RALLY ARGENTINA REPORT P22

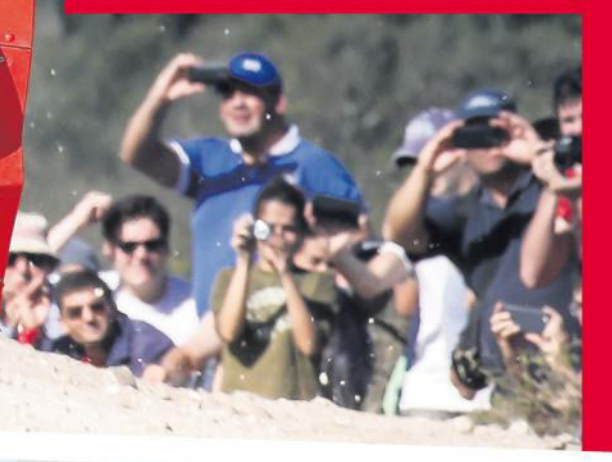
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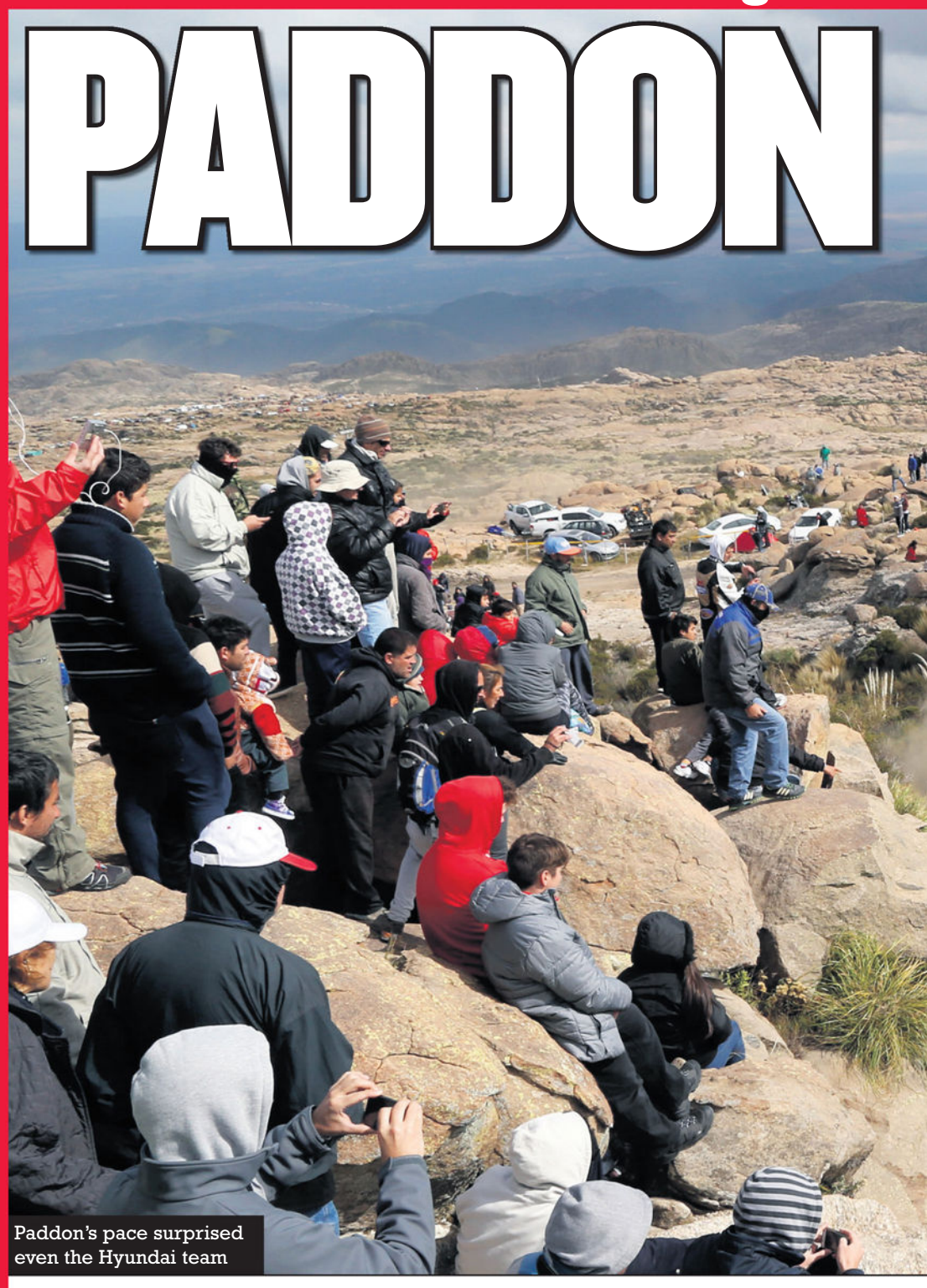
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New Zealander takes breakthrough WRC

PADDON



Paddon's pace surprised even the Hyundai team

By David Evans

Hayden Paddon has targeted a 2017 title push after scoring his first overall world championship victory on last weekend's Rally Argentina.

After heading off Sebastien Ogier for the rally win – beating the Frenchman by 11.2s on the final stage and 14.3s overall – the Kiwi believes talk of a 2016 title push is premature. The win moves him into second in the championship, but still 39 points behind treble champion Ogier in the standings.



Paddon was PWRC champ

"I think it's a bit early to start talking about the championship," he said. "The plan was always to win rallies this year and look for the title next season. I'm realistic enough to know that, right now, we probably don't have the ultimate speed for Seb. OK, I would probably back myself on some of the fast rallies, but I can't just rely on fast rallies or gravel rallies. Tarmac's a big thing for me, it's an area I want to work on and I need to work on."

It's not just Paddon and co-driver John Kennard who are getting quicker either, the i20 WRC is evolving all the time, with suspension improvements coming in time for Portugal and possibly a mid-season engine upgrade.

"We need to keep the rear of the car in-line a bit more," said Paddon. "That's a key area and something we have struggled with since we've had the new car. If we can get on top of that then we'll find a lot more speed and I know I can drive it a lot faster as well."

Hyundai team principal Michel Nandan confirmed the German-based team is working hard to improve the new car. "We are working on the suspension and differential," he explained. "Already since Mexico, we made a good step here on suspension and dampers. We have some other things in testing next week and the following week – I think we are going in the right direction. I think we can get more performance.

"As well as that, we are working on the engine and maybe there are some changes to come. We are working on the test bed at the moment and if it's valuable then we will do it."

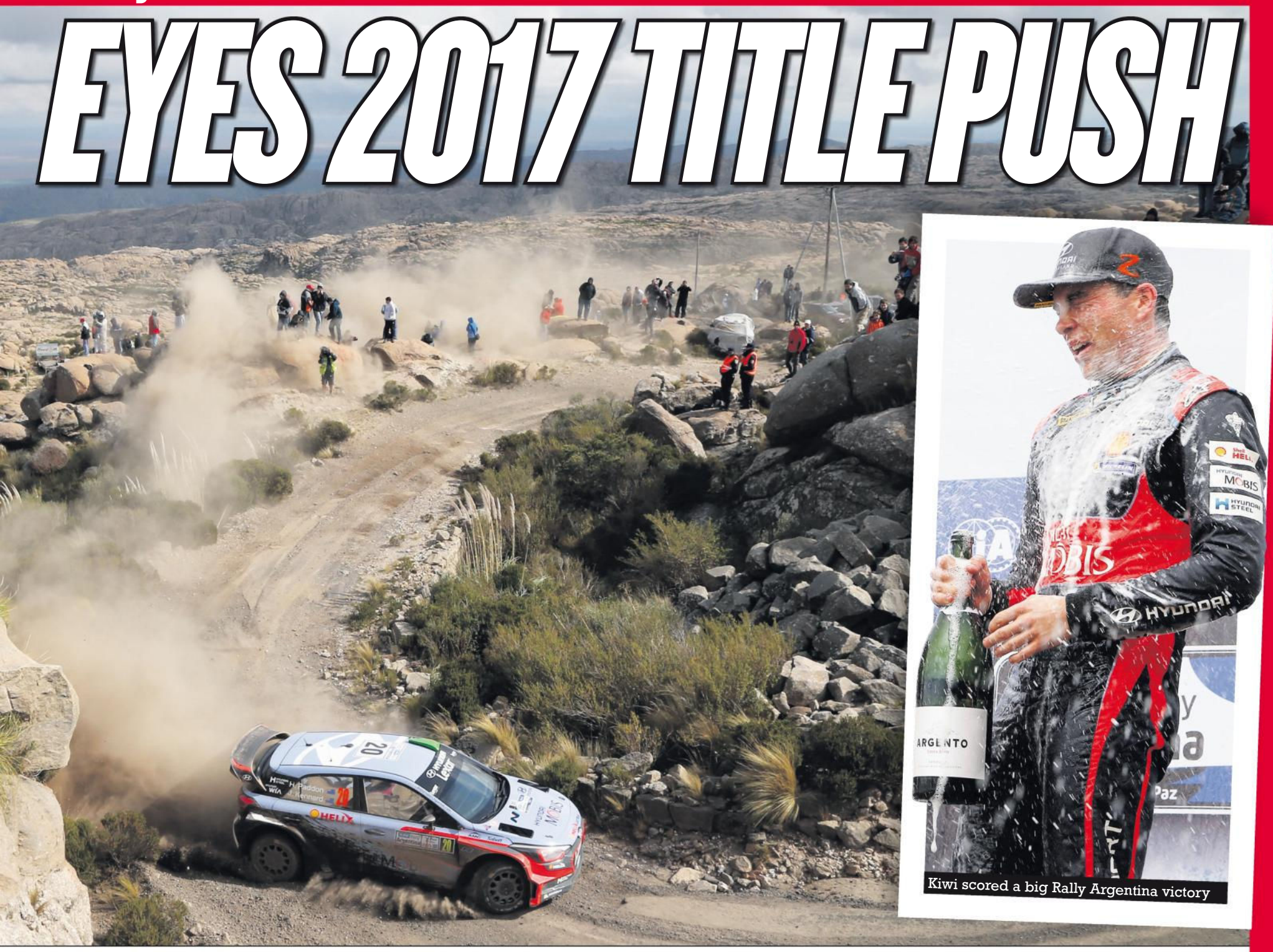
Nandan paid tribute to Paddon in landing the team's first 'proper' win. Hyundai's previous victory came from Thierry Neuville after Volkswagen's Ogier and Jari-Matti Latvala and Citroen's Kris Meeke all crashed out of the 2014 Rally Germany.

"This is a proper victory, we showed the car is improved, and now the times are really close to

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com and Timo Anis Photography

victory and now wants more

EYES 2017 TITLE PUSH



Kiwi scored a big Rally Argentina victory

the Volkswagen," said Nandan. "This shows we are closer and now we are able to fight. It's good for the team and it's good for the car. This is only the fourth rally for the new car and now we win. This could be a good push for us for the future.

"It's also a good push for Hayden and John. When we saw the time from Sebastien in Mina Clavero, we thought it could be tough, but we never stopped believing that they could do it. But, honestly, I don't think anybody thought they could do it in this way. It was incredible. Fantastic. It's very good for Hayden as well. He's such a professional guy, working so hard all the time and trying to improve in everything he does. This is good for him. After all of that work, he can look at himself and say: 'I can do it'. And he can."

Kennard's first win comes after more than three decades in the sport. He said: "We really didn't have much expectation from this rally at all – maybe that's the key! Hayden works so hard in this sport, he really deserves it."

Paddon admitted his progression to the top of the WRC has taken longer than is currently fashionable – but that doing it his own way has made it satisfying.

"I started slowly," he said, "building up and competing at home [New Zealand]. Then winning the Pirelli Star Driver in 2009 gave us six WRC rounds in 2010 and that was definitely a big turning point.

"These days, young guys come in, jump straight in the big cars and want to win immediately, but they end up crashing and then maybe running out of money. We took our time and when it got tough, we found 70-odd people to invest in us and back me.

"But, through all of the tough times, I never lost sight of getting to this point and winning this first rally. It's an amazing feeling."

Paddon credited two of his heroes with helping him along to his groundbreaking achievement. Possum Bourne, who blazed a trail for Kiwi rally drivers, and 1995 World Rally champion Colin McRae are both heroes for Paddon.

"Possum was a role model for me," added Paddon. "He showed that you could come from New Zealand and go overseas and be very successful. Colin was the inspiration for me to want to be world champion.

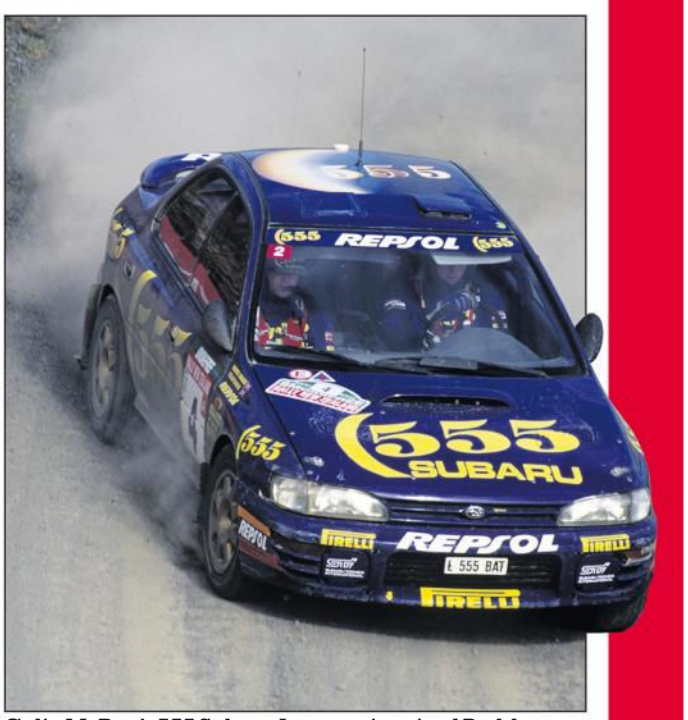
"I wasn't lucky enough to know Colin personally, but I know the family a little bit now. For me, it was that blue Group A car [Subaru Impreza 555] that both Colin and Possum were associated with. I loved that car. I never forget the day I met Colin at Rally New Zealand, I was 12 years old and I got his autograph. I'd been standing on the road section on Friday morning with this big sign I made: 'Go Colin!' He was my hero and I've watched that video of him winning the title in 1995 over and over. To be a rally winner like Colin was, is very special."

The WRC heads to Portugal next, where Paddon has only competed once in a world rally car. Ogier has won the four times, while Jari-Matti Latvala won in 2015.

CV

Hayden Paddon

2016: First full WRC, first win in Argentina
2015: First WRC podium, second in Sardinia
2014: Joins Hyundai Motorsport for six WRC rounds
2013: World Rally Car debut, eighth in Fiesta RS WRC in Catalunya
2012: Two SWRC wins, fourth in championship
2011: PWRC champion, four wins
2010: First PWRC win in New Zealand, third in championship
2009: Wins Pirelli Star Driver with ninth overall on Rally Australia
2007: First WRC round – Rally New Zealand (17th PWRC)
2007: First win – International Rally of Whangarei
2004: First rally



Colin McRae's 555 Subaru Impreza inspired Paddon

ARGENTINA HAS EASED SAFETY FEARS PAGE 11

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RACING NEWS

F1 ROUND-UP



Bernie backs female drivers

Bernie's support

F1 tsar Bernie Ecclestone has vowed to help female drivers break into the sport by backing Susie Wolff's Dare to be Different scheme, following controversial comments last week about his view on their abilities. Ecclestone claimed a female F1 driver "would not be taken seriously", while also suggesting they would struggle physically in the cars. Ecclestone then told *MN*'s sister title *Autosport:* "Let me be clear, I would love to see a woman driver in F1. Absolutely. One hundred per cent. I was asked 'if there was a sponsor wanting to put £100m into a team, providing it had two women drivers, what would I say?' I said 'I'd give another £20m to make it happen'."

Pirelli's plans

Pirelli has already run many of its 2017 F1 tyre concepts on GP2 cars to get ahead with early development. Pirelli was given clear guidance on the changes to rubber for 2017 onwards following last week's World Motorsport Council meeting. Pirelli's Paul Hembery said: "We've been doing a huge amount of work. We've also done limited tests on GP2 cars looking at some new concepts, so work is ongoing."

Haas to change?

Haas F1 driver Esteban Gutierrez believes the team needs to experiment more to get over its disappointing Chinese GP. Following two strong top six finishes for Romain Grosjean, Haas failed to score points in Shanghai. Gutierrez said: "Our set-up is quite conservative at the moment. We still don't know exactly where we are or are 100 per cent confident that this is right, so we can expect to have weekends where things aren't working. But we have a good base to work with."

Hungary for more

The Hungarian Grand Prix will remain on the F1 calendar for another decade after race organisers secured a new deal until 2026. The race already had a deal until 2021, but that was extended last week. The extension comes after track resurfacing work and the promise of further government funds to redevelop the track's facilities.

Photos: LAT

ALFA ROMEO WILL NOT BUY SAUBER

Italian brand edges closer to F1 return, but not with Sauber takeover



By Rob Ladbrook

Ferrari chief Sergio Marchionne is continuing to push for Alfa Romeo's return to Formula 1 to become a reality, but has quashed speculation that the brand could buy Sauber.

Marchionne is head of both Ferrari and the Fiat/Chrysler Group, which owns Alfa Romeo, and said back in January that the marque had to look at a return to the sport's top flight to improve the sporting image of its road cars.

Marchionne insisted that any Alfa return could be done by establishing a new team, but conceded that a takeover of a current squad would be the preferable option.

Reports have linked Alfa with a buyout of the struggling Sauber team. Sauber has endured a testing start to the campaign amid financial issues. It was forced to delay payments to 300 of its staff for February, and had to introduce its new car late at the second test.

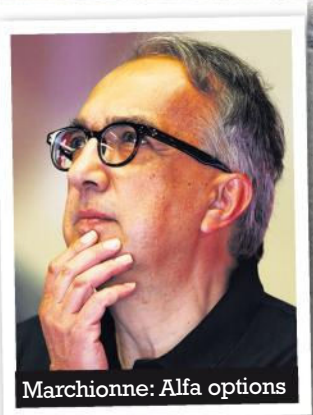
The financial strife of the Swiss team would make it a candidate for a brand like Alfa, which could follow Renault back into the sport as a full works team after the French firm bought out Lotus last year. Sauber also already boasts a Ferrari engine supply deal.

However, Marchionne poured cold water on the potential for any deal with Sauber, saying that the firm should look to re-enter the sport in conjunction with the Fiat/Chrysler Group, or Ferrari.

Marchionne said: "There are perhaps other alternatives for Alfa if they wanted to come back into the race [F1].

"It is a very close cousin of Ferrari, and you should start looking at your family first before you start looking outside."

Alfa Romeo last raced in F1 as a works operation 31 years ago, but has one of the longest histories in motorsport, having been involved in racing in various forms since 1911.



Marchionne: Alfa options

Hamilton: F1 not scared of grand prix format change

Lewis Hamilton has called on F1 chiefs to keep thinking of ways to freshen up the format of grand prix weekends, and would not object to trying out new formats this season.

F1 rulemakers have faced intense criticism this year after attempts to shake-up the qualifying format, with the resulting knockout format being widely slammed before it was shelved.

Regardless of the difficulties, Hamilton insists that F1 should not be scared to try new things, and has backed calls for change in the traditional race format.

Hamilton said: "I definitely think we should use this year as an opportunity to come up with some ideas and test some things. If the fans saw we tried another new format and it didn't work, sure they might not like it, but at least they would know we're trying.

"For the last 10 years it's [race weekends] been the same, but if the format was different each weekend it would be exciting. It doesn't have to be every weekend, but if you had a super race weekend or three heats, I don't know, but something different."

Red Bull speed comes as a surprise for Mercedes

World championship leader Nico Rosberg says he's been surprised by the pace of Red Bull this season, and insists the team must be taken seriously as a title threat.

Mercedes racer Rosberg has won the first three races of the season, but was pushed hard in China by Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull in the early stages before the Australian picked up a puncture.

Rosberg said the upswing in form from the Milton Keynes team had caught his attention: "Red Bull was a surprise. They were close in qualifying and in the race, although we see Ferrari [as being] right on us whereas Red Bull were still about half a second away in qualifying. But Red Bull made a big step, which is a surprise as they don't have as much engine power as we do, so they are a force to be reckoned with."

Mercedes head Toto Wolff said: "Red Bull's pace is strong. It would be good if they bounced back."

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'Win was end of emotional ride'
Ingram and Speedworks, p21



Photos: LAT and Jakob Ebrey

PARIS
A 'TURNING POINT' FOR FE



Formula E's inaugural race on the streets of Paris must be used as a "turning point" for the electric single-seater series, according to series head Alejandro Agag.

The Paris ePrix took place around Les Invalides, the army hospital and hotel complex that also houses Napoleon's Tomb, and with the Eiffel Tower as a dramatic backdrop.

Agag believes taking the championship into the heart of the French city is a "coming of age" moment.

"Even by FE standards it is amazing," he said. "This is the best one so far.

"This is like the demonstration that Formula E can really bring racing to the heart of a city like this. Like a coming of age, it's a turning point – the whole world is going to see the images of the cars, the Eiffel Tower, Les Invalides. It shows the power and potential of Formula E."

The track was also based near to the headquarters of the FIA and the governing body's president Jean Todt said he hoped the race would remain "for years to come".

FE is in the process of finalising its season three calendar, with a New York race the headline potential addition.

Agag says he will use the Paris race as a blueprint for getting such deals over the line.

"This is what we need to use as a showcase," he said. "To say 'this is what we can do, if you want the same, you have to do it in the city centre'.

"It's huge. I can't believe it myself. I walk around and say, 'Have we really done this?'

"It's an incredible achievement. Four years ago when we started we would never have dreamed of this. It's a sign of how quick big things are coming for Formula E."

Di Grassi extends his Formula E championship lead with dominant victory

Lucas di Grassi extended his Formula E points lead with a dominant performance in the inaugural Paris ePrix.

The Abt Audi Sport driver beat poleman Sam Bird into Turn 1 and raced into a commanding lead early on.

He was granted an easy conclusion when Ma Qing Hua crashed heavily five laps from the end of the race and brought out the safety car, which allowed di Grassi to secure his third win of the season under caution.

The Brazilian extends his championship lead to 11 points over Sebastien Buemi, who finished third, behind Jean-Eric Vergne.

Buemi inherited the final podium position after a mistake from Bird, shortly before Ma crashed, sent the British driver down the escape road at Turn 1.

Bird had run third for the entirety of the race up until that point after also losing out to DS Virgin Racing team-mate Vergne at the start.

The two touched wheels at Turn 2 and came to blows again before the car swaps, Vergne hanging on each time – but the delays allowed Buemi and the other Renault e.dams car of Nico Prost to make it a four-car fight for second.

They held position through the pitstops, after which Vergne and Bird pulled away from Buemi, who took longer to warm up his tyres but soon set a couple of new fastest laps to draw onto the tail of Bird's car. A couple of half-hearted looks were rebuffed and Bird appeared to have his rival covered, but he locked up defending into Turn 1.

He performed a swift U-turn down the escape road, but tumbled to sixth behind Buemi, Prost and Venturi's Stephane Sarrazin.

MOTORSPORT NEWS says...

Paris is an FE springboard

There needs to be greater excitement over, and respect for, what happened in Paris last weekend. Like, loathe or display indifference to Formula E, but it delivered what must be motorsport's greatest achievement.

At the very least you can make a strong case in its favour. Just think for a moment: on Saturday there was a race on the streets of the French capital…with the Eiffel Tower in the background!

Loic Duval, the Audi LMP1 driver who competes for Dragon Racing in Formula E, hit the nail on the head on Friday when he said traditional motorsport has become progressively "more secretive". He said this as we stood outside his team's awning, with a stream of French traffic passing by just feet away – the road that would make up the pitlane on Saturday was still in regular use until Friday afternoon.

That was what Paris was all about – it was proper heart-of-the-capital, taking-it-to-the-people motorsport. And it would not have been possible for anything other than the all-electric championship.

Conversations began with the previous mayor, Bertrand Delanoe, 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 original pitch had been to have it on the outskirts.

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

The series is right to view this as a springboard. Hopefully the gravity 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 as well.

Scott Mitchell

Huff questions WTCC penalties

Rob Huff questioned the inconsistency of penalties handed out during the second World Touring Car Championship race at the Hungaroring after a drivethrough penalty dropped him out of contention.

Huff had been battling for the lead with Citroen drivers Jose Maria Lopez and Yvan Muller in a sodden race, but had his hopes of victory crushed after he was penalised for bumping his way past Muller.

Mehdi Bennani also received a drivethrough for contact, while Lada's Nicky Catsburg was punished for skipping the chicane.

But with three other clashes not investigated by the stewards, Huff, who finished sixth, said a lack of clarity on what was deemed fair was part of the reason moves like his were being attempted.

"It was a harsh decision," he said. "So many people are very upset with it. That's mainly due to the inconsistency of penalties being handed out.

"We had contact; I took advantage of that because I felt it was fair to. Yet if you look further down the order there are people driving into each other and having absolutely no outcome at all.

"If we could understand a bit better as drivers exactly what's allowed and what's not then we might be able to race together and not have these upsets that we're still having at the moment."

Lopez went on to win race two comfortably ahead of Muller and Tiago Monteiro.

Bennani was victorious in the opening race, ahead of Sebastien Loeb Racing team-mate, Briton Tom Chilton, as Honda and Citroen's runners opted for slick tyres despite the fact the track was wet.



Huff: lack of rule clarity



Audi was denied Silverstone victory

Audi opts against appeal over WEC exclusion

Audi has decided not to appeal its exclusion from the opening round of the World Endurance Championship earlier this month.

Andre Lotterer, Benoit Treluyer and Marcel Fassler won the Silverstone race on the road but were later excluded after their Audi R18 e-tron quattro's skid block had been found to be worn beyond the permitted limit in post-race scrutineering.

Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich said in a statement: "It is our job to avoid increased wear – we accept this responsibility.

"We have made our decision in the interest of the sport and hope that the eight remaining world championship rounds will be similarly thrilling as the season opener."

Audi's decision not to appeal confirms the win went to the Porsche crew of Neel Jani, Romain Dumas and Marc Lieb.

Barnicoat takes maiden European Formula 3 triumph at a wet Hungaroring for Hitech

Brit Ben Barnicoat claimed his maiden European Formula 3 win in the third race at the Hungaroring last weekend.

The Hitech driver took the lead when team-mate George Russell collided with poleman Maximilian Gunther – a crash that earned the Brit a three-place grid penalty for the next round at Pau.

Barnicoat was able to control the remainder of the race on a wet track. "It was an amazing race for me and I'm extremely happy," said the Racing Steps Foundation-backed driver. "The track was like driving on ice. It was very hard."

Estonian Ralf Aron won the opening race, while Prema Powerteam team-mate Gunther became the first 2016 two-time winner in the second contest.



Brit won final race in Hungary

Honda WTCC cleared of technical breach

The Honda World Touring Car Championship team was cleared of any breach of the technical regulations after checks last Sunday at the Hungaroring.

Stewards decided to investigate the flat floors of all four Honda Civics after Saturday's qualifying session, but could not complete their findings before the start of the first race, which meant the qualifying result – on which the grids for the two races were based – remained provisional.

The results of Sunday's races were provisional until the conclusion of the investigation, but a statement released later that day confirmed that the cars were compliant.

Rob Huff had challenged for victory in the second race, until a drivethrough penalty ended his hopes (*see story above*).

RACING NEWS

IN BRIEF

Brits abroad
There were British winners in both rounds of the International GT Open at Estoril. Shaun Balfe and Phil Keen won the opener in Balfe's Ferrari 458. Michael Benham and Duncan Tappy's McLaren 650 won the second race, when the two cars ahead of them collided on the last lap leaving Tappy to take the flag. Balfe/Keen finished fourth.

Wells' win
Tony Wells and James Littlejohn won two out of the opening three races in the Radical European Masters at Estoril. The pair led most of races one and three, taking the narrowest of victories first off as their SR8 had Alain Costa/Johan Scheier close the gap to 0.871s at the flag. They were never headed in the third, finishing well clear of Ozzy Yusuf/Tom Ashton. But the duo had to settle for third place in race two, behind James Abbott/Paddy McClughan's Spyder turbo and Manhal Allos/Alex Kapadia.

Orrock's SEAT
Last season's VW Racing Cup runner-up Lucas Orrock made his SEAT Eurocup debut at Estoril. Having qualified 10th he was up to eighth place in the opening race before retiring and came home 12th in race two. Fellow Brit Alex Morgan, now a regular in the championship, collected a fifth and eighth from his two outings.

