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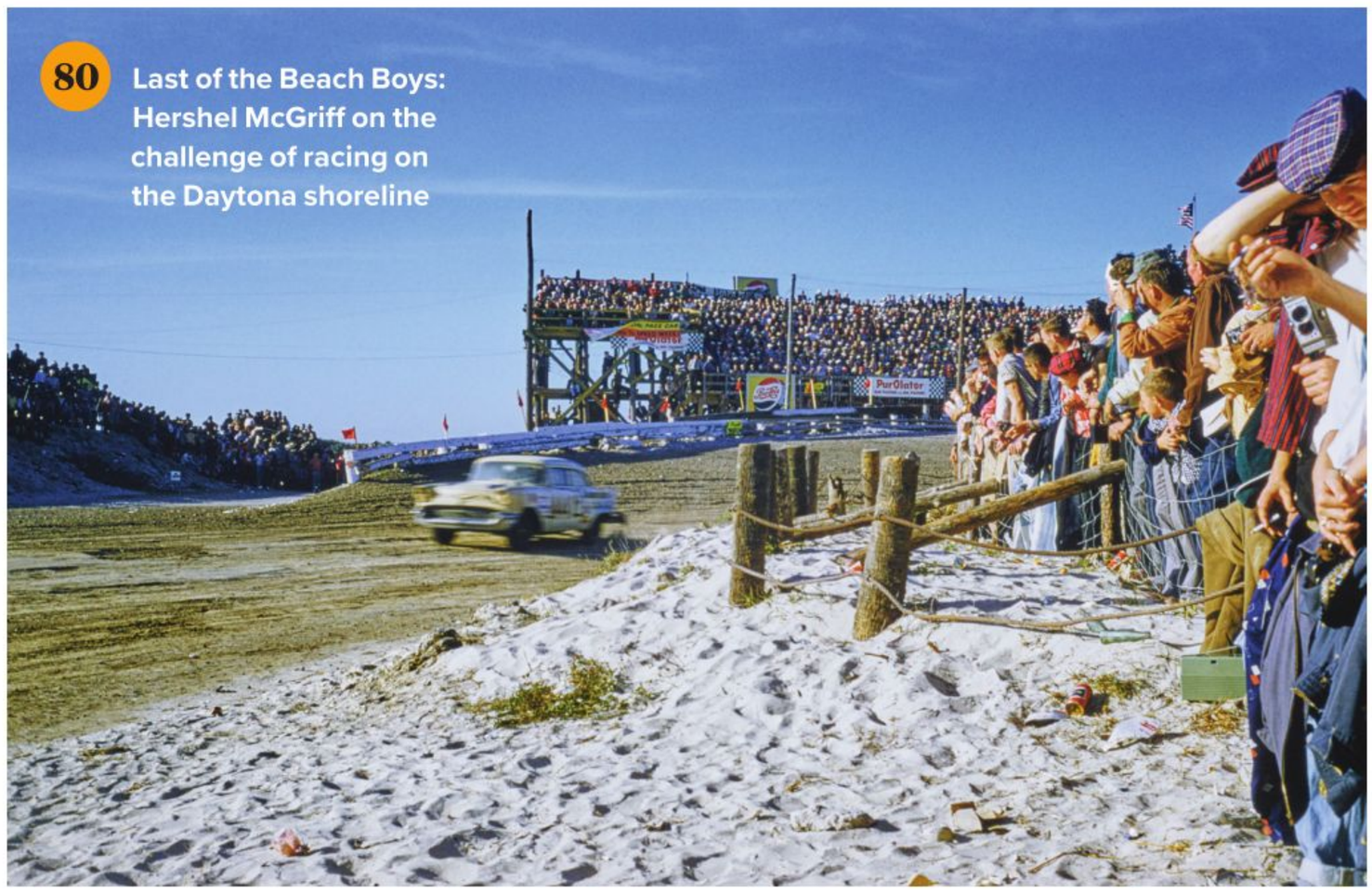
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MOTOR SPORT

THE EDITOR

"I hope you find the changes respectful of our great history"

YOU WILL HAVE NOTICED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME changes to your issue of *Motor Sport* this month. As a reader I know that any change to a much-loved magazine can be concerning, so I want to take this opportunity to explain the thinking behind the new-look *Motor Sport* and take you through the issue.

The first thing to say is that I hope the revised magazine is easier to read. We have increased the type size in order to improve legibility and also changed the font to a more user-friendly version. For aficionados the previous font was called Delirium and new one is Proxima. The difference between them is not huge, but I feel that the switch makes the great content we produce clearer and more accessible.



We have also 'justified' the text – given each column a straight edge – rather than using the ragged-edge layout from before. Although not particularly fashionable these days, justifying the text offers a clarity and sense of order to the magazine (which by its very nature can be an unruly beast). Of course, that unpredictability is crucial but I think providing clear boundaries amplifies rather than dulls its impact. On a more practical note it also allows us to pack more words onto the page, which means that, despite increasing the print size, the word counts remain virtually unchanged.

One of the great strengths of the magazine, and an area about which I know readers feel particularly passionate, is our columnists. So I am very pleased to welcome two new voices. Readers will of course know Andrew Frankel from his incisive and wry road car reviews; he joins us with a brilliant new diary column casting a knowledgeable eye over the automotive industry as well as following his own historic racing exploits. Andrew is one of the of the most connected, trusted, specialist journalists in the country and I am delighted that he has agreed to contribute his thoughts and insights exclusively to *Motor Sport*.

I am also incredibly excited to welcome Jennie Gow. Jennie might be familiar to F1 fans from the radio, where she reports for BBC Radio 5 Live. That role gives her money-can't-buy access to the paddock and pitlane and, as a trained journalist, her eye for a story means her columns will be packed with behind-the-scenes snippets you won't read anywhere else.

Andrew and Jennie join our strong roster of columnists: Mark Hughes continues to offer his technically brilliant insights into the world of F1; Mat Oxley remains the best motorcycling writer working today; and Doug Nye will continue offering his unique perspective on the world of motor racing – always with one eye on the past.

There are some changes to the content, too. We have expanded and reorganised the reviews section, gathering all review elements into one easy-to-navigate area. As part of this move, the book review section has been expanded from one page to three in order to make more of the wonderful variety of literature published every month. Previously, we could do little more than pay it lip service. Road car reviews and our expanded products pages will also be in this section, allowing you to browse everything from a new Porsche 911 to a Lego version of the McLaren Senna.

I have also moved what I regard as one of the centrepieces of our magazine to a permanent mooring nearer the front. *Lunch with...* is probably the greatest in-depth sports interview published anywhere in the world and we wanted it to have its own slot right at the heart of the magazine, where readers can find it every month.

It is preceded by a new, regular feature called *Racing Lives*, which comprises interviews with family members who share a motor racing link. In this issue we speak to David Brabham and his son Sam, who give fascinating insights into the differences between how they started racing and what it is like living with the Brabham name.

Together, *Racing Lives* and *Lunch with...* point to a renewed emphasis on hearing the voices of our sport's great names who can tell human stories behind the landmark events. The magazine will continue to give readers unique access to such stories by tracking down those who have participated in making history.

Of course, not everything has changed. Our features will continue to surprise and delight with an eclectic, effervescent range of topics. And these will continue to be curated and written by our terrific in-house writing team – Gordon Cruickshank, Simon Arron and Robert Ladbrook, ably assisted by special correspondents Gary Watkins and Paul Fearnley. And finally, the eagle-eyed among you will have noticed another significant difference: the title of this column. But before you worry about the loss of our famous *Matters of Moment*, I urge you to turn to page 14...

Enjoy the magazine. I hope you find the changes are respectful of our great history while improving the reading experience. As ever we welcome your feedback, so please email me (editorial@motorsportmagazine.com) or write in with your comments.

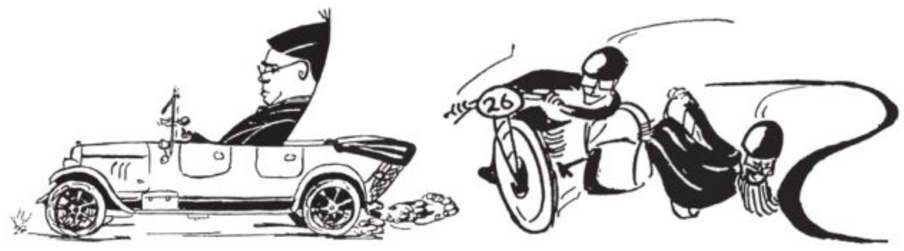


Joe Dunn, editor

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MOTOR SPORT

IN THE SPIRIT OF BOD AND JENKS



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SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR HELPING WITH THIS ISSUE
Mercedes-AMG and Audi Sport for their assistance, and Hershel McGriff for his invaluable time

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Details matter.



We thought it would be simple – ask Mercedes-AMG if we could photograph Lewis Hamilton's 2018 title-winning helmet for our cover feature this month. It proved complex in the extreme, but finally we got the go ahead, under conditions of strict secrecy. It transpired that the drivers own their own helmets, and Lewis had to agree to letting his prized lid out of his keeping. Further, the helmet would be brought to a secret location where Mercedes keeps its stunning F1 heritage collection and we were sworn to secrecy about that (we'd love to tell you...) plus we would have only two hours. At last the helmet arrived, complete with Lewis's PA and a security guard and warnings not to touch the inside or stick anything to it. It was daunting – but we're pleased with the outcome, and grateful to Lewis for helping it happen.

Motor Sport (ISSN No: 0027-2019, USPS No: 021-661) is published monthly by Motor Sport Magazine GBR and distributed in the USA by Asendia USA, 17B S Middlesex Ave, Monroe NJ 08831. Periodicals postage paid New Brunswick, NJ and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Motor Sport, 701C Ashland Ave, Folcroft PA 19032. UK and rest of world address changes should be sent to 18-20 Rosemont Road, London, NW3 6NE, UK, or by e-mail to subscriptions@motorsportmagazine.co.uk. Distribution: Marketforce, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Colour origination: All Points Media. Printing: Precision Colour Printing, Telford, Shropshire, UK.

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Fancy watching live Formula 1 grands prix this season? You'll have to stump up for Sky Sports to be able to

The great racing rip-off

EVER GET THE FEELING YOU'RE being fleeced? Motor sport fans face paying upwards of £800 this year in order to watch live coverage of top-tier racing as international series move further behind pay-per-view TV services.

The cost of watching live races could have a detrimental effect on the popularity of motor sports in the longer term as younger viewers either struggle to afford the services or refuse to pay. It may also be fuelling a rise in the number of people watching live coverage of races illegally via streaming sites.

This year Formula 1 fans will lose free-to-air grands prix as Sky's new deal means it will be the only place to watch live races in the UK. Channel 4, which showed 10 races live in 2018, will revert to showing a delayed highlights package of each race, and will only show the British GP live on terrestrial TV.

The change has already brought warnings from the Formula 1 Promoters' Association - comprised of the promoters of 16 grands prix - about the damaging impact of restricting access to races. In a statement the organisation said: "It is not in the long-term interest of the sport that fans lose free access to content and broadcasting."

With annual Sky and Virgin Media subscriptions costing on average £50 per month this means F1 fans in the UK must stump up £600 per year to watch live F1.

This figure increases for Sky customers wanting BT Sport as part of the package as it's a £20 per month additional cost. BT Sport comes included in the Virgin deal.

It's not just F1 fans who are paying the price. While highlights of the World Rally



LAT

Championship are shown on BT Sport, along with selected stages live, fans who want uninterrupted live coverage must subscribe to the WRC+ All Live streaming service which comes at an added cost of £78 per year.

American series are also behind paywalls, with IndyCar coverage on BT Sport's ESPN channel and NASCAR largely restricted to Premier Sports (an additional £10pm or £120 annually), although a handful of 2019 races will be shown on digital channel Freesports.

The fees required mean that an F1 fan who wants to follow WRC and NASCAR would be required to pay around £800 per year to keep up to speed.

The only FIA single-seater series boasting free live coverage this year is Formula E, which is on the BBC's Red Button service.



Racing legend Jim Clark drove his red Elan on the road, the Evora (below) is homage to it

Jim Clark Trust heading to Monaco with tribute Evora

'Monte Carlo twinned with Duns'. Admittedly it's not a connection that immediately springs to mind but curators of the Jim Clark Trust are hoping the association between the glamorous city and the birthplace of Scotland's most famous racer will stick over the course of the year.

The trust is planning a series of events in the principality to help spearhead a renewed push for funding for the rebuilt Jim Clark Museum, which commemorates the career and life of Clark. Chief among these is transporting a special edition modern Lotus to Monte Carlo. The Jim Clark Lotus Evora GT410 Sport will then be put on display for fans to enjoy over the course of this year's Monaco GP race weekend. The Evora is a one-off homage to the famous red Elan that Clark enjoyed for his road driving and is officially the 100,000th Lotus built.



"The Evora is officially the 100,000th Lotus ever built"

Clark famously never won the Monaco Grand Prix, but according to the trust the relationship between Scotland and Monaco is strong: Jackie Stewart recorded three victories in the grand prix while – slightly more tenuously – Sean Connery's James Bond was famously a regular at the Monte Carlo Casino.

The initiative is in partnership with Scottish hospitality company Ecosse Elite, which will be hosting a "luxury tri-deck superyacht experience" (read: an event on three floors of a yacht) on which there will be a Clark exhibition as well as a daily auction of Clark and motor sport items, with money again going to the Trust. Ecosse Elite will also be celebrating the best of Scottish food and drink.

Readers of *Motor Sport* can claim a 10% discount on the entry price of the exhibit, details of how to do this are on our website. The Evora is also being offered as a prize for fans via a lottery - all proceeds going towards the museum.

Holy smokes!

YOU MAY NOT HAVE HEARD OF ANTOINE Bessette, but the former racing driver is hoping for more success on the road than he achieved on track.

Bessette - whose career highlight was finishing third the 2004 North American Formula Renault 2000 Championship - is the brains behind an all-new road car that looks like an early sketch of the Batmobile - discarded for being too outlandish.

Called the CB7R, it was unveiled at the Montréal International Auto show in January. According to Bessette the track focused but road-legal car will feature a seven-litre V8 engine producing 700bhp and boasting a 0-62 time of 2.9sec. It'll cost $270,000 (£206,000) and comes with the option of track day training with a company racing coach.

Bessette, whose company Felino is based in Québec, said: "It's a bit like when I was racing, I had my team around me that was taking care of my car, taking care of me. We're doing the same, but for a street car. Of course, we have a small tendency to push the customer to try his car on the track, because it's built for that, the DNA of that car is for the track."



The catchily-named CB7R boasts a 700bhp V8 and has been created by a former racing driver

Powerboat brings F1 tech to the water

PRINCESS YACHTS HAS REVEALED ITS fastest-ever boat, the R/Evolution 35, which brings a host of Formula 1 and sportscar technology to the water.

The carbon fibre hull has been jointly designed by two familiar names: Pininfarina and BAR Technologies (Not that one, this one's Ben Ainslie Racing Technologies), which has developed a revolutionary Active Foil System, allowing the boat to adapt its handling and stability to different conditions.

The head of BAR Tech is former McLaren F1 boss Martin Whitmarsh, who is reunited with Princess chairman - and former McLaren road car boss - Antony Sheriff.

"It's a bizarre parallel - I now make the road boats while he makes the race ones!" said Sheriff of the £535,000, 860bhp boat.



The new R/Evolution 35 can do the equivalent of 60mph and has been created by an ex-McLaren duo

Spirit of Spa 24h revived

A NEW TOURING CAR ENDURANCE RACE will be held at Spa-Francorchamps later this year, reviving the spirit of the original Spa 24 Hours event for the first time in 19 years.

WSC, the organiser behind the global TCR concept, has teamed up with leading European endurance race promoter Creventic to schedule the first TCR Spa 500 for October 4-6, 2019.

The 500-lap race will be open to TCR-spec cars only and aims to combine entries from the World and International TCR fields, as well as the 22 regional categories it runs around the world. The organiser is targeting 40 entries for the first year.

Entries will be split between three groups according to ability – professional, semi-professional and amateur teams, and WSC reports that many of the current manufacturers involved in TCR have already thrown their weight behind the concept.

"Extensive discussions with representatives of the brands involved in TCR made it clear that there was a need for a flagship, high-profile endurance race to showcase the category and make the connection with the production models the racing cars are stemmed from," announced WSC.



TCR already boasts an impressive list of manufacturers, with brands such as Volkswagen, Audi, SEAT, Alfa Romeo, Hyundai, Honda and Peugeot (*right*) among the 11 to produce homologated models.

The race will be the first of its kind since the original Spa 24 Hours ceased to cater for touring cars after 2000, when it switched to the current SRO-promoted contest reserved instead for GT machinery.

Spa has a long history of hosting endurance tin-top racing, having run the first 24-hour event back in 1924. The race then became an annual fixture, before being put on hold across the course of both world wars and when the circuit was reconfigured from its original 9.3-mile layout to the 8.7-mile version. The current 4.3-mile permanent circuit was established for the 1979 season.

WSC chairman Marcello Lotti said: "The growth of the [TCR] category has been the success story in international motor sport over the past few years. The idea of an international endurance race, exclusively reserved for TCR cars, is the icing on the cake."

"Spa first hosted a 24-hour race back in 1924"



The current 4.3-mile Spa circuit opened in 1979 and the layout remains, although photographers don't get the same access as they did here in 1971


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HOW FLIGHT-LIEUT. BOOTHMAN WON AT 340 M.P.H.

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THE SCHNEIDER TROPHY

Motor Sport's report on the final Schneider Trophy event back in October 1931



"The target is to exceed 300mph with a single propeller"

Wildcat strikes the UK

US-style Sprint racers are headed to the UK circuits (minus the huge lop-sided roof spoilers)

LAT

BRITISH MOTOR RACING MIGHT BE awash with different championships and series - more than 230, last time we counted - but something new and very different is coming to a circuit near you.

The aptly named Wildcat Sprint Car Series, which has its roots in the US sprint scene, will appear at several UK venues this season, including Brands Hatch, Pembrey, Croft, Donington Park, Mallory Park and Croft. The series will be administered by the British Automobile Racing Club.

Powered by a 230bhp 2.0-litre Ford Duratec engine, and weighing just 570kg, the Wildcats are inspired by classic US sprint cars but have been adapted to comply with British single-seater circuit regulations (which didn't allow for the huge States-style asymmetrical roof spoilers).

"The series has been in the planning for some time," said promoter Sonny Howard. "Talks began several years ago, when there were tentative plans to build a short, banked oval on spare land at Rockingham. The project kept getting deferred, simply because we were so busy, then just when we were finally ready to go ahead we learned that Rockingham would be closing its doors as a racing venue..."

The series will be open to drivers aged 16 and above and Howard anticipates a field of about 12 when the season commences at Brands Hatch on April 20/21. "The BARC has committed to Wildcats until 2021 and we hope to have 30 cars on the grid by season three," he says.



Victory Rolls?

WHILE ITS NAMESAKE IN THE CAR world turns out opulent models such as the Cullinan 4x4, the separate Rolls-Royce aerospace business is taking a leaner approach.

As part of its ongoing ACCEL (Accelerating the Electrification of Flight) programme, partially funded by the UK government, Rolls-Royce is spearheading a project to build the world's fastest electric aircraft; the target is to exceed 300mph with a single-propeller plane, beating the 210mph record set by Siemens in 2017. During the development, the company has confirmed that it will tap into technology derived from Formula E.

Rolls-Royce is no stranger to speed records in the air. Its R engine powered the Supermarine S.6B that set a 343mph speed record during the 1931 Schneider Trophy, when Britain scored its third straight victory in the last of a famous series of races that received coverage from *Motor Sport*.

In our October 1931 issue, we mentioned how "the comparative stillness, with the watchers rather tense, was broken by the indescribable noise of the Rolls-Royce R.

"The Schneider Trophy Contest has been flown for the last time and the famous *objet d'art* has passed for ever into the hands of England – or, at any rate, the Royal Aero Club.

"The British team for the third successive time has swept the board and this country now stands as the unchallenged producer of the world's swiftest-moving aircraft. This is a very pleasant thought, and yet those of us who watched Flight-Lieutenant Boothman pilot his S6.B around the course in the bright sunshine did so with mixed feelings. A tinge of regret that the event would mark the end of the great contest that has been since 1913."

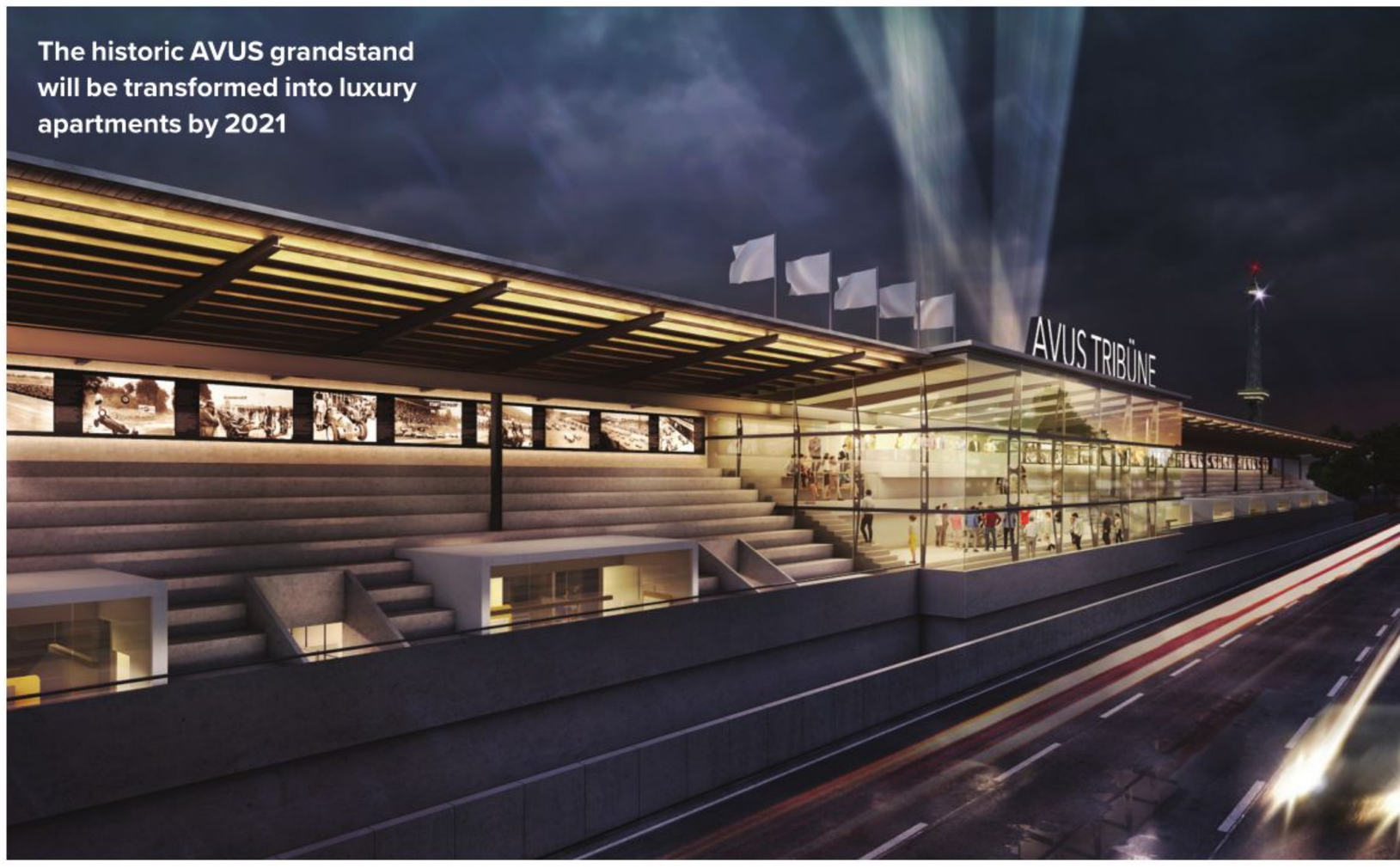
New walls for Berlin

ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS grandstands in grand prix racing is being restored to former glory – but with a modern twist.

The stand which is adjacent to the old AVUS track – home to the German Grands Prix of 1926 and 1959 – has been left to decay in recent years, but has been saved from demolition by an Iran-born entrepreneur, Hamid Djadda, who will turn it into smart apartments for those who want some motor sport history with their mortgage.

Opened in 1921, AVUS – essentially two sides of the world's first motorway, the A115, with links at either end – originally had a lap length of more than 12 miles and the steeply banked North Curve was for many years its distinguishing feature. It hosted speed-record attempts, as well as race events, but over time safety considerations led to it becoming both shorter and flatter. Its final meeting took place in 1998 and the grandstand subsequently fell into disrepair.

Djadda aims to retain the stand's original structure and convert the space into a complex of offices and shops, with a café-event area that will be themed to commemorate the circuit's history.



The historic AVUS grandstand will be transformed into luxury apartments by 2021

"It came about by chance. The first thing I saw when I drove into Berlin six years ago was the rotten, ugly stand. I got really angry that they would allow such a historical monument to decay," said Djadda.

He bought the shell and spent two years obtaining planning permits. "The roof will be constructed exactly as it was. The remainder should be finished by 2021." Which is, coincidentally, the venue's centenary anniversary...

German motor sport promoter ADAC has plans to hold a demonstration event around the old circuit to coincide with both the grandstand's reopening and the anniversary.



Successful Under Two-Litre Touring Cars series boasts strong grids

Forget swallows, historics are the first sign of spring

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR WHEN GARAGES and workshops the length and breadth of the country reverberate to the sound of historic racers coughing into life after the winter hibernation. The cars that is.

And with the new season almost upon us news arrives that one of the most successful historic racing series organisers has added more championships to its roster. Motor Racing Legends has announced an expanded portfolio for 2019 after it took over responsibility for the Pre '63 GT and U2TC (under two-litre touring cars) series, both of which were previously promoted by Carol Spagg's Historic Motor Racing News Organisation.

News of the expansion came at MRL's annual prize giving, held at the Royal Automobile Club on London's Pall Mall.

Several well-known drivers collected awards for their racing successes during the 2018 season, including Steve Soper and Patrick Watts (Ford Capri, Tony Dron Trophy), while Spa Six Hours organiser Vincent Collard received the Motor Racing Legends Trophy for services to historic motor sport.

Winter car covers will be removed at MRLs season opener at the Donington Historic Festival (May 3-5).



Yes she can: Ana Carrasco in action

Carrasco gets title defence

AFTER BECOMING THE FIRST FEMALE to win a solo motorcycle world championship last year, 21-year-old Ana Carrasco will defend her World Supersport 300 crown with Kawasaki.

The Spaniard rode last season with DS Junior racing - having used a crowd-funding appeal in the wake of a sponsorship hitch - and two wins from the opening four races created a platform for her eventual victory.

She has now switched to Kawasaki-backed Provec, whose co-director Guim Roda said: "Last year's result was spectacular and we had no choice but to set up a project tailored to Ana, to help her be an example for all women who believe 'Yes, I can."

The season begins April 5-7 in Aragon.

Girardo & Co.

The ex-Peter Sutcliffe

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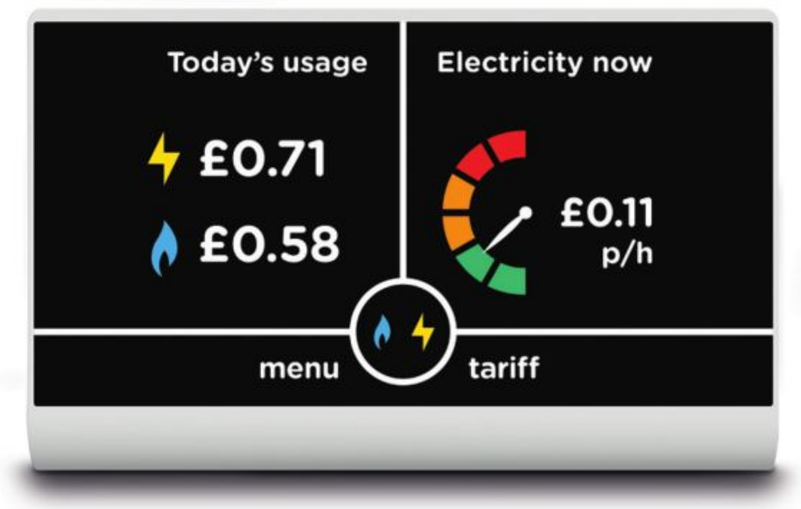
This Lightweight being chased by the Ecurie-Francorchamps Ferrari 250 LM and a Ferrari 250 GTO at the 1964 Nürburgring 1000 km

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MARK HUGHES

"Arrivabene's autocratic manner created an oppressive atmosphere"

In axing Maurizio Arrivabene as Scuderia Ferrari's team principal and replacing him with Mattia Binotto, Ferrari chairman John Elkann has simply actioned the plan laid out by the late Sergio Marchionne. In between Marchionne's sudden death last July and the end of the season, Arrivabene had the chance to fortify his position, but clearly in this time the new boss reached much the same conclusion as had Marchionne. He simply wasn't the right man for the job. Reports that Arrivabene's firing came at CEO Louis Camilleri's instigation are wide of the mark – and in fact the latter's position was unclear at the time of writing.

Usually when someone within the paddock loses their job there is a measure of sympathy. It's a results-based environment and high-profile people often have to carry the can. But sympathy was not much in evidence on this occasion...

Arrivabene had an aggressive, combative manner that did not appreciate questions – certainly not from the media, with whom he operated a zero co-operation policy, but also from his staff. This might have been OK if it was merely an outward-facing front to take the pressure off those inside, but according to many he was exactly like that internally, too. He was autocratic but without the skills required to inspire. He was recruited from Philip Morris by Marchionne as a lieutenant, someone to action his instructions while he went about the business of running the whole group. Just as Arrivabene didn't appreciate questions, so he never questioned the boss – and, as someone in the field in a better position to inform him, that was another failing.

Marchionne presided over a refreshing culture change within the Scuderia technical group. But he was guided in this by Binotto, who impressed the boss with his quietly level-headed, highly intelligent approach. It was Binotto who proposed a new working culture within the technical group and Marchionne who actioned it. When Marchionne took over, Binotto was assistant chief of the engine department. Subsequently he was made engine chief and then technical director after the departure of James Allison (with whom Marchionne did not see eye to eye). As well as his own technical creativity, Binotto understands how to manage a group of creative people. Some who have worked there a long time say he reminds them of Ross Brawn. Far from reeling from the loss of Allison, as had been expected, the technical group began delivering on the talent that had lain within all along. Ferrari in the last two years has been the most progressive, creative F1 team.

The racing group was another matter. Here, Arrivabene's management style was devoid of subtlety. He wasn't the type of personality to grasp human relationship nuances. His autocratic manner created an oppressive atmosphere that contrasted with the spirit of openness and co-operation in the technical group. Their cars ensured considerable success, which relieved some of the pressure, but increasingly it became apparent that this was a poor team squandering great cars and that created greater pressure. With a virtually non-existent relationship with the media, Arrivabene could count on no help there. You might have seen him last year stare straight through Martin Brundle on the grid, not even acknowledging his presence, for having the temerity to ask him a question.

"Binotto understands how to manage a creative group"

During the 2018 Chinese GP, Sebastian Vettel removed his steering wheel after a practice session and laid it atop the Ferrari's cockpit, where it was photographed by the renowned technical journalist Giorgio Piola, who spotted that it featured an extra control – which he then drew and wrote about. The following day Arrivabene drew himself up to Piola's chest, trying to intimidate him – for writing about a piece of car that was there in the public domain; for doing his job, in other words. Doing it, what's more, better than Arrivabene was doing his.

The atmosphere created by Arrivabene was surely a contributory factor not only to Ferrari's poor operational performance, but also the state of mind of lead driver Sebastian Vettel. It's impossible to decouple his errors last year from the atmosphere around him.

A couple of years earlier Arrivabene had for once chosen to interact with a TV camera – but only to say that his driver Vettel should stop trying to involve himself in running the team and concentrate instead on justifying his drive. In that moment he showed he completely misunderstood one of Vettel's major assets and into the bargain lost his lead driver's respect.

As Binotto advised Marchionne on how he saw things, so the boss came increasingly to consult with and be informed by him. Arrivabene was falling out of the loop – and plans were already in place, before Marchionne's trip to the hospital, for the move that has now happened. Marchionne's passing merely put it in doubt for a time.

Binotto should transform things. It's expected that the structure will be changed to be more like that of the Brawn years, where the technical boss also ran the team. It worked then and can surely work again.

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

"All motor sport is largely about solving technical challenges"

MOTOGP PRE-SEASON testing commences at Sepang, Malaysia, on February 6. The 2019 season, which marks the 70th birthday of world championship grand prix racing, is likely to be every bit as frantic as the last few campaigns, during which Honda and Ducati assumed the technical advantage.

Honda and Ducati left their rivals behind because they adapted better to MotoGP's biggest regulations change since the big four-strokes replaced the 500cc two-strokes in 2002. Following the 2016 switch to unified software and Michelin tyres, the bikes have become more challenging to engineer and to ride than at any time since the fiery 500s.

Corner-entry performance is hard to find because the Michelin front tyre isn't as good as the previous Bridgestone front, while corner-exit performance is similarly elusive because the unified traction-control software is purposefully less effective than the tailor-made factory alternative it replaced. This is why half MotoGP's lap records stand from 2015 or earlier, before the new technical rules were introduced.

If this sounds like a bad thing, it isn't. All motor sport is largely about technical challenges - either solving them in the garage or riding around them on the racetrack - so the bigger the obstacle, the better it is for the more talented engineers and riders.

"I enjoy it when the challenge is more complex," says Gigi Dall'Igna, chief engineer at Ducati Corse. "It's also better for increasing our knowledge, because we are always pushing to try to understand things better."

World champion Marc Márquez feels the same, especially about the lower-tech software, made for MotoGP rights-holder Dorna by Magneti Marelli. "Less electronics is better, because then everything is more in your hand, in your body," he says.

Honda and Ducati have engineered their motorcycles to enter and exit corners as effectively as possible, despite these problems, so now the big deal is focusing on the middle phase of the corner to improve lap times. If they can make the motorcycle turn more quickly in this area, then the rider can be even faster, while asking less of the front tyre and of the traction control.

Chassis flex is thus now a very important factor in chasing better lap times. Last year Ducati and Suzuki introduced aluminium/carbon-fibre composite frames to change the amount of flex or move the area of flex, while Honda might follow suit. Lateral flex isn't only vital to provide suspension at full lean, when the front forks and rear shock can't work effectively, but also to provide a self-turning effect. This makes the bike corner better, while also stressing the front and rear tyres less, because the bike turns more naturally and the rider needs less wheelspin to finish the corner. Thus flex is as big a factor in the turning conundrum as geometry and centre of mass.

"It's black magic!" says Paul Trevathan, crew chief to Pol Espargaró at Red Bull KTM. "You have to take the load off the front tyre and start the process of getting the bike around the corner and rotating the load to the rear, because motorcycles don't turn from the front, they turn from the rear. This process of finding the right rear grip is the key, because the sooner you can do that, the sooner you can finish the corner and get onto the good [fatter] part of the tyre and then go. The more flexible you are in this area is key to tyre life. We see on the data that from 50deg of lean to 35deg of lean the difference in tyre performance is unbelievable, so you need to get into that better area and the quicker you can get there, the sooner you can use more throttle."

"Chassis flex is now a very important factor in chasing lap times"

Once the right amount of flex has helped the rider turn - so he can lift the bike onto the fatter part of the rear tyre - he needs a nice, friendly engine that will find traction without relying too much on the electronics.

"You are always looking for rideability from the engine," adds Trevathan, "because the less the engine and electronics fight each other the smoother the whole corner-exit process will be. My belief with the Michelin rear is that you can't shock it into catching grip. You have to constantly load it. For example, if the traction control makes an ignition cut, then all of a sudden you've taken load off the rear tyre, so the bike goes into a state of nothing, then the load comes back as a shock and the tyre loses grip. If you have a good engine - a good, smooth heart to the motorcycle - it makes everything easier."

Austrian factory KTM, which entered the premier-class in 2016, decades after its rivals, has a lot of catching up to do. That task might be eased by the completion of MotoGP's unified electronics system, with the 2019 introduction of a unified Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU).

Most electronics engineers believe factory teams had been using their own IMUs to get more performance from the unified software, but no one admitted it and no one accused anyone else of doing such things. Not surprisingly, the faster factories don't think the control IMU will make much difference, while the slower factories hope it will help them to close the gap. Only time will tell...

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

Follow Mat on Twitter @matoxley

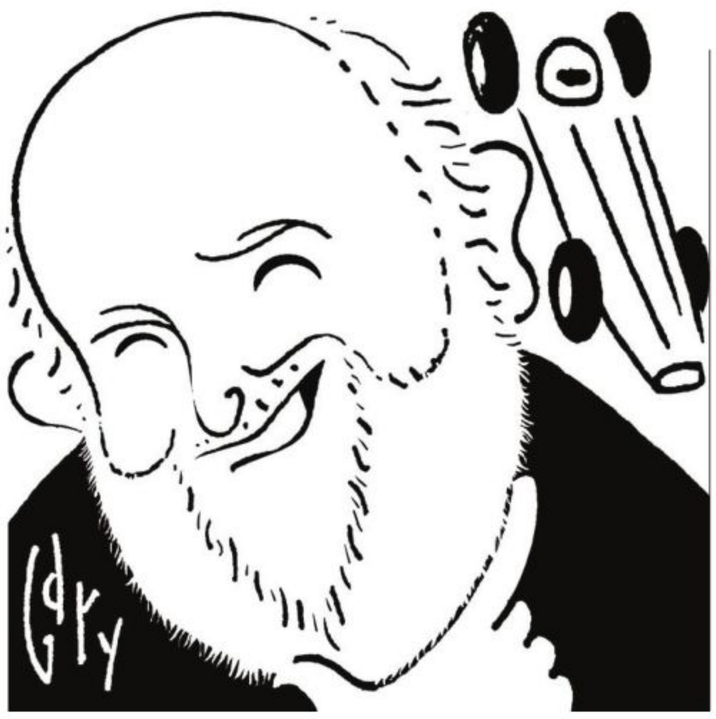
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DOUG NYE

"Dick Seaman had serious concerns about Anglo-German relations"

LOOK BACK 80 YEARS AND ONE OF the most momentous in modern history was surely 1939. The Second World War erupted that September, but back at this time of the year - February/March - many of our predecessors were hopeful that the four-month old Munich agreement with Herr Hitler had made another war less likely. After all, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had said that the successful Munich conference assured "Peace in our time..."

Chamberlain had returned to Heston in a British Airways Lockheed 14, piloted by Victor Flowerday. Another pilot who had flown occasionally from Heston, in his own aircraft, was the greatest British racing driver of the pre-war era - Dick Seaman.

On February 4, 1939 he and his young German wife Erica celebrated his 26th birthday. He was a professional racing driver, retained by the mighty Daimler-Benz team, and still basking in the afterglow of winning the 1938 German Grand Prix, no less.

One of Dick's closest friends was the tubby, acerbic, often argumentative George Monkhouse. He was a senior engineer with Kodak photographic and became technically the finest motor racing photographer of his era. His relationship with Seaman in combination with the quality of his work secured a unique 'in' with the German team, whose every work he admired immensely.

His motor club picture-shows became immensely popular, but into 1939 his commentaries - tending to extol almost everything German while disdaining almost everything British - did not go down well. After all, it was only 21 years since the First World War had ended.

Dick and George conducted a long correspondence. On February 21, 1939, Dick wrote: "Dear George, I duly arrived in Berlin after a pleasant flight, with Mrs Aldington..." - wife of British BMW concessionaire H J Aldington of parallel Frazer Nash fame - "and attended the ceremonial opening of the Motor Show. We assembled in a vast hall, adjoining the chief exhibition hall (of which there are 10 this year) and after speeches by the President of the Industry and Dr Goebells (sic), the Führer himself spoke.

