great History of the 24 Hours of Le Mans** series continues this week and the first instalment is dedicated to the 1972 edition of the race (Wednesday, 2200-2230hrs). That year marked the introduction of the Porsche

Curves so tune in to see who found the latest iteration of the track most to their liking.

There's more classic sportscar action this week too with a look back at the 1988 **World Sports Car Championship** (Tuesday, 1745-1900hrs, Motorsport.tv). The opening Jerez round of the season is featured and among the cars competing were the iconic Silk Cut-liveried Jaguar XJR-9s and the Sauber Mercedes C9.

However, if you prefer your endurance racing to be of the

more contemporary type, you are also catered for this week. There's a season review of the recent **Asian Le Mans Series** campaign so tune in to find out how Harrison Newey was able to claim the crown (Saturday, 1830-1930hrs, Motorsport.tv).

But if that's far too much sportscars for you, then why not catch up on some rallying highlights? Action from the **Irish Forest Rally Championship** opener, the William Loughman Memorial Rally, is also on this week (Thursday, 2100-2130hrs, BT Sport 2).

## LIVE TV

### Formula E: Mexico City

■ **Race:** Saturday, 2130-2320hrs, 5 Spike/2145-2310hrs, Eurosport 2

### NASCAR Cup: Las Vegas

■ **Race:** Sunday, 2000hrs, Premier Sports



Buemi seeks his first win of the FE season

## LIVE TV motorsport.tv



Australian Supercars to Adelaide

### Australian Supercars: Adelaide

■ **Race one:** Saturday, 0430-0700hrs  
 ■ **Race two:** Sunday, 0430-0700hrs

## LISTINGS

### RALLYING SATURDAY

■ **Cockermouth, Cumbria Malcolm Wilson Rally**  
 Starts 0700hrs Admission free  
 Web malcolmwilson.co.uk

### SUNDAY

■ **Donington Park, Leicestershire Imperial Commercials Donington Rally**  
 Starts 0920hrs Admission £13, teens 13-15 £9  
 Web doningtonrally.co.uk  
 ■ **County Limerick Limerick Forest Rally**  
 Starts 0920hrs Admission free  
 Web limerickmc.ie  
 ■ **Newtown, Powys Mid Wales Stages**  
 Starts 0901hrs Admission free  
 Web newtown-mc.co.uk

### SPORTING SCENE SATURDAY

■ **Birmingham National Hot Rods**  
 Starts 1830hrs Admission adults £16, children £7  
 Web spedeworth.co.uk

Details correct at time of press

## THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

# MOTORSPORT NEWS

Autosport Media UK Limited, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, TW9 1AG, UK

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## BOOK REVIEW GROSJEAN: CUISINE AND CONFIDENCES

Full, flustered, flecked with flour. All of the above apply to *Motorsport News*' culinary odyssey, testing out the dishes included in the recently released cookbook **Marion and Romain Grosjean – Cuisine and Confidences**, which is written by Grosjean's wife Marion, a journalist and TV presenter.

The roots of the Haas Formula 1 driver's passion for cooking are explained in the book's editorial introduction, as Marion recalls that he needed to lose weight during 2009 when going from GP2 to his first, short-lived, F1 stint.

The book is split into six sections: 'Welcome to Our Home', 'Children, it's Ready!', 'Between Us', 'The

Athlete's Diet', 'Friends Bistro', and 'Eminent Chef's Cuisine'. Each contains a selection of dishes, with the final chapter dedicated to recipes provided by Grosjean's chef friends. These are interspersed with images of Grosjean's F1 career, kitchen exploits and family life, and each recipe includes a short explanation of its background or importance to the couple.

To sample a range of the book's flavour, we picked five dishes. The chosen smorgasbord: "So British" pea soup', 'beef stroganoff', 'sole filets in papillote with truffle oil, cherry tomatoes and fennel', and 'salmon tartar and green asparagus' – plus 'macarons with raspberry'

for the office to enjoy. Overall, the results are good – which wasn't guaranteed. The pea soup – "one of the first recipes that Romain tried when we moved to England" – is a triumph. The salmon tartar, once we'd got past the trepidation and then amazement at fish essentially cooking without heat, is splendidly tender and rich. The stroganoff is also colourful and charming, but the beef doesn't pack much of a flavour punch.