Brown is back
Rising saloon car star Jono Brown returned to racing at Donington Park after recovering from a heart condition. Brown will contest the full Mini Challenge JCW class this year with backing from Corbeau. He raced only sporadically last year after undergoing surgery to correct the health issue. He scored a best finish of sixth before being caught up in the first lap incidents of race two.

Caymans join in
The Porsche Cayman Clubsport made its UK competition debut when three examples ran in the GT Cup at Donington Park. The cars were delivered last week in base form, with the GT4 update kit to come later. Esmee Hawkey raced one car for GT Marques, Harry Whale shared an Amspeeed entry with Alistair MacKinnon, while Rick and Brad Nevinson sharing the other Track Focused-run example.

Palmer's debut
Reigning BRDC Formula 4 champion Will Palmer secured a podium finish on his debut in the Formula Renault Northern European Cup at Monza last weekend. Palmer was 13th in race one but raced to third for the second outing in his R-ace GP-run machine. The results leave him seventh in the championship points.

Photos: Mick Walker, Nicola Todd



United Autosports will run two Ligier JS P3s

PROTOTYPE CUP TO LAUNCH THIS SEASON

By Rob Ladbrook

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 sportscars. A two-hour pilot race will be held alongside the final rounds of the GT Cup on the Snetterton 300 Circuit on October 8/9. A full six-round schedule including Silverstone, Donington Park, Brands Hatch and Spa-Francorchamps is planned for 2017.

United Autosports, which recently became the UK agent for the Ligier JS P3 car, is the first team to commit to the series, fielding a minimum of two cars. Other entries are expected to include the new Ave-Riley LMP3 car from UK agent Murphy Prototypes.

Bute Motorsport's Phil Boland said: "We've worked so hard to bring this together and it's really got a head of steam. We'll run the pilot race this year to spread the message that this is happening and then 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."


Profit: Ligier backing

Onroak Automotive's Christophe Profit said: "LMP3 is 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 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."

THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP



Simon Pagenaud took another IndyCar win at Barber Motorsports Park last weekend after an entertaining battle with Graham Rahal in the closing stages. Rahal managed to get ahead of Pagenaud but then lost out after clipping Jack Hawksworth when lapping him. Josef Newgarden completed the podium, while Juan Pablo Montoya took fifth despite starting last… Johnny Cecotto Jr gave RP Motorsport its maiden Formula V8 3.5 win in the first race at the Hungaroring last weekend. The Venezuelan profited from a mistake from poleman Tom Dillmann mid-race. Dillmann made amends in a wet race two, fending off Roy Nissany to take his first win… **The McLaren 650S GT3 of Rob Bell, Come Ledogar and Shane van Gisbergen took the opening win of the Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup season at Monza. Despite starting 16th, Bell surged up the order in the first stint and the McLaren was able to hold off the polesitting HTP Mercedes-AMG GT3 of Maximilian Buhk, Dominik Baumann and Jazeman Jaafar…** A last-lap move on Kyle Busch gave Carl Edwards his second NASCAR Sprint Cup win of the season at Richmond last weekend. Jimmie Johnson completed the podium…

Witt looking to British GT with new Bentley GT3

Jordan Witt is aiming for a British GT entry next season after running 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 Continental, which was delivered just three weeks before last weekend's season-opener at Donington. The car was entered by Witt's Jordan Racing team, but staffed by Porsche Carrera Cup squad Redline Racing.

Witt took a third and then won the second GT Cup race last weekend. He said he had bigger plans for the car next season.

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

"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."


Witt landed two wins in Bentley

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."


Harris made his debut in Monza

Top Gear man Harris joins Team Parker squad

New *Top Gear* presenter Chris Harris will race in the Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup this season, driving a Team Parker Racing Bentley Continental GT3.

He made his debut in the category at Monza last weekend alongside Derek Pierce and Chris Cooper but retired from the race.

"This is a bit of a pinch yourself moment," he said. "If, last year, you'd asked me what my dream 2016 race season would be it would have involved a Bentley Continental GT3, Stuart Parker and my good friend and long-time team-mate Chris Cooper. And now it's actually happened!"

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'The past MX-5 master prevailed'
M3 Cup at Brands, p16



Photos: Mick Walker, Tony Todd

MINI CHALLENGE SET TO RESCHEDULE LOST RACE



Mini Challenge organisers are planning to reschedule the second race of the season from Donington Park, which was cancelled last weekend after a series of incidents.

Despite attracting a 30-car entry for the top JCW Class, the championship suffered a difficult weekend in Leicestershire, with three red flag stoppages over qualifying and the first two races of the campaign. The second race was struck from the timetable entirely after multiple cars were damaged on the opening lap. The third race ran without incident on Sunday evening.

Race one was stopped on the opening lap after multiple cars tangled at Hollywood corner. Drivers complained about problems getting heat into the hard compound Dunlop rear tyres that have been introduced this season. Dunlop's Michael Butler held a meeting with drivers on Sunday morning and two green flag laps were introduced for the final two races.

Regardless, race two was halted again on lap one when several cars were heavily damaged in incidents at Schwantz and McLeans.

Championship organiser Antony Williams said he would hold talks with MSVR to reschedule the lost race, and insisted bad driving would be dealt with.

"We are trying to find a time slot at one of the future rounds to reschedule the cancelled race," said Williams.

"Some drivers have complained about the Dunlop tyres, but we're happy that two green flag laps sorted that and there's no inherent problem. I think this weekend was a case of some drivers trying too hard early on. Race three proved we have clean races."

Reigning champion Charlie Butler-Henderson added: "The tyres were fine on Sunday. It's just some drivers not using their brains. These cars are proper racing cars so have to be treated with respect. I think people will understand that now."

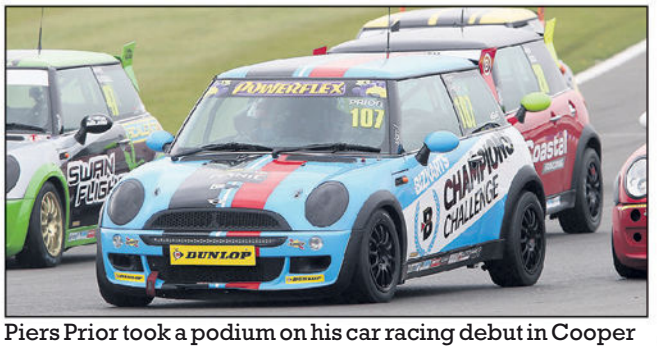
Surtees Trophy winner Prior makes debut

Henry Surtees Challenge winner Piers Prior made his car racing debut in the Mini Challenge at Donington Park last weekend.

Prior, who won the Buckmore Park shootout last year, earned his spot on the Cooper Class grid thanks to winning a shootout with BIZ karts. Prior took a best finish of third.

"Considering it was my first car racing weekend I have to be pleased with the results," he said. "The Coopers are quite like a kart, but getting used to the extra weight of them was a challenge.

"I've only tested Formula Renault and MSA Formula cars on a long circuit, so the experience wasn't that useful here. At the moment this is a one-off but if the chance comes up I'd love to do it."



Piers Prior took a podium on his car racing debut in Cooper



Witts raced new Golf

New VW Golf Mk7 starts its first race

Tin-top champion Tom Witts will handle the first race-spec Mk7 Volkswagen Golf in this year's Volkswagen Racing Cup after giving the car a shakedown at Donington Park last weekend.

Witts, who won the Production GTI title last season, entered the Maximum Motorsport-run car into last weekend's VAG Trophy races before the VW Cup begins at Rockingham this weekend. He took a best finish of seventh.

"The new car is a bit different," said Witts. "It's basically a Scirocco underneath the skin so it's built on a proven platform. We've had a few technical issues. We had an anti-rollbar break in qualifying and a few gearbox issues with gear selection, but that's normal for a new car.

"It looks great and has a lot of potential. The organisers want to move the VW Cup forward so it was natural to try the Mk7."



Side-engined car ran in Croft races

Classic ex-Derek Bell Beagle makes race return in Clubmans Cup after 30-year absence

Beagle Mk IV 1700 designer Jim Yardley is eyeing further Clubmans Cup appearances this season after the car raced for the first time in 30 years at Croft last weekend.

The uniquely built side-engined car, which was previously driven by Derek Bell in its heyday, was guided to three podiums by current driver Jonty Hair.

Hair recorded two second places and a third at Croft and battled admirably with defending champion Alex Champkin in the much-fancied Vision V84.

Both Yardley and Hair know the significance of Beagle's long overdue return to racing and are confident of more success.

"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 really. It only comes alive when you're fully on the limit so you need to be on it the whole time."

As yet, the car does not qualify for the Historic Classic class, but Yardley is hopeful that the rules can be tweaked to allow the Beagle to make a full-time racing return this season.

"Currently it doesn't meet their regulations because the flywheel is too small. So I'm hoping they can change the rules to allow us to run, which would be against like cars."

THE VOICE OF NATIONAL RACING

MATT JAMES

"Subaru will face a hard time at Thruxton"





There will be tough times ahead for Team BMR

Coming up next on the British Touring Car Championship roster is Thruxton in 10 days' time. It is one of those circuits that fans, volunteers and drivers all look forward to. It is super-quick and super challenging: just what a motor racing circuit should be.

One of the teams that won't be looking forward too much to the visit is the Team BMR Subaru squad. Its Levorg is very new – completed on the eve of the opening rounds at Brands Hatch – and it has done very little testing so far.

But one of the noticeable things about the car so far is that the chassis is strong – look at Colin Turkington's qualifying pace at Donington Park in the mixed conditions. His sixth row start is a sign that the chassis is pretty good. The four-strong Subaru crew – which includes Jason Plato, James Cole and Warren Scott on the driving strength alongside Turkington – has a decent car underneath it. But the speed traps are what lets the estate-shaped car down at the moment.

There aren't any real straights at Brands and, over the two speed traps (at the start-finish line and then another on the Cooper Straight). The average deficit there was almost 4mph slower than the pacesetters. At Donington Park, it was almost 5mph. Those figures are likely to be exaggerated at Thruxton, the fastest circuit on the calendar. If it is going to hurt, it is likely to hurt badly there.

There are systems put in place in the British Touring Car Championship to make sure that the cars are levelled up on power, but these are only part of any solution. If the engine has problems that the team or tuner Mountune has yet to solve, then the BTCC technical boffins aren't likely to just hand out extra boost to push the car up the grid.

The engines had to be brought in from Japan, because the units are not on sale in the UK. That meant delivery took time and, in the rush to get the cars ready, that was just another delay in the full pressure process.

There is still work to be done on the powerplant, and it does need some more time on the dyno before it will be anywhere near ready to reach its full capacity. There are other tweaks that the team will want to implement when they are permitted to – but there will be much technical wrangling before that will get the green light. There is a way to go but, don't forget, this is a three-year programme.

There were always going to be teething troubles and it seems that the engine is the stumbling block right now. Going to Thruxton, it is going to be more painful than at most places.

AGREE/DISAGREE?
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RACING NEWS

IN BRIEF

Ginetta's USA
Ginetta has signed 15-year-old American Parker Chase as a factory recognised driver for the remainder of the Pirelli World Challenge. Chase joined the PWC one week after his 15th birthday and raced a Ginetta G55 GT4 to third place on his debut with the Performance Motorsports Group at Circuit of the Americas in Texas. Ginetta's Ewan Baldry said: "Parker is the latest young driver to progress his career with Ginetta. In light of his immense start to his season we are delighted to offer him factory driver status."

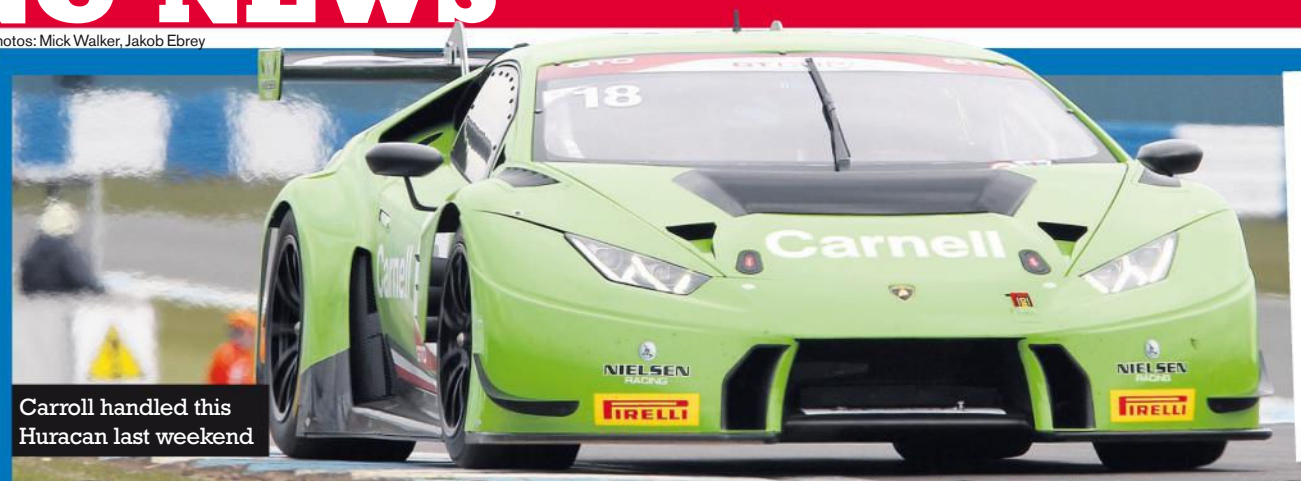
GBR's KTM
Heads at the University of Hertfordshire have signed up to run a car in the new Reiter Young Stars series, which forms part of the GT4 European Series. The university will field one of the KTM X-Bow GT4s for German driving duo Lennart Marioneck and Timothy Stupple. So far, eight teams have signed up to run cars, with Hertfordshire being the sole British entry. Rebecca Jackson is the only British driver signed up. She is sharing a car with Dane Thomas Krebs in the FH Aachen team. Jackson and Krebs took second place in race one and fourth in race two at Monza last weekend. Marioneck and Stupple won race two for Hertfordshire.

Wrigley's G57 drive
Runaway Ginetta GT4 Supercup points leader Tom Wrigley competed in a Ginetta G57 for the first time last weekend. He finished ninth in the four-hour V de V Endurance race at Le Mans, sharing with Radical ace Andy Cummings and GT star Bradley Ellis. Ginetta owner Lawrence Tomlinson and factory driver Mike Simpson won the race in another G57.

Bradshaw success
British karter Callum Bradshaw won the opening round of the CIK-FIA Karting Academy Trophy at Essay in France last weekend. He didn't put a foot wrong all weekend in an impressive display. Fellow Brit Oliver Clarke made a strong debut in the category, finishing fourth in his first race overseas.

Northern family
Louise Claxton became the third generation of her family to race in the Northern Saloons and Sports when she made her race debut at Croft. Grandfather Bob and father Neil were on the entry list too, but Bob's Renault 21 Turbo broke its gearbox in qualifying. Neil won his class in the second race with his Suzuki SC100, having been seventh in race one, but Louise put her Peugeot 106 into the Complex undergrowth in race one before taking second in class in race two.

Photos: Mick Walker, Jakob Ebrey



Carroll handled this Huracan last weekend



CARROLL BACK TO BRITISH GT IN LAMBO


Carroll will join Barwell to share car with Griffin

By Rob Ladbrook

Pro racer Adam Carroll will return to the British GT Championship for the next two rounds with the Barwell Motorsport team to replace factory driver Fabio Babini.

The team has drafted multiple race winner and former A1GP champion Carroll in to share one of its Lamborghini Huracan GT3s with Liam Griffin. Griffin began the season alongside Lamborghini factory driver Babini at Brands Hatch and the pair scored a podium finish.

Babini was placed with Barwell as a stand-in until Alexander Sims could take over the car from round four at Silverstone onwards.

However, with Carroll available Barwell has opted to switch drivers.

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. The Ferrari is mechanically brilliant as it has so much raw grip and power, but it can 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 Britain."

Barwell head 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 are fully supportive of the change and we're looking forward to working with Adam."



Turkington drove BMW CSL in 2014

Turkington lines up a double drive at Donington Historic Festival

Two-time British Touring Car champion Colin Turkington will handle two different cars at the Donington Historic Festival – an ex-DTM BMW M3 E30 and a Corvette.

The Northern Irishman, who raced at the Silverstone Classic in 2014 in a BMW 3.0 CSL, will enter the Touring Car Challenge event in the ex-Steve Soper 1992 BMW M3 E30, owned by Mark Smith, and go up against a number of his rivals from the BTCC, including Matt Neal.

Then he will step in to the Sam Thomas Racing Chevy Corvette for the 90-minute GT and Sports Car Cup race, which features pre-1966 GT machines and pre-1963 Sports Cars that raced at world championship level.

Turkington said: "I am thrilled to be racing the BMW. I had an E30 as my wedding car – I simply love them. It has a really strong pedigree too, so that is exciting. Although I missed that era for tin-tops, to step back in time is a real privilege.

"I am sharing the Corvette with Sam Thomas, who owns the BMW I raced at Silverstone in 2014.

"I have tested a lot of his cars, and I drove one of his Lister Jaguars during a test at Silverstone last week. Hopefully we will be doing more races together in the future."

JTR team still hopeful of fielding two MSA Formula cars this year

MSA Formula squad JTR is still looking for drivers to compete in the category after running a single car for Dane Patrik Matthiesen so far in 2016.

The team won the series in its final two years as Formula Ford in 2013 and 2014 but has struggled since single-seater powerhouses like Carlin, Arden and Fortec joined last year when it became Britain's FIA F4 category.

"We are still looking for other drivers," said team manager Nick Madge. "It just seems quiet. It's hard to find people with budget."

The team has therefore decided to put one of its three Mygale chassis up for sale. "We've got three cars and there's no point having them standing around doing nothing," added Madge. "We can survive easily enough with two."

Matthiesen has had a difficult start to his first season in single-seaters and has been struggling with engine issues. Madge is confident the team has now got to the bottom of these and there should be an improvement.


British Formula Ford title-winner JTR is running one car

READ MN'S DIGITAL EDITION
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'Butler-Henderson starts title defence with a win'

Action from Donington Park, p17



HOPKIRK'S MINI TO STAR AT COVENTRY



Hopkirk and Liddon won 1964 Monte in Mini



Hopkirk: in talks to drive

The 1964 Monte Carlo Rally-winning Mini Cooper S will be a star feature for this year's Coventry Motofest event, with Paddy Hopkirk in talks to return to the driving seat.

The famous machine has been stored within the British Motor Museum in recent years, but will return to action following an extensive engine restoration to conduct demonstration runs around the road course for the June 4/5 event.

Event organisers have yet to confirm a driver, but are in talks with Hopkirk – who famously won the 1964 Monte alongside co-driver Henry Liddon – to drive the car once again.

The Coventry Motofest holds non-timed live action runs around a 1.5-mile closed circuit created on the city's A403 ring road. The event, which is also co-organised by the British Automobile Racing Club and Donington Park, features displays from a vast array of national motorsport. British Touring Cars are expected to run, as is a selection of club racing, short oval, rally cars and bikes.

Coventry Motofest director James Noble said: "We are very excited to have Paddy Hopkirk's Mini Cooper S ready to run at this year's event.

"The Mini's win at Monte in 1964 is one of the most iconic performances in motorsport history, and so to have it run here on our circuit over 50 years on from its greatest triumph is an amazing coup for the event.

"We want to thank the British Motor Museum for their assistance in bringing the Cooper S to Coventry and we look forward to this iconic car thrilling the crowds."

Strawberry Racing issues statement on engine seals for OK units

Strawberry Racing has issued a statement clarifying a number of points regarding the Votex OK engines used in the revived MSA British Senior and Junior Championships.

Strawberry – the official OTK UK importer – has said that all engines are provided direct from the factory and have three seals so it is easy to see if they have been tampered with. Once purchased, the engine does not have to be maintained by Strawberry Racing.

Strawberry's Warwick Ringham said: "All we, and the OTK Kart Group, are trying to do is give everyone the chance to race in what, from 2016 forward, will be the pinnacle of world karting.

"The OTK Kart Group has invested heavily in this class, in terms of time and money in developing this new generation of CIK engines and wants to see it grow and carry on for years to come. They and Strawberry Racing understand that some people do have a few concerns and issues. That is why we have moved quickly to answer any questions and offer complete openness."



OK engines are active

KARTING REPORT

Rattican and Barnard share British Cadet spoils in second Super One round at Rissington

Joshua Rattican and Taylor Barnard shared the spoils in the MSA British Cadet Championship's second round at a bitterly cold Rissington.

Bray Kenneally and Harry Thompson traded the lead in the first final, with Rattican and Jonny Wilkinson battling behind. After Thompson had eased Kenneally to one side on the penultimate lap they clashed on the final lap, allowing Rattican to take up the lead and win.

While Wilkinson and Thompson slowed each other, Kenneally swooped round the outside for a provisional second until penalised 10s. Thompson also took a penalty but a successful appeal to the stewards put him back to third.

Rattican was hung out to dry in the second race in favour of Thompson after many karts crashed at the first corner, including Kenneally. Thompson clung on to the lead ahead of Georgi Dimitrov and Tyler Read until a sudden rain shower had Barnard at one with the conditions, catapulting himself from 21st to snatch the lead.

Alex Simmonds followed him through, while Joseph Taylor salvaged third and Thompson fifth, split by Reggie Duhy all the way from winning the repechage.

Jenson Butterfield took lights-to-flag victories in **MiniMax**. In **Junior Max's** first final Joe Turney eased clear of William Pettitt, who had overcome Jonathan Hoggard, but in the second final it was Pettitt who cleared off.

Massive battles in **Senior Max** resolved in favour of Harrison Thomas in the first, but he was relegated from first on the last lap of final two by Josh White.

The **X30 International Qualifiers** had Gordon Mutch win the first Junior final, but was pipped by Angus Fender in the second. Sam Marsh took the first senior final, then Scott Mackrell broke away to win the second.

Graham Smith



Barnard won Cadet final two

Results

Cadets (16 laps) 1 Joshua Rattican (Synergy); 2 Jonny Wilkinson (Synergy) +1.31s; 3 Harry Thompson (Synergy); 4 Max Dodds (Synergy); 5 Van Knapton (Synergy); 6 Joseph Taylor (Synergy). Fastest lap Thompson. Pole Bray Kenneally. **Final 2** 1 Taylor Barnard (Zip); 2 Alex Simmonds (Zip) +0.43s; 3 Taylor; 4 Reggie Duhy (Synergy); 5 Thompson; 6 Rattican. FL Wilkinson. P Rattican. **MiniMax (18 laps)** 1 Jenson Butterfield (Tony Kart); 2 Dexter Patterson (Kosmic) +6.67s; 3 Jonny Edgar (Esprit); 4 Lorcan Hanafin (Tony Kart); 5 Alex Lloyd (BRK); 6 Finlay Bunce (Tony Kart). FL Tom Canning. P Butterfield. **Final 2 (18 laps)** 1 Butterfield; 2 Patterson +0.41; 3 Tom Canning (Kosmic); 4 Hanafin; 5 Edgar; 6 Lloyd. FL Hanafin. P Butterfield. **Junior Max (18 laps)** 1 Joe Turney (Kosmic); 2 William Pettitt (Tony Kart) +2.44s; 3 Jonathan Hoggard (Tony Kart); 4 Myles Apps (Tony Kart); 5 Mark Kimber (Tony Kart); 6 Axel Charpentier (Tony Kart). FL Pettitt. P Turney. **Final 2 (18 laps)** 1 Pettitt; 2 Turney +0.94s; 3 Luke Ide (Alonso); 4 Tommy Foster (Tony Kart); 5 Charpentier; 6 Tyler Chesterton (Tony Kart). FL Turney. P Turney. **Senior Rotax (19 laps)** 1 Harrison Thomas (Tony Kart); 2 James Johnson (Tony Kart) +0.70s; 3 Jack McCarthy (Tony Kart); 4 Josh White (Tony Kart); 5 Josh Collings (Kosmic); 6 Ben Davis (Alonso). FL White. P White. **Final 2 (19 laps)** 1 White; 2 Collings +0.11s; 3 Johnson; 4 Thomas; 5 Davis; 6 McCarthy. FL White. P Thomas. **Junior X30 (18 laps)** 1 Gordon Mutch; 2 Ethan Pitt (Gold) +1.11s; 3 Jake Douglas (Alonso); 4 Angus Fender (Gold); 5 Tom Douglas (Mach 1); 6 Ethan Rees (Tony Kart). FL Harrison Smith. P Jake Douglas. **Final 2 (16 laps)** 1 Fender; 2 Mutch +1.83s; 3 Pitt; 4 Harry McQuillan (Tony Kart); 5 Jake Douglas; 6 Oliver Greetham (Alonso). FL Fender. P Mutch. **Senior X30 (19 laps)** 1 Sam Marsh (Alonso); 2 Scott Mackrell +3.09s; 3 Brett Ward (Mach 1); 4 Matthew Hirst (Tony Kart); 5 Josh Collings (Alonso); 6 Euan Wilson (Alonso). FL Marsh. P Marsh. **Final 2 (18 laps)** 1 Mackrell; 2 Marsh +0.38s; 3 Collings; 4 Ward; 5 Jack Partridge (Gold); 6 Hirst. FL Matt Davies. P Marsh.

GROUP NATIONAL EDITOR

ROB LADBROOK

"British GT can change things very quickly"





British GT: back to the safety car after quick action

Ever heard of the expression 'too many cooks'? Formula 1 certainly has, but fortunately national motorsport tends to be good at keeping things simple.

If something is wrong, it tends to get fixed pretty quickly around the UK circuits.

We recently had a great example of this following the British GT Championship opener at Brands Hatch. All was well as the race began and cars circulated without issue for the first 40 minutes.

Then, bang! Phil Dryburgh's Aston rolls to destruction on one of the fastest parts of the circuit and the racing is neutralised, but not with a safety car, with the new Full Course Yellow 'Code 80' ruling. It limits all cars on track to 80km/h (50mph) at all times during a serious accident.

It caused problems up and down the grid, as teams and drivers grappled to understand the rule, and officials struggled to enforce it. Rick Parfitt Jr was understandably aggrieved to have lost a good chunk of time, and ultimately the race, because of the rule.

Code 80 isn't totally new. It's been used since 2014 in the FIA World Endurance Championship, and to great effect. The issue is that the cars in the WEC are far from basic customer products, like GT3 and GT4 versions are.

Many in the WEC have electronic limiters that can engage the 80km/h limit, and the WEC uses an array of data masts and telemetry for every car, so officials can easily see any cars straying beyond the set limit.

In national motorsport the situation is very different. The only limiters most British GT cars have are the pit ones, which are set way under 80km/h, so the rule relies on drivers using their right foot correctly. For officials it's a nightmare too. Some cars were circulating far too slowly during the FCY. It led to a huge variety in what were meant to be controlled lap times, and accounted for much of the loss, or indeed gain, in time gaps between cars.

Immediately after the race SRO officials, led by British GT manager Benjamin Franassovici, met with timekeepers, stewards, drivers and team bosses.

It was talked about, the issues raised, and the rule was postponed there and then – at least until the relevant technology can be fitted to make it more controllable. Don't get me wrong, FCY is the way forward for British GT as it improves the flow of a race compared to the use of a safety car.

It is admirable how fast action was taken. Barely anybody had left the track before a decision was made and implemented, and back to safety cars we go, albeit only for the moment. No squabbling, no bickering, and no silly presentations of experimental new rules. Simply back to what we know works.

