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Rethinking Formula 1 from the ground up

THE QUESTION POSED ON THE FRONT COVER OF THIS issue seems an absurd one for *Autosport* to ask. It's a sign of the severity of Formula 1's identity crisis that it is a question that lies at the heart of the problems consuming grand prix racing.

It's also a question that is more complex than you might think. You know what F1 is, right? And I'm sure you believe everyone else shares that opinion? Well, as ever, it's not that simple.

When the idea for this feature first came to mind, an ad-hoc request via Twitter for one-word definitions last month produced some interesting and very disparate answers. Many of those responses appear on our cover among the many possible key definitions, and many are in direct conflict with each other.

You want driver skill to matter more than anything? Great. But you want technology as well? There's a conflict there. And that kind of conflict is at the very heart of what F1 is struggling to understand about itself today.

Amid the scattergun rule changes and quick-fix solutions, what has been neglected by all those involved is a rigorous attempt to understand what F1 needs to be. This is no better encapsulated than by the absurd situation that engulfed qualifying in the early stages of this season.

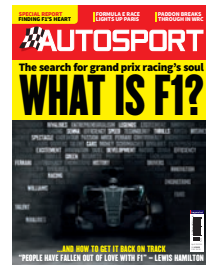
F1 has attempted to solve problems it has not fully understood. Only with that understanding can the right direction be found. It's time to go back to basics and rediscover those core values.



EDD STRAW EDITOR

edd.straw@haymarket.com

@eddstrawF1



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WHAT IS F1?

THE SEARCH FOR GRAND PRIX RACING'S SOUL

Formula 1 is battling an identity crisis that will only end if it faces the challenge of understanding the qualities that define it

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

 @BenAndersonAuto

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE RACING

This lies at the very core of what Formula 1 is all about, pitting 22 cars and drivers against each other on a circuit with a set start-and-finish point. For all the politics and “bullshit” (as Raikkonen puts it) in F1, ultimately it all comes down to this.

Most people describe F1 as the pinnacle of motorsport, but it's doubtful that it also represents the pinnacle of racing. In fact it wouldn't take long to come up with several forms of motorsport that produce closer and more exciting racing more regularly than F1 does.

“That's something Formula 1 needs to examine — to understand what is good racing,” Symonds tells *Autosport*. “To me, good racing is about two things: it's about spectacle and it's about not going to an event knowing who is going to win. It's about that sort of unpredictability and uncertainty. Spectacle is made by close racing.”

Safeguarding the racing is an area where the drivers feel that F1 is letting itself down. It was a theme of the recent letter the drivers' body (the GPDA) published on social media, and reigning world champion Lewis Hamilton has spoken at length on this.

He feels an F1 focused on tyre management and fuel efficiency undermines the wheel-to-wheel competition that makes motorsport so appealing in the first place, but equally wants to avoid the ‘gimmicks’ deployed in other forms of motor racing to mix up grids and promote closer competition.

“All us drivers are doing what we do because we love cars, we love racing, we love wheel-to-wheel,” says Hamilton. “I miss go-karting. It was some of the best racing I've ever had, and it's hard to have that today.

“We want to make racing better. It has to be physically draining; you have to be able to race all the way and not have to do all the fuel-economy stuff. People have fallen out of love with the sport and we don't want that, because it should be the greatest sport in the world.”

The concoction of ingredients that makes for good racing is not easily distilled. It depends on the technical make-up of the cars certainly, but also the conditions, the circuit layouts, the tyres, the format and the drivers.

“We are limited by tyre wear today, because the aerodynamics of the cars is very efficient,” says Wolff. “Pirelli could easily bolt a rock-solid tyre on, like we have at Le Mans, and the entire thing would last 90 minutes, no pitstops, the drivers would enjoy themselves and would be flat-out.

“The question is, is it about the drivers enjoying themselves and being flat-out, or do we want interesting strategies? The various tyre strategies and the tyres degrading have actually given some very interesting racing. It is not an easy task.”

F1 faces a dilemma over whether to focus on the quality of the racing at the cost of other elements. Should good racing be the aim and the audience the focus? Or should F1 concentrate on being an elite competition between teams and drivers and let the spectacle be merely a natural consequence?

“There are many football matches that end 0-0 and yet people have been blown away because they saw Lionel Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo,” argues Mercedes technical chief Paddy Lowe. “They accept not all matches are the most exciting ever. That's the nature of sport — you have good days and bad days.

“Like all premier sports, Formula 1 should be very wary of heading down the ‘rigged-for-a-show’ route. We're not here to create a show above providing a proper sporting contest, because people will switch off.”

But in that case the contest needs to be naturally exciting to watch. For F1 that means creating technical conditions that discourage dominance and promote overtaking.

“MotoGP is a good example of how a very, very good competition at the front between the two or three main guys can keep a series alive,” Wolff points out.

“In the last five years only two teams have won races, only four riders have won races, but the controversy and fight between Lorenzo, Marquez and Rossi is still able to generate a huge buzz.” >>



Two Mercedes cars circulating at the front is all too familiar

Morris & Parfitt Jnr lead!

The 2017 Sunoco Challenges are now in full swing with British GT3 hotshot Seb Morris leading the Sunoco Whelen Challenge and team mate Rick Parfitt Jnr topping the Sunoco 200 Challenge after a strong Brands weekend. However, they have 186 Sunoco Challengers all very eager to turn the table in their favour.

Follow the battle on www.sunocochallenge.com



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1	S Morris	British GT3	115.50
2	J Abbott	Radical Challenge	85.00
3	J Scheier	Radical Masters	80.67
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1	R Parfitt Jnr	British GT3	137.50
2	S Kelly	F3Cup C11	126.67
3	M Bladon	COOPER	120.00
4	S Burgess	Radical Challenge	120.00
5	N Freke	BRITISH GT4	115.50

Points correct as of 25.04.16

Next eligible races

Sunoco Whelen Challenge
British GT at Rockingham 30-1/5
Radical Euromasters at Spa 20-22/5

Sunoco 200 Challenge
British GT at Rockingham 30-1/5
Mini Challenge/GT Cup at Brands 6-8/5

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UNFORTUNATELY, AT THE MOMENT FORMULA 1 CARS ARE TOO DAMN GOOD

HOW IMPORTANT IS SPEED?

F1 is the fastest form of motor racing on the planet. A recent *Autosport* study calculated that it is currently between five and six per cent faster than the next fastest series (Japan's Super Formula) on a road course.

There is a clear desire to maintain this status. Suggestions that F1 was too close to GP2 pace when V6 hybrid-turbo engines were introduced in 2014 caused much alarm. The 2017 technical regulations focus on aggressive aerodynamics, aiming to make F1 cars several seconds per lap quicker.

The fact that Lewis Hamilton recently broke Michael Schumacher's 2004 circuit record in qualifying for the 2016 Bahrain Grand Prix (by more than six tenths of a second) suggests F1 cars are already super-quick. The problem is they are far slower in the races, limited by the tyres and the fact that they cannot refuel.

Drivers will always want to go faster, and they will always want more grip. Aerodynamics are established as the best way to achieve these aims. But the drivers are increasingly vocal about aggressive aerodynamics harming racing.

There is also the problem of the pure spectacle of the cars. They look easy to drive because they're far more technologically sophisticated than they used to be.

"Unfortunately, at the moment I think Formula 1 cars are too damn good," says Symonds. "While they are incredibly difficult to get the best out of, they don't look it."

"I do think it's difficult to say Formula 1 is the top echelon of motor racing if it isn't the fastest on any given circuit. But it doesn't have to be the best in every respect."

"An LMP1 car is faster on a straight than a Formula 1 car if the straight is long enough, but overall you've got to be able to say, 'Wow, that's the ultimate automotive performance.'"

F1 stands at an important crossroads in this regard. Should it pursue pure speed at all costs, continuing to push against the

heavy regulatory burden that so infuriates Adrian Newey? Or should it release the vice-like grip of laptime on the collective conscience and think more about the driving challenge posed by the cars, the racing they create, and the resulting spectacle?

"The cars have to be quicker than other similar formulas, particularly something like GP2, which races nearby," insists Lowe. "But equally they don't want to be too fast because it will become too difficult to overtake and you'll lose the spectacle."

"We could make bigger circuits, but then you're just moving the crowd away from the cars, which is already bad enough. We could do more, particularly on this aspect: the performance we have is dependent on aerodynamics, and aerodynamics causes difficulty to overtake compared to non-aerodynamic formulas."

"We've fought for years to find the right balance, and DRS was something which allowed us to escape from that compromise – albeit with something people think isn't pure. I'm OK with it, because it gets a better compromise between the car following and absolute performance, which you need aero for."

But F1 comes alive when those elements that make cars quicker are taken away: low-grip surfaces, mixed conditions, tricky tyre compounds, imperfect set-ups.

Why rely on circumstance? If the sheer spectacle of drivers behind the wheel of F1 cars became wilder, more visceral, more thrilling – perhaps by increasing power massively and reducing grip correspondingly – would speed, or rather laptime, actually matter all that much?

"A very good example is MotoGP," argues Pirelli motorsport boss Paul Hembery. "Compared to a Formula 1 car those bikes are almost 30 seconds slower per lap, but I don't hear anyone saying MotoGP is boring."

"A lot of people like MotoGP, despite not liking motorcycles, because the racing is compelling, and it's interesting because there is overtaking and the element of the man is clear to see."

"The absolute speed is not the deciding factor. It's substantially slower, yet I think most people's perception is that it's the most exciting form of motorsport." >>

Alonso demos a 1951 Ferrari that allows fans to see drivers at work behind the wheel

FORMULA 1'S BATTLE WITH TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM

F1 is unique in its relationship with technology among major sports. While it's a competition between drivers on the circuit, it is also a race between large teams of engineers, using highly specialised equipment.

"One of the things that sets it apart is that it's a constructors' formula and there are not that many of them," argues Symonds. "In professional motorsport I think Formula 1 is really the only single-seater formula that has that technical content, and personally I think that's quite important.

"Most weekends there's a GP2 race. GP2 can be pretty good racing, but F1 is widely reported, widely watched. GP2 doesn't reach one per cent of the audience of F1. They have to look at that and say, 'Here are two events happening on the same track on the same day, we really ought to understand the differences,' and one of the differences is that GP2 is a spec formula."

For Haas, the deep technological aspect is a unique selling point for F1. "The technology is always changing, which I think makes it very, very interesting," he says.

"It separates racing from other sports, where you've just got humans against humans. Formula 1 that is just driver against driver would not be Formula 1."

But this technological dependence is both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand it makes F1 stand out, offering the chance to be seen as a sport that is cutting-edge, pushing the boundaries, striving to go ever faster in ever more ingenious ways. A space race on Earth in many respects.

On the flipside, the technological aspect is at the root of many of F1's perceived problems. It creates a ludicrously expensive arms race in chassis and engine development, nullifying the impression that the drivers are greatly skilled, and reducing the likelihood of close competition because of the complexity of the cars, combined with a fundamental architecture that makes wheel-to-wheel racing more difficult.

There is also the difficulty of differentiating between the drivers. It's hard to know who the best athletes are, because of the heavy influence of the technology.

There is a serious case to be made for rebalancing this, simplifying F1 to promote the driving and racing aspects above the rest in order to make it a more appealing spectacle. And it is argued from an unlikely source.

"We need a much more precise definition of what Formula 1 is or should be in the next few years, thinking in particular to balance entertainment versus technological showcase," says Renault F1 managing director Cyril Abiteboul. "Because those two things, we try to make them match together, but actually they clash more than they are compatible.

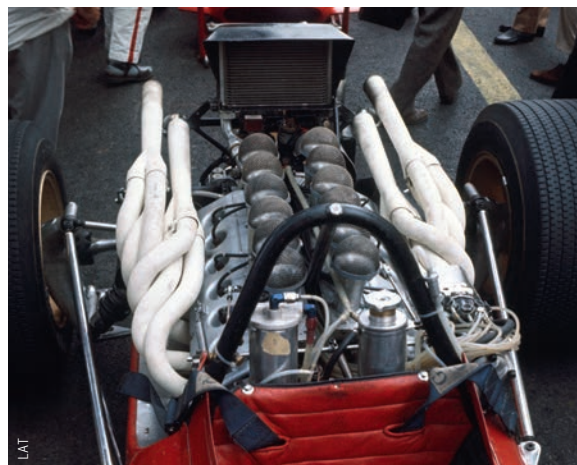
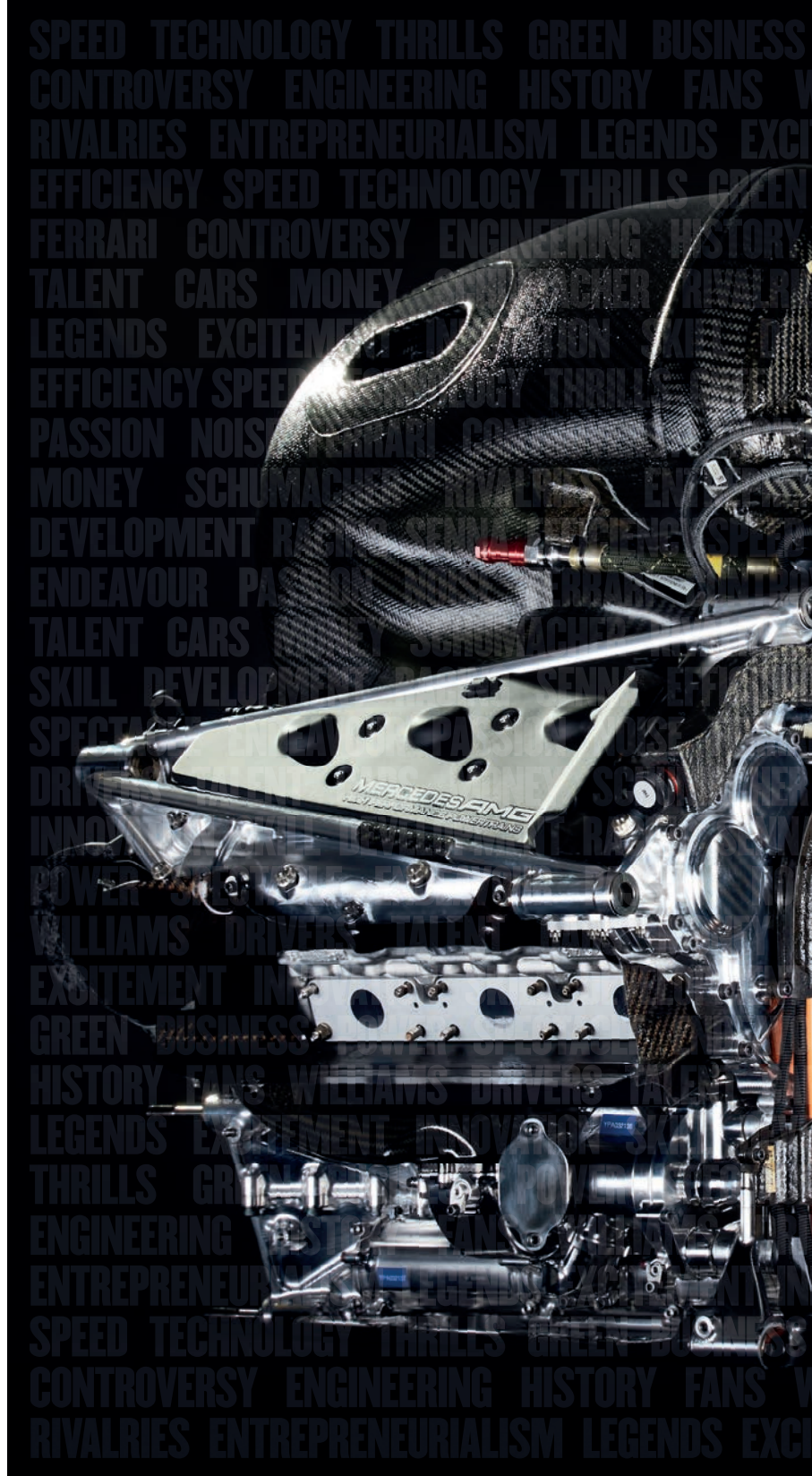
"You don't need to spend a fortune to have speed. It's a combination of the constraints plus the necessity to have quick cars that makes this world so extremely expensive. But you could very well have a very, very fast car – much faster than what we have – for just a fraction of the price.

"It's a no-brainer. You just call Bruno Michel from GP2 and he will put together in five minutes a formula that is much faster, much more fun to watch than Formula 1. But you will lose the technology showcase, and that will be an issue for most of the people who finance Formula 1.

"There is one model that is all about entertainment – standout cars, very fast, the best drivers. And on the other extreme you've got something that's completely free from the technology standpoint, extremely expensive. And frankly Sauber, or Force India, or even Williams, will never be able to be there.

"Right now Formula 1 is sitting between those two extremes. We want entertainment, we want all the teams to be capable of being here; but unfortunately, given the regulations, not all the teams are capable of being competitive.

"We need to decide – are we here for the entertainment? Or are we here purely for the technology? It is not possible anymore to think you can make the two completely compatible." >>



Above: is F1 about the cutting-edge 2.4-litre V6-hybrid turbos?

Left: or should it be about wailing V12 powerplants...

Right: ...and manual gearchanges to give the drivers control?

WHAT SHOULD F1 BE?

As the pinnacle of single-seater racing, Formula 1 naturally wants to be the foremost of everything this represents – drivers, racing, technology, speed, business and entertainment. But it seems that F1 cannot be the pinnacle of all things at once.

So F1 needs to decide what it wants to be. Is it about the greatest drivers and making them into heroic figures for the public, or are they merely servants of the teams?

Is it about great racing and daredevil antics in wild machines, or is it a technological arms race between car constructors and engine manufacturers within an ever-tightening regulatory framework?

Should F1's technology be the primary focus, or should it be subservient to the spectacle?

The technological battleground provides a serious element of pure sporting competition between constructors and engine builders – a constant theme throughout F1's history. But should this competition be better framed so that it's easier, and more likely to be hotly contested?

What should F1 cars be? Should they be speed machines capable of extraordinary lap times, or wild, untameable beasts – extreme and nearly impossible to drive consistently?

This cuts to the core of what many perceive as the essence of F1: drivers trying to defy the laws of physics and being pushed to the limits of their skill while battling each other to prove they are the best in the world.

But within this dynamic it seems they can either be astronauts on earth, driving high-speed, high-grip, 'perfect' rockets in pursuit of ever-quicker lap times, or extreme sportsmen, doing battle in raw, imperfect, challenging racing cars.

"F1 is not an extreme sport," says Hembery. "That's what's missing from its DNA."

You could argue both these versions are 'extreme' in their own way, but F1 has to decide the path it wants to take.

At the moment it is caught between those two identities, trying to balance them out with degrading tyres and drag-reduction systems, as well as special exhausts to recapture the raw emotional appeal of engine noise.

Here is the heart of F1's real angst. Does it want to be a global entertainment business, focused on the fans that enjoy its show? Or does it want to be a niche technological battle for manufacturers, with public interest confined to the margins? Or does it want to continue trying to be both at the same time?

"You need to differentiate between what is really happening and how it is being perceived by the public," says Wolff.

"Formula 1 was always a competition between engineers. The priority will always be the competition between drivers, but they compete in the most sophisticated cars.

"We need to be careful how we balance engineering and innovation against simple entertainment. The audiences need to be entertained. If the sport is boring, but we have the highest sophistication in our cars, it doesn't serve anybody.

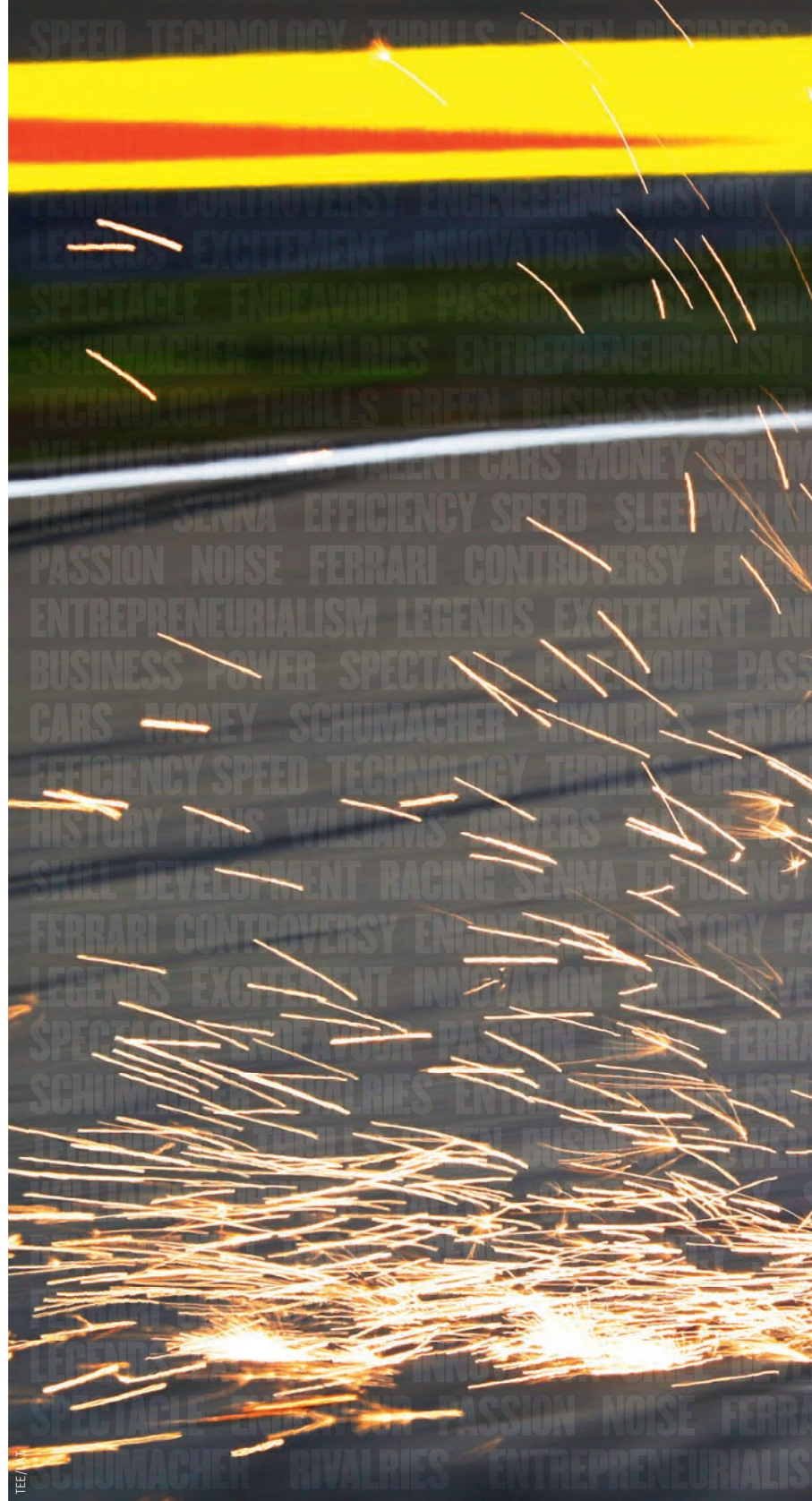
"Equally we don't want to oversimplify the car, because it wouldn't be Formula 1 anymore – it would be reduced to what GP2 is. Getting that balance right is not easy, but we shouldn't try to streamline everything.

"For the future, the tyre supplier, the FIA, the commercial-rights holder, the teams and the drivers need to pull more on the same side in order to design a spec-sheet of what the racing should look like, and then support each other in coming up with the best solution.

"I think we are not far off. We have seen some very exciting races this year, and in my opinion it doesn't need surgery – a strong pill is enough."

Formula 1 faces a fundamental battle to reach this consensus, between those who believe the competing elements that make it what it is can be balanced against each other, and those who feel a rapidly changing media and automotive landscape means hard choices must be made and certain cherished totems ditched.

F1 needs to work harder to find clarity over these key





**WE ARE NOT FAR OFF.
IT DOESN'T NEED SURGERY —
A STRONG PILL IS ENOUGH**

F1 needs to feel like an extreme sport, like skateboard or snowmobile racing



contradictions, and decide a firm direction to take. It should then be possible to devise a mission statement based on this clarity — to frame what F1 is and what it should become.

It is impossible to have a proper strategy if you don't know what you're trying to achieve and why you're trying to achieve it.

“That’s a leadership issue,” says Neale. “The relationship between the commercial-rights holder and the sport’s regulator — the FIA — is really important. They have to have a shared sense of true north.”

This is another of F1’s key battlegrounds: proper leadership to determine whether it must take bold steps to confront this challenging new world, or stay its present course, fiddling at the margins and broadly maintaining the status quo.

Either way F1 must decide what it is, and what it wants to be. F1 is a living contradiction, and there are no easy solutions, but that is no excuse for sleepwalking into the future. ❧



How Formula E made

THE DEFINING IMAGES OF THE FIRST PARIS ePrix came from the entry to the final corner. From that vantage point, the shots of the cars flashing through into the right-hander featured the Eiffel Tower in the background.

Racing around Les Invalides in the heart of Paris was never Formula E's original plan, but that is the feat it accomplished last Saturday.

Conversations over a Parisian round of the all-electric single-seater championship began with the city's previous mayor, Bertrand Delanoë, but his term ended in April 2014. The office of his successor, Anne Hidalgo, pushed for the race in the city centre – Formula E's first pitch had been to have it on the outskirts.

"We wouldn't have dared to present that," series sporting manager Benoit Dupont says of the eventual location for the race. "The mayor said it was within the project for promotion of electro-mobility and here is where we want you to do it. We were amazed by this."

Political support is a must for a street race and in Paris there was cohesion the championship hasn't really enjoyed elsewhere.

"Point number one is to have local political support to make things happen," says Dupont.

"Honestly it was something we were lacking in Miami and it was one of the reasons we didn't go back. When everyone is pushing in the right direction, everything is way easier.

"The mayor of Paris and the mayor of the area are not on the same political side but they agreed it's good for the city and the district."

Compare that with the warring parties that make up Wandsworth Council and which mean that the future of London's Formula E race, in Battersea Park, has been up for debate since the end of last June's season closer.

FE leant heavily on FIA president Jean Todt and four-time Formula 1 world champion and Renault e.dams senior manager Alain Prost to give the project as much credibility as possible. When the city authority came on board, that gave it the momentum it needed.

Without such significant backing (FE also needed approval from the district authority and the military body that looks after Les Invalides) the event would not have been possible.

Hildago "was really positive from the beginning, but of course it was a long process," says Formula E CEO Alejandro Agag. "Then someone in her team said if we do it in Paris



FORMULAE

RENAULT FIRST TO TRY YEAR-THREE CAR

THE RENAULT E.DAMS team has become the first Formula E squad to test its season-three powertrain on track.

Teams manufacturing their own powertrains have 15 test days before official pre-season testing begins in August.

Renault e.dams senior manager Jean-Paul Driot confirmed that the team had completed a brace of three-day runs.

That puts Renault ahead of its current rivals, while the incoming Jaguar squad is understood to be close to kicking off its programme.

Seven of the current teams confirmed to Autosport that they had not yet started testing.

Most expect to do so within the next month, although Dragon Racing – which is developing a powertrain for the first time – and Abt Audi Sport are not concerned by the prospect of having to wait until after the June 1 homologation deadline.

Teams are not required to test before that deadline, but it does mean that should they encounter problems in their first tests they would not be able to alter their motor, gearbox and inverter designs.

Venturi's powertrain will not have a four-speed gearbox like the current VM200-FE-01, while Mahindra has confirmed that it is switching from McLaren to Magneti Marelli for its M3ELECTRO motor supply.

NEXTEV TCR has confirmed it will retain a twin-motor set-up.

SCOTT MITCHELL

a Paris street race a reality

let's do it in the heart. We have to show the beauty of Paris, why are we going to do it far away? That was the defining moment."

That made things much easier for FE's local promoter, headed up by Eric Barbaroux (who was a key part of FE's formation before focusing solely on the Paris event) and Pierre Gosselin, to take charge of organising the event. In terms of the on-the-ground work, the seven-day turnaround of the race's infrastructure building up to the event is the fastest the series has managed so far.

But it would not have even been at the negotiation table if it were not an electric series.

"We were able to justify it because the message is fundamentally different," Todt said in the build-up to the event about how the Formula E race was possible, but a Formula 1 grand prix was turned down when he was part of a delegation trying to make it happen three decades ago.

FE's EV niche has enabled it to pull off a succession of minor miracles – people forget that getting the series off the ground in the first

place was a major achievement. There are 40-odd cars shipped to every race, the technology is new, every race is a street track, and almost all the venues are built from scratch.

The radical nature of FE took it to the brink financially a year ago but now, Agag insists, things have stabilised on that side. It has established itself as a serious championship, one of the toughest in the world from a driver's perspective, and its season-three calendar could feature races in London, Paris, Berlin, New York and Hong Kong to name a few.

Nothing else, not even F1, can make that happen.

FE's latest event was not just another street race. It's right to view it as a springboard to even greater things. Hopefully the nature of the achievement, and the images the event generated, give sceptics of the series and the place EVs have in motorsport something to think about too.

If nothing else, what FE has pulled off should get the recognition it deserves.

SCOTT MITCHELL

“Racing in the heart of Paris was never the original plan”

MAZEPIN ESCAPES WITH ONE-RACE BAN FOR PUNCHES

WHEN THE STEWARDS, including five-time Le Mans 24 Hours winner Emanuele Pirro, handed down a one-race ban to Nikita Mazepin for punching Callum Ilott at last weekend's Formula 3 European Championship round in Hungary, the paddock reaction was disbelief that the Russian had been let off so lightly.

The Mazepin case, which happened after free practice on Friday, was the first two of unsavoury incidents – both coming under the umbrella of 'unsporting behaviour' – in Hungary. Two days later, Red Bull junior Niko Kari drove into Pedro Piquet after the finish of race three in retribution for an incident between the two earlier in the race. The Finn's punishment is a pitlane start in the opening race of the next round at Pau.

Force India Formula 1 development driver Mazepin was angered that Ilott had hampered a run on new tyres. He remonstrated with Ilott, before striking him twice. Ilott sustained cuts to his cheek and neck, a swollen jaw and a black eye.

"Nikita is a young man who had a lot of adrenalin at that point, and he did something that he deeply regrets," said Oliver Oakes, director of Mazepin's Hitech GP team.

"I don't know what they said in the heat of the moment, but obviously it [Mazepin's reaction] is unacceptable and he needs to learn from it."