"Unable as I was to understand most of it, I found him a most electrifying orator. At the end of his 17-minute speech, plush curtains at his back swept aside, disclosing, to a fanfare of brass instruments, the main hall beyond. I doubt if Cecil B DeMille could have done it much better himself. All the racing cars and motor-cycles are this year enshrined in a new hall to themselves.

"A very interesting exhibit is the new 'Grosser Mercedes'. It has a tubular chassis with front and rear suspension on the same principle as the racing cars. I cannot remember seeing such a good illustration of the 'racing benefits a firm's production models' argument.

"On Friday there was an NSKK gathering in another hall, at which [Adolf] Hühnlein, having repeated practically word for word the speech which he made at the same function last year, distributed medals to the *'Meisterfahrers'* in the motor cycle and racing car categories.

"We were then shown the first presentation of the film which [Erich] Stoll was taking all last year. It was undoubtedly extremely good, with very good photography and excellent cutting. There are most exciting shots of [Christian] Kautz's crash at Spa and [Rudolf] Hasse's at Monaco. The only fault is that in many of the shots the cars appear to be travelling too fast."

But he was having real doubts about the much-discussed 'International situation' in which tensions between his country and that of his wife - and of his employer - seemed likely to explode. As the 1939 racing season commenced, Mercedes-Benz dithered over what to do with its Brit. He was just a reserve for the season-opening Pau GP. On March 27 Dick wrote to Earl Howe, co-founder of the BRDC, whom he knew was well connected with government: "Anglo-German relations having reached the stage they have... I am... being forced to consider very seriously whether I ought to give up racing with Mercedes. The only reasons why I have not thrown in my hand before were a) ...mixing politics with sport... would do more harm than good; b) I am on very good terms personally with all the Mercedes people. But [I am] ...wondering if the time has not come when I ought to give up driving the Mercedes..."

"Mercedes dithered over what to do with its British driver for 1939"

After consultation, Howe responded to Dick on May 5: "The general concensus seems to be that it is far better... to retain every individual contact with Germany in every shape and form..." but he added "...you must be the judge, but I do not suppose you want to stay in a concentration camp."

Dick was given a drive in the *EifelRennen* at the Nürburgring, but his car's clutch failed, after "a really *wizard* start". In testing he later felt he was hitting tremendous form, and on June 25 he demonstrated that in his first full-blown Grand Prix of the year - the Belgian race at Spa. He utterly dominated it, he led it and, while leading, he crashed and was killed.

Remember Dick Seaman this year - Britain's greatest of his time.

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

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JENNIE GOW

"Billy Monger brought the auditorium, and the watching world, to tears"

A SEA OF FLASHBULBS illuminate the room and the press shout: "Billy over here, this way Billy! Smile, Billy!" A couple of years ago Billy Monger was just a normal kid hoping to make it to Formula One. Now, as he takes to the red carpet at the BBC's Sports Personality Awards where he is to pick up the Helen Rollason Award for outstanding achievement in the face of adversity, he is a man in demand.

Having made a BBC documentary with Billy in 2018, I was thrilled to be asked to chaperone him and his family to the awards ceremony. It was a request I accepted with great pride, not only because the Monger family are incredible, but also because my first job at the BBC after becoming a journalist was working as a production secretary on Sports Personality of the Century at the end of 1999.

My first day in the job was making sure all the VIPs had transport to get to them to the event at Television Centre in London. I'd gone from practising shorthand one minute to phoning greats like Sir Stirling Moss and Sir Steven Redgrave the next.

On the night I was assigned to look after Sir Alex Ferguson and the Manchester United team. I remember standing under the giant arc of Television Centre nervously awaiting the arrival of 'Fergie'. As he climbed out of the car, I was there to shake his hand. He wasn't the only famous person I rubbed shoulders with. I was also lucky enough to welcome the amazing Muhammad Ali.

We were told as staff it was not acceptable to ask for photos or autographs... you should have seen how many people rushed David Beckham when he entered the after-show party... I of course, was not one of them, I was still shaking from just being in the same room as many of these sporting greats.

I worked 36 hours straight before the ceremony, but it was an evening I will never forget and it laid the foundations for the rest of my career. I moved from behind the scenes to in front of a microphone as I worked my way up from reading the travel news and hosting speedway meetings to presenting rallying and MotoGP on the BBC.

Most recently, and the reason I was invited to the BBC awards again, is because I now stalk the F1 pit lane presenting and doing interviews. It's a job I adore and one that I have been lucky enough to have done for the BBC since 2011.

Working in the paddock can be unglamorous at times, despite what many people may think. Soaked with rain or freezing cold, waiting for a driver interview after what has been a dull race is certainly not something to write home about, but there are still times when I have to pinch myself. I try not to get too star-struck, but the first time you sit down and interview the likes of Michael Schumacher, Alain Prost or Lewis Hamilton you can't help but think - WOW!

As I guided Billy Monger to his seat in the auditorium at Sports Personality, it was another of those incredible moments. It took forever to get him into position because *everyone* wanted to say hello, have a selfie or just shake him by the hand.

"I saw Lewis gently take the hand of Billy's mum and ease her forward to watch her boy"

What Billy has achieved since his accident at Donington Park when he lost both of his legs whilst competing in a Formula 4 race is quite extraordinary, and the stars all wanted to meet the man who has done what seemed like the impossible.

It was an honour to be there with Billy and his family, especially when he learned of Hamilton's appearance at the awards. In fact, the general excitement in the hall when people found out he was coming that night was palpable. Hamilton took to the stage in a striking black, bejewelled outfit as Gabby Logan interviewed him as one of the nominees for the Sports Personality of the Year Award. Those sat around me whispered: 'He's actually here. That's amazing.'

Lewis would have known the chances of him winning were slim. It seems a long time since the glory days of the '80s and '90s when Mansell and Hill both won it twice.

But Lewis was there that night to support Billy. (I was told earlier in the year there was 'no chance' of him going to the ceremony.) He was elated as his interview turned into the prizegiving for Billy. He listened with pride to the inspirational words of his friend. While the speech was happening I saw Lewis gently take the hand of Billy's mum, Amanda, and ease her to the front so she could take centre-stage and watch her boy bring the whole auditorium to its feet, and the watching world to tears.

While motor sport might not be as loved by the masses as once it was, there is no doubt that evening a star was born... and as Lewis looks to get his sixth world title, Billy Monger will look to turn the adoration and admiration of the public into a race seat and his own challenge in 2019.

After the show, as Hamilton's jacket faded into the night and he slid out the back door, it was Billy who was left shining brightly. Yes, Geraint Thomas might have won the big award, but at the after-show party this time, forget David Beckham... everyone wanted their photo with the man of the night, Billy Monger.

Jennie Gow has formed a staple of the BBC's Formula 1 broadcasting team since 2011, working across both TV and radio

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ANDREW FRANKEL

"What is the most exciting car company at present? My bet is Lotus"

A NEW COLUMN DESERVES SOME comment from the industry upon which it reports, so here are a few I have rounded up. From Volkswagen: "We have never before seen this kind of crisis." Toyota: "An emergency of a magnitude we have never seen before." Mercedes-Benz top brass: "The worst crisis since World War Two" and, not to be outdone by its rival up the road, BMW: "The worst crisis BMW has faced in its history."

That's the bad news.

The good news is the 'crisis' to which they all refer is not where the industry thinks it is today. In fact, all those quotes are a little more than a decade old and came in response to the global financial collapse of 2007. We have problems today including the slowdown in China, the collapse of confidence in diesel and, of course good ol' Brexit, but the temptation to think that just because things aren't great means they have never been worse is to be avoided, even though for those directly affected - such as the 4500 who recently lost their jobs at JLR - it must seem that way.

What is true is that the industry is changing, faster than at any time in its history, and you can't go through that kind of seismic upheaval without causing a considerable disturbance to the status quo. Omelettes and eggs, if you like.

It would have been helpful had government kept up with the industry and got behind the provision of a respectable charging infrastructure for this electrically powered world to which we are now irretrievably committed, but as even filling in pot-holes seems a bit of an ask, we need to manage expectations. Our 50kW public charging stations are pathetic, and that's when they're working. Show me a person who owns an electric car and I will show you someone who has crawled around the countryside, schedule in tatters, trying to find any way possible to put some charge in their batteries.

I'M OVERJOYED THAT, AFTER MISSING OUT in 2018, the S F Edge Trophy for cars with an average age of 100-plus is back on the Goodwood Members' Meeting fixture list - not least because I'm in it.

Friends who race more modern machinery (which is all of them) think I'm insane. But I know something they don't: the people who pedal these ungainly Goliaths do so impeccably, because we all know the consequences of not doing so are unlikely to be pretty. I'll be back in the 1921 TT Bentley, which is not an original TT car because none exists, but an identical copy created from an even earlier 3-litre that itself raced at Brooklands in period.

I expect that, once again, I'll have the smallest engine on the grid, but the car is light and handles well. It's odd to be saying that about a vintage Bentley, I know, but such things are relative. The car has punched well above its weight on our previous two excursions at Goodwood and I hope to be able to make it do so again.

A FEW DAYS AGO, SOMEONE asked when I first knew I was addicted to cars. I'd never thought about it because I grew up in a house with two elder brothers and a father even more infected by 'the disease' than I. To me it was a natural state. But I do remember the first time I was overcome by it.

It would have been about 1974 so I was probably eight years old, living a sheltered life between home on a Channel Island and a boarding school in Eastbourne. As a treat one *exeat* we took a detour past Maranello Concessionaires in Egham. The lines of Dinos and Daytonas left me reeling. I didn't know Ferraris even came in pairs, let alone by the dozen. But then I saw something else: a dark blue Boxer sitting menacingly on the forecourt. Somewhat stunned, I did what I always did and peered through the window to see the speedometer. It read to 200mph, and that set me reeling. I staggered to the back of the car where my bulging eyes were greeted by the sight of not two or even four exhaust pipes but six. Six! How fast must a car be to need six pipes?

I had to sit down. Years later I was told I had to be physically dragged away, but I don't remember that: just that dark blue Ferrari, those six stubby pipes and the dawning realisation that whatever this disease was, it was with me for life.

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING CAR COMPANY to be working for at present? My bet is Lotus.

Starved of cash and product for years, but now in the hands of the same organisation that turned Volvo from an also-ran into a front-runner, all the elements are there for it to become a car company of which not even Colin Chapman could have dreamed. And it is recruiting. To use its own words it has "new positions available across the company in multiple locations in the UK and internationally", so you don't even have to live in Norfolk any more. If I wanted a job in the car industry in almost any capacity, that's where my CV would be heading first.

Perhaps things aren't so bad as some would have us believe, after all.

"Our 50kW charging stations are pathetic... when they're working"

A former editor of *Motor Sport*, Andrew splits his time between testing the latest road cars and racing (mostly) historic machinery

Follow Andrew on Twitter @Andrew_Frankel



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Going out with a bang

Andrew Frankel explains why the new Porsche 911 could be the last of its kind



THE MAN WHO HAS CARED FOR and nurtured the Porsche 911 these last 18 years is retiring. This car, the new 992-series 911, is August Achleitner's last. He might be going because he's reached retirement, or maybe he can see the writing on the wall.

This says that quite soon the 911 will have to change, and in such a way as to make the day in 1998, when it went from being cooled by what you breathe to what you drink, seem like a minor historical footnote. We all know that, rightly or wrongly, electric cars are the future; we know also that VW, which owns Porsche, has said it won't develop any more internal combustion engines after 2026. So one day, maybe not that far away, someone is going to have to come up with an electric 911. And if that prospect was what persuaded Herr Achleitner to reach for the pipe and slippers, I'd be the first to understand.

An electric 911 can't have a flat-six engine in its boot or anywhere else, so the car's defining characteristic, the thing that has distinguished it from every single other car on sale for the last 55 years, will go. In what way will what remains be a 911? And no, it's not the same for everyone, because for more than half a century the 911 has embodied all that we like about the internal combustion engine in terms of its reliability and suitability to our needs, and all that we've loved from the power that it produces to the sound that it makes.

Even this new 911 is heading in that direction, though you might be hard-pressed to spot it. One of Achleitner's last jobs was to engineer a space between the engine and gearbox to take an electric motor, which will come when the hybrid version of this car is launched in 2022. Imagine that: a 911 wafting around on a carpet of inaudible electrons.

For now, however, the rest of the car is reassuringly conventional, albeit far newer than it appears. It sits on a fresh platform, carrying over only 10-15 per cent of the previous car's componentry. Least changed is the 3-litre engine that, in this Carrera S model (the only one so far launched), is internally identical to the last, but with bigger turbos and new electronics to raise its power by 30bhp to 444bhp. Everything else - wheels, suspension and brakes - are new, as is the car's body which, for the first time in 911 production history, is now fashioned entirely from aluminium.



The four-wheel-drive 4S will be less playful than the rear-wheel 911 2S

The biggest visual change is inside, where the old dials have been replaced by glossy TFT screens, with only the pointedly retro rev-counter escaping the treatment. It all functions well, but to me does not look like a 911 interior. Then again, to my perhaps somewhat traditional eyes, it's been more than 20 years since a 911 had one that did.

The price of getting in the car many weeks before almost every other journalist is that I was only able to drive it around a track - a dry, damp, wet and flooded Hockenheim - so there are elements of its character such as ride and refinement upon which I remain ill-equipped to comment. But if you want to know how the new 911 behaves when being driven as fast as a grizzled old road tester can make it go, I will be of more use.

It is some indication of where Porsche is going with the 911 to consider that even this standard model now costs almost £100,000 and is faster than GT3 models of



"This new car is faster than older GT3 models. Its power is almost double a 911 Carrera 30 years ago"

not very many years ago. Its power output is not far off double that of the 911 Carrera you could buy when I started doing this job 30 years ago. And that never felt slow to me.

Today the 992 feels relentlessly rapid, accelerating straight up to 130mph in one soaring surge, scarcely interrupted by the deftly slurred shifts from its new eight-speed double clutch transmission. Fret not: a manual is coming later in the year. The engine sounds quieter to me, but even more responsive.

The bigger change comes when you reach a corner. The 992 bites into an apex like no standard 991 ever drove, doubtless thanks at least in part to a considerable widening of the car's front track. I guess you might say strong understeer has been part of the 911 proposition for decades, but it's one characteristic I won't miss. The car is more neutral on the way in, and you can leave it to the electronics to ensure things stay tidy on the way out.

And if you don't want to do that, then switch them all off and drift like a god in the hope that no one watching will realise how easy it is. No normal 911 was ever as well balanced as this apart from, perhaps, the very earliest. Of course, the four-wheel-drive Carrera 4S is far less playful, which I guess is how its owners want it, but I still don't understand the appeal: why pay more for a car that's a little slower, a little more costly to run, a little less quick to respond and a lot less fun to drive hard? If you need traction in bad weather - and all 911s have always had fabulous traction as standard - might I recommend you save yourself a packet and invest in a set of winter tyres instead?

I could have driven the Carrera S until the fuel tank ran dry. For all its fearsome technology, it's an essentially simple soul, one that just wants to be driven hard and far, but which will happily revert to being high quality, user-friendly daily transport whenever that moment sadly arrives. I know most owners will never take their car to a track and I know the road is no place to exercise a car of this potential to the full, so I fear many will never realise just what a car they've bought. I suspect there's no other car you can use every day costing less than a six-figure sum that's even in the same street as this. Achleitner saved his best 'till last.

PORSCHE 911 CARRERA 2S



- **Price** £93,110 **Engine** 3.0 litres, 6 cylinders, turbocharged
- **Power** 444bhp@6500rpm
- **Weight** 1515kg
- **Power to weight** 293bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** eight-speed double clutch, rear-wheel drive
- **0-60mph** 3.5sec **Top speed** 191mph
- **Economy** 31.7mpg **CO2** 204g/km
- **Verdict** The 911 just gets better, for now

Bright spark

Audi's new e-tron electric SUV with a practical range



THE REAL BATTLE FOR THE hearts and minds of those who want an electric car, or will shortly feel they have no choice but to buy one, starts here. Here's an Audi: a full-sized SUV-type family car, as electric as your toaster and about as mainstream, too. Tesla is the citadel and the rocks are now flying.

So Audi flew us to the Middle East, where there'd be no chance of needing the heating, headlights, windscreen wipers or any of those juice-sapping conveniences that constitute so much of the reality gap between claimed and actual range for electric cars. But nor did they appear to know about the 100mph speed limit just introduced on a new Abu Dhabi motorway, so I made its batteries drag two and half tonnes of metal through the air at an even tonne then, when we got lost, went quite a lot faster on a gravel road.

But the thing still did more than 200 miles before I got to lunch, where specially provided 150kW chargers gave me 200 more in little more than 20 minutes. And suddenly it all started to make sense.

The e-tron provides a perfectly pleasant place. It doesn't handle at all, but then few who buy one will care. It's Bodleian quiet, exceptionally comfortable and has a well laid out and presentable interior.

The e-tron shows how easy and, yes, how pleasant electric cars can be. But now show me one that's great to drive...

AUDI E-TRON

- **Price** £71,490 **Engine** front and rear electric motors **Power** 404bhp
- **Weight** 2490kg
- **Power to weight** 162bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** single-speed automatic
- **0-60mph** 5.7sec **Top speed** 155mph
- **Economy** 248 miles **CO2** 0g/km
- **Verdict** Solid start, but lacks fun factor

Size is no barrier, sense is

Capable design, but the X5 is no match for superior siblings



I'M SURE YOU DON'T HABITUALLY FEEL sorry for car manufacturers, but you might find it instructive to consider some of the things that they have to factor in to every car they design. Homologation legislation and crash testing plays havoc with design, which is why there are so few good-looking cars any more. People expect more features and luxury, yet also want less weight and greater economy.

Now consider the lot of the SUV designer: they now face the fact that customers might want a car that looks like an SUV, but they certainly don't want it to drive like one. So although I am no fan of the SUV genre, I do admire those who manage to persuade a car as high and heavy as this new BMW X5 to be as good to drive as it is.

No, this is no sports car. But it is a capable thing, offering strong performance from its 3-litre diesel motor, accurate steering and composed manners. That it also manages to ride reasonably well is commendable, too. Its interior is spacious, its operating system beyond serious reproach.

Just don't spend too much time working out how much quicker, more frugal and cheaper a 5-series Touring will be when specified with four-wheel drive and the same engine, and definitely don't drive one and discover how much more fun it is. Yes, the X5 has seven seats and a (slightly) bigger boot if you fold down the rear seats, but to me that's not enough. The X5 is a convincing example of an art that is very hard to master, and harder still to love.

BMW X5 30D MSPORT

- **Price** £60,995
- **Engine** 3.0 litres, 6 cylinders, turbo
- **Power** 261bhp@4000rpm
- **Weight** 2110kg
- **Power to weight** 124bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** eight speed auto, four-wheel drive
- **0-60mph** 6.5sec **Top speed** 143mph
- **Economy** 45.6mpg **CO2** 162g/km
- **Verdict** Buy an estate instead



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HORTONS BOOKS

Swooning sixties

Gordon Cruickshank discovers a sumptuous record of Italian car design





BERLINETTA '60S – EXCEPTIONAL COUPÉS OF THE SIXTIES
Xavier de Nombel & Christian Descombes
Published by Dalton Watson Fine Books, £125
ISBN: 978-1-854432-99-5

WITH ITS STARTLING yellow cover this is clearly a book led by design, and it follows the same authors' similar work about 1950s Italian coupés. Niche works? Yes – and why not? Setting aside the chrome-plated, futuristic but barely practical jet fighter inspirations that American design houses were creating, it was Italian design houses which led the automotive aesthetic advance in the two decades after WWII. Pininfarina's ground-breaking Cisitalia 202 coupé of 1947 finally banished separate wings, instead integrating them into one shell with a continuous wing line, and though hand built in limited numbers its influence was overwhelming. One example remains in the permanent collection of New York's Museum of Modern Art.

Having illustrated that first post-war decade in their previous book, the authors have now turned to the 1960s, a period of increasing prosperity when designers had more freedom, and more customers, than ever to realise their concepts, exploiting the hand skills of Italian artisans to turn sketch into metal. It was not just the Ferraris and Alfa Romeos which provided bases for these exciting creations; as this book lavishly demonstrates, small coachbuilders at home and makers from Britain, the US and France also turned to Milan, Turin and Modena to clothe otherwise mundane products, mostly for motor shows but occasionally bringing the results to production.

Both authors are well qualified: de Nombel has photographed beautiful cars for many magazines and has his own collection, while Descombes has been part of French magazine *Automobiles Classiques* for 25 years, and their collaboration provides a picture of Italian car design through this period, including cars which might have passed you by such as the ATS Allemano, Apollo 5000GT, and Bizzarrini Manta.

This was a significant period in car design, embracing the arrival of mid-engined architecture which meant the fading away of the 'long bonnet equals power' mantra and a new vocabulary of visual balance, with rear air intakes and shovel noses presaging the angular wedges of the 1970s.

In something of a coup for the book it is one of the greatest of those artists in metal who provides the foreword – Giorgetto Giugiaro, author of Alfa's Giulia GT, Maserati Ghibli, Alfasud and Golf as well as a string of supercar concepts – and he offers a wealth of information and insight about how these new shapes required new techniques, and about the lesser-known people in the tight community of Italian coach-building. He is openly admiring of many cars from his peers and rivals, notably Marcello Gandini, author of the timelessly wonderful Lamborghini Miura, and also draws a parallel between 1970s car and furniture design, when seating went lower and lower and so did cars: it was after all the era of beanbags, and designers had a sort of limbo-dancing rivalry to squash their cars as flat as possible. Bertone's 1968





Left: Lombardi-bodied Abarth. Above, Giugiaro's 1963 Corvair Testudo concept



"Designers had a sort of limbo-dancing rivalry to squash their cars as flat as possible"

Alfa Romeo Carabo was just 39in high, while Gandini's 1970 Lancia Stratos Zero was almost two-dimensional, requiring the driver to step in via its near-horizontal opening windscreen. Any distinction between cabin and body disappeared as nose flowed into roof into tail, where of course the engine resided - only a mid-engined machine could be made as flat as any racing car.

This was when Giugiaro started his own studio, Italdesign, soon to be a revered name, and of course his first solo project, the Bizzarrini Manta concept, follows the same line with a windscreen lying at 15 degrees to the road. The visibility, he admits, was terrible which is why he put three slats in the nose that the driver could look through; it's this sort of detail which makes this work so interesting, and it is highlighted by including some of Giugiaro's own sketch designs slotted in on tracing paper like views in a 19th-century novel.

The main body of the book is grouped into sections from the decade's newcomers - Iso, Bizzarrini - through limited editions from the big names up to concept cars with little likelihood of production but designed to be catchy billboards for manufacturers - and of course individual design houses. Pointing out that design houses were now vigorous rivals for larger-scale work, Descombes calls them "bait" for the big makers. Every model, even the one-offs, gets the same attention, with its own body of text offering copious information and generous photographs taken by de Nombel specifically for this book. For example the Alfa-engined Aguzzoli Condor (of which only two, one horrible, one pretty, were built by an optimistic ham magnate in Parma) occupies similar space to the well-known Miura.

I met several cars new to me, such as an extremely pretty Touring-bodied OSCA 1600GT, and I learned a new word too - "elaborati", referring to tricked-up versions of series cars, which is what small workshops were forced to switch to once unitary construction ended the supply of separate chassis to build on. Short summaries of each coachbuilder are a handy addition, and the smooth translation deserves a mention.

If car design excites you this era must be a highlight, and Italy a favourite locality. With its combination of industry context, individual focus and fine presentation in a slip cover, it's a book to savour.

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750MC action – the spice of racing wherever you finish, says Dave Roberts

The surprising benefits of racing at the back

Has there ever been a book about life as a tail-ender with the 750 Motor Club? Well, there is now, says **Simon Arron**

SEARCH UNDER THE 'MOTOR sports' tab at Amazon Books and 'Ferrari' throws up 301 results, 'Porsche' some 158 and 'Lewis Hamilton' 98. Attempt the same exercise with 'Dave Roberts' and it returns only this, so it's safe to say he's breaking fresh ground. (Don't confuse him with the Dave Roberts who has written a legion of books about non-league football.)

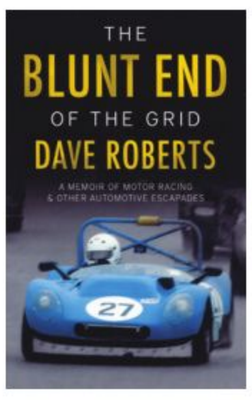
A refreshing antidote to bland paeans about the overly familiar, it's a self-deprecating look at motor racing - and other automotive matters - through the eyes of somebody who took up the sport fairly late, admits he hasn't always approached it in the most logical manner and has always been happy simply to be on the track whenever he finishes first or, far more likely, 21st.

Whether he's writing about the drawbacks of buying any car with a British Leyland logo on its flanks, his time as a taxi driver, life in the paddock at 750 Motor Club meetings or the rather obvious flaw in buying a second kit car when your first isn't yet finished, Roberts has a gentle, engaging writing style that makes adversity sound vaguely appealing. He also captures the true spirit of a nation's grass roots.

I have to confess to feeling a certain - and unexpected - personal resonance, too, while perusing the early chapters. Roberts was schooled in Manchester, as I was, and makes reference to the long-demolished Aaben in Hulme, a popular arts cinema located in what was once (particularly during the 1970s) a notoriously crime-ridden suburb. Dispatched by a French teacher to watch some *film noir*, as a denizen of William Hulme's Grammar School I always felt somewhat vulnerable wandering the streets in a freshly pressed blazer.

Roberts turned up there in an MGB, politely declined when a young lad asked, "Can I look after your car, mister?" and returned to find a brick through his rear window - a sliver of familiarity that probably shouldn't have made me smile, but did.

In the publisher's words this is "a defiantly unprofessional memoir". In mine, it's all the better for it.



THE BLUNT END OF THE GRID
Dave Roberts
Published by The Book Guild, £9.99
ISBN: 978-1-912575-64-0

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AUTOCOURSE 2018-2019

Edited by Tony Dodgins

Now 68 seasons young, *Autocourse* is as much a part of each grand prix season as Ferrari political implosions – and also proof that print is alive and well in a digital world. There are few things more comforting than plonking oneself in an armchair towards the year's end, smothering a few cubes of ice with a generous helping of malt and reliving the peaks and troughs of the campaign just past.

Autocourse has always been a watchword for high quality – and remains so on the watch of the current regime. **SA**

Published by Icon, £55.00
ISBN: 978-1-910584-31-6

SCIENCE OF SUPERCARS

Martin Roach, Neil Waterman and John Morrison

A laudable idea – a history of supercars built around the science inside with long sidebars on various tech aspects and input from Gordon Murray and Adrian Newey adding gravitas.

Yet something doesn't gel. It doesn't bode well to read that "1918-38 is not a high watermark for supercars..." before listing syncromesh, twin cams and supercharging in the era. What about the Alfa Romeo 2900B and Bugatti 57SC? And are turbos really the most significant supercar feature? Not dear, but could have been better. **GC**

Published by Mitchell Beazley, £20
ISBN: 978-1-78472-363-7

THE ALL-BRITISH MARENDAZ SPECIAL – THE MAN, THE CARS, THE AEROPLANES

Graham Skillen

Better than a Bentley? That was what Marendaz claimed about his cars – but then this dogmatic man spent his life making unbacked assertions. Marendaz wrote often to *Motor Sport* criticising WB and his "fraudulent" work and I too suffered his phone complaints.

Skillen kindly suggests that unjust wartime internment broke the man, but his detailed story implies he was always a bad-tempered dreamer. Impressively researched, this must be the last word on a colourful blusterer. **GC**

Fonthill Media, £25
ISBN: 978-1-78155-702-0

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The new designer chairs that are inspired by racing legends

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY? NO? WELL PERHAPS A CUSTOM-designed chair inspired by a legendary automobile might fix the issue? On second thoughts perhaps it won't, but either way you'll end up with something truly unique.

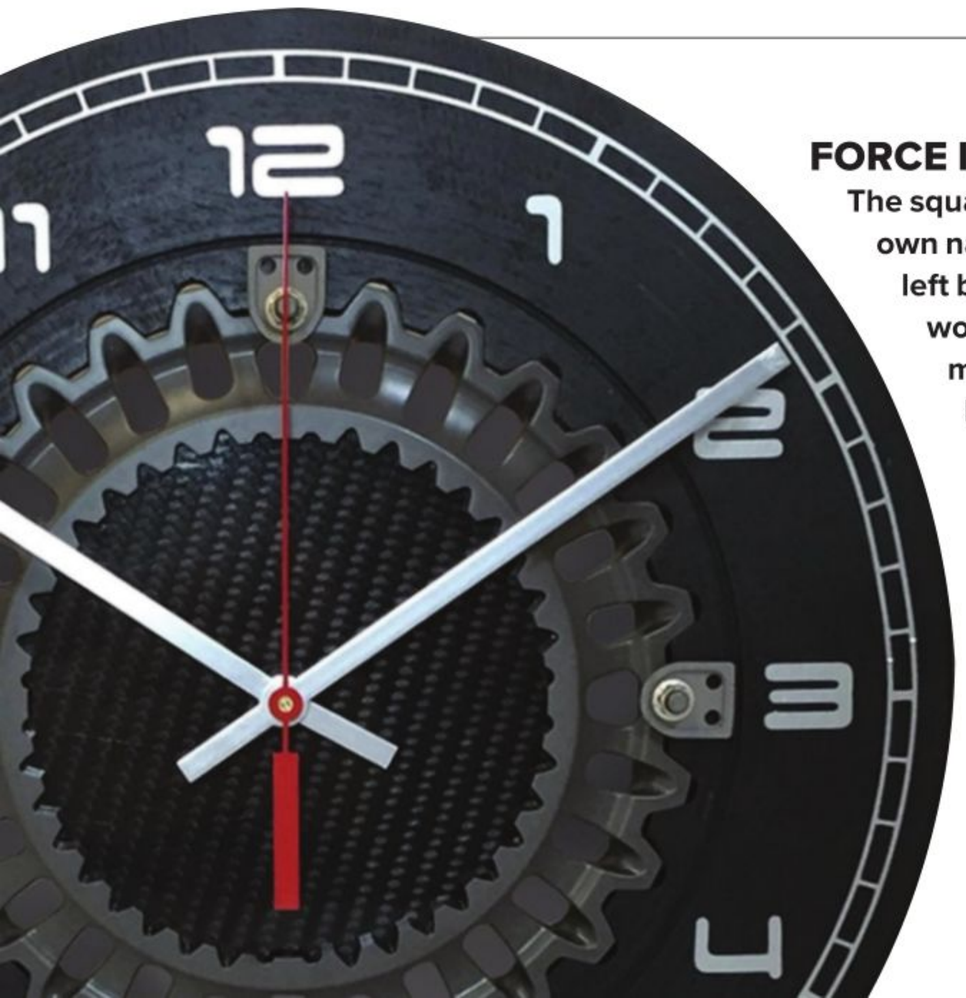
Sculptor and designer Adam Williams has the sport in his blood, seeing as his father George was Castrol's head of motor sport. Williams has been creating these eye-catching chairs as one-off commissions. His designs so far have drawn inspiration from Nick Mason's Ferrari 250 GTO, a Ford GT40, Cobra Daytona and a 1950s Bentley Continental. Each chair is inspired by key features, lines and design cues from the specific car, and made from different material, depending on what the car itself used. They have a lead time of 12-14 weeks.

They don't come cheap though: Williams estimates each commission to range between £10,000-15,000, *adamwilliamsdesign.co.uk*



ROTA PRESS POSTERS

New British publishing house ROTA Press has been founded by illustrator Guy Allen and former *Motor Sport* staffer Richard Heseltine and specialises in producing both modern and retro motoring posters and print art. Many of the designs stem from original event imagery, and are either designed true to history or stylised into a bespoke piece. From £20, *rotapress.co.uk*



FORCE INDIA BRAKE CLOCK

The squad may be unable to decide upon its own name at time of writing, but the legacy left behind by the original Force India era won't be forgotten in a hurry. The squad made itself into F1's modern-day giant killer with a string of overachievements. This wall clock is produced from a carbon brake disc that was actually raced by either Paul di Resta or Nico Hülkenberg in their VJM05s during 2012. Each disc retains its original titanium bell and bolts and has a carbon-black face. It comes gift-boxed with a certificate of authenticity from Force India. £495, *f1store.formula1.com*

LEGO McLAREN SENNA



Lego. It's just for kids, right? Not for those of us determined never to fully grow up and Lego's Speed Champions series is a haven for fans of brick-based scale model kits that are definitely not toys. Its latest offering is a homage to the McLaren Senna hypercar, following on from its limited editions of the P1 and 720S. Instead of an 800bhp V8, you get 219 pieces to create the 15cm model and it even comes with its own wind tunnel. It's available now and is frankly a bargain. Some may even suggest it's prettier than the real thing... £12.99, *shop.lego.com*

SCALEXTRIC LEGENDS FORD GT40 SET

Some Scalextric models are built to crash; the Legends sets however are rather more special. Limited to 2000, this one celebrates 50 years since Ford's iconic GT40 completed its hat-trick at Le Mans in 1968 (although it also won in '69). The set features a 1:32 scale model of all three GT40 entries from that year, all bedecked in their famous Gulf Oils colours.
£129.99, *scalextric.com*



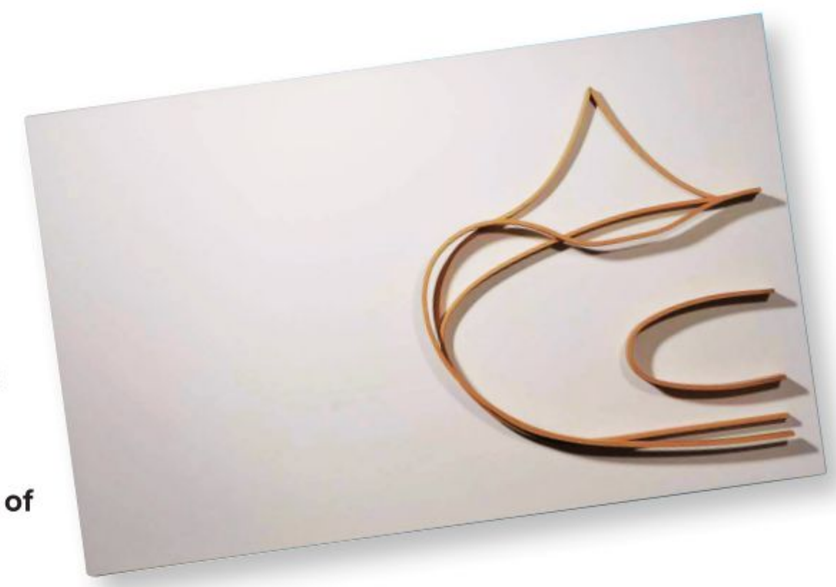


PORSCHE DESIGN KITCHEN KNIVES

Bring some German engineering to your dinner table with a set of Porsche Design kitchen knives. Designed by Ferdinand Alexander Porsche – the grandson of marque founder Ferdinand Porsche and son of Ferry. The Chroma Type 301 knives feature ergonomic handles and Japanese 301 steel blades, meaning each is very light. Downsides? They're not dishwasher friendly. £45-130, *porsche-design.com*

JAGUAR D-TYPE 1955 ART

Using wood, metal or carbon fibre Jonny Ambrose produces 3D representations of famous race tracks and handsome cars, including this minimalist Jaguar artwork whose beechwood strips delineate cross-sections of the Le Mans-winning D-type. £800, *jonnyambrose.com*



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automobilia-uk.com



IMSA prototypes will take centre stage, with WEC as their warm-up act...

Feast of endurance

The world's leading sports car teams descend on Sebring for a high-profile double-header

March 13-16, Sebring International Raceway, Florida

MINI BREAK

AT THE HEART OF THE WORLD Endurance Championship's 'super-season', book-ended by consecutive editions of the Le Mans 24 Hours race, long-distance racing aficionados can feast on 'Super Sebring', one of the most intense racing weekends to be found on the calendar.

The Floridian airfield venue returns to the WEC schedule for the first time since 2012 - and the revived 1000-mile race runs from 4pm until midnight on Friday March 15, while the traditional Sebring 12 Hours, a round of the IMSA WeatherTech Sports Car Championship, follows it, beginning at midday on Saturday.

Sebring marks be the sixth of eight rounds on the 2018-19 WEC schedule. Sole surviving LMP1 entrant Toyota has won all previous races on the road, but lost first and second places at Silverstone last August when both its cars failed post-race scrutineering... after finishing four laps clear of closest rival Rebellion. Things are likely to be rather less one-sided in IMSA's pace-setting DPi division, which last season produced seven winners from 10 races. Both series traditionally serve up intense competition in the GT classes; there are no fewer than eight manufacturers - Lexus, Acura, Mercedes, Audi, Lamborghini, Ferrari, Porsche and BMW - on IMSA's GTD (GT3) entry list.

The meeting also features rounds of both the Michelin Pilot Challenge (two hours, for GT4 and TCR cars) and IMSA Prototype Challenge (1hr 45 min, for LMP3s).

Practice begins on Wednesday, March 16 and a four-day pass can be purchased in advance for $110 - £85 at the time of writing and exceptional value by the standards of the modern age.

You can obtain further information at sebringraceway.com; for advance admission, go to tickets.sebringraceway.com.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

- **HOW TO GET THERE** The most practical option for Europeans is to book a direct return flight to Orlando – about £300 if purchased in good time and 80 miles away via I-4W and US-27S.
- **ALSO GOING ON** Early birds could take in the world dragbike nationals (March 9) at Orlando Speed World Dragway.
- **DON'T MISS** The Hall of Fame is an on-site museum, which each year displays a collection of cars from Sebring's illustrious racing history.

RACE RETRO 2019

February 22-24, Stoneleigh Park, Warks

Historic race and rally show, promoted in conjunction with *Motor Sport* (preview p108). A fusion of cars, bikes, star guests and automobilia, embellished by a live rally stage (Saturday and Sunday only).

MOTOGP: ROUND 1

March 10, Losail, Qatar

The first of this season's 19 MotoGP rounds – and opening bout in a compelling tussle between Honda duo Marc Márquez and Jorge Lorenzo. And Valentino Rossi is still there, aged 40.



FORMULA 1: ROUND 1

March 17, Melbourne, Australia

The dust seems barely to have settled on Lewis Hamilton's fifth F1 title, but the moment is nigh for pursuit of number six. Will Ferrari's Vettel/Leclerc partnership be able to stop him?

BARC RACE MEETING

March 23, Oulton Park, Cheshire

Car racing returns from its seasonal UK hibernation with a BARC clubbie featuring classic touring cars and more. The alternative? A concurrent BRSCC meeting at Brands Hatch, Kent.

HSCC SEASON-OPENER

March 30, Donington Park, Leicestershire

The Historic Sports Car Club's year begins in the shadow of East Midlands Airport. Bill includes touring cars, Formula Ford (1600 & 2000), Guards Trophy sports/GTs, road sports and Classic F3.