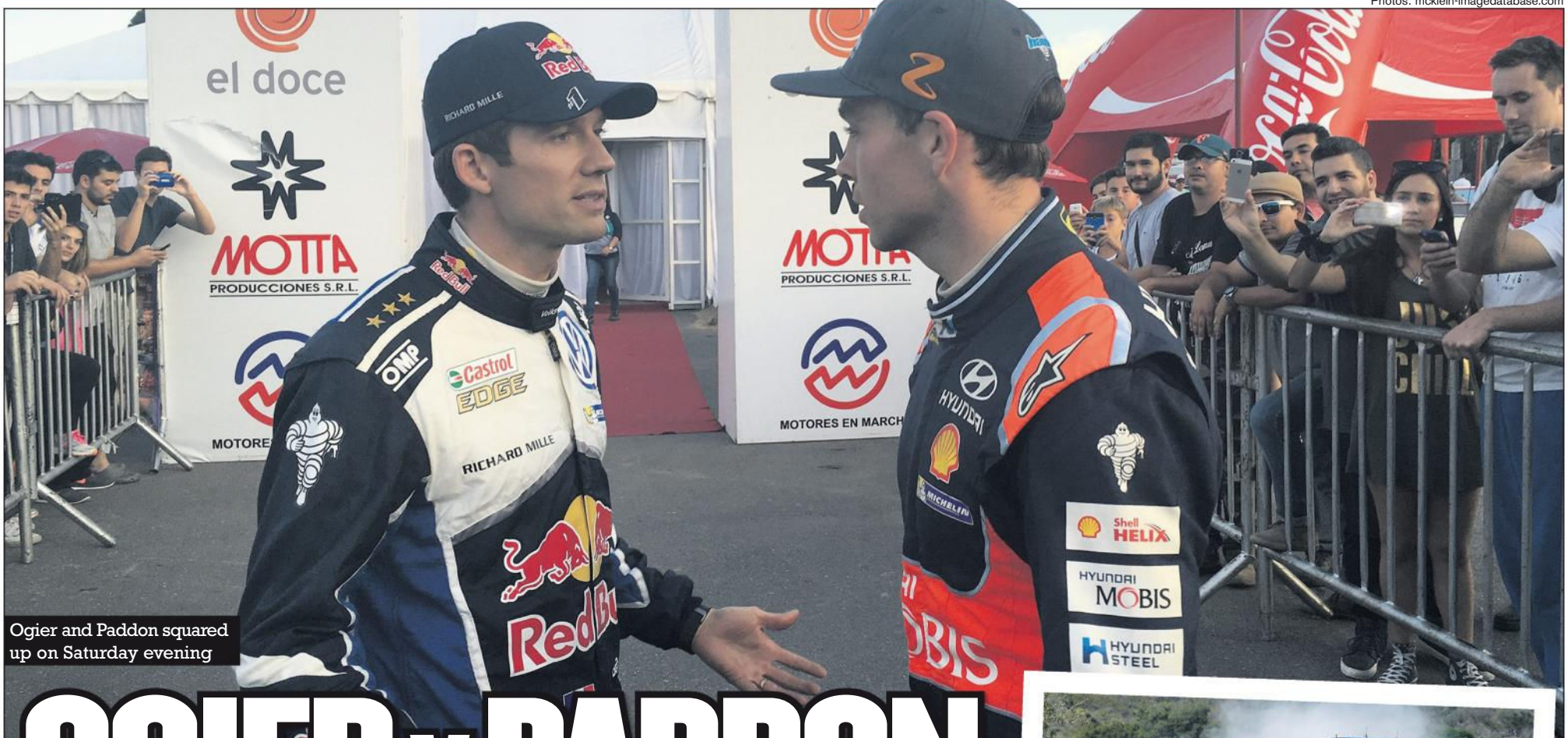
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RALLY NEWS

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Ogier and Paddon squared up on Saturday evening

OGIER v PADDON

OVER RUNNING ORDER DEBATE

Duo spar over conflicting views on who runs first



Ogier was fighting tough road sweeping conditions

By David Evans

Sebastien Ogier and Hayden Paddon went head-to-head over the current road order rules as Ogier continues to run first on the road for the majority of World Championship events.

The hostility came to a head following the end-of-day press conference last Saturday. Paddon told Ogier he thought it might be better to keep talk of politics and regulations for private discussions – the press conference takes place in the service park and is watched by the general public.

Ogier told Paddon in no uncertain terms that he didn't know what he was talking about. The pair momentarily squared up to each other before heading to their respective areas of the service park.

Ogier then apologised to Paddon when the pair went to retrieve their cars from parc ferme the next morning. He reportedly told Paddon: "I am sorry for my words, but you are still wrong…"

Ogier was leading the event until the fourth stage, where he dropped time on a road with more loose gravel. Saturday's Los Gigantes stage was the worst for the Frenchman; he dropped 24 seconds to Paddon on that stage alone. Before team-mate Jari Matti Latvala crashed out, Ogier was 46.4s adrift of his stablemate.

"I am so bored of talking about this," Ogier told *MN*. "I just wanted to finish this rally and go home to think about something else. Rallying is quite boring for me at the moment. We get good points for [second] place, but where is the sport? Yes, we can be champion again, but I know we deserve more than this. It's completely unfair and not how the championship should be for me to run first on the road 80 per cent of the time.

"The problem is that it only comes from me and it's the same story, but my point of view is always the same. For me, year after year, this championship is getting more and more a joke."

Asked if he could understand Ogier's perspective, Paddon told *MN*: "No. I'd quite happily trade with him to be first on the road, it would mean I was leading and winning championships. At the end of the day, somebody has to have that handicap and we have to have that handicap – it keeps the sport interesting. I went through years of national rallying being first on the road and it keeps it close and it keeps people in the game. For me, if it's not Ogier sweeping the road, it's going to be somebody at the back trying to make it in the sport – but they'll never get the confidence, never get the speed, never get the recognition and that can't be good for the sport. We need people coming through this sport.

"If I was first on the road, I'd be leading the championship and I'd be quite happy. This is the fairest way. And anyway, look at the calendar: on seven rounds, it's an advantage to be first on the road – you don't hear us complaining on those rallies. If he doesn't want to be first on the road, slow down and drop down the order."

On the subject of the row with Paddon, Ogier said: "We talked about what was said and I apologised for my words. Sometimes these things happen when emotion is high, now this is behind us. All I can say is that he drove a great rally."

WRC manager Jarmo Mahonen said there would be no change to the running order regulation this season – but the FIA will review the rules at the end of the year.

Mahonen said: "Of course we will meet about this again. I want to see the whole season, [to see if we] have been successful? Then we will look. I understand how he [Ogier] feels, I understand his frustration, but we have to see the bigger picture: we have to look after the whole championship.

"He [Ogier] doesn't have to see the big picture and I understand that he has to be selfish – this is part of what makes him so successful. But nobody can say this has been bad for the sport. Look at the final day here in Argentina, we have a very exciting Sunday – we need this."

Mahonen added that the rule change was implemented to make the championship closer.

He added: "Our intention was to decrease the gaps by not offering the best starting position to the best guy in the championship. Before this, the rallies could be over on Friday. We wanted to bring uncertainty and it seems we have done this. What is the championship if it finishes in the middle of the season? I would like to see it decided on the last round."

WRC safety delegate Michele Mouton said the current regulation was helping to develop the younger drivers in the series.

"You can see this," Mouton said. "Look at Kris [Meeke] here last year and now Hayden [Paddon] and some of the others. We know that he [Ogier] is at the top, but some of the others take confidence to fight against him. You can see some of the other drivers have already stopped to fight against him; you see this so easily when you are three or four minutes behind in nearly similar cars. For me, this shows they have given up. But for Kris and Hayden, this rule tells them they have a chance and they take it."

PADDON FENDS OFF LATE OGIER CHARGE FOR FIRST OVERALL WRC WIN PAGE 22



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'Fuchs takes win as Evans hits trouble'

Argentina WRC2 report, p24



Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

ARGENTINA EASES SAFETY CONCERN



Mahonen: impressed



Argentina ran with no safety issues

Rally Argentina's place in the World Rally Championship looks to be secure after an improvement in spectator safety and control.

Twelve months ago, there were those within the sport's governing body who feared Argentina would be lost from the WRC for good amid safety fears.

Spectators were injured when Hayden Paddon rolled in 2015, with some fans even reported to be trapped beneath his car. In addition to that, there was incredulity at the powerstage continuing to run despite two cars crashing in quick succession with fans close by.

One source said: "We could have killed people live on television. We could have finished our sport."

There was outrage at pressure being applied to the Argentina organisers to keep the live television powerstage running and the FIA's WRC manager Jarmo Mahonen has since underlined the chain of command for the sporting side of WRC rounds, which lies with the governing body. Mahonen insists WRC Promoter will not be allowed to affect sporting decisions again.

All of those issues led to Rally Argentina running under a warning from the FIA, with a so-called yellow card in place. Two yellow cards spell the end of a rally on the WRC calendar.

A repeat of last season's events would have spelled the end. But organisers turned in a strong safety plan, which included new red no-go zones for spectators, and held a well-run rally.

Mahonen told *MN*: "I can't see any problem with them staying on the calendar for next season. Even before this event started, I was impressed with the positive attitude from these organisers. It hasn't been like we have been imposing something on them. They came back with a real positive attitude and we shouldn't forget how important this rally is to the WRC."

The drivers also praised the organisers. Reigning world champion Sebastien Ogier said: "It's been a great rally. On this side, they improve a lot, it looks better than the year before – definitely! The FIA made a close look at this this week and if they don't cancel any stages then it means the safety is there and I am happy for that. Another bad rally for them [Rally Argentina] and they would have been out of the championship and that's not what we need. This is a historical rally with beautiful stages, it's special with so much passion from the people. Definitely we need to keep coming here."



Oz: no funding issues

Mahonen: Australia is safe despite government funding issues

WRC manager Jarmo Mahonen has confirmed this year's Rally Australia will run, despite political and funding issues for this season's World Rally Championship finale.

The local council voted against funding for the world championship event, but the financial input from Coffs Harbour was not a deal-breaker for Rally Australia.

"We are told the amount of money is minimal in regard to the whole budget for the event," said Mahonen. "This is an election year and it seems there is some politics going on. I can confirm that the rally takes place. They are not in danger, it will happen."

Rally Australia chairman Ben Rainsford said three per cent of the overall budget comes from Coffs and he confirmed a new venue could be sought.

"Moving the event is not the desired solution," said Rainsford. "But there are alternative locations and there are alternative income streams. This is not the end of Rally Australia."

Rainsford added that there has been significant and vocal backlash locally against the councillors' vote.

Ostberg and Wilson clash over rally speed

M-Sport driver Mads Ostberg and team principal Malcolm Wilson have disagreed over the Norwegian's apparent lack of pace on Rally Argentina.

Ostberg finished the South American event in fifth place, almost five minutes behind winner Hayden Paddon.

Unable to travel to the event following an operation on his ankle, Wilson was watching from Britain and was not pleased with what he saw.

"Mads is still not where we would expect him to be," said Wilson. "He has set some encouraging splits, but his overall stage times are a long way off what we wanted and we need to understand why he has been unable to match the speed of his rivals, or his fellow Fiesta driver Ott Tanak."

Ostberg defended his position and pointed to a lack of engine development from the team as well as an intermittent gearshift problem as causes for the apparent time loss.

"The engine and gearbox need work," said Ostberg. "Sometimes, the gear is not going down when we go to the corner and when this is happening, you have to change your style to be less aggressive. We need more pressure from the pump in the [gear] change system.

"We are behind with the engine. I understand it's difficult for Malcolm, but we have to face facts – the manufacturers are upgrading the engines and we need to do the same. I want to work with the team, we have to do something. I will talk to Malcolm after this rally, we talked after Mexico and we understood some things then."

Asked about the comparison with Tanak, Ostberg said: "It's not such a fair comparison with the cars behind me, they have grip – they are driving on Tarmac compared with what I am driving on."



Latvala seemed comfortable before big crash ended his win hopes

Volkswagen misses out on record win run

Hyundai's victory in Argentina last week means Volkswagen must wait at least another year to attempt to score a perfect year.

The Polo R WRC was on the verge of winning every rally for the last year ahead of the South American event, but Hayden Paddon's success spoiled a party for the reigning world champion team.

Volkswagen team principal Jost Capito remained pragmatic about the result, saying: "It never feels good not to win, but, with this sport, you always know there comes a rally where you don't win. It's not a given that we always win. But, we have two cars on the podium and this is quite a good achievement too."

Asked if this loss hurt more with the perfect year waiting, McLaren-bound Capito said: "My successor can have the perfect year!"

Paddon's win means Argentina remains the only current WRC round Sebastien Ogier hasn't won.

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"Safety was very much better than last year"



It took Gonzalo Cumplido, the man immediately to my right, just three corners to start wrestling with his seat belt. The Volkswagen we were in had become slightly crossed up. Not surprising when the rear wheels were in the air.

I laughed. Loving it.

Cumplido smiled, nervously.

I laughed because I couldn't have been less concerned. Our driver had done this all before. Michele Mouton's no stranger to pushing a German car hard in these parts. Her story about guiding an Audi quattro A2 down a snow-packed Bariloche stage on gravel tyres couldn't fail to inspire confidence.

Michele was enjoying herself. The main part of her work in this stage was done and this was a brief respite from the responsibility of keeping the Argentinian fans safe.

This stage was Los Gigantes. The longest of the rally.

"They call it 'giant'," said Mouton.

The first 10 miles is fast and fairly full of fans. The 14 miles which follow to the finish?

"It's the moon," Michele smiled, "I call it the moon. There's nobody around and look at it..."

It's hard to argue. When Tim Peake comes back down to Earth, if he's pining for the last six months of his life, he could hang out on the road between Los Gigantes and Cantera El Condor. He'd feel very much at home.

The reason there's nobody around is that the organisers have deemed this a no-go zone. Which is why Michele's taken the wheel. She likes driving. And this road is definitely one for the driver.

Faced with world rally oblivion, Rally Argentina has stepped up and delivered a serious safety plan. It's still not perfect, but it's very much better than last year.

And *MN* has been granted exclusive access to its implementation. Which is how I find myself sitting between Cordoba's chief of police, Cumplido, and Rally Argentina's safety co-ordinator Carlos Borrione in a Volkswagen Amarok kitted out with coms to FIA rally director Jarmo Mahonen in the helicopter above us, rally control and police central.

Today I'm part of the decision-making process that says if this rally runs or not.

'Part' might be pushing it a bit. I'm here, at least.

The focus in the car is incredible. From the start, Mouton's eyes are everywhere. Like everywhere. She doesn't miss a thing. She's happy. The fans are toeing the line, quite literally. Red's a no-go.

Not far from the finish of Villa Bustos she's spotted something.

A chap in his eighties is sitting on a stool in front of his house drinking a cup of coffee while waiting for the cars.

Out front of his house is red tape. He's got to go.

Borrione's on the roof-mounted PA system while Cumplido jumps out to explain further. Full of apologies, the old boy takes his coffee and retreats.

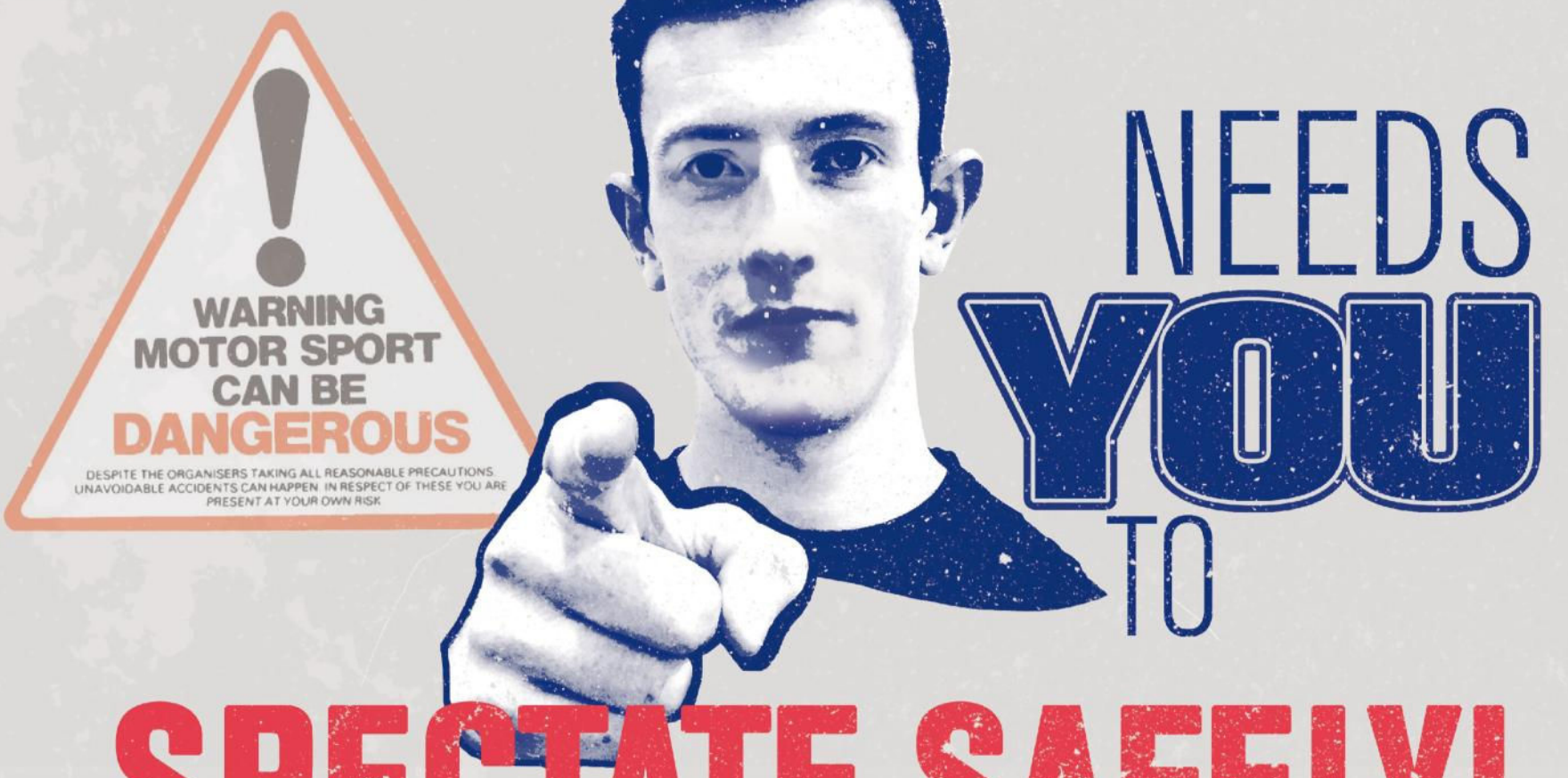
Two things surprise me here: it's carrot not stick and the locals are desperate to do the right thing.

Mouton's happy. Everybody's happy.

Job done.

AGREE/DISAGREE?
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ELFYN



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RALLY FUTURE

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Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Jakob Ebrey



Evans last competed in a WRC car on Rally GB in '15

EVANS CLOSING ON WRC RETURN

Welshman could be in a Fiesta WRC before season end

By David Evans

Elfyn Evans' return to a World Rally Car looks to be getting closer with confirmation of a WRC2 programme weighted towards the first half of the season.

Evans participated in his third WRC2 round of the season in Argentina last week (*see report, page 24*) and will contest three of the next four world championship rounds in an effort to sew up the WRC2 title as soon as possible.

The Welshman will compete in Portugal, Poland and Finland, leaving one more scoring opportunity to be decided.

M-Sport's Rich Millener, who was deputising for Malcolm Wilson in South America, told *MN*: "We'll see where we're at once we get to Finland, Malcolm will then decide if Elfyn stays in WRC2 or if he moves back to a World Rally Car. We want to keep Elfyn competing as much as possible and the goal is, obviously, the WRC2 title. If we could get that sorted then it opens up other opportunities in the second half of the year."

Wilson has already talked about bringing Evans back into a Fiesta RS WRC for some asphalt action, following his second place in Corsica last season.

"That's still being looked at," said Millener. "Especially after the pace Elfyn showed on the Circuit of Ireland recently. The only problem we have is the clash between Germany and the Ulster Rally. I guess we take a look at Elfyn's progress in the [BRC and WRC2] series.

"There's Rally GB later in the year as well, which is another opportunity for Elfyn [in a WRC], but as a team we have to weigh all of this up with the additional costs involved in running a third Fiesta RS WRC in addition to Mads [Ostberg] and Eric [Camilli] when we're looking to direct investment into the 2017 car. But it goes without saying, Elfyn's keen to be back in a World Rally Car!"



Circuit of Ireland provided successful TV coverage with live stream

Circuit live stream attracted 100,000 viewers

The Circuit of Ireland has become one of the world's most watched rallies, courtesy of its live internet streaming.

The Belfast-based rally showed live coverage for the two main days of competition and has been rewarded with 100,000 fans tuning in around the world in more than 130 countries.

Event director Bobby Willis made a significant personal investment to underwrite the live streaming and is delighted with the results.

Willis said: "Streaming was something that I pushed hard to do, and I really believe that it's the future of rallying. No one else has attempted this, partly because of the costs involved but also because of the logistics. It was a huge undertaking and the backroom team who made it happen were all local people.

"It was fantastic to show off Northern Ireland like this, not just our beautiful scenery and the rally's demanding special stages, but to be able to do it with a team of home-based IT specialists is a measure of the talented people we have here. I think we have raised the bar to new heights in the coverage of rallying."

Craig Breen and Scott Martin won the event in a Citroen DS 3 R5.

Sousa in as Drive DMACK Trophy drivers revealed

Experienced World Rally Championship competitor Bernardo Sousa is one of 10 drivers who will start the opening round of this year's Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy in Portugal next month.

The Portuguese, who has started 38 WRC rounds, has struggled to make an impression in the service park in recent seasons and is hoping DDFT will help him get his career back on track.

The 28-year-old said: "I've decided to do the Trophy as it's a great chance to relaunch my career. My goal will be to fight for the win, I have a good knowledge of the rallies and quite a lot of experience, but not much experience of two-wheel drive."

Sousa will face a competition from a trio of Brits, headed by one of last year's Junior WRC frontrunners, Osian Pryce.

"It's good to know who the competition is," said the Welshman. "It's going to be an interesting season. I can't wait to get started now, to be honest."

DDFT rookie winner from last year Gus Greensmith and Northern Irish star Jon Armstrong are the other home drivers contesting the five-event series.

Greensmith said: "We always had a two-year plan for the DMACK Trophy from the beginning and I got so much experience from it last year. It really is the strongest series in terms of competition for young drivers and I wanted to be here again to compete against the quickest people."

Max Vatanen returns for another season, with Oscar Solberg, son of Henning, making his DDFT debut.

Brit Phil Hall will co-drive Kenyan Karan Patel (*see story below*), while the other three Fiesta R2T drivers are American Dillon Van Way, Pole Jakub Brzezinski, and Frenchman Nicolas Ciamin – the youngest starter at 18 years old.

Hall gets Drive DMACK co-driving seat for '16

MSA Academy co-driver Phil Hall will compete in the full Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy this year with Kenyan Karan Patel.

Hall recently left Toyota by mutual consent after guiding Hiroki Arai to a podium on the Arctic Lapland Rally, and will now join Patel, who is managed by 1999 British Rally champion Tapio Laukkanen.

"It's great to be doing world championship events again," said Hall. "It's a really good championship and it's a good opportunity for young drivers and co-drivers like myself to learn and develop experience."

Hall is hoping his ambitious nature will come through when competing in front of WRC teams.

"There are a lot of capable co-drivers out there but if you can demonstrate how much you want to be there, that will count for a lot," he added.

Hall won his class on the only WRC event he has competed on – Rally Australia – with Rhys Pinter, and in a last-minute deal Hall will rejoin the Australian in a one-off outing in the British Rally Championship this weekend for the Pirelli Carlisle.

Pinter's co-driver Mark Swallow has damaged his foot.

RALLY NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

DMACK BRINGS NEW TYRE FOR CARLISLE

Cumbrian outfit has tested new rubber extensively



Tanak (far left) ran new tyre on test and in Argentina

By Jack Benyon

The DMACK British Rally Team is hoping a new tyre for the Pirelli Carlisle will give it an edge on this weekend's round of the British Rally Championship.

The team has developed tyres specifically for the R5 car as well as a new WRC tyre, which the team's WRC driver Ott Tanak has tested extensively.

Welshman Elfyn Evans is hoping the new tyre will allow him to return to winning ways on the Pirelli Carlisle Rally. He won the BRC opener in Mid Wales, but had to push hard to fend off the charge of Swedish challenger Fredrik Ahlin – who took the lead on Saturday morning. The benefit of a new tyre could help Evans head the Pirelli-shod Ahlin.

"I'm looking forward to the Pirelli, it's a fast rally where there's not much margin for error," said Evans. "Hopefully we can be at the front of the field again with the new gravel tyre that DMACK has introduced. I know they've done quite a bit of testing with Tanak so I'm looking forward to seeing the improvements for myself."

Evans is only two rallies into his experience with DMACKs, having not run the rubber in his career before Mid Wales. But the Circuit of Ireland – round two of the BRC – proved the tyre isn't as far behind its rivals as previously thought. Evans set six fastest times out of the seven stages he finished, but the alternator belt broke on his Ford Fiesta R5, ruling him out of the rally.

DMACK managing director Dick Cormack believes the improvement in Circuit of Ireland is down to the extensive testing the manufacturer has been doing with its covers.

"It was clear to see the progress with our Tarmac tyres on the Circuit of Ireland with Elfyn fastest on all but one of the stages he completed," said Cormack. "I'm excited to see how the new gravel tyres perform this weekend. We have been extremely busy with development over the last few months and, with our new tyres now being manufactured in the UK [instead of China], it's a new chapter in DMACK's history."

Cormack confirmed that the outfit has completed multiple tests with the tyres at various levels ready for its first introduction on Rally Argentina.

"We've completed three major gravel tests already this year," added Cormack. "We have developed products specifically for R5 cars in both national and world events. There's a definite improvement in performance and hopefully that will give us an edge."

Evans won't face an easy challenge though, with many of the BRC frontrunners happier on gravel than asphalt. Ahlin impressed early on the Circuit of Ireland, but a small shunt on Friday followed by a rally-ending off on Saturday ruled out good points. He had been the quickest BRC runner at points on the rally's opening day.

Third seed David Bogie and fourth seed Tom Cave should also be more at home on the gravel of Kielder, while former WRC driver Matthew Wilson is the fifth seed on his first BRC rally in 11 years.

SEEDED ENTRY LIST

Pirelli Carlisle Rally, BRC round 3/7, April 30/May 1

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Elfyn Evans/Craig Parry	Ford Fiesta R5
2	Fredrik Ahlin/Morten Erik Abrahamsen	Ford Fiesta R5
3	David Bogie/Kevin Rae	Skoda Fabia R5
4	Tom Cave/James Morgan	Ford Fiesta R5
5	Matthew Wilson/Stuart Loudon	Ford Fiesta R5
6	Marty McCormack/David Moynihan	Skoda Fabia S2000
7	Euan Thorburn/Paul Beaton	Peugeot 208 R5
8	Desi Henry/Liam Moynihan	Skoda Fabia R5
9	Jonny Greer/Kirsty Riddick	Citroen DS3 R5
10	Neil Simpson/Elliott Edmondson	Skoda Fabia R5



Evans is hoping for tyre boost in Carlisle

Gill returns to British championship after nine years out

Former British Rally Championship regular Rob Gill will return to the Pirelli Carlisle Rally for the first time since 2007 next weekend.

Gill contested Rally GB last year after a six-year break from competition, driving Stephen Petch's WD40-backed Ford Fiesta R5. Petch uses the car in the BTRDA with a two-litre engine, which has to be converted back to the homologated 1.6-litre for the BRC 1 class.

"The Pirelli is a brilliant rally," said Gill. "All the big names have won there, your McRaes, Vatanens etc. It's probably the fastest piece of man-made forest in Europe."

Gill is hoping to compete on more BRC events this year: "I'd love to do every round but obviously it depends on budget and time. I have great memories of the Scottish and the Manx, the Manx is a legendary event.

"It's no fluke top drivers come and compete in the BRC. It's on the up."



Gill: Rally GB in 2015 in R5

BRC JOKERS



On each round of the British Rally Championship, drivers can play their 'joker' card, which allows them to score double points on that event, but they can only play the card once. Here are the drivers that will score double points on the Pirelli Carlisle.

Fredrik Ahlin (BRC 1)
Desi Henry (BRC 1)
Matt Edwards (BRC 2)
Gus Greensmith (DMACK BRC Junior)
Rhys Pinter (DMACK BRC Junior)

After two rounds of the championship, here are the top six in the points:
1 Elfyn Evans (Ford Fiesta R5) 50; 2 Josh Moffett (Ford Fiesta R5) 30; =3 Jonny Greer (Citroen DS 3), Tom Cave (Ford Fiesta R5) and David Bogie (Skoda Fabia R5) 18; 6 Fredrik Ahlin (Ford Fiesta R5) 15.

Kumho backs Simpson for British title tilt

British Rally Championship BRC 4 winner Tony Simpson could compete on more rounds of the series this year after signing a deal with tyre supplier Kumho.

Simpson won the class on the season opener in Mid Wales, while the Circuit of Ireland wasn't one of the rounds on his calendar.

"We had a chat with Kumho after Mid Wales and put a deal together," explains Simpson. "I saw that they had signed up as the main tyre supplier for the BRC, but when I had a walk around the service park in Mid Wales I could only find one car on Kumhos. So I spoke to them to see if a deal was to be made and there was."