There are some issues with **Cuisine and Confidences** that impacted on the experiment. The English translation is a touch off at times and some instructions are confusing. The macarons taste

delightful, but following the recipe exactly calls for the oven door to be left ajar; the heat is promptly blown out by the fan, leaving the end product unrisen and lumpy.

But overall these are minor complaints. The meal was thoroughly enjoyable and pleasantly different. That, in addition to the love between the Grosjeans and their family and friends that flows through the pages, is what makes **Cuisine and Confidences** stand out. There are few tales from the motorsport sphere, but the book is full of smaller stories about their lives that provide fantastic insight. It is decidedly different, and all the better for it.

**Alex Kalinauckas** Book offers range of recipes and tales



## NEXT WEEK

## OUT WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7

# WHAT WE LEARNED FROM F1 TEST

## A FULL LOOK AT WHERE ALL THE TEAMS STAND AFTER OPENING BARCELONA RUNS



## CAN BIRD CONTINUE FLYING START TO BTRDA?

REPORT OF MALCOLM WILSON RALLY



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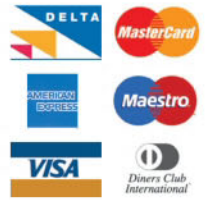


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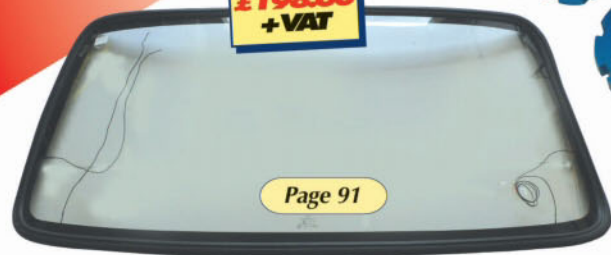
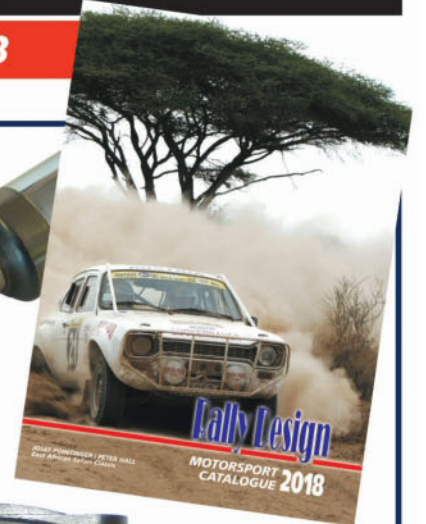
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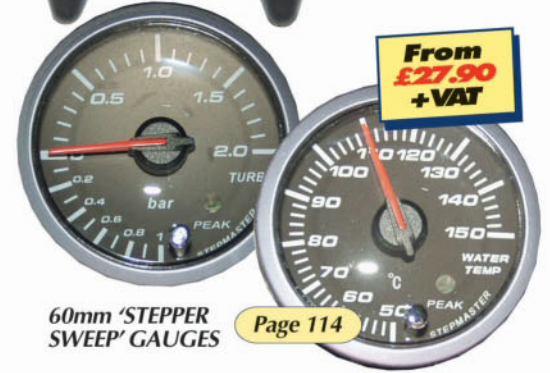
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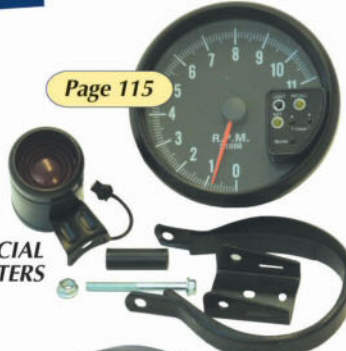
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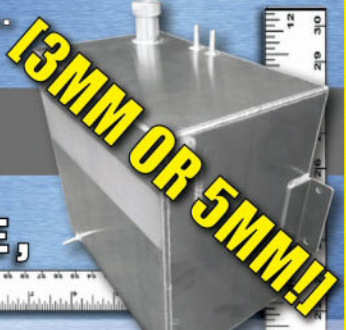
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