MORE FEBRUARY/MARCH EVENTS

Feb 22	SUPERBIKE WC Phillip Island, Aus
Feb 24	NASCAR Atlanta, USA
Mar 3	STAGE RALLY Donington Park, Leics
Mar 7-10	WRC Rally Mexico
Mar 10	INDYCAR St Petersburg, USA
Mar 23	FORMULA E Sanya, China
Mar 24	INDYCAR Austin, USA
Mar 30	MG CC Silverstone, Northants

Abu Dhabi Grand Prix with Best of India and Sri Lanka Cruise

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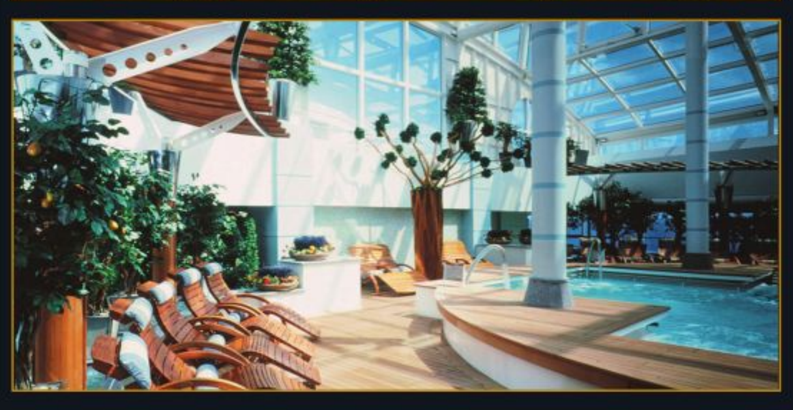












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Timing a Spitfire around the world

IWC has produced a watch in honour of a restored fighter plane's epic forthcoming expedition

THERE CAN'T BE MANY PEOPLE who are not moved by the sight and sound of a Spitfire (the aircraft I mean, not the Triumph roadster), so we can expect emotions to run high on August 18 when a gleaming, mirror-polished example that completed a remarkable 51 combat missions during WWII takes to the skies on the first leg of a round-the-world flight.

The aptly named Silver Spitfire will be flown in rotation by pilots Steve Brooks and Matt Jones across as many as 30 countries and some of the world's greatest landmarks, from the Grand Canyon in the west to Mount Fuji in the east. If successful, the 27,000-mile, four-month trip will enter the record books as the first global circumnavigation by a Spitfire, a plane originally designed for short-haul missions.

The Silver Spitfire is a MKIX that was delivered in 1943 before serving with various UK-based RAF squadrons. She suffered damage from a 'wheels-up' landing at Ford, Sussex in May 1944.

Once repaired, MJ271 ended up in the Netherlands with the Canadian pilots of 401 Squadron, with whom she carried out no fewer than 10 dive bombing raids before being declared "over-stressed" in December 1944 and removed from active service.

For more than 70 years the aircraft was kept mothballed by the Royal Netherlands Air Force before being taken over by Brooks, a property developer and record-breaking pilot who co-founded the Goodwood-based Boultbee Flight Academy with Jones almost a decade ago, after buying a two-seat Spitfire at auction.

The Silver Spitfire is currently undergoing a ground-up restoration at the RAF Museum, Duxford, and is due to make its first shakedown flights in April prior to being used to promote the round-the-world bid.

The expedition will largely be financed by sponsorship and one of the main backers is watch brand IWC, which has produced a special, 250-piece Longest Flight edition of its Timezoner model, examples of which will be worn by Brooks and Jones.



The stainless steel case, black dial and green textile strap echo the finishes of a Spitfire cockpit - but the movement powering the watch is interesting in its own right, since it features IWC's ingenious Timezoner mechanism.

Developed from the 2003 invention of entrepreneur Mike Vogt, which launched under the Vogard dial name, the system makes it possible instantly to adjust the watch to display the time in any one of 24 different zones around the world.

The case back, meanwhile, is decorated with an outline of a Spitfire above a stylised globe and the relevant edition number.

IWC Pilot's Watch Timezoner Spitfire Edition The Longest Flight. £11,290
www.iwc.com



IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A RETRO-inspired driver's watch from a historic Swiss name but don't fancy shelling out for one of the more obvious mechanical models, Zodiac's Grand Rally might be worth a look.

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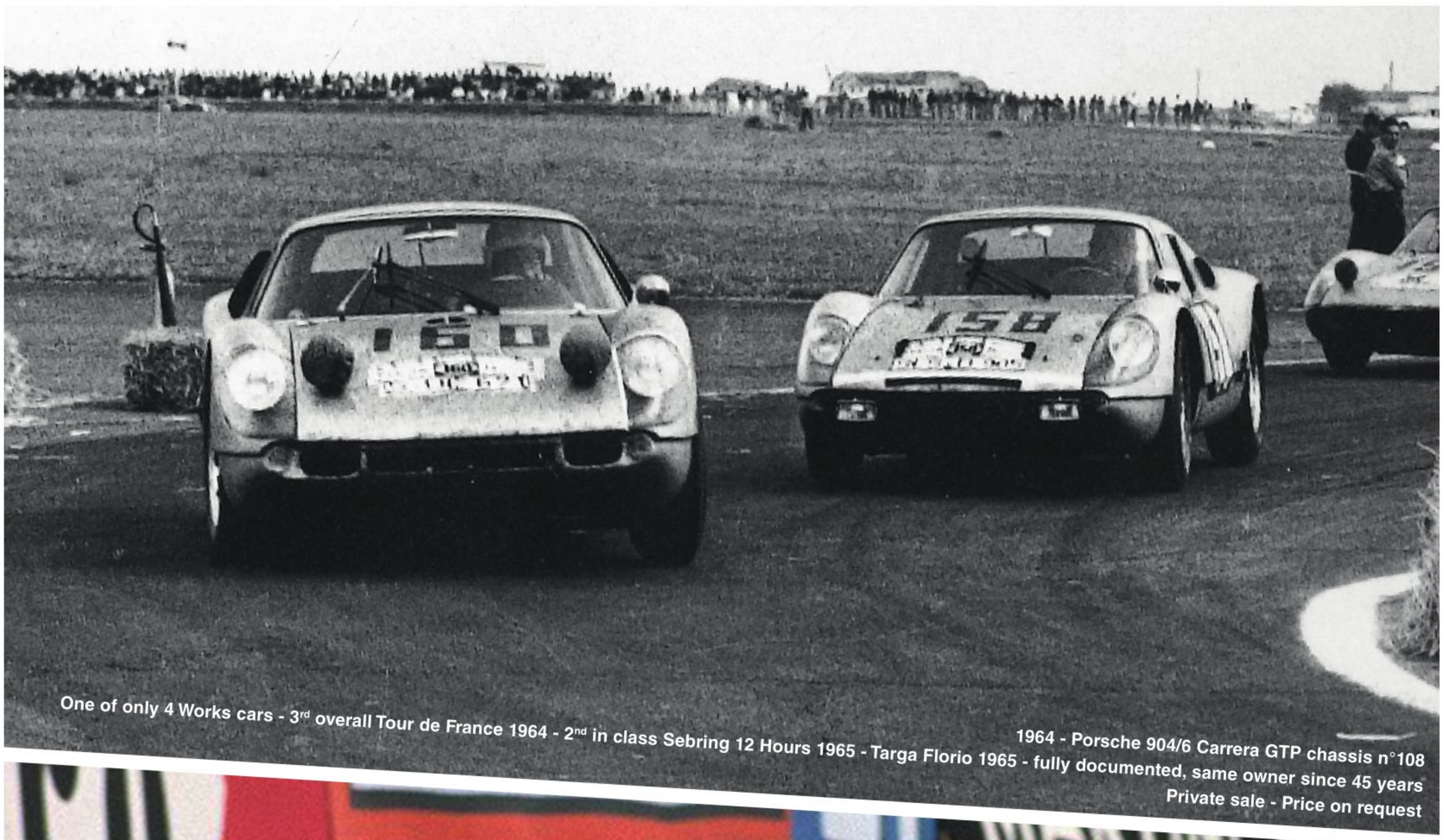
ALTHOUGH NOT DESIGNED FOR the wrist, the Time Fast D8 deserves a place in *Precision* for obvious reasons. Arguably the ultimate in clockwork cars, it was designed by Georg Foster, a student at Lausanne's École Cantonale d'Art, and is produced by Switzerland's leading high-end clock maker L'Epée, founded in 1839. The eight-day mechanical movement is wound via the rear wheels, while the time is adjusted by turning the steering wheel. *£21,500*
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Motor Sport's monthly watch review _Precision_ is written by renowned luxury goods specialist Simon de Burton

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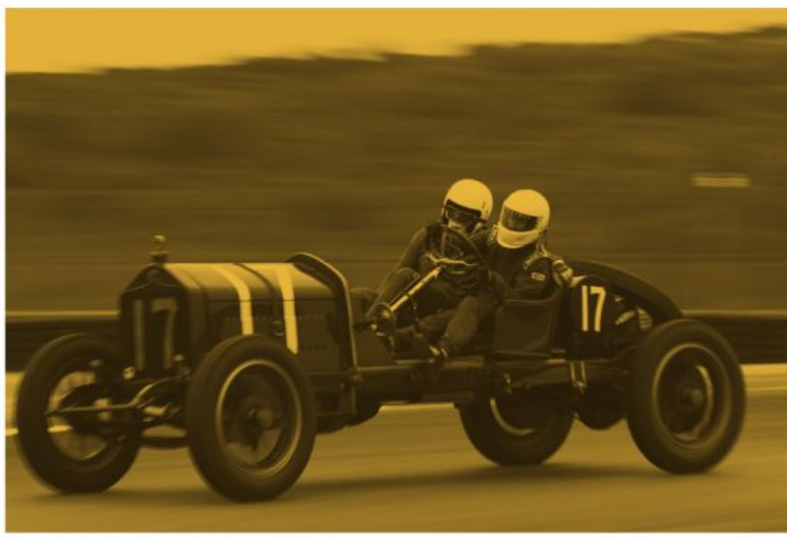
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DAN BATHIE

Sam still hopes to make it to F1, where his father David raced briefly, but accepts that a career as a paid pro is more realistic

RACING LIVES

David & Sam Brabham

THEIR NAME IS RICH IN RACING pedigree. David, 53, is the youngest racing son of triple world champion Jack Brabham; his own single-seater hopes stalled after winning the 1989 British F3 title, but a long, successful sports car career included one outright victory and two further class wins at Le Mans. His 24-year-old son Sam's ambitions have been on hold for a couple of years, following early signs of promise in Formula Ford, but he hopes to be back on track soon. Here, father and son talk about what it was like growing up with the Brabham name and the changing racing scene.

DAVID: My upbringing was different from Sam's. I was born in Wimbledon but when Dad retired, in late 1970, I was four and a half and we shipped out to Sydney. At 13, I was sent to an agricultural boarding school, as the family groomed me to run our farm in Wagga Wagga. It was 4500 acres, just outside Wagga. You could do anything you wanted and I loved being outdoors. But it wasn't easy. We had droughts and floods.

Whatever I was driving around the farm, I'd be flat out and sideways. I didn't realise it at the time, but this was race training, giving me car control, feel and quick reactions as I balanced a car or truck.

I didn't buy a kart until I was 17, going halves on a second-hand chassis with a pal and paying for everything through the money I made on the farm. Once I started in Formula Ford, Dad paid for a car and after that I was lucky enough to get free drives.

It was the opposite for Sam. He was at boarding school and about 14 when he first expressed interest in getting a kart. I wasn't sure how serious he was; did he really want to follow in the family footsteps, or did he just want to mess about?

At the same time, I was in the middle of an expensive court case [to protect the rights to the Brabham name], and I didn't have funds to pay for his racing. And even in karting you need a lot of money today.

That was painful. People would assume that a Brabham would have money behind them, but no. I could see he wanted to get out there, but I had to focus on the long-term legacy - the next chapter of Brabham.

So the early phase of his career was sacrificed, in a sense. And to be brutally honest, karts didn't suit his style - and I told him as much. The way he'd enter a corner and rotate the kart wasn't the best

technique; it was better suited to a car.

When he did get his drive in Formula Ford, he qualified seventh for his first race at Donington Park yet was still learning the track, as he'd not had a test day. His sector times at Craner Curves, McLeans and Coppice were the fastest in the race. Afterwards, Nick Tandy, who owned the JTR race team running Sam, said, "Are you sure he's not driven a racing car before? That's not what we expected!"

As an active racer, Lisa [David's wife] and I had to make some tough calls about Sam coming to my races. I remember when we made him stay at school for a cross-country running race and he desperately wanted to come and watch me at Le Mans, with Aston Martin. Lisa and I put our foot down, saying, "You've made a commitment; you have to keep it." He was pretty cross...

I didn't plan to enter F1 the way I did. I got a call from Middlebridge Racing, the F3000 team for whom I'd signed in 1990 after winning the previous year's British F3 championship, and they told me they were concentrating on F1. They'd acquired control of Brabham and basically said, "You either race with us in F1 or find a new home" – not something I fancied at that stage.

So I took the drive, not knowing that the show was imploding. My F1 dream was quickly shattered. There was no money for engines; no money for anything. It was a disaster. All my momentum after winning F3 just stopped.

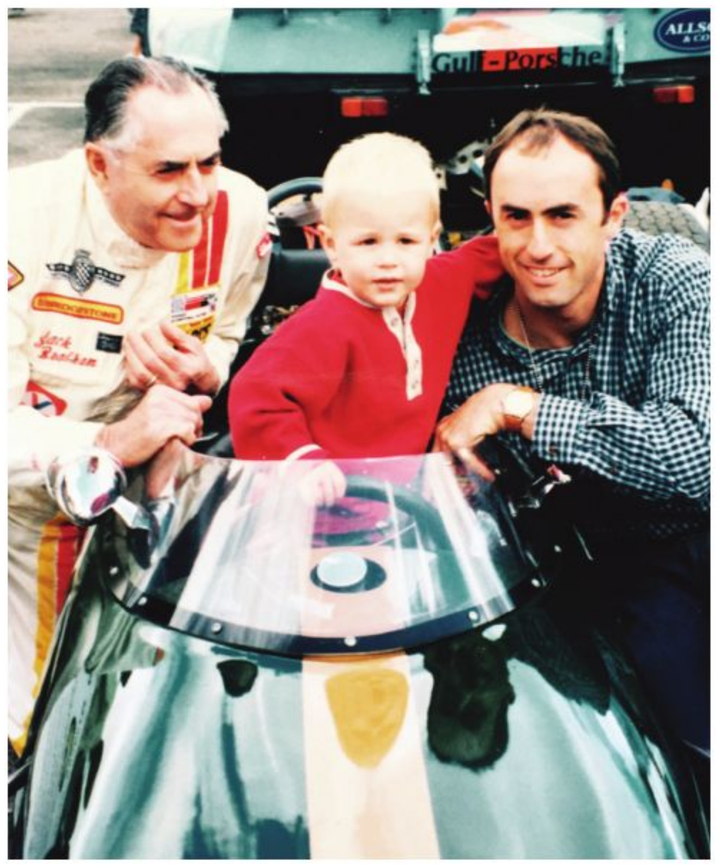
For Sam and drivers of his generation, you have to work a lot harder to secure sponsorship. That's another reason why I set about rebuilding the Brabham brand, to develop opportunities.

Brabham will return to racing: we aim to take the BT62, the first car from my own company Brabham Automotive, to Le Mans in 2021. The first deliveries of the BT62 track car will be in July, and I'm proud of what our team has achieved in such a short space of time. Sam can be a part of that.

"The BT62 is insane – by far the quickest thing I've driven. I want to race it"

If there was one car from my career that I could fix for Sam to drive, it would probably be the Jaguar XJ-R14. It was a magic thing.

Dad was a private man, but when he gave you advice, it went right through you. Once, he tapped his fingers on his head, and said, "David, it's all in the head." It's advice I passed on to Sam: you have to set your goals, make things happen. No one can do it but you.



The generation game: Sir Jack Brabham (left) with a very young Sam and David

SAM: When I was growing up, Jack was just my granddad, no different to anyone else's granddad. That's why Ayrton Senna was someone I looked up to.

I first became aware of the significance of my family name after I went to boarding school. My art teacher - obviously a racing fan - wrote 'Jack' on my exercise book and was terribly apologetic once he realised his mistake. Then it dawned on me and I started to look into it and ask questions at home.

Since Jack passed away I haven't been out to Australia much. Then, last October, Dad and I did a road trip to Oz.

We had a BT62 test arranged at Phillip Island and Dad was racing at Bathurst, as a guest of Toyota, and there was a gap of about a week and a half between – and we had a car on loan.

Dad hadn't been back to the farm for about 25 years – and I'd never visited. Seeing it put all the stories into perspective. According to Dad, some of the wallpaper was still the same as when he grew up there!

In 2009 the whole family went to watch Dad compete at Le Mans. He'd told me that it's rare a driver has a good chance to win Le Mans outright, so seeing the race unfold, appreciating the elements that it takes to win and feeling the emotion at the end was overwhelming.

At the time of the court case around the Brabham name I didn't really understand what was going on. As I got older, Dad told me it would give me a platform to do more. Now I understand what he was getting at. Seeing a professional athlete at home is probably what steered me to study sports science at university. Dad would be working out in the gym and that stuck with me. As did the mental side of things, which I came to appreciate is so important in the car. So during my studies I related a lot of the learning to motor sport, even though none of my tutors touched on it.

Dad taught me about visualisation. When I was young, I might have been able to picture a clear lap but my clarity wasn't great. He helped me to speed everything up on the laps, visualise clipping each apex and even work on start strategy.

To be honest, finding sponsorship was much more of a challenge than the physical and mental side of things. In sponsorship pitches, sometimes those who were familiar with our name assumed we'd have money and wonder why we were knocking at their door. But that only makes you fight harder and appreciate everything you achieve.

The hand-to-mouth way of racing eventually caught up with me in Formula Ford, when I crashed at Oulton Park [in 2014]. A rear suspension arm collapsed, sending the car onto the grass, and then it rolled. It all happened so quickly. After that, unfortunately, the money was exhausted.

Since then, I've been making a living doing customer demonstration drives, with car manufacturers, and private coaching.

There was also a spell working with Wirth Research, helping Honda develop its IndyCar. Justin Wilson was one of the drivers and I worked with him on the project to develop the car for road courses. It was tragic to see him lose his life in a freak accident.

I haven't given up on my F1 dream, but the most realistic goal is to be a professional, paid driver within five years. I had a run in the Porsche Carrera Cup series and went well. I reckon we've got three-quarters of the budget to race in whichever series we choose, with time to raise the final chunk.

Brabham Automotive is exciting. I've seen how Dad's fought to keep the heritage going, and to have the family involved in that would be fantastic. His car, the BT62, is insane, by far the quickest thing I've ever driven. It made an LMP3 car feel slow. My ambition is not just to have my family name on the badge – I want to race it.

Sometimes I'm asked whether drivers could be replaced by a computer, but I don't believe we'll ever be redundant. People want to cheer on heroes and hopefully I can give them another Brabham to support.

Interview by James Mills

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Stéphane Ratel, the architect of modern GT racing, lunching at The Ivy restaurant on London's King's Road

LUNCH WITH

Stéphane Ratel

Would GT racing even exist without this pioneering Frenchman? **Robert Ladbrook** hears how Ratel has led the revival, and growth, of a major branch of the sport over the last 25 years

LIKE MANY GREAT MOTORING tales, this one began with a Mk1 Volkswagen Golf. Unlike many great motoring tales, that small German hatchback inadvertently spawned the rebirth of GT racing and sparked Stéphane Ratel's global empire.

Currently running 12 championships, the modestly named Stéphane Ratel Organisation has grown to be a powerhouse of modern racing. Its flagship Blancpain GT Series is the world's leading category of its kind and SRO counts major events such as the Spa 24 Hours, Bathurst 12 Hours and FIA GT World Cup among its portfolio. This year alone, it will host 100 championship rounds across 53 events on five continents. No other independent race organiser can match those figures. It's fair to say that it's been a busy quarter-century for Ratel and the SRO.

To learn more we arrange to meet at The Ivy Chelsea Garden on King's Road, close to SRO's office in London. It's a city Ratel knows well from the 1980s, when he plied his trade through car dealing and high-end fashion retail – as his Dolce & Gabbana suit, Thomas Pink shirt and Hermès tie testify. Yet there's nothing flash or arrogant about him. Ratel is incredibly aware of his own roots, regardless of his current position. "You know," he says, "the first race meeting I ever attended was the first one I organised!"

LUNCH WITH *Stéphane Ratel*

Sounds a bizarre fact, but it's true.

Born in Perpignan, France, in July 1963, Ratel's family had no motor sport background - nor even a particular interest in cars. Instead, he found his way into race organisation mostly by chance.

"Everybody thinks that I was a racer first and then turned into a promoter," he says. "But it's almost completely the other way around as I was a promoter first without ever really being aware of it.

"It's weird because I got into cars and motor sport via business, first and foremost. I didn't grow up with flash cars and my family had zero interest in them. I don't think I ever heard my parents talk about cars. I never watched a race until I organised one, not even on TV. But life has a funny way of doing things. I just believe in taking the chances life gives you, and that's what's led me here. I've been running around pretty much non-stop for 25 years."

'Here' is arguably one of the most influential positions in the modern sport. Across the first 25 years of SRO, Ratel has found himself going from running legally questionable street races to forging alliances with Bernie Ecclestone and, eventually, becoming the figurehead for GT racing. He created GT3, GT4 and also defied the naysayers to begin a world championship for manufacturers in the face of near-overwhelming financial odds.

But where does that Golf come into it?



Ratel's first car was a VW Golf. He graduated to a Ferrari 275, bought from the father of a girlfriend

RATEL GREW UP IN PARIS IN THE care of his godfather, following the death of both parents and his sister when he was still a teenager. His family has a long military history. His father was an officer in the French Army while his godfather is a descendant of Maréchal Joffre (Marshal Joseph Joffre, who was instrumental in saving France by stopping the German advance to Paris in WW1, winning The Battle of the Marne in 1914).

Ratel did come from money - as he puts it, "Most kids had pocket money and parents, I had an inheritance" - but what he's gone on to create more than justifies his early expenditure.

Upon gaining his French Baccalaureate, Ratel's godfather bought him his first car - that Golf.

"I'd had a hard time in many ways growing up - but I just remember thinking at that point 'Wow, I'm going to get a car!' It wasn't something I spent much time considering, but the car of the moment back then was the Golf GTi," says Ratel. "So I got a Golf, but there was then the problem of insuring it in central Paris as an 18-year-old. It was almost impossible. The insurance was taking up a third of what I had to live on, but we found a loophole where you could insure a classic or historic car on specialist insurance for much less. The Golf had ignited my passion for cars, so I sold it and bought a VW Beetle - and a Jaguar E-type, which was strangely affordable back then!"

It was the 4.2-litre E-type that gave Ratel his first real taste of speed.

"My friend and I took it to Germany on the autobahn for a trip and I remember this Porsche 911 coming flying past us and my friend screaming at me 'Go after it, go after it!' So, of course, I go," he says. "We watched the speedo - 180-200-220kph and then... *booom*! The engine went blang, blang, blang with oil everywhere... but I had to learn while I was young. We sat on the hard shoulder with the engine in pieces and my friend was just shouting 'Crap old British cars - if you had a Porsche we'd be fine.' From that moment I wanted a Porsche, but I couldn't bring myself to ask my godfather for one as he was controlling my inheritance. Then the bank called to say my mother had some savings I had to collect... and inside this little safe was just enough cash for a 911. So I went and bought one, which was not a very reasonable thing to do, but my passion had really set in by then and there was no stopping me. But when I got the car my godfather wouldn't give me permission to park it outside the house!"

That Porsche came from a young French doctor named Jacques Tropenat, who had an image on the wall of the very car Ratel was buying. It was on a circuit. Tropenat - now the medical delegate for both the World Touring Car Cup and World Endurance Championship - introduced Ratel to track days via the Porsche Club of France.

That could have provided an ideal entry



point to the sport, but Ratel's attention was instead swayed by a silver Ferrari 275 GTB/4 owned by the father of a girlfriend. After wrangling with his godfather to allow him to "blow all my inheritance in probably the dumbest way possible - but I managed to convince him it would be a good investment" Ratel owned the car, but swapped it soon after for a more modern 512 BB.

"Then something nobody expected happened, the value of classic cars started to skyrocket - I sold the 512 BB for more money than I paid for it. Even though the value of my old 275 had basically doubled in comparison, it didn't stop me telling my godfather, 'See, I told you so!' That was my glory day..."

After completing his national service where he did duty as an intelligence officer for the French Air Force - something he still credits with making him a good public speaker - Ratel moved to California to study at university, where his first real business opportunity awaited.

"I got off the plane, went straight to a car dealership and there was a 512 in the window - exactly the same as the car I just sold in Europe, but it was half the price. So, my first day in America, and not speaking English very well, and I find this car at a bargain price and see an opportunity."

"Ratel counted figures like Sir Elton John as clientèle, until he lost it all"

With the US dollar strong against the European currencies, many Americans bought European-spec cars and shipped them out to the US. But when the currencies shifted the opposite way, the value of these 'grey market' cars plummeted. For Ratel, with European connections and cash to spend, it was unmissable. He began buying multiple cars and shipping them to Europe to resell at a profit.

"I remember buying the first car and taking it back home with me at Christmas on a plane. I sold it almost as soon as it arrived. I started buying and selling more and more cars, and made good money from it."

Ratel sold many cars at auction, avoiding VAT and import duties under EEC law at the time, and gradually developed a successful business. He even treated himself to his dream car - a white Lamborghini Countach, purchased from the Drug Enforcement Agency.

"There was a time when I lived in California, drove a white Lamborghini with white interior and wore a white suit, had long hair and a big gold Rolex... I looked like something out of Miami Vice," he says with a chuckle. "My conservative godfather took one look at me and... let's not say he insisted I go back to France, but it was strongly suggested."

With America off-limits, Ratel set up fashion shops in London's Sloane Street and St Tropez and counted celebrities such as Sir Elton John among his clientèle. But he lost almost everything in the financial crash of 1991. His car dealings collapsed, as did demand for his high-ticket fashion stock.

It was while Ratel was at his lowest ebb that motor sport first appeared on the horizon for him.

"I moved back to Paris and had a housewarming party with many friends and clients, and we decided to have a race," he says. "We knew about the Cannonball Run, so we all decided to drive from Paris to St Tropez, with the first one there getting a trophy. Soon a few magazines picked up on what we were doing and we got some cool coverage, and I guess that was the first event I ever organised - but looking back it was a hugely stupid thing to try and do!

"Regardless, we all enjoyed it and said we'd do it again. Then a law student friend of mine said to me, 'Don't dare do that again because if somebody has an accident, you'd be for it. If you must do it, rent a track.' So ▸



Ratel's breakthrough came with the 1992 Venturi Trophy

we did. One of my friends had a Venturi cars contact, who came to me and said: 'If you race a Countach or a Testarossa, you'll do two laps before you break it - so let us make you some cars instead."

Venturi and Ratel came to an agreement to produce 24 cars, each with lightweight chassis and 400bhp twin-turbocharged engines. In that deal the Venturi 400 Trophy was born for 1992. Ratel managed to sell 30 cars in a single day, spreading the word about this Ferrari F40 lookalike to his contacts. As word of his 'gentlemen drivers trophy' concept spread, no fewer than 55 cars were shipped for year one, and a date at Le Mans was booked. Just a week after the world famous 24 Hours suffered its worst-ever entry - only 28 starters and just 14 finishers - Ratel took his 55 Venturi Trophy cars to the track, prompting a chat with Alain Bertaut, vice president of Le Mans organiser, the Automobile Club de l'Ouest.

"It all happened so fast," says Ratel. "We'd gone from a hotel lobby, where I'd convinced my friends that the Venturi was much more than a little plastic car with a Renault engine, to having clients like Riccardo Agusta [of the MV Agusta motorcycle empire] sign up. Riccardo was desperate to do Le Mans so we went there. I've barely been to a race event in my life and suddenly I'm talking about getting Venturi onto the grid for the 1993 Le Mans 24 Hours!

"We worked out a GT regulation for the 400, and I went back to Venturi and pitched the modifications to them. However, at the time the company was also involved in Formula 1 with Larrousse and that was a financial disaster. Suddenly Venturi wanted to stop everything. A Le Mans upgrade was now out of the question, and I ended up pleading with them to save the 400 Trophy as that would have been the end of me as a businessman because all of my friends had bought cars and invested in it. We kept the Trophy going, but I wasn't prepared to let the Le Mans idea die."

Ratel put together a handful of deals, including trading some of his remaining car collection, to finance the build of the Venturi 500LM cars. The plan needed four to be complete in order to recoup the investment back. He sold eight.

"I'll never forget Le Mans that year," he adds. "I don't think I slept for a week. We turned up with seven cars for the 24 Hours and I'd entered one through my own team, plus more than 60 Trophy cars for a support race, and I had to manage the lot! It was just me and an assistant for the week and it was the most stressful time. Madness. To add to the pressure, we also had a driver called Christophe Dechavanne, who was the number one TV celebrity in France at the time [a talk show host who was France's answer to Jerry Springer]. We were on the cover of every magazine with him and the media attention was huge. Plus there were many in the paddock going 'Look at this young fool coming to Le Mans with seven cars, we won't see one after two hours.' We ended up getting five to the finish."

That was truly the start of Ratel's organisational career. He took what had been learned with Venturi and expanded dramatically when he spotted a niche in the market. Following the demise of the World Sports Car Championship in 1992, global motor sport was bereft of a sports car series and there had been practically no professional-level GT racing since production-based cars were killed off by the shift to prototypes.



The success of the BPR Series – launched with Patrick Peter and Jürgen Barth – laid the foundations for almost all of the modern GT categories

"After Le Mans we had a problem that we had these eight 500LMs and nothing else to do with them," he says. "I had some friends with Ferraris, and then got a call from Patrick Peter, who had just revived the Tour Auto. Plus Jürgen Barth was running Porsche racing over in Germany, so we decided to get together and run a series."

BPR - Barth, Peter, Ratel - was an instant hit when it launched in 1994, attracting 30-car grids before the end of the year with Venturi and Porsche entries gradually joined by models like the Ferrari F40, Lotus Esprit and Callaway Corvette.

"There was nothing like it at the time. The World Sports Car Championship was finished and GT racing had essentially been dead since the mid-1980s, so there was this vacuum where nobody had done racing like this for a long time. BPR came along at the right time. But we had to rebuild everything and start from scratch."

RATEL FOUNDED SRO IN 1995 to look after his stake in BPR and also organise the new Lamborghini Supertrophy, which he had started as a sideline. But with success also came the politics that go with motor sport at a high level and the BPR Series soon faced what Ratel describes as "a double threat".

Firstly, the McLaren F1 GTR was sweeping the board. Never specifically intended for racing, the ultimate road car of the 1990s translated into the ultimate GT racer, too, sparking an arms race.

The decision to allow Porsche's controversial 911 GT1 sparked an arms race in the BPR Series

Fed up of being trounced, Porsche responded by developing its mid-engined 911 GT1 prototype, getting around the homologation rule by producing 25 road-going examples of what was a pure-bred racing car. When Porsche applied to join BPR and take on McLaren, Peter was against it, Barth was tied by his conflict of interest and so the casting vote came down to Ratel.

"The Porsche decision was a big moment. I ultimately said 'OK, we take the car and move on' but it created a huge commotion and the McLaren owners were furious. In hindsight it probably was the wrong decision, but it paved the way for some amazing cars like the McLaren F1 Longtail and Mercedes CLK GTR to join and try to beat Porsche."

"GT1 was beautiful, but I lost so much money and it hurt SRO"

But the more dangerous threat came from the top of the tree and brought about a tense encounter with the FIA and F1 chief Bernie Ecclestone (*see panel overleaf*).

Following the end of BPR and his exploits with the resulting FIA GT Championship - now renamed and reformatted into the Blancpain GT Series - Ratel's work wasn't done. In partnership with the ACO he helped launch the Le Mans Endurance Series and took over and rejuvenated the British GT and Formula Three championships as well as the French GT series and others.

But something was still missing - a truly global GT competition. Cue the 2010 FIA GT1 World Championship - Ratel's biggest gamble, success, and perhaps also failure.

"The concept for World GT1 was great - we wanted 24 cars, shared between six manufacturers with two teams running two cars each. It was very ambitious, and it did work. We had Aston Martin, Lamborghini, Corvette, Nissan, Ford and Maserati - we had the numbers and an even share of manufacturers, but it wasn't financially sustainable from day one. The sheer logistical cost of racing around the world was huge, and we launched it at the time of a global financial crisis, so getting it up and running at all was an amazing achievement. Everybody said it had a 90 per cent chance of failure and laughed when we first announced the plan. But it was like F1 for GT cars and it was beautiful, but after a few years it was a complete financial failure.

"I've made mistakes in my career, but my biggest was not giving up on GT1 when the FIA and ACO launched the World Endurance Championship for 2012. I guess there was

DUNCAN HAMILTON ROFGO



1984 EX-WORKS TWR JAGUAR XJS GROUP A, CHASSIS 005
Exstensive race history including ETCC and Bathurst. Driven by Tom Wilkinshaw, Win Percy, Martin Brundle and Chuck Nicholson. Race ready.
£POA



1973 SHADOW DN1/3A
Raced by Graham Hill throughout '73 season. Competitive for Monaco and Masters. Race-ready with new HTP.
£POA



2000 SUBARU IMPREZA WRC EX-RICHARD BURNS – SOLD



1987 'ROTHMANS' PORSCHE 962
World Championship race winner, and Kyalami 500 winner driven by Jochen Mass. Race ready.
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too much vanity from me and, looking back, I can see there couldn't be two world championships. I lost so much money and it hurt SRO badly, that's when we withdrew and focused purely on GT3 and GT4."

Ratel's philosophy of always keeping more than one plate spinning paid off most when he noticed a seed of opportunity within his Lamborghini Supertrophy. While running the powerful production-based Diablos as a support to FIA GT, he noticed that they could lap almost as fast as full GT2-spec cars, but at a fraction of the price.

"When Lamborghini stopped the Supertrophy in 2002, I took the rules concept to as many manufacturers that would listen, and the beauty of it was that GT3 was simple and affordable. Instead of having to build 25 cars to homologate a certain model for racing, manufacturers could build four or five and it just took off."

"Balancing was the antithesis of racing, but we proved that it works"

Within the Supertrophy, SRO honed the technical rules, the driver grading system and its Pro-Am format, which has proven so popular in its domestic categories, and translated it into the multi-marque global phenomenon that GT3 has become. If you're fortunate enough to own a GT3 car, you could technically race it anywhere in the world on almost any given weekend, such has been the widespread acceptance of the format.

Not all Ratel's ideas have been universally popular, and balance of performance (or BoP) remains a hot topic among the purists. A concept of Max Mosley and administered by Ratel, its 2004 introduction was a direct response to Maserati's MC12, which threatened to reignite the costly homologation special war all over again.

"Things had just settled in FIA GT after the Porsche and McLaren storms of the late 1990s, and then suddenly Maserati brings this new car, which is basically another GT1 prototype. With Ferrari's involvement in its development, politically we couldn't say no to it, but instead we added weight to balance things out.

"The concept of balancing was the very antithesis of racing and we had nobody willing to accept what we were trying to do. But we proved in 2005 that it worked, when we had the FIA GT title decided by one point in favour of a Ferrari 550 over the Maserati. BoP is a necessity in GT3, when you have so many different brands and type of car racing. It's a mix of grand touring cars and supercars and the manufacturers want them to race together, and BoP is the only way to do that."

With so many different projects on the go, spread all around the world, Ratel has needed to remain committed. "It's an intense life, and an intense business," he says. "I do about 35 weekends per year and it's not the type of job where you can wake up on Monday and decide to take a day off. This is a life where you're constantly on the move. I've missed everything – birthdays, weddings, celebrations... everything! But I don't call it work, I do what I love to do. From the first day I bought a car I've been living out my passion for automobiles, and my passion for chasing sales. I've even gone from selling cars and race entries to friends to selling global championships to manufacturers.

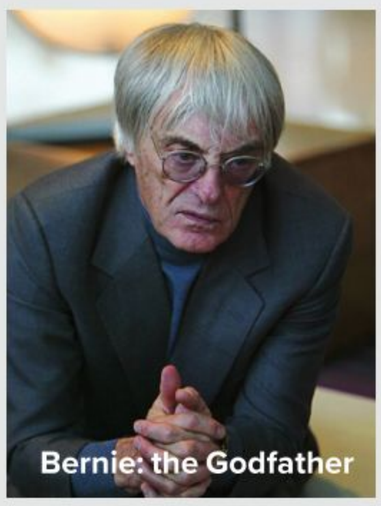
A legal brush with Bernie

How a rights run-in with F1's ringmaster ended BPR, but gave rise to SRO



During the early 1990s the FIA, under Max Mosley, was restructuring its commercial rights agreements with international series, handing many across to Bernie Ecclestone, which rankled with the European Competition Directorate.

"The FIA restructured everything beneath F1 and we got caught up in that," says Ratel. "The ruling was that the FIA would own all the commercial and TV rights to its sanctioned international series. So one day we had a deal with Eurosport to broadcast BPR, the next we get a fax from Bernie on F1-headed paper saying we couldn't do that because they owned the rights. It all went up in arms and I, as the best English speaker of the three BPR rights-holders, had to lead the conversation with Bernie and sort it out.



Bernie: the Godfather

"Visiting Bernie for the first time was like a scene from the movie, *The Godfather*. He's there with the chief of police and says very clearly: either we're 50/50 partners in this or we close you down – choose.

"The way I saw it, either we lost the series or became 50/50 partners with motor sport's God. I wanted to do the deal, but Patrick didn't and wanted to fight. I begged him to let me have one more meeting with Bernie. I went into that last meeting only for Bernie to slap a bit of paper down on the table in front of me, which turned out to be a legal injunction Patrick had launched against him! That was an awkward moment and Bernie asked, 'Are you part of this?' So I said 'No! No!' He continued, 'So are you with me or against me?' To which I answered 'Errr, I think I'm with you...' So Bernie decided on a new deal that would result in us creating the FIA GT Championship for 1997. We had three great years working together."

It ended the BPR Series and caused a rift with Patrick Peter, but the two have since settled their differences. When Brussels finally did insist that Ecclestone step back from everything but F1, Ratel inherited full rights to FIA GT and found himself in charge of an international championship for the first time, with SRO at its helm.

LUNCH WITH *Stéphane Ratel*



FIA GT1 World Championship was stunning, but short lived and a financial failure for SRO

But the pleasure I get from doing it is the same at any level.

"I'm not a championship promoter now, I'm a category promoter. And with SRO – now the walls are built and the roof is on, I can leave the internal design to my team and enjoy things more."

But what about his driving career?

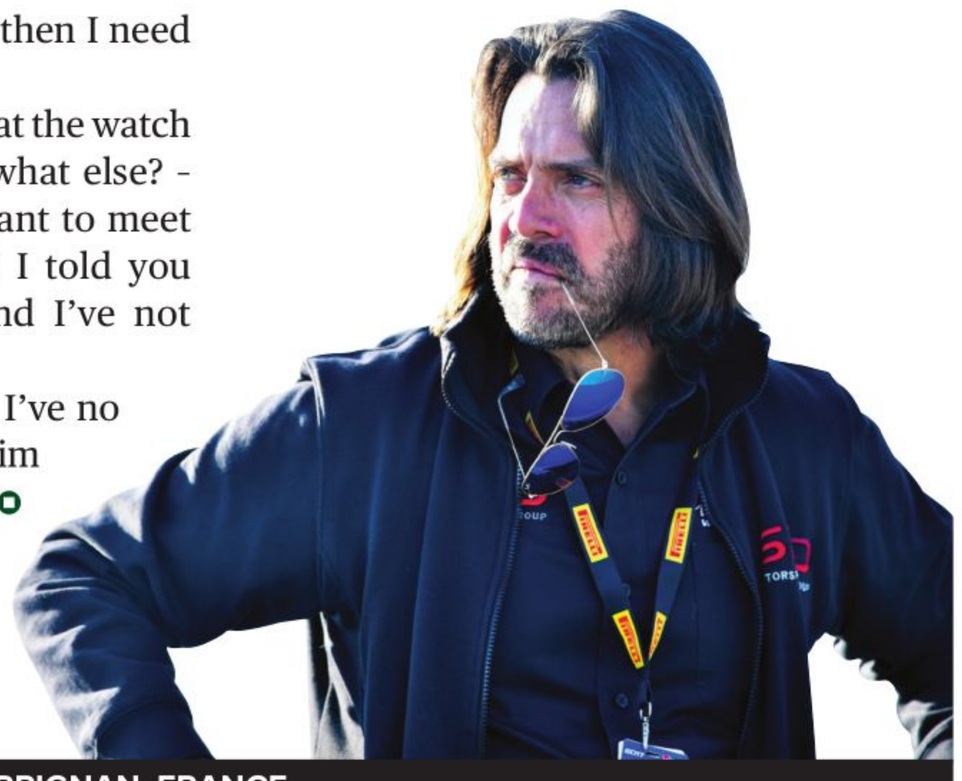
"Rubbish, I was a lousy racer!" he laughs. "I raced a bit and did development on the Venturi Le Mans programme. I did Le Mans in 1994 with Agusta, and shone in the first Zhuhai street race as a late entry. Qualifying was my first practice and I started last, but then had the best race of my life, got up to fourth and thought 'I'm on fire here!' But then of course I crashed. The speed I showed got me a bit of a reputation and a few last-minute invites to race in other places. My best-ever result was second in GT2 class at the 1000km of Suzuka in 1995.