Ilott's team boss, Frits van Amersfoort, described the single-race ban as "a ridiculous decision. Callum was attacked in the face – twice! The first action might be emotional, but then they were separated and he was attacked again."

While there was some feeling that boys will be boys – Mazepin is 17, Kari is 16 – and that emotions run high at that age, the consensus was that such behaviour is unacceptable and that the FIA is treading a dangerous line in its leniency.

It would be easy for outsiders to conclude that behaviour is being allowed to spiral out of control. Insiders pointed out the incongruity of Anthoine Hubert having a greater punishment – three 10-place grid penalties – than either Mazepin or Kari for the crime of an engine change due to low oil pressure.

The F3 drivers were given a media-training course between Wednesday's test day and the start of the Hungaroring meeting on Friday. Perhaps they also need an anger-management course.

MARCUS SIMMONS



Mazepin (right) is reckoned to have been let off lightly

Vinales faces 2017 decision

The in-demand Suzuki ace has the chance to take up the seat vacated by Jorge Lorenzo at Yamaha

W

HILE HE CONSIDERS A "REALLY DIFFICULT" decision about his future – between staying with Suzuki or replacing Jorge Lorenzo at Yamaha – Maverick Vinales holds the key to the MotoGP silly season.

Even before three-time champion Lorenzo confirmed his move to Ducati earlier this month, Vinales had emerged as the frontrunner to join Valentino Rossi.

When asked whether he wanted to make a call before the next round at Le Mans on May 6-8, Vinales said: "Really, I want to clear it up fast."

"Lorenzo made his decision, now I think it's important to [make my decision] and concentrate on racing. I trust Suzuki and I trust that they can still give me the results. At the moment I need to be sure. Taking one step that will secure my future,

I need to take the best option I can for me.

"I consider a lot the opinions of my closest people, but at the end I always follow what my head says."

A move to Yamaha would put Vinales on a proven race and title-winning bike, but the 21-year-old is believed to feel a sense of loyalty to Suzuki, which made major inroads during the winter.

"That you can have these two options is something that I dreamed about when I was a kid," he said.

"Suzuki is a really nice dream, but we need to get the results. If you don't get the results, it's a mistake. Yamaha makes a lot of sense, because being alongside Valentino can be really important for my career, and to get on a bike that is already there on the top."

Yamaha team boss Lin Jarvis confirmed that Vinales is one of several riders in contention to replace Lorenzo.

"We have expressed our interest, and there's an ongoing discussion," he said. "Certainly Maverick has proven that he's one of the new, future talents of MotoGP. He has a very good chance to go on to be world champion. So he's an attractive rider. There are other options as well."

While Jarvis says Yamaha has no deadline for finalising its line-up, Ducati has indicated it is planning to make a decision on the identity of Lorenzo's new team-mate by early June. Incumbents Andrea Dovizioso and Andrea Iannone have sounded out other options within the paddock, but it appears one will be retained rather than both leaving.

"We spoke to them when we made the decision," sporting director Paolo Ciabatti said. "It will be important to keep one of the two current riders because of continuity. Don't forget that both have been with Ducati in MotoGP since 2013 – Iannone two years with Pramac and Dovizioso since 2013 on the factory team."

MITCHELL ADAM



IN THE HEADLINES



VANDOORNE THIRD ON JAPANESE DEBUT

McLaren junior Stoffel Vandoorne (above right) finished third on his Super Formula debut at Suzuka last weekend (see report, page 45).

ECCLESTONE BACKS WOLFF INITIATIVE

Bernie Ecclestone has vowed to support Susie Wolff's 'Dare To Be Different' programme in order to get a female driver into Formula 1. "I've offered more help than many others have done for women in F1," he said.

PIRELLI TYRE-TEST PLAN APPROVED

A proposal to allow Pirelli more track time to develop its 2017 tyres this year has been approved by the Formula 1 Commission.

AUDI WON'T APPEAL WEC WIN EXCLUSION

Audi has chosen not to appeal its exclusion from victory in the opening World Endurance Championship round at Silverstone two weeks ago. It accepted that there was excess wear on the skid-block of the Audi R18 e-tron quattro driven by Benoit Treluyer, Marcel Fassler and Andre Lotterer.

SERVIA SECURES INDIANAPOLIS 500 RIDE

IndyCar veteran Oriol Servia has been named as Schmidt Peterson's final entry for this year's Indianapolis 500. Servia joins SPM's full-season drivers James Hinchcliffe and Mikhail Aleshin in the line-up for Indy.

MOSCOW FORMULA E ROUND IN DOUBT

Formula E's penultimate race of the season in Moscow could be cancelled. The championship has written permission from Russian president Vladimir Putin and the security services of the Kremlin, which the circuit would be adjacent to, but the city authority is yet to confirm it will close the streets to traffic for the proposed June 4 race. An answer is needed by mid-May.

TUNJO TOPS BARCELONA GP3 TEST

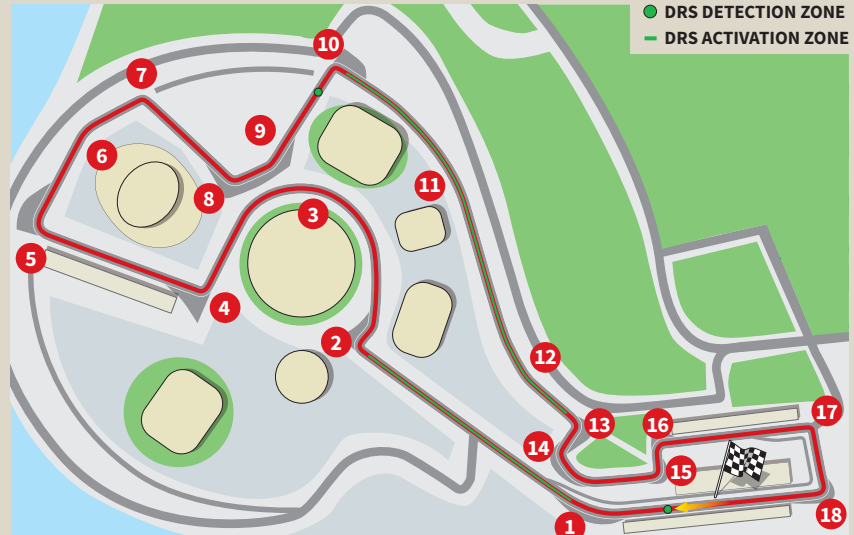
Jenzer Motorsport driver Oscar Tunjo (below) ended GP3 pre-season testing at the top of the timesheets after setting the fastest time in two days of running at Barcelona. His best time put him almost three tenths ahead of Trident's Antonio Fuoco. Charles Leclerc topped two of the four sessions, with Kevin Jorg fastest in one.



F1 PREVIEW

Russian Grand Prix

April 29-May 1



SOCHI AUTODROM

LENGTH 3.634 miles NUMBER OF LAPS 53

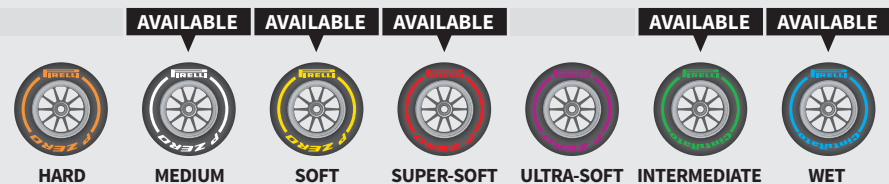
2015 POLE POSITION Nico Rosberg 1m37.113s

QUALIFYING LAP RECORD Nico Rosberg 1m37.113s (2015)

RACE LAP RECORD Sebastian Vettel 1m40.071s (2015)



Slick tyre allocation



UK start times

LIVE ON SKY SPORTS F1

FRIDAY

FP1 0800 FP2 1200

SATURDAY

FP3 1000 QUALIFYING 1300

SUNDAY

RACE 1300

Previous winners

2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
1914	Willy Scholl	Benz
1913	Georgy Suvorin	Benz

HIGHLIGHTS ON CHANNEL 4

QUALIFYING SATURDAY 1730 RACE SUNDAY 1800

Themes to watch

ROSBERG'S RUN

Nico Rosberg has won six successive races, stretching back to last year's Mexican GP. But how will he respond when Lewis Hamilton has a clean weekend?

RISE OF RED BULL

Red Bull has been the surprise package, with its performance in China suggesting it will be a thorn in the side of Ferrari and Mercedes. Will that continue?

HAAS'S RESPONSE

Haas was brought back down to earth with a bang in China as it failed to score points for the first time. It needs to prove that Shanghai was just a one-off.

FEEDBACK

Reversed grids will devalue our sport

I always like reading Gary Anderson's pieces, as they are very well written, thought out and articulate. I often agree with him but sometimes I don't, and I have to take issue with his article about reversed grids (autosport.com).

He mentions how purists will disagree, so I won't disappoint! Whenever people start talking about improving the F1 'show', you know you should be worried. Why are reversed grids a bad idea? Because it is fake. It is meddling with the competitive order and thereby devaluing any sport you get from it.

For all its sins F1 must remain a sport. Putting faster cars at the back of the grid is just fiddling the result and would take it further away from a sporting spectacle.

The majority of football matches can be dull. The majority of cricket matches can be dull. Watching scrum after scrum collapse in rugby is dull! But what you watch and wait for are the moments of pure unexpected sporting magic. That's what excites, and you can't manufacture that.



Grands prix need to be allowed to sometimes be dull so that when you get the exciting ones it is all the more special because it is genuine.

Simon Dimbylow
Bath

Team opens door to BTCC fans

I'd like to share with fellow readers a wonderful experience I had at Donington's BTCC meeting. As a long-time BTCC fan and spectator I came across driver Mark Howard's 'Silver Fox Racing Club' offering fans the opportunity to join Team BKR for the day as a special guest, usually the preserve of commercial sponsors.

I arrived at Donington to a warm welcome before being ushered into the team garage and given a personal tour of the car and garage by Mark himself.

I was also lucky enough to sit in the car, walk on the grid before all three races and listen to the team's radio channels. The day was a fantastic experience and gave a terrific insight

Welcome to the winners' circle. Flying Kiwi Hayden Paddon on his way to victory in Argentina

into the workings of a BTCC team.
Steve Martin
Chester

Pat on the back for Paddon

Fantastic to see Hayden Paddon taking his maiden World Rally Championship win in Argentina, particularly as he beat the ever-moaning Ogier – he really needs to shut up and take a leaf out of Loeb's book, who just accepted the rules with a Gallic shrug, got on with the driving and beat everyone anyway!

Paddon really is a huge force to be reckoned with and it's great to see someone coming through the ranks and bringing some fresh blood (and in a different car) to the top of the leaderboard. Long may it continue!

Andy Maclean
Churchill, Oxon

Don't dilute IMSA's great racing

So the ACO, which runs the Le Mans 24 Hours, has mandated essentially spec cars in LMP2 for next year.

There were seven manufacturers in the prototype ranks at Sebring (albeit some just as engine suppliers). Why would manufacturers be so willing to contest the IMSA races in the US, and yet unwilling to compete in Europe?

What can the ACO and the FIA learn from IMSA's approach? I hope the ACO's mandate does not dilute the great racing in the IMSA series.

Bruce Merchant
Carmel, California

HAVE YOUR SAY, GET IN TOUCH

Autosport editorial
Bridge House
69 London Road
Twickenham
TW1 3SP

@
E-mail
autosport@
haymarket.com

Twitter
twitter.com/
autosport

Facebook
facebook.com/
autosport



Mind's the gap

Mental strength so often separates the great from the good, and this year's F1 grid has several examples where it will play a crucial role

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

[@BenAndersonAuto](#)

FOR ALL THE INTRICATE AERODYNAMICS, complicated engine technology and phenomenal science that powers Formula 1 machines, the driver – the loosest nut on the car, as some would say – still arguably has the biggest say in whether a team wins or not.

“People often ask me what’s the ratio between driver and car, and I always say 50 per cent,” says Mercedes technical chief Paddy Lowe. “We all agree you can’t win a championship without a decent car, and you can’t win a championship without a decent driver.”

Even one of F1’s most prominent technical directors admits there’s no component more important on his prototype racing car than the flesh-and-blood that sits in the middle.

That means the science of human performance, which has grown massively in all sports in recent years, has a huge part to play in F1. If you can work out a regimented way to ensure your athlete performs at their best consistently, you stand a much better chance of success. The obvious focus is physiological – essentially diet and fitness. But this also encompasses the more mystical arts of mind management and psychology.

The brain is a key regulator of your body’s performance, so getting the best out of it should pay dividends. But here the science is inexact, encompassing intangibles such as emotion, personality and attitude, which can’t be easily measured. It’s here, in the dark reaches of the mind, where one of the big differentiators in elite sports lies. And so it is too in F1.

At the front of the grid a certain elite level of driving skill and physical prowess is taken for granted. What often sets drivers apart is their mental make-up – the capacity to make the most of chances when they come along, and rebound quickly when things go wrong.

In this regard there are several fascinating dynamics emerging on this year’s grid already. At the front, how will Lewis Hamilton react to the sequence of disappointments he’s suffered over the first three grands prix of 2016?

Mental fortitude has not traditionally been one of Hamilton’s strengths. He’s always been a force of nature when all is right in his world, but those who recall the unravelling of his 2011 campaign at McLaren know how easily that delicate mental balance can be upset by turbulence outside the car.

But the Hamilton of today looks utterly unflustered. Age, increasing maturity and the inner confidence bred by his recent championship successes probably means he is better able to see

the bigger picture, take setbacks in his stride and prevent any of those nasty ‘dark clouds’ hanging over him.

Conversely, will Nico Rosberg’s six-race winning streak imbue him with enough inner confidence to remain on top when Hamilton finally enjoys a clean race?

Rosberg has been excellent so far this year, but when he refutes suggestions that history is now on his side (given no driver who’s won the first three races of an F1 season has failed to claim the crown) by saying, “They didn’t have Lewis Hamilton as their team-mate”, you get the sense there’s still a nagging doubt that he may end up second best again. How he overcomes that potential inferiority complex will be key.

As far as group mentality goes, can Ferrari deal with the collective pressure Maranello is under to beat Mercedes?

Everything flowed so nicely last year, as Ferrari recovered from a difficult 2014, but the team enjoyed the mental freedom of knowing things couldn’t really get worse. But now the pressure is on, and suddenly mistakes are coming: engine unreliability, bad strategy in Melbourne, a poor start by Kimi

Raikkonen in Bahrain, misjudgements in qualifying and the first corner by both drivers in China. How do you stay calm and not force it?

This is something Valtteri Bottas seems to be grappling with too. He has struggled a bit in wheel-to-wheel battle

recently, particularly on the first laps of races. Is he just unlucky? Or is he making poor decisions when the pressure is on? Is there a pattern? If so, how does he turn it around?

Perhaps he should give Romain Grosjean’s psychologist a call. Grosjean happily admits he needed professional help to turn things around after a pattern of first-lap problems in 2012.

Then there’s the mystery of Felipe Nasr. He’s complaining of a problem with his Sauber C35, but the team is unable to trace it. Meanwhile his team-mate is doing just fine.

Nasr may get a new chassis this weekend, in an effort to finally draw a line under the saga. But if he still struggles, he will have no other place to look than the mirror.

Renault rookie Jolyon Palmer faces a similar challenge, having suffered a “catastrophic” drop in pace since his accomplished debut in Melbourne. Is it the car? Is it the driver? Is it both? He will need clarity to escape the grip of the negative spiral. But it only takes one good race to restore confidence. That will be the comfort to all those with a point to prove.

F1 is a technical sport like no other, but brilliantly augmented by the battleground of the mind. ✨

“He’s been excellent, but you sense Rosberg has a nagging doubt”

Rossi makes a welcome return to winning form

Valentino Rossi has rediscovered his mojo in the twilight years of his career – and it's fantastic news for MotoGP

By Mitchell Adam, International Editor

🐦 @DrMitchellAdam







You know that saying about dogs of a certain age and unfamiliar tricks? Sport is probably the arena where this is most applicable to humans. Each activity has generally accepted age ranges in which athletes are considered to be on the rise, at their peak or on the way towards retirement.

Obviously, they all differ from sport to sport and even discipline to discipline within that sport, based on a myriad of criteria. For instance, the average age of the last three 100-metre sprinting Olympic gold medallists is 22 for men and 23 for women. In another form of running event, the marathon, the age is 25 for men and 29 for women.

Motorsport is obviously very different to sprint and endurance running, but it does share the notion of 'best-before dates' being attached to a competitor. An undefined 'edge' is lost, reflexes slow, bodies change, fitness and motivation become harder to maintain, and younger

rivals emerge as time passes. In short, few sports are considered the domain of older competitors.

So when Valentino Rossi missed out on the 2015 MotoGP title at the final hurdle by a handful of points, there was an understandable sentiment that perhaps an eighth premier-class crown – a perfect 10 including the junior classes – could evade him.

Rossi was, after all, set to turn 37 before 2016's first race. Yamaha teammate Jorge Lorenzo is at the peak of his powers. There is still improvement in Marc Marquez, already a two-time champion. Last year's campaign was seen as a superhuman effort by Rossi, but could it be repeated, especially given all of MotoGP's off-season change?

The mercurial Italian himself admitted at the start of the year that it would be difficult to maintain the performance levels he found in 2014 and '15, going so far as to say it would require a "great effort, a special effort" to do so.

"This is the target because in the last two years, especially 2015, I was competitive more or less everywhere," he said at the time. "So this is the target,

Rossi leads away from his first MotoGP pole position of 2016

and after, what happens, the championship, if I will be able to fight for the win, we don't know."

Even if Rossi stayed at that level, the next question was whether it would be good enough to beat Lorenzo and Marquez in a straight fight, without the presence of any outside circumstances. Of his 2015 wins, both rivals had troubles in one, Rossi and Marquez clashed in two, and the other was a wet-dry race.

Could he, simply, find that little bit extra in a couple of key areas to close the gap and make it a three-way fight more often than not?

Rossi identified three key areas: starting weekends better, improving his qualifying form, and not losing as much time at the start of races. These are all largely related, in a way, to getting more out of his Yamaha earlier, when he exits the pitlane.

But you know what? Rossi has done it. His practice form has been more consistent so far this year, and he has qualified an average of 0.470 seconds closer to pole at each race, resulting in an improved average grid position 3.5 spots – an entire row – higher. His latest trick



is accepting that fairing winglets are beneficial and using them, even though he maintains his (correct) reservations about their aesthetics.

Sure, he blotted his copybook with a crash at Austin (Lorenzo did the same seven days earlier in Argentina), but there were signs during the three flyaway races that the 2016 version of Rossi wasn't going to be a bit-player. While he still feels burned by the way last year finished, he was buoyed by Yamaha wanting him to stay on for another two years. It offered him a new contract before the season had even started, when he was content to wait until June to see if he wanted to and was quick enough to stick around.

And then came Jerez, the first European round of the season. Rossi was in the ballpark from the start of Friday's first two practice sessions, and later said he was feeling that he could find the balance on his M1 earlier in grand prix weekends this year.

Rossi topped his first session of the season on Saturday morning, then rolled back the years with a stunning pole lap. Half a second behind Lorenzo as the >>

TYRE TROUBLES BLIGHT DUCATI

HAVING SHOWN POTENTIALLY RACE-WINNING pace in Qatar, and fought for podiums in the Americas, Ducati suffered a setback as MotoGP returned to Europe. Its bikes were the hardest hit by the combination of the ageing surface at Jerez, one of the lower-grip venues on the calendar, and Michelin's stiffer-construction rear tyres.

Following a puncture on Loris Baz's Avintia Ducati during the Sepang pre-season test and an issue for Pramac Ducati's Scott Redding during practice in Argentina, Michelin brought a fresh batch of rear rubber to Austin, offering a stiffer construction but offset with a slightly softer compound.

While it was adopted without a problem at the Circuit of the Americas, a severe lack of rear grip defined the Jerez weekend. Riders throughout the paddock described spinning of the tyre when they tried to accelerate.

"The feeling with the bike was not so bad on the corner, but when I pick up the bike it had a lot of spin and does not have a good acceleration," Ducati factory rider Andrea Iannone summarised on Friday afternoon.

The Italian manufacturer has developed the strongest engine in MotoGP, but could not find the settings to make it work, or at least as well as Yamaha and Honda did at the front of the field.

Iannone eventually managed seventh in the race, a decent outcome having fallen from 11th to 14th early, while team-mate Andrea Dovizioso encountered a different rear-tyre problem. A leaking pump put water on the tyre while he was running seventh, behind Dani Pedrosa and Suzuki's Aleix Espargaro and Maverick Vinales,

who ultimately finished fourth, fifth and sixth.

"I almost crashed three times and I had to retire," Dovizioso said of his latest misfortune, having been taken out of podium finishes in each race in the Americas.

Low grip is a common theme for MotoGP at Jerez, with Marquez noting that "last year, here, we complained a lot" on Bridgestone's tyres. The overriding consensus was that the stiffer rear Michelin was not a great match. And while some called for the French manufacturer to revert to the construction used before the latest scare, that is not on its agenda.

As it was, Valentino Rossi's lap to take pole was 0.826 seconds slower than team-mate Jorge Lorenzo's a year earlier, and he was 31 seconds slower over the duration than Lorenzo on his way to the 2015 victory.

"I have to say, if we were on Bridgestones we'd be going a hell of a lot faster than we are now," LCR Honda rider Cal Crutchlow said.

"That's not against Michelin – we know they're being safe. The track, sure, it might need resurfacing, sometimes the track is not so grippy here. But last year it was fine in the race, with quite high track temperatures."

Crutchlow recorded his first finish of the season, in 11th place, while fellow Brit Redding perhaps suffered most from lack of rear grip, and laboured home in 19th, the last runner.

"Nothing worked today and throughout the weekend," he said. "We spent three days trying to find grip and we never succeeded. And I do not think it was only our fault."



The Ducatis struggled badly for rear grip

chequered flag flew, he found six tenths to take pole by a tenth. It was his first in 10 months, his first at Jerez in 11 years, and just his fourth since the end of 2009 – the year of his last title and the last time he started three consecutive races from the front row. Mark that up as clear qualifying progress, which he feels is aided by Michelin's return as MotoGP's tyre supplier, even if he didn't actually know why.

"It looks like this year in qualifying I am stronger, I am faster compared with last year," Rossi said. "Last year it was one of my weak points with Bridgestone.

"Maybe because I grew up as a rider with these [Michelin] tyres and I arrived to Bridgestone already quite old. Also, the thing is that with Michelin, usually, we used the softs [for qualifying] and for the race you use the hard.

"But with Bridgestone a lot of times you had to qualify with the same tyre as in the race. I think [it helps] that but essentially I don't know."

With Lorenzo and Marquez racing in front of a massive crowd in their home country, admittedly with a large contingent of Rossi fans in the stands, could he carry that form into Sunday?

The answer was yes. Rossi's Jerez performance was a masterclass.

He didn't waste pole position, fought off an early Lorenzo challenge – his team-mate took the lead for a couple of seconds at Turn 9 on lap two – and then pulled away to lead by three seconds at the halfway mark. Tyre wear was a big question mark and, when Lorenzo took the best part of a second out of that within the next few laps, onlookers were braced for a charge from the reigning champion, on the basis that he had been sitting back and saving his rubber, and that Rossi might have used his up.

Rossi responded, rebuilding the gap back to three seconds, and the race was his. Lorenzo later discussed excessive spinning of his rear tyre on the straight, limiting his throttle application and hurting his chances to fight for the win, but Rossi also explained that he had faced the same issue.



He duly partied like it was 2009. It was a big win, a vital win. Rossi will need many more Sundays like this during the year, but if he can put more of them together he will be a championship contender. And at the end of the day, a strong Rossi is good for MotoGP viewers and the championship itself.

"You cannot wait for nothing better," he concluded.

"When I was on the grid I knew I could have good pace. But in the race it's always more difficult. My mechanic on the grid said 'be first from the first corner to the last', and I thought that's a good idea!

"I did a good start and I felt good with the bike from the beginning. I had good grip. I tried to push and I understand that I take it lap by lap. It was the best feeling that I can expect."

This year marks 20 years since Rossi took the first of his 113 world championship race wins, in the 125cc class, and if he can maintain this level through to the end of what is likely to be his last MotoGP deal – he will be closer to 40 than 39 by the end of 2018 – then

Rossi bagged his 87th top-class Motorcycle Grand Prix victory

it will only enhance his legendary status.

"It's more difficult," he said of winning now, compared with his junior days. "More effort, more training.

"But you can ride MotoGP minimum to 40 years. The difference is the motivation, what you feel. If you want to try to win, and to try to continue. It's more difficult – 20 years ago it was easier to do everything, but I feel not so bad."

Lorenzo settled for second and Marquez a lonely third, having challenged his countryman in the first half of the race before settling for a podium. It was the first real sign of a new, more conservative mental approach from Marquez, who crashed too often on a troubled Honda in the first half of 2015 to be a credible title contender.

"Maybe last year was different, but this winter I learned a lot and already before the race [HRC vice-president Shuhei] Nakamoto said to me, 'please finish the race,'" Marquez said.

"Here in Jerez, we know that for my riding style it's not one of the best tracks – we know that we are not at 100 per cent level with the bike.

"And when I saw that Valentino was in an incredible level and Lorenzo was a little bit faster than us, I said, '[take the] 16 points and be quiet for the next race'.

"It's a big fight inside me. But I need to feel well on the bike and I need to feel strong enough.

"At the moment I feel strong, but I didn't feel at that point like 2014, when I was doing what I wanted on the bike, I was playing with the bike. OK, maybe it's not the best Marc now – for the show, for the fans – but I don't want to be in the same situation as last year."

After four rounds, Marquez leads Lorenzo by 17 points and Rossi by 24, and over the next 14 races there is plenty to play for – for young and old. ✨



Marquez (93) and Lorenzo (99) battled for the runner-up spot



Binder charged to victory in Moto3

BINDER BACK TO FRONT

BRAD BINDER LED THE MOTO3 CHAMPIONSHIP heading to Jerez, but was still searching for his maiden victory. When he qualified second, it seemed a decent chance to change that, until stewards noted that his KTM was running an unhomologated ECU, in what is believed to be more clerical error than anything else. He got word on Saturday afternoon that there might be trouble, slept for “maybe three hours” that night, then “found out literally when I was putting my leathers on that I was going to start last”.

It set the scene for a stunning performance. Binder cut his way from 35th to fourth in the first eight laps, then caught the lead pack, which was four seconds ahead, and snatched the lead from Jorge Navarro with six laps remaining.

He charged on to become the first South African rider to win a grand prix since Jon Ekerold won the 250cc race at Paul Ricard in 1981. His final margin was more than three seconds – sizeable in Moto3, even if you haven’t started last.

“Starting last made the first win even sweeter,” he said. “I knew even starting last with my rhythm I could fight to a podium and I was quite surprised when I arrived at the group. I followed them for three laps to have a look at the pace and really felt like I had a good half a second in my pocket.”

Behind Binder, the fight for second raged on, with honours eventually going to Nicolo Bulega, Valentino Rossi’s protege. In his fifth Moto3 start, Bulega claimed pole position and then audaciously passed both Navarro and Francesco Bagnaia at the final corner.

The Moto2 race was more straightforward, but Sam Lowes’s performance was also impressive. The championship leader grabbed his first win of the season from pole position, leading home Jonas Folger by two seconds.

RESULTS ROUND 4/18, JEREZ, APRIL 24 (27 LAPS – 74.205 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Valentino Rossi (I)	Yamaha	45m28.834s
2	Jorge Lorenzo (E)	Yamaha	+2.386s
3	Marc Marquez (E)	Honda	+7.087s
4	Daniel Pedrosa (E)	Honda	+10.351s
5	Aleix Espargaro (E)	Suzuki	+14.143s
6	Maverick Vinales (E)	Suzuki	+16.772s
7	Andrea Iannone (I)	Ducati	+26.277s
8	Pol Espargaro (E)	Tech3 Yamaha	+30.750s
9	Eugene Laverty (IRL)	Aspar Ducati	+32.325s
10	Hector Barbera (E)	Avintia Ducati	+32.624s
11	Cal Crutchlow (GB)	LCR Honda	+38.497s
12	Bradley Smith (GB)	Tech3 Yamaha	+39.669s
13	Loris Baz (F)	Avintia Ducati	+45.227s
14	Stefan Bradl (D)	Aprilia	+47.886s
15	Yonny Hernandez (CO)	Aspar Ducati	+47.988s
16	Michele Pirro (I)	Pramac Ducati	+49.414s
17	Jack Miller (AUS)	Marc VDS Honda	+49.513s
18	Tito Rabat (E)	Marc VDS Honda	+53.334s
19	Scott Redding (GB)	Pramac Ducati	+1m05.555s
R	Andrea Dovizioso (I)	Ducati	9 laps-water pump
R	Alvaro Bautista (E)	Aprilia	5 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 97.894mph. **Fastest lap** Rossi, 1m40.090s, 98.850mph.

Qualifying 2 1 Rossi, 1m38.736s; 2 Lorenzo, 1m38.858s; 3 Marquez, 1m38.891s; 4 Dovizioso, 1m39.580s; 5 Vinales, 1m39.581s; 6 A Espargaro, 1m39.588s; 7 Pedrosa, 1m39.678s; 8 P Espargaro, 1m39.720s; 9 Barbera, 1m39.742s; 10 Crutchlow, 1m39.881s; 11 Iannone, 1m40.054s; 12 Baz, 1m40.184s.

Qualifying 1 1 Crutchlow, 1m39.907s; 2 Baz, 1m39.993s; 3 Bautista, 1m40.239s; 4 Smith, 1m40.242s; 5 Laverty, 1m40.292s; 6 Hernandez, 1m40.335s; 7 Redding, 1m40.595s; 8 Bradl, 1m40.835s; 9 Miller, 1m40.968s; 10 Pirro, 1m40.985s; 11 Rabat, 1m41.039s.

Riders' Championship 1 Marquez, 82; 2 Lorenzo, 65; 3 Rossi, 58; 4 Pedrosa, 40; 5 P Espargaro, 36; 6 Vinales, 33; 7 A Espargaro, 32; 8 Barbera, 31; 9 Laverty, 28; 10 Iannone, 25.

Manufacturers' Championship 1 Yamaha, 90; 2 Honda, 82; 3 Ducati, 58; 4 Suzuki, 39; 5 Aprilia, 20.