Simpson: Mid Wales winner

The deal could now see the driver head to the Scottish Rally, which is the next round after the Pirelli Carlisle Rally.

"Depending on what happens at the Pirelli we may get the Scottish in now as well," Simpson added. "Financially it's made a big enough difference that we may be able to consider it."

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'Circuit rallying is harder than it looks'

Single-venue rally feature, p29



Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Rally Gallery

CRONIN CHOOSES IRELAND OVER BRC AS EVENTS CLASH



SEEDED ENTRY LIST

International Rally of the Lakes, ITRC round 4/7

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Donagh Kelly/Conor Foley	Ford Focus WRC
2	Declan Boyle/Brian Boyle	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
3	Garry Jennings/Rory Kennedy	Subaru Impreza WRC
4	Keith Cronin/Mikie Galvin	Citroen DS 3 R5
5	Sam Moffett/Karl Atkinson	Ford Fiesta R5
6	Alastair Fisher/Gordon Noble	Ford Fiesta R5
7	Josh Moffett/John Rowan	Ford Fiesta R5
8	Alan Ring/Adrian Deasy	Ford Fiesta R5
9	Stephen Wright/TBA	Ford Fiesta R5
10	Joe McGonigle/Ciaran Geaney	Skoda Fabia S2000

Keith Cronin has chosen to compete on the International Rally of the Lakes for the Irish Tarmac Championship next weekend, foregoing the British championship in Carlisle.

This season is the first time the championships have run the same cars at the front in many years, and a calendar clash has left crews doing double-duty with a decision to make.

Cronin had a puncture and struggled to adapt to gravel on the opening round of the BRC in Mid Wales, and an accident at the start of the Circuit of Ireland ruled him out on the first stage. He had won the opening two rounds of the Irish Tarmac Championship before the Circuit *faux pas*, but is hoping Killarney will get him and co-driver Mikie Galvin's title charge back on track.

"We're going to Killarney," said Cronin, who pilots a Citroen DS 3 R5. "I think the British Championship is finished for me this year. We'll be doing some of the other rounds, we'll do Killarney and go from there. We haven't had the best of luck.

"The car is performing well on Tarmac, everything is working well there. There are a lot of good stages in Killarney like Glendun so it's nice to go and do that, Killarney was one I grew up watching so it's nice to go and do it. It would have been the Bertie Fisher years and Austin MacHale [when I was watching]."

The Moffett brothers – Sam and Josh – join Keith in Killarney, while Cronin's team-mate Jonny Greer and Skoda driver Desi Henry will head to Carlisle.

World Rally Cars can still compete in the Irish Tarmac Championship and Donagh Kelly will compete on his second championship event in a row in Killarney seeded at number one. Declan Boyle is seeded car two despite not competing on the event last year, while Galway and West Cork victor Garry Jennings lines up as car three.



Cronin: Hard start to BRC

Cornwell sticks with Evans for Pirelli Carlisle

British Junior Rally Championship driver Josh Cornwell will continue with Melvyn Evans Motorsport in a Ford Fiesta R2T for the Pirelli Carlisle, after switching from his own MH Motorsport-run R2.

Cornwell discovered after the Mid Wales Stages that his fourth-placed finish had come with an ailing engine that was down on power in his older-spec Fiesta.

The Junior driver – from Newdigate in Surrey – did not have time to repair the car in time for Carlisle and instead has switched to Melvyn Evans' spare machine driven by Amittrajit Ghosh in Mid Wales.

"We joined Melvyn Evans for the Circuit of Ireland because, after Mid Wales, we got the car dyno'd and it turned out to be 150 horsepower at the flywheel, so we decided we had a decent result there considering," said Cornwell.

"We went to Melvyn Evans because we couldn't get an engine rebuild in time, so the R2T was the only route we could go and know that we'd be competitive. We would have had no chance with our current car."

The 18-year-old was third junior on his first visit to the Circuit and looked like the only challenger to the Vauxhall Motorsport team, before the turbo failed: "Me and [co-driver] Dai Roberts were both really happy with our performances in the first two stages, being the first car behind the Vauxhalls, especially the first time being in the car."



Evans won the AGBO Stages at Weston Park in March

Driveme to become BARS school in 2017

AGBO Stages winner and Driveme owner Paul Evans will see his driving experience centre become a recognised British Association of Rally Schools venue in 2017.

BARS currently regulates the BARS exam that has to be passed by all drivers before they can compete on UK rallies. Evans' Driveme centre based in Stafford currently operates Red Letter Day-style supercar driving experiences, but Evans' rally background has encouraged him to incorporate more rallying.

"My son George is starting in Junior Autograss this year and it's nice to give something back," said Evans. "Phil Price and Bill Gwynne both encouraged me onto the board of BARS and we're looking forward to opening properly in 2017."

As well as offering BARS tests, Evans has offered up a number of prizes to Junior F1000 drivers. Last month he provided a free test where over 15 juniors drove at the venue in Stafford.

"We're offering the venue for a press day for the F1000s," added Evans. "The winner of the championship will receive a free driving day with their car for family and sponsors."

Rare Saxo back out on stages

A one-of-a-kind Citroen Saxo will return to rallying next month in the hands of Andy Gwynne.

The Gloucester driver built the car to S2000-spec, but a loose stone snapped the alternator belt at its last outing in the Brawdy Stages last year and since then the car has undergone a rebuild.

"It's self-built, mainly as the problem with works stuff is that if you need parts you can't get hold of them or they're too expensive," he said.

The car has had a full engine rebuild and Gwynne has been experimenting with a flat-shift system.

"I just need to get back in the seat now as it's some car to drive, its got 220bhp," he added. "I'm really looking forward to getting back out in it as we have so much else going on I don't get to spend as much time on it as I would like."

Gwynne – along with Holly Robinson – runs and builds the GwynneSpeed C2 Challenge cars and operates the Gloucester Rally School near Cirencester.

REVELLING IN HISTORIC RALLYING

PAUL LAWRENCE

"BHRC makes annual trip to Kielder"





Elliott: unlucky in early BHRC gravel rounds

The M6 beckons on Friday morning and that's fine with me. It's time to move the Mintex MSA British Historic Rally Championship circus out of Wales and north to Carlisle for the Pirelli Rally.

That, of course, means the championship's annual visit to Kielder and the unique challenge of the forest roads in Europe's biggest man-made forest. I love going rallying in the Borders region; the scenery is stunning, the roads are quiet and the rallies are generally free from the mindless chavs who can do so much damage to our sport in other regions. Kielder is a place for proper rally fans.

After two excellent, albeit horribly wet, rallies in Wales, the BHRC battle lines have been drawn and now comes round three of nine. After Kielder, three more gravel and three asphalt rounds will settle the 2016 title.

On current form, two drivers are setting the historic pace and they'll rejoin battle this weekend. Jason Pritchard has taken two perfect scores with two faultless performances, with the ever-professional Phil Clarke on the notes. Meanwhile, Nick Elliott and long-time co-driver Dave Price have finished second on both events.

However, Elliott can rightly feel hard done by this year, as on both the Red Kite and Rally North Wales his engine cut out for long enough to cost him two wins. The pressure is now on Elliott to beat Pritchard this weekend, for it is on gravel that Elliott needs to get his big scores. The best six scores from nine will decide the title and there are six gravel rounds on Elliott's surface of choice. On the other hand, Pritchard has shown ample ability on either surface and knows that the Isle of Man double-header in September will play to his asphalt prowess and knowledge of the island. Elliott has never been there.

So, Elliott has to take maximum scores on as many gravel events as possible and that needs to start in Kielder this weekend. If Nick drops another top score to Pritchard, it is going to set Jason nicely on course to retain his crown. Elliott won here a year ago while Pritchard was sidelined by clutch problems. There is plenty for both crews to think about as they cruise up the M6 on Friday.

What lies in wait should be a cracking event, with just four long stages making up 45 competitive miles. The organising team on the Pirelli has worked hard to deliver just what the historic crews want and are to be commended for arranging first usage and single usage of the forest roads for the BHRC contenders. That fact alone should put a smile on the face of the historic crews.

AGREE/DISAGREE?
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RACING REPORTS

BRANDS HATCH: 750MC BY MARCUS PYE — APRIL 23/24

Photos: Gary Hawkins

SPIRES WIN AS MITTELL SUFFERS



Mittell lost out after trailing bodywork


Chandler claimed both wins in new M3 Cup


Allee won two Locost races, which were packed

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, defending 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 usurped 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 Billy 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 reprieve. Scott 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 Larner. 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 MX-5 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 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 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 a "very surprised" 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 of the finale then dropping the pack, led by birthday boy Stuart Nicholls and Cook at the chequer.

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 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' 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 third after an early slip.

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 champ 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. Ians Buxton (whose GAC's throttle cable broke on Saturday) and 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.


Cooper's Radical eventually usurped Hogg for victory

Cooper builds on maiden success with a further Bikesports brace

Still on a high following his maiden circuit racing wins at Oulton Park three weeks before, Cheshire autograss ace Phil Cooper added two more 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 paddleshift actuator curtailed Cooper's qualifying efforts, but as he watched nervously from 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 ground the deficit down 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 Phil 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.

RESULTS

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). Class winners Reynard; James Walker (Spire GT3); Max Lees (Mission T5). Fastest lap Cooper. Pole Cooper.
Race two (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.

RGB (17 laps) 1 Jon Cutmore (Spire GT3S); 2 Alastair Boulton (Spire GT3) +4.82s; 3 Oliver Hewitt (Mittell MC-53); 4 Daniel Larner (Mittell MC-52B); 5 Paul Rogers (Contour RGB09); 6 Tim Hoverd (AB Hoverdcraft T2A).
CW Matthew Higginson (AB Arion S2).
FL Scott Mittell (Mittell MC-53). P Mittell.
Race two (9 laps) 1 Billy Albone (Spire GT3S); 2 Boulton +2.15s; 3 Cutmore; 4 Hewitt; 5 Larner; 6 Rogers. CW Higginson. FL Mittell. P Albone.

M3 Cup & Super Cooper Cup (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 two (21 laps) 1 Chandler; 2 Sedzikowski +4.04s; 3 Dengate; 4 Shield; 5 Wallis; 6 John Brown (M3). CW Dunmore. FL Chandler. P Sedzikowski.

Sport 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 two (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 two (9 laps) 1 Jim Davies; 2 Traynor +2.03s; 3 Ward; 4 Shane Mansbridge; 5 Stuart Nicholls; 6 Tim Heron. FL Davies. P Davies.
Race three (13 laps) 1 Davies; 2 Nicholls +13.28s; 3 Cook; 4 Kristian White; 5 Graham Malings; 6 Ralphson. FL Davies. P Mansbridge.

Locost, Groups B&C (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 two, C&A (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 three, A&B (15 laps) 1 Allee; 2 Andrew +0.07s; 3 Coveney; 4 Neat; 5 Bradley; 6 Brandon. FL Neat. P Allee.

5Club Racing MX-5 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 two (15 laps) 1 Blackwell-Chambers; 2 Rogers +0.55s; 3 Sycamore; 4 Bessell; 5 Symonds; 6 Short. FL Rogers. P Rogers.

Classic Stock Hatch (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 two (14 laps) 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 Ed Pither (PRS 1b).
Race two (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 two (11 laps) 1 Smith; 2 Jordan +0.42s; 3 Ian Buxton (GAC Daghorn); 4 John Hughes; 5 David Hughes; 6 Harry Webb (AHS Dominator). CW Harridge. FL Jordan. P Smith.

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 two (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.

READERS LETTERS: YOUR VIEW ON THE LATEST MOTORSPORT NEWS PAGE 34

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

'Bladon took a Mini triple'
Challenge Coopers



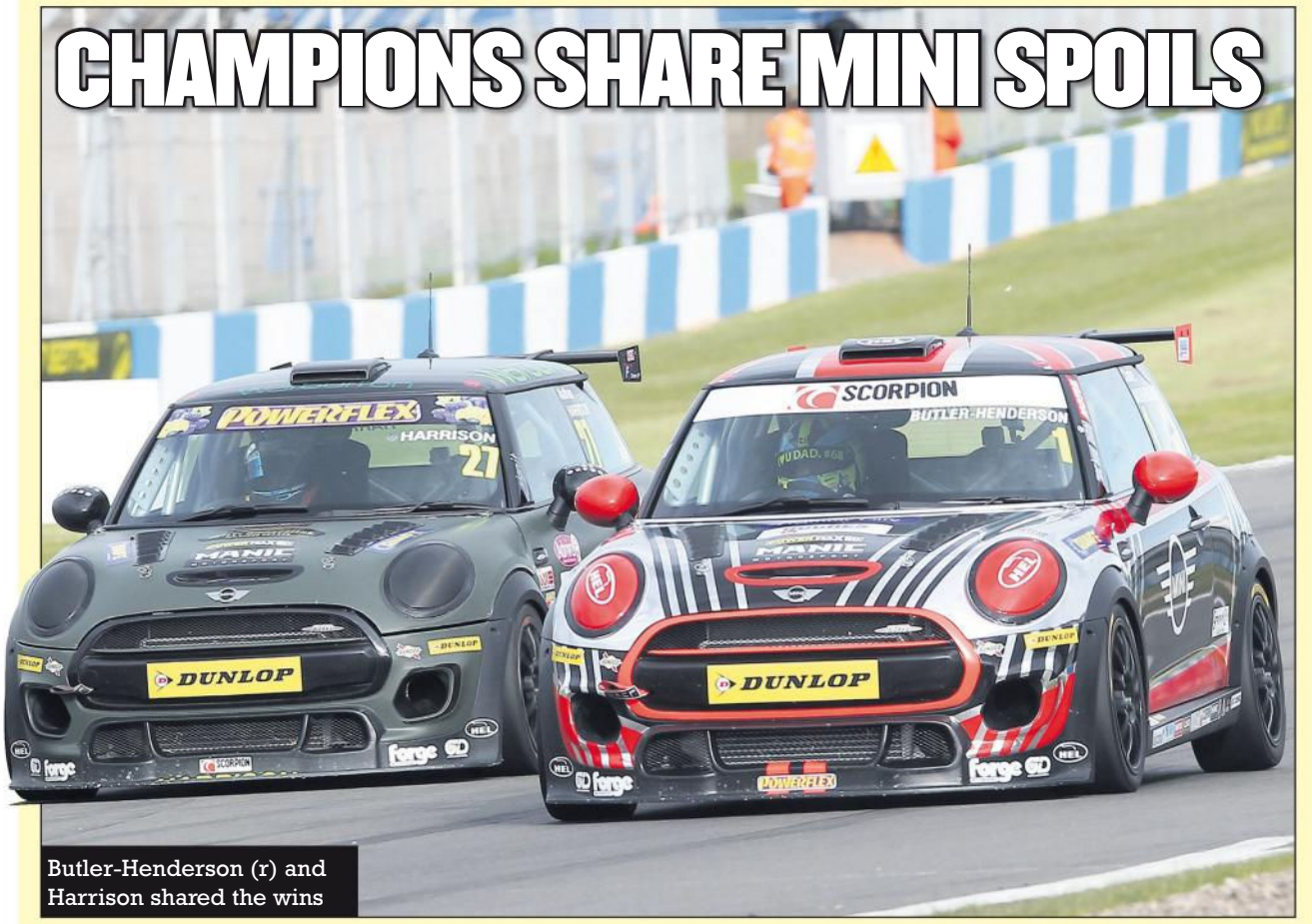
'Shane Kelly scored three'
F3 Cup action



DONINGTON PARK: MSVR BY ROB LADBROOK — APRIL 23/24

Photos: Mick Walker

CHAMPIONS SHARE MINI SPOILS



Butler-Henderson (r) and Harrison shared the wins

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 round after a multi-car accident. But, when racing finally did break out, there was much to enjoy from the 255bhp, 30-car 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 past 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 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 1900hrs, but eventually canned it due to timetable concerns (*see Racing News*).

That meant race three effectively became round two, with the grid 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 Hairpin and not looking back.

Butler-Henderson shadowed him for much of the race, but throttled back when light rain began to fall. "You can't win a championship on the first weekend so I'm playing the long game and taking no risks, especially after how this weekend has gone for some!" said CB-H. 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. Bladon even beat a five-second track limits penalty in the last outing to secure his treble.

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.



The 30-car JCW field had some issues, but still starred

Chamberlain wins, but Witt's Bentley stars

Richard Chamberlain's Porsche 935 showed no signs of its age as he took victory in the first **GT Cup** sprint race after a race-long battle with Darren Nelson. However, when Nelson took his Lamborghini Huracan – new to the series – through the gravel at the Old Hairpin, Chamberlain instead had 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 put his Bentley Continental GT3 on the podium despite starting from the back of the grid due to getting into his car 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 shared with pro driver Adam Carroll. Despite his experience, Carroll was still 17 seconds adrift of solo driver 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 outfit Team Fox fared less well, as Daryl Jones experienced a debilitating misfire throughout the first race. Though the team managed to fix the problem overnight and Jones was able to (unsuccessfully) 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 looked to make amends for his DNF at Snetterton last month, and leading the first 16 laps of the hour-long race was a great way to do that. However, a big spin at Redgate handed Adam Mackay the lead and, ultimately, overall 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.



Paul Taylor did VAG double

For the third **Toyo Tyres Racing Saloons** race in a row, Stuart Waite led home Karl Cattliff. Stephen Pearson would have added a third BMW M3 to the podium, but was pegged back 30 seconds for ignoring yellow flags. The honours were reversed in race two; Cattliff won with Waite second, and Pearson finished third – this time without a penalty.

Harry Goodman continued his impressive start to the **Production BMW** 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 in 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 the Golf of Taylor to take a second win of the weekend, and third of the season.

Charlie Eustice



Harry Goodman leads the big Production BMW field

RESULTS



Chamberlain (l) won as Lambo chased

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. FL Brown. P Harrison.
Race two abandoned after serious accident
Race three (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 two (14 laps) 1 Jeffs; 2 Cocker +10.595s; 3 Porter; 4 Hotston; 5 Bladon; 6 Josh Gollin (Cooper). CW Bladon. FL Jeffs. P Cocker.
Race three (13 laps) 1 Jeffs; 2 Porter +1.543s; 3 Hotston; 4 Bladon; 5 Brad Hutchison (Cooper); 6 Gollin. CW Bladon. FL Jeffs. P S 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 GT3); 5 Colin Paton (Porsche 911 GT3); 6 John Dhillon (Ferrari 485 GT3). CW Paton; Warren Gilbert (Marcos Mantis); Ian Anderson (Ginetta G55). FL Witt. P Nelson.
Race two (21 laps) 1 Witt; 2 Chamberlain +5.344s; 3 Dhillon; 4 Downing; 5 Neil Huggins (Lamborghini Gallardo LP570); 6 Darren Nelson (Lamborghini Huracan GT3). CW Huggins; Gilbert; Tom Webb (BMW E46 M3). FL Witt. P Witt.
Race three (44 Laps) 1 Witt; 2 Nelson/Adam Carroll +17.522s; 3 Dhillon/Aaron Scott; 4 Nigel Hudson/Adam Wilcox (Audi R8 GT3); 5 Webb; 6 David Fairbrother/Jamie Dawson (Porsche 997 GT3). CW Webb; Fairbrother/Dawson; Paton/Ross McEwan. FL Nelson/Carroll. P Witt.

F3 Cup (14 laps) 1 Shane Kelly (Dallara F308); 2 George Line (F308) +12.257s; 3 Stuart Wiltshire (F308); 4 Mark Harrison (F305); 5 James Hefferman (F308); 6 Tony Bishop (F310). CW James Ledamun (F300); Geoffrey Hoodless (March 813). FL Robbie Watts (F308). P Kelly.
Race two (12 laps) 1 Kelly; 2 Daryl Jones (F308) +4.459s; 3 Bishop; 4 Line; 5 Jacopo Sebastiani (F310); 6 Harrison. CW Ledamun; Hoodless. FL Kelly. P Kelly.
Race three (18 laps) 1 Kelly; 2 Harrison +32.210s; 3 Daniel Tapinos (F308); 4 Wiltshire; 5 Heffernan; 6 Malcolm Scott (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) +4.174s; 3 Adam Ball (S1); 4 Simon Oakley (S2); 5 Stuart Ratcliff (Cup R); 6 Danny Holland (S2). FL Hetherington. P Ball.
Race two (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 E36 M3); 2 Karl Cattliff (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 two (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 320); 5 Alan Wileman (320); 6 David Graves (320i Cab). FL Wileman. P Goodman.
Race two (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 two (10 laps) 1 Wilson; 2 Taylor +0.634s; 3 Lewis; 4 Walker; 5 Byrne; 6 Didge Dziurzynski (Scirocco). CW Barrie Culley (VW Vento VR6). FL Lewis. P Taylor.
Race three (12 laps) 1 Taylor; 2 Bearne +2.145s; 3 Walker; 4 Lewis; 5 Dziurzynski; 6 Stephen Johansen (Golf TFSI). CW Simon Tomlinson (Golf Mk4). FL Dziurzynski. P Witts.

FORMULA 3 ENSIGN BACK ON TRACK AFTER REBUILD PAGE 30

RACING REPORTS

SILVERSTONE INTERNATIONAL: BRSCC BY DOM D'ANGELILLO — APRIL 23/24

Photos: Rachel Bourne

MURRAY TWICE BEATS RAVEN

Niall Murray made it two wins out of two in the Formula Ford 1600 National Championship, both times beating James Raven to the chequered flag.

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 of Stowe but claimed "there were too many marbles and it wasn't worth the risk". He admitted second wasn't really a bad result.

Race two warranted the same top five, much to the disappointment of Texan Chase Owen. Victory in the wet at Oulton Park seemed a distant memory as two fourth place finishes behind Stuart Gough were not what he wanted, admitting it had been a "tough, but solid weekend".

It was a peculiar weekend in the **Intermarque Championship**. With race one winner Tommy Field disqualified for an oversized diffuser, he looked to make amends in race two, but despite a 30-second track limits penalty, he was still victorious as an erroneous chequered flag waved, forcing the majority of the field into the pits a lap too soon.

According to Daniel Smith "it was shown, but quickly taken away and the cars started going into the pits so everyone followed". Daniel's brother Lewis, who had been gifted the victory in race one, was leading in the second race but followed the rest of the grid into parc ferme while Field remained on track. With the source of the error undiscovered, race control chose to allow 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 admitted he "had the worse of the backmarkers", meaning that second place finisher Patrick Sherrington could cut down a four-second gap to just 0.1s, 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 crucial blow.

Jam Sport 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 following damage to his driveshaft, but it was Horrobin who suffered a similar fate in race two, finishing in 25th. The celebrations continued for Jam Sport in Class D, as Jessica King took her maiden victory in the series, holding off a late charge by Stuart Robbins.

Carlito Miracco gave a display of defensive maturity in race one of the **Fiesta Juniors**, denying rookie Harry Gooding's advances. The Italian couldn't make it a full house of victories though, as Gooding's inspiring start to the season again proved too much in race two. Elliot Wilson was leading the points going into the weekend after two victories at Snetterton but was below his 2016 standard, only managing two fifth places, 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 in his Nissan Skyline.

The **Superkarts** were the usual breathless display, somehow seeming to almost 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 on 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 with 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.



Murray emerged victorious in both National FF1600 contests



Thompson (centre) fights with Priest (r) and Going (l) in Fiestas

RESULTS



Field won Intermarque race two

Formula Ford 1600 National Championship (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). Class winners John Svensson (Van Diemen); Ben Tinkler (Reynard FF89). Fastest lap Raven. Pole Murray.
Race two (17 laps) 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 (Z4). CW Gary Bate (Caterham R400). FL L Smith. P Tommy Field (Tigra). **Race two (13 laps)** 1 Field; 2 L Smith +12.176s; 3 Chris Brockhurst (Tigra); 4 Blackman; 5 Rueben Taylor (Peugeor 206); 6 Chris Ayling (Tigra). CW Robert Singleton (Caterham). FL Field. P Richard Smith (Mercedes SLK)

Sports 2000 Championship (22 laps)
1 Patrick Sherrington (MCR); 2 Tom Stoten (Gun TS11) +17.991s; 3 Michael Gibbins (MCR); 4 Paul Martin (MCR); 5 Tim Tudor (MCR); 6 Alaric Gordon (Cabir CS2). CW Martin; Gordon; Mike Turner (MCR); Peter Needham (Tiga SC80); David Pittard (Swift DB/5). FL Gibbins. P Sherrington.
Race two (22 laps) 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; 2 Jamie Going +0.471s; 3 Samuel Priest; 4 Nick Sanderson; 5 Nathan Edwards; 6 Kevin Stirling. CW Alastair Kellett (Zetec S); Peter Dendy-Sadler (Fiesta Si); Luke Bannister (Zetec). FL Going. P Priest.
Race two (13 laps) 1 Aaron Thompson; 2 Priest +0.118s; 3 Going; 4 Alfonso Skriczka; 5 Nick 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 two (15 laps) 1 Gooding; 2 James Waite +2.619s; 3 Quinn; 4 Miracco; 5 Elliot Wilson; 6 Bearman. FL Gooding. P Miracco.

MR2 Race Series (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 two (11 laps) 1 Pullan; 2 Lockwood +4.432s; 3 Wright; 4 Higton; 5 Baxter; 6 Neale Hurren. FL Pullan. P Pullan.

Nippon Challenge/Deutsche Marques Cup/Tricolore Trophy Invitation (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 Mk2); 5 James Mumbray (BMW M3); 6 Andrew Mclennan (Suzuki Swift GTi). CW Mumbray; Paul Clothier (Renault Clio 197). FL Hockley. P Hockley. **Race two (12 laps)** 1 Hockley; 2 Nerijus Zabotka (Subaru Impreza) +10.661s; 3 Mumbray; 4 Nick Gwinnett (Clio 172); 5 Hope; 6 Roberts. CW Mumbray; Gwinnett. FL James Janicki (Nissan Skyline R32). P Hockley.

F250/450 Superkarts (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 two (14 laps) 1 James; 2 Bennett +2.558s; 3 Ross Allen (Jade/Honda); 4 Burrows; 5 Waite; 6 James Skyers. 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 two (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 three (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.

Tricolore 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 (205 GTi); 6 James Breeze (Clio 172). CW Mitchell; Breeze; Gerrard Merriman (Citroen Saxo); Robert Buckland (Clio). FL Whelan.

PEMBREY: BARC BY DAMIAN MEADEN — APRIL 23/24

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 solitary 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 0.050s 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. He recovered in the last race, however, and led home Mickel to secure a controlled victory and take his win tally for the season to five.

There was more decided in the stewards' room than on the circuit on Saturday in the **British Truck Racing Championship**. David Jenkins was stripped of his race one victory for passing under yellow flags and Ryan Smith fell foul of a five-second time penalty for exceeding track limits in race two, which dropped him from the top to the third step of the podium. Smith's penalty was rescinded on appeal, however Jenkins' was not.

On Sunday it was the on-circuit action that carried the most weight. After Steve Thomas claimed the honours in race three, 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 finish.

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

After James Dorlin and Samuel Randon claimed a dominant win apiece in the **Michelin 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 weekend's 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 became the first female ever to take a pole in the **Junior Saloon Car Championship**, and duly took 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 for Milner into Brooklands in the closing stages of the second contest gifted both the win and the championship lead to Sutton, who led home Matteo Zanetti.

Keith White spun his BMW Z4 into Brooklands during the opening round of the **WRDA Championship** season, handing Ford Sierra Cosworth driver Jason Davies a comfortable win, with Neil Watts rounding out the podium in his Westfield SE1.

Chris Everill secured the race two victory in his Ginetta G50 ahead of Fabio Luffarelli. The race was 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.