"I dipped in and out of driving but was always better at organising. I did buy a factory Bentley Continental GT3 and entered one of my GT Sports Club events at Barcelona last year, but I crashed it in practice. I was running between paddocks organising and wasn't properly focused on driving so didn't notice the traction control setting was wrong and went off. If I drive, then I need to only drive, not organise."

Then comes a quick glance at the watch – a Blancpain Fifty Fathoms, what else? – followed by "Oh no! I was meant to meet David Brabham an hour ago! I told you I've always been running, and I've not stopped yet!"

His exit is swift, yet polite. I've no idea what type of car ferried him away, but I'd bet it wasn't a Golf.

Follow Robert on Twitter
@LaddersMSport



CV **BORN: 23/7/1963 IN PERPIGNAN, FRANCE**

- **1992** Venturi Trophy founded
- **1993** Masterminds Venturi's Le Mans programme
- **1994** Co-founds BPR with Patrick Peter & Jürgen Barth
- **1995** SRO founded, Lamborghini Supertrophy
- **1997** Co-founds FIA GT with Bernie Ecclestone
- **2004** SRO takes over promotion of British GT and Formula 3
- **2005** First GT3 race is held
- **2006** FIA GT becomes FIA GT3 Championship
- **2010** FIA GT1 World Championship launched
- **2012** FIA GT1 folds
- **2013** FIA GT3 is relabelled Blancpain Endurance Series
- **2016** Intercontinental GT Challenge introduced to combine Bathurst 12Hrs, Spa 24Hrs and Sepang 12Hrs
- **2017** Blancpain Asia Series launched
- **2018** SRO becomes majority shareholder in Pirelli World Challenge, USA

1980 Ferrari 312 T5

Competitive car eligible for the Monaco Historics and Masters Formula One Series. This is the last of the great design, the Mauro Forghieri aluminum monocoque, flat 12-cylinder powered F1 car, that claimed Constructors' Championships in 1975, '76, '77 and '79. Piloted by World Drivers' Champion Jody Scheckter in his final Formula One season.



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Le Papillon remembered

I WAS DELIGHTED TO READ THE ARTICLES ON MIKE HAWTHORN IN THE FEBRUARY 2019 OF *Motor Sport*, but would take issue with your description of him as a 'forgotten world champion'. Certainly his name may not be known to younger present-day spectators, but to septuagenarians such as myself he will never be forgotten.

When I get frustrated with modern Formula 1, I read again my treasured copies of Mike's books *Challenge Me the Race* and *Champion Year* to remind myself of what hooked me onto the sport in the first instance.

I only saw Hawthorn race once, at the 1958 British Grand Prix, when he came second to his '*mon ami mate*' Peter Collins. My abiding memory of that July afternoon is Mike coming around on his slowing down lap, drinking a beer from a tankard that I believe was given to him by Tony Lanfranchi, who was marshalling at the event.

Wonderful days - Mike is sadly missed, but never forgotten.

DAVID ROBINSON, MILTON KEYNES

WHAT A STAR MR WEBB AND HIS wonderful collection of Mike Hawthorn tributes is. It must be kept for the nation, surely? Our very first world champion!

Come on Lewis Hamilton! Stump up and help it happen. You are the best there is now, and a fine multiple world champion, modest and cool as a cucumber on track and a real credit to the sport.

PS: Cracking issue.

NICK REECE, GWYNEDD

I HAVE READ WITH BEMUSEMENT YOUR recent articles bemoaning the current historic racing scene. It does not reflect what I see almost every day.

Of course things ain't what they used to be. Nothing in life stands still - as a racer of mainly pre-war machines I'd be delighted to go back to the supposedly 'gentlemanly' racing when I started nearly 30 years ago. But as a race organiser I know full well that the thought of drivers not wanting to get one over on the regulations is laughable.

Yes, of course there are issues such as driving standards and over-developed cars. However, these can - and should - all be dealt with by the organisers responsible for the respective races, series or championships. Don't criticise the drivers if the organisers let them get away with it.

And any organiser bemoaning diminished grids has simply failed to move with the changing demands of drivers, spectators and the circuits. Look at the extraordinary success of such as the Classic Sports Car Club to see how far off the mark some other clubs have found themselves.

But peer beyond club racing to the grids that populate the likes of the Donington Historic Festival, Silverstone Classic, Spa Six Hours and so on. You'll find consistently well-supported grids, terrifically competitive racing and great atmosphere on and off the track, all organised by outfits who understand what their drivers want.

Undoubtedly the current historic racing scene is a far cry from the time when one simply turned one's flat cap backwards and went racing, but today's historic world is only reflecting the demands of those individuals who are most active in it. We should applaud this incredible movement and the amazing people in it.

DUNCAN WILTSHIRE, CHAIRMAN, MOTOR RACING LEGENDS, SUFFOLK

I APPRECIATED DOUG NYE'S FAIR AND accurate depiction of the changing face of historic motor sport. My good friend Tony Dron has been bringing this subject to the fore for many years. He and I spent some very happy years racing a 1961 Aston Martin DB4 in the Masters, ADAC Classic and Gentleman Drivers' Races throughout Europe, with many class wins to our name. Classes were fair and scrutinising thorough.

In the 2007 Spa 6 Hours event, where endurance and maintaining a rhythmic lap average is the key, my car qualified in the 20s on the grid. This, I believe, was the first year that Ford GT40s were eligible and all seven qualified in the top 10. At the end of the race only one finished, seventh, two places behind our car.

Of the 12 or 14 GT40s suddenly now available, they invariably take all the prizes and fill the top 10 places. Hot-shoe drivers, but also improved mechanicals furnished by huge budgets from wealthy owners.

The grass roots of the sport have left or are leaving, as the gentleman driver no longer exists in their original form. Progress, maybe, but it requires a significant step-up in capacity checking and a verification through scrutineering that certain tolerances are adhered to and enforced.

We all love the show at Goodwood, but most recognise the sound of a well-known engine striking a new note never before heard. The power lies in the hands of the event organisers, for whom filling a grid has understandably taken preference in many instances.

Have we gone too far, or is it possible that a return to the truth is still possible?

MARK TAYLOR, VIA EMAIL

YOUR BOOK EXTRACT ABOUT IMSA'S 'bad boys' (*Motor Sport*, January 9) reminded me of those heady days. I worked briefly for one IMSA owner/driver when he ventured into Europe in 1981, with his Porsche 935 K3. I never worked for him in the USA, but the stories of drivers using drugs were legion.

My favourite concerned one of the racers mentioned in your piece. They would apparently spend practice diligently setting up their car and learning the track. Qualifying then consisted of a couple of warm-up laps, at a reasonable pace, but he would then need to pit and 'take a rest' in the truck or motorhome. After this 'rest' (usually only about five minutes) his pace stepped up markedly, as inhibitions and reactions were apparently on a different level. Each lap was quicker until, eventually, the car would not come around. It would be in the barrier or the sand, but usually on pole by a margin. Glory achieved, race day was usually quite calm, with the hard work often left to the hired pro.

ADAM GOING, SOMERSET

FASCINATING TO READ THE MANY articles extolling the virtues of using hydrogen as a fuel. The one in your December issue put the case most clearly.

While I agree with all being said technically, I have one nagging question. Why does no one discuss the safety aspect of highly inflammable hydrogen? What happens if a car is involved in an accident?

Are any proponents even aware of the R101 and Hindenburg airship disasters?

ERIC FLETCHER, PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA

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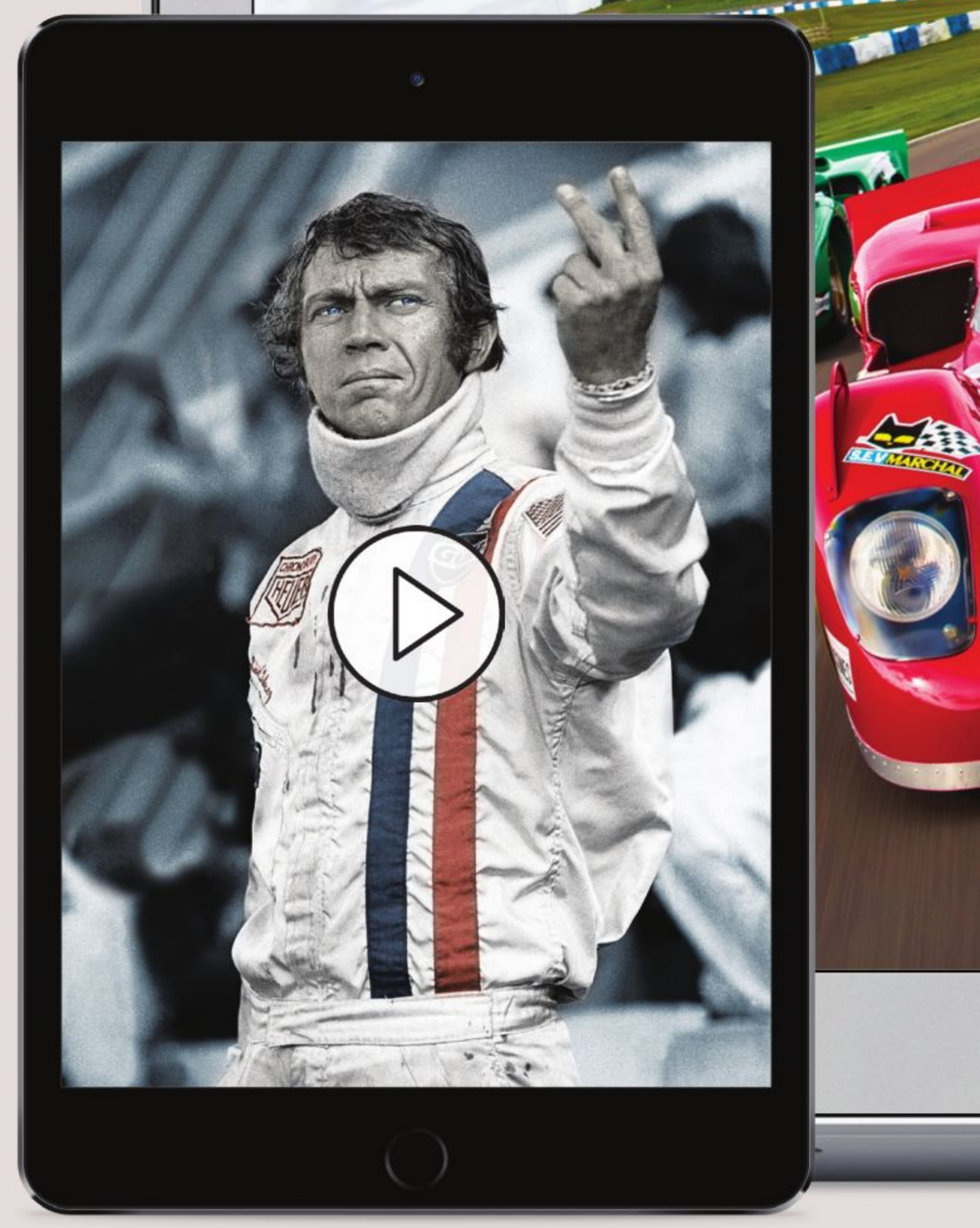
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Unwrapping Lewis Hamilton

Britain's most successful Formula 1 driver has often divided opinion, with flamboyance a central feature of both his racecraft and his lifestyle. But what drives him? And what's he really like? **Mark Hughes** spoke to some of those who know best

LEWIS HAMILTON IS MORE FAMOUS than any racing driver has ever been. Yet the world barely knows him. He's an apparently lumpy bag full of unresolved contradictions.

So who is he? There's his centre of gravity, which is Lewis the racing driver. For years that's been his balancing point - and it plays out in his actual racing persona, too. He's Lewis Hamilton, the fastest racing driver there is. There has never been anything other than 100 per cent certainty of that in his mind - and that's the point around which he keeps rebalancing during a race weekend, whenever things don't go right.

But he has also constantly had to refocus in his search for who he is. And it has taken a long time properly to decouple the racing driver from the person. Because he's had an extraordinary life ever since the age of eight; by the time of F1 he'd quickly reached a debilitating level of fame that totally eclipsed that of any other driver. He's famous far, far beyond the world of F1 fans. So while we would consider Hamilton in much the same recognition bracket as Fernando Alonso or maybe Max Verstappen - the wider world

Hamilton's race helmet, shot exclusively by *Motor Sport* at Mercedes' HQ *(see page 12)*


EPSON
PETRONAS



"What people tend to forget is the journey that I had getting to Formula 1. There were plenty of years where I had to learn about losing and having bad races."

hasn't even heard of those guys. But they certainly know Lewis Hamilton. "I've been with him when he can't walk down the street anywhere in Europe or Japan without being mobbed within 15 seconds and having to get back in the car," says Paddy Lowe. "No other driver in this paddock is hampered at that level."

This lack of normalcy, straight from childhood to stardom leaves its mark. How can you become a fully formed adult? In the case of Hamilton, perhaps the closest parallels are to be found in the world of showbusiness rather than sport.

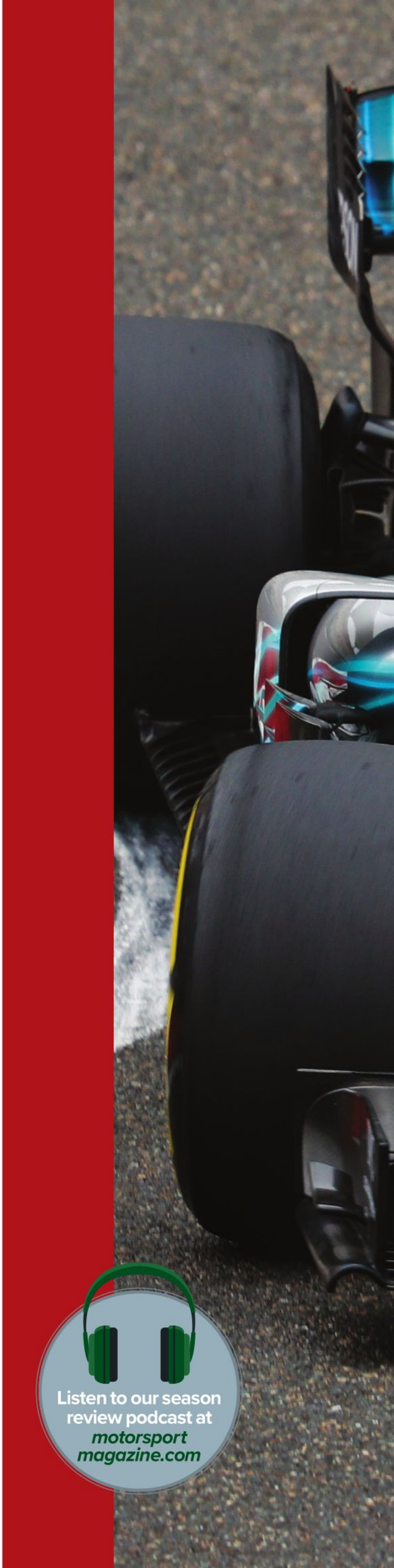
The late Andy Fraser was a musician in the 1960s/70s rock band Free. He wrote the song *All Right Now* when he was 16, went almost straight from a council estate to playing at Madison Square Garden, endured fans trying to pull the hair from his head as he struggled to get through them. Here's how he later reflected on things. "I missed out on an adolescence, the phase where our personalities are usually largely formed, where you experiment a bit and find out who you really are." It took Andy until his 30s to begin to get a good handle on that. Maybe it's taken Hamilton just as long?

On the one hand, he is someone who feels the need for the level of his talent to be recognised, who craves approval. But on the other, has chosen to compete in a sport with a fanbase as far removed as it's possible to be from his interests outside racing - fashion, rap, black culture. He isn't going to bend, isn't going to be something he's not for the sake of the sport's approval. But at the same time he can find the resultant belittling of his level of ability and achievements - and the widespread misunderstanding of his nature (to which he has himself contributed) - difficult to shrug off. That is magnified by the factor of his level of fame (6.4 million Twitter followers) and having to grow up as a teenager in a man's body.

The music and showbusiness worlds will have an intoxicating pull to anyone enthused by them, to get to know as friends these people whom you've only admired from afar, to be treated as their equal. A world far more tolerant of his mild eccentricities than motor sport is, of his love of loud, outrageous fashion, of the more out-there social mores than those of the straight world.

He's from these two very different places that cannot be bridged. Maybe he was trying to bridge them, maybe he's realised that he cannot and so can just content himself with being in one at a time? Then he gets criticism because he's not focused or committed - but then he turns up and annihilates the competition, and this only enrages, rather than becalms, some of his critics.

That's a lot of processing and resolving to do - all while getting to the competitive pitch required for 20-odd weekends a year and the associated work around that. A process that could take years - and has.



LEWIS THE DRIVER

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF Hamilton's extraordinary ability as a driver is an essential component of understanding his enigmatic persona. His inner certainty of being able to drive a racing car faster than anyone else is an absolutely intrinsic part of who he is.

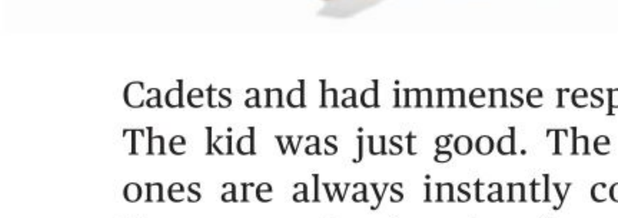
He can do things with a car that only a handful of people in the sport's history have ever been able to do. He is blessed with an off-the-scale talent, one that is actually underplayed by the demands of current-era F1, which places an emphasis on tyre management over race-day pace.

That's been there since day one, aged eight. Since the time Martin Hines spotted him making his karting debut and assumed, from the way he scythed through the pack in his second-hand chassis, that he already had many races under his belt. In 1998, as a 13-year-old - now with McLaren backing and newly promoted to karting's more powerful JICA category, he immediately went head-to-head with the more experienced pre-season favourite Fraser Sheader, two years older and in his third season at that level. Was this a surprise? "No, it really wasn't," says Sheader - who now heads up the driver development company ADD that numbers Lando Norris among its clients. "He was already a superstar in karting. I'd watched him since he was an eight-year-old in ▶

Hamilton chose 44 as his race number in F1 as it was the number he carried as a rising star in karting

LAT

The many faces of Lewis. Hamilton celebrates his fifth world title at Abu Dhabi last year



"I feel like people are expecting me to fail, therefore I expect myself to win."

Cadets and had immense respect for him. The kid was just good. The really good ones are always instantly competitive - Verstappen, Leclerc, Lando - and it was the same with Lewis. When you are racing from eight years old, 40 weekends a year, if you are good you pretty much have the feel for what it is to be quick from about nine. The natural sensors for grip, rotation, feel of the tyres - it's there. And it's the same thing they are doing all through their careers. So the really good ones are always really good."

It was a pattern repeated as he made his way up the ladder. Another who was observing, from a couple of years ahead, was Jenson Button, who would eventually come to have a fuller appreciation of the scale of that talent when he got to see his telemetry as his McLaren team-mate from 2010. He confided to his father, John. "Dad, if he ever fathoms out how to work with his engineers, the rest of us might as well all go home." A couple of years ago Button said publicly: "He's one of the all-time fastest drivers in the history of F1, maybe even faster than Senna. Alonso was in some ways a tougher team-mate because Lewis could have weekends where he just wasn't there. Not many, but occasionally. You never got that with Fernando, but in terms of speed, yes - probably the fastest I've seen."

It wasn't only the speed, but the racecraft, the uncanny ability to put himself in the right place wheel to wheel, invariably to pull off the pass. This was certainly an eye-opener to Marc Hynes, the 1999 British F3 champion who was Hamilton's driver coach as the young kartist graduated to Formula Renault and who has since become a close friend. "He was an awesome racer, the way he could find overtaking spots, the way he could spot a gap even before it appeared... He spots the gaps so early - and that's a natural, instinctive thing you can't teach."

Nor was it just the speed and the racecraft. "He was also resilient," says Sheader. "He could always grind it out. All the really top guys had that - Gary Paffett, Robert Kubica, Jamie Green. They could always come back from any setback. They were mentally tough. I was always mindful of him. I knew he was going to be running at the front. Put it this way: even if he had



LAT

The early signs of success

Simon Arron selects the great drives that set a young Lewis Hamilton apart from his rivals



APRIL 1998

JICA British karting championship, Larkhall

It was Hamilton's first meeting since McLaren boss Ron Dennis had agreed to back him. He was 13, competing in Junior Intercontinental A against rivals who for the most part were a year or three older – and much more experienced. Pre-season favourite Fraser Sheader led away in the rain, while Hamilton duelled for second with Russell Parkes... and eventually pressured him into a spin. Hamilton caught Sheader and eventually won by 15sec. Sheader pipped him to the title, but Hamilton wasn't even tipped as a contender.



JUNE 2003

UK Formula Renault 2.0, Silverstone

Hamilton had started his second season of Formula Renault as clear favourite – but the first four races yielded no victories. For the fifth, at Silverstone, backer McLaren sent along a couple of staff to monitor their young protégé. He was running second when the race began in the dry but after the heavens opened, with every driver on slicks, he was suddenly quickest by a colossal margin, took the lead around the outside at Bridge and vanished into the distance. He was beaten only once all year after that.



DECEMBER 2004

Formula 3 Superprix, Bahrain

At the end of his maiden Formula 3 season, Hamilton contested the first (and only!) Bahrain Superprix. Quickest in first practice, he was condemned to start the opening race from 22nd after crashing early in the quicker qualifying session. He recovered 11 places on the opening lap, but was unable to progress further and started the main event from the sixth row, from where another dynamite start catapulted him to fourth, then third. Compatriot Jamie Green looked to have the race under control, but misjudged a safety car restart and had to fight off Nico Rosberg. While they focused on each other, Hamilton dived through to pass both – opportunism of the kind that would become his F1 trademark.



JUNE 2006

GP2 Series, Silverstone

It's not every weekend that an F1 audience stays in place to watch the undercard, but this was different. Hamilton was a title contender in his rookie GP2 season and the crowd's reaction reflected his career momentum, the sense that this was a 24-carat prospect rather than just another promising youngster. He'd won the opening race, putting him eighth on the grid for Sunday's sprint, and it wasn't so much the fact that he came through to win comfortably as the manner in which he did. Through Maggotts/Becketts, he picked up a double slipstream from rivals Clivio Piccione and Nelson Piquet Jr to draw alongside and pass both in one decisive, three-abreast move that carried him to second... and that at a spot not favoured for overtaking. Inspired is too weak a word; it raised a brilliant cheer from the crowd.



AUGUST 2006

GP2 Series, Istanbul Park

Was the balance of power shifting? Hamilton came to Istanbul as GP2 points leader, but Nelson Piquet Jr had won the previous two races, in Budapest, and beaten Hamilton in the Turkish opener. And then, while they were battling during the early stages of the following morning's sprint, Hamilton ran wide and spun down to 16th. Advantage Brazil? Not at all. Hamilton embarked upon a remarkable recovery drive – including a mesmerising duel with Timo Glock, the two remaining almost side by side for more than a lap before the Englishman finally prevailed. That put him third – and on the final lap he passed Adam Carroll to take second. With Piquet among those he had dispatched, Hamilton would go to the Monza finale as clear title favourite.



Formula Renault UK success came in 2003

a difficult Thursday you knew he was going to be right there by Sunday - you could never think, 'I've got this one in the bag'."

It's a quality his one-time karting mechanic Kieran Crawley saw. "Adversity brings out something very special in him. There is never any panic, just grit. I call it council estate grit. I've seen it so often in karting: the kids from the privileged backgrounds, who know they will be racing no matter what, don't have the same resilience, don't know how to dig deep and their performances are more up and down."

Paddy Lowe: "He's at his best when the pressure is on. The few times he underperforms are all when he's not under pressure. It's quite unique. Under pressure, he can be frightening and pretty much impossible to beat." In a 12-year F1 career, can we recall one pressure error on track?

Jock Clear, who engineered Jacques Villeneuve to the 1997 world title and went on to be one of the few who worked with both Michael Schumacher and Hamilton, makes a telling observation in the different mindsets between them. "Michael once confided that he didn't believe he could drive a race car faster than Mika Häkkinen - and so therefore he needed to work extra hard behind the scenes to ensure he had every advantage possible over him. Lewis, on the other hand, more than any other driver I've known, has 100 per cent belief in his ability as the best, the fastest, and when things go wrong he returns to that belief - it's his balancing point. You never, ever, need to build his confidence back up; it never wavers. Sometimes he'd say after a practice session in which he was fastest, 'What's wrong? Why are we not faster?' and I'd point out that he was fastest. And he'd reply, 'Yes, but we're only a tenth ahead of Nico [Rosberg].' He believed he was more than a tenth faster than Nico as a driver - so if he was only beating him by that much, something was wrong."



After proving his potential with McLaren, Hamilton has matured with Mercedes-AMG

"I know what Jock means," says Ross Brawn, another of the few to have worked with both. "But I see it slightly differently. I never got from Michael any sense that he doubted his own ability. He just would not leave any stone unturned and would explore every avenue - and sometimes went too far. Lewis wants it but expects you to do it for him. Neither is right or wrong. But with Lewis it would be, 'We're not quickest today, you need to fix it.' With Michael it would be, 'What do I need to do - and what are you doing about it?'"

Yet he continues to evolve. Towards the end of 2018 Hamilton gave some insight into how, 11 years into his F1 career, he'd made a step change in the consistency of his performances, eradicating that occasional

Five of his best

Mark Hughes rates each of Hamilton's world titles, proving he just keeps getting better

2018 Hamilton's best title would have been that as a rookie in 2007 – except, of course he didn't win it. That said, he's adamant that his 2007 self would not have stood a chance of winning in 2018. The Mercedes W09, he insists, was way too complex for the 2007 him to have been able consistently to access its performance – which underlines the extra dimension that has developed. His raw talent was still seen on a regular basis – the poles even at tracks where the Ferrari was the faster car and the wheel-to-wheel racecraft. But it was allied to the most consistent delivery of his career.

2017 This was the work-in-progress performance that would flower fully in 2018 – with a new focus on extracting the maximum from his core strengths. He was helped in this by a clear-the-air meeting with Toto Wolff at the end of 2016, when the boss was able to make his internal grievances evaporate. This and Rosberg's subsequent retirement and replacement by Valtteri Bottas produced a step change in Hamilton's maturity and consistency as he was able to turn his focus away from internal competition and towards the newly invigorated Ferrari and Sebastian Vettel.



LAT



"When it comes to racing, it's always about who is willing to go further, who is willing to take that extra step. I'm willing to take any amount of pain to win. I'm hungry to win."

missing weekend to which Button referred. He said: "What you don't see is this large group of people I have to utilise. They're my tools, my soldiers. We all individually think we're operating at the highest, but one of us can lean against another and pull more out of them. My job is to try to extract the most from every single person. So, how you debrief, how you understand, how you engage with everyone when you have a shit weekend, how you lift everyone. How you nurture that and build upon it.

"My closest guys - my engine engineer, a couple of electronics guys... they're the guys I'm most connected to in terms of talking, to extract the most out of them. How I get the best out of each of them is key. If I didn't get those guys in the right positions, I wouldn't be able to extract what I have in me. I have always had what I have in the way I am driving, but if they mess up or didn't do something right, I can't unlock the potential in the car. That's why it's a collective group."

He's adamant that only such depth allowed him to extract the maximum from the complex Mercedes and that he wouldn't have won the title without it. "The 2007 me - who was still very fast - wouldn't have stood a f***ing chance [of the title] in 2018."

This approach has, he believes, allowed him more access to the special stuff. "What we are paid for is that extra 0.1sec, 0.2sec or 0.3sec you are able to bring. It was great last year to be able to stretch it a little bit more and live in that stretched area..."

2015 There was an intensity about Hamilton's rivalry with Rosberg. That Rosberg set more poles in 2014 didn't sit easily – and Hamilton proceeded to set 11 in the first 12 races. He wrapped up the title with three races still to go, with the sort of aggressive assumption of dominance that subsequently forced Rosberg to re-evaluate his own approach.



2014 Winning Mercedes its first title since 1955 rubber-stamped Hamilton's status as the team's cutting edge. His ruthless edge in close-quarters combat with Rosberg never quite crossed the line between harsh and foul – Rosberg later said of the fights: "He can race to the point of plausible deniability without it ever quite being illegal. And he can do it every time. That's very difficult to deal with."

2008 Hamilton's triumph over Ferrari and Felipe Massa was the most dramatic in F1 history, the destiny of the crown changing on the last corner of the season's final lap. But, in reality, it wasn't the greatest of his titles. The highs were as high as ever – and his sensational wet British Grand Prix win ranks among the all-time great drives – but there were key errors and quite a bit of luck. Without Massa's engine failure in Hungary – or Renault's infamous subverting of the Singapore race – Hamilton would today be 'only' a four-time champion.



LEWIS

THE MAN

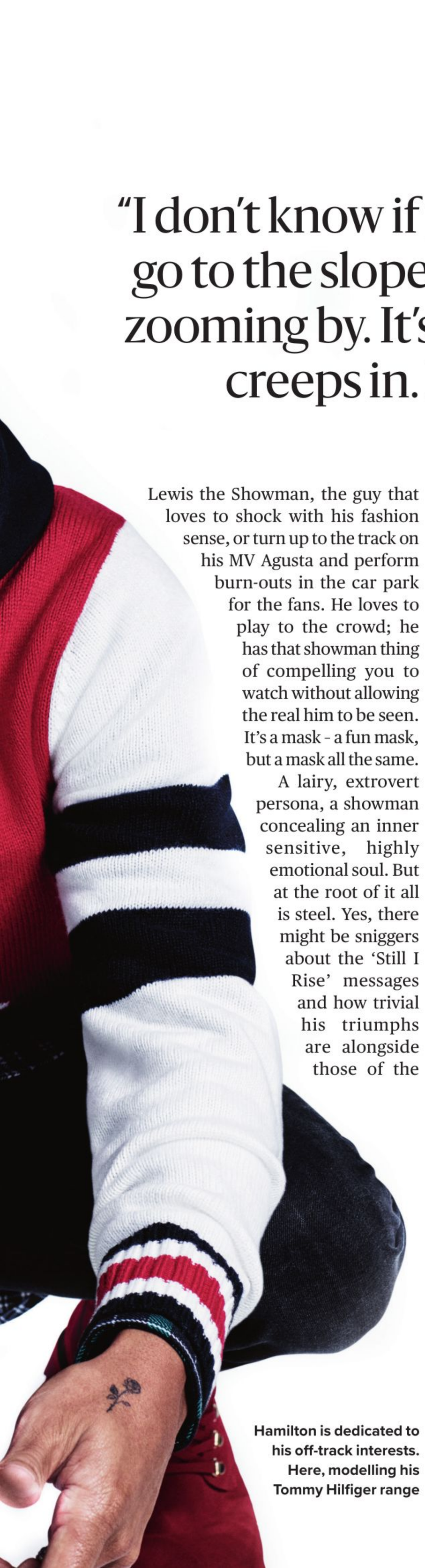
WHAT YOU NEED TO know about Lewis Hamilton is that protecting a sensitive inner soul is one tough hombre. That's not the image generated by the fashion icon Lewis or the sometimes thin-skinned-to-criticism Lewis. But it's at the heart of who he is. Part nature, part nurture, his father Anthony instilled in him the mental discipline and sacrifice required by racing right from the start - and he was a hard taskmaster. "I took the attitude that if I was going to be doing all this extra work to support the karting, then he'd better bloody well do his best," said Anthony. But it's more than just mental discipline; it's also desire. That has to come from the driver, no matter how hard the father might be pushing.

The part Anthony played in Hamilton's career cannot be overstated. It would not have happened without him. But the impetus was always down to Lewis. It was something another of his karting mechanics Johnny Restrick noticed: "Once the McLaren backing happened, the pressure was really on, to keep up the momentum of the whole thing. It was no longer about just the next race win. Things got longer-term. There was definitely a pressure, a push to keep getting the results and what was needed to do that. Sometimes it came from Tony. He could be pretty tough on Lewis; we both could. But then Lewis could be pretty tough on us, too. Suddenly he'd fire back at us if the kart wasn't right - 'find me more grip, more power', and you realised who the boss was."

That desire and resilience has been the driving force of Hamilton's career, the vast talent simply in the service of those qualities. He's incredibly mentally strong. But he's never been some professional automaton. Beneath the well-rehearsed PR sheen, instilled in him first by Anthony and later by McLaren, has always been a risk-taking, impulsive character. His youth was littered with subterfuges to escape his father's control away from the track - and the scrapes and escapades have continued into adult life, only a few of which ever reach the notice of the public. "I sometimes think, 'I've gone too far this time, I'm going to be in trouble'," he admitted towards the end of 2015. This was around the time he'd clinched the title. He let himself off the leash well before the season had ended. "You'd be amazed how much I've drunk," he claimed at one point. It was possibly no coincidence that his form fell away in the last few races and Nico Rosberg won several on the bounce.

That part of him is surely related to

"I don't know if you've ever been skiing, but if you go to the slope you'll see all these kids fearlessly zooming by. It's only when we get older that fear creeps in. But for me, it just never has."



Hamilton is dedicated to his off-track interests. Here, modelling his Tommy Hilfiger range

Lewis the Showman, the guy that loves to shock with his fashion sense, or turn up to the track on his MV Agusta and perform burn-outs in the car park for the fans. He loves to play to the crowd; he has that showman thing of compelling you to watch without allowing the real him to be seen. It's a mask – a fun mask, but a mask all the same.

A lairy, extrovert persona, a showman concealing an inner sensitive, highly emotional soul. But at the root of it all is steel. Yes, there might be sniggers about the 'Still I Rise' messages and how trivial his triumphs are alongside those of the slaves the phrase originally referenced. It's a reflection of an occasionally narcissistic person who is trying to reconcile who he is with projecting to the outside world. A world he knows is watching him intently. But that's just froth and trimmings. At the core is one of the toughest individuals imaginable. Hard as nails, resilient beyond the perceptions of the everyday, adventurous – and vastly, vastly, freakishly gifted. That, and black, in what has historically been a white man's sport. It's about as combustible a combination as has ever sat on an F1 grid. That's the cauldron into which his circumstances and personality have placed him.

NOW IMAGINE ALL THAT without the normal teenage adaptation years. Between the ages of 8-13 he was a phenomenon and treated as such, but under the strict control of Anthony. Between 13 and his F1 debut as a 22-year-old, he was on the tight leash of Ron Dennis and entirely dependent upon him. Two control freaks trying to manage your every move and utterance between eight and 22 years old, no normal teenage years of discovery – and then suddenly a globally famous millionaire, with a love of showbusiness and the opportunities to live and breathe in that world, to get to sit and talk with Nelson Mandela. Heady stuff for a Stevenage council estate kid.

It would have been a miracle if he'd come through that with a conventional outlook and persona, would it not? So yes, for much of his 20s you might have described him as a teenager in a man's body, but away from the spotlight his reflective side was asking himself questions, was involving himself privately in helping ill and disadvantaged kids and exploring his religious faith. He was quite open about how freaked out he was after asking for a sign the night before race day at Hockenheim and then witnessing the biblical storm on the podium after his weather-assisted victory. "I don't pray for fortune. I always just ask... whether you're talking to yourself or someone's hearing you, but I want to be able to live to my potential today. Allow me to live to my potential today. I know I can be great but certain things gets in the way and you're not always able to be great. Just allow me to run free."

Then there is the Hamilton free of both Hollywood and F1 – blatting through the forests on a trials bike or doing a track day on a superbike, just letting the speed gene feed him the adrenaline without the pressure, usually in company with his friend Marc Hynes.

As that process has unfolded, it's sometimes caused him difficulties in the insular F1 world. His occasional gaffes are not forgiven easily by a fanbase who like their F1 heroes to fit into their own traditional preconceptions and who distrust the showman, who scent insincerity in his words when he's trying on a personality for size. No one from the racing world has been able to guide him. So he's sometimes stumbled his way through being a public sportsman. People want him to be all these different things – but he can only be what he is. He's tried to be all these things to everyone... and come across as insincere. He's remedied that increasingly with time. He's a more mature Lewis, one that's finally caught up – and maybe even progressed past – his actual age. But he remains hugely individualistic – more than any other driver with the possible exception of Kimi Räikkönen.

He still demands that he do his own thing in his own way and uses the weight of his success to get that, but his vision has widened at much the same time as his approach to his racing has deepened. It all seems to be part of the same process. Ross Brawn has an interesting take. "I think it's partly to do with how integrated he's



"A shark? No, I like to think I'm more like a panther. A shark attacks from behind without you knowing. With a panther, you know it's coming, but he still gets you."

become at the team. At McLaren there was a certain culture where the drivers were kept at a distance – and that's the environment Lewis came from. But Mercedes was and is much more intimate, a much more inclusive environment. He wasn't used to this and I think it took a time to build up the trust. I still know and talk to people on the team and they tell me that he's evolved both as a person and a driver."

"I've been racing since I was eight," Hamilton told *GQ* magazine earlier this year. "All my focus has been on this. In my part-time role outside F1 I'm trying to figure out what else I want to do. Naturally it's easy for me to come to all the grands prix after I've been racing, even be the number two to Toto perhaps – I've been racing for years, I know it just as well as anyone else. But I'm more intrigued to learn something new." Hence immersing himself in fashion and his highly successful clothing line with Tommy Hilfiger.

What we're seeing now is probably peak Hamilton, when his incredible gift has finally come together with a resolved inner self and who therefore has ultimate control over those fires within. The question is how long he can remain at that peak before the maturing process begins to insist he evolves, before he begins to question whether he really wants to go wheel to wheel with Max Verstappen at 200mph. Another two titles, to take him level with Michael Schumacher? Another three?

The clock's ticking.



Trial by Twitter

Lewis Hamilton was quick to understand the power of social media and is the F1 driver most committed to connecting with his fans. But there have been a few slip-ups along the way, as **Robert Ladbrook** recounts

The race card

The 2011 season wasn't kind to Hamilton, who endured a mixed bag of results with a difficult McLaren. After a tough Monaco GP in which he collided with both Felipe Massa and Pastor Maldonado – incurring two penalties – Hamilton was asked by the BBC's Lee McKenzie why he'd become a bit of a magnet for the stewards in recent races. "Maybe it's because I'm black... that's what Ali G would say, right?" he answered. Safe to say the flippant comment, which went viral on both social and print media, didn't go down well post-race, and Hamilton issued a full apology and had to explain his actions to the race stewards. "I was trying to be funny... but it wasn't funny," he said.

Sore loser

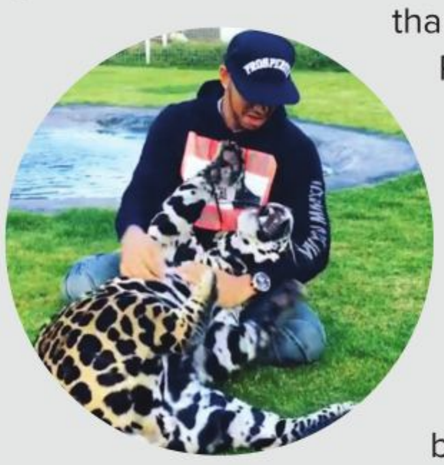
Hamilton's first widespread social media *faux pas* occurred in 2012 when he was put in the shade during Belgian GP qualifying by McLaren team-mate Jenson Button. While Button was on pole, Hamilton was just eighth and reacted by tweeting a shot of the telemetry trace of both drivers' laps, showing where he was losing time. The post angered the team management and engineers, who roundly demanded he delete it immediately. Which he did.