Di Grassi wins a special race

The latest flawless performance from Formula E's points leader made him the deserving winner of the inaugural Paris ePrix

By Scott Mitchell, Features Editor

🐦 @ScottAutosport



DUNBAR/LAT



Lucas di Grassi was exceptional again. Magnifique. Formula E broke new ground by pulling off the impossible, a motor race in the heart of Paris, but on the track it was the same story as in recent races. Several drivers have flitted between making mistakes and performing exceptionally this season, but di Grassi is the only one permanently planted at the preferred end of that spectrum.

At first glance the inaugural Paris ePrix played out quite similarly to the previous race in Long Beach: Sebastien Buemi's threat was neutered by a poor qualifying session, Sam Bird claimed pole for DS Virgin Racing and di Grassi moved to the front and ultimately controlled proceedings with ease. There was even a late safety car for the second race in succession, although this one stayed out until the chequered flag – much to di Grassi's pleasure.

But from Long Beach to Paris there were as many differences as there were similarities. For starters, Abt Audi Sport had expected Renault e.dams to be untouchable in the States thanks to the short, revised IndyCar course's long straights. The Paris track, comprising more complex sequences of corners, had the German team smiling when it sampled it on the simulator.

That meant Abt and di Grassi were expecting to start from a stronger base, but they could not have expected the Parisian race to play out as well as it did for di Grassi. Bird, Buemi and home hero Jean-Eric Vergne all could have won the Paris ePrix, but yet again it was di Grassi and Abt that picked up the maximum.

Key to that success was the weather. Climactic conditions have been a factor already this season – witness humidity-related chaos in Putrajaya and battery-management issues in the Buenos Aires heat – but here was a problem the teams had not faced before.

The weather forecasts in the build-up to the event suggested the series might encounter its first wet race, but instead an altogether different challenge played out. It was cold. Very cold. Decent sunshine and 20-degree heat in the week gave way to ambient temperatures barely past 10 degrees on Saturday. And while Abt and di Grassi were able to cope, chief title rival Buemi and Renault e.dams couldn't.

The all-weather, 18-inch Michelin tyres have a stiff sidewall construction, the series does not allow the use of tyre warmers and the carbon brakes are stone cold to begin with too. It's very difficult to generate the necessary temperature to drive these cars with confidence, particularly with the series' qualifying format allowing just one 170kW lap before the full-power effort in the >>

group phase. So while it may seem easy to point to Buemi's eighth-place start as another qualifying disaster, perhaps the latest in a line of braking-related mistakes from the Swiss driver, the reality is different. Stripping the Z.E.15s down at Donington Park after the cars finally returned from their Asian-and-American sojourn through the first half of the season meant Renault discovered greater degradation than expected on several components, "particularly the brakes"; according to e.dams senior manager Jean-Paul Driot.

The solution, says Buemi, alleviated the issue – but this was masked by the very specific conditions in Paris. "I didn't have problems on braking, that was fine," he insisted. "It's just strange because it was so cold here – we've never had it so cold, and we didn't do a good job trying to anticipate that."

Di Grassi wasn't the quickest in qualifying. Bird led a DS Virgin one-two in the group phase before topping the superpole. Vergne ultimately lined up third – at the home race for season-two partner DS Automobiles, the DSV-01s were comfortably the most competitive they've been this season.

That may seem an odd thing to say given that Bird was on pole in Buenos Aires and Long Beach, but Buemi had erred in Argentina and fastest qualifier Antonio Felix da Costa was excluded from the session in the US. This time, nobody was close to Bird.

A theory from one team boss was that the heavier, twin-motor, single-gear powertrains used by DS Virgin and NEXTEV TCR were able to switch on the tyres quicker because they work them harder than those, such as Abt's and Renault's, that are bang on the weight limit. And, di Grassi pointed out, when you need to be on the ragged edge in order to tame a rear-heavy beast, the car moves around more and that generates tyre temperature too.

The quirk of the one-day Formula E format means it's impossible to know whether that is exactly true, because the sample set of data is limited. But it offers a possible explanation as to why DS

Virgin was so strong in qualifying and in the initial laps after the car swaps in the race. Not that it mattered as far as di Grassi was concerned.

Bird lost the lead into Turn 1 after getting "way too much wheelspin" off the line, which he put down to the team opting for the wrong mapping. Di Grassi bolted, while Bird banged his left wheel against the bodywork of Vergne after the Frenchman followed di Grassi through at the first corner, then toughed it around the outside of Turn 2.

By the end of the opening lap di Grassi was a second clear, and the lead was double that next time around. He pushed his advantage as high as the five-second mark by the time the mid-race car swaps came around, helped by Vergne performing a rearguard action against Bird that led to contact, again, at Turn 3 when Bird attempted an opportunistic move to the inside.

While Vergne and Bird continued to hold their positions, Bird just keeping Buemi (having passed Robin Frijns, Oliver Turvey, Stephane Sarrazin and the sister Renault of Nico Prost during a strong first stint) at bay, they were unhappy with each other.

"It was enjoyable if he wasn't my team-mate," said Vergne. "This is our home race for DS – we don't want to see two cars finishing in the wall."

Bird, asked by *Autosport* if he took any enjoyment from the fight, kept his thoughts succinct: "No. I'm too angry to comment, and I don't want to say anything I shouldn't."

Bird's post-race dejection was not limited to that fight, though – for the second race in a row he made a mistake under braking and cost himself a podium finish. Unlike in Long Beach, where he was running reasonably comfortably in second and not attacking di Grassi ahead, this time the trip down the escape road came under intense pressure from Buemi. And this time it happened towards the end of a frustrating race he will know he had the pace to win.

Buemi suggested after the race that Bird is more susceptible to a mistake, because of his on-the-edge driving style.



Di Grassi got the jump on poleman Bird to lead into Turn 1, a move that also allowed Vergne to take second

That needn't be interpreted as a fundamental criticism of Bird, more an observation that a natural consequence of the approach needed to make the DSV-01 quick means he is at risk of going over the limit. An aggressively defensive line into Turn 1 proved his undoing when he was caught out by a bump under braking.

The upshot of Bird's mistake, which dropped him to sixth, was Buemi salvaging a podium from another make-do-and-mend race. He was unable to attack Vergne for second because Team Aguri debutant Ma Qing Hua, who had run strongly in the first half of the race, crashed heavily exiting the final corner a lap after Bird's accident (on the road, just far enough in front of di Grassi for the Brazilian not to be caught out).

That brought out a safety car five laps from the end, and the wreckage took too long to clear for racing to resume. Ending under caution brought a race that had been quietly bubbling to an interesting conclusion to an anti-climax. It's fair to call the Paris ePrix a sensational event, but the race itself was relatively mundane by Formula E's high standards.

Regardless of how the drivers took the flag, the end result was the same: di Grassi was several seconds to the good when it mattered, always in command, and finished on top.

It was not lost on either team that Abt got one over on Renault at the French marque's home race. The next round in Berlin offers Buemi a chance to exact revenge – another element to savour as this incredible title fight rumbles to its conclusion. ❧



Buemi salvaged third at Renault's home race after a tricky qualifying



VERGNE FINDS HIS VERVE

THE PARIS EPRIX WAS FOUGHT OUT WITH THE sort of backdrop that made it impossible not to think 'I still can't believe they've pulled this off'. The army museum and Napoleon's Tomb were on the circuit's southern perimeter, with the Grand Palais to the north and the Eiffel Tower poking out above the impressive architecture that lined the surrounding streets to the west.

Everywhere you looked, someone connected to the championship was a little in awe of the setting. Naturally, the home contingent – Jean-Eric Vergne, Stephane Sarrazin, Loic Duval and Nico Prost – provided a focal point for national media. But it was Vergne who was able to translate the palpable excitement around the event into the best result.

Vergne admitted he needed to change his mentality in order to end his “negative spiral” after a “disastrous” season that has featured just one points finish – seventh in Punta del Este. It has been a tough first campaign with DS Virgin Racing for the man who joined Formula E for the third round of the inaugural season and scored three poles – including one on his debut – and two podiums with the Andretti team over the rest of that campaign.

Those troubles meant his second place in Paris was “not a race win but it feels like it for me”, especially as Vergne admitted he has had “a hard time to get back on top” after setbacks in the past.

“It's really important,” he said. “In the end I really wanted to change that negative spiral into a positive one. For this you need to question yourself. I cannot blame it all on bad luck, which is probably what I did for too long.

“I put in hard work on me to improve and attract good things to me – which happened to me this weekend. The season has been pretty much a disaster, so to finish second in my home race is something I'm quite proud of.”

RESULTS ROUND 7/10, PARIS (F), APRIL 23 (45 LAPS – 53.686 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Lucas di Grassi (BR)	AbtAudi Sport / AbtSchaefflerFE01	52m40.324s
2	Jean-Eric Vergne (F)	DS Virgin Racing / Virgin DSV-01	+0.853s
3	Sebastien Buemi (CH)	Renault.e.dams / Renault Z.E.15	+1.616s
4	Nicolas Prost (F)	Renault.e.dams / Renault Z.E.15	+2.142s
5	Stephane Sarrazin (F)	Venturi / Venturi VM200-FE-01	+3.044s
6	Sam Bird (GB)	DS Virgin Racing / Virgin DSV-01	+3.856s
7	Robin Frijns (NL)	Andretti Autosport / Spark SRT_01E	+5.141s
8	Antonio Felix da Costa (P)	Team Aguri / Spark SRT_01E	+7.000s
9	Bruno Senna (BR)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M2ELECTRO	+8.433s
10	Daniel Abt (D)	AbtAudi Sport / AbtSchaefflerFE01	+9.479s
11	Jerome d'Ambrosio (B)	Dragon Racing / Venturi VM200-FE-01	+10.738s
12	Nick Heidfeld (D)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M2ELECTRO	+12.453s
13	Oliver Turvey (GB)	NEXTEVTCR / NEXTEVTCR001	+13.721s
14	Mike Conway (GB)	Venturi / Venturi VM200-FE-01	+14.833s
15	Simona de Silvestro (CH)	Andretti Autosport / Spark SRT_01E	+16.049s
R	Nelson Piquet Jr (BR)	NEXTEVTCR / NEXTEVTCR001	39 laps-out of energy
R	Ma Qing Hua (PRC)	Team Aguri / Spark SRT_01E	38 laps-accident
R	Loic Duval (F)	Dragon Racing / Venturi VM200-FE-01	4 laps-gearbox

Winner's average speed 61.155mph. **Fastest lap** Heidfeld, 1m02.323s, 68.914mph.

Super pole 1 Bird, 1m01.616s; 2 di Grassi 1m01.932s; 3 Vergne 1m01.993s; 4 Sarrazin 1m02.550s; 5 Prost 1m02.709s.

Qualifying 1 Bird, 1m01.514s; 2 Vergne, 1m01.770s; 3 Sarrazin 1m02.148s; 4 di Grassi 1m02.249s; 5 Prost 1m02.339s; 6 Frijns 1m02.405s; 7 Turvey 1m02.492s; 8 Buemi 1m02.661s; 9 Piquet 1m02.685s; 10 da Costa 1m02.747s; 11 d'Ambrosio 1m02.797s; 12 de Silvestro 1m02.888s; 13 Senna 1m02.915s; 14 Abt 1m03.081s; 15 Ma 1m03.655s; 16 Duval 1m03.787s; 17 Conway 1m04.798s; 18 Heidfeld 1m11.853s.

Championship 1 di Grassi, 126; 2 Buemi, 115; 3 Bird, 82; 4 d'Ambrosio, 64; 5 Sarrazin, 58; 6 Prost, 50; 7 Duval, 48; 8 Heidfeld, 41; 9 Frijns, 37; 10 Abt, 32.



Paddon makes Ogier eat his dust

Hyundai's rising star dug deep in Argentina to repel the world champion's challenge and take an epic maiden WRC victory

By David Evans, Rallies Editor

🐦 @daviddevansrally



A

t the pivotal moment it was All Blacks coach Gilbert Enoka who came to the rescue. Hayden Paddon had lost 27.2 seconds in

24.2 miles. His dream was teetering on the brink. It was then that he turned to Enoka. Then New Zealand beat France – at rallying, not rugby.

Twelve months after Kris Meeke broke his WRC duck at the end of El Condor in Argentina, Paddon smashed his own. And in some style, taking a near-unbelievable 11.7s out of Sebastien Ogier on the final stage.

Paddon – who has been using Enoka as a mind-coaching guru over the past few months – and co-driver John Kennard were just about as surprised as anybody. Enoka, presumably, saw it coming all the way from the South Pacific. If he did, it's fair to say he was in a minority. Particularly before the rally started.

Pre-event, the talk had pretty much all been about Volkswagen. It was debatable whether Ogier could overcome the handicap of running two days at the front of the field, but the Hanover winning machine was more than capable of sealing a 13th victory from 13 starts.

Ogier led from the opening gravel stage but, when the going got too much on the first run from Santa Rosa to San Agustin, Jari-Matti Latvala took over at the top.

But Paddon was close, and showing no respect for the form book or pre-event predictions. Mexico winner Latvala couldn't shake the Kiwi off.

Fastest on the first two Saturday stages, Paddon closed the gap to 6.7s to Latvala as the top two moved clear of Ogier. The Los Gigantes test – back for the first time in 17 years – resembled a beach in places. Ogier was on a hiding to nothing, while Latvala eased his lead up to 14s with a quickest time either side of lunch.

Latvala's disaster

On that first run through Los Gigantes, Latvala scared himself. Too quick into a long, tightening left-hander, the Polo broke away and started sliding. Looking past co-driver Miikka Anttila, Latvala eyed the approaching bank, buried the throttle and said a nanosecond-quick silent prayer. It was answered. Four soft Michelins saved the Finn's bacon.

Second time through there was a corner and a rock with his name on it. The wheel connected and the shockwave sent the damper skywards through the bonnet. With no damper on the right-front, his chances of making it through

Hayden Paddon bagged his first WRC victory in style

a nearly-flat left were zero. The Finn sliced at the apex, but the car dug in and rolled. And rolled again.

Ironically, moments before, his lead had moved above 20 seconds after an accomplished effort through the first half of the test.

The team was guarded in what it said, but Latvala insisted the damper broke before the corner. Some crews had it in their notes to avoid the rock, but television pictures show Paddon's Hyundai hitting and dealing with it, with no consequence.

Latvala said: "I was in a very fast section where there was a bit of bedrock on the road, and when we went over it suddenly the front-right top-mount broke and the damper came through the bonnet.

"At that moment I couldn't steer the car anymore, we went into a bank and we rolled."

Team principal Jost Capito wasn't about to hang his man out to dry, but gently made the point that J-ML had given it a bit of a whack. "He hit the rock where he believed the car would take it, but it didn't," said Capito. "It was quite a big impact.

"You have to have a balance with this car – we can't build a tank. We go through all the loads we experience in testing and that's how we build the



Paddon and co-driver Kennard celebrate their breakthrough win

car, and when you get a higher one then certain parts break.

"We know other drivers went around this rock, Seb [Ogier] as well."

Latvala and Anttila were checked over in hospital while sledgehammers and a forklift truck set about straightening the chassis rail on Polo #2. The job was done by two in the morning.

Ten hours later, it was parked up at the side of the road again, this time with a broken trackrod – likely a consequence of Saturday's inversion.

Regardless of who was to blame, Latvala's search for successive wins goes on. While his title hopes have taken another massive blow, he remains in the perfect place on the road through Portugal and, more importantly, Sardinia, where the road-cleaning will be as bad as anywhere this year.

Cometh the hour...

Latvala's departure left Paddon 34.3s in front, a lead Ogier had chipped away to 29.8s on Saturday night. One day, three stages to go. Place your bets.

The atmosphere at Saturday's end-of-day press conference was strained as Ogier complained about the regulations. Afterwards, Paddon ventured that washing the WRC's dirty laundry in public did nobody any favours. Predictably, Ogier disagreed. A frank

exchange of views followed in full view of a slightly bemused Carlos Paz crowd not entirely well versed in the sporting regulations of the World Rally Championship.

The pair then returned to their corners, ready to come out fighting for real the next morning.

Paddon smiled about the incident as he strolled into service well before dawn on Sunday. "Well," he said, "he's certainly fired up now."

There must have been more than a little concern at the poke the tiger had been given.

Ogier was relaxed, nursing an orange juice as he sized up the task in hand. On his departure, his engineer, Gerard Jan de Jongh, wouldn't be drawn on the specifics of his tactics. "We'll throw some bait out there and see if he bites," he said.

The bait in question was a time 7.4s quicker than Paddon over a horribly foggy El Condor.

Ogier took his own bait.

Well aware that the chink in Paddon's armour was his lack of experience of the road from Mina Clavero to Giulio Cesare – he'd only done it once in a Group N Subaru six years ago – the Frenchman wound his Polo R WRC up and let it fly.

Ogier crushed the opposition with

a time 13.6s faster than anybody, and Paddon's lead was down to 2.6s. He struggled to find words. Instead, he found first and pulled away from the stop line, eyes and voice full of emotion.

We'd seen this story before: Ogier winning the unwinnable rally. The script would be followed.

The fog had disappeared; at least it would be a clean-and-fair fight, with Ogier running directly in front of Paddon.

Four miles in and Ogier was faster than everybody except Paddon's team-mate Dani Sordo. Given the upturn in pace from both the Spaniard and the New Generation i20, that came as no major surprise. The big question – the big, big question – was centred on Hyundai #20.

Agonisingly, the split times had given up the ghost in Mina Clavero, leaving a world of rally fans in the dark for far longer than could ever be acceptable.

Mercifully, the system just about held to reveal what must have been one of the most shocking split times in the history of the sport.

Paddon: minus eight point five. There was more than one person questioning the accuracy of that readout...

Having dropped a shade over a second per mile on the initial two, Paddon had done Ogier for two seconds per mile in the super-twisty first section of Condor. The same super-twisty section the >>



leader feared most, given his car's wayward rear in comparison to the planted Polo. Hence the question.

The answer came on screen. Usually a model of inch-perfect precision motoring, Ogier's car looked to be moving far more than usual. Tyres? Steering damage? Surely something was amiss.

At the finish, Ogier was content with his job. Condor's not the kind of place to push, especially when it's as rutted and rough as it was last Sunday. If Ogier has one weakness, it's his mechanical sympathy — he hates bouncing the car in and out of the ruts.

Had he done enough? Not nearly, because Paddon was 11.7s quicker.

It's almost impossible to take in what Paddon achieved in those 10 miles. And, devoid of split times to the car, he and Kennard had no idea. "The guy put the times on the board on the windscreen," said Paddon, "but the windscreen wiper was blocking Ogier's time, so we couldn't see.

"I looked at the media, but there really wasn't much expression. We just didn't know. Then I saw the time..."

And his world went mad. He'd won.

Out of the car. On the roof. Off the roof. Back on the roof. Hugging his co-driver. Smiling. Staring. Smiling.

But how?

Back in service a couple of hours later, Paddon was still a little lost for an explanation.

"Something just happened," he said. "I have no idea where it came from. I told you I wasn't happy in the



twisty section, but it just... it gelled. Something came over me, something happened. We did it.

"Now we're here and we've won," Paddon added, "I'll tell you that I really wasn't sure last night. I just wasn't sure it would be enough. I felt a bit sick, to be honest. And then when we lost 20-odd seconds in the second one. I thought it was gone."

Cue a question about All Blacks coach Enoka.

"He's given me some pointers," said Paddon. "Obviously I was pretty low when I saw the time loss on the second stage, but he's shown me how to stay in the moment and not to think about the result or what might happen. I thought about that, used that, used the triggers and got myself ready."

Ogier was utterly magnanimous. "I never want to finish second," he said, "but this is much easier to accept.

Ogier once again took umbrage at his status as roadsweeper

The difference happened behind the steering wheel today. Well done to them.

"Like them, I had no idea at the end of the last stage if it was enough. I knew I didn't take the ultimate risk, but I didn't drive slowly. I have to think about the championship and it could have been suicide to make a big attack when it was so rough."

VW could take some solace from Andreas Mikkelsen's third, but the Hyundai challenge is getting stronger and stronger now.

Safer safety

Disharmony and rancour might have played their part in last week's Rally Argentina, but on one subject the crews spoke with one voice: the organisers had delivered perfection.

Arriving in South America, some predicted that 2016 would be the World Rally Championship's farewell tour of these parts. A hard-hitting safety report condemned last season's event and the organisers were told in very straightforward terms to improve or they would be gone. Likely for good.

The rally's popularity has become something of a poisoned chalice in recent years; 12 months ago the organisers were overrun, a woeful lack of safety planning laid bare.

Losing Rally Argentina was unthinkable for all concerned, hence the FIA matching the Automobile Club of Argentina pound for pound in terms of effort to put the job right.

WRC safety delegate Michele Mouton



Broken suspension pitched rally leader Latvala into a roll

RESULTS ROUND 4/14, RALLY ARGENTINA, APRIL 21-24

POS	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Hayden Paddon (NZ)	John Kennard (NZ)	Hyundai Motorsport / NHyundai i20 WRC	3h40m52.9s
2	Sebastien Ogier (F)	Julien Ingrassia (F)	Volkswagen Motorsport / Volkswagen Polo R WRC	+14.3s
3	Andreas Mikkelsen (N)	Anders Jager Synnevaag (N)	Volkswagen Motorsport II / Volkswagen Polo R WRC	+1m05.2s
4	Dani Sordo (E)	Marc Marti (E)	Hyundai Motorsport / Hyundai i20 WRC	+1m17.1s
5	Mads Ostberg (N)	Ola Floene (N)	M-Sport WRT / Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+4m56.7s
6	Thierry Neuville (B)	Nicolas Gilsoul (B)	Hyundai Motorsport / Hyundai i20 WRC	+9m29.5s
7	Marcos Ligato (RA)	Ruben Garcia (RA)	Citroen DS3 WRC	+9m39.2s
8	Eric Camilli (F)	Benjamin Veillas (F)	M-Sport WRT / Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+10m16.0s
9	Henning Solberg (N)	Ilka Minor-Petrasko (A)	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+10m48.5s
10	Nicolas Fuchs (PE)	Fernando Mussano (RA)	Skoda Fabia R5	+24m42.8s
OTHERS				
13	Lorenzo Bertelli (I)	Simone Scattolin (I)	FWRT / Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+33m23.7s
15	Ott Tanak (EST)	Raigo Molder (EST)	DMACK World Rally Team / Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+37m22.4s
16	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN)	Miikka Anttila (FIN)	Volkswagen Motorsport / Volkswagen Polo R WRC	+42m15.6s
19	Jose Alberto Nicolas (RA)	Miguel Recalt (RA)	Citroen DS3 WRC	+1h24m51.3s
R	Valeriy Gorban (UA)	Volodymyr Korsya (UA)	Eurolamp WRT / Mini John Cooper Works WRC	SS5-engine

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Ogier, 96; **2** Paddon, 57; **3** Ostberg, 52; **4** Mikkelsen, 48; **5** Sordo, 44; **6** Latvala, 27; **7** Tanak, 24; **8** Neuville, 23; **9** Lefebvre, 10; **10** Solberg, 8.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Volkswagen Motorsport, 117; **2** Hyundai Motorsport, 81; **3** M-Sport WRT, 62; **4** Hyundai Motorsport N, 49; **5** Volkswagen Motorsport II, 45; **6** DMACK World Rally Team, 30.



Ligato was the best local driver in seventh

spent five days with the organisers last month, rearranging a second day that the clerk of the course had moved as far north as possible in an effort to take the rally away from the people, one way of solving the overcrowding issues.

That wasn't the point. It was avoiding the problem, not solving it. Mouton brought back some classic roads just outside Carlos Paz, then pushed and pushed on the 'go, no-go' areas – if the tape's red, don't go near it. Yellow? Happy days. Local media hammered the point home in the weeks leading up to the rally, while 6000 police worked wonders for three days.

As soon as she arrived in the stages, Mouton knew all was well. The people had listened.

"There is such passion for this sport here," she said. "It's not like in Monte Carlo or some of the other European rallies. There, the fans have alternatives. If they don't go to the rally, they'll do something else. Here, there is nothing else. The rally is everything for these people."

People of Argentina, your work is done; same time, same place next season.

Admittedly, we're asking a lot, but if you can organise another epic, that would be nice. It's going to be tough, though: two maiden victories in as many years played out on roads as good as anything on planet Earth before a petrol-headed population pumping up an atmosphere that has to be experienced to be believed.

Argentina last week was as good as it gets in the World Rally Championship. It was the WRC at its very best. ✎

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Super Especial Cordoba 1.86 miles	Ogier 1m29.0s	Sordo	Ogier +0.0s
SS2 Soconcho-Villa del Dique 1 14.60 miles	Ogier 13m00.1s	Ogier	Sordo +2.0s
SS3 Amboy-Santa Monica 1 12.63 miles	Latvala 10m36.5s	Ogier	Paddon +0.6s
SS4 Santa Rosa-San Agustin 1 13.27 miles	Latvala 13m58.3s	Latvala	Paddon +3.6s
SS5 Super Especial Parque Tematico 1 3.75 miles	Neuville 4m55.9s	Latvala	Paddon +5.4s
SS6 Soconcho-Villa del Dique 2 14.60 miles	Paddon 12m54.6s	Latvala	Paddon +4.8s
SS7 Amboy-Santa Monica 2 12.63 miles	Latvala 10m33.7s	Latvala	Ogier +6.6s
SS8 Santa Rosa-San Agustin 2 13.27 miles	Latvala 13m56.4s	Latvala	Paddon +10.2s
SS9 Super Especial Parque Tematico 2 3.75 miles	Ogier 4m55.3s	Latvala	Ogier +7.9s
SS10 El Reposo-Villa Albertina 1 20.32 miles	Paddon 9m58.3s	Latvala	Paddon +9.3s
SS11 Villa Albertina-Ischilin 1 9.32 miles	Paddon 20m34.9s	Latvala	Paddon +6.7s
SS12 Ischilin-Ongamira 1 15.22 miles	Latvala 13m32.9s	Latvala	Paddon +13.3s
SS13 El Reposo-Villa Albertina 2 20.32 miles	Latvala 9m55.0s	Latvala	Paddon +14.5s
SS14 Villa Albertina-Ischilin 2 9.32 miles	Paddon 20m21.2s	Paddon	Ogier +34.3s
SS15 Ischilin-Ongamira 2 15.22 miles	Mikkelsen 13m27.1s	Paddon	Ogier +29.8s
SS16 El Condor-Copina 10.14 miles	Tanak 13m50.6s	Paddon	Ogier +22.4s
SS17 Mina Clavero-Giulio Cesare 14.07 miles	Ogier 18m38.5s	Paddon	Ogier +2.6s
SS18 El Condor (Power Stage) 10.14 miles	Paddon 13m08.0s	Paddon	Ogier +14.3s

ALL PICS: MCKLEIN/DE

RACE CENTRE

BLANCPAIN GT • INDYCAR • FORMULA V8 3.5 • FORMULA 3 • WTCC



HTP Merc took the lead at the start, but trailed McLaren at finish (inset)

It's McLaren-Mercedes

BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE CUP
MONZA (I)
APRIL 24
ROUND 1/5

A CURSORY SCAN DOWN THE GRID FOR Sunday's Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup opener at Monza wouldn't have given the impression that the McLaren 650S GT3 was a potential winner. The two Garage 59 entries lined up alongside each other on the eighth row, yet after three hours of racing Rob Bell, Come Ledogar and Shane van Gisbergen claimed victory by the narrowest of margins for the team.

The grid was to some extent deceiving. Junior driver Andrew Watson and Bell had qualified the two McLarens run by the in-house squad in 15th and 16th positions, but they were only four tenths down on pole winner Maximilian Buhk's HTP Motorsport Mercedes-AMG GT3. In fact, the first 20 cars were within half a second and the first 31 covered by a second.

There wasn't too much concern in the McLaren camp, Bell pointing out that they would have been higher based on their best sector

times. That was a common complaint given that that a 57-car field was always going to make getting a clear lap difficult.

And that closely packed field was surely also going to make overtaking difficult. But not, as it turned out, if you were Rob Bell in a McLaren 650S last weekend.

The Briton vaulted to 11th on the first lap and was into the top six by lap six. A couple of laps later and he was fifth, albeit nine seconds down on battling Nissan and Bentley drivers Lucas Ordonez and Andy Soucek. The McLaren had wiped out that gap inside a dozen laps, Bell quickly making it past Soucek in the M-Sport Bentley Continental GT3 and taking another couple to move ahead of Ordonez's RJN Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3.

By the time the pitstops started at the end of the opening hour, Bell was 11s down on the leaders. Yet by the completion of the stops, Ledogar was out front with a handy lead of nearly seven seconds. The leading pro-am Black Pearl/Rinaldi Ferrari 488 GT3 in which pro Daniel Keilwitz had moved to the front on lap 15 was falling down the order in the hands of



AT A GLANCE

- 1 Bell/Ledogar/
van Gisbergen McLaren
- 2 Baumann/Buhk/
Jaafar Mercedes
- 3 Soucek/Soulet/Reip
Bentley

 P47 RESULTS



ALL PICS: VISION SPORT AGENCY

as Bell stars for win at Monza

amateur Steve Parrow. And the pole-winning HTP Merc in which Dominik Baumann had shadowed Keilwitz had lost time exiting the pits.

The engine died on Jazeman Jaafar when he turned off the pitlane speed limiter, the result of what the team suspected to be an issue with the electronic control unit. The net time loss after he'd fired up the V8 was at least 15s.

Jaafar lost time to Ledogar initially before closing to within three seconds, only to drop back in traffic as the end of the second hour approached. Buhk took over for the final stint with a deficit of just over nine seconds to van Gisbergen. Immediately the Mercedes made inroads, and big ones at that. With the quicker car, the German arrived on the back of the McLaren with just under 25 minutes to go – a Mercedes victory looked a formality.

Only Buhk never really had much more than one proper shot at overtaking the McLaren. That came when van Gisbergen was baulked

out of the second chicane.

Van Gisbergen thought he'd blown it on the penultimate lap when he went wide onto an oily line on the exit of the Parabolica. "I hit a bit of oil on the outside," said the Kiwi. "Buhk must have hit it too, otherwise he should have passed me."

Buhk was a couple of tenths behind as they crossed the line, but could get no closer, the final margin of victory a scant 0.341s.

Bell was typically understated in his assessment of the victory. He appeared to have forgotten that he'd passed 13 cars in an opening stint around a track where others were saying it was nigh-on impossible to overtake. "We didn't expect to win, just to be there or thereabouts,"

he said. "We just maxed what we had. We didn't make any mistakes today and that equalled a win because the others had issues."