RESULTS

Legends (10 laps) 1 John Mickel; 2 Nathan Anthony +1.926s; 3 Stephen Whitelegg; 4 Rickie Leggatt; 5 Paul Simmons; 6 Connor Mills. Fastest lap Whitelegg. Pole Mickel. **Race two (10 laps)** 1 Mickel; 2 Mills +0.191s; 3 Whitelegg; 4 Leggatt; 5 Simmons; 6 Jack Parker. FL Mills. P Mick Bourner. **Race three (12 laps)** 1 Mickel; 2 Mills +0.050s; 3 Whitelegg; 4 Guy Fastres; 5 Parker; 6 Anthony. FL Whitelegg. P Fastres. **Race four (10 laps)** 1 Mickel; 2 Fastres +9.385s; 3 Simmons; 4 Anthony; 5 Whitelegg; 6 Sean Smith. FL Mickel. P Mills. **Race five (10 laps)** 1 Mickel; 2 Whitelegg +0.512s; 3 Fastres; 4 Rob King; 5 Simmons; 6 Leggatt. FL Mickel. P King. **Race six (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 (Buggyra-Freightliner); 6 Steve Powell (MAN). CW Simon Cole (Mercedes). FL Smith. P Smith. **Race two (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 three (14 laps)** 1 Thomas; 2 Oliver +4.747s; 3 Smith; 4 Mat Summerfield (MAN TGX); 5 Brereton; 6 Janes. CW Bint. FL Thomas. P M Oliver. **Race four (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 five (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 (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 two (16 laps)** 1 Randon; 2 Pinder +11.057s; 3 B Lidsey; 4 Dorlin; 5 Palmer; 6 Ben Colburn. CW Nic Harrison. FL Randon. P Dorlin. **Race three (16 laps)** 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 two (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 Saloon); 6 Roger Dowden (Davrian Mk6). CW White; Dowden; Dave Scaramanga (VW Vento); Daryl Radford (Honda Civic). FL White. P White. **Race two (10 laps)** 1 Everill; 2 F Luffarelli +2.982s; 3 Davies; 4 Damian Longotano (Westfield); 5 Endaf Owens (Mini Miglia); 6 Tyrone Luffarelli (Peugeot 106GTi). CW Davies; Owens; T Luffarelli; Radford; Alan Smith (Ford Ka). FL Longotano. P Davies.

GETTING IN THE CO-DRIVER'S HOT SEAT IN A RALLY CAR PAGE 39

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

'Lewis topped US V8 power'
Big Lister wins



'Friedrichs beat Stretton's Alta'
Pre-War Sports



SILVERSTONE NATIONAL: VSCC BY PAUL LAWRENCE — APRIL 23

Photos: Richard Styles

SMITH STEALS BIG VICTORY

While Philip Walker's Lotus 16 dominated the Pre-1961 Racing Cars race within the VSCC Silverstone Spring Start, it was the Lotus 12 of Andrew Smith that took an unexpected victory.

Racing his Lotus 16 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 got the car restarted, Smith had 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 Indycar.

"I'm so honoured to drive for Nick and I can't believe the result," said a stunned Smith after an 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 as always, even though Tom Walker edged away in his 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 the Frazer Nash stole ahead.

It was a big day for the **Frazer Nash** marque as a special race celebrated pre- and post-war cars from 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 were battling for third and it was Tony Lees in the final podium place when the red flags flew.

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, in which 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.

"Once he made the break in the traffic I just couldn't get back to him," said Stretton.

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 Boultbee Brooks guided his Aston Martin DB3S to second place in the half-hour thrash but was relieved to see the flag as Chris Keen's Kurtis was looming large after starting from the pitlane when 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.

Mark Lewis led a thunderous podium party in the **1950s Sports Cars** race as US V8 powered the top three cars. Lewis and third-placed Roberto Giordanelli ran their Chevrolet-powered Lister Knobblies while Tony Bianchi split them in the Cadillac-powered Farrellac. The result might well have been different had first lap leader Giordanelli not 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 day's 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 the opposition.

An unusual guest race brought a touch of the modern era to the day as a full grid of Morgans contested the second round of the **Morgan Challenge**. 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 young Elliot Paterson.



Andrew Smith took Pre-1961 Racing Cars win in the rebuilt Lotus 12



Eddie Gibbs took the win in superb Frazer Nash celebration outing

RESULTS



McWhirter took Tom Cole Trophy after briefly dropping to third place

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 Dalglish (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 Boultbee 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 Boultbee 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).

KIRKISTOWN: 500MRCI BY RICHARD YOUNG — APRIL 23

The fledgling **Irish Legends** series may not, as yet, have very many cars, but on their first visit to Kirkistown they made a strong, and hopefully lasting, impression.

And they 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 as well, and the final lap scrap was between Meredith and Holman, who passed the flag absolutely together, with O'Brien in close attendance.

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, and entering the Hairpin for the final time it looked very much as though Armstrong was going to make it ahead of Traub. However, a very brave move by Jess round the outside helped him squeak past to win by 0.141s.

By comparison, race two was almost 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 thus 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 1-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, however, behind the Reynards of Ryan and Henry Campbell.

RESULTS

Legends (8 laps) 1 Paul O'Brien; 2 James Holman +0.174s; 3 Ivor Greenwood; 4 Des Foley; 5 Ian Conroy; 6 Niki Meredith. Fastest lap O'Brien. Pole Jonathan Taylor.
Race two (8 laps) 1 Meredith; 2 Holman +0.00s; 3 O'Brien; 4 Greenwood; 5 Jonathan Taylor; 6 Conroy. FL Holman. P Meredith.
Race three (8 laps) 1 O'Brien; 2 Holman +1.438s; 3 Foley; 4 Meredith; 5 Taylor; 6 Conroy. FL Meredith. P Bobby King.

Saloon/GT (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 two (13 laps) 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 (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). Class winner Thompson. FL Larkham. P Larkham.
Race two (13 laps) 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.

Northern Irish FF1600 (16 laps) 1 Noel Robinson (Van Diemen JL012K); 2 Alan Davidson (Mondiale M89S) +3.665s; 3 Ryan Campbell (Reynard FF89); 4 Andrew Noble (JL012K); 5 Andrew Blair (Reynard FF84); 6 Henry Campbell (Reynard FF89). CW Davidson; Blair; Paul McMorran (Crossle 32F). FL Robinson. P Robinson.
Race two (16 laps) 1 Robinson; 2 R Campbell +6.325s; 3 H Campbell; 4 Davidson; 5 McMorran; 6 Noble. CW R Campbell; Blair; McMorran. FL Robinson. P Robinson.

HOW TOM INGRAM IS MAKING WAVES IN THE BTCC PAGE 21

RACING REPORTS

CROFT: BARC BY STEPHEN BRUNSDON — APRIL 23/24

Pete Sparrow took the lead of the **2CV Racing Championship** with a brace of victories at Croft. After winning race one, he combined perfectly with co-driver Jim Henshaw to take the two-hour endurance win on Sunday.

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 both Lien Davies and Louis Tyson.

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

Davies and Crispin completed the podium in third, while the top 12 was covered by just 8.1s.

Race two produced another thriller and was only settled on the penultimate lap by an audacious move from Alec Graham into Sunny In on race-long leader Kris Tovey. It was a move that epitomised 2CV racing, of which Graham certainly approved. "It's always brilliant here at Croft and 2CV is a fabulous form of racing. It's always close and carnage," exclaimed Graham after taking the chequered flag.

Graham confirmed his Croft specialist status by taking a remarkable second in the endurance race on Sunday. It was a particularly impressive feat as he was without a co-driver for the duration.

An opportunistic late-race overtake allowed Adrian Wray to snatch victory from 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.

Behind the top two, Adam Jackson looked set to complete the podium, but his hopes were dashed as he was forced into retirement early on. Jim Baynam took victory in Class A.

Wray was denied in race two due to retirement, meaning that Wills headed Jackson, while Baynam again took the Class A win.

Nick Dunn led from start to finish in the first of two **Max5 Championship** races, beating John Munro by 2.2s. Despite setting the fastest lap in qualifying, Invitational driver Paul Roddison started from the back and finished third after the 12 laps in his new Mk4. Guy Carter prevailed in Class B.

Dunn continued his winning run by pipping Roddinson to the flag in race two as Chris Webster completed the podium.

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 by taking a victory in race two ahead of Phil Weaver's Nemesis.

Champkin completed a clean sweep as Weaver retired three corners from the end in race three. Jonathan Hair bagged three podiums in the Beagle's first race outing in 30 years.

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

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

RESULTS

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. FL Chris Yates. P Sparrow. **Race two (10 laps)** 1 Graham; 2 Paul Taylor +1.59s; 3 Tom Perry; 4 Kris Tovey; 5 Crispin; 6 Mick Storey. FL Matthew Hollis. P Yates. **Race three (56 laps)** 1 Jim Henshaw/Sparrow; 2 Graham +13.536s; 3 Perry/Davies; 4 Crispin; 5 Caryl Wills/Tovey; 6 Taylor/Louis Tyson. FL Henshaw/Sparrow. P Henshaw/Sparrow.

MG Owners' Club Championship (12 laps) 1 Adrian Wray (MG ZR); 2 Martin Wills (MG F) +0.438s; 3 David Mellor (MG ZR); 4 Mark Baker (MG F); 5 Simon Kendrick (MG F VVC); 6 Stuart Plotnek (MG F). Class winners Mellor; Jim Baynam (MG B). FL Wray. P Wray. **Race two (12 laps)** 1 Wills; 2 Adam Jackson (MG ZR) +0.600s; 3 Mellor; 4 Kendrick; 5 Plotnek; 6 Baker. CW Jackson; Baynam. FL Wray. P Wray.

Max5 Championship (12 laps) 1 Nick Dunn (Mazda MX-5 Mk3); 2 John Munro (Mazda MX-5 Mk3) +2.159s; 3 Paul Roddison (Mazda MX-5 Mk4); 4 Iain Loversidge (Mazda MX-5 Mk3); 5 Chris Webster (Mazda MX-5 Mk3); 6 Steve Dolman (Mazda MX-5 Mk3). CW Roddison; Guy Carter (Mazda MX-5). FL Roddison. P Dunn. **Race two (12 laps)** 1 Dunn; 2 Roddison +1.442s; 3 Webster; 4 Munro; 5 Geoff Gouriet (Mazda MX-5); 6 Loversidge. CW Roddison; Carter. FL Roddison. P Dunn.

Clubmans Cup (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 (Delapena Mallock Mk16BW). FL Champkin. P Champkin. **Race two (12 laps)** 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 three (12 laps)** 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 Head 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 Mk2); David Bird (Honda Civic). FL Rose. P Watson. **Race two (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 (SV)); Simon Baker (Ford Fiesta XR2). FL Simpson. P Brydon. **Race two (11 laps)** 1 Addison; 2 Paul Brydon (BMW M3) +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.

WILKS TO RETURN TO WORLD RALLYCROSS AT LYDDEN HILL PAGE 32

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SPEEDWORKS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

How the BTCC's newest star is eager to cement his reputation. By Matt James

INGRAM READY TO STEP UP TO THE BIG TIME



Ingram starred at the Brands Hatch opener

Brands Hatch's opening British Touring Car Championship round at the start of April is the one everyone wants to win. That is because it is the only event of the year where no driver or car combination is saddled with pesky success ballast. It is, in effect, the only 'pure' race of the season. This year, it also marked a watershed for Tom Ingram.

The Speedworks Toyota Avensis driver showed his brace of podiums at the end of the 2015 season weren't a fluke as he controlled the race to record his maiden win in the top flight.

It was the end of an emotional ride for Ingram. The 22-year-old ripped up the junior levels, claiming the Ginetta Junior, G50 class and G55 Supercup titles in four seasons to land in the BTCC in 2014 with Speedworks. From there, he has improved year on year until that moment at Brands.

It was a tough weekend in many ways. That glory was followed by a shunt in race two and a penalty in race three – but even that couldn't take the gloss of the victory.

"After the opening race, you don't really get a chance to look back – you are straight in to race two," explains Ingram. "The elation of what you have just done is lost in the rest of the day. I think it muddied it with what happened in race two and race three. We didn't really get a chance to sit back and realise what we had done.

"We stayed over at Brands Hatch on the Sunday evening. We were at the hotel at the track and had some dinner and a few drinks. I was sat eating my food, and I all of a sudden just burst in to tears. I had just done what I had always wanted to do – it sunk in then."

That victory at Brands wasn't just lucked in to either. The Toyota man had taken his career first pole, powered into the lead after an excellent getaway and he was able to keep reigning champion Gordon Shedden's Honda at arm's length throughout the 27 laps.

"I didn't push too hard at the start of the race, and that comes down to knowledge," explains Ingram. "I was confident we had the pace if I needed it and I knew I could push harder if I needed to. We had the pace to control the race the way we wanted. We were in total control. I remember seeing the pit board with 15 laps to go, and I knew I had it barring any punctures or anything stupid like that."

And after it sunk in, he followed it up with another podium finish at Donington two weeks ago. The targets have shifted significantly for the High Wycombe man.

"Winning a race does close a chapter, but it opens another one," he says. "There is a completely different mindset now we have got that. In previous years, we came in and just wanted finishes or trophies. Not any more. It is not about top 10 anymore, or even sneaking a top five. We want to be winning races consistently. We want to be the one being knocked off the top of the perch."

It is a heart-warming story. The Speedworks operation has become more and more professional. Team boss Christian Dick and his wife Amy have crafted the team in to a frontrunner, and they have nurtured Ingram's talent along the way. There were options for Ingram to jump ship over the winter, but the relationship between the team owners and Ingram himself meant that he wasn't tempted.

"I would much rather have had the success the way we have done it rather than go straight in and buy it," explains Ingram. "It has been developed. People looking from the outside now would look at Speedworks and see that it has all come together. We have a driver that can do it, there is an engineer that can do it [Geoff Kingston] and there is a team that can do it. It has built up. It has happened over the space of two years, whereas people would have said that I would only have been winning because I was in a good car.

"It has been a long journey. I trust my own ability enough that I wasn't doubting myself. It was about getting everything together at the right time. If in my first year I had gone straight in with a manufacturer team, then I am certain that I would have won races. But where does that leave everyone's support for you, and everyone else's expectations and future goals when you have already done it straight away?

"The fact that Speedworks has worked very hard to make this happen and I have worked very hard to make this happen means it is more special than winning it any other way. It has not been gifted. No one has walked in with £2million and told me to go and drive a car around. That makes it more worthwhile. When you look at the team and the resources we have, we shouldn't be doing what we are doing."

But they are there, and the signs are that more wins will follow later in the season. And Ingram says he will only get better with more time in the BTCC.

"I think my knowledge and understanding has improved," he adds. "And that has been the key to this. It is knowing what is happening before it is happening. It comes with time. I look back and watch some of the onboard from my first year – and I think 'Jesus, what was I doing?'. You learn. I watch footage from last year, and it was better but there were still mistakes being made. This year, coming in to it and knowing what changes what has helped. I have a bank of data in my mind. It is down to confidence.

"I have got experience of the circuits from previous years now – I know that sounds like a little thing, but look at the names at the front of this championship – they have been there for years, and that is down to knowledge. I am building that up with every race weekend that goes by." ■



Flanked by Matt Neal and Gordon Shedden after his win



Geoff Kingston and Ingram are two of the key ingredients

The Speedworks road to the front of the BTCC

Speedworks team principal Christian Dick has gradually built up the Speedworks British Touring Car Championship team over its six years in the category. Now it has stepped in to the winner's circle it is a feeling the team wants to experience over and over again.

"I didn't want to be a team that would pitch up, get a little bit of luck, get a reversed grid and the win that way," says the boss. "I didn't want it to be lucky, I wanted to structure it in a way that when we did hit the front and started winning races, that it would be races plural. I wanted the platform behind us to enable us to do it consistently. Everything that we did as far back as three years ago was targeted for the future, and we have learned year on year, which has now got us to this place."

One of the vital things for Speedworks has been the dynamic with Ingram. There is probably no closer relationship in the BTCC pitlane.

"I have seen Tom improve on all fronts," says Dick. "Don't forget, he came with a massive pedigree, and he had won in everything he had been in, but this is a massive step up. Until you get to the BTCC with the level of competition and the demands that there are on a driver, you can't imagine what it is like.

"Everybody wants a bit of the drivers over the race weekend – engineers, sponsors, the team, the public, the media, everyone. Just walking from the garage to the back of the truck can be hard because you are stopped every second. You don't have time to go to a quiet corner and think about things. You have to learn how to think about your racing in the middle of all of that, which is hugely intimidating. To be able to tune that skill, to jump in the car and just bang in a quick time is a real skill. It is a tough ask and it takes time to get the hang of.

"He has always been quick, but it is about the focus. Everything has improved with Tom, as you would expect with a younger driver. He has learned so much about the car and particularly the tyres and when to get the most from them. Tom does make mistakes, but the impressive thing is that he doesn't make the same mistakes twice. That is really telling."



Dick has pushed team to the top



"It has been a long journey"
TOM INGRAM

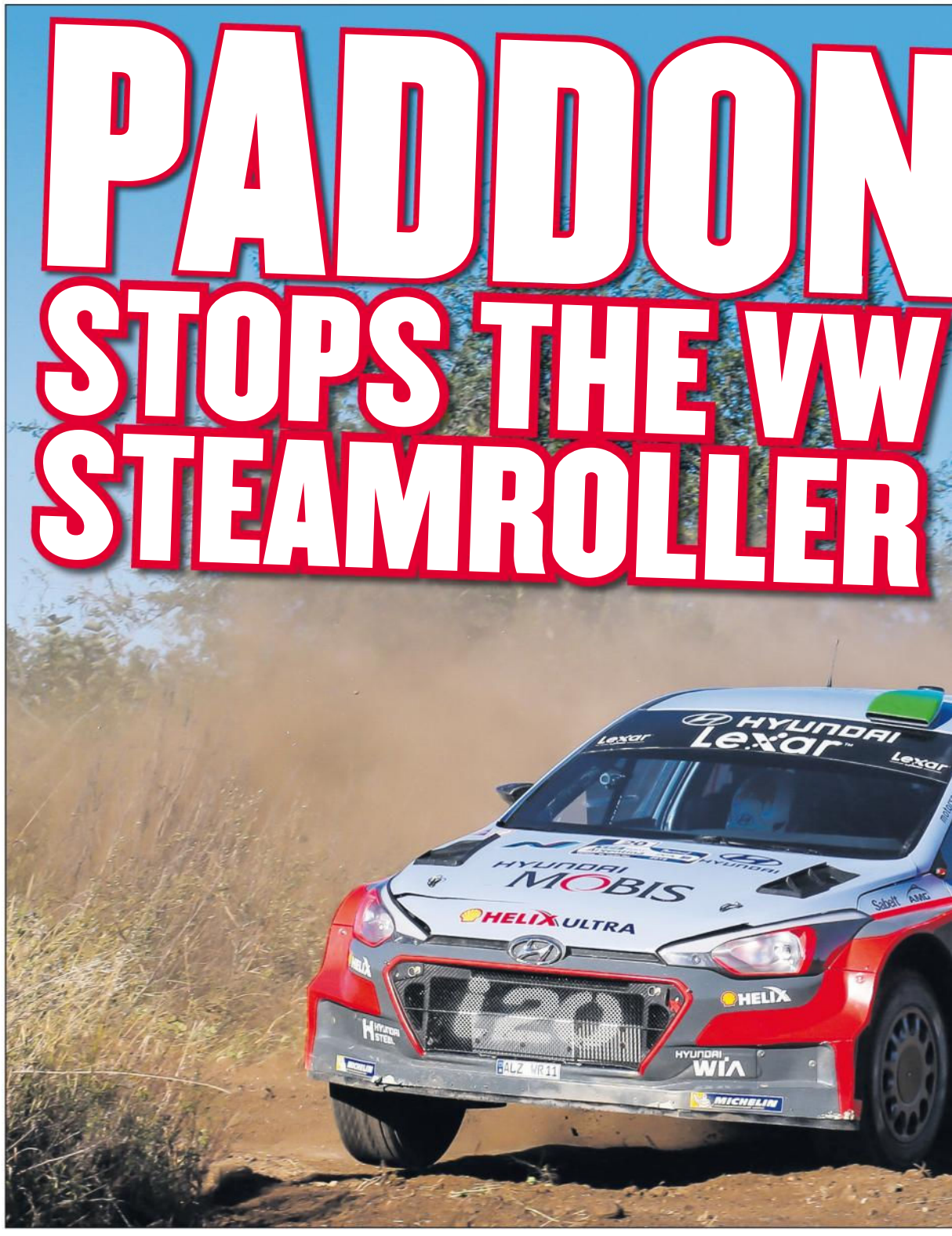
RALLY ARGENTINA



BY DAVID EVANS

Hyundai ace holds off Ogier to take first World Rally Championship victory

PADDON STOPS THE VW STEAMROLLER



At 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.

And, among the remains of the duck Kris Meeke broke at the end of El Condor, Argentina 12 months ago, Paddon smashed his own. And in some style, taking a near unbelievable 11.7s out of the world champion on the final stage.

Paddon and co-driver John Kennard were just about as surprised as anybody in the service park.

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.

If last week was about a song, Dina Carroll looked to have the lyrics licked with *The Perfect Year*. Ahead of the event, few would bet against the Hannover team making it a full year since they were last beaten (Kris Meeke here, 12 months ago).

By Saturday night, The Rolling Stones stepped up with *Street Fighting Man* as Ogier squared up to Paddon post day two press conference.

But in the end, Ellie Goulding got it right. Paddon. *Winner*.

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

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

Driving towards the end of the test, you knew what was coming. The damp morning air had dried into a sunny southern hemisphere Friday.

The champion didn't say much. He didn't need to.

Latvala took charge, 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 his co-driver Miikka Anttila, Latvala eyed the approaching bank, buried the throttle and said a nano-second-quick silent prayer. It was answered. Four soft Michelins dug into Argentina and 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 through 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 north of 20s 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 the bedrock suddenly the front-right top-mount broke and the damper came through the bonnet. At that moment I couldn't steer the car any more, 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 stone where he believed the car would take it, but it didn't," said Capito. "It was quite a big impact. You have to have the balance with this car – we can't make a tank. We go through all the loads we experience in testing and that's how we build the 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 track rod – likely a consequence of Saturday's inversion.

Regardless of who was to blame, Latvala's search for successive wins goes on and while his title hopes have taken another massive blow, he will remain 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 the end of day press conference on Saturday was strained as Ogier complained about the regulations. Following the press conference, 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 slight concern at the metaphorical poke the tiger had been given.

Ogier was relaxed, contemplating another 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," said Jan.

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.

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.

All bets were off. The script would be followed. Ogier would win his first Argentina to a Dina-sourced soundtrack; Volkswagen's perfect year was coming.

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.

Mr SIT timing fellow, please don't take this the wrong way, but I wasn't the first to question the validity of what was delivered.

Having dropped a shade over a second per mile on the first 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.

Paddon was 11.7s quicker.

Even sitting here typing these words no it's almost impossible to take in what Paddon achieved in those 10 miles.

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



Latvala crashed out of the lead...

'Needs to be back in a WRC car as soon as possible'
Elfyn Evans' rally rated, p25



ROUND 04

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com and Timo Anis Photography



Kennard and Paddon celebrate Hyundai's first WRC win for nearly two years



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…"

He 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 John. Smiling. Staring. Smiling.

But how?

Back in service a couple of hours later, Paddon's 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."

They certainly did.

"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."

Continued on page 24


…bringing considerable pain for the likeable Finn

STAGE TIMES

■ **SS1 Super Especial Cordoba (1.86 miles)**
Fastest Ogier and Sordo 1m29.0s
Leaders Ogier and Sordo

■ **SS2 Soconcho-Villa del Dique 1 (14.60 miles)**
Fastest Ogier 13m00.1s **Leader** Ogier **Second** Sordo +2.0s

■ **SS3 Amboy-Santa Monica 1 (12.63 miles)**
Fastest Latvala 10m36.5s
Leader Ogier
Second Paddon +0.6s

■ **SS4 Santa Rosa-San Agustin 1 (13.27 miles)**
Fastest Latvala 13m58.3s
Leader Latvala
Second Paddon +3.6s

■ **SS5 Super Especial Parque Tematico 1 (3.75 miles)**
Fastest Neuville 4m55.9s **Leader** Latvala **Second** Paddon +5.4s

■ **SS6 Soconcho-Villa del Dique 2 (14.60 miles)**
Fastest Paddon 12m54.6s
Leader Latvala
Second Paddon +4.8s

■ **SS7 Amboy-Santa Monica 2 (12.63 miles)**
Fastest Latvala 10m33.7s
Leader Latvala
Second Ogier +6.6s

■ **SS8 Santa Rosa-San Agustin 2 (13.27 miles)**
Fastest Latvala 13m56.4s
Leader Latvala
Second Paddon +10.2s

■ **SS9 Super Especial Parque Tematico 2 (3.75 miles)**
Fastest Ogier 4m55.3s **Leader** Latvala **Second** Ogier +7.9s

■ **SS10 El Reposo-Villa Albertina 1 (20.32 miles)**
Fastest Paddon 9m58.3s **Leader** Latvala **Second** Paddon +9.3s

■ **SS11 Villa Albertina-Ischilin 1 (9.32 miles)**
Fastest Paddon 20m34.9s
Leader Latvala
Second Paddon +6.7s

■ **SS12 Ischilin-Ongamira 1 (15.22 miles)**
Fastest Latvala 13m32.9s
Leader Latvala
Second Paddon +13.3s

■ **SS13 El Reposo-Villa Albertina 2 (20.32 miles)**
Fastest Latvala 9m55.0s **Leader** Latvala **Second** Paddon +14.5s

■ **SS14 Villa Albertina-Ischilin 2 (9.32 miles)**
Fastest Paddon 20m21.2s
Leader Paddon
Second Ogier +34.3s

■ **SS15 Ischilin-Ongamira 2 (15.22 miles)**
Fastest Mikkelsen 13m27.1s
Leader Paddon
Second Ogier +29.8s

■ **SS16 El Condor-Copina (10.14 miles)**
Fastest Tanak 13m50.6s **Leader** Paddon **Second** Ogier +22.4s

■ **SS17 Mina Clavero-Giulio Cesare (14.07 miles)**
Fastest Ogier 18m38.5s **Leader** Paddon **Second** Ogier +2.6s

■ **SS18 El Condor (Power Stage) (10.14 miles)**
Fastest Paddon 13m08.0s **Leader** Paddon **Second** Ogier +14.3s

COLIN CLARK

"Is handicapping right for a world championship?"



Is it right that the very top level of our sport is effectively a handicapped championship?

That's the question I keep asking myself after weekends like the last one.

My answer will always be the same: absolutely not. That's how I see the current running order regulations.

Punishing the championship leader by having him run first on the road for the first two days of competition is, as I see it, a handicapping system. I've always viewed handicap races as being for under-performers and amateurs. There's no place for it at the top level of any sport.

It's also mighty confusing for the casual viewer. The blindingly obvious system is for the championship standings to be reflected in the opening day's order and then, surely, subsequent days should reflect rally order. It's simple to understand and, above all, fair.

When we last employed this equitable system, it was much maligned because of the end-of-day tactics that left drivers slowing down to jockey for favourable road position on the following day. That's a fair point and it was a good reason for dropping the system. But the lack of split times to the cars mean such tactics are no longer possible. So why not go back to the old system?

Our governing body doesn't want to. They are very happy to see the best driver in the world start certain rallies with no chance of winning. I heard a senior figure stating their preferred option was to run all three days in championship order! The apparent reason for this is to increase the spectacle and entertainment, a view that's held by many within the sport.

But aren't these the very same people who derided and comprehensively destroyed Jost Capito's shootout proposal? And what was Mr Capito trying to do? Oh yes, increase the spectacle and entertainment.

In my book, you just can't have it both ways. We either look at the sport and stick with the DNA that made it great or we take comprehensive steps to address the lack of relevance that our sport is faced with, particularly in the eyes of a younger audience.

Seb Ogier's frustration was mighty evident in Argentina and indeed spilled over in a very unseemly spat with the amiable Hayden Paddon on Saturday evening. Too many were too quick to castigate the behaviour of the Frenchman. Ogier is a brawler, a street fighter, a man with only one aim: to win. He uses, quite rightly, every means available to achieve his goal. He dominates Latvala, knows Mikkelsen is no threat, but Paddon is something new, a genuine contender. So he resorted to psychological warfare, and it very nearly worked!

Starting order regulations are the spark and the ammunition Ogier needs to have a go. If you really want to dampen his powder, the answer is very simple: change the rules.

NOW TURN OVER TO READ MN'S DRIVER RATINGS

RALLY ARGENTINA

RALLY ESSENTIALS

Day one: 94.19 miles; 9 stages

Weather: sunshine 14 to 23 celsius

- Sebastien Ogier makes the most of the morning moisture hanging around on the stages to take lead from a very popular, Spanish-speaking Cordoba superspecial stage winner Dani Sordo. Ogier's frustration is clear when he's passed in a particularly gravelly fourth stage. The Frenchman ends the day third.
- Ogier's Volkswagen team-mate and last round winner Jari-Matti Latvala rules the opening afternoon with a masterful performance in his Polo R WRC. His closest rival is Hyundai's Hayden Paddon. Having celebrated his 29th birthday during the week, the Kiwi is upbeat and very, very fast on Friday – and only slowed slightly by a dodgy left-rear damper.
- Andreas Mikkelsen has found his feet through Friday and settled into fourth place. Early leader Sordo was running fourth, but loses time when the throttle on his i20 sticks open in SS4. He's fifth overnight. There's more misfortune for Hyundai when the sister car of Thierry Neuville is forced to stop while the crew trace a disconnected sensor in the same stage. The Belgian recovers in the best possible fashion with fastest time in the following superspecial. He's 10th at the end of the opening day.
- Mads Ostberg leads M-Sport's effort in sixth, with Henning Solberg and Eric Camilli following behind. Local hero Marcos Ligato is ninth after stopping to rip the front bumper off his car, having nudged a bank and blocked the air intake.