Look, no hands

The curse of Instagram strikes as Hamilton posted a selfie apparently taken while riding a motorbike on a public road in Auckland in 2016. The post prompted a full police investigation due to it being illegal to use a mobile phone whilst driving in New Zealand. The case was eventually dropped due to "lack of sufficient evidence".

Animal frights

Hamilton attracted unwanted attention from animal rights group PETA in 2016 by sharing images of himself cuddling up to tigers and Jaguars at the Black Jaguar-White Tiger Foundation in Mexico. The images showed him holding a tiger and face-to-face with a Jaguar, plus a Snapchat video of a Jaguar lying on top of him. PETA issued a statement saying the big cats "were used for photo ops" and suggesting the animals were drugged. It finished with the line stating a mauling from one of the animals would be "more foolish than tangling with Nico Rosberg." PETA later awarded Hamilton its 2018 'Person of the Year Award' for becoming a high-profile vegan...



Cross dressers

During the 2017 Christmas break, Hamilton posted what was intended to be a fun video onto his Instagram showing him spending time with his nephew. Sadly it involved him telling the child, who was in fancy dress, that "Boys don't wear princess dresses". It drew widespread criticism forcing Hamilton to issue a public apology.

Carbon footprint

Not so much a gaffe, more tone deaf. In 2018 Hamilton posted a well-intentioned video on Instagram showing himself clearing a pile of plastic rubbish from a beach in an undetermined tropical location. While many applauded Hamilton's efforts in calling for action against plastic pollution, it also prompted many to point out the irony of somebody running a private jet and burning petrol shouting so loudly about the environment.

INSTAGRAM.COM/LEWISHAMILTON



My brother, Lewis

Nicolas Hamilton knows his sibling better than anybody, he spoke to **Robert Ladbrook**



LAT

"We spent Christmas together as a family, out in the US – it's the first time we've been able to have a full break as a family for a while now. And it's just as well, because 2019 is going to be a massive year for the Hamiltons."

It certainly will be. Lewis will be chasing a historic sixth F1 World Championship with Mercedes. And his younger brother, Nicolas, will be embarking on his first full campaign in the British Touring Car Championship.

Nicolas is no stranger to racing himself, and was inspired to get behind the wheel – defying his cerebral palsy – by watching his older brother. Earlier in his career, Lewis spoke often about the inspiration he too drew from having Nic beside him at races. When Nic jumped in at the deep end in the 2011 Renault UK Clio Cup, the boot was on the other foot.

"I always wanted to race, but wasn't sure if I could due to my condition," says Nic. "But Dad [Anthony] took the plunge and helped me through my first two years of Clios, but after that I've been racing on my own, doing deals and working hard. My parents don't fund it, and neither does Lewis. I'm very much my own man when it comes to motor sport.

"It's funny though, because when you're the brother of a five-time world champion who has loads of money people make assumptions. There's also a lot of pressure and expectation from being a Hamilton. It can be a hindrance. If one of my rivals goes off, most people won't bat an eyelid. But if I go off every TV camera finds me. I remember being in the wall at one round and the fans were gathering at the fence to take a picture of themselves with my crashed car. It's pretty surreal. But I've learned to just drive the car for myself and to use all of that to my advantage."

Lewis attended a few of his brother's early races, but Nic reckons they came as bit of a shock. "Deep down I reckon Lewis would prefer me not to be racing – purely from a safety perspective," he says. "He's been racing since he was eight, and to see me in a car I think is a bit nerve-wracking for him. He's protective of me, but so are my parents. But if racing is what I want to do, it's what I want to do. I know Lewis is proud of what I'm achieving. Lewis came to Brands Hatch and Thruxton in 2011. There was no hiding and he was in the paddock like a normal guy, except he had to have a bodyguard with him."

Has the stellar rise of his brother come as a shock to Nicolas?

"I cannot believe how talented Lewis is," he says. "The more you try to be a racer, the more you appreciate exactly how much natural talent Lewis has. He has nothing to learn from me in terms of racing, so I observe a lot about him – how he carries himself and how he prepares – and he's there if I ever need to ask a question, but he's on a new level now.

"I'd say he's matured so much in recent years. He wears his heart on his sleeve, so if Lewis is upset the whole world will see him upset – whether that's making silly comments in the media or just having a bad race. The 2011 season was terrible for him. He made mistakes on and off track and that changed a few people's perceptions of him. Then everybody said his move to Mercedes was a backwards step. But he stuck to his guns and said this was his challenge. I think him going to a team that wasn't winning and helping to transform them into the best really helped him to mature and become the athlete he is.

"It's all culminated into this amazing second chapter of his career where he's almost untouchable. I thought he'd be in his prime in his 20s, but he's now 34 and is stronger than ever. He gets a lot of criticism for what he does – jumping on a jet and flying around the world, dating celebrities etc. People make snap judgments, usually not knowing the full story, but you learn to deal with it and not engage. But I'm super proud of him and the fact he doesn't let it affect him. It's his job and he does it exceptionally well. I hope he keeps the drive and the motivation to keep going – because 21 races takes a lot out of you when you have to be on the top of your game constantly – he could break so many more records.

"Right now, Lewis is comfortable in who he is. He's moved to a plant-based diet and is true to his beliefs and religion and he's found himself through motor sport. He's proved that the best thing in life is to do you the way you want to do you. He's ignored a lot of advice and has done what makes him happy."

> "Lewis wears his heart on his sleeve; if he's upset, the whole world sees it"

For this year, Nic has his own programme and is preparing for the biggest season of his career. His touring car will be modified to fit a hand clutch and a larger brake pedal.

"This year is huge. I've been working toward a full BTCC season for seven years.

"I still get texts however, checking in on how I'm going in Clios or whatever I'm racing. He still keeps tabs on me."

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DAYTONA BEACH

Last of the Beach

The skill requirements for racing on sand were very different to what drivers face now on the speedway

Sixty years ago the most famous stretch of sand in motor sport closed for racing, to be replaced by the asphalt of Daytona Speedway. **Samarth Kanal** tracked down one of the few surviving beach racers

Boys



REVS INSTITUTE

Hershel McGriff can recall how much his '53 Oldsmobile cost when he picked it up from the factory in Lansing, Michigan: $1800. He can remember how much he was paid for finishing third at Darlington in 1951 ($1500) and how much he should have been paid because he actually finished fourth ($1210).



ISC ARCHIVES

But McGriff, at 91 years old, is possibly the only living driver who can recall racing on Daytona Beach as well as the fast and vast banks of Daytona International Speedway, which took over hosting the races in 1959.

Ask about the difference in speed between sand and concrete and he laughs: "That's like me racing you across the state; with you on a bicycle and me in a Lamborghini." No prizes for guessing which one is faster.

Daytona Beach racing has worked its way into folklore, and its legacy laid the foundations for the formation of NASCAR, now one of the world's biggest sporting enterprises. Originally used as a site for land-speed record attempts, Daytona Beach first hosted a circuit race in 1936, when local motorcycle race promoter, Norwegian-born Sig Haugdahl was tasked with designing a 3.2-mile oval course taking in a drag along the sand and the adjacent A1A two-lane coastal road. That first event was largely a disaster. Despite thousands of spectators and a $5,000 prize purse put up by the city, the sandy turns rutted so badly the race had to be stopped after 75 of the 78 laps. The event was a financial drain, not helped by many of those spectators arriving at the beach early to avoid the ticket charge.

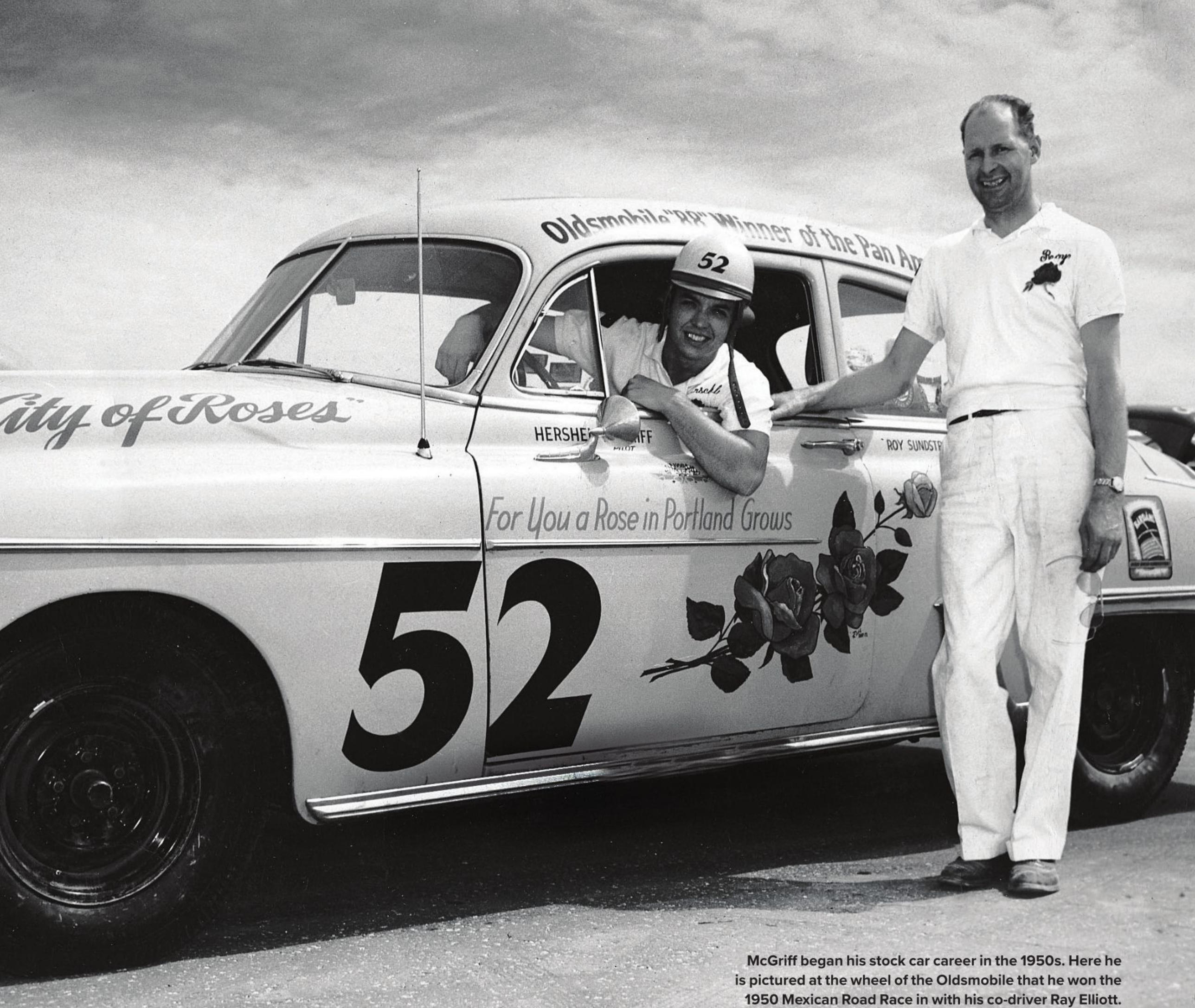
It was only when future NASCAR founder and regular stock car racer William (Bill) France Sr stepped in to help Haugdahl for 1937 that the event finally made some progress. After further financial losses, Haugdahl stepped back, leaving France in sole charge for 1938, when he organised two much more successful open-invite events, which finally turned a substantial profit.

It marked the first organisational success for France, who revolutionised American racing during a time of swindling, banditry and smuggling. Moonshine running was still rife, and many early race promoters carved unscrupulous reputations for themselves by promising to pay drivers, only to disappear from their own events early, taking all of the cash with them.

> "Moonshine running was rife and many promoters stole cash"

One reason that France was so popular, especially compared to other racing promoters around the country, was that he guaranteed a prize purse; other promoters would sometimes find excuses not to pay the drivers. France guaranteed the purses, and even in the early days he had a $4000 purse - he paid $1000 for a win, $750 for second and $500 for third.

With entries flooding in, Daytona Beach often played host to large packs of powerful cars, all going door to door in front of big crowds. One report from *Sports Illustrated* captured the atmosphere during a race in 1955. It read: "A giant cloud of sand mushroomed into the blue Florida sky like dust from an exploding bomb. Perched on sand dunes, on grandstands, on the tops of thousands of parked cars, 28,000 spectators strained eyes and ears as the low rumble of 10,000 horsepower pushing 48 of America's newest and fastest production automobiles swelled to a roar on the backstretch. In



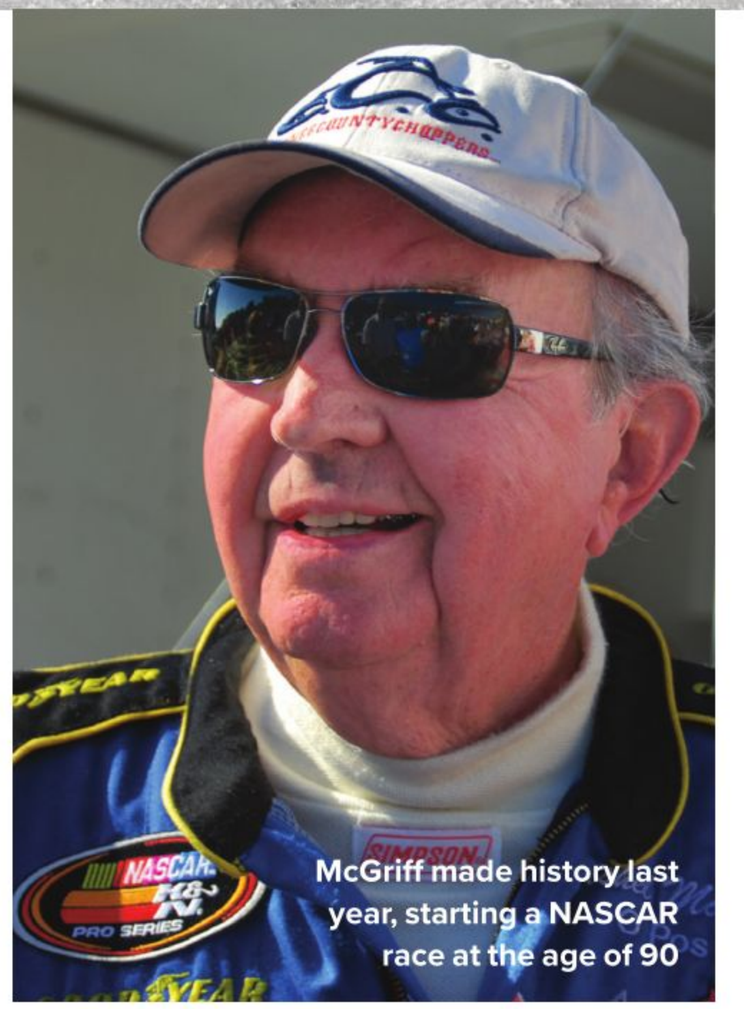
McGriff began his stock car career in the 1950s. Here he is pictured at the wheel of the Oldsmobile that he won the 1950 Mexican Road Race in with his co-driver Ray Elliott.

double rows, their brightwork masked in heavy tape, windows closed to the brine-filled ocean breeze, the massed cars swept across the starting line"

McGriff's story really begins in May 1950, when he caught the eye of France when he won the inaugural Carrera Panamerica alongside Ray Elliott. That's Mexico's equivalent to the Targa Florio, and McGriff beat the likes of Formula 1 drivers Piero Taruffi and Felice Bonetto to win it.

As a result of meeting France, McGriff began his NASCAR career that same year, when he was invited to compete at Darlington. It was a one-race cameo, but in 1954 he managed to find the funds to compete in the full season - all 24 races. His first race of the season? Daytona Beach.

"Thousands of spectators flocked to this small town to enjoy sun, sea and sand... but holiday could quickly turn to horror," says McGriff.



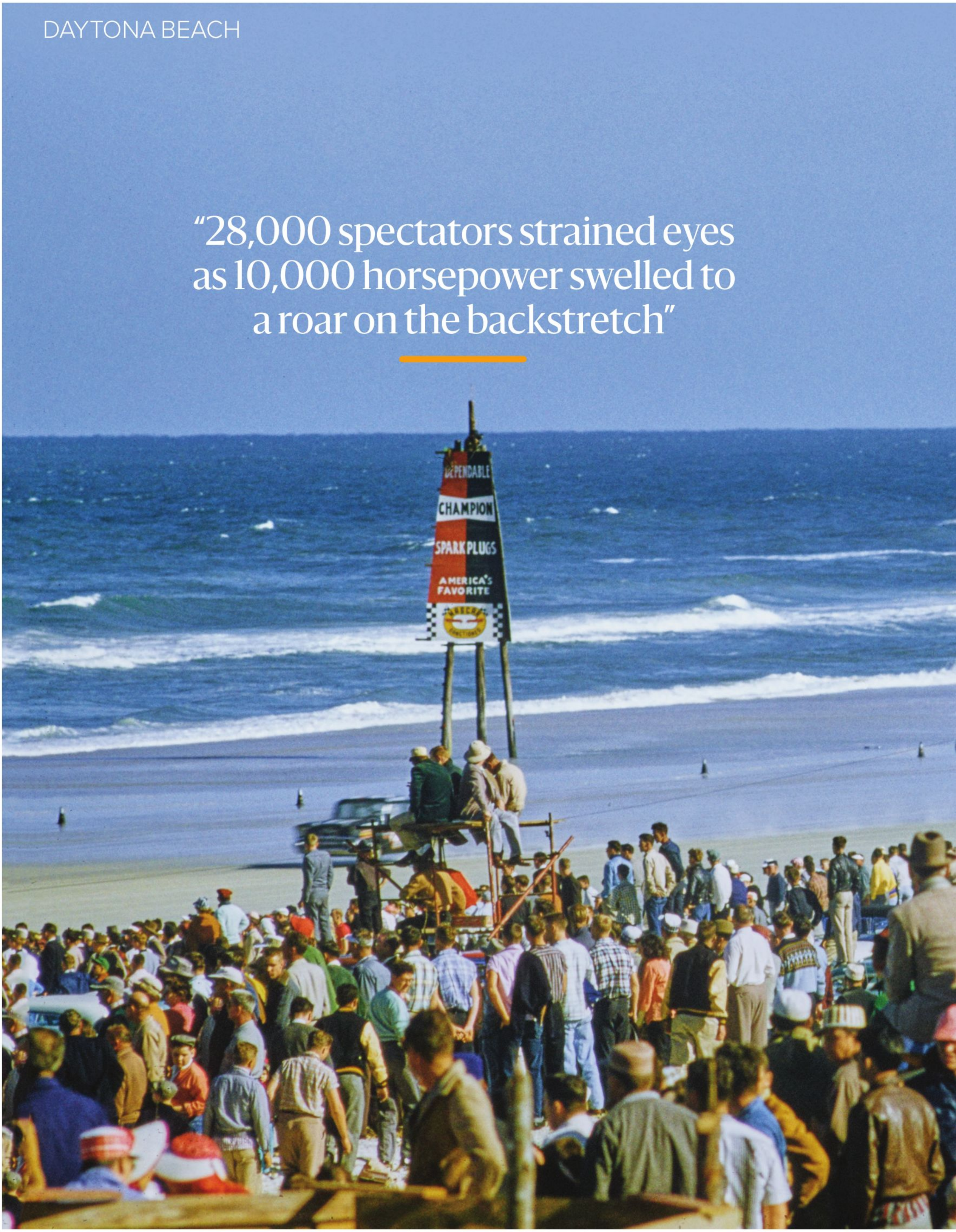
McGriff made history last year, starting a NASCAR race at the age of 90

"The cars could easily run over those people on the backstretch. They'd go on over the sand dune banks [where people were watching]. I don't know how they controlled that many people - they charged a couple of bucks to get in, but people would still sneak in from here and there.

"The front stretch was a narrow two-lane asphalt road, where the start/finish line was. The hard part was that, when you came off the sand onto the blacktop, it would dig up the sand so badly - around two-three feet deep. You'd really have to be careful not to get stuck or roll over."

The danger was clear from the early days. Korean war veteran-turned-racer Dick

"28,000 spectators strained eyes as 10,000 horsepower swelled to a roar on the backstretch"



The track by the shore was referred to as 'hard sand'. The transition to asphalt was tricky

REVS INSTITUTE

The pack roars away for a convertible race as big crowds watch on. Left, spectator numbers were huge for events, even if safety was rather lacking

REVS INSTITUTE

Kaufman was the first NASCAR fatality on the Beach, succumbing to head injuries sustained after crashing in 1954. His car was reported to have rolled multiple times having hit one of those three-foot-deep ruts.

Tragedy also struck in 1955 when three spectators were injured in an accident during a Modified Series race for powerful, reworked pre-war coupés. Regular driver Al Briggs was killed in the fiery crash. There were many grave dangers to be found on the beach.

"One of the keys was to know where the sand was hardest - where the waterline was - because you couldn't go where the sand was too soft as it would slow you down," McGriff explains. "That was kind of an art, to learn how to do that.

"The beach was a historic drive. Going through the corners in the sand, hitting blacktop, and then getting off the blacktop onto soft sand and then back onto the hard beach. There was no other way to describe it - it was a learning experience every lap but everybody caught on quickly, and we had some really good races."

The final problem for McGriff during that '54 debut was the mess that the seagulls made on his windscreen... of course there weren't wipers or tear-offs on his Oldsmobile. He finished his first race in 12th place, while Lee Petty went on to win.

In fact, only the top three were on the lead lap at the flag.

He remembers a party atmosphere on race weekend. The roads of Daytona would be rammed by traffic jams on the way back, but nothing like the "fender-rubbing" that took place on the beach. Road rage? Sure,



but nothing like the post-race pugilism seen at Daytona in later years - such as Cale Yarborough and Donnie Allison's famous fisticuffs at the end of the 1979 event. McGriff maintains that he never got into fistfights. It wasn't an apt place to make enemies.

He and Petty would go on to score a few 1-2 finishes in '54 as Petty secured the drivers' championship and McGriff finished sixth.

"He knew how to drive pretty good because of his experience hauling booze, so drivers like Petty did pretty good on a Sunday at the dirt tracks," explains McGriff. "There was probably more moonshine running going on than you've heard about."

BUT THE DAYS OF BEACH RACING were numbered. The businessman France had outgrown the sands of Daytona, and something much, much bigger was on the horizon. McGriff was doing promotional work for France's new series, and his position gave him a unique insight into France's expanding empire.

"I remember him [Bill France Sr] picking me up and he'd spread blueprints all over the plane. He was studying them intently: they were the blueprints for Daytona Speedway. We flew right over the area where the track was going to be, but he'd not yet accumulated all the land.

"Bill France Sr was looking way ahead. He was one of the greatest guys I ever met, and I learned a lot from him. He never said anything to you that wasn't important; he didn't beat around the bush - he just said it like it was and I appreciated all the time

that I was able to spend with him, which, in those days, was more time than I spent with anybody else because of our connection that year when I helped him promote his races."

With a young family, McGriff took a break from the world of NASCAR racing for over a decade, hanging up his helmet in 1954 and not returning until 1967. Racing was a financial burden for him.

In the meanwhile, France had built NASCAR's third speedway after Darlington and Raleigh (now closed) for the sum of $2.9 million. The first race was run at the new Daytona Speedway on February 20, 1959, for open-roof cars.

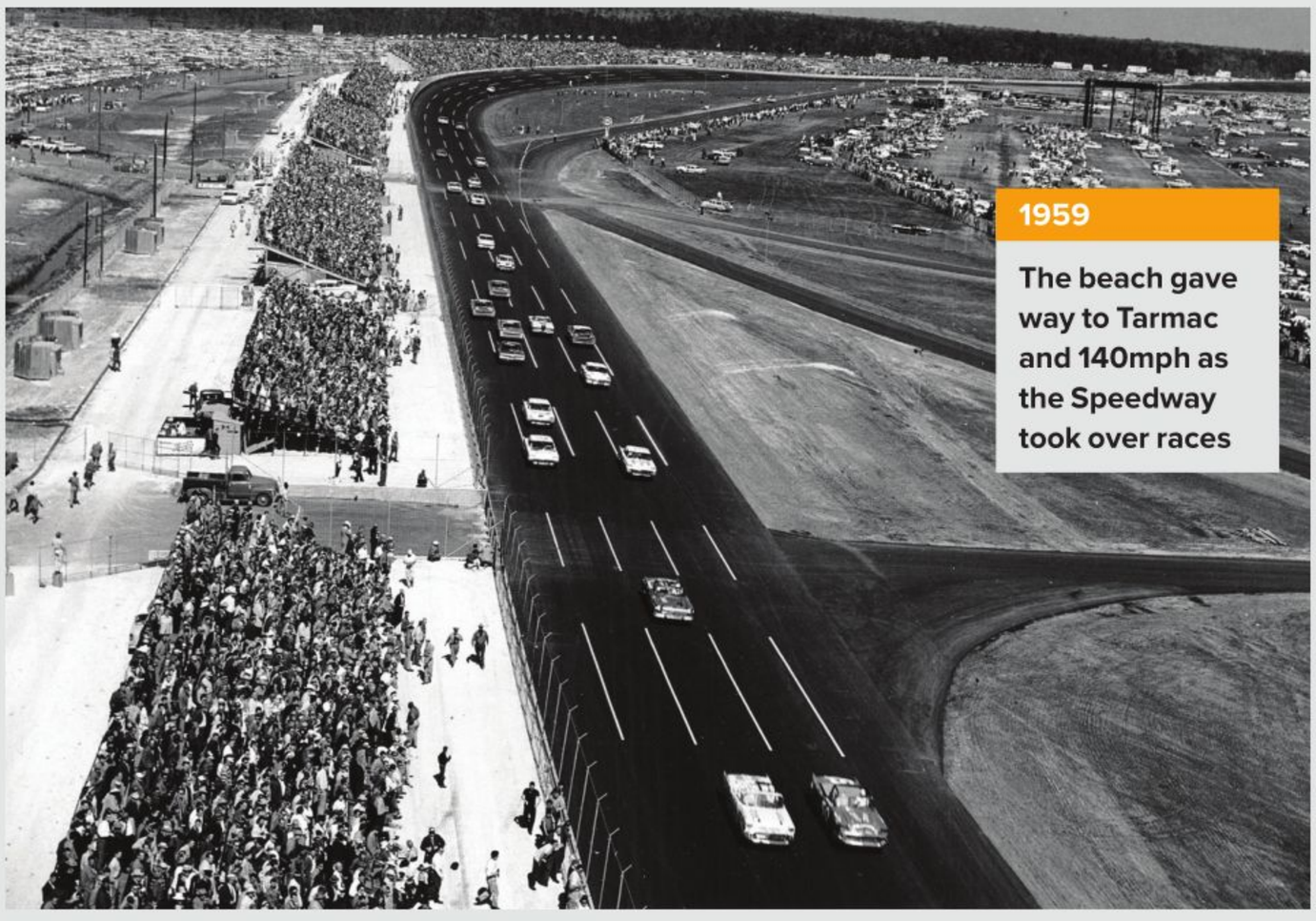
More than 40,000 paying spectators attended the Daytona 500 two days later, which came down to Petty and Johnny Beauchamp and ended in a photo finish that required analysis of newsreel footage and stills over three days after the event had finished. Petty was the eventual winner.

"Petty knew how to drive good because of his booze hauling"



1955

The 3.2-mile oval took in a run along the beach and back down the A1A road



1959

The beach gave way to Tarmac and 140mph as the Speedway took over races

ISC ARCHIVES

McGriff returned to racing in 1967 at Riverside, and he first got a taste of NASCAR's concrete jungle in 1973.

"When I first ran Daytona, it was so smooth. I qualified sixth at 185mph, which was really good in those days. That's the biggest track I've ever driven, and it was full of spectators. But you're definitely glued into the preparation, the rules and I had to focus so hard on the racing - you didn't notice all of that," he says.

Yes, the beach was dangerous, but the speeds at Daytona broke fresh ground for many American racing drivers. That became clear even before the first race at the Speedway, when France invited drivers to break the world speed record on a closed racing circuit. The first driver to reach 180mph on Daytona would win $10,000, and bragging rights.

But when double NASCAR national champion Marshall Teague, nicknamed "King of the Beach" for his two wins at Daytona in 1951 and '52, attempted the record, he was not prepared for this new challenge at all.

The high banks of the oval got the best of his Sumar Special Indycar, which flipped over at 140mph. Teague was ejected - still in his seat - from the car nearly 500 metres from the spot where he had his accident as Daytona claimed its first casualty before a race had even started.

"There's no comparison between the beach and the speedway," reiterates McGriff.

KEEN NOT TO TRAVEL THE length of the country to compete, Daytona veteran McGriff raced in the NASCAR K&N Pro Series West - a regional division that was formed in 1954 - until finally retiring in 2012.

But NASCAR had one final surprise for him: last year for his 90th birthday present Bill McAnally Racing gave him the chance to return, to complete a 100-lap K&N Pro race at Tucson.

"I didn't do very good - I tagged along at the tail end - but it was a great weekend for me, a fantastic weekend and a big celebration with lots of friends from all over the country coming over to watch," he says.

With that, he became the oldest driver ever to start a NASCAR-sanctioned race. McGriff finished 16th, but it was one hell of a party nonetheless.

Just like the old days, indeed, flat out on Daytona Beach.

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Spot the Gen 2

An exclusive track test provided a chance to compare old and new Formula E chassis directly

difference

A new generation of electric racer boasts Buck Rogers bodywork and more power than the car it replaces. But could either one convince **Dickie Meaden**, a Formula E sceptic, that they deserve their place on a racetrack?

PHOTOGRAPHER **LYNDON McNEIL**

Gen 1



Halo's central spar required a little acclimatisation on Meaden's part

For a gallery of more stunning images visit *motorsport magazine.com*

Few things in motor sport are more evocative than watching a solitary car lapping an otherwise empty circuit. Senses trained on a distant, fast-moving shape pursued by the howl of a highly tuned racing engine, the purity of the scene only serves to intensify the experience.

Private tests such as this are something I've witnessed probably a hundred times, but none has been quite like today. For starters it's in Majorca (for reasons I will explain shortly) and, in place of an internal combustion engine working through its raucous ascending and descending scales, there's a constant, piercing whine. Like a flightless helicopter without the thrashing rotor blades, this otherworldly noise is the shrill soundtrack to Audi's new-generation Formula E racer. And we're here to drive it.

Why Majorca? Because the compact, sinuous circuit is very close in character to the tight, twisty street circuits that are part of FE's USP. It is a slightly odd place;



The Gen-2 Formula E racer is styled much more adventurously than the car it supersedes

a bit rough around the edges and with a somewhat improvised feel to it, it's like a scaled-up kart track. This makes it ideal for a FE car and a great place to get a feel for both the old- and new-generation machines in a relatively safe yet representative environment.

We covered the difference between this and the car it replaces in the December 2018 edition of *Motor Sport*, but in case you missed it I'll recap the most salient points. The altered look is very obvious, the new car somewhat self-consciously channelling a sci-fi future where the original car remained rooted in the present. There's a massive diffuser, but it's a bit of a red herring as FE is resolutely not an aero formula. Drag has been reduced thanks to enclosed wheels, but the original car's aero wheel rims have been banned.

The tub is a spec design by Dallara and built by Spark Technologies. Teams were already allowed to develop their own powertrains - a big incentive for the major automotive players to get involved - but they are now also free to develop aspects of the rear suspension, including the dampers and packaging. Active brake-by-wire systems are now allowed (on the front axle only), with teams free to develop their own or use an off-the-shelf system.

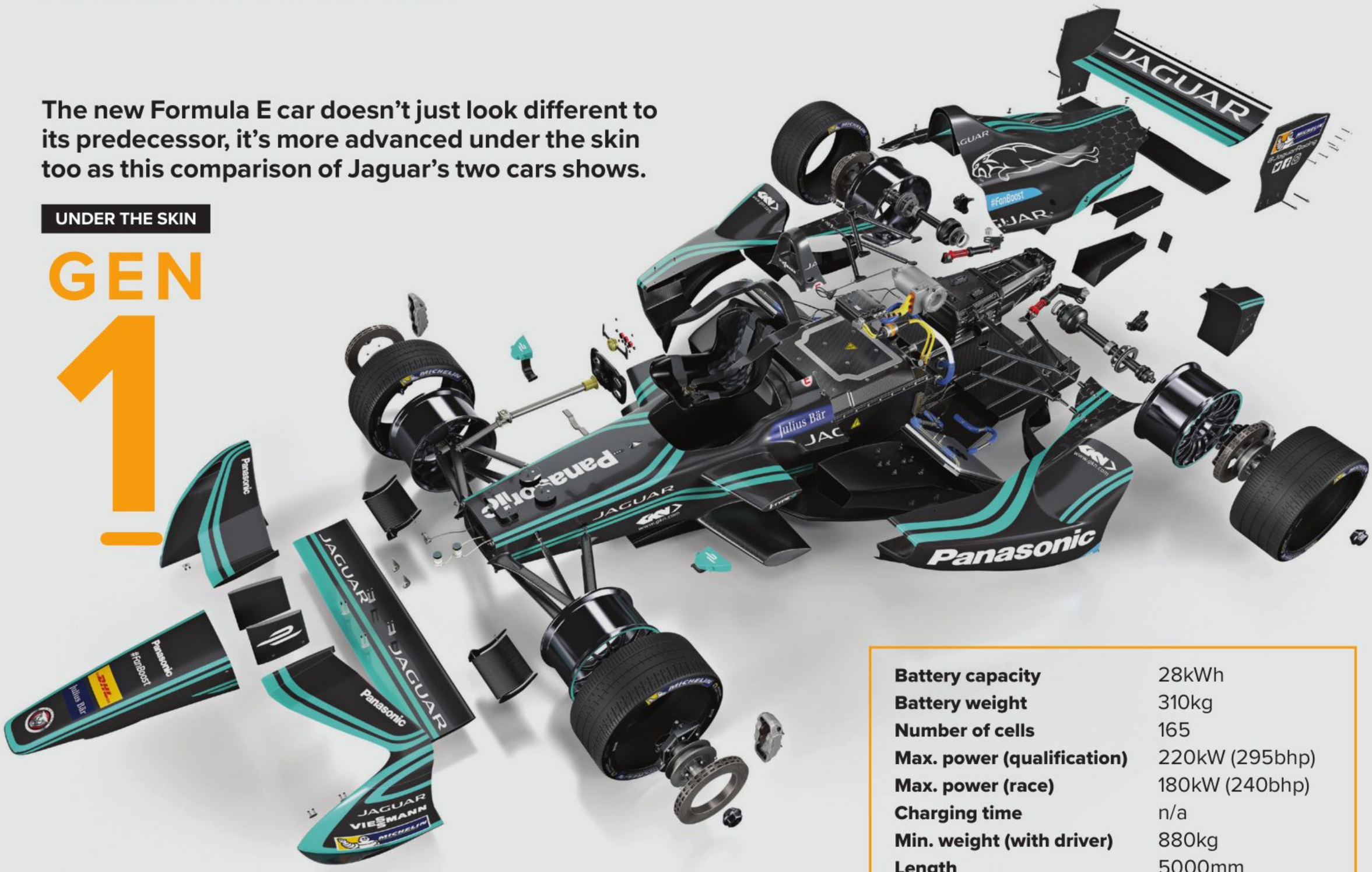
Power management software has always been the freest area of FE's otherwise tightly controlled technical regulations, so while testing is limited to just seven days per season and many areas of the car are standard or subject to development restrictions, the brain of the powertrain inverter can be developed during the season.

Biggest news is the latest battery pack. Produced by McLaren Applied Technologies, it has 54kW/h of useable energy; almost double that of the previous car. This means each 45-minute ePrix can now be completed without the need to swap cars - a big step in terms of credibility and a significant strategic shake-up.

The new Formula E car doesn't just look different to its predecessor, it's more advanced under the skin too as this comparison of Jaguar's two cars shows.

UNDER THE SKIN

GEN 1



Battery capacity	28kWh
Battery weight	310kg
Number of cells	165
Max. power (qualification)	220kW (295bhp)
Max. power (race)	180kW (240bhp)
Charging time	n/a
Min. weight (with driver)	880kg
Length	5000mm
Width	1780mm
Height	1050mm
Max. speed	225kph (140mph)
Acceleration (0-100kph)	3.0sec

Power is up compared to the Gen-1 cars, with 200kW (approx 268bhp in old money) available in race mode and 250kW (335bhp) in qualifying. That 50kW (67bhp) bump is also available through the familiar 'FanBoost' in-race vote process, and a new 'Attack Mode' - the specifics of which (that's to say the number and duration of shots) will be announced to the teams only an hour before each ePrix to add an element of unpredictability. Spectators and viewers know when Attack Mode has been engaged thanks to a special lighting system on the halo.

To help demonstrate how the fresh technology and power increase translate on the track, Audi has brought Lucas di Grassi's Gen-1 car fresh from Season 4 along with the team's first Gen-2 car, which was being used for official FE testing ahead of the first race in Saudi Arabia last December. It's a rare privilege to drive a car so early in its racing life, and no small risk for Audi if the car was damaged during a handful of media tests.

WE START BY DRIVING THE Gen-1 car. I've watched enough FE to know the outgoing car would be tricky, but if I'm honest I didn't think it would be quite such a challenge. This has nothing to do with its pace, for it really doesn't feel that fast. All things are relative, however, and it's worth noting we are doing none of the energy management or almost continual brake bias adjustments the FE regulars have to cope with while racing.

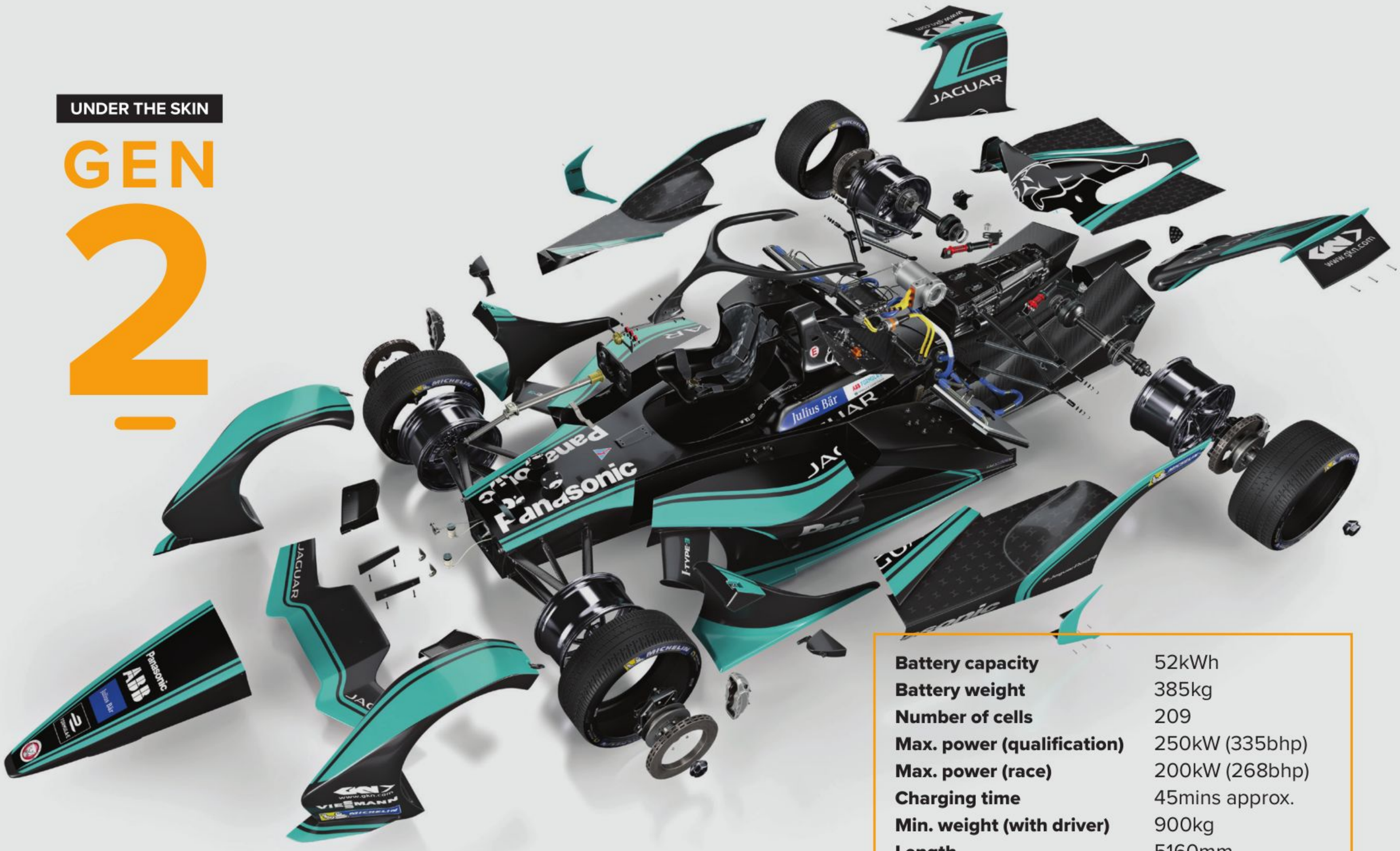
This Gen-1 car is a real handful in the braking areas, for it rarely seems to behave in the same way twice. This is evident from the racing, but such is the shift in brake balance, not just lap to lap but sometimes from corner to corner, that you're constantly reacting, correcting and modulating your braking efforts.