HTP's engine-management issue undoubtedly cost the German team victory. Buhk was in no doubt that the Merc was the faster car, but was

Bell: "We just maxed what we had, with no mistakes"

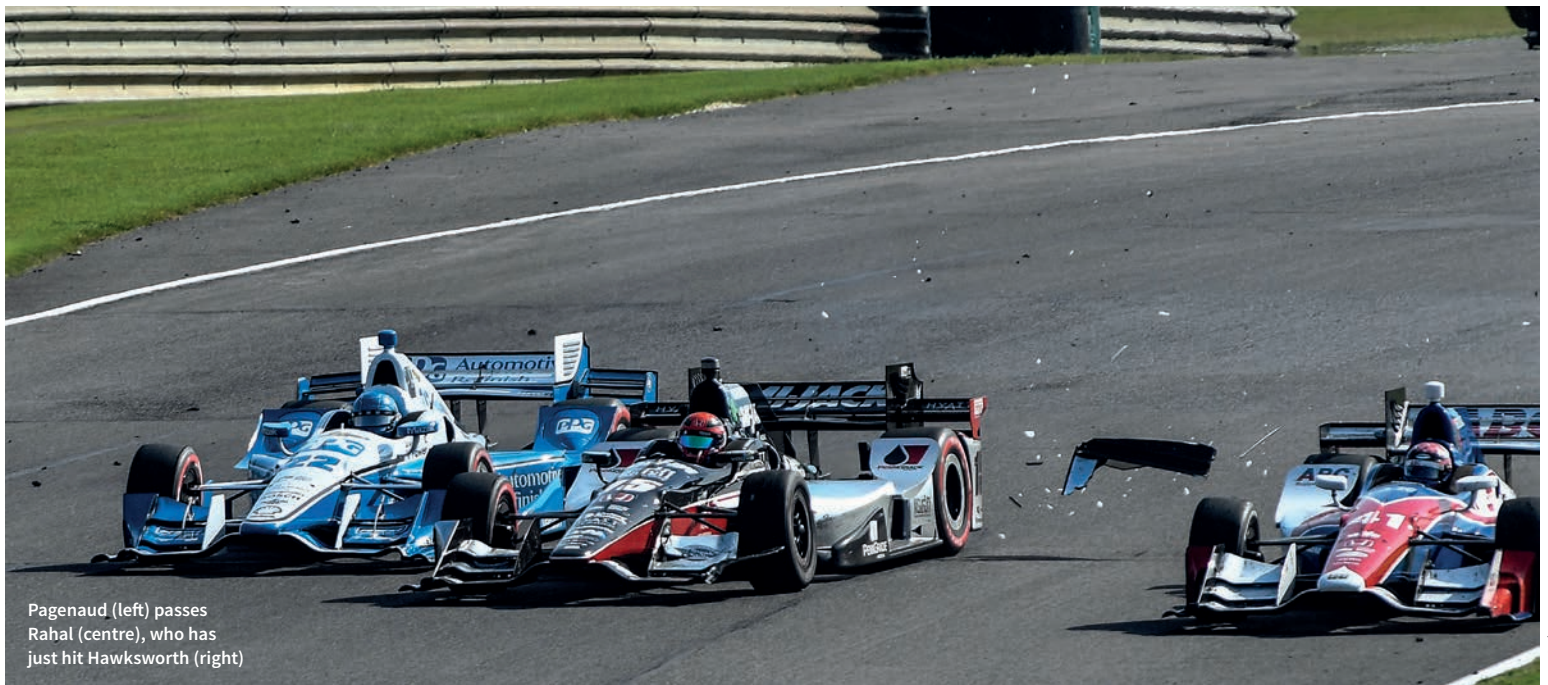
happy to admit that he wasn't about to take any risks. "I didn't want to do anything silly," he said. "The only time I thought I could pass was when the Lamborghini baulked the McLaren."

This became a two-horse race early in the second hour. Despite the ultra-close qualifying in which there were 10 makes in the top 20, only three had the speed to win: the McLaren (which did win), the Ferrari 488 (which didn't have the drivers), and the Merc (which didn't have the luck).

M-Sport claimed third with Soucek, Wolfgang Reip and Maxime Soulet. The Bentley moved ahead of the Nissan, which Ordonez shared with Mitsunori Takaboshi and Alex Buncombe, when the car got hemmed in during its pitstops, but there wasn't too much disappointment with fourth from last year's Blancpain Endurance Series champions. The Nissan didn't look after its tyres as well as the Bentley, so, said team boss Bob Neville, "what we got is what we had."

McLaren had a little bit more than it expected on a circuit that shouldn't favour the 650S. "There are," said van Gisbergen, "going to be better tracks for us."

GARY WATKINS



Pagenaud (left) passes Rahal (centre), who has just hit Haworth (right)

LEPAGE/LAT

Pagenaud's close shave at Barber

INDYCAR SERIES

BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK (USA)

APRIL 24

ROUND 4/15

BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK, ONE of the most beautiful and scenic road courses in the United States, is just 38 miles from Talladega Superspeedway, one of NASCAR's most iconic racing facilities. And while a weekend at Talladega is usually one of drunken debauchery among the earthy folk attending, Barber draws an upscale crowd from Birmingham, Alabama's high-tech industries.

Last weekend these comparatively refined and discerning IndyCar fans saw a thrilling finish won by Simon Pagenaud, who just a week after taking his first victory for Team Penske added a second.

But for the second-straight year at Barber, Graham Rahal put on the real show on the racetrack.

Pagenaud's Dallara-Chevrolet had built up huge leads throughout the race, but was slowed when he closed up on Conor Daly, who was bidding to remain on the lead lap, allowing Pagenaud's Penske

team-mate Will Power and the Rahal Letterman Lanigan car of Rahal to close up. Pagenaud re-established his lead after the final round of pitstops, but Rahal had cleared Power and reeled in the leader to provide some of the most thrilling racing of the season. Rahal was able to manhandle a car that had a broken right-front wing earlier in the race, and made his move with eight laps to go at Turn 8. The two cars made slight contact entering the corner and Pagenaud drove off course trying to regain control.

The move turned the flying Frenchman into the furious Frenchman, determined to retake the lead before the chequered flag. With five laps to go, Pagenaud repassed Rahal in Turn 15 as they ran in lapped traffic, Rahal hitting Jack Haworth and this time breaking his front wing on the left side.

"That was a good piece of driving from him [Rahal] but that was a late pass," Pagenaud contended. "It's not a corner where you can pass. I went off in the end and it made me really upset, I have to say. I said I was going to pass him back and that is what we did."

Pagenaud was able to drive away from his pursuer over the final five laps and won for the sixth time in his IndyCar career by 13,7475 seconds over Rahal. "We are just on a roll," said Pagenaud. "It was another green-flag race from start to finish but we made it exciting at the end for the fans, which is great. I'm happy there was some action."

Rahal, meanwhile, reckoned Pagenaud put on a massive block in the Turn 8 move. "He just completely turns into me – it's fine," he said. "You can see that it's just a racing incident. I gave him room on the outside; I could have pushed him off."

Last year's winner, Josef Newgarden, finished third in the Ed Carpenter Racing machine, passing two-time Barber winner Will Power on the penultimate lap. But perhaps the most impressive driver in the top five was Power's team-mate Juan Pablo Montoya, who started last in the 21-car field. Despite complaining of gearshift problems, the Colombian charged through the order to finish fifth.

Reigning champion Scott Dixon started fourth but was involved in a crash on lap three when he was hit in Turn 5 by Sebastien Bourdais, damaging both cars. Dixon continued in the race but was mired back in last place. He then fought back and finished 10th, the first time he has been outside the top three at Barber Motorsports Park. Bourdais earned a drive-through penalty.

Although this was the second straight race held without a caution – the lack of respite on this high-speed road course taking its toll on the drivers – the yellow flag flew for an aborted start after Mikhail Aleshin, Carlos Munoz and Haworth ran into each other.

BRUCE MARTIN

AT A GLANCE

- 1 Pagenaud Penske
- 2 Rahal Rahal Letterman Lanigan
- 3 Newgarden Carpenter

➔ P47 FULL RESULTS



Newgarden followed 2015 win with a podium

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PETE LITTLER

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PFL MOTORSPORT PROVING DISABILITY IS NO BARRIER

PFL Motorsport is making history in British GT this year, while defying adversity at the same time.

Team founder Pete Littler is the first disabled driver to compete within Britain's premier sportscar championship, handling a 600bhp six-litre V12 Aston Martin Vantage GT3 with rising star Jody Fannin.

A serious accident in 2004 left Littler with life-changing injuries, which included the amputation of his right leg, and multiple operations to fit a false hip and pins in his back and pelvis. Littler is classed as 40 per cent disabled.

Regardless, Littler is determined to make his mark in GT racing, and hopes to inspire other people – both able-bodied and disabled – to challenge themselves.

"This year is a dream for me to be on the grid with so many great drivers and teams, but in truth this year is about more than just racing," says former rally driver Littler.

"This is about proving that even if you're disabled, you can still have plenty of scope and opportunities to succeed.

"It's brought to my attention other people who have adversity in their lives. I've seen a lot of people in dark places, and I've been there myself as I was told I'd never walk again after my accident. I hope that through racing I can show people that you can overcome challenges and deal with the cards life has dealt you.

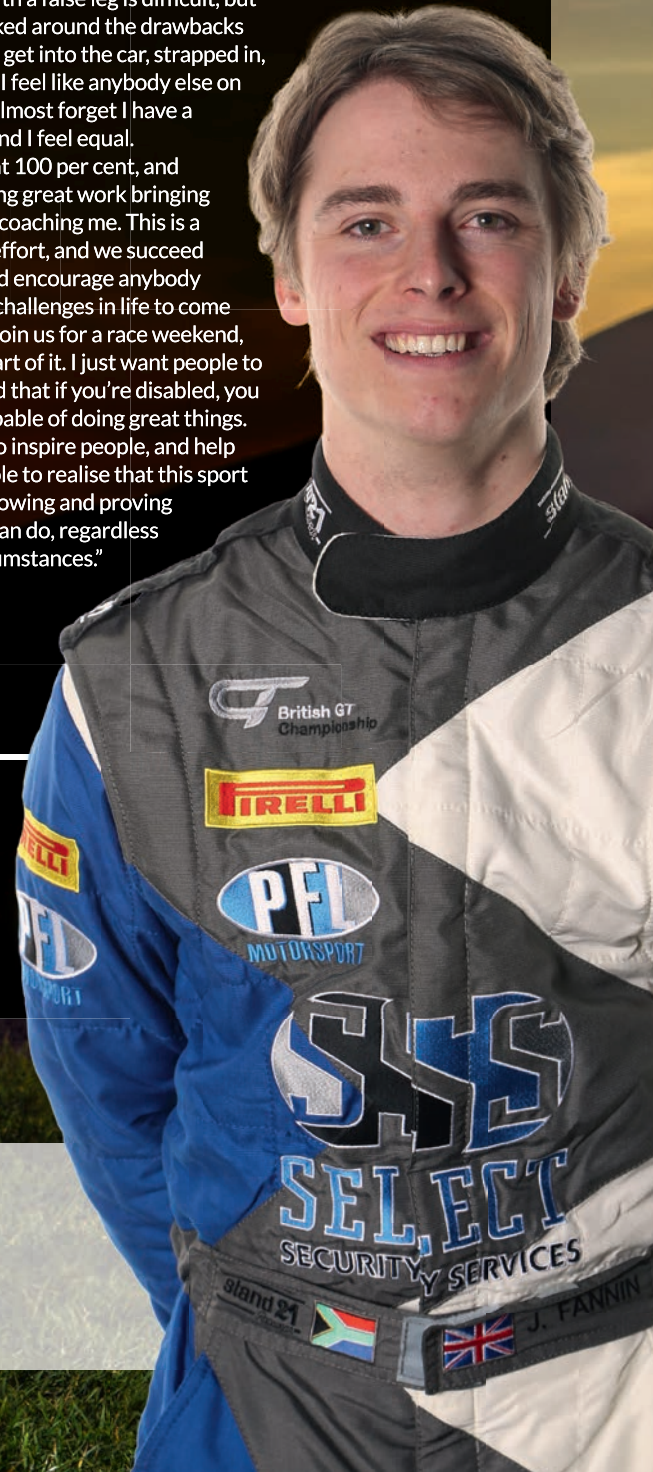
"I'd love to see more disabled people getting involved in motor sport. The sport's window to help people with disabilities is now wider than ever, with the technology that's available and the support from organisations like the MSA [Motor Sports Association]. For a lot of people who have suffered life-changing injuries it can be easy to think your life is over, but it's about picking yourself up and changing your mindset and reassessing what you can and can't do. You have to keep challenging yourself and pushing boundaries, and that's what racing is about for me."

Littler has worked with Fannin to adapt to the Aston Martin, which runs almost no modifications to accommodate for his false leg and restricted movement. The only change is a modified throttle heel board, which allows Littler to vary the power by sliding his leg back and forth from the thigh.

"Jody is a very talented guy," adds Littler.

"Driving with a false leg is difficult, but we've worked around the drawbacks and when I get into the car, strapped in, helmet on, I feel like anybody else on the grid. I almost forget I have a disability and I feel equal.

"I drive at 100 per cent, and Jody is doing great work bringing me on and coaching me. This is a real team effort, and we succeed together. I'd encourage anybody that faces challenges in life to come down and join us for a race weekend, come be part of it. I just want people to understand that if you're disabled, you are still capable of doing great things. We want to inspire people, and help other people to realise that this sport is about showing and proving what you can do, regardless of the circumstances."



PFL MOTORSPORT

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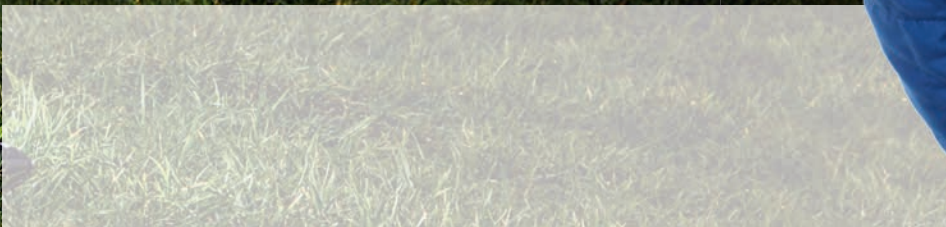


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Dillmann leads from Nissany and Vaxiviere



VAN DER LAAN/LAT

Dillmann's redemption

FORMULA V8 3.5 SERIES
HUNGARORING (H)
APRIL 23-24
ROUND 2/9

JOHNNY CECOTTO JR'S VICTORY FOR RP Motorsport last Saturday was a worthy reward for the Italian team's bold decision to enter the Formula V8 3.5 series during the category's period of uncertainty over the winter.

A late-race mistake by long-time leader Tom Dillmann greatly eased Cecotto's path to the top step of the podium, but the experienced Frenchman reversed any loss to his reputation by breaking both his and AVF's win duck in treacherous conditions on Sunday.

RP understandably faced a steep learning curve pre-season. Former Carlin engineer Marcus Koch was brought on board for the Hungaroring, and Cecotto set a track record in Friday free practice, the pace somewhat flattered by the circuit's resurfacing. But come qualifying, the GP2 race winner was unable to challenge Dillmann, who racked up his third pole position in just three 2016 meetings.

Dillmann banished the memory of two woeful starts at Motorland Aragon a week earlier by executing a flawless getaway. Fellow front-row starter Aurelien Panis scraped through Turn 1 in fourth, having been outjumped by Fortec's Louis Deletraz and Cecotto.

Deletraz was faced with the tough task of maintaining focus in considerable discomfort. A split tank steadily deposited fuel into the cockpit, burning the Swiss youngster's backside. Deletraz's distress contributed to Cecotto pulling off an unorthodox move around his outside at Turn 12 on the fifth lap.

Up front, Dillmann extended a 2.6s cushion, but the Mulhouse driver's advantage would

shortly be negated. A collision between Alfonso Celis Jr and Egor Orudzhev at Turn 6, while disputing seventh, brought out the safety car.

Dillmann controlled the restart admirably, only to outbrake himself at the penultimate hairpin. Cecotto was gifted the lead, as Deletraz completed the podium behind a despondent Dillmann.

The severity of Sunday's bad weather required a safety-car start for race two. When the race went green, Roy Nissany pirouetted out of second exiting the final corner, dropping to seventh. Meanwhile, poleman Dillmann led just half a lap before aquaplaning off and losing the lead to SMP Racing's Matthieu Vaxiviere.

Dillmann, Panis and Nissany were among those to pit at the first opportunity on lap six. When the safety car was called out again on the following tour, the early stoppers were handed a sizeable advantage. Vaxiviere, in contrast, was cruelly denied his shot of glory.

Adrenalin-filled after losing a position to Panis through a sluggish tyre change, Dillmann pushed hard and swiftly recovered the lead. Nissany set fastest lap in an impressive recovery, and would finish 0.8s in arrears of Dillmann, who secured a long overdue victory. Panis scrambled home to complete the podium, while the unfortunate Vaxiviere hustled back to fifth as Yu Kanamaru spun on the final lap.

PETER MILLS

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Johnny Cecotto Jr, 27 laps in 42m58.954s; 2 Tom Dillmann, +2.290s; 3 Louis Deletraz; 4 Aurelien Panis; 5 Matthieu Vaxiviere; 6 Roy Nissany; 7 Beitske Visser; 8 Pietro Fittipaldi; 9 Yu Kanamaru; 10 Vitor Baptista. **Race 2** 1 Dillmann, 19 laps in 43m10.395s; 2 Nissany, +0.898s; 3 Panis; 4 Deletraz; 5 Vaxiviere; 6 Cecotto; 7 Rene Binder; 8 Fittipaldi; 9 Egor Orudzhev; 10 Kanamaru. **Points** 1 Dillmann, 76; 2= Panis & Deletraz, 62; 4 Cecotto, 43; 5 Vaxiviere, 38; 6 Nissany, 38.

IN BRIEF

INDY LIGHTS

Anglo-Emirati Ed Jones has moved to the top of the points after a win and a second at Barber Motorsports Park. Jones led all the way in race one, while fellow Carlin runner Felix Serralles was promoted to second by collisions between Felix Rosenqvist and Santiago Urrutia, and RC Enerson and Scott Hargrove. Urrutia won the second race, the Uruguayan moving his Schmidt Peterson car past Dean Stoneman and Jones early on. Stoneman completed the podium.

PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE

Alvaro Parente (McLaren) and Michael Cooper (Cadillac) took the wins at Barber Motorsports Park. Parente won the first from the Caddy pair of Cooper and Johnny O'Connell. Cooper stepped up in the second to win a fight with Parente, with O'Connell third again.

JAPANESE FORMULA 3

Two-time series runner-up Kenta Yamashita started as expected at Suzuka with a double win in his TOM'S Dallara-Toyota. His rookie team-mate, Formula 4 champion Sho Tsuboi, claimed a second and a third place, as did Welshman Jann Mardenborough in his B-Max Racing Dallara-Volkswagen.

FORMULA RENAULT NEC

European F3 refugee Dorian Boccocacci leads the points after claiming a win and a fifth in the opener at Monza. The Tech 1 Racing-run Frenchman passed early leader Jehan Daruvala in race one, then held off a train from which Nikita Troitskiy emerged to take second, with Lando Norris winning a fight with Daruvala for third. R-Ace GP driver Max Defourny won race two, with Daruvala beating Will Palmer and Norris to second.

TCR INTERNATIONAL

Gianni Morbidelli moved into the series lead thanks to a win at Estoril in his West Coast Racing Honda. The Italian passed long-time leader Mato Homola, with the Leopard Racing VW Golfs of Jean-Karl Vernay and Stefano Comini also making it onto the podium ahead of Homola. James Nash won the reversed-grid race (and goes second in the points) in his Craft Bamboo SEAT from Comini and Morbidelli.

EUROFORMULA OPEN

Jack Aitken geared up for his GP3 campaign with a win at Estoril on an outing with RP Motorsport, the Brit beating Leonardo Pulcini and Damiano Fioravanti in race two. Aitken clashed with Colton Herta in the opener. That race was won by Pulcini (Campos Racing) from Ferdinand Habsburg and Diego Menchaca.

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

Phil Keen and Shaun Balfe won the first race at Estoril in their Balfe Motorsport Ferrari from the BMW of Gustavo Yacaman and Fernando Monje. The Garage 59 McLaren of Duncan Tappy and Michael Benham won race two after Alexander West (McLaren) and Fabrizio Crestani (Lamborghini) collided on the final lap.



Gunther moves in front in dramatic

FORMULA 3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
HUNGARORING (H)
APRIL 23-24
ROUND 2/10

IT'S NO SECRET THAT LANCE STROLL and George Russell are the expected European Formula 3 title challengers this year for Prema Powerteam and Hitech Grand Prix respectively. But the victories at the Hungaroring were instead mopped up by their team-mates on a weekend where, as at Paul Ricard, F3 served up thrilling racing and controversy, garnished this time by a bewildering episode of mysterious tyre performance on the brand-new, high-grip track surface.

The talented Maximilian Gunther moved into the championship lead thanks to a win in the second race in his Prema car, before Formula Renault graduate Ben Barnicoat provided a feel-good story for the Hitech squad, the cheerful East Midlander netting the team its first win in a wet finale after Gunther and Russell had collided while battling for the lead. But Barnicoat had been pipped to the post to become the first rookie F3 winner this season: in a gripping, three-abreast contest, Ralf Aron had triumphed in the opener, the Prema-run Estonian leading a podium clean sweep by F4 graduates in a race where form was turned on its head by the tyre problems.

All the while, Stroll racked up impressive points in difficult circumstances, while, as at Ricard, Russell haemorrhaged them.

It started with Russell losing a possible 25 in race one. When triple poleman Gunther fluffed the getaway, Russell made his best-ever F3 race start to lead as the German lost further places in the opening corners to Aron and Stroll. Russell thought he was home free, but within just a few racing laps his tyres were blistering. This had already struck Prema's pre-weekend championship leader Nick Cassidy together with Stroll in second qualifying, and had provided a knock-on effect in Russell getting baulked by the struggling Cassidy, preventing an attack at the front row.

Now Russell was experiencing the same phenomenon. Quickly a queue built up behind him, with Aron finally piercing the Brit's defences at half-distance when he slithered down the inside at Turn 6. Stroll was next in line, but the Canadian is a reformed man since his mid-2015 accident spree and doesn't take big racing risks. That delayed Gunther and led to an ever-increasing train of frantic pursuit, and it was finally feisty Red Bull junior Niko Kari who demoted Russell with six laps to go.

Russell's stunning racecraft had allowed Aron to build an enormous 10-second gap before he was warned by the team to back off to save his Hankooks. From 1m35s, he dropped to 1m40s/1m41s, just matching Russell's pace. But when Kari and then Joel Eriksson wriggled through, it became clear that their Motopark team was truly on top of the tyre situation. Now Aron had quick guys chasing him, but due to his leisurely

mid-race pace he had enough rubber left to up the pace back into the 1m35s, leaving Finn Kari 1.5s short and Eriksson only a further 0.8s adrift on an all-Baltic podium.

Russell and Cassidy, who in turn had been opposite-locking his way around and delaying the train for seventh place, eventually retired, Cassidy declaring that he would not be able to start the third race if it was dry, due to having no usable rubber left.

A paddock rethink on tyre pressures wiped out Motopark's advantage in race two, although Cassidy was still stricken. This time Gunther made no mistake at the start and he was able to pull a gap on Aron.

Russell jumped from fifth to third, but mindful of his first-race woes he took it very easily, and Motopark's Chinese Ferrari protege Guan Yu Zhou found a way past at mid-distance. With a few laps to go the rubber was OK and Russell went for it. "I was on four old tyres – the only one of the top runners," said Russell, whose wilting Hankooks in race one had all been brand-new. "I took it cautious, but by the last few laps I'd come so far that even if they dropped off it'd be possible to hold it. Then I learnt I could have pushed harder through the race..." Russell's very last lap was just 0.170s off Gunther's overall fastest. Cue more head-scratching.

None of the tyre stuff mattered on Sunday, as the balmy spring warmth gave way to rain and cold. Gunther led away from a safety-car start, and Russell moved up to second as front-row man Sergio

AT A GLANCE

RACE ONE

- 1 Aron Prema
- 2 Kari Motopark
- 3 Eriksson Motopark

RACE TWO

- 1 Gunther Prema
- 2 Aron Prema
- 3 Zhou Motopark

RACE THREE

- 1 Barnicoat Hitech
- 2 Eriksson Motopark
- 3 Stroll Prema

➔ P46 FULL RESULTS



Disaster looms as Russell chases Gunther

weekend

Sette Camara spun. Now Russell charged up to Gunther, who was taking wide lines in the wet. Russell saw an opening at Turn 11 – normally flat in the dry – and was at least fully alongside when contact was made, front wheel to front wheel. Gunther’s right-front suspension broke and he slithered into the barriers, Russell’s left-front too and he toured to the pits, although he was surprised at the damage as the contact was light. He was also surprised to get a three-place grid penalty for race one at Pau – this one had ‘racing incident’ written all over it.

Barnicoat, who felt lucky to survive light contact with Cassidy as the Kiwi spun at the green flags, was now leading from Eriksson, and held the gap at just over a second before Eriksson slid wide with four laps to go. Stroll took the final podium spot when he forced Zhou into a mistake.

Stroll’s 31 points, to the 35 of Hungary top-scorer Gunther, was a fantastic return after his tyre woes in qualifying, while pre-weekend leader Cassidy scored just two. Even more puzzling is that Gunther, who had no worries on tyres, has the most aggressive driving style at Prema. “It’s hard to understand,” said team boss Rene Rosin. “All four cars are exactly the same on set-up. We have two cars that are fast, and two that were almost embarrassing.”

The race is still, therefore, wide open. Gunther leads Russell by 43 points – and there are nine drivers in between...

MARCUS SIMMONS



Yamamoto was the class act at Suzuka

Yamamoto starts in style

SUPER FORMULA
SUZUKA (J)
APRIL 24
ROUND 1/7

NAOKI YAMAMOTO GOT HIS SEASON off to a great start with victory in his Mugen-run, Honda-powered Dallara.

Yamamoto took pole position for the eighth time and was able to make a big gap in the race over Yuji Kunimoto, who started alongside on the front row and emerged as the leading Toyota runner in his Cerumo-Ing car. Even a slight hesitation getting his car going after his pitstop couldn’t harm Yamamoto on his way to victory.

McLaren Formula 1 protege and reigning GP2 champion Stoffel Vandoorne completed the podium on his Super Formula debut. Vandoorne made up one position from his grid spot of fourth at the start, and managed

a very consistent race to follow Kunimoto in his Dandelion Dallara-Honda.

Behind Takashi Kogure and Koudai Tsukakoshi, Britain’s James Rossiter gained places from 10th on the grid to finish sixth. Andre Lotterer was running ahead of Rossiter after a bad qualifying, only for suspension failure at the very end of the race to drop him to seventh, while Bertrand Baguette made it two Belgians in the points.

JIRO TAKAHASHI

RESULTS

1 Naoki Yamamoto (Dallara-Honda), 43 laps in 1h13m59.415s; **2 Yuji Kunimoto (D-Toyota)**, +11.710s; **3 Stoffel Vandoorne (D-H)**; **4 Takashi Kogure (D-H)**; **5 Koudai Tsukakoshi (D-H)**; **6 James Rossiter (D-T)**; **7 Andre Lotterer (D-T)**; **8 Bertrand Baguette (D-H)**; **9 Tomoki Nojiri (D-H)**; **10 Joao Paulo de Oliveira (D-T)**. **Points 1 Yamamoto, 11; 2 Kunimoto, 8; 3 Vandoorne, 6; 4 Kogure, 5; 5 Tsukakoshi, 4; 6 Rossiter, 3.**

Edwards whacks Busch

NASCAR SPRINT CUP
RICHMOND (USA)
APRIL 24
ROUND 9/36

CARL EDWARDS AND KYLE BUSCH provided an early insight into this year’s title fight at Richmond International Raceway as the Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota pair continue to emerge as frontrunners.

Edwards may have grabbed the win on the final lap, but it was the manner of the pass that raised eyebrows. Edwards was the more dominant and led 151 of the 400 laps, but he fell behind midway through the race as the momentum shifted toward Busch.

The reigning Sprint Cup champion looked to be on course to win his third race in

four outings after the challenge from elder brother Kurt Busch faded following a slow pitstop during a late caution.

But having clawed up to second by the final restart, Edwards was not content and bumped his team-mate on the final lap to sweep past and snatch his second consecutive win.

Jimmie Johnson did well to finish third despite experiencing handling issues midway through, while his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet team-mate Kasey Kahne quietly finished fourth. Kevin Harvick rounded out the top five.

Tony Stewart recovered from a puncture, which put him a lap down, to finish 19th on his return from injury.

RESULTS

1 Carl Edwards (Toyota Camry), 400 laps in 3h05m26s; **2 Kyle Busch (Toyota)**, +0.675s; **3 Jimmie Johnson (Chevrolet SS)**; **4 Kasey Kahne (Chevy)**; **5 Kevin Harvick (Chevy)**; **6 Denny Hamlin (Toyota)**; **7 Matt Kenseth (Toyota)**; **8 Joey Logano (Ford Fusion)**; **9 Martin Truex Jr (Toyota)**; **10 Kurt Busch (Chevy)**. **Chase grid 1 Edwards, 2 wins/331 points; 2 Johnson, 2/310; 3 Kyle Busch, 2/302; 4 Harvick, 1/324; 5 Hamlin, 1/258; 6 Brad Keselowski, 1/255; 7 Logano, 0/299; 8 Kurt Busch, 0/279; 9 Dale Earnhardt Jr, 0/278; 10 Truex, 0/246; 11 Chase Elliott, 0/234; 12 Austin Dillon, 0/234; 13 Jamie McMurray, 0/224; 14 Kahne, 0/222; 15 Kenseth, 0/212; 16 Ryan Newman, 0/205.**



Edwards lost gift of gravity after win

LABOUILLY/LAT

RESULTS

FORMULA 3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 2/10, HUNGARORING (H), APRIL 23-24

RACE 1 (21 LAPS – 57.167 MILES)

1	Ralf Aron (EST) <i>Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F315</i>	35m01.789s
2	Niko Kari (FIN) <i>Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F315</i>	+1.551s
3	Joel Eriksson (S) <i>Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F315</i>	+2.400s
4	Lance Stroll (CDN) <i>Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F316</i>	+11.297s
5	Maximilian Gunther (D) <i>Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F315</i>	+11.801s
6	Alessio Lorandi (I) <i>Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F312</i>	+12.174s
7	Sergio Sette Camara (BR) <i>Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F314</i>	+12.612s
8	Guan Yu Zhou (PRC) <i>Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F314</i>	+13.090s
9	Benjamin Barnicoat (GB) <i>Hitech GP / Dallara-Mercedes F316</i>	+13.632s
10	Mikkel Jensen (DK) <i>Mucke Motorsport / Dallara-Mercedes F312</i>	+14.407s
11	Ryan Tveter (USA) <i>Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F316</i>	+15.381s
12	Harrison Newey (GB) <i>Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F316</i>	+16.289s
13	Pedro Piquet (BR) <i>Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F316</i>	+17.095s
14	Arjun Maini (IND) <i>T-Sport / Dallara-NBE F312</i>	+28.629s
15	Li Zhi Cong (PRC) <i>Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F314</i>	+29.296s
R	George Russell (GB) <i>Hitech GP / Dallara-Mercedes F315</i>	17 laps-tyres
R	Nick Cassidy (NZ) <i>Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F314</i>	15 laps-tyres
R	Anthoine Hubert (F) <i>Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F314</i>	11 laps-oil pressure
R	Callum Iloft (GB) <i>Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F312</i>	0 laps-accident
NS	Nikita Mazepin (RUS) <i>Hitech GP / Dallara-Mercedes F315</i>	banned

Winner's average speed 97.916mph. Fastest lap Eriksson, 1m34.722s, 103.461mph.