End of day one: 1 Latvala/Anttila 1h26m31.3s; 2 Ogier/Ingrassia +7.9s; 3 Paddon/Kennard +11.4s; 4 Mikkelsen/Jaeger +25.7s; 5 Sordo/Marti +49.0s; 6 Ostberg/Floene +2m07.9s

Day two: 98.06 miles; 6 stages

Weather: sunny 14 to 27 celsius

- Latvala crashes out of the second run of Los Gigantes. His 15-second lead comes to nought as Paddon moves to the front, to lead a WRC round for the first time since Sardinia last season.
- Ogier is still second, but he's complaining bitterly about the cleaning effect on the first run through the stages and drops back from the lead fight in the Los Gigantes 20-miler. Second time through, he's marginally happier. But still wants to go home.
- A fight for fourth between Mikkelsen and Sordo has become a bottom-step podium tussle on the final day. The Spaniard closed the gap to his Norwegian rival to 12s, but it's at 17 going into the final day.
- Ostberg is a comfortable fifth overnight, almost three minutes down on Sordo, but four ahead of Ligato – the Argentinian feeling more and more at home in his PH-Sport-run Citroen DS 3 WRC.
- Comfortable and homely as he might be feeling, Ligato will need to keep an eye in the mirror tomorrow, with Neuville and Solberg just 4.8s down on him on Saturday night. Thierry and Henning are tied on time in seventh.

End of day two: 1 Paddon/Kennard 2h54m45.6s; 2 Ogier/Ingrassia +29.8s; 3 Mikkelsen/Jaeger +44.3s; 4 Sordo/Marti +1m02.0s; 5 Ostberg/Floene +3m46.2s; 6 Ligato/Garcia +8m13.1s

Day three: 34.35 miles; 3 stages

Weather: cloudy 6 to 14 celsius

- Final-morning thriller works out well for Paddon. Volkswagen content with two cars on the podium and an increased advantage in the manufacturers' race. Sordo closes on Mikkelsen, but the Norwegian's done enough to hold third.
- Neuville takes sixth, edging Ligato by 9.7s, while Solberg drops time on the final day and finishes behind the second factory Fiesta of Camilli.
- Nicolas Fuchs benefits from Latvala's powerstage problem (the Finn fixes his motor and drives across the line a massive 27m37.6s slower than Paddon) to move into the top 10 overall – meaning a double celebration with his WRC2 success (*see box, right*).

Continued from page 23

Cue Gilbert. And it's important to note, it's Gilbert, as in the rugby ball. Hayden looked pretty appalled when I asked about *Jill Bare*, impossible to say without a French accent…

"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 in defeat. "I never want to finish second," he said, "but this is much easier to accept. 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 to the championship and it could have been suicide to make the big attack when it was so rough."

Perfect year gone for another year, 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 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 and 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 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 – seeing that as the most sensible way to solve the overcrowding issues.

That wasn't the point. That 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 the work was done. 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 could do epic again, that would be nice. It's going to be tough though: two maiden winners in as many years played out on roads as good as anything anywhere 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. And that was the WRC at it's very best.

In reality, there was only one soundtrack in South America. EMF. *Unbelievable.* ■

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Ogier starred but missed out again



Local man Ligato went well

Evans is fastest but Fuchs takes the honours

WRC2

Nicolas Fuchs celebrated his first win of the WRC2 season in Argentina – ruining the first part of M-Sport and *MN*'s story.

The script was a simple one. Elfyn Evans flies to South America, completes his hat-trick, maintaining his 100 per cent record in WRC2, before his Ford Fiesta R5 is flown home and handed to Matthew Wilson to win this weekend's Pirelli Carlisle Rally.

Unfortunately, a fuel rail pressure sensor stopped working on the way to the third stage. Evans and co-driver Craig Parry were left stranded at the side of the road. They'd already suffered a front puncture on the opener, but nothing prepared them for the disappointment that followed.

"It's a long way to come for that kind of Friday morning," said Evans, ruefully. With life breathed back into the Fiesta, he then blitzed the opposition with a string of fastest times – when, that is, he wasn't suffering from punctures.

With Evans out of the picture, the way was clear for the best of the rest.

In fairness to Fuchs, he'd been quicker than anybody through Thursday night's Cordoba crowd-pleaser. And the Peruvian pressed on into Saturday, building a 50-second lead on the first morning.

As has been the case so many times before for Fuchs, it looked like his chance had slipped through his fingers when the powersteering pump failed on his Skoda in the second Soconcho test. Such were his efforts to keep the car in a straight line, his co-driver Fernando Mussano was called on to change gear.

Fellow Skoda runner Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari stepped up and moved to the front of the field. His old co-driver Killian Duffy was back on the notes in Argentina, with Marshall Clarke still recovering from the fractured spine he suffered when he and Al-Kuwari crashed out of the Qatar Rally at the start of the season.

Another inversion ruined the Middle East star's trip to Villa Carlos Paz. Caught out by a left-hander in Villa Bustos, the Fabia R5 tumbled into a field. A punctured tyre needed changing before they could get going again and when they did, they only had two-wheel drive.

First became a very distant third at the finish.

That handed the advantage back to Fuchs, who started the final day with more than three minutes in hand over Hubert Ptaszek's Peugeot.

Fourth would come as some consolation for Evans, but now for part two of the story. As you read this, the Fiesta is somewhere over the Atlantic. By Friday afternoon, it should be in scrutineering in Carlisle. And by Sunday… see next week's *MN*.



Fuchs won for Skoda after Evans hit trouble

ROUND 04

DRIVER ANALYSIS BY DAVID EVANS



SEBASTIEN OGIER
VOLKSWAGEN MOTORSPORT

He might have been a bit miserable, maybe even a bit mardy, but we can take nothing away from him. Another peerless drive from the champion. That time in Mina Clavero was pure genius.



10/10

JARI-MATTI LATVALA
VOLKSWAGEN MOTORSPORT

Did it break? Did he break it? Undoubtedly, Latvala puts his Polo through more punishment than his colleagues, but I'm with him this time. His motor let him down. Back-to-back wins should have been his.



7/10

ANDREAS MIKKELSEN
VOLKSWAGEN MOTORSPORT II

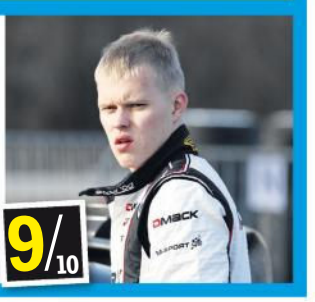
Mikkelsen came to Argentina looking to settle a score after a retirement in Mexico. Did he do that? Depends.
In Ogier's book, a score is a win. Looks like Mikkelsen settled for a draw.



6/10

OTT TANAK
DMACK WORLD RALLY TEAM

Great speed from the Estonian. Might have troubled the podium were it not for an alternator problem on Friday. Last event with Chinese-made DMACKs (made in UK from now on). Signed off with puncture…



9/10

THIERRY NEUVILLE
HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT

Stopping and fiddling with wires and sensors for six minutes in the middle of a stage is never going to make for a great event. But we didn't see much fire from the Belgian over the weekend either.



4/10

HAYDEN PADDON
HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT

So, he goes to next week's Whangarei Rally on a hat-trick! Backed up his Otago win with a stunning, epic and awesome maiden WRC success here. He and John Kennard absolutely deserve the glory.



10/10

ERIC CAMILLI
M-SPORT WORLD RALLY TEAM

Arrived at the end of stages looking like a rabbit caught in the headlights – or like he half expected Malcolm Wilson to jump out from behind every other tree. Under the ultimate pressure, he brought it home.



7/10

MADS OSTBERG
M-SPORT WORLD RALLY TEAM

The upside of the weekend is that his place on the road in Portugal will be better. The downside was an Ostberg-Fiesta package unable to demonstrate the kind of performance we know each is capable of.



5/10



Bad luck for Evans, who was quick

PH SPORT PRIVATEER
MARCOS LIGATO 8/10

Despite only having a handful of test miles in France ahead of the start, Ligato was always at the races on his home WRC round, his first in a WR Car since 2005. Nudged a bank on the exit of a day one watersplash, but otherwise perfect. And quick.

HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT
DANI SORDO 9/10

Made a change to his pacenotes and reaped the rewards on a rally where he has always been strong. Would have been right at the sharp end had it not been for sticking throttle on SS4.

M-SPORT WORLD RALLY TEAM
ELFYN EVANS 10/10

When all four Michelins were fully inflated, Evans was fastest of the WRC2 runners by a country mile and should have bagged his third win of the year. Really needs to be back in a World Rally Car as soon as possible.

M-SPORT PRIVATEER
HENNING SOLBERG 7/10

Great to see the ever-cheerful and deeply amusing Solberg back in the World Rally Championship again. Felt his motor might have been a tad down on power, but also pointed out he hadn't been in the gym much recently!

RESULTS

World Rally Championship, round 4/14, Rally Argentina, April 21-24

POS	DRIVER/ CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Hayden Paddon (NZL)/John Kennard (NZL)	Hyundai i20 WRC	3h40m52.9s
2	Sebastien Ogier (FRA)/Julien Ingrassia (FRA)	Volkswagen Polo R WRC	+14.3s
3	Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR)/Anders Jager Synnevaag (NOR)	Volkswagen Polo R WRC	+1m05.2s
4	Dani Sordo (ESP)/Marc Marti (ESP)	Hyundai i20 WRC	+1m17.1s
5	Mads Ostberg (NOR)/Ola Floene (NOR)	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+4m56.7s
6	Thierry Neuville (BEL)/Nicolas Gilsoul (BEL)	Hyundai i20 WRC	+9m29.5s
7	Marcos Ligato (ARG)/Ruben Garcia (ARG)	Citroen DS 3 WRC	+9m39.2s
8	Eric Camilli (FRA)/Benjamin Veillas (FRA)	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+10m16.0s
9	Henning Solberg (NOR)/Ilka Minor-Petrasko (AUT)	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+10m48.5s
10	Nicolas Fuchs (PER)/Fernando Mussano (ARG)	Skoda Fabia R5	+24m42.8s
13	Lorenzo Bertelli (ITA)/Simone Scattolin (ITA)	FWRT Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+33m23.7s
15	Ott Tanak (EST)/Raigo Molder (EST)	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+37m22.4s
16	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN)/Miikka Anttila (FIN)	Volkswagen Polo R WRC	+42m15.6s
17	Elfyn Evans (GBR)/Craig Parry (GBR)	Ford Fiesta R5	+27m17.5s
19	Jose Alberto Nicolas (ARG)/Miguel Recalt (ARG)	Citroen DS 3 WRC	+1h24m51.3s





CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS

POS	DRIVERS	PTS
1	Sebastien Ogier	96
2	Hayden Paddon	57
3	Mads Ostberg	52
4	Andreas Mikkelsen	48
5	Dani Sordo	44
6	Jari-Matti Latvala	27
7	Ott Tanak	24
8	Thierry Neuville	23
9	Stephane Lefebvre	10
10	Henning Solberg	8

MANUFACTURERS

POS	TEAMS	PTS
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



Argentinian fans behaved well and were controlled properly by organisers

NEXT RALLY Can Paddon score another WRC victory?

RALLY PORTUGAL
MAY 19-22

RALLY REPORTS

IN BRIEF

Milne heads class
Top two-wheel drive runner on the Speyside was Quintin Milne, having purchased the ex-Calum MacKenzie Ford Escort Mk2. He finished 20th overall, but perhaps if he had refrained from playing to the crowds with his sideways antics he might have fared better. Scott Kerr was second Escort home in 25th place after a few spins and the fuel pump cutting out in Gartly.

Sloan: Car like tractor
Scott Sloan won the 1450cc class in his Vauxhall Corsa but said "the car was handling like a tractor", with Grant MacRae second in his Peugeot 205 after admitting to "just one ditch today!" Gavin Kelt and Nikki Addison rounded out the top three in the category in their Vauxhall Nova.

Gray survives puncture
In the 16v 1650cc class, and despite a puncture on the final stage, Thomas Gray scored the win in his Ford Fiesta R2, from the Citroen C2 of David Martin who spent the day using up old tyres. James Robertson was third in his Citroen after changing the alternator, while Murray Coulthard retired his C2 when a front wheel stud broke and the wheel bounded off into the undergrowth. Steven Smith retired his Escort Mk2 with an engine issue.

Ross' crew saves day
Robbie Beattie won the 8v 1650cc class in his Peugeot 205 by just 21 seconds from the similar car of Donald Peacock but he was lucky. "It was thanks to David Ross' crew that we finished," said Beattie. "The axle broke and they welded it for us at service." As for Peacock, he claimed that he had been slow to protect the wildlife: "A deer ran across the road in front of us."

Freddie Milne returns
Freddie Milne scored an encouraging ninth overall first time out in the ex-Barry Groundwater Mitsubishi Lancer E9 and first time out since he destroyed his own car on the RSAC Scottish Rally last year. The younger brother of Quintin had an added incentive to do well with 'big brother' out in his Mk2: "If I beat you in this today, you'll never live it down when you go home," said Quintin. He didn't.

Handbrake advice
Fraser Wilson finished top Group N car in his Mitsubishi Lancer in 13th place overall by 10 seconds from the similar machine of Alasdair S Graham but only after advising Graham that the only way to get round the hairpin in Cooper Park was to handbrake it. Naturally, Graham took this advice on board and, after an embarrassing spin in front of the huge crowd, wished he hadn't.

Thorburn's trouble
Euan Thorburn faced a hectic race to get ready for the Speyside. Following transmission failure on the Circuit of Ireland, the gearbox had been sent back to Peugeot for a rebuild. However, they managed to borrow a gearbox from Jonny Greer in Belfast so father Alistair Thorburn was dispatched at mid-day on Thursday to Belfast. It was only when they installed the gearbox they realised it was minus the joint between engine and gearbox as Euan had sent his away complete with the union. After another phone call, Jonny sent the part to Belfast for ferry to Stranraer, leaving the Thorburns with another problem. They were already on their way to Elgin. After a Facebook appeal, rally fan Ryan Johnstone picked up the part at the ferry port and it duly arrived in Elgin in the early hours of Saturday morning. The bleary-eyed team made the rally start with time to spare.

Photos: Writtle Photographic

FIRST SRC WIN FOR PEARSON

Scot extends championship lead in Elgin. By John Fife



Pearson is adjusting well to new R5 Fiesta

Eight seconds separated the top two at the end of the McDonald & Munro Speyside Stages Rally last weekend, with victory going to Garry Pearson and Robbie Mitchell. Having tied with Jock Armstrong and Paula Swinscoe last month on the Border Counties and losing out on the tie-decider, there was no mistake this time, although it was close. Very close.

The opening two tests around the Cooper Park 'city centre special' in Elgin were run on asphalt. There was little to separate crews but David Ross held a narrow lead heading to the first gravel stages of the day in his rare DAM Metro after topping the second asphalt run.

Top of the timesheets in Knock More was Jock Armstrong, but by only a second from Euan Thorburn, with Pearson four seconds off the pace.

Thorburn was well into his stride on the fourth test at Balloch in his Peugeot 208 T16 R5. The former champion was using the event to prepare for the next round of the British championship in Carlisle, and was a full nine seconds up on his Dom Buckley stablemate Pearson – in a Fiesta R5 – with John MacCrone showing a much more encouraging return of pace in his Fiesta R5 a further second behind and one up on the Subaru of Armstrong.

At first service after SS4, Thorburn had a 12-second lead over Pearson with Armstrong and MacCrone tied, just three more seconds behind in third. The Mitsubishi Lancers of Mike Faulkner and Bruce McCombie followed. Shaun Sinclair had been on the early pace too, but was slowed on the fourth test when the Subaru sheared a driveshaft and he limped into service with three-wheel drive.

Three more tests followed in the Gartly/Clashindarroch forests, a fearsome test of man and machine, with 10 seconds covering the top four through Gartly, led by Thorburn from Armstrong, Pearson and Faulkner. This time it was MacCrone suffering driveshaft woes, dropping a massive 50 seconds to the leaders.

Down the road in the first Clashindarroch test – Strone Hill – Pearson scored his first fastest time of the day, but by just three seconds from MacCrone, and three more from Thorburn, tying with Faulkner and Bruce McCombie, one second clear of Armstrong.

MacCrone hit the front in Cats Craig, two seconds faster than Armstrong and Faulkner, who were three up on Pearson and Donnie MacDonald. He had earlier been delayed with a puncture in his Lancer, but not as badly as McCombie, who suffered three punctures in the same stage!

At final service before the last loop of three stages, Thorburn had a nine-second advantage over Pearson, with Armstrong still a threatening four seconds behind in third place. Faulkner was fourth, with MacCrone having fought back to fifth ahead of McCombie.

On the second run through Gartly, Pearson scored his second fastest time of the day and did it again on the penultimate test, in which Thorburn dropped almost 20 seconds and lost the rally lead to Pearson.

A whole minute covered the top five as they headed for the final stage. Surely things couldn't change that much, could they?

MacCrone was fastest, Pearson spun and Thorburn didn't start the stage! According to Pearson's co-driver Robbie Mitchell: "That was as big a spin as you're ever likely to see, off down the road backwards!"

A relieved Pearson admitted: "That was real pressure. We knew Euan had a problem and I had two near-spins before that big one!"

"We spun backwards into a ditch in SS8," said Thorburn, "and we noticed a noise from the diff in that one, so decided not to do the final stage – and save it for the Pirelli Rally next week."

Pearson held on to score his first outright victory by just eight seconds from Armstrong, with Faulkner holding off MacCrone for third place.

"That was as fast as she will go," said Faulkner. "We were on the door handles."

For his part, MacCrone's grin said it all: "We're getting our pace back and the confidence is returning. If it hadn't been for that driveshaft!"

He ended 47s back from Pearson, with the loss of time for the driveshaft 50s. He certainly would have been in the battle for the victory in the MSL-run Fiesta.

McCombie recovered from his tyre disaster to claim fifth ahead of Dale Robertson, but the day belonged to Pearson and Mitchell.

Pearson's victory has now given him a seven-point lead over Armstrong in the ARR Craib Scottish Championship after three rounds, but there's still a long way to go.

As ever, Garry's dad, Monty, was at the rally finish, and he was even seen to smile! ■



Beattie thrilled in Peugeot 205

RESULTS

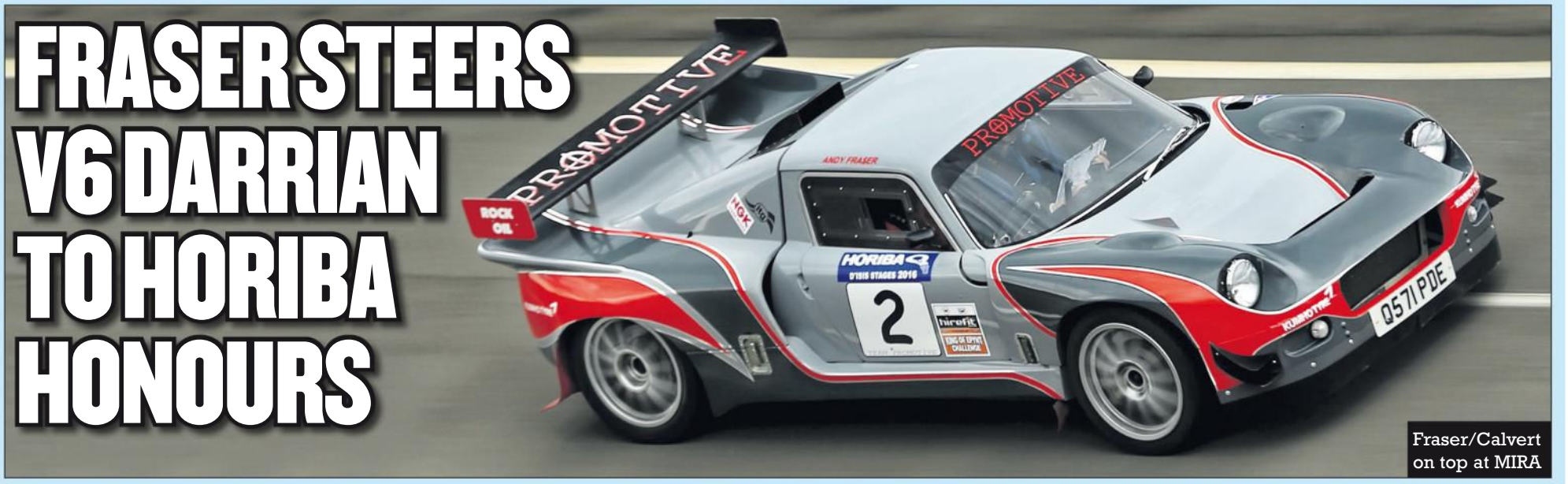
McDonald & Munro Speyside Stages Rally
ARR Craib MSA Scottish Rally Championship, round 3/7, April 23

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Garry Pearson/Robbie Mitchell	Ford Fiesta R5	42m32s
2	Jock Armstrong/Paula Swinscoe	Subaru Impreza	+8s
3	Mike Faulkner/Peter Foy	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+41s
4	John MacCrone/Rhianon Gelsomino	Ford Fiesta R5	+47s
5	Bruce McCombie/Michael Coutts	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+1m36s
6	Dale Robertson/Stuart Loudon	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+1m59s
7	Mark McCulloch/Michael Hendry	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+2m04s
8	Andrew Gallacher/Jane Nicol	Mitsubishi Lancer E8	+2m23s
9	Freddie Milne/Charley Sayer-Payne	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+2m43s
10	Barry Groundwater/Sean Donnelly	Mitsubishi Lancer E10	+3m05s

11 Donnie MacDonald/Andrew Falconer (Lancer E9); 12 Shaun Sinclair/Kirsty Riddick (Impreza); 13 Fraser Wilson/Craig Wallace (Lancer E9); 14 Alasdair S Graham/Laura Stuart (Lancer Evo); 15 Scott Mutch/Greg McDonald (Impreza); 16 Ross MacDonald/Matthew Johnstone (Lancer E8); 17 Iain Wilson/Keith Riddick (Impreza N12); 18 John Wink/John Forrest (Lancer E9); 19 Keith Morris/Martin Forrest (Lancer E6); 20 Quintin Milne/Paul Hughes (Ford Escort Mk2).
Class winners Scott Sloan/David Sloan (Vauxhall Corsa); Robbie Beattie/David Findlay (Peugeot 205 GTi); Thomas Gray/Dave Robson (Fiesta R2); John McIlwraith/Scott Young (Ford Escort RS); Ian Milne/Sandy Milne (Escort Mk2); Ian Forgan/Kathryn Forgan (Ford Ka); Milne/Hughes; Scott Kerr/Stephen Clark (Escort Mk2); Wilson/Wallace; Faulkner/Foy; Armstrong/Swinscoe; Pearson/Mitchell.

Photo: Kevin Money

FRASER STEERS V6 DARRIAN TO HORIBA HONOURS



Fraser/Calvert on top at MIRA

Horiba D'Isis Stages

By Peter Scherer

Organiser: Quinton Motor Club **When:** April 23 **Where:** MIRA, Leicestershire **Championships:** AWMMC Heart of England; ANWCC; AEMC/ASEMC; EMAMC **Stages:** 8 **Starters:** 75

Andy Fraser repeated his 2014 victory by bringing his Darrian T9 V6 home well clear of Tommy Morris and Colin Harkness' Metro 6R4 to win the Horiba D'Isis Stages at MIRA. Fraser had led from the second stage and gave co-driver Michael Calvert his first rally win.

Gary and Gordon Adam's Ford Escort had a three-second lead on the opening stage, as Fraser shared second with Ian and Stephen Woodhouse's Escort, despite having overfilled the Darrian with oil and breaking an exhaust spring.

Morris also had trouble on the opener when he broke a driveshaft and had a rear puncture, but was still fourth best, 10s down on third, but 10s up on Martin Hodgson/Tony Jones' Ford Escort.

Both Fraser and Woodhouse outpaced Adam on stage two and demoted him to third, but Fraser had broken a damper, which he was only able to repair with the help of rival drivers.

While Fraser continued to consolidate his lead over the next two stages, Woodhouse went out on stage four with a bent axle having just made it into second. Adam retook the place, with Morris into third, even though he had to change the diff after a "rumble" on stage four.

Fraser continued to increase his advantage and by the end of stage five was 33 seconds up on Adam, and Adam had increased his cushion over Morris too. Hodgson was next to join the retirements with a maximum on the sixth stage, vacating fourth with electrical problems.

Further dramas soon followed. Adam explained: "I was one mile from the end of the last stage and the diff broke. I was going through a twisty bit and then put the power on and it went."

The final stage wasn't without drama for Fraser either. "I had eased off and was short shifting, then hit a barrier as I lost concentration," he said.

He survived to take victory with Morris a clear second, but a storming drive from Chris Woodhouse/Rachel Inns gave their Darrian T90 a late third.

"We had done a lot of work on the car since we won at Down Ampney, including a new fuel system," he added.

John Marshall/Scott Crawford's Subaru Impreza was fourth.

More than half of the top 10 were battling for the Class C spoils. Alistair Hutchinson/St John Dykes' Renault Clio led initially, before Chris Woodhouse's Darrian took charge. Having ended stage three tied with Hutchinson, Mike English/Andy Robinson's Escort went on to secure second in class from stage four, with Hutchinson just keeping Julian Jones/Mikey Herritts' Escort at bay for third.

Jonathan Hudson/Adi Collins' Suzuki Swift topped Class A after Andrew Egger/Val Thompson and Ian and Sarah Hambleton retired their Vauxhall Nova and Peugeot 106 after three stages with gearbox and engine maladies respectively. James Watts/Aston Cox were second in their VW Polo. Adrian Mayall/Robert Hayden's Alfa Romeo 33 snatched third on the last stage from Trevor Jones/Steven Bulloss's Rover Metro GTi.

In Class B, Howard Potter/Martin Haggett's Talbot Sunbeam led, taking the spoils by over a minute from Ben and Andrew Wilkinson's Peugeot 106.

Results

1 Andy Fraser/Michael Calvert (Darrian T9 V6) 59m04s; 2 Tommy Morris/Colin Harkness (MG Metro 6R4) +1m49s; 3 Chris Woodhouse/Rachel Inns (Darrian T90); 4 John Marshall/Scott Crawford (Subaru Impreza); 5 Mike English/Andy Robinson (Ford Escort Mk2); 6 Alistair Hutchinson/St John Dykes (Renault Clio); 7 Julian Jones/Mikey Herritts (Ford Escort Mk2); 8 Rob Hughes/Sion Cunniff (Ford Focus Millington); 9 Peter Barlow/Mark Dillon (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 Howard Potter/Martin Haggett (Talbot Sunbeam). **Class winners** Jonathan Hudson/Adi Collins (Suzuki Swift GTi); Potter/Haggett; Woodhouse/Inns.

Late switch to WRC gives Josh Moffett success

Monaghan Stages

By Brian Patterson

Organiser: Monaghan Motor Club **When:** April 23 **Where:** Monaghan **Championships:** Sligo Pallets Border Rally Championship **Stages:** 9 **Stages:** 122

After a switch to a WRC Ford Fiesta from his usual R5, Josh Moffett won his home Monaghan Stages Rally ahead of brother Sam and former winner Niall Maguire.

The top three remained the same throughout the rally's nine stages, with Sam having James Fulton on the notes for the second time this year. Although at a disadvantage with the car, Sam was only 40s back from his brother at the finish.

Maguire – with Enda Sherry on the notes – had won the event on multiple occasions in the past. Even so, he was no match for the more modern Fiestas in his S12B Impreza. His best finish this year remains second on the Birr Stages Rally.

There was a huge battle behind the top three, mostly among the Ford Escort Mk2 men, and it was Jonathan Pringle in his example who was the pacesetter. Pringle was fourth on SS1 but lost a few seconds in SS2. He briefly dropped to eighth but quickly battled back to fifth behind Stephen Wright in his Fiesta R5 by stage three. Pringle retook fourth by stage four and held that to the end, with Wright fifth. Gary McPhillips was slightly cautious at the start but set some quick times as the day progressed to finish sixth.