I've grown used to there being few if any transferable skills from historic racing to the modern realm, so the irony of feeling very much at home in a Formula E car is not lost on me. Especially when the rear wheels decide to lock under braking going into the chicane at the end of the longest straight. It's quite a moment - one almost immediately followed by a similar lock-up into the chicane directly adjacent to where the Audi Sport guys are constantly monitoring my progress.

"The Gen-1 car is a real handful in the braking areas, it rarely seems to behave the same way twice"

UNDER THE SKIN

GEN 2



Battery capacity	52kWh
Battery weight	385kg
Number of cells	209
Max. power (qualification)	250kW (335bhp)
Max. power (race)	200kW (268bhp)
Charging time	45mins approx.
Min. weight (with driver)	900kg
Length	5160mm
Width	1770mm
Height	1050mm
Max. speed	280kph (174mph)
Acceleration (0-100kph)	2.8sec

When I come in for my mid-stint pause, the chief technician has some fairly stern words of caution for me - and a look to match. Audi test driver Benoît Tréluyer is less scary and even offers a wry smile when attempting to calm me down, but the message is clear; please don't push any harder. To be honest I'd already had that word with myself, but it was fun to push hard and to feel genuinely how tricky the limit is to find.

After my mild dressing-down in the old car, I approach the new one with a little more circumspection, for crunching it really wouldn't go down well. It's a very different car to behold, and a very different car to board thanks to the halo. Instead of stepping into the car I'm ushered towards what horsey people would refer to as a mounting block, from which I can step directly onto a specific area of the cockpit surround that's solid enough to bear the weight of someone standing on it. From here you hoist one leg then the other over the halo's sturdy metal hoop and stand on the seat before lowering your way in, remembering to keep your legs out straight so they thread down into the pedal box.

Initially you go a bit boss-eyed focusing on the halo's central support spar, but once on the move it's a relief to find you genuinely look through it. Initial impressions are of an immediately tighter, more responsive car. It feels bigger and visibility is severely impeded by the enclosed front wheels, to the point where I find it hard to place the car close to apex cones with the same confidence, even though I know the circuit by this point.

As with the original car there are no gears to shift, so it's a case of pointing and squirting. The new motor and battery cells deliver more shove and a sharper, fizzier whine, but there's the same sense of immense torque from rest followed by a linear, uninterrupted rate of propulsion. Like the Gen-1 car it reaches a plateau sooner than you expect, so while it's still



Meaden settles into his unfamiliar surroundings

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Meaden took a more cautious approach with the new car – but very quickly found four tenths

"It's still easy to lock a wheel when slowing into a tight hairpin"

accelerating happily into the braking area along the FE test circuit's longest straight, the impression of speed is moderate, as you'd expect in a 900kg car propelled by 268-335bhp.

Despite appearances there's little to no downforce generated by the Buck Rogers bodywork, so you know you've only got mechanical grip. Ordinarily this is well inside my comfort zone, but there's not a great deal of feel from the new iteration of Michelin's treaded, all-weather rubber. They might be softer, but they have to go a race distance (unlike the old ones, which only ever did half a race) and you never get the reassuring sense they've switched on in the manner of a nice, grippy slick. In hands new to the peculiarities of a FE car, the effect is a little spooky.

This remoteness most readily manifests itself under braking, where it's still easy to lock a wheel when slowing into a tight hairpin, at least early in a run when the tyres are still cold. According to feedback team principal Allan McNish has received from his drivers, the brake-by-wire system



Brake-by-wire systems are now allowed in Formula E, but only on the front axle

reduces the single trickiest car control-related aspect of driving a FE car, but it can still be a devilish job to get even temperatures into front and rear tyres, or even across each axle. It's encouraging that these new cars require a driver not only to have feel, but a readiness to react and improvise.

I've already made a pact with myself not to drive as hard as I did in the old car. Still, it's interesting to note that according to the steering wheel data screen, my best lap is nearly 0.4sec faster than my quickest in the old car. While far from an absolute benchmark, it's an illustration of the new car's greater pace and increased drivability. Though not as committed on the brakes, I'm enjoying the new car's willingness to wag its tail under power; something the drivers won't be doing for the fun of it, but will most likely have to embrace at the end of the race when the Michelins are potentially wrung out.

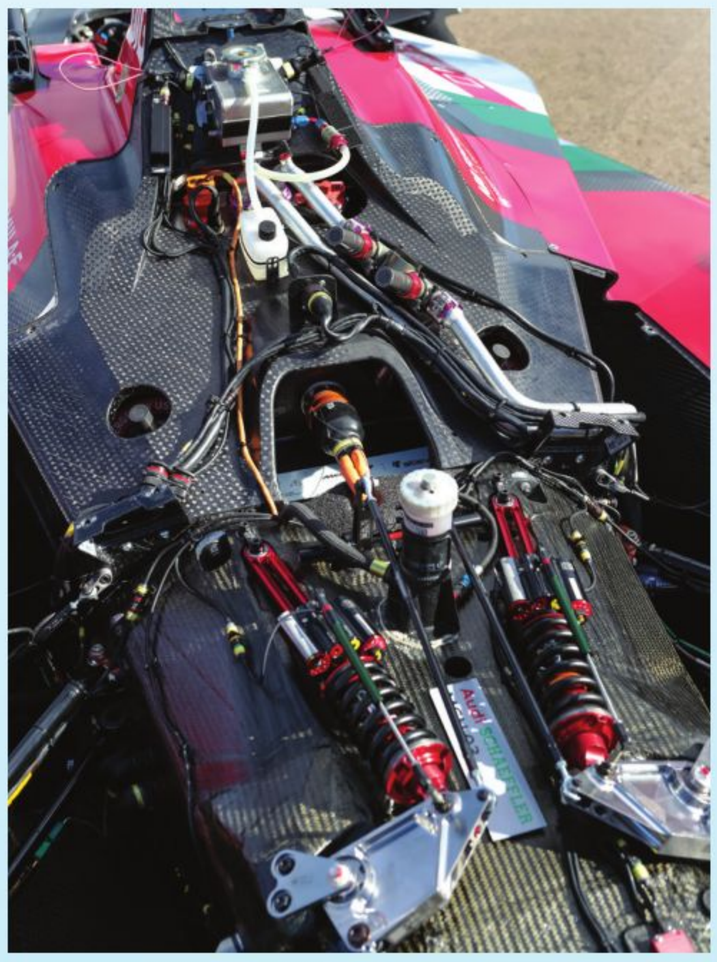
DRIVING BOTH FORMULA E generations was as much a test of my own feelings on the future of motor sport as it is a simple evaluation of a new racing car. This explains why at the end of the day I was fascinated and better informed about FE, but still conflicted by what it offers. Both as a spectacle for fans and as a formula for the big manufacturers.

Unquestionably FE retains a laudable commitment to shaking things up. An opportunity to avoid well-worn motor sport tropes is one of the few luxuries FE's founders enjoyed and, as electric propulsion becomes a greater part of the wider automotive industry strategy, its position as a marketing platform becomes exponentially stronger. These are two things F1 can't claim.

Having tried both cars I know first-hand that they are challenging, though the new car feels far more polished than the one it replaces. This tells me that as the series matures and the cars evolve, FE will inevitably face the same problems as F1; namely the big brands' desire to dominate, the engineers' impulse to improve things and the racers' instinct to go faster. As we've seen in F1, this cycle doesn't guarantee better racing and often masks the drivers' skill.

Another aspect I believe will become increasingly hard to reconcile is FE's desire to peg the pace of development - and avoid an arms race. Not least because that's precisely what the big automotive players (incumbent and emerging) are engaged in with road cars. Battery technology is something even the largest automotive brands prefer to develop in partnership with pure tech companies, so it makes sense for FE to keep teams focused on how to wring the most from what they have, rather than chase better battery tech.

Yet can we really expect some of the most illustrious, proud and fiercely competitive brands in the history of motor racing to remain committed to playing nicely, in order to nurture Formula E's greater wellbeing? They might be happy to offer platitudes for now, but after going toe-to-toe in the World Endurance Championship's hybrid era or battling (and beating) Ferrari in F1, how long will the likes of Audi, BMW, Mercedes (HWA) and Porsche suppress the feeling that they are going racing with one arm tied behind their backs?





A powertrain capable of lasting a full race without a car swap is the biggest change beneath the skin. Left, diffuser is more style than substance – there's little aero grip

Confining the cars to inner-city street circuits enforces a certain Darwinian evolutionary fitness for purpose, but it's also a tacit acknowledgement that FE cars simply don't cut it on full-scale tracks. Newcomers to motor sport see this as a plus, but although I understand the inner-city concept I'd be lying if I said I didn't think it pales compared with the majestic scale and dazzling speed of internal combustion racing at traditional venues.

I've not been a fan of FE, though I've always been impressed by the best drivers' abilities to go wheel-to-wheel within the wholly unforgiving confines of concrete-lined streets. It's certainly refreshing to see racing in an environment where track limits are physical rather than philosophical. Having now experienced the original car, I've got even greater respect for the tricky and surprisingly old-school challenges they presented by having manually to manage their mechanical and regenerative braking systems.

IT'S TOO EARLY TO SAY WHAT EFFECT the new Season 5 machines will have on the excitement of FE, but with a greater level of predictability under braking and without the need for a mid-race car swap, the unique variables thrown up by the Gen-1 car's limitations have gone. Attack Mode will introduce dynamic, potentially race-changing opportunities, while fresh tactics to get the best from the available battery energy and tyre life will emerge as sim-honed strategies are fused with real-time race data.

Those drawn to motor sport by FE's urbanite, family-friendly approach and futuristic technology will still find plenty to like about the latest cars and E Prix events. The fact there's no longer the need to swap cars should boost battery racing's credibility among traditional race fans, a demographic that has struggled to engage with FE emotionally. I'd count myself among that group.

Being brutally honest, driving Audi's old and new FE cars hasn't brought me any closer to loving them - they remain essentially cold-hearted appliances - but it has taught me this much: that racing is racing and racers are racers, whatever the means of propulsion. I'll be tuning in to the rest of Season 5 with interest.

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WRC RETURNS

WRC strikes back

This year's World Rally Championship features the return of star names, new events and the most unpredictable title race for years. **Jeremy Hart** says it could mark the start of another golden era



The WRC has struggled for mass appeal since the loss of stars like Colin McRae

IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT THE WORLD Rally Championship heads into 2019 on a high. The Monte Carlo Rally showed that it's arguably as competitive and dramatic as it has ever been and is certainly a much-changed sporting proposition to the climate the world championship found itself in around the turn of the century.

A glance down this year's entry list reveals names such as Loeb, Grönholm and Solberg, together with the more modern star attractions like Ogier, Neuville, Meeke and Tänak. It's a compelling mix of returning legends - many considered to be the original rock stars of rallying - and promising youth.

Ask M-Sport Ford World Rally Team boss Malcolm Wilson what he thinks of the current state of the world championship and you'll get a clear answer.

"The sport has worked hard and we are arguably now in a better position than we were when we had Group B," Wilson says. "We now have live TV, new events planned in places like Chile and other countries... The sport is in a good place right now."

These are bold words. World rallying's Group B era of the 1980s is perhaps its most evocative period, involving power-hungry days of speed, duelling drivers and danger. Ultimately it was banned on safety grounds, but the cars still retain a special place in the memories of rally fans.

The modern machinery we have now has been designed to get back towards that ethos, with big power, big downforce and big grip - but this time allied to the necessary safety requirements.

It's worked, too. Now we have four full-time manufacturers, and the star names of the sport are coming back. Rallying found itself in a slump after 2003. The main attractions of Colin McRae, Richard Burns, Tommi Mäkinen, Didier Auriol, Juha Kankkunen and Carlos Sainz were gone. That removed drivers with a total of 13 world titles between them. But now the big hitters are returning, buoyed by the positive changes to the WRC.

The greatest rally driver of all-time, nine-time world champion Sébastien Loeb is back for six events with Hyundai. Having taken time off to dabble in circuit racing, rallycross and tackle Dakar, Loeb has a new home. And it's arguably the best-funded in the field.

Hyundai thus far hasn't enjoyed the championship success that its investment into the impressive i20 WRC should have justified. Its lead driver, Thierry Neuville, took three victories last term and finished the year second in the championship. He

"As a driver, organisation was not Mäkinen's strength, he appears to have learned new tricks"



Double world champion, and fan favourite Marcus Grönholm, right, will be in a Toyota for Sweden

then missed victory on the Monte by just 2.2sec. He's unquestionably rapid, but has lacked that finishing touch. Loeb has been brought in – sharing an extra i20 with Spanish veteran Dani Sordo – to help support the team and bring Hyundai more wins.

Committing to just six rounds will almost inevitably rule Loeb out of the fight for the drivers' title, but such is the mental destabilisation of 'the Loeb effect', he could well knock his younger rivals out of kilter.

"I did three rallies [in 2018, winning his final outing with Citroën in Catalunya] and I was either victorious or I had a lot of pleasure in doing it," says Loeb. "I'm still motivated to drive, I'm still competitive, I enjoy the rallies and I don't want to stop driving – it's my passion. I'm not doing this to prove anything. The goal is to score points, to get a good result, to enjoy the car, to enjoy the races and to do as well as possible. The goal is simply to do the best, the goal is not for me to win the world championship."

BUT ISN'T IT TOUGH COMING BACK into the sport after a break of six years, and at the age of 44? Up to now, Swede Björn Waldegård is the oldest event winner on record – 46 when he won the arduous Safari Rally. No driver older than 41 – Hannu Mikkola – has won the title.

Loeb only just missed the podium in Monte, finishing fourth. He adds that experience counts heavier than youth in the WRC.



"I was six years away and the knowledge of the stages is important," adds Loeb. "It's also more complicated when you lose a bit of rhythm in the races. It's a championship where the drivers are very strong and they are really prepared for the stages. It's not easy to arrive later, being less prepared, and go on and win. But the main thing for rallying for me is the feeling you have to have with the car. It's not like running a marathon where the most important thing is the [physical] preparation. With rallies it's mostly about feeling, and you have to be precise. In Catalunya I was perhaps not the fastest over the whole rally, but I was able to bring everything together. But I have lost too much experience [during his break] to have victories everywhere."

It will likely be the same scenario for the WRC's other returning legends – double world champion Marcus Grönholm and 'Hollywood' himself, Petter Solberg.

Grönholm will start his first WRC event in nine years when he handles a Toyota Gazoo Racing Yaris WRC for what is currently a one-off appearance on Rally Sweden. With five wins in Sweden, Grönholm is the second-most successful driver on the event, trailing Stig Blomqvist by two.

Solberg, the 2003 world beater, will also return. He has reportedly secured a deal with Volkswagen to drive its new Polo GTi R5 for a handful of events. While the R5 won't be a match for the mighty WR Cars at the front, the return of another top name will only bolster interest.

However, arguably the first big hitter to return to the WRC was Tommi Mäkinen, and he's already made a big impact. The four-time world champion is one of the greatest-ever drivers, and took on a fresh challenge of bringing Toyota back into the world championship as team boss in 2017.

Mäkinen at the helm of Toyota is interesting as when he was a driver, organisation was not one of his strong points. But, roll on 15 years and it appears this old dog has learned new tricks. Constructors' champion last year, Toyota is a formidable team with a brace of talented drivers, including Estonian Ott Tänak. The surprise package of last season, Tänak won four rounds to finish third in the points, and also set the early pace on the Monte before finishing third. He's yet to fully mature as a driver, and the Yaris still has some potential to unlock.

Another returning name – albeit far more modern – is Kris Meeke, whom Mäkinen ▶

has thrown a lifeline. Having been ditched by Citroën last year after some heavy, and rather questionable, accidents, Meeke is back for what could be his final chance.

"I find myself in one of the best seats in the house this year," says the Northern Irishman. "I might be one of the elder statesmen, but I have only done three full seasons. I have never found myself in the right place at the right time, but I believe this will be the right time. If I enjoy driving, I believe I can be at the front."

One of the fastest and most spectacular drivers on his day, Meeke will learn a lot from Mäkinen, and may well add to the five wins he has notched so far. Meeke is also a protégé of the late master, Colin McRae. What would the heroic Scot think of rallying's new golden era? "Colin would have loved a go in the current cars..." sighs Meeke. "But I think this is going to be a great year for world rallying."

THAT BRINGS US TO THE current dominator. Who can beat Sébastien Ogier? While French drivers named Sébastien have totally monopolised the world title across the last 15 years - Loeb with nine titles to Ogier's six - this year's is far more open.

Ogier returns to his first WRC employer - Citroën, a team not without its own problems since its return to rallying's top flight. He'll now go head-to-head with Loeb and Co on more events - and who doesn't want to see that?

Regardless, the current master still nicked victory on his home turf in Monte.

"It is going to be a golden year," says Ogier excitedly. "Last year was very close [he narrowly claimed the title in his M-Sport Ford from Neuville] and I think this year will be, too. I am the only one [of the main title contenders] who has moved team. Having the past champions coming back is great for the show. Sport needs heroes. These guys are heroes. There will be a bigger amount of spectators to see them.

"It's a bit funny they all wish to come back to do some rallies after such a long time. In [athletics, for instance] it is not possible but in rally it is. They are not a threat for the championship, but I need to be careful not to get into the fight with the older guys. Loeb still has a lot of ability. He won last year, so he could still take points and win in some places this year."

"One of the fastest, most spectacular drivers, Meeke will learn at Toyota"

But, what of Ogier's former employer? It's looking like an uphill battle for Wilson's M-Sport team. Having lost his star driver, Wilson was faced with a tough choice. Without enough funding in place, he had to commit millions of pounds and hundreds of jobs at his Cumbria base to the WRC. Ford has supported the team technically, but its focus is on sports car racing. For 2019, the world-title winning squad for the past two years may be reduced to fighting for crumbs.

Still, it has 2017 Rally GB winner Elfyn Evans onboard again, plus Teemu Suninen and Pontus Tidemand. "Elfyn is a proven winner, so I hope we can challenge on the odd rally, but we have got to be realistic," Wilson adds. "If we can get the odd podium, I would be happy with that. Our focus is for 2020, though."

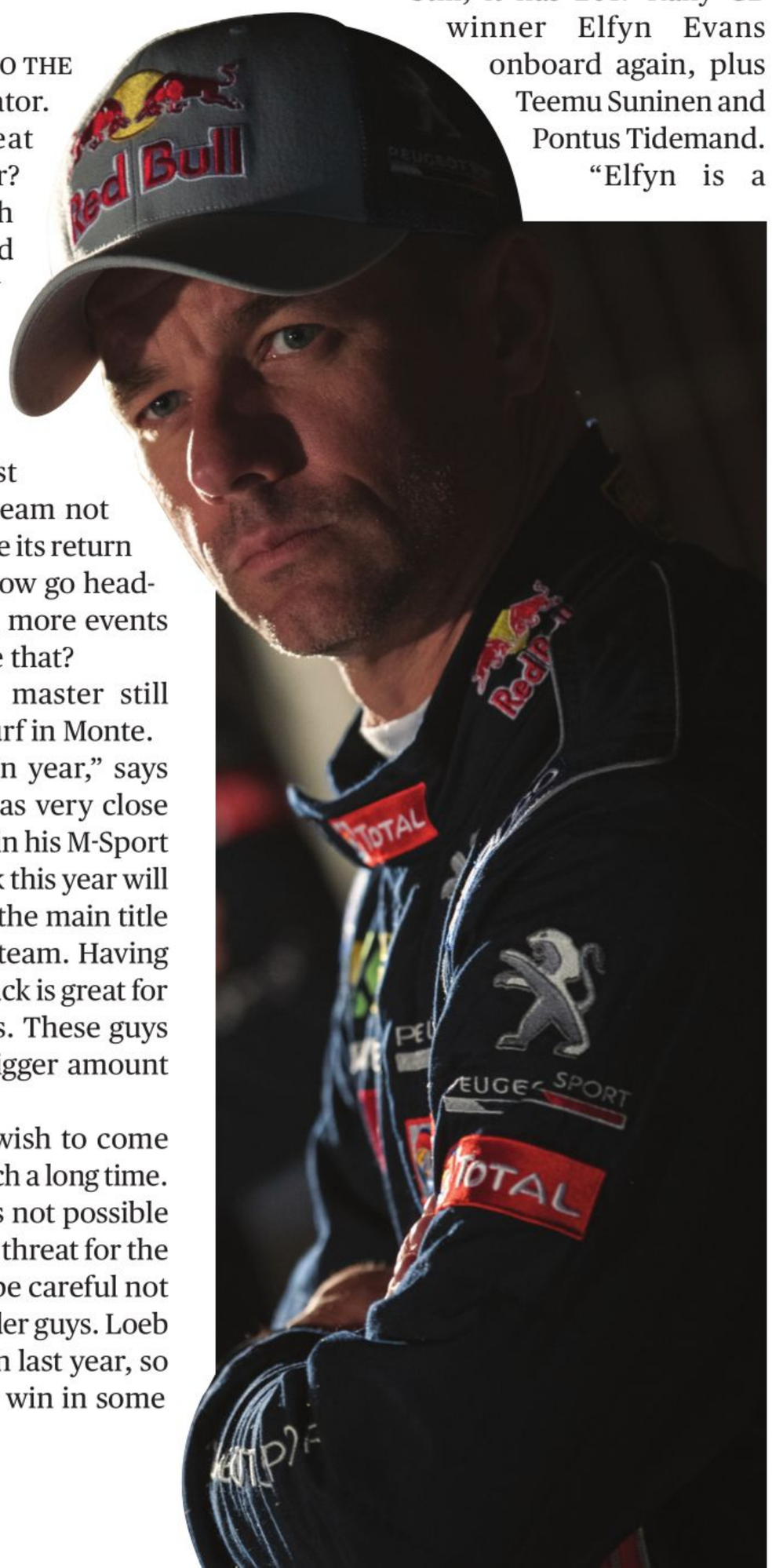
Trying to predict the competitive order is tough, particularly with the field so deep in talent and the teams so well matched.

Of course it's not just a coincidence that the WRC has ended up like this. Since Red Bull got the promotional rights in 2012 and created the WRC Promoter, much work has gone into bringing it back up to scratch.

The new generation WR Cars that came into play for 2017 have proven spectacular, and they've had better stages to play on, too. We've seen bigger special stages held closer to city centres, designed to bring rallying to the people - the Mexico City run around the Zócalo square where the James Bond thriller *Spectre* was filmed springs to mind, as does cars pounding the streets of Llandudno on Rally GB. We've had experiments to bring back endurance stages, such as the 50-mile Guanajuato epic - again in Mexico. OK, it didn't quite catch on, but it did go some way to appease calls to bring back the glory days of endurance rallying. Plus, it highlighted that these cars, rightly, work best in a sprint format. Flat-out over shorter, more accessible distances.

There's also been the launch of the WRC+ All Live streaming service, which brought live coverage to fans' TVs, smartphones and tablets - fulfilling a prophecy Prodrive boss David Richards made almost 20 years ago. The Promoter is also reaching out to new areas. There's been talks to bring back the legendary Safari Rally, plus much work to try and get an event up-and-running in China, and this year it heads to Chile.

Added together it shows a sport making an effort, and moving in the right way to appeal to a younger generation. It's also clearly caught the attention of its own past stars, who will perhaps go on to form key parts of what could be a second coming of the WRC's golden era.



Sébastien Loeb, left, is back for six events with the Hyundai team to try and topple Ogier

F1 Through The Ages



Whatever your favoured decade, Grand Prix Models is your one stop shop for all Formula 1 models. Above are just a small selection of the F1 subjects in stock at the time of press, ranging from the 1940s to the present day. We have a huge range available to with prices to suit all pockets, be they traditional diecast, resincast or artisan produced kits and hand builts (we'll even build the kits for you if needed!).
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Europe's biggest historic motor sport show begins this month. Here's your guide to the stars and the cars on offer this year

THE HISTORIC MOTOR SPORT season will roar into life at Stoneleigh Park on February 22-24 as the annual Race Retro Show, powered by *Motor Sport*, opens to showcase the great and the good of our sport.

Race Retro has grown to become Europe's biggest and best historic motor sport event, and this year will again feature a plethora of automotive exotica and star personalities sharing many behind-the-scenes stories of their career live on the *Motor Sport* Stage.

This year we're delighted to welcome Finnish 'Rally Professor' Rauno Aaltonen. To coincide with the 60th anniversary of the Mini, Aaltonen will speak of his adventures with the marque, including winning the 1967 Monte Carlo Rally. Also present will be sports car star John Fitzpatrick - famed for his success across touring car and GT racing, especially with the Porsche marque.

Whether your passion focuses on the 24 Hours of Le Mans, Formula 1, the World Rally Championship, vintage racing or club race and rally action, there is something for everybody at Race Retro.

THE HAWTHORN COLLECTION

Taking centre stage during Motor Sport Hall of Fame Live will be a world-first gathering of many of the cars, trophies and artefacts celebrating the life of Britain's first Formula 1 world champion, Mike Hawthorn.

The legacy of Hawthorn was explored within the February edition of *Motor Sport*, as we lifted the lid on a driver who is often, unjustly, overlooked in the history of grand prix racing.

The story and career of the 'Farnham Flyer' may be relatively brief, but it was filled with drama, glory, tragedy and intrigue before his life was cut short by a road accident just weeks after landing the 1958 world championship with Ferrari.

The display will feature many of the cars that made Hawthorn the driver he was - from the ex-works 1100cc Riley Ulster Imp in which he took his maiden racing successes to a Lotus 11 he raced exactly 11 times.

The display will also feature many items from the unique collection of Nigel Webb, whose work collecting and curating everything Hawthorn has helped keep the legacy of such an intriguing racing character alive.

On display will be Webb's Jaguar D-type - built from parts of the original 1955 Le Mans-winning chassis - as well as a collection of Hawthorn's famous four-spoke steering wheels, what remains of his 1958 World Championship trophy as well as various personal memorabilia giving a unique insight into the life of Mike Hawthorn.

ENDURANCE APPEAL

Twenty years ago, Audi first rocked up to Le Mans to kick-start what would become one of the most successful manufacturer programmes at La Sarthe. A total of 13 wins from the Ingolstadt firm's 17-year stint in prototype racing catapulted the Audi to become the second-most successful brand in the history of the race.

It all began with the 1999 R8C, which featured the 3.6-litre V8 that pre-dated the all-conquering - if controversial - diesels.

The mighty Group C regulations dominated the early 1990s, and one of the most recognisable of these machines, the Sauber-Mercedes C11, will also be on display. As well as winning Le Mans in 1990, the car can count the great Michael Schumacher among its elite list of drivers.

TURBO FEVER

Remember the days of grand prix cars that made the ground shake? This year's Race Retro will pay homage to arguably

WIN A RIDE IN A GROUP B RALLY CAR

Motor Sport readers can enter an exclusive prize draw to win a high-speed rally ride in a Group B machine during the weekend of Race Retro, thanks to Rallying with Group B.

To enter, simply book Saturday or Sunday advance tickets by Sunday 17 Feb using the code RALLY via RaceRetro.com.

The ride will happen as part of Rallying with Group B's Live Rally Stage, which runs over the weekend of the show.

All entrants must be aged 14 or over and must be a minimum height of 135cm. For full terms and conditions see RaceRetro.com.





The stars of the show

The power-hungry race cars that will light up Race Retro

The Williams FW11/B (top left) headlines the turbocharged F1 display alongside the Toleman TG185 (top right) and Arrows A10 (bottom middle). The Sauber-Mercedes C11 (top middle) joins the Audi R8C (bottom left) and Jaguar XJR-11 (bottom right) in a Le Mans tribute.

the sport's most monstrous era – the turbocharged 1980s.

With engine manufacturers favouring reduced capacity but high compression, the sheer statistics that went along with the rise in success of turbocharging in F1 were staggering. Headlining the display will be Williams' FW11/B from 1987: famously taken to the drivers' title by Nelson Piquet,this design also took the team to the constructors' glory too, with Nigel Mansell in the sister chassis. Between them, Piquet and Mansell won nine of the year's 16 races in a dominant campaign. With its 1.5-litre Honda engine pushing out over 1200bhp in full-bore qualifying mode, the FW11/B was truly a monster of its day.

Other attractions include a Ross Brawn-designed Arrows A10 – as raced by Derek Warwick and Eddie Cheever in 1987 – and a Toleman TG185, as handled by Teo Fabi and Piercarlo Ghinzani in 1985.

RALLY HEAVEN

Rally fans will be well catered for thanks to a bevy of displays – including the Rallying Hall of Fame, which will house cars handled by greats such as Russell Brookes, Malcolm Wilson and Carlos Sainz. There will also be a celebration of British Rally champions, honouring names such as Brookes, Mark and David Higgins and Jonny Milner.

Also, don't forget about the Live Rally Stage, which is traditionally one of the highlights. Run by Rallying with Group B and with over 125 drivers already signed up to make the high-speed run on the stage, it's the perfect place to take in the sights, sounds and smells of some great machinery. From rumbling Group B cars from the likes of Lancia, Peugeot, Ford and Audi, to more modern examples like the current generation of R5 cars, the weekend-only attraction is sure to be a big draw. It's not just for spectators either, as visitors can book themselves in for a passenger ride too.

NATIONAL STARS

It's not all about world championship-level competition either, and those looking for a fix of national and club-level content won't be disappointed with virtually every discipline in the sport being showcased across the three days.

The Pride of the Paddock will highlight great cars with storied pasts from every brand of the sport, from an ex-John Watson MG B that contested the London-Sydney Marathon to a Le Mans-spec Lola T212.

There are also over 250 specialist exhibitors, including racing clubs such as the 750 Motor Club, Classic Sports Car Club, HSCC and VSCC . Plus there'll be plenty of retailers giving you the chance to pick up those competition essentials.

AUCTION LOTS

Don't forget to drop by the annual Silverstone Auctions event at Race Retro, which will feature classic and competition cars, bikes and automobilia. The Classic Car sale on Saturday is usually the highlight with some lovely lots. Don't forget your wallet... ●



Classic Group B machinery will be in action on the Live Stage

EVENT INFORMATION

Opening Hours

Friday, 22 February	**9.30am to 5.30pm**
Saturday, 23 February	**9.30am to 5.30pm**
Sunday, 24 February	**9.30am to 4.30pm**

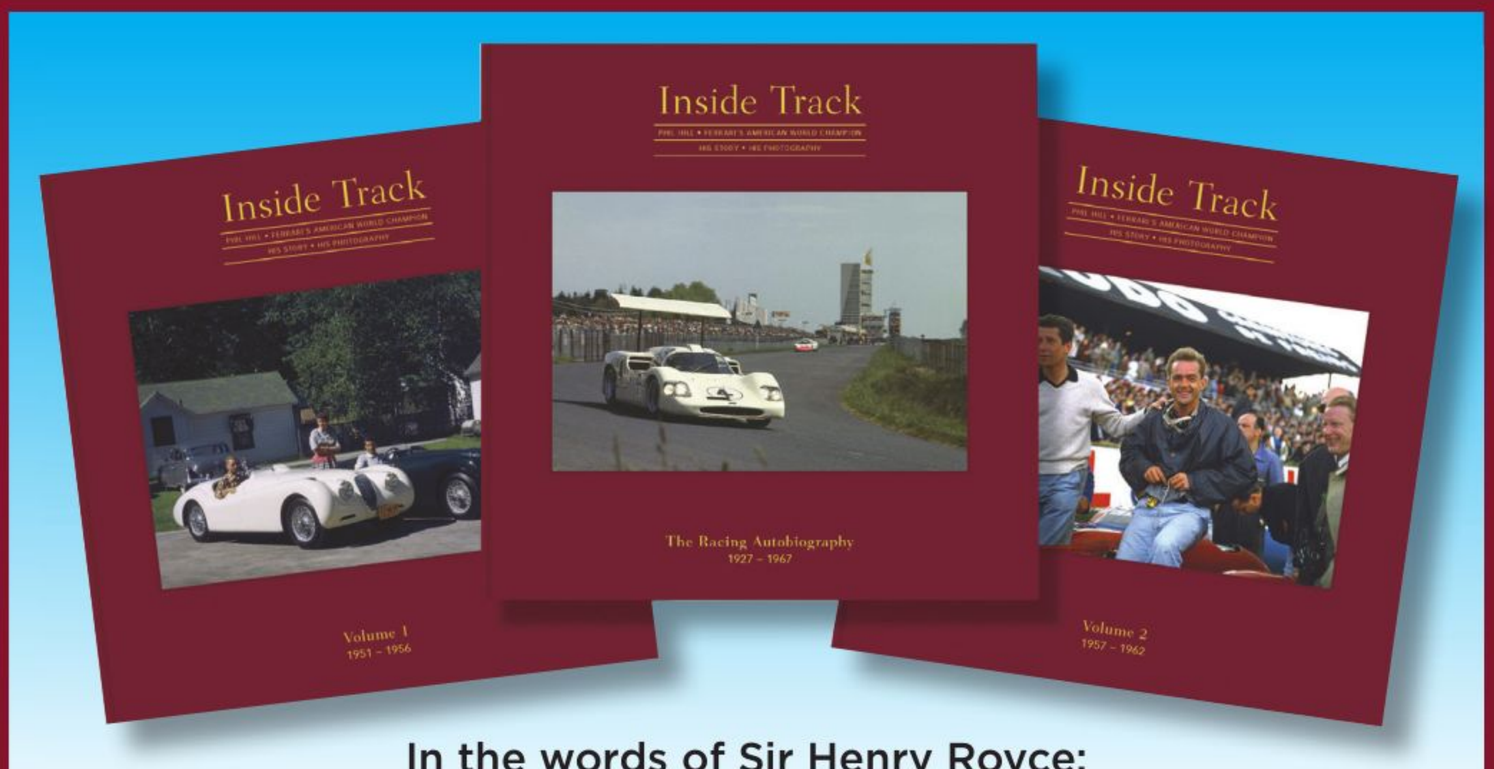
Advance tickets

Adult/Senior (16+)	**£22**
Child (5-15)	**£7**
Child (0-5)	**FREE**
Groups (10+)	**£20.20 each**
Two-day pass	**£40**
Three-day pass	**£60**
Adult/Senior (16+) plus 12 month *Motor Sport* subscription	**£61.99**

Book now at raceretro.com

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Phil Hill photo: Ferrari 'The Beauty'



Phil Hill photo: Ferrari 'The Beast



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PART ONE

THE ALAN HENRY TAPES

Ayrton Senna & Denis Jenkinson

A rediscovered cache of interviews between the late Alan Henry, one of the finest reporters of his generation, and a galaxy of stars sheds fresh light on a golden age of racing. In a new series, *Motor Sport* listens in on the first of these fascinating conversations between two legends of the sport: Senna and Jenks.

THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW took place in McLaren's motorhome at Spa, in August 1990. Nowadays, teams often tend to allow their drivers time only to offer the press short sound bites - but even back in the commercial 1990s things were a little more relaxed. This is the first time the transcript has been published for almost 30 years, although we have edited for space. The protagonists start by discussing the psychology of racing...

Alan Henry It's 40 years since the dawn of the world championship, although there were grands prix before that, and we're trying to establish whether the qualities of a top-line driver today are fundamentally the same as they were 30 or 40 years ago.

Denis Jenkinson We spoke before about this and I reckoned the most important thing was eyesight, vision. The brain then had to use what it could see and transmit that to other faculties. And if it transmitted them all 100 per cent, then you had the makings of a world champion, or at least a GP winner. If one part of your make-up was lacking, but another was very strong, it could compensate and bring up the average.

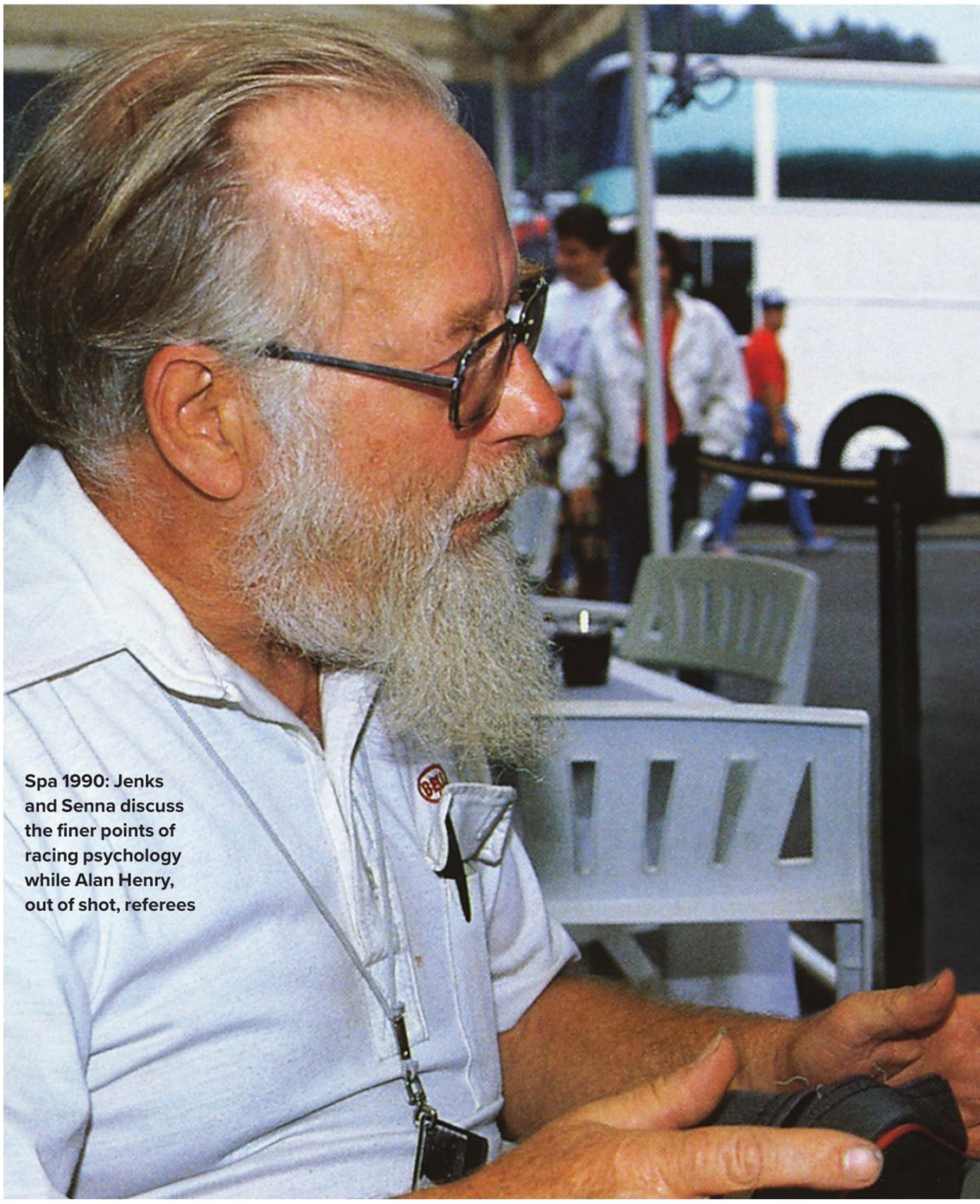
When I wrote the book *The Racing Driver* I cited vision as the most important thing, then your nervous processes - the things you're born with, that transmit feelings and muscular reactions.