QUALIFYING 1

1 **Gunther**, 1m34.107s; 2 **Russell**, 1m34.187s; 3 **Aron**, 1m34.257s; 4 **Stroll**, 1m34.284s; 5 **Eriksson**, 1m34.339s; 6 **Kari**, 1m34.423s; 7 **Cassidy**, 1m34.615s; 8 **Sette Camara**, 1m34.617s; 9 **Iloft**, 1m34.676s; 10 **Lorandi**, 1m34.776s; 11 **Mazepin**, 1m34.891s; 12 **Tveter**, 1m35.043s; 13 **Barnicoat**, 1m35.118s; 14 **Zhou**, 1m35.223s; 15 **Jensen**, 1m35.401s; 16 **Hubert**, 1m35.432s; 17 **Piquet**, 1m35.587s; 18 **Li**, 1m35.856s; 19 **Newey**, 1m35.894s; 20 **Maini**, 1m45.003s.

RACE 2 (22 LAPS – 59.889 MILES)

1 **Gunther**, 35m03.935s; 2 **Aron**, +3.676s; 3 **Zhou**, +4.816s; 4 **Russell**, +10.451s; 5 **Sette Camara**, +11.306s; 6 **Lorandi**, +15.175s; 7 **Jensen**, +28.495s; 8 **Stroll**, +29.292s; 9 **Iloft**, +30.002s; 10 **Barnicoat**, +30.642s; 11 **Tveter**, +31.111s; 12 **Newey**, +31.675s; 13 **Hubert**, +34.435s; 14 **Piquet**, +35.720s; 15 **Maini**, +59.497s; 16 **Cassidy**, +1m10.143s; R **Mazepin**, 17 laps-accident damage; R **Eriksson**, 9 laps-front wing; R **Kari**, 9 laps-saved tyres; R **Li**, 1 lap-clutch plate.

Winner's average speed 102.475mph.

Fastest lap Gunther, 1m34.023s, 104.229mph.

QUALIFYING 2

1 **Gunther**, 1m33.614s; 2 **Aron**, 1m33.778s; 3 **Sette Camara**, 1m33.814s; 4 **Zhou**, 1m34.300s; 5 **Russell**, 1m34.458s; 6 **Cassidy**, 1m34.856s; 7 **Lorandi**, 1m35.034s; 8 **Barnicoat**, 1m35.116s; 9 **Stroll**, 1m35.122s; 10 **Kari**, 1m35.297s; 11 **Eriksson**, 1m35.300s; 12 **Jensen**, 1m35.377s; 13 **Tveter**, 1m35.386s; 14 **Iloft**, 1m35.715s; 15 **Piquet**, 1m35.746s; 16 **Mazepin**, 1m35.911s; 17 **Newey**, 1m35.938s; 18 **Maini**, 1m36.041s; 19 **Li**, 1m37.863s; 20 **Hubert**, 1m36.069s*. * grid penalty.

RACE 3 (16 LAPS – 43.556 MILES)

1 **Barnicoat**, 35m22.885s; 2 **Eriksson**, +4.998s; 3 **Stroll**, +6.032s; 4 **Zhou**, +17.627s; 5 **Sette Camara**, +18.503s; 6 **Iloft**, +19.980s; 7 **Piquet**, +22.747s; 8 **Kari**, +24.067s; 9 **Cassidy**, +27.384s; 10 **Newey**, +29.868s; 11 **Jensen**, +30.474s; 12 **Lorandi**, +31.230s; 13 **Mazepin**, +32.585s; 14 **Hubert**, +34.097s; 15 **Maini**, +42.367s; 16 **Li**, +52.153s; R **Russell**, 6 laps-accident damage; R **Gunther**, 5 laps-accident; NS **Tveter**, engine; NS **Aron**, accident on recce lap.

Winner's average speed 73.862mph.

Fastest lap Stroll, 2m00.265s, 81.487mph.

GRID FOR RACE 3

1 **Gunther**; 2 **Sette Camara**; 3 **Russell**; 4 **Zhou**; 5 **Cassidy**; 6 **Barnicoat**; 7 **Eriksson**; 8 **Stroll**; 9 **Newey**; 10 **Aron**; 11 **Iloft**; 12 **Li**; 13 **Kari***; 14 **Piquet**; 15 **Maini**; 16 **Jensen**; 17 **Lorandi**; 18 **Hubert**; 19 **Mazepin***. * grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 **Gunther**, 70; 2 **Stroll**, 66; 3 **Eriksson**, 58; 4 **Cassidy**, 56; 5 **Aron**, 55; 6 **Zhou**, 50; 7 **Barnicoat**, 40; 8 **Iloft**, 36; 9 **Sette Camara**, 36; 10 **Jensen**, 31.



Lopez comes under pressure from Muller and Huff

Lopez makes up for Citroen blunder

WORLD TOURING CARS

HUNGARORING (H)

APRIL 24

ROUND 3/12

POLE POSITION NUMBER 16 AND VICTORY NUMBER 24 moved Jose Maria Lopez into outright third ahead of Alain Menu on each of those respective all-time lists. So relatively short has the Argentinian's time in the World Touring Car Championship been, yet so highly impressive is his record.

Lopez's third win from as many main races this year looked so comfortable near the finish as he eased clear of Citroen team-mate Yvan Muller, and it certainly made amends for a shocking strategy call in the opening affair.

But that masked just how hard the Citroens had been pushed mid-race, before Honda's Rob Huff was hit with a penalty while challenging for the lead. Muller and Huff had caught Lopez following a safety-car restart. Passing up a look the lead into Turn 1, Muller's conservatism instead allowed Huff a run for second on the approach to Turn 2.

Muller jolted left as the pair braked for the corner. A bump; a push; a pass. Huff sneaked past the C-Elysee after a number of touches and, as Muller moaned, Huff reeled the leader in.

Any satisfaction was quickly suppressed as the stewards, shortly after investigating the contact, handed Huff a drive-through for his role in the collision. This handed Lopez a clear run to victory, although the double champion closed out the race with a series of impressive laps.

Muller had no answer but deserved a podium spot for a strong start and impressive early pace – his second place was, incredibly, his first podium of the season – while there was some consolation for Honda as Tiago Monteiro finished third, to keep his early-season momentum rolling.

Cleared of any fault with its flat floor after a lengthy investigation, the Civic was a match for the C-Elysee in the Hungarian rain despite a gain of 70kg, so Huff's eventual sixth was a frustrating one, the Briton lamenting inconsistent penalties for "robbing the fans" of a fight for the win. He fared better than home hero and team-mate Norbert Michelisz, though, who clung on for dear life to score a solitary point after his left-rear wheel broke on the final lap.

Citroen's factory pair had got its tactics stupendously wrong in the first race (as Honda did similarly), each opting for four slicks on an evidently wet track, but satellite Sebastien Loeb Racing drivers Mehdi Bennani and Tom Chilton showed them how it was done with a fine one-two in their C-Elysees.

Bennani's path to victory was secured at the first turn as he converted his pole into an early lead, but Chilton advanced from 10th with a masterful drive to clinch his first podium in a year ahead of Lada's Nicky Catsburg, who followed up his Slovakia Ring podium from a week earlier with another third place.

JACK COZENS

AT A GLANCE

RACE ONE

- 1 **Bennani** Citroen
- 2 **Chilton** Citroen
- 3 **Catsburg** Lada

RACE TWO

- 1 **Lopez** Citroen
- 2 **Muller** Citroen
- 3 **Monteiro** Honda

➔ P47 FULL RESULTS

ROUND-UP

INDYCAR SERIES

ROUND 4/15, BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK (USA), APRIL 24 (90 LAPS – 207.000 MILES)

1	Simon Pagenaud (F) <i>Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	1h48m42.3334s
2	Graham Rahal (USA) <i>Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda</i>	+13.7476s
3	Josef Newgarden (USA) <i>Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	+15.8039s
4	Will Power (AUS) <i>Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	+16.7315s
5	Juan Pablo Montoya (CO) <i>Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	+21.1160s
6	James Hinchcliffe (CDN) <i>Schmidt Peterson Motorsports / Dallara-Honda</i>	+23.6222s
7	Helio Castroneves (BR) <i>Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	+25.5391s
8	Tony Kanaan (BR) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	+27.9007s
9	Charlie Kimball (USA) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	+31.8726s
10	Scott Dixon (NZ) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	+39.0603s
11	Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA) <i>Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda</i>	+40.7485s
12	Marco Andretti (USA) <i>Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda</i>	+53.3648s
13	Takuma Sato (J) <i>AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Honda</i>	+55.2122s
14	Carlos Munoz (CO) <i>Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda</i>	+1m03.5214s
15	Alexander Rossi (USA) <i>Andretti Herta Autosport / Dallara-Honda</i>	+1m04.8661s
16	Sebastien Bourdais (F) <i>KVSH Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	-1 lap
17	Mikhail Aleshin (RUS) <i>Schmidt Peterson Motorsports / Dallara-Honda</i>	-1 lap
18	Luca Filippi (I) <i>Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda</i>	-1 lap
19	Jack Hawksworth (GB) <i>AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Honda</i>	-1 lap
20	Conor Daly (USA) <i>Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda</i>	-1 lap
21	Max Chilton (GB) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet</i>	-1 lap

Winner's average speed 114.253mph. Fastest lap Dixon, 1m08.4533s, 120.958mph.

QUALIFYING

Q3 1 Pagenaud, 1m06.7262s; 2 Power, 1m06.9421s; 3 Newgarden, 1m07.0283s; 4 Dixon, 1m07.2083s; 5 Bourdais, 1m07.2965s; 6 Rahal, 1m07.6388s.

Q2 Bourdais, 1m06.6001s; Dixon, 1m06.6522s; Power, 1m06.7742s; Rahal, 1m06.8166s; Pagenaud, 1m06.8665s; Newgarden, 1m06.9900s; 7 Castroneves, 1m07.0129s; 8 Hinchcliffe, 1m07.0955s; 9 Kanaan, 1m07.1715s; 10 Kimball, 1m07.3020s; 11 Chilton, 1m08.0728s; 12 Filippi, 1m08.3655s.

Q1 – GROUP 1 Power, 1m06.7274s; Pagenaud, 1m06.7630s; Newgarden, 1m06.7668s; Kanaan, 1m07.1972s; Hinchcliffe, 1m07.2048s; Filippi, 1m07.2243s; 14 Hawksworth, 1m07.2360s; 16 Sato, 1m07.2385s; 18 Hunter-Reay, 1m07.4449s; 20 Rossi, 1m07.5612s; 21 Montoya, 1m07.5627s.

Q1 – GROUP 2 Dixon, 1m06.8810s; Bourdais, 1m06.9427s; Castroneves, 1m07.0125s; Rahal, 1m07.1635s; Kimball, 1m07.1954s; Chilton, 1m07.2408s; 13 Aleshin, 1m07.2417s; 15 Munoz, 1m07.2435s; 17 Daly, 1m07.2974s; 19 Andretti, 1m07.6570s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Pagenaud, 188; 2 Dixon, 140; 3 Montoya, 136; 4 Castroneves, 118; 5 Kanaan, 106; 6 Rahal, 100; 7 Power, 94; 8 Newgarden, 91; 9 Sato, 90; 10 Hunter-Reay, 87.

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 3/12, HUNGARORING (H), APRIL 24

RACE 1 (14 LAPS – 38.111 MILES)

1	Mehdi Bennani (MA) <i>Sebastien Loeb Racing / Citroen C-Elysee WTCC</i>	30m49.813s
2	Tom Chilton (GB) <i>Sebastien Loeb Racing / Citroen C-Elysee WTCC</i>	+3.313s
3	Nicky Catsburg (NL) <i>Lada Sport / Lada Vesta WTCC</i>	+6.367s
4	Fredrik Ekblom (S) <i>Polestar Cyan Racing / Volvo S60 WTCC</i>	+13.918s
5	Gabriele Tarquini (I) <i>Lada Sport / Lada Vesta WTCC</i>	+14.566s
6	Hugo Valente (F) <i>Lada Sport / Lada Vesta WTCC</i>	+29.575s
7	Gregoire Demoustier (F) <i>Sebastien Loeb Racing / Citroen C-Elysee WTCC</i>	+34.530s
8	John Filippi (F) <i>Campos Racing / Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1</i>	+47.418s
9	Ferenc Ficzá (H) <i>Zengo Motorsport / Honda Civic WTCC</i>	+52.927s
10	Rene Munnich (D) <i>Munnich Motorsport / Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1</i>	+1m48.021s
11	Rob Huff (GB) <i>Honda Racing Team / JAS Honda Civic WTCC</i>	+1m58.809s
12	Tiago Monteiro (P) <i>Honda Racing Team / JAS Honda Civic WTCC</i>	+2m26.774s
13	Yvan Muller (F) <i>Citroen Total / Citroen C-Elysee WTCC</i>	-1 lap
14	Jose Maria Lopez (RA) <i>Citroen Total / Citroen C-Elysee WTCC</i>	-1 lap
15	Tom Coronel (NL) <i>ROAL Motorsport / Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1</i>	-1 lap
16	Theo Bjork (S) <i>Polestar Cyan Racing / Volvo S60 WTCC</i>	-1 lap
NS	Norbert Michelisz (H) <i>Honda Racing Team / JAS Honda Civic WTCC</i>	turbo

Winner's average speed 74.169mph. Fastest lap Lopez, 2m09.820s, 75.489mph.

GRID FOR RACE 1

1 Bennani; 2 Ekblom; 3 Muller; 4 Catsburg; 5 Michelisz; 6 Monteiro; 7 Huff; 8 Coronel; 9 Lopez; 10 Chilton; 11 Tarquini; 12 Valente; 13 Filippi; 14 Ficzá; 15 Munnich; 16 Demoustier; 17 Bjork.

RACE 2 (17 LAPS – 46.278 MILES)

1 Lopez, 38m37.180s; 2 Muller, +2.821s; 3 Monteiro, +14.981s; 4 Bjork, +18.026s; 5 Chilton, +19.834s; 6 Huff, +24.535s; 7 Coronel, +26.979s; 8 Bennani, +27.898s; 9 Valente, +36.557s; 10 Michelisz, +36.867s; 11 Ekblom, +42.681s; 12 Filippi, +50.959s; 13 Catsburg, +58.529s; 14 Ficzá, +1m13.924s; 15 Munnich, -2 laps; 16 Tarquini, 5 laps-collision; R Demoustier, 2 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 71.898mph. Fastest lap Lopez, 2m10.774s, 74.938mph.

QUALIFYING

Q3 1 Lopez, 1m46.109s; 2 Coronel, 1m46.718s; 3 Huff, 1m46.833s; 4 Monteiro, 1m46.895s; 5 Bjork, 1m46.980s.

Q2 Huff, 1m46.349s; Lopez, 1m46.399s; Monteiro, 1m46.419s; Coronel, 1m46.457s; Bjork, 1m46.493s; 6 Catsburg, 1m46.725s; 7 Muller, 1m46.824s; 8 Ekblom, 1m46.831s; 9 Bennani, 1m47.078s; 10 Chilton, 1m47.159s; 11 Tarquini, 1m47.170s; 17 Michelisz, 1m46.597s*. * put to back of grid.

Q1 Lopez, 1m46.261s; Tarquini, 1m46.633s; Huff, 1m46.706s; Bjork, 1m46.722s; Bennani, 1m46.813s; Monteiro, 1m46.843s; Catsburg, 1m46.859s; Michelisz, 1m46.920s; Coronel, 1m46.929s; Ekblom, 1m46.993s; Chilton, 1m47.247s; Muller, 1m47.358s; 12 Valente, 1m47.484s; 13 Filippi, 1m47.704s; 14 Demoustier, 1m47.751s; 15 Munnich, 1m47.900s; 16 Ficzá, 1m48.707s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Lopez, 106; 2 Monteiro, 94; 3 Bennani, 77; 4 Huff, 60; 5 Muller, 54; 6 Michelisz, 53; 7 Catsburg, 50; 8 Chilton, 40; 9 Valente, 26; 10 Tarquini, 22.

BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE CUP

ROUND 1/5, MONZA (I), APRIL 24 (96 LAPS – 345.562 MILES)

1	Rob Bell (GB) <i>Come Ledogar</i> (F) <i>Shane van Gisbergen</i> (NZ) <i>Garage 59 / McLaren 650S GT3</i>	3h00m16.723s
2	Dominik Baumann (A) <i>Maximilian Buhk</i> (D) <i>Jazeman Jaafar</i> (MAL) <i>HTP Motorsport / Mercedes-AMG GT3</i>	+0.341s
3	Andy Soucek (E) <i>Maxime Soulet</i> (B) <i>Wolfgang Reip</i> (B) <i>Bentley Team / M-Sport Bentley Continental GT3</i>	+29.623s
4	Lucas Ordenez (E) <i>Mitsunori Takaboshi</i> (J) <i>Alex Buncombe</i> (GB) <i>Nissan GT Academy Team RJN / Nissan GT-R Nismo GT3</i>	+47.670s
5	Michal Broniszewski (PL) <i>Andrea Rizzoli</i> (I) <i>Alessandro Bonacini</i> (I) <i>Kessel Racing / Ferrari 488 GT3</i>	+58.047s
6	Will Stevens (GB) <i>Antonio Garcia</i> (E) <i>Nico Muller</i> (CH) <i>WRT / Audi R8 LMS</i>	+1m17.774s
7	Hubert Haupt (D) <i>Adam Christodoulou</i> (GB) <i>Andreas Simonsen</i> (S) <i>Black Falcon / Mercedes-AMG GT3</i>	+1m21.561s
8	Jeroen Bleekemolen (NL) <i>Mirko Bortolotti</i> (I) <i>Rolf Ineichen</i> (CH) <i>GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3</i>	+1m38.719s
9	Frederic Vervisch (B) <i>Laurens Vanthoor</i> (B) <i>Dries Vanthoor</i> (A) <i>WRT / Audi R8 LMS</i>	+1m40.618s
10	Motoaki Ishikawa (J) <i>Lorenzo Bontempelli</i> (I) <i>Giancarlo Fisichella</i> (I) <i>AF Corse / Ferrari 488 GT3</i>	+1m48.412s
11	Daniel Keilwitz (D) <i>Steve Parrow</i> (D) <i>Alexander Mattschull</i> (D) <i>Rinaldi Racing / Ferrari 458 Italia GT3</i>	-1 lap
12	Mike Parisy (F) <i>Gregory Guilvert</i> (F) <i>Christopher Haase</i> (D) <i>Sainteloc Junior Team / Audi R8 LMS</i>	-1 lap
13	Ahmad Al Harthy (OM) <i>Jonny Adam</i> (GB) <i>Devon Modell</i> (GB) <i>Oman Racing Team (Motorbase) / Aston Martin Vantage GT3</i>	-1 lap
14	Guy Smith (GB) <i>Steven Kane</i> (GB) <i>Vincent Abril</i> (F) <i>Bentley Team M-Sport / Bentley Continental GT3</i>	-1 lap
15	Henry Hassid (F) <i>Philippe Giaouque</i> (F) <i>Franck Perera</i> (F) <i>ISR / Audi R8 LMS</i>	-1 lap
16	Rodrigo Baptista (BR) <i>Sergio Jimenez</i> (BR) <i>Filipe Albuquerque</i> (P) <i>Team WRT / Audi R8 LMS</i>	-1 lap
17	Marco Seefried (D) <i>Rinat Salikhov</i> (RUS) <i>Norbert Siedler</i> (A) <i>Rinaldi Racing / Ferrari 458 Italia GT3</i>	-1 lap
18	Miguel Toril (E) <i>Oliver Morley</i> (GB) <i>Maro Engel</i> (D) <i>Black Falcon / Mercedes-AMG GT3</i>	-1 lap
19	Patric Niederhauser (CH) <i>Daniel Zampieri</i> (I) <i>Fabio Babini</i> (I) <i>Attempo Racing / Lamborghini Huracan GT3</i>	-1 lap
20	Stephane Ortelli (MC) <i>Lorenz Frey</i> (CH) <i>Albert Costa</i> (E) <i>Emil Frey Racing / Jaguar Emil Frey G3</i>	-2 laps

Winners' average speed 115.009mph.

Fastest lap Fisichella, 1m48.948s, 118.942mph.

Pro-Am 1 Broniszewski/Bonacini/Rizzoli; 2 Fisichella/Bontempelli/Ishikawa; 3 Keilwitz/Mattschull/Parrow.
Am 1 Maurice Ricci (I)/Jean-Luc Beaubelique (F)/Gilles Vannelet (F) *ASP Mercedes-AMG GT3*; 2 Pierre Ehret (D)/Stef Vancampenhoudt (B) *Rinaldi Racing Ferrari 488 GT3*; 3 Miro Konopka (SK)/Andrzej Lewandowski (PL)/Teodor Myszkowski (PL) *ARC Bratislava Lamborghini Huracan GT3*.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Bell/Ledogar/van Gisbergen, 25; 2 Baumann/Buhk/Jaafar, 18; 3 Soucek/Soulet/Reip, 15; 4 Ordenez/Takaboshi/Buncombe, 12; 5 Stevens/Garcia/Muller, 10; 6 Haupt/Christodoulou/Simonsen, 8.

Overall Blancpain GT

1 Buhk/Baumann, 38; 2 Bell, 37; 3 L Vanthoor/Vervisch, 31; 4 Ledogar/van Gisbergen, 25; 5 Soulet/Soucek, 23; 6 Eng/Sims, 21.

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Suspension

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Body

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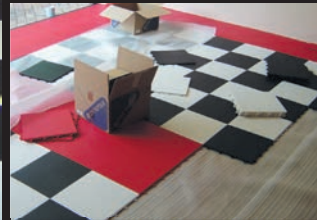
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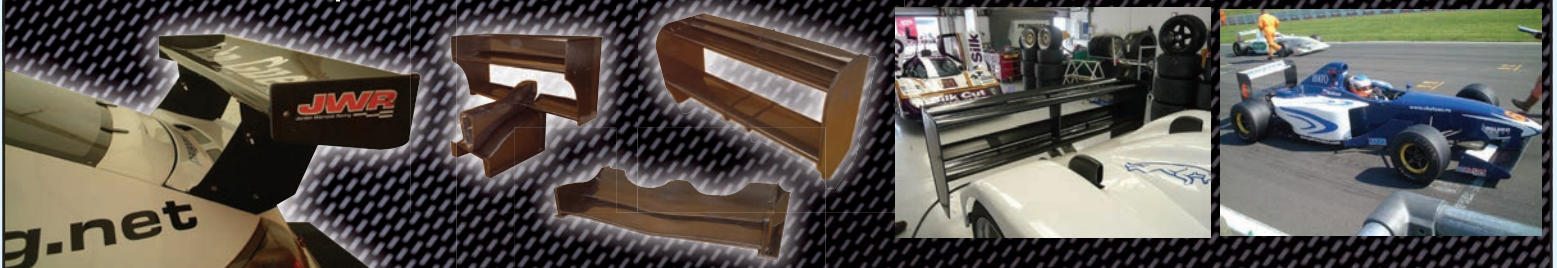
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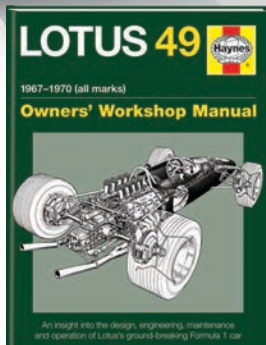
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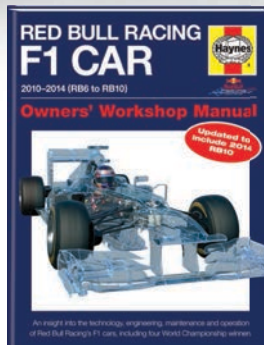
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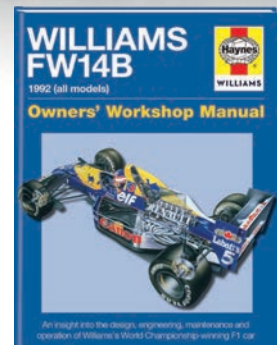
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Onroak Automotive and the United Autosports team are supporting the Prototype Cup

Ligier signs up for UK LMP3-based series

BUTE MOTORSPORT'S NEW Prototype Cup series has attracted factory support from Ligier parent company Onroak Automotive, and will hold its first race later this year.

The Prototype Cup will run for LMP3 machinery with a separate class for CN-spec sports cars. A two-hour pilot race will be held alongside the final rounds of the GT Cup – also run by Bute Motorsport – on the Snetterton 300 Circuit on October 8/9. A full six-round schedule, including events at Silverstone, Donington Park, Brands Hatch and Spa-Francorchamps is planned for 2017.

United Autosports, which recently became the UK agent for the Ligier JSP3 car, is the first team to commit to the series and will field a minimum of two cars. Other entries are expected to include the new Ave-Riley LMP3 car from UK agent Murphy Prototypes.

“We’ve worked so hard to bring this together and it’s really got a head of steam,” said Bute Motorsport’s Phil Boland. “We’ll run the pilot race this year to spread the message that this is happening, and then [there will be] a full series next season.

“LMP3 is one of the fastest-growing forms of motorsport in the world right now, and the level of interest we’ve had so far has been huge. Having the endorsement of a brand like Ligier and Onroak will only boost that.”

Onroak Automotive’s Christophe Profit said: “LMP3 is currently the fastest-selling product for Ligier. The car only ran for the first time six months ago and we’ve sold 43 chassis already. Our customers need places to race these cars and a national series like this is the perfect answer.

“There are only so many grid slots in the European and Asian Le Mans Series [which currently cater for LMP3], and our customers naturally want as much racing as they can.

“A series like this widens the market for LMP3 significantly.”

Onroak will provide spares and technical support for each round, as well as promote the series to its customers.

United Autosports’ co-founder Richard Dean said: “This is a very exciting concept because the UK has never seen a series like this. It’s real Le Mans prototypes being run on UK



Onroak’s Profit says Prototype Cup-type initiatives are ‘perfect’ for extra LMP3 demand

tracks. It will help make LMP3 even more accessible as drivers can gain additional mileage and the cars don’t cost much to maintain over a season, so will easily cope with the extra mileage.”

Bute motorsport head Marc Haynes added: “One of the important factors of the Prototype Cup is that we’ll have very strict technical control over the cars. LMP3 cars will have to run to ACO specification and CN cars to FIA homologation, and that should make it very, very close racing.”

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EBREY

BRITISH GT

Carroll gets Lambo outings

FORMER A1GP CHAMPION ADAM CARROLL WILL return to the British GT Championship for the next two rounds, replacing Lamborghini factory driver Fabio Babini at the Barwell Motorsport team.

Carroll, a multiple race winner in British GT, will share one of the squad's Lamborghini Huracan GT3s with Liam Griffin, who scored a podium finish in the season opener at Brands Hatch alongside Babini.

Babini had been placed with Barwell as a stand-in until Alexander Sims could take over the car from round four at Silverstone, but Barwell opted to take advantage of Carroll's availability.

Carroll got his first taste of the Huracan GT3 at Donington Park last weekend, having been drafted in to share a car with Darren Nelson in the GT Cup.

"Last weekend was very good timing because it gave me a chance to try the Huracan GT3 and bed myself in

with it," said Carroll. "It's a great car, and not really comparable to the older Ferrari 458 [which he previously drove in British GT]."

"The Ferrari is mechanically brilliant as it has so much raw grip and power, but it could be quite feisty on the limit and in British GT they just lacked the aerodynamics of the newer cars, which was what hurt the performance ultimately.

"The Lambo is so well sorted. The new-generation GT3 cars are so accessible as they're geared toward the gent drivers. It'll be great to be back in British GT again."

Barwell boss Mark Lemmer said: "Fabio did a great job and we're very thankful to him, but ideally we wanted a driver with knowledge of British GT and the British circuits, and Adam is an expert in both areas.

"Lamborghini is fully supportive of the change and we're looking forward to working with Adam."

GT CUP

WITT AIMS FOR BRIT GT WITH BENTLEY

JORDAN WITT IS AIMING for a British GT entry next season after taking two wins in his new Bentley Continental GT3 in last weekend's GT Cup races at Donington Park.

Witt has swapped his factory-run Chevron GR8 for the Bentley, which was delivered just four weeks ago. The car was entered by Witt's Jordan Racing team, but staffed by Porsche Carrera Cup squad Redline Racing.

"Racing with the Chevron was fun but we always had trouble with homologation papers whenever we wanted to race it anywhere," said Witt. "With the Bentley we have a universal product that we can enter into any GT championship going.

"The Continental is a world apart from the Chevron. GT3 is more like prototype racing now and the grip levels are unbelievable. We'll stay in GT Cup this year to learn and then we'd like to do British GT next season, maybe with a two-car team."

Redline Racing head Simon Leonard said: "The Continental is different to run than the Porsches we're used to but is such a well-sorted machine. It's a new challenge for us and for Jordan, so we figured teaming up was a good opportunity."

VOLKSWAGEN CUP

Witts beds in new Golf ahead of Volkswagen Cup

TIN-TOP CHAMPION TOM Witts will campaign the first race-spec MkVII Golf in this year's Volkswagen Racing Cup after shaking down the car at Donington Park last weekend.