Results

1 Josh Moffett/Jason McKenna (Ford Fiesta WRC) 56m06.0s; 2 Sam Moffett/James Fulton (Fiesta R5) +40s; 3 Niall Maguire/Enda Sherry (Subaru Impreza WRC S12B); 4 Jonathan Pringle/Alan Keena (Ford Escort Mk2); 5 Stephen Wright/Fintan Sherry (Fiesta R5); 6 Gary McPhillips/Paul Sheridan (Escort Mk2); 7 Ryan Loughran/Leon Jordan (Escort Mk2); 8 Vivian Hamill/Andrew Grennan (Escort Mk2); 9 Adrian Hetherington/Ronan O'Neill (Escort Mk2); 10 Damien Toner/Denver Rafferty (Escort Mk2). **Class winners** Ruari McCaffrey/Seamus McTigue (Honda Civic); Shane Forde/Darragh Mullen (Citroen C2R2); Roger Kennedy/Wendy Blackledge (Peugeot 306); Shane Maguire/Mac Kierans (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); S Moffett/Fulton; J Moffett/McKenna; Gene McDonald/Kevin Reilly (Escort Mk2); John Kelly/Niall Kelly (Toyota Corolla); Adrian Sweeney/Shane Buckley (Peugeot 207); Seamus Connolly/Gary McCrudden (Toyota Corolla); Alan Atcheson/Thomas Wedlock (Escort); Damien Tourish/Domhnall McAlaney (Escort); Pringle/Keena; Martin Tynan/Declan Tynan (Mitsubishi Lancer); Darren O'Brien/Damian Fleming (Honda Civic); Malcolm Pedlow/Ivor Ferguson (BMW 2002tii); Michael Carbin/Darragh Kelly (Mitsubishi Lancer E4).

Photo: Russ Otway



Paul Griffiths made an impressive asphalt rallying debut to be the first British driver home on the Rallye Salamandre in Belgium last Sunday. Griffiths and Iwan Jones (Ford Escort Mk2) finished fourth overall in very slippery conditions to beat Tim Pearcey/Louis Louka (above) by half a minute in the second round of the Fuchs R.A.C. Historic Asphalt Championship.

McGonigle pushes to the end for victory

Lark in the Park Stages Rally

By William Neill

Organiser: Maiden City Motor Club **When:** April 23 **Where:** Carndonagh, County Donegal **Starters:** 40 **Stages:** 6

Despite the bumpy nature of the 8.1-mile Drung Hill, Joe McGonigle and Ciaran Geaney beat the bogey time on each pass in their Skoda Fabia S2000 and won the Lark in the Park Rally by 16s.

The number one seeded crew went 4s faster than the bogey and went quicker again on the repeat. But the awarded time placed McGonigle just 2s ahead of Frank Wray's Subaru Impreza, which later suffered frontal damage – and a retirement – after an incident on the 0.6-mile St Columb's Park-based stage.

McGonigle was fastest there too, touching a course marker on the way. Adrian Hetherington was three seconds slower on the short test but, across the Irish border, he proved to be fast. The Ford Escort Mk2 stopped the clock 12s quicker than the bogey and 6s up on McGonigle's SS4 performance. The gap would have been different if recorded times were received but McGonigle's win would be undeniable.

A return to the park for two passes of a two-lap, 1.1-mile stage is where McGonigle doubled his lead from Hetherington and Ronan O'Neill to 16s.

John Bonner and Leon Jordan received a 10s penalty for a late arrival on the way to third, ahead of fellow Donegal and Ford Escort Mk2 crew Brendan McDaid and Karl Reid by 9s. Group N winners Gary Cairns and Justin Coyle were one second back in their Lancer.

Results

1 Joe McGonigle/Ciaran Geaney (Skoda Fabia S2000) 23m26s; 2 Adrian Hetherington/Ronan O'Neill (Ford Escort Mk2) +16s; 3 John Bonner/Leon Jordan (Ford Escort Mk2); 4 Brendan McDaid/Karl Reid (Ford Escort Mk2); 5 Gary Cairns/Justin Coyle (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 6 Lee McLaughlin/Aaron McLaughlin (Mitsubishi Lancer E5); 7 Alan Smyth/Mac Kierans (Suzuki Swift); 8 Declan McGrory/Paddy McCrudden (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 9 John Bradley/Ryan Crozier (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 Jonny Morrow/Denver Rafferty (Talbot Sunbeam). **Class winners** Robert Reilly/Eamon Conway (Honda Civic); Cairns/Coyle; Stephen Gallinagh/Sean Doherty (Opel Corsa) Eamon McLaughlin/Shane McLaughlin (Ford Escort Mk2); Smyth/Kierans; James Wylie/Connor O'Loan (Ford Escort Mk2); Bonner/Jordan; Hetherington/O'Neill; McGrory/McCrudden; McGonigle/Geaney.

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COMPETING AT ANGLESEY

Photos: SMJ Media

MUCH HARDER THAN IT LOOKS

Co-driving on a single venue is rather complicated. By Jack Benyon



Field/Benyon took overall event win

Our man struggled to cope with so many tasks

"It's just book reading while simultaneously hitching a lift," was the description from one person, who will remain anonymous for their own safety.

In March, I embarked upon my first rally as a co-driver. Scratch that, my first rally. The Lee Holland Memorial Rally at Anglesey Circuit.

It seemed easy on the face of things. On a single-venue circuit rally, the track is laid out in loops, which requires splits to access the next loop (*see sidebar*). So the most important job for the navigator is to remember which way to turn at said splits and direct the driver around the track. It's not like a stage rally with a recce and 20 pages of notes. Just split and corner guidance.

That seems easy, yes?

It turns out, absolutely not.

First off, all you're given is a map of the track. No pacenotes, no reconnaissance run. You can walk the track the day before the rally, but that's it. And remember, the rally doesn't just follow the circuit. It uses access roads and reverse loops, so there's very little prior research that can help you prepare.

MSA Academy co-driver Phil Hall explains: "Because you aren't using pacenotes – you're just using maps – it gives you a really good opportunity to develop communication between a driver and co-driver. You're having to describe a stage from a map you haven't seen on a stage you probably haven't seen before, so it's a representation of the route. You have to run with it and it really helps you develop your ability to describe things on the fly."

To make things that little bit harder, I hadn't chosen a one-litre Nissan Micra for my debut. It was a 2.5-litre lightweight rocket ship; to give it its proper name, the Darrian T90+. It regularly beats World Rally cars like the Ford Focus WRC in the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship.

Luckily, capable hands were behind the wheel. Experienced Darrian campaigner Ashley Field was there to put the car in the right place at the right time. He'd competed in the Peugeot 205 Cup that shot Richard Burns to glory and produced some of the best young rally drivers of the 1990s. Field won events and has done since, a very handy driver leading the points ahead of Anglesey.

However, luck had conspired against Field and he hadn't yet won a round of the series overall. One of the failures was due to a co-driver sending him the wrong way at a split. Which did nothing to calm my nerves…

The Darrian accelerates as quickly as an F3 car according to one person involved with the Medi Cell Rally Team, but it feels quicker than the Saturn 5 rocket. It was so quick in fact that the pages of notes on my clipboard flew up under acceleration from the start, but luckily they stayed attached as the rear-wheel-drive car shot up the Anglesey pitlane.

Before the event, certain drivers and co-drivers (who will also remain nameless) took bets on when I'd be sick. I've sat in a Group B Ford RS200, Metro 6R4s and a Ford Fiesta WRC so I was confident in being OK. But after the first stage I understood why Chris Ingram (Opel works driver) and Michael Gilbey (M-Sport mechanic and co-driver) had taken bets. Sorry lads.

Looking down at the diagram and back up at the circuit was nauseating and another hindrance to block concentration. Luckily I wasn't ill, so happily their cruel bet failed.

The main issue in reading the map came with the fact that it was just a diagram and therefore wasn't following the direction of travel. It's just a drawing on a page, and it was rather too easy to lose your place when glancing up.

In essence, a lot of the tasks as a co-driver are simple. In the same way that a long-jumper's individual steps are easy. Run-jump-extend-land. Easy right? Not when you're doing it all at once. That's where the trickiness lies.

As well as the notes there's the obvious stopwatch and recording times, but the timecards can also throw up a curve ball. Especially when they fall off your clipboard and go under the seat. That was interesting. The marshal who saw a 6ft 2 inches broad-shouldered lump running towards them instead of a car – which is the usual approach to a time control – must have been amused. Hopefully that gave something back to them for their valuable voluntary service.

The time card ensures that you reach the stages on time and is filled in by both the co-driver and the marshals. One item on the card that was confusing was the end time, to the control after the stage had ended. The regulations provide three minutes of road section, but that obviously isn't needed in the 200 yards between stage-end and control. Therefore the time given at the end of the stage must have the three minutes added to your stage finish time to hand to the marshal at the control. Easy enough, but when the adrenaline is pumping after a five and a half minute stage in a car like the Darrian, forgetting something as simple as that is easily done, especially when there's a small calculation in dropping seconds from the time.

So all in all, it was a successful debut. The Techron- and Goodridge-backed T90 didn't skip a beat all day and any rain that could have taken away the mid-engined car's advantage stayed away.

I didn't particularly enjoy the day: the pressure to make sure the car was where it was supposed to be was crippling.

But the feeling as the results went final and Irish rally legend Dessie McCartney applauded us receiving trophies, that's the moment that makes it all worthwhile.

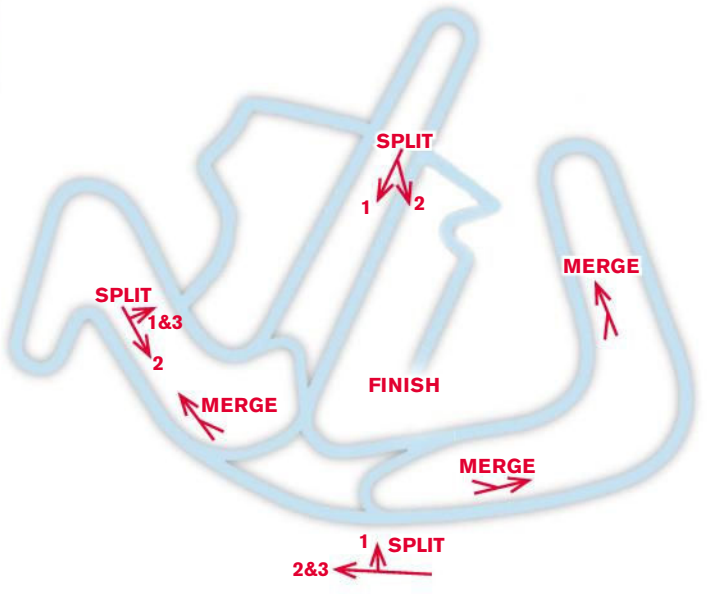
Co-drivers, I salute you for your tough job. I can only imagine that the stakes and ability needed is multiplied for stage rallies and that's a job I won't be accepting anytime soon. ■

STAGES 3 AND 4

Below is the map co-drivers receive at signing on for the Lee Holland Memorial Rally. The splits are labelled one, two and three referencing the lap number that direction should be taken. The tricky part is remembering how many times you have passed it. SS3 and SS4 poses an almost unique challenge compared to most other single-venue events as splits usually go left-left-right or right-right-left.The split to the furthest left of the map goes left-right-left, increasing the time between the splits and likelihood of forgetting the next direction. Co-drivers usually use a box system, where you put an 'x' in the box each time you pass a split.

The merges are another single-venue delicacy, where cars can be coming from the inside or outside of the track as you pass. Therefore, a co-driver also must make sure the road is clear as cars merge on the track.

● Thank you to Garstang and Preston and Pendle and District Motor Clubs for their help and to Alan Shaw for the original maps.



Championship success story

Despite being spawned from a meeting at Beaconsfield Services, the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship has been an astronomical hit with crews this year.

Before 2015 there wasn't a dedicated championship for circuit rallying on a large scale. But as is the issue with all new championships, did that mean one was needed? Was it filling a gap in the market that wasn't actually there?

An astounding entry at the opening round was filled with WR Cars and a very special R5 entry of Neil Simpson's Skoda Fabia R5, but the brilliant Neil Howard Stages event always attracts a strong and top-heavy entry. The real test for the championship came at Anglesey, which ran with just over 30 entries in 2014. This year it maxed out the entry, in part thanks to the MN Circuit crews.

Plans are afoot next year to improve the series, which has been such a hit that the organising crew have struggled to keep up at points. But with a strong TV package and with backing from the hands-on Michelin, the series has delivered more than anyone could have hoped in year one. Let's hope that '16/17 brings even more winter rallying fun.

HISTORICS

'Thornton will race Japanese GP winner'
Monaco Historic entry, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence, Steve Jones and LAT

DOWN THE PUB WITH

GEORGE TIZZARD

Age: 33
Lives: Boscombe, Dorset
Racing newcomer

His career is in music
"I'm a record producer and song writer and I'm lucky that it is a passion as well as a career. I'm all over the world with it, but we have a studio in Highcliffe. I describe it as shameless pop music and stuff that you might hear on *X Factor*. It' a good way of life and means I can do my hobbies."

He followed his dad into racing
"About five or six years ago my father Stuart felt sorry for me because I'd just split up with my girlfriend and was feeling a bit sad. He offered me a drive in the Lenham sports-racer to cheer me up. Unfortunately for him I said yes. I'd done a little bit of karting but I jumped straight into the Lenham in the HSCC Guards Trophy."

Racing has been limited
"I've probably done about 10 or 15 races in three seasons and I'm going to try and do more this year. We did well last year and finished with a win at Silverstone, so I really got the bug then. I've only raced the Lenham so far and it's a lovely car. I don't know if I've got any ability but the car is beautiful and John Percy does such a good job of preparing it. He's our secret weapon. I just drive it as fast as I can."

Family is important
"It's a good bit of father-and-son bonding. It's what the dads have to do to spend time with their sons! Mum hates it and very rarely comes to race meetings because she thinks it is far too dangerous. I've got a sister but she's one of the worst drivers in the world, so I don't think dad will ever let her have a go. She's crashed more cars than I've owned."

Racing is just for fun
"I'd love to do more racing but I'm too fat and too old to make a career out of it, so I'll stick with this. We're going to try and do all the Guards Trophy races this year and try and do well in the championship. I live on the beach and do things like boating and wakeboarding as well as skiing. Water or mountains or race tracks; they're the only places to be, really!"



Tizzard: Guards racer



EAGLING BRINGS F3 ENSIGN BACK TO RACING

Former Clubmans ace competes in F3 Ensign after restoration

By Paul Lawrence

Experienced racer Glenn Eagling has restored the ex-Mo Harness Ensign LNF3 for this year's Classic Formula 3 Championship.

Eagling started racing in FF1600 but enjoyed much of his success in Clubmans. He tested the 1600cc Ensign at the end of 1973 but never got to race it. He finally bought it last year and has spent six months restoring it to immaculate condition.

The 1973 car is chassis 17 and was raced by Harness in the British F3 Championship for owner Teddy Savory under the Modus Team Ensign banner. However, mid-season Harness switched to a March 733 and the Ensign was sold for sprints and hillclimbs and did not race again until Eagling debuted it at Castle Combe earlier this month, finishing 14th overall and first in class.

"The chassis was in good condition but I stripped and rebuilt it and even made new wishbones," said Norfolk-based Eagling. "I started the work in September and worked on it all through the winter. This is my baby and I wanted to do it properly. I can't stop looking at the car; it's fantastic!"

Back in 1973, Eagling was invited to test the Ensign as a promising 18-year-old Formula Ford racer. "Teddy Savory, who was local to us, asked me if I'd like to test the car and I tested on the old Snetterton at the end of the season," added Eagling. "I'd never driven with slicks and wings before. Then I did the Thruxton race at the end of the season in the team's March. That was my one and only F3 race in period."



Goodyear at Combe

Hillclimb competitor Goodyear switches to racing with Lotus 59

After 25 years competing on the hills, Mark Goodyear has switched to racing with the ex-Anthony Ross Lotus 59.

Goodyear lives only two miles from Shelsley Walsh in Worcestershire. He competed in Clubmans cars and single-seaters in hillclimbs, sharing the cars with his wife Annie.

Goodyear decided to finally try his hand at racing and has joined the Classic Racing Car grid in the 1600cc twin-cam powered Lotus.

"It is just a total change of scene and a massive learning curve," said Goodyear. "Every track is new to me and it is a stunning car."

After a couple of outings late last season, he is now planning a fuller programme this year.

OBITUARY

Picko Troberg 1938-2016

Picko Troberg, one of the biggest names in Swedish motor racing, died last week at the age of 78 after suffering with cancer.

Troberg was a successful racer in the 1960s and competed extensively at home and across Europe with a Formula Junior Lola Mk5A.

He switched to running F3 and touring car teams and managed the career of 1998 British Touring Car champion Rickard Rydell. He later raced a Ford Falcon in historics and was the driving force behind recent historic festivals at Knutstorp, Karlskoga and Anderstorp.

UK commentator Ian Titchmarsh, a friend for 50 years, said: "He was a larger than life and very entertaining character who for many years could truly be regarded as Mr Motor Racing in Sweden."



Stokes pressing on

New award to celebrate rally man Stokes

The rallying career and character of David Stokes will be remembered with a new end-of-season award within the MSA British Historic Rally Championship.

The award will celebrate the life of the four-time BHRC champion who died in February.

The Castrol-supported annual award will be presented to the individual who displays 'spirit and enthusiasm for the BHRC in the style of David Stokes'. The winner could be a driver, a co-driver, a mechanic, an official or a marshal.

The award will be judged at the end of the season by David's co-driver Guy Weaver, David's younger brother Andrew, Donald Smith from Castrol and BHRC manager Colin Heppenstall.

Weaver said: "This award is designed to encapsulate David's philosophy of inclusion for everyone in historic rallying. He would offer help and advice to anyone, no matter where they were in the field."

Classic parade for HSCC 50th

The 50th anniversary of the Historic Sports Car Club will be marked at the Silverstone Classic (July 29-31) with a parade.

On the Sunday of the event, the 50-car parade will show the breadth of the club's racing with at least three cars representing each of 16 championships and series.

The 50-car parade will include cars from five decades and cover everything from a Formula 5000 Lola to a Lotus Elan.

"It seemed appropriate to mark 50 years of the HSCC with 50 cars in a parade at the world's biggest classic and historic racing festival," said the HSCC's Grahame White.

IN BRIEF

GP victor to Monaco

Former FIA Historic Formula 1 champion Greg Thornton will race a famous Lotus for the first time during the Monaco Historic Grand Prix next month. Thornton has been invited to race the Lotus 77 of Classic Team Lotus, the car driven to victory in Japan in 1976 by Mario Andretti. "To race that car at Monaco will be very special," said Thornton.

Fun Cup to historics

Former Fun Cup racer Mark Burton has followed his friend Graham Pattle into historic racing. Burton has the ex-Neil Brown/Richard Dutton Ford Mustang and tested it for the first time at Donington Park last week. He will race the car for the first time in HRDC BTCC celebration race at the Donington Historic Festival on May 2.

Dixies Challenge

More than 40 historic cars, including 17 Minis, will contest Sunday's Dixies Challenge over the western section of the Epynt ranges. Heading the field are the Ford Escort Mk2s of local aces Mark Solloway and Eian Pritchard, while Kevin Jones fields his Ferrari 308 GTB. Irishman Stanley Orr plans to run his Ford Escort Mk1 after competing on the Pirelli Carlisle Rally the previous day.

Justin Foley

MN is sad to report the death of former Clubmans racer Justin Foley, son of 'Catchpole' cartoonist Barry. Justin, 42, was quick when he followed his father into Clubmans in the late 1990s and set some lap records that still stand. He collapsed and died after flying from his home in Thailand to the UK for a friend's wedding.

Elan switch

Historic single-seater racer and engine builder James Claridge has switched to a Lotus Elan for this year's Guards Trophy. The Elan was formerly a road car, now converted to race trim. Meanwhile, his father Ian has returned to racing in a Ford Anglia in Historic Touring Cars after doing very little racing over the past decade.

Big Equipe entry

Equipe GTS series for pre-1966 sportscars running to FIA Appendix K will have a full grid of 34 cars plus four reserves for the MG Car Club meeting at Brands Hatch this weekend. The entry includes 17 MGBs and nine Triumph TR4s.

McCarthy Mallock

Renowned MGB ace Spencer McCarthy has returned to Classic Clubmans this season in his 1979 Mallock Mk20B. After sitting out the 2015 Clubmans season, the car was damaged in road accident at the end of last year when on the trailer en route to a rolling road session. It has been rebuilt over the winter by Andy Harrison.



McCarthy Mallock returns

YOU WERE THERE: READERS PICTURES PAGE 34

'Crispian Besley will race at Monaco'

Formula Junior racer, below



Evans builds a Ford for Silver Fern bid

Ford Escort rally driver and builder Meirion Evans will concentrate his season's rallying into one event when he tackles the Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand at the end of the year.

The Welshman currently has a new Escort Mk2 in build for the week-long gravel rally and says that he will not have time for any other rallies this season due to a business expansion.

The car he used on last year's British Historic Rally Championship was sold to New Zealand over the winter and is now competing in the local historic championship.

"There will be time to go and do the Silver Fern the end of the season," said Evans. "I've only been there on holiday before. It is a year's rallying in a week and I intend to finish."

He will complete shakedown testing of the new car before it is shipped to New Zealand.



Ben Mellors: Belgian outing

Mellors to run in more asphalt rallies

Ben Mellors says he will do more asphalt rallying after taking his Toyota Celica RA40 to Rallye Salamandre in Belgium last Sunday.

Mellors had never competed on asphalt before but coped with incredibly slippery conditions to finish in 11th place.

"It was a steep learning curve and I'd never made pace notes before. We had quite a few spins and flattened a road sign, but it was a great experience," he said.

"We went with a set of slick tyres and it snowed! But I think I'm converted to asphalt rallying."

Although he has no immediate plans for his next rally, he says it is likely to be another asphalt event.



Mallock won in the U2 at Castle Combe recently

MALLOCK SET FOR MONACO DEBUT

RML head to race one of his father's U2 machines

By Paul Lawrence

Ray Mallock will race at Monaco for the first time next month at the wheel of the U2 Mk2 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 raced in a one-litre F3 Mallock in 1964. It was one of the first major international races for the new F3 category.

Mallock will race in the front-engined Formula Junior race in the 1960 car raced 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. I was there as a 13-year-old in short trousers."

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

"I've always wanted to race at Monaco so this is ticking a box," said the younger Mallock brother, who is likely to be one of the frontrunners in the 48-car Formula Junior entry.

Back in 1964, Arthur Mallock raced at Monaco after travelling overnight from Monza where Harwood had raced the car on a Friday. They used a streetlight to change the diff on the pavement and in the race Mallock senior spun up the steps of the Hotel de Paris when a trailing arm bolt broke.

Despite the non-finish, Mallock earned enough start money to fund a short family holiday.

Perkins snaps up Tojeiro Bristol racer

A rare 1952 Tojeiro Bristol will race this season in the hands of new owner Neil Perkins.

One of only three such cars believed to have been built, the Tojeiro was driven by Cliff Davis but is not thought to have raced since the 1950s. "It was built as a racer, but it was later used on the road," said Perkins, who has had it restored.

Perkins' car is a sister car to the well-known 'LOY 500' and a third car is in Italy where it has run in the Mille Miglia.



Perkins: trouble at Silverstone

After selling his RGS Atalanta, Perkins now plans to race the Tojeiro but was denied a start at Silverstone last Saturday after transmission issues in qualifying.

Tyzack unveils rare Kellison sportscar

Former BMW racer Richard Tyzack has acquired a rare Kellison J4R sports-racing car and gave it a debut run at Silverstone last Saturday.

The US built car dates from the mid-1950s and was the work of former fighter pilot Jim Kellison, using Corvette parts including a 4.6-litre Chevrolet engine.

It was more recently rebuilt and raced by Albert Otten, including at Goodwood, and is thought to be one of only seven such models built. Only one other is likely to still exist.



Tyzack's rare Kellison motor

"It's a mid-life crisis," said Tyzack of the car, which he will share in the GT and Sports Car Cup with Nick Taylor.



PHOTO: XXXXXXX

A race dedicated to Frazer Nash delivered a remarkable 39-car field at Silverstone last Saturday. The 19-strong post-war contingent is thought to be the biggest ever race entry from the company that ceased production in 1957 to become the UK importer of Porsches.



Iriarte and Henriksen both drove 'Rocketford' at Silverstone

Rocketford makes a European race debut

A group of Argentinean enthusiasts have shipped a 1929 Ford V8-based special to the UK to race with the Vintage Sports-Car Club this season.

Nicknamed the Rocketford, the special is based on a Ford Model A chassis. It was raced at Silverstone by Torcuato Iriarte and Christian Henriksen. "The car only arrived on Tuesday," said Iriarte, who was eighth in the GP Itala and Lanchester Trophy race. "It's the first time the car has run in Europe."

They now plan to leave the car in the UK and return later in the season for more VSCC races. It ran as a single-seater and a sportscar Silverstone. Henriksen was 12th in the Fox and Nicholl Trophy.

IN BRIEF

Woodhouses swap

Father and son Mark and Jack Woodhouse will race a different Formula Junior this season when they both have runs in the Brabham BT6 of John Truslove. Mark will also race his usual Elva 100 and Jack will field his Lotus 20 when his MSA Formula engineering commitments allow, while both of them will also race the Brabham, which last competed at Pau in France and has been unused for four years.

Jags ready to go

A 32-car field will kick the Jaguar Classic Challenge off in style at the Donington Historic Festival. The first of five races this season features 26 E-types including frontrunning cars for Martin Stretton, Joaquin Folch, Julian Thomas and Graeme Dodd. Ben Eastick's D-type and several saloons offer variety for the 40-minute race.

Nash-Healey runs

The unique Nash-Healey that finished third at the 1952 Le Mans 24 Hours raced in the United Kingdom for the first time since 1951 when Sam Stretton raced in the FISCAR Tom Cole Trophy. The car ran steadily in the capacity field and finished 29th overall in the 34-car pack. The Nash-Healey is owned by Jose Fernandez and is likely to race again this season.

Wilson's step up

Formula Junior racer Sam Wilson stepped up to the Lotus 18 Grand Prix car of John Chisholm for the HGPCA race at Silverstone last weekend. Although Wilson has raced Cooper Grand Prix cars and a Formula Junior version of the Lotus 18, this was his first time in the ex-Jim Clark/Innes Ireland car. Unfortunately, he was unable to start from pole position after problems in qualifying.

Touring stars ready

The opening round of the revamped Historic Touring Car Challenge has drawn a superb grid for Saturday's race at Donington Park. The series for pre-1991 touring cars has a capacity grid of 40 plus six reserves, with at least half a dozen current and former British Touring Car Championship racers including Matt Neal, who again shares the Chevrolet Camaro of David Clark.

Besley's new motor

Crispian Besley drove his third different Formula Junior in six days when he tested the OSCA of Peter Mullen at Silverstone last Friday. Besley, who raced his own Elva and Cooper at Castle Combe the previous weekend, had a run in the front-engined OSCA ahead of racing it at Monaco next month. Mullen will be busy at Monaco racing his 1964 BRM P261 Grand Prix car.

Thornton's woe

Frazer Nash racer Tom Thornton caused two red flags at Silverstone when his car lost different rear wheels in both qualifying and the race. Both incidents were at Brooklands and the second one caused the race to be stopped and not restarted after eight laps. The first wheel to come off halted the qualifying session after only a few laps.

SPORTING SCENE

Photos: fiaworldrallycross.com

WILKS GETS UK WORLD RX DEAL

Former British Rally champ lines up drive with OMSE


Wilks will tackle Lydden


Wilks raced in the WRX last season

By Hal Ridge

Two-time British Rally champion Guy Wilks is set to race at his home round of the FIA World Rallycross Championship at Lydden Hill next month, driving an OlsbergsMSE-run Ford Fiesta Supercar.

Wilks made his rallycross debut at the same event last season, driving a Mini RX for the JRM Racing team. He qualified for the final but picked up a puncture.

"I'm massively looking forward to getting back out there at Lydden," said Wilks. "To get another chance to show what I can do will be a great opportunity and racing on the track is where I want to be. Being a British driver in a British round with home support is always special. But, when it is World RX, for me right now it doesn't get any better. Obviously rallying is my background, so I'll have to brush up on my racecraft."

Wilks also raced at the French round of World RX in Loheac last season, but was ruled out by engine dramas.

OlsbergsMSE claimed the World RX teams' championship title in 2014, and has won events in both years of World RX so far. Andreas Bakkerud won the Lydden Hill event in 2014 driving an OMSE Fiesta, joined on the podium by one-off team-mate Andrew Jordan.

"I've known Andreas Eriksson [OMSE team owner] for a long time and we've kept in touch," said Wilks. "The Fiesta is one of the best-sorted packages. The team knows exactly what the car is capable of and how to extract the best out of it in all conditions. Hopefully I'll get a short test before Lydden but I'll have to rely on the team and Andreas to get the best set-up as quick as possible.