Next, I mentioned anticipation - your brain always thinking ahead of your vision. It's a natural reflex, not a thing you sit down and practise. You've either got anticipation or you haven't. After that, you have judgment - a fairly physical thing.

And lastly, a combination of all those things, is response - so I've broken the human being down into those five characteristics. If you have a weak one, two strong ones can help... D'you think that sounds reasonable?

Ayrton Senna It's all theory, of course - you could talk for a *long* time and find your initial analysis is not quite right by the time you get to the end. Starting with vision, it's really the ability you have to assess the speed of an approaching target - a corner, an apex. You know its shape, the state of your car and so on. It comes down to your ability, through your vision, to be able to evaluate the speed of your approach. Let's say you have to reach a maximum speed X for that target - and to reach X, at the correct moment, it's no good if you brake a little too early or a little too late, because then you're gone.

DSJ These are nervous processes...



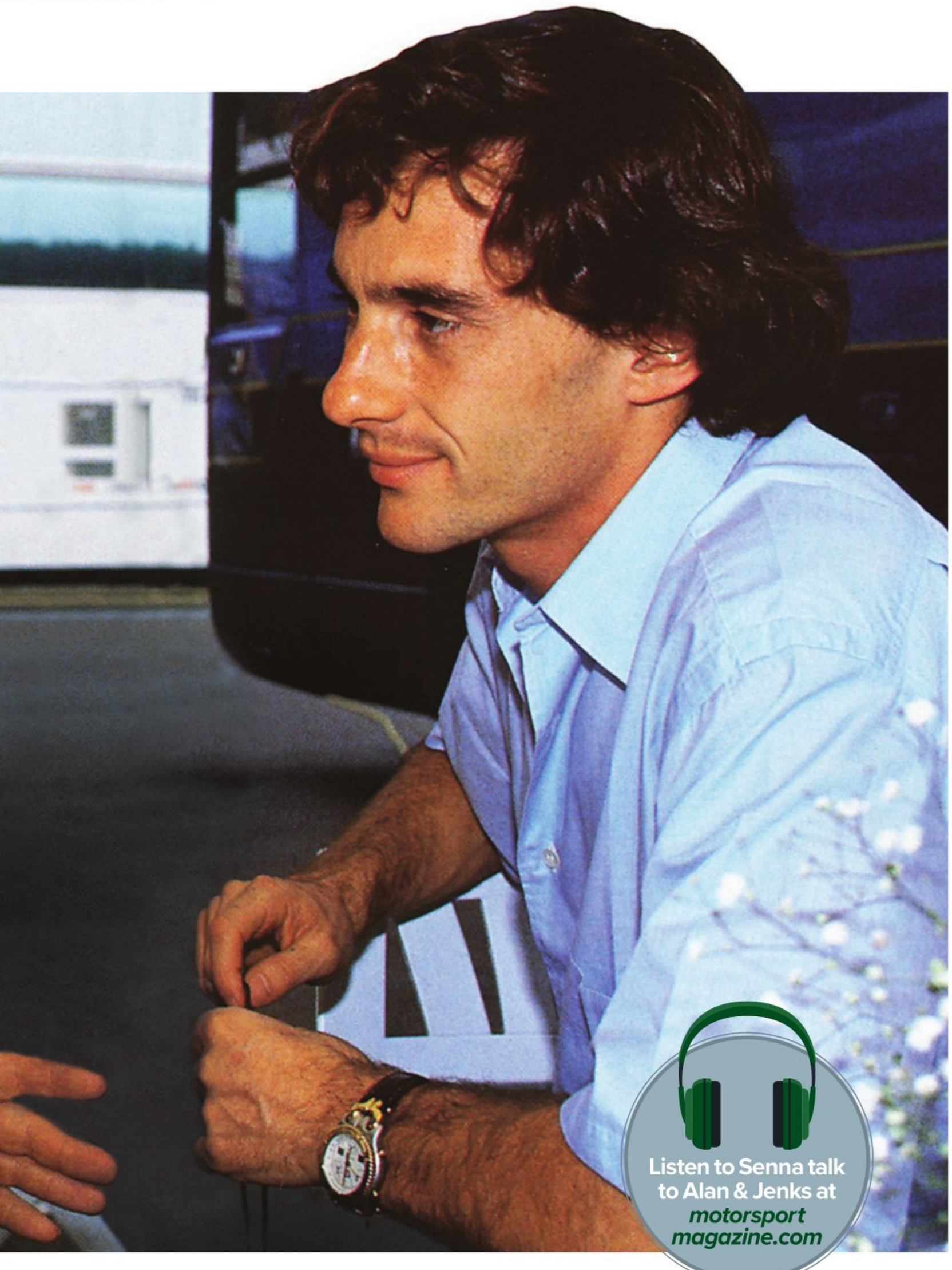
Spa 1990: Jenks and Senna discuss the finer points of racing psychology while Alan Henry, out of shot, referees

AS Yes, but attached to your vision. It's the distance you can see, the distance you can measure by looking.

DSJ Your brain has to analyse that, but there are plenty of people with good vision but no brain...

AS I understand, but I'm talking slightly differently - I'm assuming you have the basics. The way it works for me, from a 300-metre target - a long way with no reference points, if you have a reference it's a lot easier - you have to judge your approach to match the maximum speed you could have at the critical point. That is all completely visual. Then another thing takes over, which is your judgment - it comes from feelings in your hands, your feet, your body. Then it's all automatic from there on. According to the accuracy of your approach from the visual side, you are going to react until you get to the target.

The thing that has the responsibility for making the rest work properly at the highest level, in sequence, is the ability to judge. On many occasions, if you are not completely into it, your visual ability becomes really reduced. It's something that comes on many occasions with the equilibrium of your psychological side. If you are in a good state psychologically, your visual sensitivity is so much greater, so much more accurate that everything else feels more natural, and easier, which takes a lot less energy. Everything just comes together and your



AUTOCOURSE

their peak - and at the same time you have to be completely under control, because then you optimise every sense... It goes so high, the anticipation feeling, the judgment feeling, everything...

DSJ They've got to be there all the time?

AS Things you didn't even realise were there before. It becomes instinct, pure instinct, in the right way.

COMPLETE COMMITMENT

AH I'd like to ask about that connection, when you are focusing on a car that's 300 metres away. Say you're coming down the hill here at Eau Rouge, on a qualifying lap, and there's a slower car. D'you find yourself almost taking Eau Rouge without looking at the corner because you're looking at the car?

AS No. If you do that then you will for sure be at a lower level. If you see a car, you have to be able to determine instantly...

AH Whether he's going to be through and up the hill or not?

AS Yes. Once you've determined that, it's not going to affect you at the critical place so you just forget it, like it isn't there, so you can commit yourself completely as though you're there on your own. You come back to your own world and don't let anything external affect your feelings. It's instant reaction, again - judgment and reaction. It's far away so you might not even be able to make a very accurate speed judgment, but you just put it away. Once you get to the other car, it doesn't matter because you know it's not going to be in a critical part of the track.

DSJ Then comes the anticipation, because your brain has absorbed it and thought, 'In three corners I'm going to catch him, in the wrong place...'

AS Yes, but there's a difference between qualifying and the race. In qualifying, in that situation, even with your best judgment you

"If you are in a good place psychologically, everything else feels more natural, and easier"

whole system is less stressed, so the next corner is less stressed - so your judgment will be accurate. That's what it's all about: how to maintain a very natural equilibrium.

AH It's about building momentum.

AS Exactly. If you get the wrong side of that momentum, it's going to take a lot more out of everything to reverse it. Sometimes, as a race progresses, you have time to breathe a little bit, because the other guy is backing off, or his tyres are going off a little, so you automatically have time to cool down, stop that momentum, reduce your pace and then restart in the right way. That's over a race distance. If you're talking about one lap, a two-minute sprint at the maximum, then again you have to be really, really switched on because all your feelings are at think, 'It's going to be just on the limit to get through without having to disturb myself.' Then it's a question of commitment, whether you are really into everything or 90 per cent into it. That is going to affect your performance.

In a race it's a completely different thing, because you've got to have such an instant reaction. When you see a car, you have to



"I was in a tunnel, but in such a way I suddenly realised I was over a level that was reasonably safe"

Monaco 1988, when Senna felt he had absolutely nothing left to give – a sensation he'd never felt before

know immediately which one it is - normally you have a feeling about the performance and know how quickly you're going to get to it, or how much time it's going to take and where you're going to get to it.

At that stage you should push a bit more to get there before a critical point where it's going to cost a second or two, or it's not worth pushing because you're always going to use your material a little bit so you carry on at the same pace. It's very relative. Which car? Which driver? And it also depends on the condition of your own car.

DSJ The important thing is vision again. You explained to me once, here about two years ago, that you could see which car and who was driving long before you got anywhere near it. And you said you knew almost exactly where you'd pass them.

AS Yeah, it's true.

DSJ The whole race you were doing that and you were very tired at the end. You said that physically there was no problem, but mentally it had been very tough, you were worn out, because you'd spent so much time lapping people and using the knowledge your eyes were giving you to work out where you were going to pass.

AS You know, physically you can be the best trained guy in the world, which is important, of course, but the tension, the stress, the mind work through a weekend goes to such a level that, if you're not careful, you're already compromised by Sunday afternoon. It is a consistent fight with your own mind, your own equilibrium. Equilibrium is fundamental for triggering the right momentum.

DSJ Were you saying this afternoon that you didn't take Eau Rouge full throttle, but you know you can.

AS Yes.

DSJ What was it that told you not to do it on that lap?

AS My self-preservation.

DSJ ***(laughing)*** That's most important, but what feedback were you getting?

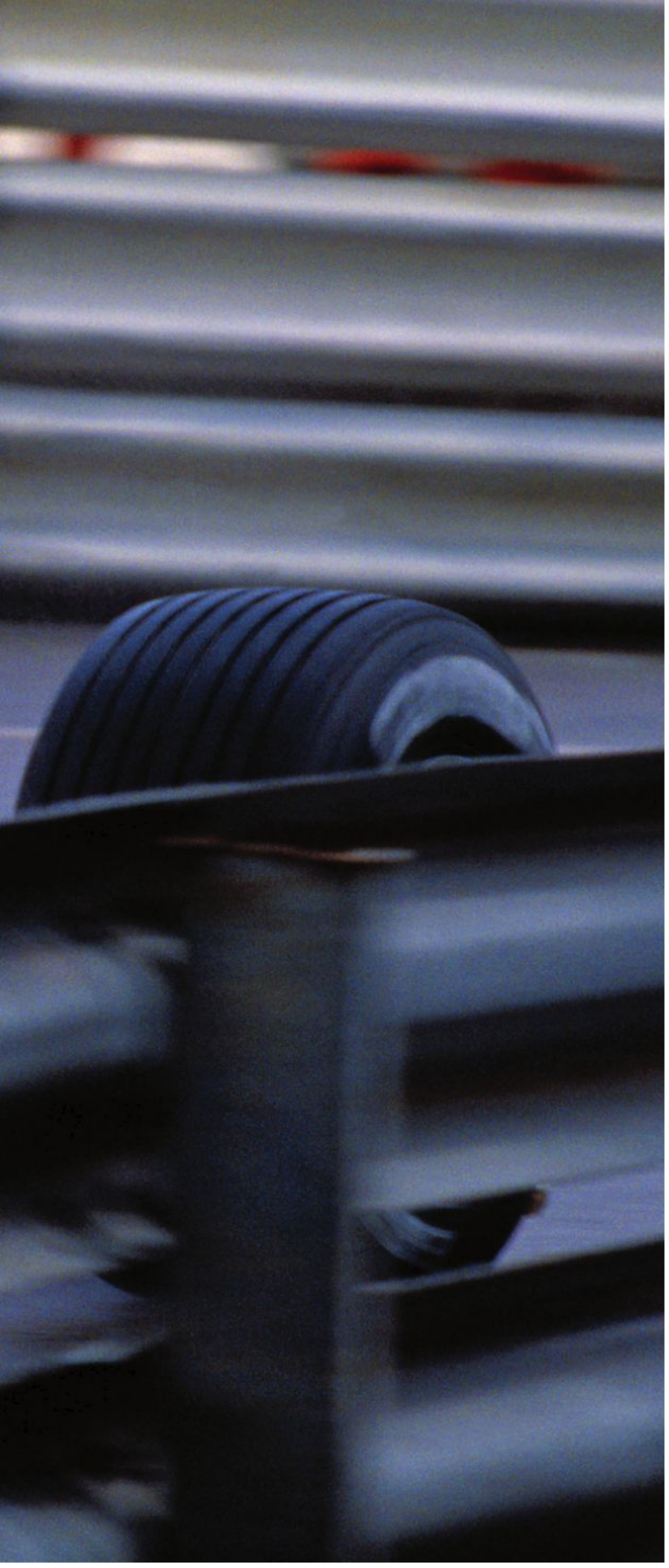
AS Simply the speed you're going - you know you've got out of La Source well, you know you're going to get to Eau Rouge really quick. You know your car's characteristics are such that, at a given moment in that corner, it's very tricky.

DSJ D'you get feedback through the steering, through the car's balance?

AS Yes, but it happens so fast. Before you get to the entry, you have to decide...

DSJ You're using anticipation again... If it feels all right, you'll go through flat.

AS Yes, but the anticipation is also linked to the reason for doing it: what you can gain, what you can lose, the risk implication of getting it wrong and losing time, the risk



LAT

implication of getting it wrong and having a big shunt... If you do it right, how much are you going to gain?

DSJ Do you study the Olivetti [sector] times, now we have them?

AS They help you understand not only what you've changed but also what other people are doing. It helps you understand your feelings and, on many occasions, tells you that what you think is *not* right. You go deeper into it, understand differently and react accordingly. For some drivers I think it helps a lot, for others less so.

DSJ It's information for drivers to use - and if they're intelligent they will...

AS Yes, but that information helps *more* drivers to understand what's going on. If you don't have that information...

DSJ ...then *you* have an advantage?

AS Exactly!

AH When you were on your way up, who was your hero among the top drivers?

AS Emerson Fittipaldi, really.

AH Has he helped you at all?

AS I think he has helped every single Brazilian racing driver. He gave us all more credibility with the outside world.

UTTER EXHAUSTION

AH When you were talking to Jenks about sheer effort, the emotional, psychological effort that leaves you drained almost before the race, what steps do you take, say, on Thursday? How do you defuse the situation and reduce the tension, calm everything down in your mind? Other than keeping away from the press...

AS That's one of the things!

AH How d'you feel on Sunday night, after you've perhaps won a race? Are you totally shattered?

AS Not only Sunday night. As soon as you pass the chequered flag it comes in one go - boom! Because your mind goes down. Once you've crossed the finishing line you can just [flops hand on table]...

DSJ Relax?

AS Yes.

DSJ A lot of our friends the press don't appreciate that. I've seen you after a race and the last thing you want to do is a TV thing and then have people talking to you all the time. I'm sure very few of the press have any awareness not only of the mental strain, but the fact you've been doing this since Thursday night. Suddenly, it's all stopped and now they think, 'The miserable bugger won't speak to us.'

AS The objective is the chequered flag.

AH Everything else is incidental?

AS When you reach the objective, everything was established to get the optimum up to the chequered flag. Once you get there [slaps table], that's the end. It's your maximum. From Thursday to Sunday you establish a target and you have so many steps to go through, so many barriers, and they all drain you. There are problems and, whether you get it right or not, if you're committed you're giving your best all the time. For me there isn't anything left.

OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE

AH You said something very interesting at the Imola test, in an interview with Canadian journalist Gerry Donaldson, when you mentioned this business at Monaco two years ago, when you almost felt you were overdriving, faster and faster, as though somebody else had taken command.

AS We were using race tyres, so were doing lap after lap rather than one lap - that year we had no qualifiers. I went out, had a good lap, did another lap, I was on pole, and the next lap I had an even bigger margin and I was going, more and more and more and more, to a stage that I was over two seconds quicker than anybody else, including my team-mate with the same car. Not because he was going slowly, but because at that stage I was going too fast. You understand?

DSJ:You weren't going too fast, you had everything correct...

AS: Yes, but I was doing it in such a way that it was like my car was on a railway track. There was not that much left here and not that much left there.

DSJ But there was enough.

AS Enough, but in Monte Carlo enough sometimes is not enough. Given the fact I was driving a light car in high-performance trim for speed, not consistency but speed, I realised at one stage that I was not really seeing anything other than Armco...

DSJ A tunnel?

AS Exactly. I was in a tunnel, but in such a way that I realised suddenly that I was over a level that was reasonably safe. There was no margin whatsoever, in anything. When I had that kick, I immediately lifted. I didn't have to, but I was not at the same level you work in all the time. I didn't and still don't really understand, fully understand, that different level. I backed off, came slowly back to the pits and stopped. I said to myself, 'Today is special. That's enough. You just

THE TAPE TRAIL

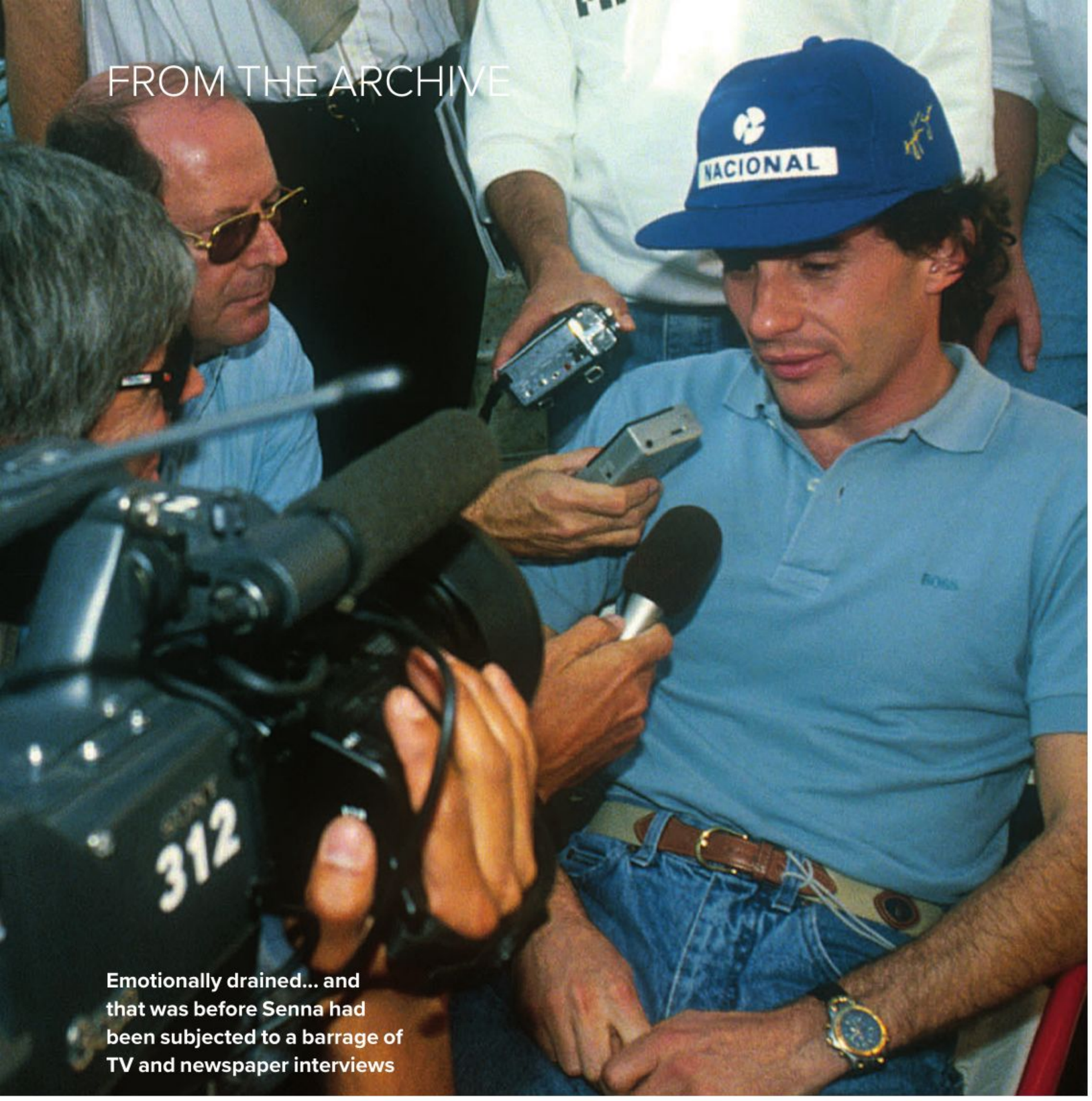
It was an email from the blue. I'd met Nick Henry many years previously, when he was a teenager accompanied by his dad Alan in the Silverstone paddock, and he felt the moment for reacquaintance was ripe.

Specifically, he had come across boxes of interview tapes in his late father's old office and wondered whether they might be of interest to *Motor Sport*. Just a touch...



We finally met for breakfast at The Milk Shed, near Bicester, and a bag of jumbled cassettes indicated greater potential than we could have dared to anticipate: Jenks & Senna, Ron Dennis, Dan Gurney... it was a veritable treasure trove of voices from a bygone age.

The tapes represent valuable parts of a lifetime's work and we will bring more of them to the page over the coming months.
Simon Arron



Emotionally drained... and that was before Senna had been subjected to a barrage of TV and newspaper interviews

LAT

don't go out any more because you are vulnerable in terms of putting yourself in an area you don't really understand. You're doing it more from your subconscious.' I could not really cope with that in a manner that felt easy, safe.

AH Have you experienced that again?

AS That intensity? I have experienced it again but at a lower level.

DSJ Now you've experienced it once, you wouldn't get to that limit again?

AS There's no need to go there, no need.

DSJ You've never been able to analyse why you got to that limit?

AS I think I know some of the reasons. It's because I wanted so much to do more and more, better and better. Just the wish, the desire to go further was so big that nothing happened normally.

DSJ That's natural, but on that day you were beyond yourself.

AS Actually, as I was doing it I realised that what was going on was not quite...

DSJ Afterwards, when you were back home, did you do a lot of thinking?

AS It was a wonderful feeling. I had experienced something I'd never known before, doing something I love, pushing further and further, every single limit.

DSJ You did the impossible...

AS No, because if I did it once it means it can be done again.

DSJ But you haven't done it again, because your mental processes have said...

AS No, I haven't done it at the same level, but I have done at a lower level.

DSJ You were going to reach that level anyway, but you didn't know when you were going to reach it because you were always naturally striving to go faster and faster.

AS But once you do it, even if you don't fully understand, it's there in your memory. I don't know theoretically how it works, but somehow that becomes a limit.

DSJ You now have that mark...

AS Before that I had experienced situations where I was really going and going, and sometimes I was getting it wrong. This time I was going, going, going, going...

DSJ And getting it right all the time...

AS Exactly, until I stopped before it went wrong. I believe that I was able to experience something I never did before, to a level never reached before with a final result that was my maximum. That day, I could not have told myself, 'I could have done a little bit more.' That was the maximum for me. There was no room for anything more. I have not really had that feeling since. Things have been good, good, good, but there was always the possibility of a little bit more. O



Henry interviews an exhausted-looking John Watson

Who was Alan Henry?

The tenacious journalist behind the tape recorder

One of the foremost specialist writers of his era, Alan Henry (1947-2016) was a regular contributor to *Motor Sport* and its weekly sibling *Motoring News*, editor of *Autocourse* (the 1990-91 edition of which parts of this interview first appeared) and F1 reporter for *The Guardian*. *Motor Sport* is proud to perpetuate the memory of a very fine man.


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A scene from Tavullia complete with graffiti celebrating the town's favourite son

"The town square buildings are painted in Rossi's trademark yellow"

The Doctor's Empire

Valentino Rossi's hometown is the Graceland of MotoGP, where even the speed limit pays homage to him. But as **Mat Oxley** discovers, amid the hero worship something far more important is happening: an Italian motorcycling renaissance.



Valentino Rossi's racetrack achievements are awe-inspiring: 23 world championship seasons and 323 grands prix contested since March 1996, 115 victories, 232 podiums and nine world titles across three classes. And yet these numbers are very nearly eclipsed by the actual, physical empire he has created in the environs of Tavullia, the ancient hilltop town in Italy's Marche region where he grew up and still lives.

Tavullia might as well be renamed Rossi Town. VR46 flags fly from most lampposts, trees and houses. The speed limit is 46kph, not 50kph. The town square is bordered by a Rossi merchandise shop, pizzeria, gelataria, bottega and bar. Buildings are painted in Rossi's trademark yellow and traffic signs are adorned with graffiti scrawled by admirers who make the pilgrimage to his hometown from around the globe.

Thus Tavullia is probably as close as anything gets to the Graceland of motor sport. During our visit a coachload of devotees from Serbia rolls into the square. A queue of fans, cash at the ready, forms outside the VR46 official store, while others drink cappuccinos, each frothy mug topped with a number 46 sprinkled in cocoa.



Speedy macchiato, sir? Barista art pays homage to Rossi

Over the past decade or so Tavullia's most famous son has become the town's biggest employer, hiring 84 full-time staff, mostly locals, constructing a 3200 square-metre headquarters, where his business, merchandising, VR46 Riders Academy and Moto2 and Moto3 teams are based. And a mile outside the town he has built the VR46 Motor Ranch, a superb 1.5-mile dirt-track where he trains with the academy, which he established in order to reinvigorate Italian motorcycle racing. The CEO of this enterprise is childhood friend Albi Tebaldi, who nicknames his boss *Il Capo*.

"The academy and the ranch are like Florence was in Renaissance times for artists and poets," says VR46 rider Franco Morbidelli, who in 2017 became the academy's first world champion and last season won the MotoGP Rookie of the Year title. "This is Florence for riders. Vale is our teacher, he keeps us together, so we give our maximum and develop our natural skills."

The relationship between Rossi and his academy riders is a brotherhood that works both ways. "It's very important for me, because to train every day when you're alone is a lot heavier," says Rossi. "I started with one or two guys 10 years ago. First, that gives you a challenge when you are training; second it's more fun. Now we are 10 or 15 riders training and riding together, so you can imagine! Also, it keeps me young."

Alex Briggs, Rossi's mechanic of 19 years, believes the ranch and academy are vital to the 40-year-old's apparently undying enthusiasm for motorcycle racing.

"All those young kids at the ranch, they're trying to kill him!" Briggs laughs. "They have a lot of respect for him but when they start racing him, they don't care and that's definitely got to help. They all want to be him and I think he loves that – it's like he's found the fountain of youth in Tavullia."

And there's little doubt that these fiery youths do inspire their master. Last year the only race Rossi looked like winning was the Malaysian Grand Prix at Sepang, which he led for 16 laps before sliding off. Earlier that day his younger half-brother Luca Marini had won his GP and the 21-year-old's team-mate Pecco Bagnaia had secured the Sky VR46 team's first world title.

"That was a great emotion, but I needed to sit down for maybe three hours to recover; so, f**k, it was a difficult way to prepare for my race!" Rossi recalls. "But Luca's win was an unforgettable feeling and that was an unforgettable day, because also Pecco won our team's first world championship. I'm very proud of my brother."

THERE WAS ANOTHER SADDER motivation behind the creation of the academy. A decade ago Rossi's best friend was another local racer, Marco Simoncelli, who won the 250cc world championship in 2008, the same year that Rossi secured his sixth MotoGP crown. Simoncelli graduated to MotoGP in 2010, but lost his life in October 2011 when he fell during the Malaysian Grand Prix and was struck by Rossi and American rider Colin Edwards.

Rossi trained, raced and socialised with Simoncelli, so the death of his young friend left a huge void in his life. "Vale and Marco were together all the time – because Marco was the only guy who could stay with Vale on a bike," says Tebaldi, who got to know Rossi during camping trips to the Italian GP in the 1990s. "They were like brothers, so after Marco died there was something missing. A year or two later Valentino said, 'Okay, let's build something great.' Life can be cruel and it's incredible what fate can give you."

Rossi works with his apprentices as he did with Simoncelli: training in the gym with the academy's full-time trainer Carlo Casabianca and riding bikes, all kinds of bikes. There are dirt-track bikes and motocross bikes for the ranch, 80cc MiniGP bikes for kart tracks and tricked-up, slick-shod 600cc and 1000cc road bikes for nearby Misano and at Mugello. The action never stops. And it can get nasty.

Rossi, who turns 40 this month, has claimed a staggering nine world titles from three different classes

"All these young kids at the ranch want to be him, and I think he loves that"

"We ride at the ranch often and race there every weekend, when we are not doing MotoGP," adds Morbidelli. "It's very cool. When we race at the ranch or race MiniGP bikes I'd say the emotion is exactly the same as it is at proper races. The intensity is the same but, of course, the world championship is a different matter, so here you sometimes get pissed off with other riders, but at other times you are laughing!"

Occasionally, when the racing gets too heavy, Rossi has to mediate between his disciples. "It's not easy to find the right balance," he admits. "But the aggression is also good for training and improving."



Rossi and Franco Morbidelli (46) won the 2018 100km di Campioni in Tavullia

Read Rossi's dirt track event report online at motorsportmagazine.com

WE VISITED TAVULLIA on the weekend of the ranch's annual 100km Di Campioni dirt-track race, which team-mates Rossi and Morbidelli won after two hours of drifting, crashing, bumping and barging. It was thrilling stuff, the pair engaged in a vicious battle for the lead with VR46 rider Lorenzo Baldassarri and veteran Mattia Pasini, which raged all the way to the chequered flag. No victory bonuses or championship points at stake, just pride.

The race was sound-tracked by a DJ playing Wagner, Led Zeppelin, The Who and AC/DC. On the podium the winners were garlanded with strings of sausages and awarded a leg of ham each. The racing was deadly serious; the event itself, not so much.

Bagnaia – who was unable to contest the race because he was picking up his Moto2 world championship medal – is typical of the youngsters who have made their way to the court of the seven-times MotoGP king.

"We are together every day, training and racing," says the 22-year-old, born in Turin. "This is very important, because we are always in competition. We are friends, but at the track we want to beat everyone else in the group, so the motivation is always very high. And having Valentino as a coach is incredible, because he's done everything in his career and made mistakes, so he knows how to do things and how to change, so it's a faster process for us.

"The really special part is that we always go out together in the evenings, eating at different restaurants, where we talk about motorbikes and girlfriends."

Morbidelli was born in Rome and was the first VR46 rider. His father had raced with Rossi's dad, Graziano, so when Morbidelli was 13 years old his family moved to Tavullia to train with Rossi.

"Then I became the first VR46 rider when the academy was born in 2013," adds the 24-year-old. "Valentino decided to make everything official, making contracts with the riders who were training with him. Valentino said, 'Okay, let's help these guys 100 per cent.'

"The first thing I learned from Valentino was to give everything that I had when I was racing, because I used to calculate things too much. He understood I was thinking too much. And the best advice for somebody who thinks too much is to tell them not to think too much! The biggest thing I've learned from him is that you need to have fun, because he has fun all the time

"VR46 has given me fantastic opportunities – I wouldn't be in MotoGP without them. I race Valentino every week at the ranch; sometimes I'm faster, sometimes he's faster. It's been a long time now – I started riding with him at the quarry."

The ranch has its roots in a gravel quarry a few miles further down the hill from Tavullia, where a very young Rossi first fell in love with wheels and engines. Graziano, who went rallying after a head injury ended his bike-racing career, practised in the quarry, which soon became a mecca for all kinds of petrolhead: rally drivers roaring around in beaten-up Ford Escorts and Opel Asconas, bikers on motocross machines and kids in karts, including his son.

"The gravel quarry was a completely crazy place," says Tebaldi, who was also a member of the gravel-pit gang. "Graziano always arrived first in the mornings and would decide the track for the day, depending on where the piles of gravel and rocks were that day. When we arrived he would give us a briefing: 'Okay, after the straight there is a broken-down digger in the middle of the next corner, so be careful.' He improvised every weekend and we enjoyed racing the young riders who came along."

"The race became a mecca for all kinds of petrolhead"

Eventually Rossi decided he needed somewhere better and safer to train. Graziano owns some land in a valley overlooked by Tavullia, which Rossi visited in 2010, with Simoncelli and Pasini. They imagined a dirt racetrack, undulating across the hillside, beside a half-derelict farmhouse, which would be renovated and transformed into circuit offices.

"Racing here is a lot more fun than MotoGP," grins Rossi. "Riding this track is

The class of 2019

Who's who in Valentino Rossi's riding academy – and what will they be racing during the season ahead?

1 MARCO BEZZECCHI *(Moto2, Red Bull KTM Tech 3)* Came out of nowhere to challenge for last year's Moto3 title. This year graduates to Moto2.

2 FRANCESCO BAGNAIA *(MotoGP, Alma Pramac Ducati)* Won Sky VR46's first world title last year and becomes the second VR46 rider to make it into MotoGP

3 VALENTINO ROSSI *(MotoGP, Monster Yamaha)* The old warhorse celebrates his 40th birthday and 24th GP season in 2019. His contract lasts until the end of 2020.

4 LUCA MARINI *(Moto2, Sky VR46 Kalex)* Last year finally came out of his big brother's shadow with his first GP win. Goes into 2019 as a world title contender.

5 NICOLO BULEGA *(Moto2, Sky VR46 Kalex)* Struggled through the last two years in Moto3. VR46 hopes that a move to Moto2 will revive the lanky teenager.

6 ANDREA MIGNO *(Moto3, Bester Capital Dubai KTM)* Hasn't won a race since his first GP victory in 2017, so he will need to dig deep to justify the academy's investment.

7 FRANCO MORBIDELLI *(MotoGP, Petronas Sepang Racing Yamaha)* The first to sign to the VR46 academy, the first to win a world title and the first to make it into MotoGP.

8 STEFANO MANZI *(Moto2, Forward Racing Team MV Agusta)* Last year topped the all-classes crash league, with 31! Rides a different bike this season.

9 NICCOLÒ ANTONELLI *(Moto3, SIC58 Squadra Corse Honda)* Goes into his eighth GP season needing to step it up after failing to finish on the podium last year.

10 DENNIS FOGGIA *(Moto3, Sky Racing Team VR46 KTM)* Won the 2017 Moto3 Junior world championship with Sky VR46's junior team and moved to GPs last season.

11 LORENZO BALDASSARRI *(Moto2, Pons HP40 Kalex)* Another Moto2 world title hopeful after his best season which included one race victory and four more podiums.

12 CELESTINO VIETTI *(Moto3, Sky VR46 KTM)* Contested last year's Moto3 junior world series for the VR46 junior team. Made his GP debut at Motegi. Scored his first GP podium the next weekend at Phillip Island.



one of the best things you can do on a motorcycle. Also, you don't have any pressure. You just have your friends with you, so you play and you fight. It's the best."

THE MOTOR RANCH AND VR46 headquarters are Rossi's fiefdom, a money-no-object racer's utopia where all is done to perfection. This will come as no surprise to anyone who has worked with Rossi since he first arrived in the grand prix paddock almost a quarter of a century ago. He has a passion for perfection, always has had, but it came as shock to his first team manager.

"Even then, Valentino was Valentino," says Giampiero Sacchi, who signed the unknown 16-year-old on the cheap at the end of 1995. "I'd never seen a rider who wanted to do things like fix all the stickers to his bike. He has always been very careful with the details."

Indeed. All the track layouts at the ranch have concrete foundations, topped with limestone and various grades of sand, which is manicured by tractors to create just the right amount of grip. Dirt track is the best way to practise and perfect bike-control skills, because it's easier to push past the limit and then recover. Dirt track is also safer, because it's slower than road racing, although it's not 100 per cent safe. Each bend at the Motor Ranch has a name, including Tebaldi Corner, where the VR46 CEO crashed and broke three vertebrae.

reception area. Downstairs are the workshops of Rossi's Moto2 and Moto3 world championship teams and Moto3 Italian championship junior team, plus a warehouse that annually processes 20 million euros of merchandising. And not only Rossi kit. Cal Crutchlow, Maverick Viñales, Alex Rins, Jack Miller and others also have VR46 look after



GOLD AND GOOSE

Customary 50kph speed limit has been reduced to 46 in honour of Rossi's race number

their merchandising. Upstairs are studios, where everything is designed, and the management offices, where deals are thrashed out with riders and sponsors.

This empire springs from Rossi's desire to keep everything in-house. He doesn't want anyone else making money out of him. Instead he owns a business with a total turnover of more than 30 million euros (not including his own earnings), which is run on a daily basis by people he's known for

"This is Rossi's fiefdom, a money-no-object racer's utopia"

The converted farmhouse is just as impressive: immaculate changing rooms, meeting rooms, kitchen, dining room, bedrooms for visiting riders and so on. The toilets include bidets, which might just be a first in any motor sport complex.

Tavullia sits within a verdant agricultural region, with ploughed fields criss-crossing the ranks of hillsides that fade towards the horizon. Some years ago Graziano did his bit for local agribusiness by planting the hillsides above the racetrack with vines, but the wine was rubbish, so now there's an olive grove that produces excellent oil.

On the other side of town stands the VR46 headquarters, with mirror-windowed

decades. This followed one of the darker moments of his career, when his first manager left him with a £75 million tax bill. Rossi has known Tebaldi and Uccio Salucci, who runs the riders and teams side of the business, since he was a kid. It's all very Italian, in the best possible way.

It's the same throughout the organisation. Some of the staff and mechanics in his Moto2 and Moto3 teams first worked with Rossi in the 1990s, when he was just a teenager working his way up.

Rossi has 11 riders, aged between 17 and 24, in his academy: world champions Morbidelli and Bagnaia, Marini, Marco Bezzecchi, Nicolo Bulega, Nico Antonelli, Andrea Migno, Celestino Vietti, Baldassarri, Stefano Manzi and Dennis Foggia.

Of course, many of them grew up worshipping their mentor, never imagining that they would become part of his crew.

"Vale has been my hero since I was very young - I met him but never spoke to him when I visited MotoGP races as a kid," says 20-year-old Bezzecchi, who challenged for last year's Moto3 world title. "I joined the academy after I won the Italian Moto3 championship in 2015. At first it was very strange working with him. I was always nervous, but now it's normal. The academy supports me in every way. They have made me physically stronger and more motivated. And whenever I need something they do everything they can to give me what I need."

ROSSI CONTINUES MENTORING these youngsters even when he's at GPs, where his main focus is chasing more victories.