Witts, who won the Production GTI title last year,

entered the new Maximum Motorsport-run car (right) in last weekend's VAG Trophy races, with a best finish of seventh, in preparation for the start of the VW Cup at Rockingham this weekend.

"The new car is a bit

different," said Witts. "It's basically a Scirocco under the skin so it's built on a proven platform.

"We had an anti-roll bar break in qualifying and a few gearbox selection issues, but that's normal for a new car.

"It looks great and has a lot of potential. The championship organisers want to move the VW Cup image forward along with the road car updates, so it was natural to try the MkVII. I'll do the full VW Cup in it this year."



WALKER



CLUBMANS

Beagle designer eyes full season

BEAGLE MKIV 1700 DESIGNER JIM Yardley is considering further Clubmans Cup appearances this season after the car's first race in 30 years at Croft last weekend.

The side-engined racer, once driven by Derek Bell, was guided to two second places and a third by Jonty Hair, who battled admirably with defending champion Alex Champkin in the much-fancied Vision V84.

"We're there with a 40-year-old car,

keeping up with the new cars with modern aerodynamics," said Hair.

"It's such a unique car – there's nothing like it. It only comes alive when you're fully on the limit, so you need to be on it the whole time."

The car does not currently qualify for the Clubmans Historic Classic class as its flywheel is too small, but Yardley is hopeful that the rules can be tweaked to allow the Beagle to make a full-time return to racing.

IN BRIEF



JTR CONTINUES SEARCH FOR DRIVERS

Ford MSA Formula squad JTR is still looking for drivers to compete in the category this year after running a single car for Dane Patrik Matthiesen (above) in the opening rounds. The team won the series in its final two years as Formula Ford in 2013 and '14, but has struggled since Carlin, Arden and Fortec joined last year. JTR has also put one of its three Mygale chassis up for sale.

LACKFORD GOES FOR OSS IN 45TH YEAR

Club racer Norman Lackford is switching to the OSS Championship this season as he marks his 45th year of continuous racing. He made his debut in a Ford Anglia in April 1969 and will be racing a Radical PR6 this year. Lackford has raced in a number of different categories, including Special Saloons and the Castle Combe GT Series.

CAYMAN GT DEBUT AT DONINGTON

The Porsche Cayman Clubsport made its UK race debut at Donington Park, with three cars running in the GT Cup. The cars were delivered last week in base form, with the GT4 update kit to come later. Esme Hawkey raced one car for GT Marques, Harry Whale shared an Amspeed Racing entry with Alistair MacKinnon, and Rick and Brad Nevinson shared another for Track Focused.

BIRRELL HEADS FOR BRITCAR

Former soldier and double amputee David Birrell will compete in the next round of the Britcar Endurance Championship at Snetterton. He has previously raced a Mazda MX-5 with Mission Motorsport and will now drive a Woodard Racing Mini alongside Daniel Woodard.

MONTE CARLO WINNER AT MOTOFEST

The 1964 Monte Carlo Rally-winning Mini Cooper S will be a star feature for this year's Coventry Motofest event, with driver Paddy Hopkirk in talks to return behind the wheel. The machine has been stored at the British Motor Museum in recent years, but will be back in action at the festival following an extensive engine restoration.



HISTORICS

Mallock to race family U2 in Monaco

RAY MALLOCK WILL RACE IN Monaco for the first time next month at the wheel of the U2 MkII designed by his late father Arthur.

Mallock, best known for running successful manufacturer programmes in touring cars and GT, will realise a long-held ambition

to race on the street circuit where his father drove a one-litre F3 Mallock in 1964 in one of the first major international races for the F3 category.

Mallock will race in the front-engined Formula Junior race in the 1960 car driven by John Harwood when new.

"I always had Monaco in mind when I bought this car," said Mallock. "I've only been to Monaco for a race once before and that was in 1964 with my father."

The U2 has been taken back to exact period specification, including the box-shaped nose as used by Harwood.



HISTORICS

Turkington gets DTM BMW seat

TWO-TIME BRITISH TOURING CAR champion Colin Turkington will drive a pair of cars at the Donington Historic Festival this weekend: an ex-DTM BMW M3 E30 and a Chevy Corvette.

Turkington, who raced at the Silverstone Classic in 2014 in a BMW 3.0 CSL (above),

will enter the Touring Car Challenge event in the ex-Steve Soper 1992 BMW M3 E30, owned by Mark Smith, and will go up against a number of his rivals from the BTCC, including Matt Neal. He will then step in to the Sam Thomas Racing Corvette for the 90-minute GT and Sports Car Cup race.

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The heart and soul of British club racing

By Marcus Pye, the voice of club racing

[@Autosport](#)

THE 750 MOTOR CLUB'S BRANDS HATCH WEEKENDS have coloured my calendars for a decade or so. No April would be the same without one. The fabled 1.2-mile Indy circuit (created in 1954 with the addition of the Druids loop) was rebadged after the USAC's Indycars visited in 1978, the year after I joined *Autosport* as a full-time staff writer. Exciting to drive and brilliant to spectate at, its topography guarantees fast and furious action. Albeit between stoppages, of which there were 23 on Saturday and Sunday, one short of the event 'record', but when competitor and marshal safety is paramount who's counting?

Short laps mean it's often impossible for grid marshals to push a car that breaks as the start lights change without red-flag cover, but that only accounted for one hiatus this time, in the first Bikesports race. The sheer acreage of deep gravel at Paddock Hill Bend was inevitably the major contributor to the tally. Several times, notably in the Locost and Classic Stock Hatch categories, the scene revealed when the dust subsided resembled a 'desert storm' military exercise as the aggregate trapped off-piste adventurers.

Only one (Civic Cup) car was tripped into a roll, having hit the gravel and dug in, but its novice driver – likely buoyed by a reversed-grid situation and trying to carry more speed than before in a bid to match fully-fledged rivals – emerged from a spectacular incident without injury. There was a closer shave, which went unchecked, in the Toyota MR2 finale when an experienced competitor speared off left, narrowly missing another's abandoned machine, beached in the kitty litter for the third time that day!

Is there a better way to arrest cars leaving the track, short of doing away with the gravel and reverting to asphalt run-off

on the other side of a rumble-strip margin? I don't know the answer, but there is no universal panacea at venues that host car, motorcycle and truck racing. What I do know is that over two days in which very few drivers from a massive entry were penalised for exceeding track limits, that issue – so contentious when it was launched – appears largely to have been sorted.

As always, the quality of racing at Brands was superb. Watching the RGB championship contenders scrapping for supremacy – with Scott Mittell (with father Ian the star of last week's National Focus) cutting a sensational 47.98s (90.64mph) lap record in his home-built Suzuki-powered MC-53 on Saturday, six rivals lapping at over 88mph and fellow champion Matt Higginson hurtling the works AB Arion-Honda to a front-engined record of 50.04s (86.91mph) on Sunday – provided breathtaking centrepieces to the 24-race marathon.

While 'state of the art' RGB cars represent serious investment, prospective racers have unparalleled choice with the 750MC. Its portfolio of towards 20 categories starts with 'bargain-basement' Classic Stock Hatch and runs through accessible one-make championships for Toyota MR2, Mazda MX-5, Renault Clio 182, Mini Cooper, Honda Civic and BMW M3 production cars to long-serving pure racing categories the 750 Formula, Formula Vee and Locost.

From the same stable as the Hondas, the new-for-2016 Tegiwa M3 Cup promotion, which I saw for the first time at Brands, appears promising. The winged E46s not only look impressive and sound wonderful with their straight-six engines, but were also very closely matched. That 0.15s and 0.18s split the best laps of the top four in the double-header (0.03s blanketed the top three in the opener) augurs well. ✨



MAMF+SPORT

NUVOLARI TROPHY AT DONINGTON

Inaugurated in 2013, the HGPCA's dedicated Nuvolari Trophy double-header grid for pre-war racing cars returns to this weekend's Donington Historic Festival. The 20-car field is expected to embrace Alfa Romeo, Alta, Bugatti, ERA, Frazer Nash, Maserati, Parnell-MG and Talbot marques on Saturday and Sunday.

JUSTIN FOLEY 1973-2016

We regret to record the death of Clubmans racer Justin Foley at the age of 42. Justin, who had lived in Thailand for a decade, was visiting the UK when he suffered a heart attack on April 16.

Son of *Autosport's* inimitable late cartoonist Barry Foley, whose 'Catchpole' strip ran for almost a quarter of a century, Justin eagerly joined the racing fraternity amid which he grew up.

Competing alongside his father (creator of the Roughcutter car) over several seasons, Justin shone in both Sports 1600 and National Supersports. Quickest at Spa, he also left a phenomenal – and unbeaten – 1m25.2s FF1600-engined record at Croft.

To his wife Jansri ('El'), mother Liz and sister Amanda, *Autosport* offers sincere condolences.



HAWKINS

SWIFT'S DOUBLE-TOPS AT BRANDS

Carl Swift moved to second in the Tegiwa Civic Cup table behind 1600cc class leader Dave Buky as the first two-litre (Class B) Honda racer to repeat an overall victory this season at Brands Hatch on Sunday. Swift dominated, carving 0.7s from Adam Shepherd's lap record in his Owens Motorsport-built EP3 model.

BRANDS HATCH
750MC APRIL 23-24

Cutmore and Albone bag Brands RGB Spire brace

FACTORY SPIRE TWINS JOHN Cutmore and Billy Albone won an RGB thriller apiece as screaming motorcycle-engined sports-prototypes topped a frenetic 24-race Indy Circuit marathon inevitably peppered with red flags, most triggered by cars in the Paddock Hill Bend gravel bed.

Starting from the cambered pole, reigning champion Scott Mittell (Mittell MC-53) lost out in Saturday's drag race to Paddock, where Albone and Al Boulton (Spire) drifted wide, enabling Cutmore to forge ahead. Albone and Mittell passed the points leader at Druids on lap four, then battled on.

Mittell lunged ahead at Paddock, but his car's tail snapped left at the hairpin a lap later, taking Albone's nosecone as the Spire dived for the apex. They exited abreast, whereupon Albone squeezed Mittell over the kerbs, earning exclusion. After trailing his rival's nose for several laps, Mittell was black-flagged, a stunning 47.98s lap record his only reward. Cutmore, Boulton and Oliver Hewitt (MC-53) sped on to the podium.

Back on pole for Sunday, having bought a rear tyre from Spire, Mittell pitted with a fractured exhaust hanger but a red brought a reprieve. Mittell restarted from the pits, charging to 11th as 2014 750 Formula champion Albone landed his first RGB win from Boulton, Cutmore and the fiercely duelling Mittells of Hewitt and Dan Larnar. Second into Paddock in his front-engined AB Arion, double champ Matt Higginson faded to seventh.

Four winged BMW E46s wailing round in unison characterised the new Tegiwa M3 Cup's lead battle. Mazda MX5 past master Brian Chandler prevailed, repelling Adam Shepherd and sponsor's rep Luke Sedzikowski respectively, with Kevin Dengate mixing it boldly. Shepherd was penalised for repeatedly exceeding



Ralphson (left) bagged first MR2 win after polesitter Traynor's penalty



track limits as his tyres wilted second time out. With a new LSD transforming his Super Cooper, Eliot Dunmore was uncatchable among the M3s' cousins.

Sport Specials points leader Rob Johnston (Cyana) split the Atoms on both days, but was nudged out by Martin James at Clearways on lap one of the restarted opener, won by Nick Whitehead. Clive Hudson's Eclipse sustained suspension and body damage in a mass exodus at Paddock before the red, inspiring Paul Collingwood to shoot his limeade-hued example from 14th to third. James evened the Ariel score later, with Johnston a strong third.

With champion Shaun Traynor docked 10 seconds for jumping the start, Nigel Ralphson landed his first Toyota MR2 win under constant threat from Paul Cook, chased by podium debutant Lewis Ward. Jim Davies won the 45-car 'round robin' contest's subsequent legs, rounding Graham Malings at Paddock on lap two then dropping the pack, led by birthday boy Stuart Nicholls and Cook.

Locost racers also ran twice each within a triple-whammy. Ian Allee outfoxed table-topper Danny Andrew – who carried big corner speeds but was "short of waft" on the straights – with a combined margin of just 0.11s. First-heat winner Jack Coveney shadowed them in the finale.

Will Blackwell-Chambers and Jack Sycamore led the 5Club Racing Mazda MX-5 opener before initial pacemaker James Rogers returned to the front of a four-car train in which Stuart Symonds's smart Club 100 car was the guard's van. WB-C had Rogers gunning for him throughout the sequel as Sycamore jostled back past Symonds, champion Ben Short (in a new car since Oulton) and erstwhile points leader Adam Bessell to recapture fourth after an early slip.

Albone lost chance of R1 victory after contact with Mittell (#1) but landed first win in R2

Andrew Thorpe (Citroen AX) and Derek Rozier (Peugeot 205) each pipped the other in Classic Stock Hatch, the French machines well clear on Sunday despite Rozier carrying 70kg of success ballast. Their task was eased by multi-champion Lee Scott clonking fellow XR2i driver Martin Cayzer off at Paddock on lap one. Stewart Place and rookie Daniel Fillingham gleefully snared third and fourth as a result.

Robin Gearing described his 750 Formula double as "pretty punchy", having usurped Bill Cowley's eponymous steed, unbelievably in its sixth decade, with his immaculate Darvi. Third on Saturday, defending title-holder David Bartholomew's PRS threw a wheel at Graham Hill Bend when a half-shaft snapped on Sunday. Peter Bove – quadruple champion in the car Gearing now owns – wriggled from 16th to fourth in another of the late Dick Harvey's creations, behind Mark Glover's Racekits Falcon.

On current winning form, Paul Smith looks favourite to land a fourth Formula Vee crown in his AHS Dominator. Ian Buxton (whose GAC's throttle cable broke on Saturday) and Ian Jordan made Smith sweat on Sunday, local man Jordan snatching silver opportunistically at Druids on the last lap as Buxton, with a whiff of victory, left the door open.

Carl Swift blitzed the first Civic Cup round, pursued by Mark Higginson, impressive novice Daniel Reason and teenager Joe Lock. The top 10 were reversed for race two, nonetheless Swift led by lap six, whereupon front-row starter James Griffith worked him hard. Series leader Dave Buky topped the (depleted since Oulton) 1600cc class, reduced to three when Zack Bond rolled in the Paddock gravel.

MARCUS PYE

Cooper roasts Hogg for double win

STILL ON A HIGH FOLLOWING HIS MAIDEN circuit-racing wins at Oulton Park three weeks ago, Cheshire autograss ace Phil Cooper added two more Bikesports victories on his Brands Hatch debut. But the 1340cc Radical-Suzuki PR6 pilot had to drive flat-out to pass Alan Hogg, whose lightning starts in his similarly motivated Spire GT3 wouldn't have looked shabby at a drag race.

A detached paddle-shift actuator curtailed Cooper's qualifying efforts, but as he watched nervously from the pitlane his pole time survived, rival Phil Knibb 0.25s short in Tracktimesolutions' 1500cc Radical SR3.

Three attempts were needed to get Sunday's first race away, Cooper having initially driven a second warm-up lap to go from the back, but a stoppage cued a fresh start and his return to

the front. Again Hogg was quickest into his stride, but Cooper caught up as the leader's tyres went off, charging ahead on lap 10.

The sequel was a longer action replay, for Hogg rocketed into a two-second lead and, despite Cooper closing relentlessly, clung on grimly until lap 16 when a tiny slip while lapping two cars at Graham Hill Bend saw Cooper pounce. Hogg bounced back to finish in Cooper's slipstream, a class lap record of 46.61s (93.30mph) some consolation.

Bold on the brakes Will Brown (PR6) scored two fine thirds ahead of Adrian Reynard (SR3), who capitalised on Knibb's soft starts to wrest big-engined honours. Sometime Aintree Racing Drivers' School scholarship winner and Formula Renault racer Knibb finished in the 1979 FF2000 Euroseries champion's slipstream.

CROFT

BARC APRIL 23-24

Chirping Sparrow lands 2CV double

PETE SPARROW TOOK THE LEAD OF THE 2CV RACING Championship with a brace of victories at Croft, winning race one then teaming up with co-driver Jim Henshaw to take Sunday's two-hour endurance win.

Sparrow had to work hard for his Saturday win, having made a poor getaway from pole. Fellow front-row starter Nick Crispin led early on, but wasn't able to fend off subsequent attacks from Lien Davies and Louis Tyson.

While that trio each took turns heading the field in a highly entertaining race, Sparrow, who had dropped to fourth, took his time before reclaiming the lead at half-distance from Davies.

Tyson was an impressive second after coming out on top in his battle with Davies. Crispin completed the podium, with the top 10 covered by just 1.6 seconds.

Race two produced another thriller and was only settled on the penultimate lap by an audacious move from Alec Graham into Sunny on race-long leader Kris Tovey. "It's always brilliant here at Croft and 2CV is a fabulous form of racing. It's always carnage," exclaimed Graham post-win.

Graham confirmed his Croft-specialist status by taking a remarkable second in the endurance race on Sunday, driving solo for the duration.

An opportunistic late-race overtake allowed Adrian Wray and his MG ZR to snatch victory from the MGF of Martin Wills in the opening MGOC Championship encounter. Wills survived numerous slides in windy conditions, but better traction out of the hairpin gave Wray the chance he needed to take his third successive win. Adam Jackson looked set to complete the podium, but his hopes were dashed as he was forced into retirement. Wray was denied in race two after retiring, meaning that Wills headed the ZR of Jackson. Jim Baynam's MGB won Class A in both races.

Nick Dunn led from start to finish in the first of two Max 5 Championship races, beating John Munro by 1.6s. Invitational driver Paul Roddison set fastest lap in qualifying, but started his Mk4 from the rear of the grid before coming through to third.

Dunn continued his winning run by pipping Roddison – again from the back – to the flag in race two as Chris Webster completed the podium. Guy Carter prevailed in the Mk1 class both times.

Reigning Clubmans Cup champion Alex Champkin recovered from a slow start from pole to take a commanding victory in the first race of the weekend. The Vision V84 driver then doubled up in race two before completing a clean sweep in race three as Phil Weaver retired three corners from home. Jonathan Hair bagged three podiums in the Beagle MkIV's first outing in 30 years.

Garry Watson's inch-perfect safety-car restart proved crucial as his Westfield SEW edged the Stuart Taylor Locosaki of series leader Joe Spencer to victory in a tight first CNC Heads Sports & Saloons race. Race two was tighter still, but Watson could not be beaten as he secured the double ahead of Paul Rose's Saker RAXP.

Colin Simpson and Bill Addison shared the Northern Sports & Saloon Cars race wins in a Marcos Mantis and Caterham Superlight respectively.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON

P73 FULL RESULTS

RESULTS

DISLOK RGB (17 LAPS) 1 Jon Cutmore (Spire GT3S);

2 Alastair Boulton (Spire GT3) +4.82s; 3 Oliver Hewitt (Mittell MC-53); 4 Daniel Lerner (Mittell MC-52B); 5 Paul Rogers (Contour RGB09); 6 Tim Hoverd (AB Hovercraft T2A). **Class winner** Matthew Higginson (AB Arion S2). **Fastest lap** Scott Mittell (Mittell MC-53). **Pole** Mittell. **RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Billy Albone (Spire GT3S); 2** Boulton +2.15s; 3 Cutmore; 4 Hewitt;

5 Lerner; 6 Rogers. **CW** Higginson. **FL** Mittell. **P** Mittell.

TEGIWA M3 CUP & SUPER COOPER CUP (BOTH 21 LAPS) 1 Brian Chandler (M3); 2 Luke Sedzikowski

(M3) +3.53s; 3 Adam Shepherd (M3); 4 Kevin Dengate (M3); 5 Carl Shield (M3); 6 Matthew Wallis (M3). **CW** Eliot Dunmore (Mini Cooper S). **FL** Dengate. **P** Sedzikowski. **RACE 2 1 Chandler; 2** Sedzikowski

+4.04s; 3 Dengate; 4 Shield; 5 Wallis; 6 John Brown

(M3). **CW** Dunmore. **FL** Chandler. **P** Sedzikowski.

SPORTS SPECIALS (9 LAPS) 1 Nick Whitehead

(Ariel Atom); 2 Martin James (Ariel Atom) +0.85s;

3 Paul Collingwood (Eclipse SM1); 4 Matthew Booth (MK Indy RR); 5 Paul Rhodes (Arrow 2); 6 Paul Dudley (Tiger R6). **CW** Rhodes; Martin Buckland (STM Phoenix). **FL** James. **P** James. **RACE 2 (16 LAPS)**

1 James; 2 Whitehead +1.37s; 3 Rob Johnston (Cyana Mk2); 4 Booth; 5 Stephen Lansley (Procomp LA Gold);

6 Collingwood. **CW** Buckland; David Roberts (Cyana MX500R). **FL** Whitehead. **P** James.

TOYOTA MR2 (9 LAPS) 1 Nigel Ralphson;

2 Paul Cook +0.44s; 3 Lewis Ward; 4 Matthew Rowe;

5 Anthony Day; 6 Shaun Traynor. **CW** Day. **FL** Ward.

P Graham Malings. **RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Jim Davies;**

2 Traynor +2.03s; 3 Ward; 4 Shane Mansbridge;

5 Stuart Nicholls; 6 Tim Heron. **CW** Nicholls. **FL**

Davies. **P** Davies. **RACE 3 (13 LAPS) 1 Davies;**

2 Nicholls +13.28s; 3 Cook; 4 Kristian White; 5 Malings;

6 Ralphson. **CW** Nicholls. **FL** Davies. **P** Mansbridge.

LOCOST (3 LAPS) 1 Jack Coveney; 2 Ben Powney

+0.48s; 3 Richard Bradley; 4 Paul Clark; 5 Oliver

Batten; 6 Shaun Brame. **FL** Clark. **P** Coveney. **RACE 2**

(15 LAPS) 1 Ian Allee; 2 Danny Andrew +0.04s;

3 Powney; 4 Clark; 5 Garry Brandon; 6 Tim Neat.

FL Andrew. **P** Powney. **RACE 3 (15 LAPS) 1 Allee;**

2 Andrew +0.07s; 3 Coveney; 4 Neat; 5 Bradley;

6 Brandon. **FL** Neat. **P** Allee.

5CLUB RACING MX5 CUP (10 LAPS) 1 James Rogers;

2 Jack Sycamore +0.09s; 3 Will Blackwell-Chambers;

4 Stuart Symonds; 5 Adam Bessell; 6 Ben Short.

FL Sycamore. **P** Blackwell-Chambers. **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)**

1 Blackwell-Chambers; 2 Rogers +0.55s; 3 Sycamore;

4 Bessell; 5 Symonds; 6 Short. **FL** Rogers. **P** Rogers.

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH (BOTH 14 LAPS) 1 Andrew

Thorpe (Citroen AX GTi); 2 Matt Rozier (Peugeot 205

GTi) +0.57s; 3 Martin Cayzer (Ford Fiesta XR2i); 4 Lee

Scott (Ford Fiesta XR2i); 5 Paul Thorpe (Ford Fiesta

XR2); 6 Stewart Place (Peugeot 205 GTi). **FL** Cayzer.

P Rozier. **RACE 2 1 Rozier; 2** A Thorpe +1.68s; 3 Place;

4 Daniel Fillingham (Ford Fiesta XR2i); 5 Matthew

Stubington (Peugeot 205 GTi); 6 Edward Cooper

(Vauxhall Nova GSi). **FL** Place. **P** Rozier.

750 FORMULA (3 LAPS) 1 Robin Gearing (Darvi P88);

2 Bill Cowley (Cowley MkIV) +0.78s; 3 David

Bartholomew (PRS 1b); 4 Mark Glover (Racekits

Falcon); 5 Bob Simpson (SS/F 750F); 6 Chris Gough

(CGR2 Evo). **CW** Oliver Collett (Racekits Falcon).

FL Gearing. **P** Bartholomew. **RACE 2 (16 LAPS)**

1 Gearing; 2 Cowley +8.99s; 3 Glover; 4 Peter Bove

(Darvi Mk4/5); 5 Gough; 6 Simpson. **CW** Collett.

FL Gearing. **P** Gearing.

FORMULA VEE (16 LAPS) 1 Paul Smith (AHS

Dominator); 2 Martin Farmer (GAC) +6.62s; 3 Ben

Miloudi (Storm); 4 Ian Jordan (Sheane Jordan);

5 Graham Gant (WEV FV01); 6 John Hughes (Scarab

Mk5). **CW** James Harridge (Maverick). **FL** David

Hughes (GAC). **P** Smith. **RACE 2 (11 LAPS) 1 Smith;**

2 Jordan +0.42s; 3 Ian Buxton (GAC Daghorn);

4 J Hughes; 5 D Hughes; 6 Harry Webb (AHS

Dominator). **CW** Harridge. **FL** Jordan. **P** Smith.

TEGIWA CIVIC CUP (15 LAPS) 1 Carl Swift; 2 Mark

Higginson +16.63s; 3 Daniel Reason; 4 Joe Lock; 5

Matthew Bolton; 6 Mathew Webster. **CW** Dave Buky.

FL Swift. **P** Swift. **RACE 2 (11 LAPS) 1 Swift; 2** James

Griffith +4.03s; 3 Jon Peerless; 4 Reason; 5 Andrew

Gaugler; 6 Daniel Howard. **CW** Buky. **FL** Swift. **P** Griffith.

ROC BIKESPORTS (14 LAPS) 1 Phil Cooper (Radical

PR6); 2 Alan Hogg (Spire GT3) +2.03s; 3 Will Brown

(Radical PR6); 4 Adrian Reynard (Radical SR3R);

5 Philip Knibb (Radical SR3); 6 Richard Wise (Spire

GT3). **CW** Reynard; James Walker (Spire GT3); Max

Lees (Mission T5). **FL** Cooper. **P** Cooper. **RACE 2**

(24 LAPS) 1 Cooper; 2 Hogg +0.57s; 3 Brown;

4 Reynard; 5 Knibb; 6 Darcy Smith (Radical SR4).

CW Reynard. **FL** Hogg. **P** Cooper.

Murray headed Raven in both FF races – though first encounter was close



SILVERSTONE
BRSCC APRIL 23-24

Murray beats Raven to FFord double

NIALL MURRAY MADE IT TWO WINS out of two in the Formula Ford 1600 National Championship, beating James Raven to the chequered flag both times.

After the Irishman secured pole, a tenth ahead of Raven's Ray, the two were in a class of their own in race one, creating a substantial gap to the rest of the pack. "That's what it's like here, you get a lot of tow down both straights so we were constantly exchanging positions, helping each other – another lap and it might have been different," said Murray.

Raven did have a look on the final lap, eyeing up a move around the outside at Stowe, but claimed "there were too many marbles" to warrant the risk. He admitted that second wasn't a bad result.

Race two produced the same top five, much to the disappointment of Texan Chase Owen. His victory in the wet at

Oulton Park seemed a distant memory as he posted two fourth-place finishes behind Stuart Gough. It was not what he wanted, admitting his had been a "tough, but solid weekend".

It was a peculiar meeting for the Intermarque Championship. Race-one winner Tommy Field was disqualified for an oversized diffuser but looked to make amends in race two; and, despite a 30-second track limits penalty, he was still victorious when the chequered flag was waved early in error, sending the majority of the field into the pits.

According to Daniel Smith "it was shown, but quickly taken away, and the cars started going into the pits so everyone followed". Brother Lewis, who had been gifted the victory in race one, was leading the second race when the false flag prompted him into parc ferme

while Field remained on track. With the source of the error undiscovered, race control chose to include the finishers to have taken the real flag in the pitlane, albeit some distance behind the winner, much to the disdain of Lewis Smith.

Michael Gibbins was the standout driver of the Sports 2000 Championship weekend. Despite a driveshaft failure in qualifying and having to start from the back of the grid, he navigated his MCR to third. He then zipped into an early lead in race two, but a delay with backmarkers helped second-placed Patrick Sherrington cut a four-second gap to just one tenth, making for a tantalising climax. Sherrington was looking to make it back-to-back wins after victory in race one, but failed to deal the lethal blow.

JamSport was the big race-two winner in the Quaife Fiesta Championship. Aaron Thompson, a junior graduate, stormed through from 13th to take victory as he continued to impress as a senior. Thompson lost out to Simon Horrobin in race one, retiring after damaging his driveshaft, but it was Horrobin who suffered a similar fate in race two as he finished 25th. The celebrations continued for JamSport in Class D, as Jessica King took her maiden victory in the series, holding off a late charge from Stuart Robbins.

Carlito Miracco gave a fine display of defensive maturity in race one of the Fiesta Juniors, denying rookie Harry

Lewis Smith won the first Intermarque race, but early flag scuppered R2 hopes



ALL PICS:BOURNE

PEMBREY

BARC APRIL 23-24

Fantastic Legends five for Mickel

ON PAPER IT WAS A COMFORTABLE WEEKEND FOR John Mickel as he claimed five out of six victories in the National Legends Championship, but a sole race victory for Connor Mills was the least he deserved after almost single-handedly keeping Mickel honest for the weekend.

The two made contact on the final lap of the first race, handing Mickel the win while Mills trailed home in sixth. In the second contest, the two were separated by a little under two tenths of a second before that margin dropped to just 0.050 seconds in race three.

Mills spun out after attempting to put Mickel under pressure on the final lap of race four, and his poor luck continued with problems in the fifth encounter. But he recovered in the last race and led home Mickel with a controlled drive, taking his win tally to five for the year.

More was decided in the stewards' room than on the circuit on Saturday in the British Truck Racing Championship. David Jenkins was stripped of his victory in the first race for passing under yellow flags, and Ryan Smith incurred a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits in race two, which dropped him to third. Smith's penalty was rescinded on appeal, but Jenkins' was not.

On Sunday it was the on-circuit action that carried the most weight. After Steve Thomas claimed race-three honours, Shane Brereton took a dominant victory in the fourth contest. Smith returned to the top step in the final race, edging out reigning champion Mat Summerfield, who capped off a challenging weekend with a podium.

In Division Two, Simon Cole claimed a hat-trick of class wins, while Adam Bint also enjoyed a strong weekend, taking the other two victories.

After James Dorlin and Samuel Randon each claimed a dominant victory in the Clio Cup Series, the two made contact while disputing the lead of the final contest, gifting Brett Lidsey the win. Lidsey was arguably the star of the meeting, visiting each step of the podium across the three races. Both Ben Palmer and Luke Pinder enjoyed good showings as they claimed a hat-trick of top six finishes. Jack Fabby claimed a brace of victories in the road class, with Nic Harrison taking the other.