"I'll need to bring my A-game to Kent if I want to reach the top."

While the Lydden event is currently a one-off, Wilks hopes it will lead to more: "We just need to do the best job with what we have, and at the moment we have Lydden only. We'll see what comes after that but if we do a good job I think there is the chance of more."

SPORTING TRIAL

Beare returns to the top for the first time since '09

Event: Pennine Sporting Trial **Organiser:** Airedale and Pennine Motor Club **When:** April 24 **Starters:** 23.

Four months into his return to Sporting Trials, Stuart Beare won the Pennine in Derbyshire, with son Sam passengering.

Beare has only won one trial before, back in 2009, and became the eighth winner of the season.

Peter Fensom took the early lead, before Beare took over from lunch.

Reigning British champion Roland Uglow had a dreadful second round as a rain shower massively altered hills, but he showed his flair on the final eight hills to climb back to second overall. Andy Wilks was tied for the lead at lunch, but an afternoon mistake dropped him to fourth.

After a great first round, Bryan Walker slipped back to fifth place at the end. He just beat Boyd Webster, who won the intermediate class.

Jeff Armistead won the clubman class in seventh overall and top-live axle, ahead of identical twins Jerome and John Fack in identical cars.

The novice class was won by Pat Henson from Mike Salton.

Duncan Stephens

Results

1 Stuart Beare (Sherpa Indy) 71; 2 Roland Uglow (Crossle) 74; 3 Peter Fensom (Hamilton); 4 Andy Wilks (RCAP); 5 Bryan Walker (Jedi); 6 Boyd Webster (Crossle); 7 Jeff Armistead (Hutton); 8 Jerome Fack (MSR); 9 John Fack (MSR); 10 Andrew Woodhead (Jedi).



Photos: Eddie Walder, Colin Casserley and mkpics.net

BRITISH HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP

MORAN AND MENZIES STRIKE OPENING BLOWS



Multiple champion Scott Moran prevailed



Menzies took a win in the opener then fourth spot

British Hillclimb Championship: Prescott

By Eddie Walder

Organiser: Bugatti Owners Club **When:** April 23/24 **Starters:** 195

The season started at Prescott with a run-off victory for Wallace Menzies, so that after his double last September he had won three consecutive rounds at Prescott.

But it was not to be four as five-time champion Scott Moran came through in the final encounter for the win.

Following the round one victory, Menzies said: "This is now just about my favourite hill."

Moran said he was looking forward to an intense fight: "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 series by just a point from his 2015 co-driver Alex Summers and Menzies.

Despite the efforts of Summers in an unfamiliar and borrowed car, the driver of the day had to be Richard Spedding with only 1.6-litres of Hayabusa power.

Two fifth places were just reward for his maximum efforts and he was fighting a launch control set-up that needs more fine tuning.

Surprise of the day was last year's number one Alex Summers, who had a guest drive in Alastair Crawford's lovely Gould GR55 with a high-revving smaller capacity 2.8-litre NME V8.

The higher-revving unit is renowned for driveability and will pull several thousand more rpm than the more usual 3.5 Nicholson McLaren unit.

Joint Best Time of the Day with Scott Moran proved just how adaptable Summers is, but 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.

Unfortunately, Crawford could only score a solitary point.

The 2012 champion Trevor Willis was always on the pace and is fourth, with Spedding four points back and last year's number six Dave Uren continued where he left off in 2015.

More success in 1600cc cars came from Sean Gould and ex-*Motoring News* rally championship driver Eynon Price in the factory Gould.

The front half of the car will bear a resemblance to Wallace Menzies' new car, which is due in a couple of months, but the rear will have Menzies' previous Cosworth XD as a stressed member, as in the all-conquering Gould GR61X and Gould GR55s.

Devonian Ed Hollier took valuable points in his Empire and saw off Sean Gould and Price in the final stanza.

Unluckiest driver of the day was, without question, Will Hall. His engine stopped twice, once in the first run-off then again in the afternoon despite the car being fine in mid-week testing.

Results

Round one: 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) and Oli Tomlin (4.0 Pilbeam-Judd MP97) 39.82s; DNF Will Hall (2.0t Force-AER/XTec WH).

Round two: 1 Moran 36.61s; 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.

Points (after 2/34 rounds): 1 Moran 18; =2 Menzies and Summers 17; 4 Willis 16; 5 Spedding 12; 6 Uren 10; =7 Gould and Hollier 7; 9 Price 4; =10 Crawford and Tomlin 1.

BRISCA F1 REPORT

Green lands a Tarmac result

BriSCA F1: Buxton Raceway and Northampton Raceway

By Colin Casserley

Saturday, Northampton: Organiser: Incarace **When:** April 23 **Starters:** 23 **Sunday, Buxton Raceway: Organiser:** Buxton Raceway **When:** April 24 **Starters:** 34

Nigel Green scored his third BriSCA F1 final win last Saturday at Northampton – but his first one on Tarmac. Green, who was known for his prowess on Tarmac in his F2 days, picked up his two previous wins on the shale at Belle Vue and Coventry last season.

Murray Jones opened up a lead of a few car lengths early on. Further back, Mat Newson had forced his way through the pack.

Quickly, Jones' lead was negated when the yellows were shown when Mickey Randell rolled his car. On the restart, Green barged Newson wide and a lap later grabbed the lead from Jones, which he kept for the remainder of the race.

"I got held up in traffic at the start and lost a bit of ground, but my tyres started coming good towards the end of the race and I was able to get into a rhythm which allowed me to open a bit of a lead over Newson. We have been working on the set-up all season and tonight was the first time it felt real good," said Green.

Second placed Newson said afterwards: "It's good to get a podium place. I have been going well all season, but there are so many quick lower graders it is hard to catch them. I got a good start and passed Green early on, but when he nudged me wide I couldn't get back on him quick enough and he was gone."

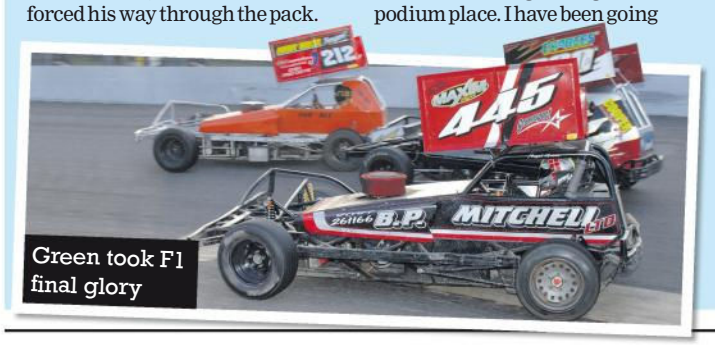
On Sunday at Buxton, Todd Jones led virtually from start to finish to record his first F1 final win in only his ninth meeting. Jones mastered the track, which had been left greasy from a rain shower shortly before. "I had some bad luck last night at Northampton, but this makes up for it," he said. "That's racing, a lot of highs and lows. I was lucky to be starting near the front and was able to keep it steady and stay out in front."

Green and Newson rounded out the podium places.

Result

Northampton International Raceway: 1 Nigel Green; 2 Mat Newson; 3 Frankie Wainman Jr; 4 Lee Fairhurst; 5 Tom Harris; 6 Danny Wainman; 7 Ryan Harrison; 8 Luke Davidson; 9 Murray Jones; 10 Frankie Wainman Jr Jr.

Buxton Raceway: 1 Todd Jones; 2 Nigel Green; 3 Mat Newson; 4 Daniel van Spijker; 5 Frankie Wainman Jr; 6 Murray Jones; 7 Lee Fairhurst; 8 Bradley Harrison; 9 Roger Bromiley; 10 Joff Gibson.



Green took F1 final glory

NATIONAL HOT RODS

McDonald seizes his opportunity

Northampton Raceway

By Graham Brown

Organiser: Incarace
When: April 23 **Starters:** 26

Rob McDonald took the win from a tightly fought final, with double heat winner Chris Lehec, Jack Blood and Carl Waller-Barrett all helping to make life difficult for the eventual winner.

Russ Wilcox was the first to show in heat one, tracked by Alistair Lowe, Ivan Grayson and Layton Milsom. When the latter pair tangled, it elevated Lehec to third. When Wilcox suddenly fell by the wayside, it was Lowe who took over at the front, but his lead turned out to be short-lived as Lehec and Danny Hunn went by.

As Lehec pulled clear, Hunn came under pressure from Blood, who went past and began closing on the leader, but he ran out of laps.

Wilcox and Lowe battled over the early lead in heat two, with Wilcox finally putting himself in front, but with Lowe, Milsom and Lehec all keeping close company. Lowe was forced out with rear bodywork fouling his tyres, which left Milsom and Lehec to attack Wilcox's lead, Russ dropped to fourth as they raced by with Hunn in tow.

Now the lead dice began in earnest, with Milsom sticking rigidly to the inside line, Lehec trying up the outside and Hunn hoping to duck underneath the pair. Lehec's last-gasp lunge was just enough to net him the win by 0.001s.

The guys at the front of the grid charged turn one three-wide in the final. It was Lehec who emerged with the lead, with Dick Hillard, Blood and McDonald all close behind. As Lehec made a bit of ground, Hillard got forced backwards. Blood moved up to second and McDonald third.

Blood and McDonald reeled the leader in, with Blood looking up the outside of Lehec and McDonald tucked in tight and hoping to benefit. He eventually did, the merest touch between the other two allowing the Scot to dart under them going through turn one.

With McDonald and Blood now locking horns, Waller-Barrett rushed to join in too. When the leaders came together just as a gaggle of backmarkers appeared ahead of them, anything could have happened over the last five laps. But McDonald proved equal to the task.


McDonald took glory

Results

Heat one: 1 Chris Lehec (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Jack Blood (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Danny Hunn (Mazda RX-8); 4 Brett Walter (Peugeot 206cc); 5 Dick Hillard (Tigra); 6 Rob McDonald (Tigra); 7 Chris Haird (Tigra); 8 Mikey Godfrey (Tigra).

Heat two: 1 Lehec; 2 Layton Milsom (Tigra); 3 Hunn; 4 Russell Wilcox (Tigra); 5 Hillard; 6 Lee Pepper (Peugeot 206cc); 7 Godfrey; 8 Haird. **Final:** 1 McDonald; 2 Blood; 3 Carl Waller-Barrett (Tigra); 4 Lehec; 5 Walter; 6 Hillard; 7 Haird; 8 Billy Wood (Tigra); 9 Hunn; 10 Colin Smith (Tigra).

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

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MN SAYS...

Congratulations to Paddon

Hyundai star took his Argentinian chance with great aplomb



That dominant final Rally Argentina stage victory for Hayden Paddon did more than *just* secure the likeable Kiwi his first World Rally Championship success. It helped give it credibility.

While having the championship leader sweeping the road for two days (or the Sebastien Ogier Clause as we like to call it) might make rallies more unpredictable and entertaining, it's not exactly pure sport. It's unfashionable to say the best car-driver combination should win, but that doesn't make it any less true, particularly at the sport's highest levels.

Fortunately, Paddon's stunning final effort – when it looked as though Ogier was about to pull off another miracle win – showed real class and meant he beat Ogier fair and square. Or at least he did when it really mattered.

Paddon has become something of a favourite in the *MN* office, not least for his efforts in a Ford Escort Mk2 in his homeland (take a look on YouTube) and it's great to see him on the top step of the WRC podium. Now he'll be looking to take on Ogier and VW on a more regular basis in 2017. Beating the Franco-German alliance to a world crown will prove much harder, but with Hayden now a winner and a revamped Citroen for Kris Meeke, there are some signs we could get a genuine battle for honours.

Kevin Turner, Editor (Twitter: @KRT917)

YOUR PICS

MN.LETTERS@HAYMARKET.COM

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

ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!



Action from the Ilkley Jubilee Historic Rally. Taken by Henry Kitching



Bryan Janes caught Senna Proctor's moment from Donington



Justin Ward went to Silverstone's WEC race



Jamie Pinchbeck's photo from Donington



Dave Mundy caught this drama from Silverstone



Mike Farmer's shot of this hillclimbing Scimitar



Harry Davies' picture at Silverstone



Flying Clios from Donington, by Cheryl Closs

LETTERS



Motorsport News, April 20

Nico's going to lose it

Whilst everyone appears to be saying it is now over – Nico Rosberg has, after all, won the first three races thus far – 2016 is different.

Analysis of the last 22 years of F1 has witnessed a ridiculous dose of luck to assist Michael Schumacher and Sebastian Vettel to count their number of titles. Without the lady of fortune shining on them it would be fair to say they would have more likely won four and two each.

So far it seems the Teutonic lady of fortune is showering the same blessings on her newest progeny. But this is different.

Like his compatriots, Rosberg does exhibit an element of natural ability. But he has also struck an amazing run of fortune – and this means it is also now stacked against him.

He does not have the depth of talent his team-mate has and it is only a matter of time before he is caught – and will, for him – once again be number two at the end of the season.

Paul Webster
Via email

Rally lessons

Jeff Ledger made some sobering observations when referring to the 2017 WRC rules (*MN*, April 13) about speeds, stage times and spectator safety concerns.

It's irrelevant to spectators that stage times have now superseded those of the 30-year old Group B cars because you cannot 'see' it from any vantage point within the stage. So why encourage cars to go faster? Which, as Mr Ledger points out, is what the 2017 WRC rules will do.

Speed doesn't equate to spectacle so let's ban the turbocharged engine. That will reduce power and speed.

Freeing up induction noise has an advantage. It liberates the different and intoxicating sounds of rally car engines because today's rally cars all sound the same and frankly, to me, they sound like demented wasps or Hoovers.

Next step – ban four-wheel-drive. Both turbos and four-wheel drive have been around long enough now. Sure, the cars will be less effective at putting their power down but that won't stop drivers trying. The whole spectacle of special stage rallying came through relatively inefficient cars and the drivers' skills in making those cars work regardless.

Sometimes in life you do have to look back to go forward, to tear up the rule book and go back to basics.

Jeremy Reseigh-Watts
Via email

GET MN ON THE GO WWW.MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK/DIGITAL-EDITION

TV GUIDE

With Formula 1 dominating your TV screens this weekend, there's still plenty on offer for other motorsport fans.

The recent **Circuit of Ireland Rally** proved a huge success, and a first chance to see the Irish Tarmac Championship section in a dedicated show is on your screens this week (Friday, 2135-2235hrs, Motors TV). Several of the championship's drivers finished in the top 10 overall.

Sticking with a rally with 'circuit' in the name, we head to Leicestershire for the latest round of the **Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship** at Cadwell Park (Friday, 2340-0040hrs, Motors TV). Erstwhile championship leader Ashley Field hit trouble and the series has only one round left.

Back on the circuits and there are plenty of highlights on from recent action. The **British Touring Car Championship** remains unpredictable, with a sixth different winner from six races at the second round of the year at Donington Park. Catch highlights on ITV4 (Wednesday, 2345-0100hrs).

Straying abroad, the latest round of the **IMSA SportsCar Championship** (Wednesday, 1720-1825hrs, Motors TV) occurred at Long Beach and usually produces thrilling action.

Finally, the **Blancpain Endurance Series** opened at Monza last weekend, with British teams and drivers in action at the historic Italian circuit (Wednesday, 1415-1620hrs Motors TV).



Things got a little too hot for some at Donington

LIVE F1

Russian GP
Sky Sports F1 HD coverage

- **Drivers' press conference:** Thursday 2015-2045hrs
- **FP1:** Friday 0745-1000hrs
- **FP2:** Friday 1145-1400hrs
- **Team principals' press conference:** Friday 1400-1430hrs
- **The F1 Show live:** Friday 1430-1500hrs
- **FP3:** Saturday 0945-1115hrs
- **Qualifying:** Saturday 1200-1445hrs
- **Race:** Sunday 0630-0930hrs
- **Highlights:** Sunday 1230-1530hrs



Russian GP
Channel 4 HD (highlights)

- **Qualifying:** Saturday 1730-1900hrs
- **Race:** Sunday 1800-2000hrs

LIVE TV



NASCAR Sprint Cup Series: Talladega

- **Race:** Sunday 1730-2200hrs

Premier Sports TV

LISTINGS

RACING
SATURDAY/ SUNDAY

Rockingham, Northants
British GT meeting
British GT, British F3, Ginetta GT5, VW Racing Cup, Ginetta Racing Drivers' Club, Super 7
Starts Saturday, racing from 1420hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0900hrs **Admission** £22
Web rockingham.co.uk
Contact 0870 1660438

Brands Hatch, Kent
MGCC meeting
Porsche Club, Quaife Saloons, Tin Tops, MG Trophy, MG Challenge, MG Metro Cup, Midgets and Sprites, BCV8, Iconic 50s, Thoroughbred Sportscars, Equipe GTS
Starts Saturday, racing from 1225hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1145hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs)
Admission adult £15, under 13 free **Web** msv.com
Contact 0843 453 9000

Silverstone, Northants
CSCC meeting
Special Saloons, Ford Puma, Tin Tops, Swinging Sixties, Future Classics, Magnificent 7s, Modern Classics, Classic K, New Millennium, Open Series
Starts Saturday, racing from 1310hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1315hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** £10
Web silverstone.co.uk
Contact 08704 588260

SATURDAY-MONDAY

Donington Park, Leics
Donington Historic Festival
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, 1000kms
Starts Saturday, racing from 1350hrs (qualifying from 0910hrs) Sunday, racing from 1105hrs (qualifying from 0910hrs) Monday, racing from 1300hrs (qualifying from 0910hrs)
Admission adult £28
Web Donington-park.co.uk
Contact 01332 810048

SUNDAY

Cadwell Park, Lincs
MSVR meeting
Monoposto, Trackday Trophy, Allcomers **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1120hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
Admission adult £15, under 13 free **Web** msv.com
Contact 0843 453 9000

Knockhill, Fife
SMRC meeting
Mini Cooper, Fiesta, FF1600, Classic Sports and Saloons, Legends, Sports and Saloons, BMW Compacts **Starts** racing from 1100hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** adult £13, under 12 free **Web** knockhill.co.uk
Contact 01383 723337

MONDAY

Castle Combe, Wilts
Live TV meeting
FF1600, GT, Saloons, Kumho BMW, Clio 182, Morgans, MGOC
Starts racing from 1140hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs)
Admission adult £15, child free
Web castlecombecircuit.co.uk
Contact 01249 782417

RALLYING
SATURDAY

Down Ampney, Gloucestershire
Corinium Stages
Starts 0900hrs
Admission No spectators
Web cirencestercarclub.com

SATURDAY/ SUNDAY

Rosehill, Carlisle
Pirelli Carlisle Rally
Starts 1115hrs
Admission free
Web pirellicarlislerally.co.uk

Killarney, Republic of Ireland
Cartell.ie International Rally of the Lakes
Starts 0830 Admission free
Web rallyofthelakes.com

SUNDAY

Epynt Ranges, Powys, Wales
Dixies Historic Challenge
Starts 1030hrs
Admission tba
Web southwalesac.com

MONDAY

Enniskillen Airport, Northern Ireland
May Day Stages Rally
Starts tba
Admission tba
Web emcni.weebly.com

SPORTING SCENE
SUNDAY/MONDAY

Pembrey, south Wales
British Rallycross Championship
Starts tba
Admission adult £12
Web pembreycircuit.co.uk

MONDAY

Hednesford Hills National Hot Rods
Starts 1330hrs.
Admission adult £16, concessions £12, children 5-14 £7
Web spedeworth.co.uk

Belle Vue, Manchester
BriSCA F1
Starts 1630hrs
Admission tba
Web f1stockcars.com

Correct at time of going to press, but please check with venue or event organisers before travelling

NEXT WEEK — OUT WEDNESDAY MAY 4

ALL THE ACTION FROM THE PIRELLI CARLISLE RALLY





ROCKINGHAM
BRITISH GT: FULL REPORT

BRITAIN'S DTM HERO
WE SPEAK TO AUDI'S JAMIE GREEN



PLUS: REPORT, NEWS AND OPINIONS FROM THE RUSSIAN GP

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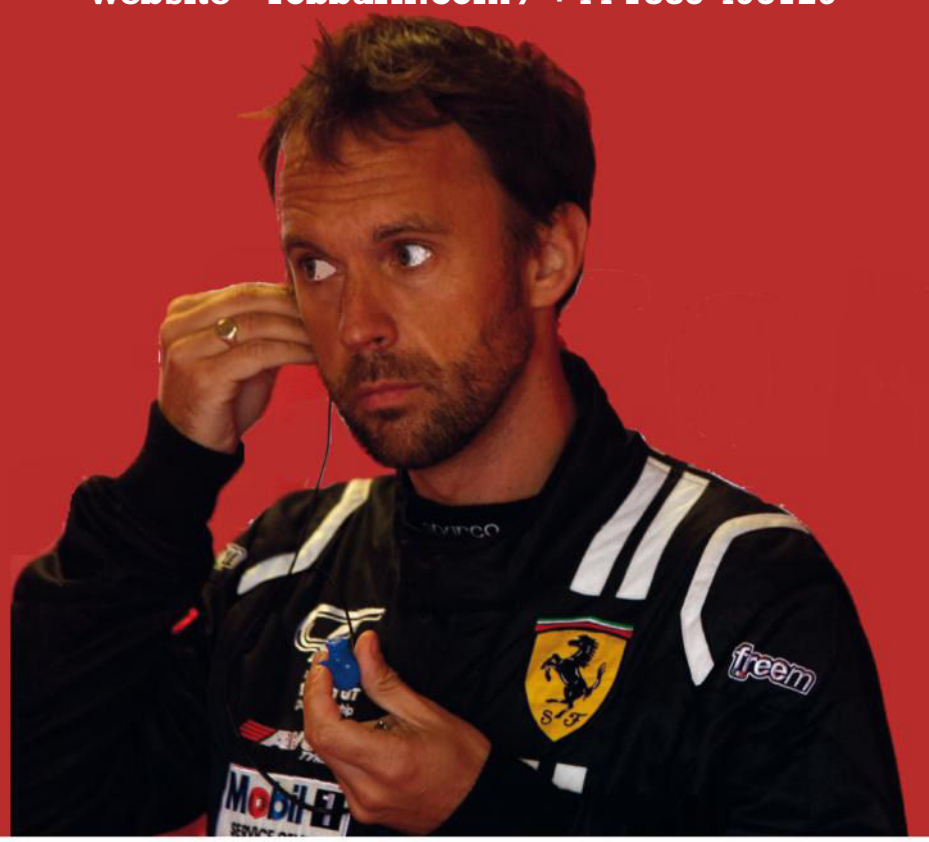
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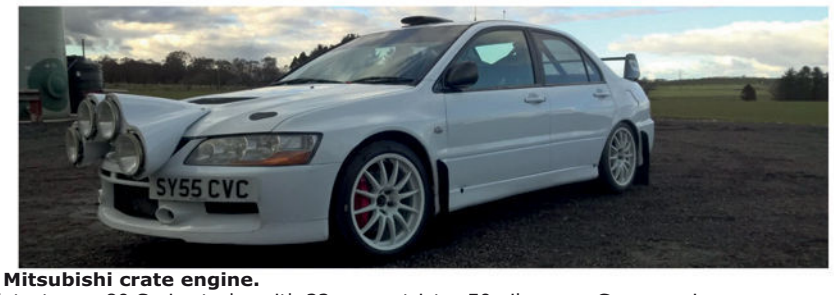
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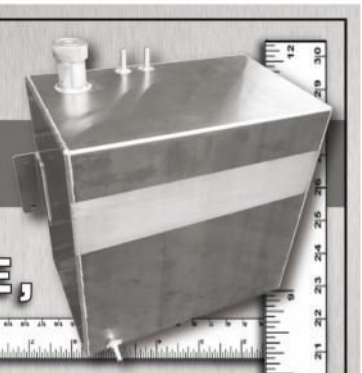
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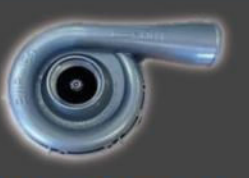
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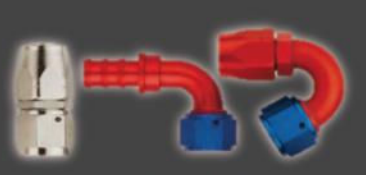
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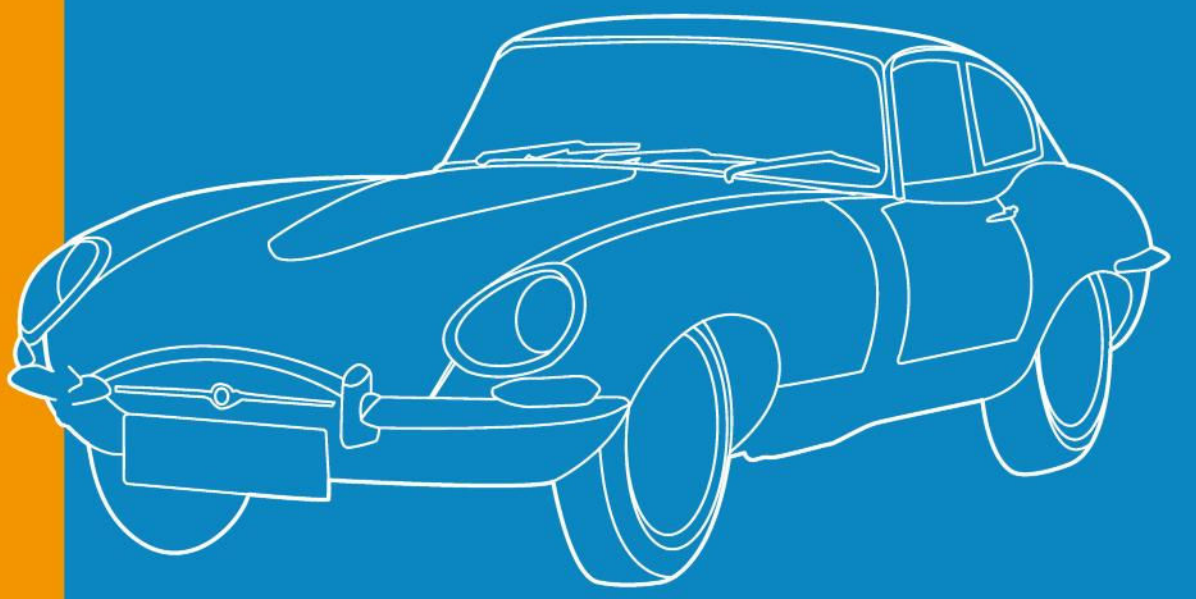
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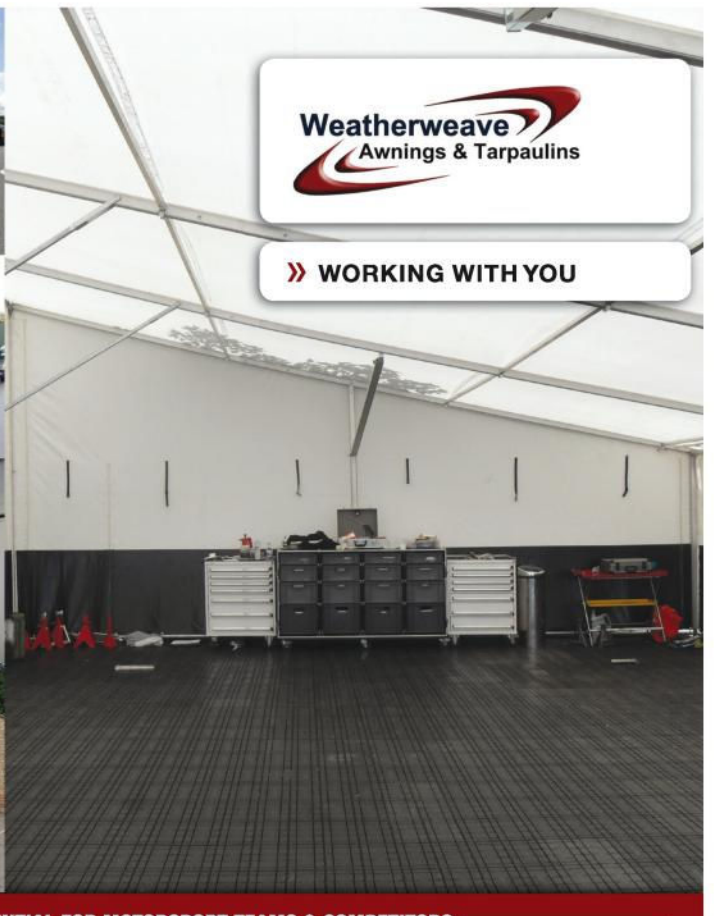






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