Katie Milner took the Junior Saloon Car pole and duly recorded her first championship race victory, capitalising on a safety-car restart after initially losing out at the start to lead home Charlie Kennedy and George Sutton.

A mistake from Milner at Brooklands in the closing stages of the second contest gifted Sutton a win; he led home outgoing standings leader Matteo Zanetti.

Keith White spun his BMW Z4 at Brooklands during the opening round of the WRDA Championship season, handing Ford Sierra Cosworth driver Jason Davies a comfortable victory, with Neil Watts rounding out the podium in his Westfield SE1. In a race of high attrition, seven cars failed to take the chequered flag.

Chris Everill secured the race two victory in his Ginetta G50 ahead of Fabio Luffarelli. The race had to be restarted after a clash between Dave Scaramanga and Watts left the former airborne, skirting along the top of the pit wall and back down to earth minus a front-right tyre, which hit the Lotus Elise of Susanne Jones and cracked the windscreen. Luckily, all three drivers escaped the incident without serious injury.

DAMIAN MEADEN

P73 FULL RESULTS

Cattermole (front) took Superkarts win with masterful display



Race one Fiesta winner Thompson (41) and Priest got together at Vale

Pullan was not beaten in MR2 races



Gooding's advances. He couldn't make it a full house of victories though, for Gooding proved too much in race two. Elliot Wilson led the championship going into the weekend after two victories at Snetterton, but was below his 2016 standard, only managing fifth and sixth, blowing the championship wide open.

There was a clean sweep for Arron Pullan in the MR2 race series. A two-second victory in race one was doubled in race two after a bold move on Adam Lockwood through the inside of Stowe.

It was an equally successful weekend for Richard Hockley in the Nippon Challenge. The Honda Civic driver's two wins made it four out of four in 2016, as his closest competitor, James Janicki, was blighted with engine trouble throughout the weekend.

The Superkarts provided the usual breathless display, seeming almost to defy the laws of physics. In the 250/450 series, a late call up to the bill, Gavin Bennett and Gareth James both celebrated victories. Kirk Cattermole proved why he is the English champion, winning all three races of the F125 Open, making a huge statement of intent in the 2016 championship.

Both Tricolore Trophy victories looked to be heading to John Whelan's hornet-coloured 306, but a loss of control around the Farm Complex in race two forced him to retire, leaving him to watch as Tony Hunter sailed to a convincing seven-second victory. Whelan will look to make amends next month when the series takes to Pembrey.

DOM D'ANGELILLO

DONINGTON PARK
MSVR APRIL 23-24

Harrison pushes Butler-Henderson

REIGNING MINI CHALLENGE champion Charlie Butler-Henderson and Nathan Harrison shared the race wins at Donington Park on a weekend the organisers would probably rather forget.

Driving standards were called into question after races littered with red-flag stoppages and the cancellation of an entire race after a multi-car accident. But when racing finally did break out, there was much to enjoy from the 30-car, 255bhp JCW grid.

Harrison is a star in the making – of that there is little doubt. The former British karting champion dominated the Cooper Class last year and secured pole for his first appearance among the turbocharged cars.

Butler-Henderson lined up fourth for the first race, but the red flags flew before he could do much when multiple cars tripped over each other at the Craner Curves. CB-H made no mistake at the restart and jumped Harrison and early leader Chris Smith before leading almost from start to finish. Harrison shadowed him in second with Smith third.

The first attempt at race two was an unmitigated disaster. Drivers complained of a lack of rear-tyre heat in their Dunlops from Saturday, so two green-flag laps were brought in for Sunday's races. But when Bence Balogh was elbowed across the grass at full tilt and helplessly slid back across the



WALKER

track at McLeans on the first lap the resulting tangle accounted for multiple retirements. The red flags flew again and, with a heavy clean-up operation needed, the cars were sent back to the paddock.

MSVR initially rescheduled the race to take place at 7pm, but eventually canned it due to timetable concerns, although hope to reschedule it.

The grid for the remaining race was decided by finishing positions from Saturday. Butler-Henderson started on pole with Harrison alongside, and this time Harrison made no mistake, slipping into the lead at the Old

Harrison and Butler-Henderson shared wins on difficult Mini weekend

Hairpin and never looking back.

Butler-Henderson shadowed him for much of the race, but eased off when light rain began to fall. David Grady took third ahead of Chris Smith.

The Challenge's combined S and Cooper Class grid did manage all three races, and produced a hat-trick of Cooper wins for Max Bladon. Josh Gollin provided stern opposition in all three.

Steve Cocker should have won all three S class races, but recurrent turbo issues limited him to just the first, while Scott Jeffs did the double in the other two.

ROB LADBROOK

OTHER RACES

RICHARD CHAMBERLAIN'S PORSCHE 935 showed no signs of its age as he took victory in the first GT Cup sprint event after a race-long battle with Darren Nelson. Nelson took his Lamborghini Huracan through the gravel at the Old Hairpin but Chamberlain was not free, instead having to fend off late pressure from Gareth Downing's Lotus Evora. Both had to look over their shoulders for a hard-charging Jordan Witt, who finished on the podium despite starting from the back of the grid due to getting into his Bentley Continental late.

Witt went on to take a comprehensive win in the second sprint race, which included another off for Nelson. For Sunday's endurance race, Nelson split

the drive with pro driver Adam Carroll, but the pair still finished 17 seconds adrift of Witt in the thunderous Bentley.

F3 Cup debutant University of Wolverhampton Racing announced its graduation from Monoposto with a trio of wins for 2006 Club F3 champion Shane Kelly. Fellow new squad Team Fox fared less well, as Daryl Jones suffered a debilitating misfire throughout the first race. Though the team managed to fix the problem overnight and Jones was able to challenge Kelly for the lead of race two, he spun into the barrier at Roberts in a slightly damp final race.

Lotus Cup polesitter Steven Train led the first 16 laps of the hour-long race, but he missed out on victory as a big

spin at Redgate handed Adam Mackay the lead and, ultimately, the victory.

A terrible start from Freddie Hetherington dropped him from second to eighth at the start of the first Elise Trophy race, but he recovered well to finish where he started, just behind Jason Baker. Resurgent too was Stuart Ratcliff, who finished fifth despite lining up at the back of the grid due to failing post-qualifying scrutineering. Baker finished off a strong weekend with victory in the second race, with Ratcliff close behind.

For the third Toyo Tyres Racing Saloons race in a row, Stuart Waite led home Karl Cattliff. The honours between the BMW M3 men were reversed in race two; Cattliff won with Waite second, and

Stephen Pearson finished third, having been penalised in the first race.

Harry Goodman continued his robust start to the Production BMWs season with a brace of wins, adding to his first and second places from Snetterton.

Both Paul Taylor and Darelle Wilson failed to finish the previous VAG Trophy race at Oulton Park, but took one win apiece with the other chasing in the first two races at Donington.

Several leading drivers made errors in race three; Wilson spun his VW Scirocco Tdi out of second at the start, then Tom Witts and Didge Dziurzynski both lost their respective leads, leaving Taylor's Golf to take a second win of the weekend.

CHARLIE EUSTICE

Chamberlain took a GT Cup win and a second in Porsche 935

WALKER



RESULTS

MINI CHALLENGE JCW (10 LAPS) 1 Charlie Butler-Henderson; 2 Nathan Harrison +0.397s; 3 Chris Smith; 4 Rob Smith; 5 David Grady; 6 Jono Brown. **Fastest lap Brown. Pole Harrison. RACE 2 abandoned. RACE 3 (14 LAPS) 1 Harrison;** 2 Butler-Henderson +6.369s; 3 Grady; 4 C Smith; 5 Neil Newstead; 6 Brett Smith. **FL Butler-Henderson. P Butler-Henderson.**

MINI CHALLENGE COOPER AND S (15 LAPS) 1 Steve Cocker (S); 2 Scot Adam (S) +7.234s; 3 Tim Porter (S); 4 Scott Jeffs (S); 5 Toby Hotston (S); 6 Max Bladon (Cooper). **Class winner Bladon. FL Cocker. P Cocker. RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Jeffs;** 2 Cocker +10.595s; 3 Porter; 4 Hotston; 5 Bladon; 6 Josh Gollin (Cooper). **CW Bladon. FL Jeffs. P Adam.**

GT CUP (22 LAPS) 1 Richard Chamberlain (Porsche 935); 2 Gareth Downing (Lotus Evora GTE) +0.331s; 3 Jordan Witt (Bentley Continental GT3); 4 Phil Burgan (Audi R8 LMS ultra); 5 Colin Paton (Porsche 911 GT3); 6 John Dhillon (Ferrari 458 GT3). **CW Paton; Warren Gilbert (Marcos Mantis); Ian Anderson (Ginetta G55). FL Witt. P Darren Nelson (Lamborghini Huracan GT3). RACE 2 (21 LAPS) 1 Witt;** 2 Chamberlain +5.344s; 3 Dhillon; 4 Downing; 5 Neil Huggins (Lamborghini Gallardo LP570); 6 Nelson. **CW Huggins; Gilbert; Tom Webb (BMW E46 M3). FL Witt. P Witt. RACE 3 (44 LAPS) 1 Witt;** 2 Nelson/Adam Carroll +17.522s; 3 Dhillon/Aaron Scott; 4 Nigel Hudson/Adam Wilcox (Audi R8 LMS ultra); 5 Webb; 6 David Fairbrother/Jamie Dawson (Porsche 997 GT3). **CW Webb; Fairbrother/Dawson; Paton/Ross McEwan. FL Carroll. P Witt.**

F3 CUP (14 LAPS) 1 Shane Kelly (Dallara F308); 2 George Line (Dallara F308) +12.257s; 3 Stuart Wiltshire (Dallara F308); 4 Mark Harrison (Dallara F305); 5 James Heffernan (Dallara F308); 6 Tony Bishop (Dallara F310). **CW James Ledamun (Dallara F300); Geoffrey Hoodless (March 813). FL Robbie Watts (Dallara F308). P Kelly. RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Kelly;** 2 Daryl Jones (Dallara F308) +4.459s; 3 Bishop; 4 Line; 5 Jacopo Sebastiani (Dallara F311); 6 Harrison. **CW Ledamun; Hoodless. FL Kelly. P Kelly. RACE 3 (18 LAPS) 1 Kelly;** 2 Harrison +32.210s; 3 Daniel Tapinos (Dallara F308); 4 Wiltshire;

5 Heffernan; 6 Malcolm Scott (Dallara F306).

CW Ledamun; Hoodless. FL Kelly. P Kelly. LOTUS CUP (42 LAPS) 1 Adam Mackay (Exige V6); 2 Ryan Savage (2-Eleven) +0.413s; 3 Steven Train (2-Eleven); 4 Adam Balon (Exige V6); 5 Adam Knight (Exige V6); 6 Andrew Wright (Exige S1). **CW Savage; Freddie Hetherington (S2). FL Balon. P Train.**

ELISE TROPHY (15 LAPS) 1 Jason Baker (Elise S1); 2 Freddie Hetherington (S2) +4.174; 3 Adam Ball (S1); 4 Simon Oakley (S2); 5 Stuart Ratcliff (Cup R); 6 Danny Holland (S2). **FL Hetherington. P Ball. RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Baker;** 2 Ratcliff +0.182s; 3 Hetherington; 4 Ball; 5 Seth Walpole (111R); 6 Neil Livsey (S2). **FL Ball. P Walpole.**

TOYO TYRES RACING SALOONS (12 LAPS) 1 Stuart Waite (BMW M3); 2 Karl Cattliff (BMW E36 M3) +0.847s; 3 Dave Griffin (E36 M3); 4 Stephen Pearson (E36 M3); 5 Colin Philpott (Jaguar XJS); 6 Chris Boon (XJS). **CW Philpott; Roger Kneebone (BMW 325i); Edd Giddings (BMW 320); Jonathan Atkinson (BMW E36 318TI); John Willcocks (BMW E30 M3); Karl Graves (BMW 120D). FL Cattliff. P Cattliff. RACE 2 (11 LAPS) 1 Cattliff;** 2 Waite +1.728s; 3 Pearson; 4 Griffin; 5 Philpott; 6 Kneebone. **CW Philpott; Kneebone; Atkinson; Alan Wileman (BMW 320); Graves. FL Waite. P Waite.**

PRODUCTION BMWs (11 LAPS) 1 Harry Goodman (320i); 2 William Davison (E30) +1.658s; 3 Matthew Swaffer (320); 4 Andy Gay (E30 320i); 5 Alan Wileman (320); 6 David Graves (320i Cab). **FL Wileman. P Goodman. RACE 2 (11 LAPS) 1 Goodman;** 2 Davison +2.579s; 3 Gay; 4 Swaffer; 5 Graves; 6 Andy Strong (320i E30). **FL Goodman. P Goodman.**

VAG TROPHY (9 LAPS) 1 Paul Taylor (VW Golf); 2 Darelle Wilson (Scirocco TDI) +0.169s; 3 Toby Bearne (Golf); 4 Darron Lewis (Golf); 5 Hamish Brandon (Golf Mk5); 6 Tom Walker (Golf TFSI). **CW Andy Baylie (Golf Mk5 GTI). FL Brandon. P Taylor. RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Wilson;** 2 Taylor +0.634s; 3 Lewis; 4 Walker; 5 Bearne; 6 Didge Dziurzynski (Scirocco). **CW Barrie Culley (Vento VR6). FL Lewis. P Taylor. RACE 3 (12 LAPS) 1 Taylor;** 2 Bearne +2.145s; 3 Walker; 4 Lewis; 5 D Dziurzynski; 6 Stephen Johansen (Golf TFSI). **CW Simon Tomlinson (Golf Mk4). FL Dziurzynski. P Tom Witts (Golf Mk7).**

KIRKISTOWN
500MRCI APRIL 23

Legends make Kirkistown history

THE FLEDGLING IRISH LEGENDS SERIES MAY NOT, AS yet, have very many cars, but on its first visit to Kirkistown it made a strong, and hopefully lasting, impression.

And the competitors made history too, providing the first-ever electronically proven dead heat in the circuit's 63 years of existence in the second of their three races.

The first of these featured Paul O'Brien and English visitor James Holman getting up close and personal with Ivor Greenwood and Des Foley in a scrap that lasted the full eight laps, peaking at the Hairpin on the final tour when all four appeared to be on course for victory. It was O'Brien who got it though, with Holman, Greenwood and Foley in very close attendance. Less than half a second covered them all as they crossed the line.

Race two was even closer. O'Brien and Holman were in the leading bunch as before, but this time Niki Meredith, who had started from the back row in race one, was there too, and the final-lap scrap was between Meredith and Holman, who passed the flag absolutely together with O'Brien right behind.

Greenwood finished fourth this time, but that was a better result than he achieved in race three when a heavy accident exiting the Hairpin on lap two ended his day prematurely. The race was red flagged, and at the restart it was O'Brien who got ahead to win from Holman by the comparatively huge margin of 1.4 seconds with Foley third.

Earlier, the first of two Saloon/GT affairs proved equally exciting, although rather smaller with only six cars lining up for the start. Chris Southcott's indecently rapid MG Midget led initially, but retired after six laps, leaving Andrew Armstrong's BMW M3 in command followed by Ralph Jess in his M3 BMW Compact. Jess, however, had plans, and closed Armstrong down, while Stephen Traub's Honda Integra moved in on the pair of them for a grandstand finish. Over the final two laps all three managed to lead in turn, and entering the Hairpin for the final time it looked very much as though Armstrong was going to make it ahead of Traub. But a very brave move by Jess round the outside helped him just squeak past in the final few yards to win by 0.141s.

By comparison race two was tame, Armstrong beating Traub to the line by 1.9s while Jess, who had planned a repeat result, found himself sidelined with the gear lever in his hand but no longer attached to the car. Donal O'Neill brought his SEAT Cupra home in third place.

Jim Larkham took a brace of Roadsports wins in his Radical ahead of the Crossles of John Benson and Paul Conn. The pair reversed order in the second race as did the battling one-litre Class B cars of Paul Thompson (Striker) and Mark Francis (Locost).

Noel Robinson (Van Diemen JL012K) was the day's other double winner, with two FF1600 victories giving him a useful lead in the Northern Ireland championship. Alan Davidson chased him hard in race one, although a buzzed engine left him with bent valves. A quick repair helped him try again in race two before his Mondiale jammed itself in third gear.

He still managed to place fourth, behind the Reynards of Ryan and Henry Campbell.

RICHARD YOUNG

P73 FULL RESULTS

SILVERSTONE
VSCC APRIL 23

Smith steers clear of slick for victory on Vintage return

WHILE PHILIP WALKER'S LOTUS 16 dominated the Pre-1961 Racing Cars race within the VSCC Silverstone Spring Start, it was the older car of Andrew Smith that took a remarkable victory.

Racing his Lotus for the first time since a bare-chassis rebuild, Walker quickly took control of the race and did everything right as the pack battled in his wake. Smith, racing the Lotus 12 of Nick Rossi on its return to competition after a nasty accident at Pembrey, slotted into second from Geraint Owen's mighty Kurtis Indy Roadster.

While Smith three-wheeled the Lotus around in style, Owen's highly promising run ended in the pits with a worsening misfire. Then, with a lap to go, Walker was caught out by a liberal oil slick on the exit of Luffield. By the time he had got the car re-started, Smith nipped through to give the 12 a very rare racing victory. Walker recovered to take second just before Fred Harper arrived in the other Kurtis Indy Car.

"I'm so honoured to drive for Nick and I can't believe the result," said a stunned Smith after the unexpected win for Colin Chapman's first single-seater design. "I was just controlling the lead and the next thing I knew I was facing the other way," said Walker.

On a day of full grids and thoroughly entertaining racing, the Vintage Racing Cars delivered even though Tom Walker edged away in his fabulous aero-engined Amilcar. Robin Tuluie gave it his best shot in the Riley Menasco Pirate and led as far as Becketts before understeering wide and allowing Walker ahead.

While Walker edged away, the Pirate expired and so second place became the subject of a mighty oversteering battle between Tony Lees (AC/GN Cognac) and Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (Frazer Nash Super Sports), which was only resolved in the closing laps when Blakeney-Edwards stole ahead.

It was a big day for the Frazer Nash marque as a special race celebrated pre- and post-war cars by the company with a capacity grid. Eddie Gibbs led throughout in his single-seater Nash, but Martin Hunt was a constant threat in his Le Mans Replica and was shaping up for a big challenge when the race was halted on the ninth lap. Up to five cars battled for third and it was Tony Lees in the final podium place when the red flags flew.



STYLES

A tardy start and an increasingly oily track gave Peter Horsman plenty to think about in the HGPCA Pre-1966 Grand Prix car race, but he deftly steered his Lotus 18/21 to the front of the pack and away for victory.

Barry Cannell gave chase in his Cooper T51 and finished well clear of a spirited four-way contest for third where Ruediger Friedrichs finally asserted his Cooper T53 over Eddy Perk's Heron.

It was a pretty good day for Friedrichs, who opened the racing by taking his Alvis Firefly to victory in the Pre-War Sports race after dealing with a challenge from the Alta of Sam Stretton. "That was my first VSCC race and it was very exciting," said Friedrichs.

The FISCAR season started in style with a bumper grid for the Tom Cole Trophy, although no one had any answer to the pace of Darren McWhirter's Lagonda V12. Steve Boulton-Brooks guided his Aston Martin DB3S to second place in the half-hour thrash but was relieved to see the flag. Chris Keen's Kurtis was looming large having started from the pit lane after a vibration developed on the warming-up lap. "I took the long way round to get back to where I should have started," said Keen.

Smith clinched late victory when Walker hit an oil slick

Mark Lewis led a thunderous podium party in the 1950s Sports Cars race as US V8s powered the top three cars. Lewis and third-placed Roberto Giordanelli ran Chevrolet-powered Lister Knobbles while Tony Bianchi split them in the Cadillac-powered Farrellac. Giordanelli led the first lap, but suffered a lurid spin at Brooklands after finding some oil.

No Spring Start would be complete without the bark of ERAs, and the closing Pre-War race did the trick as Duncan Ricketts took his stunning 1938 E-type clear of Nick Topliss (R4D) and early leader Terry Crabb (R12C).

Maintaining the Frazer Nash flavour was the entry for the Pre-War Sports Car race, which resulted in a Nash one-two as the Super Sports of Jo Blakeney-Edwards and Philip Champion saw off their rivals.

The guest appearance of the Morgan Challenge brought a touch of the modern era to the day. There was little surprise when Keith Ahlers took his Plus 8 to yet another Silverstone win from Philip Goddard, while Tony Lees forsook his AC/GN to hop into his Plus 8 and finish fourth behind Elliot Paterson.

James Whitmore won the Pre-War Handicap race in his Riley 12/4.

PAUL LAWRENCE

RESULTS

PRE-1961 RACING CARS (13 LAPS) **1** Andrew Smith (Lotus 12); **2** Philip Walker (Lotus 16) +12.10s; **3** Fred Harper (Kurtis); **4** Rod Jolley (Lister Jaguar Monza); **5** Nick Finburgh (Envoy); **6** Nick Topliss (ERA R4A). **Fastest lap** Walker. **Pole** Walker.

VINTAGE RACING CARS (10 LAPS) **1** Tom Walker (Amilcar); **2** Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (Frazer Nash Super Sports) +1.86s; **3** Tony Lees (AC/GN Cognac); **4** Julian Majzub (Bugatti Type 35B); **5** Chris Hudson (Bugatti Type 35B); **6** Duncan Pittaway (GN Vitesse). **FL** Walker. **P** Majzub.

FRAZER NASHES (8 LAPS) **1** Eddie Gibbs (SS Racer); **2** Martin Hunt (Le Mans Replica) +1.71s; **3** Tony Lees (AC/GN Cognac); **4** Ian Dalgligh (Le Mans Replica); **5** Martin Stretton (Targa Florio); **6** Charles Gillett (Super Sports). **Class winner** Hunt. **FL** Hunt. **P** Gibbs.

PRE-1966 GRAND PRIX CARS (14 LAPS) **1** Peter Horsman (Lotus 18/21); **2** Barry Cannell (Cooper T51) +13.27s; **3** Ruediger Friedrichs (Cooper T53); **4** Eddy Perk (Heron F1); **5** Andrew Smith (Cooper T43); **6** Alan Baillie (Cooper T71/73). **CW** Cannell; Perk; Smith; Peter Mullen (BRM P261); Sid Hoole (Cooper T41). **FL** Horsman. **P** Sam Wilson (Lotus 18).

PRE-WAR SPORTS (9 LAPS) **1** Ruediger Friedrichs (Alvis Firefly); **2** Sam Stretton (Alta) +3.45s; **3** Durward Lawson (Riley Special); **4** Dougal Cawley (GN Piglet); **5** Michael James (Riley 12/4 Sprite); **6** James Morley (Bentley 3/4.5). **CW** Stretton. **FL** Friedrichs. **P** Cawley.

FISCAR TOM COLE TROPHY (24 LAPS) **1** Darren McWhirter (Lagonda V12); **2** Steven Boulton-Brooks (Aston Martin DB3S) +8.95s; **3** Chris Keen (Kurtis 500S); **4** Andrew Sharp (Aston Martin DB2); **5** John Ure (Frazer Nash Le Mans Replica); **6** Nick Matthews (Austin Healey 100/4). **FL** McWhirter. **P** McWhirter.

1950S SPORTS CARS (10 LAPS) **1** Mark Lewis (Lister Knobbly); **2** Tony Bianchi (Farrellac Allard) +1.50s; **3** Roberto Giordanelli (Lister Knobbly); **4** Chris Keen (Kurtis 500S); **5** Steven Boulton-Brooks (Aston Martin DB3S); **6** Richard Wilson (Maserati 250S). **FL** Giordanelli. **P** Lewis.

PRE-WAR CARS (8 LAPS) **1** Duncan Ricketts (ERA E-Type); **2** Nick Topliss (ERA R4D) +6.14s; **3** Terry Crabb (ERA R12C); **4** Ruediger Friedrichs (Alvis Firefly); **5** Michael James (Riley 12/4 Sprite); **6** Tom McWhirter (Jaguar SS100). **FL** Ricketts. **P** Topliss.

PRE-WAR SPORTS (8 LAPS) **1** Jo Blakeney-Edwards (Frazer Nash Super Sports); **2** Philip Champion (Frazer Nash Super Sports) +3.53s; **3** Mark Groves (Frazer Nash TT Replica); **4** Adrian Van Der Kroft (Morgan 4/4); **5** Ralf Emmerling (Riley Brooklands); **6** Chloe Mason (Aston Martin Ulster). **FL** Blakeney-Edwards. **P** Blakeney-Edwards.

MORGAN CHALLENGE (18 LAPS) **1** Keith Ahlers (Plus 8); **2** Philip Goddard (Plus 8) +28.21s; **3** Elliot Paterson (Roadster); **4** Tony Lees (Plus 8); **5** Tony Hirst (ARV6); **6** Simon Baines (Roadster). **CW** Paterson; Tim Ayres (Plus 8); Henry Williams (4/4); Chris Bailey (Plus 4); Kelvin Laidlaw (Roadster). **FL** Ahlers. **P** Ahlers.

PRE-WAR HANDICAP (5 LAPS) **1** James Whitmore (Riley 12/4); **2** Trevor Swete (Invicta S Type) +4.87s; **3** John Skeavington (Austin Ulster); **4** James Ricketts (Austin 7 Monoposto); **5** Simon King (Morgan 4/4); **6** Anthony Fenwick-Wilson (Railton LS Tourer). **FL** John Seber (Wolseley Hornet Special).



Menzies claimed third Prescott win in a row before being denied by Moran

WALDER

Menzies wins but Prescott run ended

WALLACE MENZIES STARTED THE BRITISH Hillclimb season with the first run-off victory of the year, claiming his third consecutive win at Prescott after his double last September.

But Menzies was later denied a fourth, as five-time champion Scott Moran came through in the final encounter for the win.

Following his round-one victory Menzies admitted, "This is now just about my favourite hill." The redoubtable Moran said: "This really could be a season where any one of five can win the title and it will be a tough campaign for all."

Moran leads the new season standings by just a point from his 2015 co-driver and champion Alex Summers, who is tied for second with Menzies.

Despite the efforts of Summers in an unfamiliar and borrowed car, driver of the day just had to be Richard Spedding. With only 1.6 litres of overbored and stroked Hayabusa power, two sixth places were just reward for his efforts – especially having fought a launch control set-up that needed more tuning.

But Summers, who had a guest drive in Alastair Crawford's lovely Gould GR55 with high-revving smaller capacity NME V8, ran him close. The higher-revving unit is renowned for drivability and will pull several thousand more rpm than the more popular 3.5 NicMac.

Joint best time of the day with Scott Moran proved just how adaptable Summers is, although he confirmed he is unlikely to be seen again in a top-flight car until mid-season, when his father's DJ-Cosworth V6 is ready for action.

A career with Aston Martin, as well as the purchase of his first house with girlfriend Debbie, assumes greater priority for the time being – and both are also partly responsible for last year's



Summers shone, but is unlikely to return soon

WALDER

car-share with Moran not being extended into 2016. Crawford, meanwhile, could only score a point.

2012 Champ Trevor Willis was always on the pace and sits fourth, with Spedding four points back and last year's number six Dave Uren continuing where he left off in 2015.

More success in 1600cc cars came from Sean Gould and ex-MN rally championship driver Eynon Price in the factory Gould. Devonian Ed Hollier took valuable points in his Empire and saw off Gould and Price in the final stanza.

Will Hall suffered great misfortune as his engine stopped twice, once in the first run-off then again in afternoon despite the car suffering no problems during mid-week testing.

EDDIE WALDER

MSA BRITISH HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 1

1 Wallace Menzies (3.5 Gould-NME GR55) **36.84s**; **2** Alex Summers (2.8 Gould-NME GR55) 37.00s; **3** Scott Moran (3.5 Gould-NME GR61X) 37.03s; **4** Trevor Willis (3.2 OMS-RPE 28) 37.18s; **5** Richard Spedding (1.6 GWR-Suzuki Raptor) 37.82s; **6** Dave Uren (1.3t Force-Suzuki PC) 38.18s; **7** Sean Gould (1.6 Gould-Suzuki GR59) 38.63s; **8** Ed Hollier (1.6 Empire-Suzuki 00 Evo) 39.09s; **9** Eynon Price (1.6 Gould-Suzuki GR59) 39.19s; **10**= Alastair Crawford (2.8 Gould-NME GR55) & Oli Tomlin (4.0 Pilbeam-Judd MP97) 39.82s; DNF Will Hall (2.0t Force-AER/XTec WH)

ROUND 2 **1** Moran **36.61s**=**BTD**; **2** Willis 36.71s; **3** Summers 36.98s; **4** Menzies 37.15s; **5** Spedding 38.42s; **6** Uren 38.47s; **7** Hollier 38.80s; **8** Gould 38.85s; **9** Price 39.20s, **10** Tomlin 39.68s; **11** Crawford 39.70s; **12** Lee Griffiths (1.3s OMS-Suzuki 25) 41.98s.

CLASS WINNERS Richard Brant (2.0 Renault Clio 172) 51.82s; Roy Standley (2.0t Mitsubishi Evo 5) 46.99s; Allan Warburton (2.5 Caterham-Duratec) 45.29s; Andrew Russell (1.1 Ginetta G15) 50.29s; Colin Satchell (2.0 Peugeot 205GTi) 44.81s; Mike Turpin (2.2s Vauxhall VX220) 45.38s; Ash Mason (1.3s Westfield-Suzuki) 43.68s; Martin Watts (1.0 Sylva Riot) 46.86s; Graham Loakes (3.2 Lola-Porsche T492) 47.19s; Les Buck (0.6 OMS-Yamaha Hornet) 46.80s; Chris Aspinall (1.0 Empire-Suzuki Wraith) 40.06s; Nev Rollason (1.6 Jamun Formula Ford M90) 49.17s; Spedding 38.51s; Tim Davies (2.0 Pilbeam-Millington MP88) 40.07s; Uren 38.65s; Summers 36.61s=**BTD**.

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS **1** Moran **18**; **2** Menzies & Summers **17**; **4** Willis **16**; **5** Spedding **12**; **6** Uren **10**; **7**= Gould & Hollier; **9** Price **4**; **10**= Crawford & Tomlin **1**.

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RESULTS ROUND-UP

CROFT

BARC, APRIL 23-24

2CV CLASSIC CHAMPIONSHIP (9 LAPS) 1 Pete Sparrow;

2 Lien Davies +0.529s; 3 Nick Crispin; 4 Alec Graham; 5 Ash Carter; 6 Nick Clarke. **Fastest lap** Chris Yates. **Pole** Sparrow. **RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Graham;** 2 Paul Taylor +1.596s; 3 Tom Perry; 4 Kris Tovey; 5 Crispin; 6 Mick Storey. **FL** Matthew Hollis. **P** Yates.

RACE 3 (56 LAPS) 1 Jim Henshaw/Sparrow; 2 Graham +13.536s; 3 Perry/Davies; 4 Crispin; 5 Caryl Wills/Tovey; 6 Taylor/Louis Tyson. **FL** Sparrow. **P** Sparrow/Henshaw.

MG OWNERS' CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Adrian Wray (ZR); 2 Martin Wills (F) +0.438s; 3 David Mellor (ZR); 4 Mark Baker (F); 5 Simon Kendrick (F WVC); 6 Stuart Plotnek (F). **Class winners** Mellor; Jim Baynam (B). **FL** Wray. **P** Wray. **RACE 2 1 Wills;** 2 Adam Jackson (ZR) +0.600s; 3 Mellor; 4 Kendrick; 5 Plotnek; 6 Baker. **CW** Jackson; Baynam. **FL** Wray. **P** Wray.

MAX 5 CHAMPIONSHIP (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Nick Dunn (Mazda MX-5 MkIII); 2 John Munro (Mazda MX-5 MkIII) +2.159s; 3 Paul Roddison (Mazda MX-5 MkIV); 4 Iain Loversidge (Mazda MX-5 MkIII); 5 Chris Webster (Mazda MX-5 MkIII); 6 Steve Dolman (Mazda MX-5 MkIII). **CW** Roddison; Guy Carter (Mazda MX-5 Mk1). **FL** Roddison. **P** Dunn. **RACE 2 1 Dunn;** 2 Roddison +1.442s; 3 Webster; 4 Munro; 5 Geoff Gouriet (Mazda MX-5 MkIII); 6 Loversidge. **CW** Roddison; Carter. **FL** Roddison. **P** Dunn.

CLUBMANS CUP (ALL 12 LAPS) 1 Alex Champkin (Vision V84); 2 Jonathan Hair (Beagle MkIV) +25.243s; 3 Philip Weaver (Nemesis); 4 Peter Richings (Mallock Mk30PR); 5 Clive Wood (Mallock Mk23); 6 Steve Emerson (Mallock Mk27). **CW** Hair; Richings; Barry Webb (Mallock Mk16BW). **FL** Champkin. **P** Champkin. **RACE 2 1 Champkin;** 2 Weaver +5.000s; 3 Hair; 4 Richings; 5 Wood; 6 Rodney Player (Mallock Mk23). **CW** Hair; Webb. **FL** Champkin. **P** Champkin.

RACE 3 1 Champkin; 2 Hair +2.812s; 3 Richings; 4 Wood; 5 Morris Hart (Mallock Mk27 Synergy); 6 David Barnett (Mallock Mk18). **CW** Hair; Richings; Barnett. **FL** Weaver. **P** Champkin.

CNC HEADS SPORTS & SALOONS (14 LAPS) 1 Garry Watson (Westfield SEW); 2 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki) +4.089s; 3 Paul Rose (Saker RAPX S1-400); 4 Steve Harris (Saker RAPX); 5 Paul Dobson (Mazda RX-7); 6 David Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki). **CW** Spencer; Rose; Dobson; Piers Grange (Ford Escort MkII); David Bird (Honda Civic). **FL** Rose. **P** Watson. **RACE 2 (15 LAPS) 1 Watson;** 2 Rose +4.629s; 3 Harris; 4 Spencer; 5 Harvey; 6 Dobson. **CW** Rose; Spencer; Dobson; Grange. **FL** Rose. **P** Rose.

DDMC NORTHERN SALOON & SPORTS CARS (10 LAPS) 1 Colin Simpson (Marcos Mantis); 2 Bill Addison (Caterham Superlight R400) +14.476s; 3 Mike Cutt (BMW M3 E36); 4 Matthew Kirkby (Caterham C400); 5 Andrew Morrison (SEAT Leon); 6 Stephen Kell (Ford Sierra XR4x4). **CW** Kirkby; Kell; Kirk Armitage (BMW M3); Andy Robinson (Ford Falcon); Martin Whitehouse (BMW 328); Stuart Carr (Caterham CSR); David Cox (Peugeot 205 GTi); Martin Lofthouse (Triumph TR7); Neil Finnighan (Caterham R400); Simon Baker (Ford Fiesta XR2). **FL** Simpson. **P** Paul Brydon (BMW M3). **RACE 2 (11 LAPS) 1 Addison;** 2 Brydon +13.548s; 3 Andrew Wilson (Holden Monaro); 4 Morrison; 5 Cutt; 6 Robinson. **CW** Kirkby; Armitage; Neil Claxton (Suzuki SC100); Daniel Irving (Mazda MX-5); Lofthouse; Cox; Simon Mayne (Arion S2); Baker. **FL** Morrison. **P** Morrison.

SILVERSTONE

BRSCC, APRIL 23-24

FORMULA FORD 1600 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP (BOTH 17 LAPS) 1 Niall Murray (Van Diemen RF99); 2 James Raven (Ray GR15/16) +0.104s; 3 Stuart Gough (Van Diemen); 4 Chase Owen (Ray GR14/15); 5 Chris Middlehurst (Mygale GR15K); 6 Stephen Daly (Ray GR11). **CW** John Svensson (Van Diemen); Ben Tinkler (Reynard 89FF). **FL** Raven. **P** Murray. **RACE 2 1 Murray;** 2 Raven +1.396s; 3 Gough; 4 Owen; 5 Middlehurst; 6 Tom McArthur (Van Diemen LA10). **CW** Daniel Obeirne (Swift SC95); Tinkler. **FL** Murray. **P** Murray.

INTERMARQUE AND SEVENESQUE SERIES (13 LAPS) 1 Lewis Smith (Vauxhall Tigra) +5.110s; 2 Malcolm Blackman (Tigra); 3 Daniel Smith (VW Corrado); 4 Malcolm Harding (Tigra VXR); 5 Steve Burrows (Peugeot 206); 6 Simon Smith (BMW Z4). **CW** Gary Bate (Caterham R400). **FL** L Smith. **P** Tommy Field (Tigra). **RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Field;** 2 L Smith +12.176s; 3 Chris Brockhurst

(Tigra); 4 Blackman; 5 Rueben Taylor (Peugeot 206); 6 Chris Ayling (Tigra). **CW** Robert Singleton (Caterham). **FL** Field. **P** Richard Smith (Mercedes SLK).

SPORTS 2000 CHAMPIONSHIP (BOTH 22 LAPS) 1 Patrick Sherrington (MCR); 2 Tom Stoten (Gunn TS11) +17.991s; 3 Michael Gibbins (MCR); 4 Paul Martin (MCR); 5 Tim Tudor (MCR); 6 Alaric Gordon (Carbir CS2). **CW** Martin; Gordon; Mike Turner (MCR); Peter Needham (Tiga SC80); David Pittard (Swift DB5). **FL** Gibbins. **P** Sherrington. **RACE 2 1 Gibbins;** 2 Sherrington +0.157s; 3 Stoten; 4 Gordon; 5 Tudor; 6 Peter Williams (MCR). **CW** Gordon; Williams; Pittard; Needham; Mike Fry (Lola T86/90). **FL** Gibbins. **P** Sherrington.

QUAIFE FIESTA CHAMPIONSHIP (15 LAPS) 1 Simon Horrobin (ST); 2 Jamie Going (ST) +0.471s; 3 Samuel Priest (ST); 4 Nick Sanderson (ST); 5 Nathan Edwards (ST); 6 Kevin Stirling (ST). **CW** Alastair Kellett (Zetec S); Peter Dendy-Sadler (FSi); Luke Bannister (Zetec). **FL** Going. **P** Priest. **RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Aaron Thompson (ST);** 2 Priest +0.118s; 3 Going; 4 Alfonso Skriczka (ST); 5 Sanderson; 6 Nicholas Pope. **CW** Jessica King (Zetec S); Dendy-Sadler; Bannister. **FL** Thompson. **P** Priest.

FIESTA JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP (12 LAPS) 1 Carlito Miracco; 2 Harry Gooding +1.461s; 3 Callum Hawkins-Row; 4 Sikhander Hussain; 5 Elliot Wilson; 6 Ronan Quinn. **FL** Lochlan Bearman. **P** Miracco. **RACE 2 (15 LAPS) 1 Gooding;** 2 James Waite +2.619s; 3 Quinn; 4 Miracco; 5 Wilson; 6 Bearman. **FL** Gooding. **P** Miracco. **MR2 RACE SERIES (BOTH 11 LAPS) 1 Arron Pullan;** 2 Adam Lockwood +2.188s; 3 Peter Higton; 4 Stephen Wright; 5 Gareth Baxter; 6 Daniel Bryant. **FL** Pullan. **P** Pullan. **RACE 2 1 Pullan;** 2 Lockwood +4.432s; 3 Wright; 4 Higton; 5 Baxter; 6 Neale Hurren. **FL** Pullan. **P** Pullan.

NIPPON CHALLENGE/DEUTSCHE MARQUES CUP/TRICOLERE TROPHY INVITATION (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Richard Hockley (Honda Civic); 2 Vic Hope (Civic Type R) +38.347s; 3 Andrew Roberts (Civic EK); 4 Miles Hodgson (Toyota MR2 MkII); 5 James Mumbay (BMW M3); 6 Andrew McLennan (Suzuki Swift GTi). **CW** Mumbay; Paul Clothier (Renault Clio 197). **FL** Hockley. **P** Hockley. **RACE 2 1 Hockley;** 2 Nerijus Zabolka (Subaru Impreza) +10.661s; 3 Mumbay; 4 Nick Gwinnett (Clio 172); 5 Hope; 6 Roberts. **CW** Mumbay; Gwinnett. **FL** James Janicki (Nissan Skyline R32). **P** Hockley.

F250/450 SUPERKARTS (BOTH 14 LAPS) 1 Gavin Bennett (Anderson/DEA); 2 Gareth James (Anderson/DEA) +12.928s; 3 James Hassall (Jade/DEA); 4 Andy Waite (Anderson/KTM 450); 5 Alex Burrows (Jade/Honda); 6 Don Kennedy (Anderson/THR). **FL** Bennett. **P** Ross Allen (Jade/DEA). **RACE 2 1 James;** 2 Bennett +2.558s; 3 Ross Allen (Jade/Honda); 4 Burrows; 5 Waite; 6 James Skyers (Anderson/KTM 450). **FL** James. **P** Bennett.

BSA F125 OPEN (11 LAPS) 1 Kirk Cattermole (Raiders/SGM); 2 Danny Butler (Anderson/TM) +4.520s; 3 Liam Morley (Anderson/DEA); 4 Matt Robinson (Anderson/Redspeed TM); 5 Phil Garrett (HRK/TM); 6 Sam Moss (Anderson/TM). **FL** Morley. **P** Cattermole. **RACE 2 (11 LAPS) 1 Cattermole;** 2 Butler +0.128s; 3 Lee Harpham (Anderson Redspeed/TM); 4 M Robinson; 5 Neil Robinson (Anderson Redspeed/TM); 6 Kevin Gray (Anderson Redspeed/TM). **FL** Cattermole. **P** Morley. **RACE 3 (10 LAPS) 1 Cattermole;** 2 Butler +0.111s; 3 Jake Coward (Anderson/Vortex); 4 Harpham; 5 Sam Moss (Anderson/TM); 6 Morley. **FL** Needham. **P** Cattermole. **TRICOLERE TROPHY (12 LAPS) 1 John Whelan (Peugeot 306);** 2 Tony Hunter (Renault Clio) +9.242s; 3 Nick Gwinnett (Clio 172); 4 Ian Collins (Clio 172); 5 Andrew Mitchell (Peugeot 205 GTi); 6 James Breeze (Clio 172). **CW** Mitchell; Breeze; Gerrard Merriman (Citroen Saxo); Robert Buckland (Clio). **FL** Whelan. **P** Whelan. **RACE 2 (11 LAPS) 1 Hunter;** 2 Mitchell +7.389s; 3 Gwinnett; 4 Breeze; 5 Merriman; 6 Buckland. **CW** Mitchell; Breeze; Merriman; Buckland. **FL** Mitchell. **P** Whelan.

PEMBREY

BARC, APRIL 23-24

LEGENDS (10 LAPS) 1 John Mickel; 2 Nathan Anthony +1.926s; 3 Stephen Whitelegg; 4 Rickie Leggatt; 5 Paul Simmons; 6 Connor Mills. **FL** Whitelegg. **P** Mickel. **RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Mickel;** 2 Mills +0.191s; 3 Whitelegg; 4 Leggatt; 5 Simmons; 6 Jack Parker. **FL** Mills. **P** Mick Bourner. **RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Mickel;** 2 Mills

+0.050s; 3 Whitelegg; 4 Guy Fastres; 5 Parker; 6 Anthony. **FL** Whitelegg. **P** Fastres. **RACE 4 (10 LAPS) 1 Mickel;** 2 Fastres +9.385s; 3 Simmons; 4 Anthony; 5 Whitelegg; 6 Sean Smith. **FL** Mickel. **P** Mills. **RACE 5 (10 LAPS) 1 Mickel;** 2 Whitelegg +0.512s; 3 Fastres; 4 Rob King; 5 Simmons; 6 Leggatt. **FL** Mickel. **P** King. **RACE 6 (12 LAPS) 1 Mills;** 2 Mickel +2.349s; 3 Simmons; 4 Fastres; 5 Parker; 6 Bourner. **FL** Mickel. **P** Mills. **BRITISH TRUCK RACING CHAMPIONSHIP (11 LAPS) 1 Ryan Smith (MAN TGX);** 2 Steve Thomas (MAN TGX) +13.376s; 3 Luke Taylor (Renault Premium MKR); 4 Shane Brereton (MAN TGA Euro 6); 5 Oly Janes (Buggya-Freightliner); 6 Steve Powell (MAN). **CW** Simon Cole (Mercedes). **FL** Smith. **P** Smith. **RACE 2 (14 LAPS)**

1 Smith; 2 David Jenkins (MAN TGX) +1.150s; 3 Stuart Oliver (Volvo RH13); 4 Janes; 5 Brereton; 6 Thomas. **CW** Adam Bint (Volvo Aerodyne). **FL** Smith. **P** Michael Oliver (Scania). **RACE 3 (14 LAPS) 1 Thomas;** 2 S Oliver +4.747s; 3 Smith; 4 Mat Summerfield (MAN TGX); 5 Brereton; 6 Janes. **CW** Bint. **FL** Thomas. **P** M Oliver. **RACE 4 (14 LAPS) 1 Brereton;** 2 Smith +5.068s; 3 S Oliver; 4 Jenkins; 5 Summerfield; 6 Janes. **CW** Cole. **FL** Summerfield. **P** M Oliver. **RACE 5 (14 LAPS) 1 Smith;** 2 Summerfield +1.914s; 3 Brereton; 4 S Oliver; 5 Jenkins; 6 Taylor. **CW** Cole. **FL** Smith. **P** Luke Garrett (Renault T-Range). **MICHELIN CLIO CUP SERIES (ALL 16 LAPS) 1 James Dorlin;** 2 Brett Lidsey +14.921s; 3 Samuel Randon; 4 Luke Pinder; 5 Ben Palmer; 6 Tyler Lidsey. **CW** Jack Fabby. **FL** Randon. **P** Dorlin. **RACE 2 1 Randon;** 2 Pinder +11.057s; 3 B Lidsey; 4 Dorlin; 5 Palmer; 6 Ben Colburn. **CW** Nic Harrison. **FL** Randon. **P** Dorlin. **RACE 3 1 B Lidsey;** 2 Dorlin +1.387s; 3 Randon; 4 Palmer; 5 Pinder; 6 T Lidsey. **CW** Fabby. **FL** Palmer. **P** Randon.

JUNIOR SALOONS (12 LAPS) 1 Katie Milner; 2 Charlie Kennedy +0.915s; 3 George Sutton; 4 Matteo Zanetti; 5 Ed Moore; 6 Ethan Hammerton. **FL** Sutton. **P** Milner. **RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Sutton;** 2 Zanetti +0.100s; 3 Moore; 4 Kennedy; 5 Milner; 6 Hammerton. **FL** Milner. **P** Milner.

WELSH SPORTS AND SALOONS (16 LAPS) 1 Jason Davies (Ford Sierra Cosworth); 2 Keith White (BMW Z4) +16.326s; 3 Neil Watts (Westfield SE1); 4 Chris Everill (Ginetta G50); 5 Fabio Luffarelli (Mini Laffarelli); 6 Roger Dowden (Davrian MkVI). **CW** White; Dowden; Dave Scaramanga (VW Vento); Daryl Radford (Honda Civic). **FL** White. **P** White. **RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Everill;** 2 F Luffarelli +2.982s; 3 Davies; 4 Damian Longotano (Westfield); 5 Endaf Owens (Mini Miglia); 6 Tyrone Luffarelli (Peugeot 106 GTi). **CW** Davies; Owens; T Luffarelli; Radford; Alan Smith (Ford Ka). **FL** Longotano. **P** Davies.

KIRKISTOWN

500MRCI, APRIL 23

LEGENDS (ALL 8 LAPS) 1 Paul O'Brien; 2 James Holman +0.174s; 3 Ivor Greenwood; 4 Des Foley; 5 Ian Conroy; 6 Niki Meredith. **FL** O'Brien. **P** Jonathan Taylor. **RACE 2 1= Meredith & Holman;** 3 O'Brien; 4 Greenwood; 5 Jonathan Taylor; 6 Conroy. **FL** Holman. **P** Meredith. **RACE 3 1 O'Brien;** 2 Holman +1.438s; 3 Foley; 4 Meredith; 5 Taylor; 6 Conroy. **FL** Meredith. **P** Bobby King. **SALOON/GT (BOTH 13 LAPS) 1 Ralph Jess (3.2s BMW M3);** 2 Andrew Armstrong (3.2 BMW M3) +0.141s; 3 Stephen Traub (2.3 Honda Integra); 4 Tony Traub (2.3 Honda Integra); no other finishers. **FL** Chris Southcott (1.9 MG Midget). **P** Southcott.

RACE 2 1 Armstrong; 2 S Traub +1.917s; 3 Donal O'Neill (1.8 SEAT Cupra); 4 T Traub; no other finishers. **FL** Armstrong. **P** Southcott. **ROADSPORTS (BOTH 13 LAPS) 1 Jim Larkham (1.3 Radical PR06);** 2 John Benson (2.0 Crossle 37S) +4.584s; 3 Paul Conn (2.0 Crossle 47S); 4 Paul Thompson (1.0 Striker Honda); 5 Mark Francis (1.0 Locost Honda); 6 Graham Moore (2.0 GMS Ford). **CW** Thompson. **FL** Larkham. **P** Larkham. **RACE 2 1 Larkham;** 2 Conn +1.799s; 3 Benson; 4 Francis; 5 Thompson; 6 Richard Munnis (2.0 Striker Ford). **CW** Francis. **FL** Benson. **P** Larkham.

FF1600 (BOTH 16 LAPS) 1 Noel Robinson (Van Diemen JL012K); 2 Alan Davidson (Mondiale M89S) +3.665s; 3 Ryan Campbell (Reynard 89FF); 4 Andrew Noble (Van Diemen JL012K); 5 Andrew Blair (Reynard 84FF); 6 Henry Campbell (Reynard 89FF). **CW** Davidson; Blair; Paul McMorran (Crossle 32F). **FL** Robinson. **P** Robinson. **RACE 2 1 Robinson;** 2 R Campbell +6.325s; 3 H Campbell; 4 Davidson; 5 McMorran; 6 Noble. **CW** Robinson; R Campbell; Blair; McMorran. **FL** Robinson. **P** Robinson.

WHAT'S ON



HOW TO WATCH

The best of global sportscar racing

IN A MODERN WORLD FLOODED with technology, it's no surprise that watching motorsports has become more and more complicated. No longer is it simply a case of tuning the television to watch a delayed or highlights programme; we now have the opportunity to watch more series live than ever before.

While Formula 1 fans are stuck complaining that coverage of the series is moving between different terrestrial TV channels, followers of more niche sectors of motorsport are keeping on track with the action in different ways. Perhaps one of the most complicated types of racing in this respect would be sportscars.

Even the World Endurance Championship, the pinnacle of sportscar racing, is demoted to specialist television channels, with Motors TV and Eurosport battling it out for coverage of the races over the past years, and no hope of a more mainstream provider bringing Le Mans live to our screens.

Lower-tier sportscar series are even more difficult to find on TV guides. Instead, sportscar series have found a different way of airing their races, through online streaming.

Middle-ranking series such as the European Le Mans Series and IMSA SportsCar Championship straddle the line between mainstream motorsports and "hidden" series. The TV coverage, while sometimes present, is often difficult to access, and so the organisers have taken advantage of streaming.

Both the ELMS and IMSA series have dedicated high-quality live streams for British viewers, providing uninterrupted coverage of races and qualifying sessions.

When it comes to commentators, it's

World Endurance Championship remains on a specialist channel

the usual suspects for most of these championships, which guarantees informative and detailed coverage. Many have become more and more interactive with fans on Twitter too, which further increases the quality.

The Blancpain GT Series has almost reached the point of spoiling its viewers through viewing options. While it is possible to follow the world's largest GT3 fields through the series' Dailymotion feed, perhaps a more straightforward facility is the live YouTube streaming. It's surprising that the live feature on YouTube isn't used for more sporting events, as it's so easy to use and seems to buffer much less than its competitors.

In comparison, the British GT Championship, although also run by SRO, has a very different approach. Even when the races aren't live on Motors TV, there is still no live stream, something that the series is surely missing out on.

On the other hand, the World Challenge – North America's top GT series – does have a live stream for most races, while a highlights package is shown a week later on a US TV channel. The stream is usually reliable, but in recent



World Challenge series offers live streaming

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months it has shown the flaws of this kind of broadcasting.

Some rounds, including at Mid-Ohio last year and Long Beach this season, haven't had a stream for various reasons, while the second World Challenge GT race at Austin this March had many problems with the stream, to the point where the organisers stopped transmitting.

Nevertheless, the series was quick on its feet and instead switched to social-media platform Periscope, by filming and live-streaming the large screen in the track's media centre. This is an example not only of the weaknesses that come from live streams, but also how modern technology and social media can be used to influence – and improve – motorsports coverage.

The way we watch motorsports is changing, and when it comes to sportscar racing fans now have to have a reliable internet connection rather than a television. While this may be more difficult for some, it does mean that coverage is more likely to be live, uninterrupted and better quality.

JAKE KILSHAW



HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube HUFF CUTS UP ROUGH AT PENALTY

Search for: STORY OF THE DAY - Now it's getting serious

Rob Huff swaps a little paint with Yvan Muller in the main WTCC race at the Hungaroring, for which the Honda Civic driver is hit with a drive-through. Watch the action and make of it what you will. Huff calls it as he sees it at the end of the race and has since spoken out about inconsistent penalties.



TV PICK OF THE WEEK

CIRCUIT OF IRELAND RALLY

Motors

Friday 2130

Ireland has some fantastic roads for rallying and, since both the European and the British championships headed there a few weeks ago, it's well worth checking out the highlights of a great event

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

RUSSIAN GP

Formula 1 World Championship

Rd 4/21

Sochi, Russia

May 1

WATCH ON TV

Live: Sky Sports F1, Sunday 1300

IMSA SPORTSCAR

Rd 4/11

Laguna Seca, California, USA

May 1

WATCH ONLINE

www.imsa.com

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 10/36

Talladega, Alabama, USA

May 1

WATCH ON TV

Live: Premier Sports, Sunday 1730



IMSA SPORTSCAR

SCANDINAVIAN TOURING CARS

Rd 1/7

Skovde, Sweden

May 1

SUPER GT

Rd 2/8

Fuji, Japan

May 4

ADAC GT MASTERS

Rd 2/7

Sachsenring, Germany

April 30-May 1

UK MOTORSPORT

ROCKINGHAM, BRITISH GT

April 30-May 1

British GT, British F3, Ginetta GT5, VW Racing Cup, Ginetta Racing Drivers' Club, Super 7

Special Saloons, Ford Pumas, Tin Tops, Swinging Sixties, Future Classics, Magnificent 7s, Modern Classics, Classic K, New Millennium, Open Series

BRANDS HATCH, MGCC

April 30-May 1

Porsche Club, Quaipe/MN Saloons, Tin Tops, MG Trophy, MG Challenge, MG Metro Cup, Midgets and Sprites, BCV8, Iconic 50s, Thoroughbred Sportscars, Equipe GTS

DONINGTON PARK, HSCC

April 30-May 2

Pre-War GP Cars, Historic F2, HGPCA, Pre '80 Endurance, Super Touring, Jaguars, GT and Sports Car Cup, Woodcote Trophy, Stirling Moss Trophy, Historic Touring Cars, Pre-War Sports, Touring Greats/TC63 Touring Cars, BTCC Celebration, U2TC, 1000km



BRITISH GT

CADWELL PARK, MSVR

May 1

Monoposto, Trackday Trophy, Allcomers

CASTLE COMBE, CCRC

May 2

FF1600, GT, Saloons, Kumho BMW, Clio 182, Morgans, MGOC

KNOCKHILL, SMRC

May 1

Mini Coopers, Fiestas, FF1600, Classic Sports and Saloons, Legends, Sports and Saloons, BMWs

PIRELLI CARLISLE RALLY

April 30-May 1

British Rally Championship





THE ARCHIVE

Reluctant spectator
Jochen Rindt attempts
to get a better view
past the Nurburgring's
trackside flora of the
Flugplatz aerobatics
after his Cooper-
Maserati lasted just
four laps in the 1967
German Grand Prix.

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TOP FIVE

F3000 ACES WHO SHOULD HAVE MADE IT

For 20 years, the majority of drivers to reach Formula 1 made it via International Formula 3000 – the series that pre-dated GP2 and succeeded Formula 2 as the final rung on the ladder. As well as that, a host made it to become superstar professionals in Indycars, top-level touring cars as well as the world of Le Mans and sports car racing. But there were some very talented guys who fell well short of what their abilities merited...



1 VINCENZO SOSPIRI

F1? Yeah, he made it, but that was with the disastrous Lola project of 1997. Le Mans with a major manufacturer? Yep, box ticked, but that was Toyota's final crack with the GT-One in 1999, just before it pulled out to concentrate on F1. Indycars? A spell in the early incarnation of the IRL and a few outings with Dan Gurney's team, and that was it... Sospiri's 1995 F3000 title wasn't in a classic year, but he had beaten future superstars further down the ladder. He won a lot of low-profile sportscar races in a Ferrari 333SP, but deserved success at a much higher level. Now runs a Lamborghini-affiliated team in GT and F4.



2 JASON WATT

As 1995 Opel Lotus champion, Watt got his break with Alfa Romeo in the ITC, the series that arose when the DTM got all bloated... and then collapsed. That sent this British-born Dane back to single-seaters. On the verge of F1, he shunted a motorcycle and was paralysed. Success in his domestic tin-top series, using hand-controls, is a far cry from what he could have achieved. Son Noah is now an ace in karts.

3 MICHEL FERTE

Long before Esteban Ocon was a glint in his parents' eyes, Normandy had two talented up-and-comers: brothers Alain and Michel. Ferte won the Monaco F3 GP three times between them, and Michel – the younger of the two – claimed pole for and led the first-ever F3000 race, at Silverstone. Became a regular at Le Mans-only with the TWR Jaguar team, but by then his career momentum had stalled.



4 MICHEL TROLLE

Trolle is the often-forgotten victim of F3000's black weekend, at Brands Hatch in 1988. One day before Johnny Herbert's accident, Trolle – a leading contender since early '87 – suffered bad injuries in a qualifying crash. One week later he was due to sign a provisional agreement to go F1 with Tyrrell in '89... Still has contact with the sport; has managed Bruno Spengler and his son races in France's Fun Cup.

5 THOMAS DANIELSSON

This Swede sometimes beat Herbert, Gachot, Hill, Donnelly etc in his sole British F3 season in 1987. His rookie F3000 year – and his career – lost impetus while an eye problem was resolved. He won resoundingly on his return at Silverstone in 1989, but his only route was Japan. Even there he proved capable of beating Irvine, Frentzen and co, but it fell short of what his junior-category equals had achieved.



ALL PICS: LAT



Haymarket Consumer Media, Bridge House, 69 London Road, Twickenham TW1 3SP Tel +44 (0) 20 8267 5998
E-mail autosport@haymarket.com Website www.autosport.com
Individual e-mail firstname.surname@haymarket.com

Editorial

Editor **Edd Straw**
Deputy Editor **Marcus Simmons**
Chief F1 Correspondent **Ian Parkes**
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Editor **Glenn Freeman**
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Special Contributors

Gary Anderson, Alan Eldridge, Mark Glendenning, Marcus Pye, Dieter Rencken, Gary Watkins

Correspondents

Argentina Tony Watson **Australia** Phil Branagan
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Advertising

Tel +44 (0) 20 8267 5271
E-mail autosport.ads@haymarket.com

Sales Manager James Robinson

Display Advertising **Don Rupal, Karen Reilly**
Classified Advertising **Jamie Brooker, Jonathan King, Joe Andrews**
Autosport.com Sales Manager **Fiona Bain**
Online Advertising **Leah Mimms**
Advertising Director **Matthew Witham**

Advertising Production

Tel +44 (0) 20 8267 5588 Fax +44 (0) 20 8267 5320
Production Controller **Abbey Gunner** abbey.gunner@haymarket.com

Subscriptions

UK +44 (0) 344 848 8817 Overseas +44 (0) 1604 251451

Email help@autosport.themagazineshop.com

Back issues 0344 8488817

Direct Marketing Executive **Maria Fernandez** +44 (0) 20 8267 8254

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Licensing and Syndication

International Director **Alastair Lewis** +44 (0)20 8267 8606
Syndication enquiries **Isla Friend** +44 (0)20 8267 5024

Management

Group Director **Tim Bulley**
Group Commercial Director **Ben Guynan**
Group Publisher **Stuart Williams**
Group Editor **Anthony Rowlinson**
Group Publishing Manager **Sunita Davies**
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Editorial Director Mark Payton

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The grandstand is also ideally placed if you're planning to stay in the official *F1 Racing* Fan Village campsite, in the Whittlebury Park grounds – a short walk away behind the Becketts complex.

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