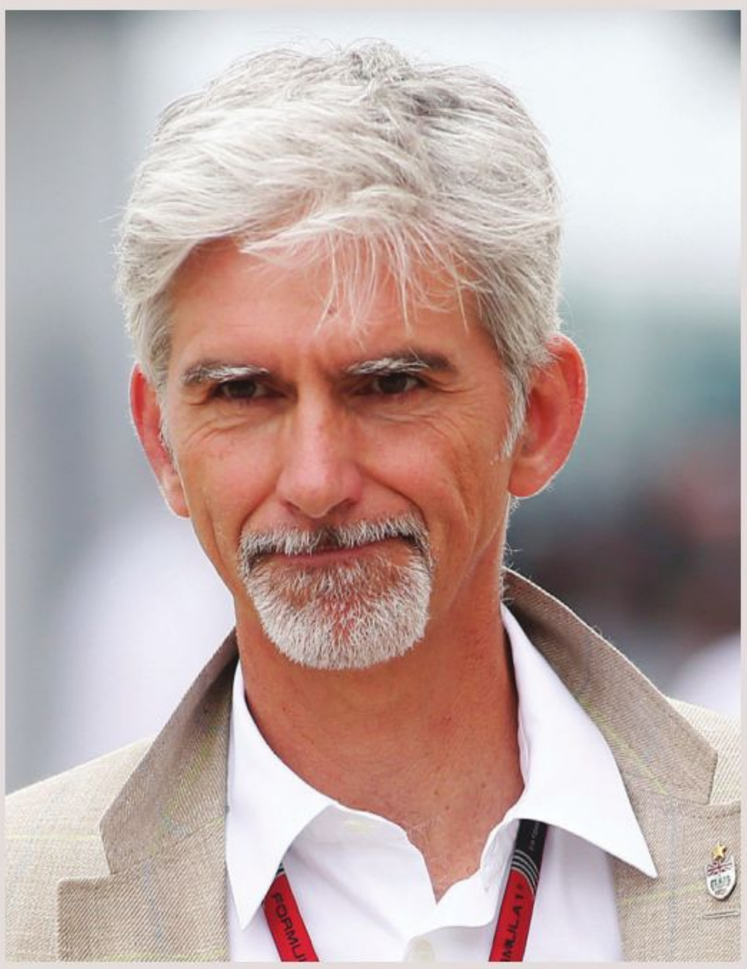
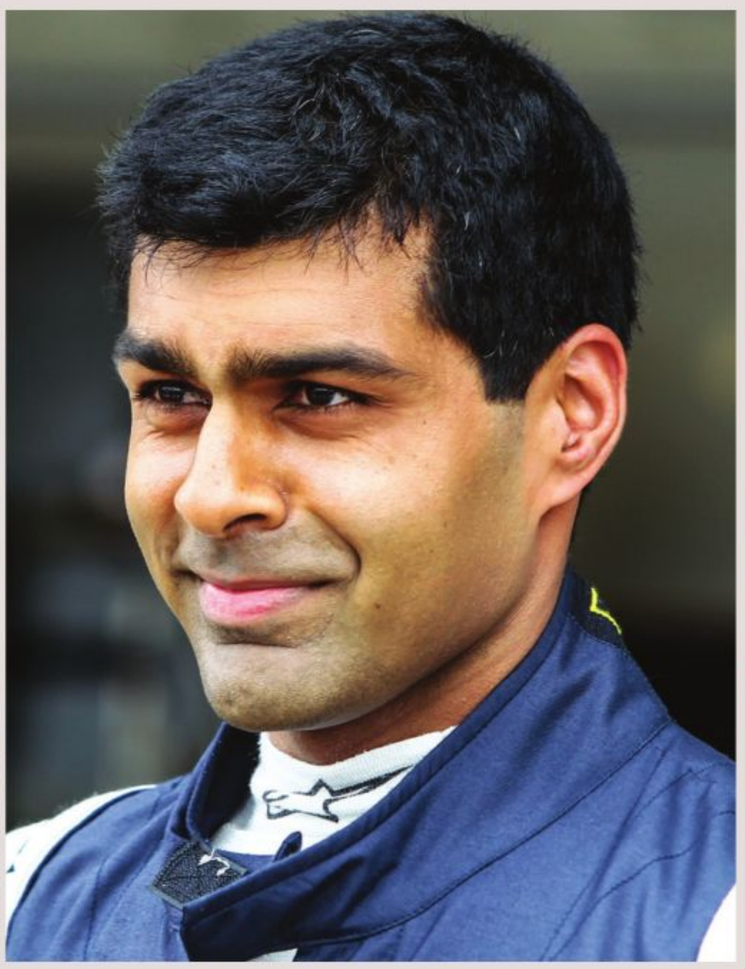
"Every evening we go to his motorhome," says Marini. "We all ask him for technical advice about riding and the track. He gives us a lot of attention and always gives us good things to think about. If I have a problem at one corner, I message him between practice sessions and he messages me back to tell me what to do."

All the riders pay 10 percent of their earnings into VR46, for which they get access to track and training facilities, business management, merchandising operations and so on. They even get English lessons, so they can communicate with non-Italian engineers and media. And two days after our visit Aldo Drudi, Rossi's favourite graphic designer and another lifelong friend, took several VR46 riders to the Uffizi gallery in Florence. This is no normal motor sport enterprise.

But it seems to be working. Italy has long been grand prix racing's most successful nation, with more than 800 GP victories since the inaugural world championships of 1949. However, Spain is catching up, with more than 600 since 1968. And leaving aside Rossi's seven MotoGP crowns, Italian riders won three world titles between 2001 and 2016 to Spain's 19. Thus the 2017 and 2018 Moto2 successes of Morbidelli and Bagnaia suggest that Rossi's academy is turning around Italy's motorcycling fortunes.

This season Rossi will share the MotoGP grid with Morbidelli and rookie Bagnaia. And there's a good chance that Morbidelli - who rides a Yamaha YZR-M1 just like Rossi's - will sometimes have the beating of his mentor. Which will be interesting...

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Thomas Fattorini Ltd

Cars may no longer be built in Birmingham but the quality makers still return to a corner of the Jewellery Quarter for one special element – their gleaming radiator badges. **Gordon Cruickshank** went along to see how these skills are thriving

PHOTOGRAPHER **LYNDON McNEIL**



Many badges are still hand-fired to fuse the coloured vitreous enamel to the badge metal

There's a mystique about car badges – the trident on a Maserati nose, the simple B on a Mulsanne bootlid, even a tortoise, Gordon-Keeble's nose-thumbing riposte to the athletic creatures of its rivals. We see the symbol, yet rarely think of the physical item – the casting and enamelling that carries the marque's image. Yet these two-dimensional flag wavers must withstand rain and hail and sun and remain gleaming beacons of identity.

MASTER CRAFTSMEN

In the heart of Birmingham's jewellery quarter, one manufacturer has made a name for itself by making names for others. Italian immigrant Antonio Fattorini began a retail business in Yorkshire in 1827 selling jewellery and watches which over the years expanded into manufacture of many sorts. Today it's still a family firm - Greg Fattorini is the MD and Tom Fattorini handles exports - making civic regalia, trophies, ceremonial swords, jewellery and *objets d'art* - not to mention plastic badges by the ton at the Manchester plant. And should you get an OBE, the actual medal probably came from here. (They won't sell you one, though - the Queen has sole distribution rights...)

But it's those shiny labels your new car comes with that concern us, and Mark Arnold, industrial sales manager, gives us the run-through in his office within a handsome, listed Victorian building. On a shelf are dozens of car badges - TVR, Jensen, Noble, Ascari, McLaren, Atalanta. And Courage and Burton ale tap badges. "We do a lot of high-end whisky medallions too," says Mark.

"Almost all our automotive work is short-run or bespoke," he continues. "We might be doing a batch of 25 Austin-Healey badges and then a run of Range Rover Autobiography Black fittings - we only do the high-end of Land Rover work, the limited editions. And we've just finished a run of Aston Martin Vantage badges for its spares department."

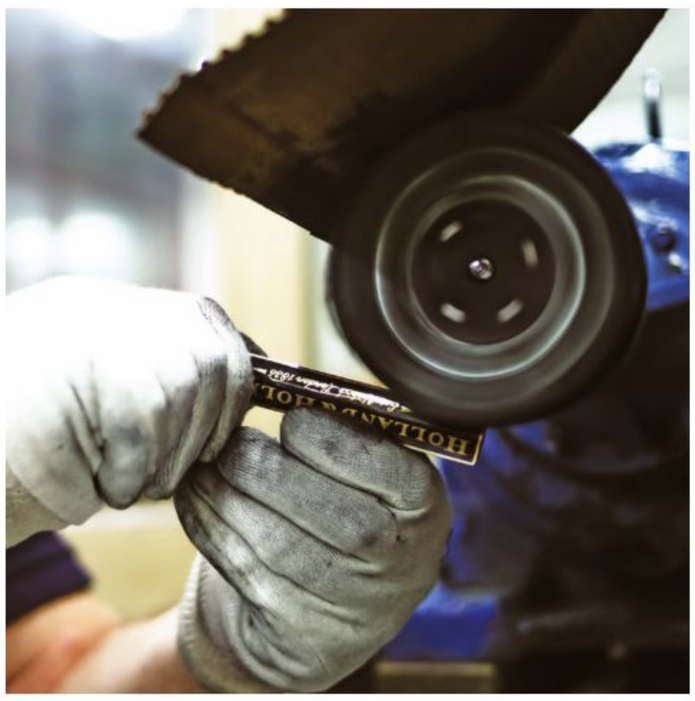
It's not just body badging: limited-edition vehicles may require dash, luggage and treadplates to receive that special little extra - for example, Holland & Holland badges are being readied to adorn the gunmaker's special Range Rover edition. Mark also shows us examples of personal one-off jobs, such as named treadplates and a silver plaque to be affixed to a birthday present Rolls dashboard inscribed from a husband to his lucky wife.

"Every design has to be tested against salt spray and stone chips," Mark says, "and now we have to use lead-free glass for EC end-of-life compliance, which is harder to work with. Some badges, such as on a Bentley airbag, are safety-critical too so they must be crash-tested with the car."

I got to know the Jewellery Quarter while at art college in Birmingham, so as we cross the road to the building housing the big machinery I'm pleased to see the area still has its character, with bullion merchants, gemstone sellers and small manufacturies on all sides. You can buy a diamond here and take it next door to have a ring made. In Fattorini's plant, though, things are on a bigger scale: at a towering stamping machine Jackie is dancing to her headphones as she stamps out the letters of 'Range Rover' while next door a 1000-ton press thumps 'Land Rover 70th Anniversary' into aluminium plaques for a limited-edition 4x4. Further on, fly presses chop off flash from the











Badge manufacturing process has many parallels with jewellery-making. Above, tool for David Brown badge, and laying in glass paste by hand. Right, heaps of Range Rover special-edition letters ready for inlay. Far right, Austin-Healey badges before and after enamelling



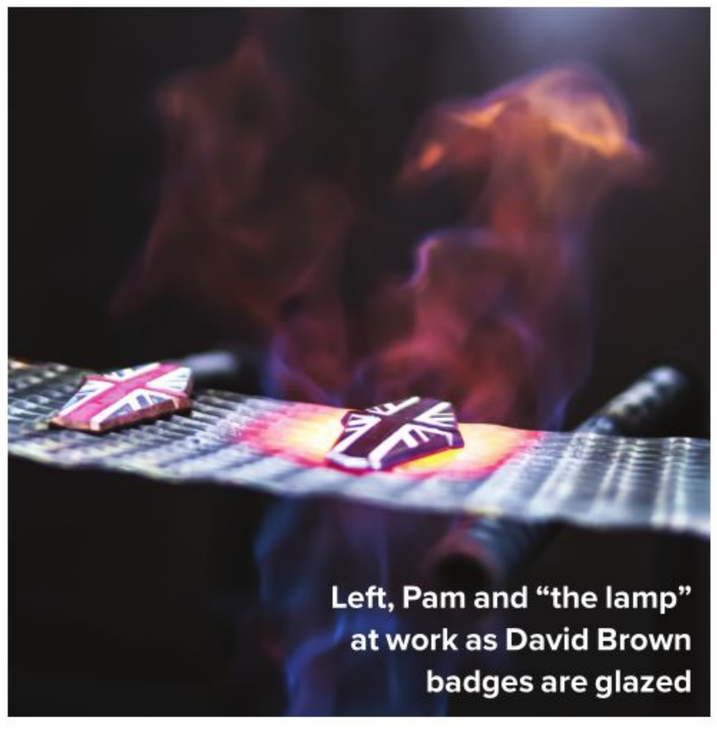






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Left, Pam and “the lamp” at work as David Brown badges are glazed



MASTER CRAFTSMEN

pressings before individual letters go through an annealing process on a fiery conveyor belt, rows of hot glowing ‘R’s picked off with tweezers into trays to cool. Now the raw emblems are chrome-plated (rhodium in the case of sterling silver, and occasionally gold) in the capacious plating room where Paul is hanging rows of Range Rover letters on ‘trees’ for dipping in the plating tanks.

We’ll come back to all this, though; now we see how a new badge begins, with an oversize pattern sculpted in clay, which is then scanned so that Phil can use Computer Aided Design to create a tool. On his screen he shows us the CAD model for the David Brown badge – the young British marque building the Speedback GT – spinning it around and zooming in to the immensely detailed level he needs to create the negative forming tool. This is fed to a CNC machine where digits turn into hard steel formers which Phil polishes with diamond paste before they’re ready for those big presses. Fattorini makes all its own dies, and behind are racks of tools labelled McLaren, Bentley, Rolls-Royce, Mini ready for the next batch. There’s also another huge stamp: boxing’s Lonsdale belt badges are made here, from sterling silver.

Back across the road again, to see how those deep rich colours are infused onto the badge casting. Mark introduces us to Pam, long-time enamel ‘laying in’ expert who makes a plain metal badge glow with colour. She’s one of five enamellers who handle the delicate work which doesn’t go through the roaring kiln. Vitreous enamel is of course coloured glass, and Pam shows us little trays of raw glass powder in pale blue and pinky-red, which turn to deep hues when she adds water. Picking up a David Brown emblem, she uses a steel stylus to smartly transfer the coloured paste into recesses on the badge and spreads it evenly. How does she know how much to apply? A shrug. “Been doing it for years.” They may have CAD and CNC capabilities across the road, but here it comes down to an expert eye and hand.

Now the dramatic part: laying a pair of badges on a grille, Pam picks up a gas torch (“the lamp”, she calls it) and plays the flame over them as casually as a painter with a brush. The badges glow and the glass liquifies until Pam is satisfied the coverage is even and puts them aside to cool. There are no other words for it; this is a black art – especially if the emblem is in silver and the operator has to stop just short of seeing the precious metal drip through the grille.

“It’s not easy to get new people into manufacturing today,” Mark says, “though we are training three enamellers. We’re trying to retain a critical mass of these skills within the Jewellery Quarter.”

Cooled and hardened, the badges go under a polishing wheel to remove the excess, the red, white and blue of the David Brown emblem emerging smooth and glossy, the lettering crisp and clear. Ridges in the metal base show through the blue glass as highlights; fancier milling and engine-turning can give almost jewellery qualities to the end result. Now whenever I see an ‘RR’ badge or Bentley ‘B’ I’ll have a picture in my head of Pam and her lamp.

Mark is proud of his firm’s work: “We have a strong craft heritage, but we also need to be fully up to speed with current CAD, machining and other engineering techniques. As I always say to visitors, we may be a craft industry, but we are not a cottage industry.”

It’s true. And now I know where to go when I need a new ceremonial mace.

THE ESSENTIALS



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- **Specialisation** Enamel badges
- **Established** 1827
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1962 ASTON MARTIN DB4 GT ZAGATO RECREATION

A stunning example presented in black pearl with soft tan leather. An original matching numbers DB4 was used as a donor car for this recreation project which included fitting a twin plug head engine upgraded to 4.7 spec and took over four years to complete by marque experts Spray-tec, Bodylines and R.S. Williams. A comprehensive history file accompanies the car with extensive restoration details and photos.



1963 ASTON MARTIN DB4 GT RECREATION

An original matching numbers DB4 Series V Vantage was used as the donor car for this DB4GT recreation project. The work was carried out over a 4 year period by marque experts Spray-tec, Bodylines and R.S. Williams and included fitting the correct twin plug head engine upgraded to 4.7 spec. Presented in black pearl with soft tan leather this is a stunning example and a wonderful driver. A comprehensive history file accompanies the car with extensive restoration details and photos.

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OSCA 1600 GTS had heavy modifications to compete at Le Mans in 1962

Bravo, OSCA

From the minds of the Maserati brothers and with Le Mans history, this berlinetta is hard to beat, says **Simon de Burton**

RARITY, ORIGINALITY, AN impressive provenance and a well-documented competition history are all regarded as desirable when buying a classic race car – but finding one that combines all four elements isn't always easy.

None, however, is lacking in the case of this superb OSCA1600 GTS Zagato currently on offer at the Classic Motor Hub.

The car was originally prepared at the Maserati brothers' *Officine Specializzate Costruzione Automobili* factory in San Lazzaro as an experimental prototype for US rocket engineer Jack Gordon and co-driver John Bentley to contest the 1962 Le Mans 24 Hours. For that race it was equipped with the unique combination of 'flat top' Zagato coachwork, a live rear axle, two 45 DCOE Weber carburettors and a twin-plug cylinder head. Other special touches included a capacious 80-litre fuel tank and a modified radiator grille to reduce high-speed lift.

Gordon also specified an oil cooler which, unfortunately, the OSCA engineers failed to fit – bringing the car's Le Mans outing to a premature end as a result of big end failure after just four hours and 12 laps.

As a result, the car was swiftly returned to OSCA HQ for repairs before being sold to Luigi Chinetti's soon-to-be-celebrated

North American Racing Team (NART) with which it competed in a raft of endurance racing events – including the 12 Hours of Sebring – in the hands of drivers such as Tom Fleming, Ray Heppenstall and Harold Baumann.

After being moved on by NART, the OSCA ended up on the forecourt of a Long Island garage from where it was bought by George Waltman, a former WWII Superfortress pilot who, after acquiring it, went to the not inconsiderable effort of travelling to Italy from his home in up-state New York in order to meet the Maserati brothers, collect parts for the car and learn as much about it as possible.

Waltman was, incidentally, no stranger to long journeys – three years later he became a minor celebrity in the racing world after driving his Aztec Racing Morgan 1000 miles to Daytona in order to compete in the 1968 24 Hour race, which he completed single-handed with no pit crew. He finished 30th overall, then changed the Morgan's oil and set off home…

After his trip to Italy, Waltman tweaked, tuned and improved the OSCA sufficiently to enable him to secure first in class at the 13th Annual Bahamas Speedweek, an achievement that's detailed in the car's bulging history file, which also includes a letter he wrote to the next owner, Franz Benjamin, who paired it with another OSCA to create a two-car race team with Tony Guinasso as driver.

Guinasso subsequently inherited the car and it remained with him for more than two decades before being sold to marque enthusiast and Pebble Beach judge Craig Davis, who owned it until 2003.

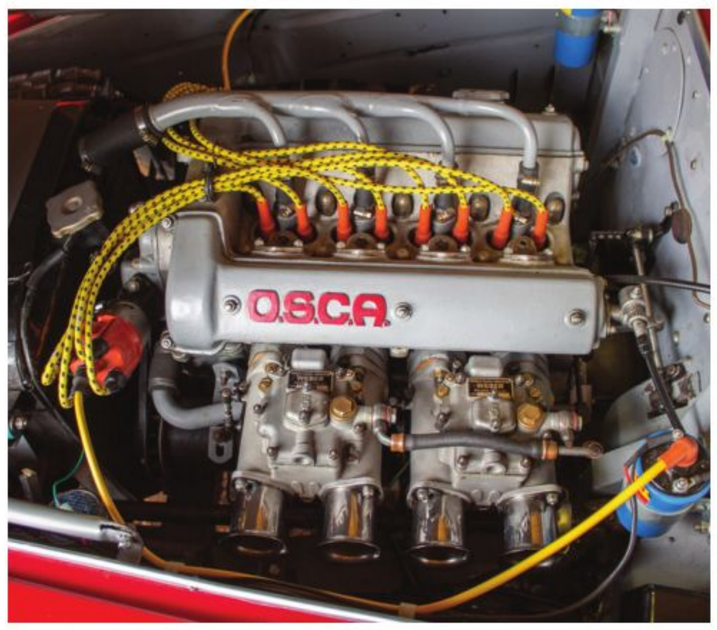
Since then, this truly unique OSCA has been in the same private collection from which it is now being sold – and, despite being lightly restored during Davis's ownership, it remains remarkably original, right down to its 'Zagato' stamped Perspex headlamp covers, 'Bahamas Speed Week' registration plate and the 8000rpm tachometer that invites spirited use of its screaming twin-cam engine.

The car also comes with gorgeous lightweight Zagato-pattern seats, a set of rare Amadori magnesium wheels and, of course, eligibility for a host of historic race and rally events.

Who needs a Ferrari?



Having undergone only mild restoration, the OSCA is still remarkably original



1962 OSCA 1600 GTS. £600,000
Classic Motor Hub, Old Walls, Ablington, Bibury, Gloucestershire, GL7 5NX.
Tel: 01242 384092
classicmotorhub.com

In the market for a sports car from Italy?

Here are four that highlight the ancient art of coachbuilding



1962 INNOCENTI SPIDER 950. £8937. Built in Italy, looks Italian… but with a British staple – the 948cc Frogeye Sprite – beneath its stylish frame.
sunclassiccars.com



1961 ABARTH 750 BIALBERO. €59,500. Lightness and efficiency were Abarth trademarks – and an aluminium body equates to just 500kg on the scales.
https://tinyurl.com/ydd76rhe



1965 FIAT 1300S VIGNALE. €40,000. Michelotti design crafted upon a Fiat 1300 saloon. Only about 50 were produced and 15 are thought to survive.
kucarfa.nl



1964 ALFA GIULIA SPRINT SPECIALE. $132,500. Perky 1.3-litre twin-cam with a Bertone body. Late production version of a car unveiled at the '57 Turin show.
hymanltd.com

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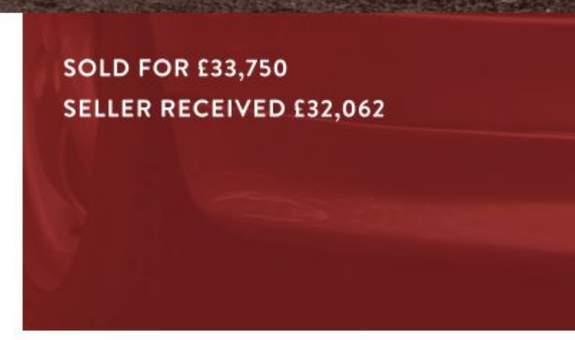
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Original work of art

The only surviving Serenissima Spyder has barely been touched since retiring from Le Mans in 1966, reports **Simon de Burton**





Pictured at Le Mans, left, the Serenissima Spyder retains its race patina more than 50 years later

WHAT WOULD YOU have done if you had inherited an enormous fortune during the early 1960s, when you were a car-mad 20-something?

Obviously you would have gone racing - which is exactly what Venice-born Count Giovanni Volpi did after being bequeathed a substantial amount of moolah by his politician father Giuseppe, the one-time Italian finance minister and founder of the Venice Film Festival.

Volpi Jr's exploits in F1 and sports car competition under the Scuderia Serenissima banner are well documented (he was the instigator, for example, of the celebrated Ferrari 250GT-based 'Breadvan'), but in 1962 - having been prompted to turn away from racing by the deaths in quick succession of Henri Oreiller at Montlhéry and Ricardo Rodríguez during practice for the Mexican Grand Prix - the young count decided to establish Automobili Serenissima to produce rapid road cars.

He recruited former Alfa Romeo and Maserati engineer Alberto Massimino to design a three-litre 300bhp V8 engine from scratch, mid-mounting it in a tubular, self-created framework that was draped in alloy bodywork penned by former Pininfarina chief designer Francesco Salomone.

Named the Jungla, the initial concept proved a failure requiring an extensive redesign which, after two years of work, evolved into a 3.5-litre car with bodywork designed by skilled Modena coachbuilder Medardo Fantuzzi.

Two examples of the Serenissima Spyder were built, with the one pictured here being the only survivor - and by far the most interesting for a variety of reasons, not least that it was converted from its original road-going specification to become an entrant in the 1966 Le Mans 24 Hours in the hands of the French duo of Jean-Claude Sauer and Jean de Mortemart.

While the attractive Serenissima bowed out after five hours with a broken gearbox, thus failing to figure in the results of what would prove to be one of the most celebrated Le Mans contests of all time (Ford's all-conquering GT40s famously came first, second and third), the car still represents a highly evocative slice of the classic event's history because it survives in exactly the condition it was in when it came off the track at the race's end.

"Hopefully the new owner will understand what needs to be done"

The original paint, red central stripe and team decals all remain just as they were, as do the tiny door-mounted lights put in place to illuminate the car's race numbers at night, the small crack in the windscreen, the deep bucket seats and the 300kph speedometer.

But what is perhaps more remarkable is the fact that the car is being sold by none other than Giovanni Volpi himself: now in his 81st year, he has kept it in his possession for more than half a century.

Artcurial expects the unique Serenissima, which is complete but not running, to sell for €1.3-1.8 million.

Hopefully the new owner will be one who understand the importance of originality, doing what needs to be done (and no more) to get it back to La Sarthe for next year's Le Mans Classic - where it will truly be 'one of one'. ○

On sale at Artcurial, Salon Rétromobile, Paris on February 9



1967 SHELBY GT500 SUPER SNAKE. SOLD FOR $2.2M, MECUM, FLORIDA.
The unique Shelby GT500 Super Snake built as a high-speed tyre-testing car for Goodyear has, once again, become the most expensive Mustang ever to cross the block. The 170mph rocket ship, powered by the 427ci engine from a Le Mans-winning GT40, last sold five years ago for $1.3m (also a Mustang record).



1969 MGB ROADSTER SUPERCHARGED. SOLD FOR £18,975, BONHAMS, LONDON.
The MGB roadster is among the prettiest of all British sports cars – but the standard 1798cc engine does lack oomph. This B has extra grunt with a 1950cc, Stage One upgrade and a supercharger. Now we're talking....



1924 VAUXHALL 30/98. SOLD FOR £437,000, BONHAMS, LONDON.
Lighter and quicker than Bentley's three-litre, Vauxhall's 30/98 may be considered as the first true sports car. This example was ordered new by Hari Singh, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, who barely used it before selling it.



1969 JAGUAR XKSS BY LYNX. SOLD FOR $423,000, R.M. SOTHEBY'S, LOS ANGELES.
Thirty years ago, few would have believed that a recreation could be worth almost half a million dollars. This XKSS by C- and D-type master Lynx Engineering was been built to the specification of car hunter Colin Crabbe.

New year, new trends

As the big auction houses open up again after the winter, how will the market react?

As this issue of Motor Sport went to press, the first major classic car auctions of 2019 were about to get underway in sunny Arizona where Bonhams, Gooding and Co and RM Sotheby's were preparing to vie for the attention of the world's most serious collectors (*see Max Girardo, right*).

With its characteristically vast and theatrical 10-day sale earlier in the month, Mecum demonstrated that the big-money buyers haven't left the planet during the transition to a new year - but it seems likely that the already established 'softening' that we've seen in many areas of the market will continue into 2019 with buyers being not necessarily more cautious, but probably even more choosy.

And that's going to make it harder still to shift low-quality restorations, substantially non-original cars and those that are recognised as having already done the rounds of the salerooms and dealers.

Those in the market for an inexpensive race car, meanwhile, should be sure to keep a finger on the auction pulse, especially pre-season. If the first January sales were anything to go by, there could be a few under-the-radar bargains about.





1965 RELIANT SCIMITAR SE GT. SOLD FOR £13,750, BARONS, ESHER.
With fewer than 300 built, Reliant's Scimitar SE GT – the straight-six coupé that preceded the more prolific 'GTE' sporting estate favoured by Princess Anne – is rare by anyone's standards. This one had been fully restored by a vicar.



2010 CHEVRON B8. SOLD FOR £104,625, SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS, BIRMINGHAM.
Built as a sanctioned 'continuation' model in 2010, this B10 looked like another excellent value, race-ready turn-key car with a zero hours BMW M10 engine recently fitted following a full season of Masters Series competition in 2018.



MAX GIRARDO

"Sotheby's and Bonhams will go against Artcurial on its home turf"

The first North American auctions of 2019 took place in Arizona recently. The sale weekend featured the top three classic car auction houses in the world making their way back to the south-western United States, with more than 400 cars on offer (not counting the American auction houses). Bonhams kicked it off on January 17, followed by RM Sotheby's sale on Jan 17-18, while Gooding & Co closed the weekend on Jan 18–19.

The headliner cars from each sale were as follows: the 1954 Ferrari 500 Mondial Series I Spider from Bonhams (estimate upon request). A fantastic-looking four-cylinder Ferrari that was owned by Porfirio Rubirosa and raced by Phil Hill and Richie Ginther. Ferrari Classiche restored it and fitted it with a replacement engine. It's been seen for sale before. Comparatively, the very special split-sump Miura SV hadn't been seen on the market in over 45 years, as it had been in single ownership since 1973.

The cover car for RM Sotheby's was a 1957 Ferrari 250 GT Coupé with one-off coachwork by Pininfarina (estimate: $11–13 million). In contrast, the Ferrari Daytona Spider had a more attractive estimate ($2.2–2.3 million).

And last, but certainly not least, was a 1964 Ferrari 275 GTB Prototype from Gooding & Company (estimated at $6–8 million) – a big estimate for a 275, especially when compared to the Ferrari 250 SWB (estimate: $6–8 million) that was in the same sale. I can honestly say that I was more tempted by the 275 GTB Prototype than the normal Ferrari 250 SWB Berlinetta... if you can even call an SWB 'normal'.

The first European auctions of 2019 will take place in Paris at the beginning of February. Traditionally held during the must-attend Rétromobile week, RM Sotheby's and Bonhams will set up shop in Place Vauban and the Grand Palais, respectively, to go up against Parisian company Artcurial on its home turf. The cars to watch from each sale are: a 1987 Ferrari F40 LM from RM Sotheby's (estimate: €4.5–5.5 million), a 1957 BMW 507 3.2-litre Series I roadster with hardtop from Bonhams (estimate: €1.8–2.2 million), and a 1939 Alfa Romeo 8C 2900B Touring Berlinetta from Artcurial (estimate: €16–22 million), which will most definitely be queen of the show with such impeccable history (*below*).

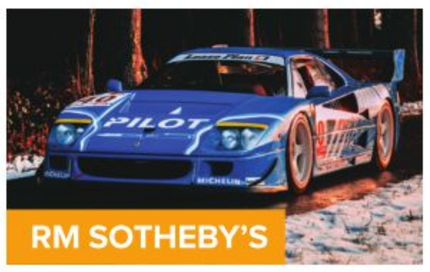
Based purely on the headline cars, I would say the European firms may be a notch ahead of their American rivals.

Max Girardo is the founder of classic car specialist Girardo & Co. Before that he spent 20 years in the classic car auction world, where he was the managing director and head auctioneer at RM Sotheby's

Max's top three auction picks



BMW 507 S1 ROADSTER (Est €1.8–2.2m)
I saw this very car a few years ago when it was in Canada. With the last two sales of 507s, this car will cement the new (real) value of the model.



1987 FERRARI F40 LM (Est €4.5–5.5m)
1980s and '90s cars are all the rage. We've not seen an F40 be offered at such a high price at auction, but this one is a two-time Le Mans entrant.



1939 ALFA ROMEO 8C (Est €16–22m)
The 2900 was originally designed with racing in mind, using a chassis based on the 8C 35 grand prix car. If a car is art, then this is one to buy.



Buying guide

McLaren M23

Took two world titles and was still competitive five seasons later

THE MCLAREN M23 HAS DECENT claim to the title of the greatest Formula 1 car ever. There are racers with a greater tally of wins than its haul of 16 – the Lotus 72 and the Mercedes W07 Hybrid – and other machines have been much more innovative, but no other F1 car remained so competitive for so long.

Designed by Gordon Coppuck, the M23 claimed victory in its fifth race, courtesy of Denny Hulme at Anderstorp, Sweden, in June 1973, and was still challenging for wins in its dotage five years later. James Hunt took three poles in a row at the start of 1977 in a car he loved, as he began the defence of his world title. The M23 was finally – belatedly even – superseded by the M26 (a car Hunt didn't love quite so much), but that wasn't the end of the competition career of the M23 at world championship level. Privateers continued to race the car into 1978, Nelson Piquet contesting three races late in the summer aboard a car run by BS Fabrications.

Hunt wasn't the only driver to adore the M23. Emerson Fittipaldi, who took Marlboro money to McLaren for the 1973 season and went on to win the title in '74 aboard the Coppuck design, picked it as his favourite racing car in the pages of *Motor Sport*. "A strong car, well engineered and reliable," is what the double world champion said.

McLaren constantly sought to improve the M23 over its five-season lifespan.

"We were always trying to push the development envelope," says former McLaren mechanic Mark Scott, who joined the team in '75. "We'd put the car in the windtunnel at MIRA a few times a year, which I'm not sure a lot of other teams did, and we had Alastair Caldwell as team manager. He was into trying different things."

Those things included the six-speed gearbox, a first in Formula 1, and underfloor skirts. Caldwell also came up with the idea for the pneumatic air-starter, a weight-saving development, during the M23's life.

There was nothing complex about the M23, adds Scott. It just did everything right. "It was just a simple and, for its time, stiff racing car," continues Scott. "And Gordon

McLAREN M23

- **Price new** n/a
- **Price now** £2-3 million
- **Engine** 3-litre Cosworth DFV
- **Power** 480-520bhp
- **GP wins** 16 ● **Pole positions** 14
- **Championships** 2
- **Verdict** One of the greatest racing cars ever built



The McLaren M23 was originally designed around Emerson Fittipaldi, and later adapted for James Hunt

was very much on top of suspension design."

The career of the M23 was lengthened by teething problems encountered with its successor. Coppuck had designed the M26 around Fittipaldi, before his sudden departure to join the team started by his brother Wilson. Hunt, his replacement, didn't fit the new honeycomb-chassis machine as it was originally conceived.

Jochen Mass gave the M26 its debut at the German GP in '76, but McLaren needed a car that was better than the M23 at a time when it was trying to win a championship. The team took the unprecedented step of setting up a dedicated test team to develop the newcomer, which wouldn't become Hunt's weapon of choice until the European season began in '77.

"James Hunt took three pole positions in a row in a car that he loved"

The M23, thanks to its longevity, isn't rare as F1 cars go. A total of 13 were built plus one Formula 5000 car around the same tub (although this was converted to F1 spec for Emilio de Villota to race and today remains an F1 car), but they aren't a regular sight in historic events. An M23 didn't grace FIA Masters Historic F1 last year. That's probably a result of the its value.

The reasons are easy to understand. It is an iconic and successful racing car that for a long time remained a front-runner. It was also a car which motor racing's first pop star, James Hunt, was driving when F1 burst into the public's wider consciousness, at least in the UK, during the balmy summer of '76 as he battled with Niki Lauda for the world title.

Market view

Not the rarest, but always desirable

The market for classic F1 cars is difficult to judge; many sales are made behind closed doors, making it difficult to track values. Interest in the sector has increased since 2004 with the introduction of the Masters F1 series which celebrates the Cosworth DFV-powered cars built from 1966 to '85.

The McLaren M23 fits squarely into this camp. The M23 was replaced by the M26 in 1976 and the public sale of the car used by James Hunt during the 1977 season is perhaps the best guide for the market. It sold for $1.2m (£735,000) – at the bottom of the $1.2m - $1.8m guide price in November 2013.

This was the last car in which Hunt recorded a career win, it is a different model and the timing of the sale came just after the release of the *Rush* film, which put 70s McLarens firmly in public eye.

The existence of the Masters series creates desirability, plus there's also good parts availability for the Cosworth DFV, making it relatively practical to use. 'Relatively' is the keyword, as nothing comes cheap in historic racing, especially in F1 guise, so expect a £15,000 rebuild every 1200 miles (12 – 36 months).

Robert Johnson,
Classic and Sports Finance

TARGET DEAL

Original example, £1.5m to £3m, depending on provenance.

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ONE CURRENTLY FOR SALE

McLaren M23

On the forecourt

London dealer Taylor & Crawley currently has an M23 for sale that boasts true Mass appeal

Originality is the hallmark of McLaren M23 chassis 12, being sold by David Clark of Taylor and Crawley in London. The car, the last M23 to be entered in a grand prix by the works team, has, he says, been "raced only sparingly" in the historic ranks since it was Jochen Mass's car for six races in 1977.

"It has the original paint on the original bodywork," says Clark, a collector, driver and dealer, who has had the car for a couple of years. "It has the proper long-stroke Cosworth DFV that it would have had back in the day, not one of the later whizz-bang short-strokes."

Clark has had a few M23s. But this one, he says, is "one of the coolest" courtesy of that originality. He believes the car has never had an accident of any seriousness.

Chassis 12 came on stream at the 1977 US Grand Prix West at Long Beach in April, Mass racing it through to the French GP at Dijon in July. A second place at Anderstorp in Sweden was the German's best result before he moved over to the new McLaren M26. The only subsequent M23 was chassis 14 — there was no unlucky 13. Privateer Brett Lunger raced it in the second half of 1977 and then the opening races of 1978.

Clark is asking $2.2 million (£1.68m), which he suggests isn't "big money". That's because of who drove it in period.

"There would be a bit more of a buzz about it if it was an ex-James Hunt car," he says, "and it would definitely be worth a fair bit more."

Taylor and Crawley, Marylebone, London. Tel: 020 7823 2599
www.taylorandcrawley.com



ONE PREVIOUSLY RESTORED

McLaren M23

In the workshop

Hall & Hall got under the skin of the car that carried James Hunt toward his world championship title

M23, chassis 6, underwent a ground-up restoration at historic single-seater specialist Hall & Hall back in the late 2000s. The car in which James Hunt won twice in his title-winning season was well used, both in period and in the historic ranks, when it arrived at the company's Lincolnshire workshops.

"It was a tired car when it came to us," says Rob Hall, who runs the business with father Rick. "The rebuild involved a complete strip-down of the monocoque. It is important to crack test the bulkheads and undertake repairs if necessary. The monocoque skins that join them together are what takes the strain, so they are what you have to replace. But we aim to preserve as well as restore."

Hall & Hall ran the car for owner Andrea Burani in three Monaco Historic Grands Prix and the FIA Masters series, although the car has been largely inactive in recent years.

That contrasts with its contemporary life. Chassis 6 made a winning debut at the 1974 Argentine GP and was still going strong in '76, when Hunt won with it in France and Germany (and also on the road at Brands Hatch before disqualification). Emilio de Villota then raced the car in a handful of GPs and rounds of the ShellSport Group 8 'libre' series and the Aurora British F1 Championship in 1977-78. The traits that made the M23 successful in the 1970s are relevant today, reckons Hall.

"The car has a big footprint; it's long and wide," he says. "That makes it very stable and instils confidence."

Hall & Hall, Bourne, Lincs. Tel: 01778 392562
www.hallandhall.net

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P.O.A



1964 Ford Fairlane 427 Holman & Moody
One of only 3 built and the only one racing. 2016 Goodwood St Mary's Trophy winner. On-the-button, very fast with good spares.
EUR 259,000



1977 Chevron B40 (B40-77-05)
Ex-Fred Opert Racing Team. Hart 420R (injection) engine, 2018 FIA HTP and good spares. A front runner for the HSCC 2019 F2 championship!
GBP 125,000



1983 BMW 635 Csi Gp A (E24-RA1-08)
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Buying guide

Nissan Skyline R32 GT-R

Japan's original street racing rebel has become an icon

THE EARLY-1990S NISSAN Skyline GT-R wasn't the first hot version of the Japanese manufacturer's saloon range, nor the first to carry GT-R badges. But the R32 GT-R car did cement the place of those three letters in the psyche of Nissan aficionados. So much so that when the latest GT-R was launched in 2007, it wasn't a Skyline at all. But the car of today does tip its hat to the race-bred machine that was first shown to the world 30 years ago.

The R32 type GT-R was the original 'Godzilla', a nickname reputedly coined in the offices of the Australian *Wheels* magazine. It stuck through multiple iterations of the GT-R, right through to today's R35-shape machine. It was an apt moniker. The R32 was a monster designed to conquer the world of touring car racing.

That explains why the GT-R version of the Skyline coupé had two Garrett turbochargers mated to a 24-valve straight-six engine - each turbo blew three cylinders – of 2.6-litre capacity and the conservative rating of 276bhp, though cars were reputed to roll out of the factory with nearer 300bhp. And, of course, the uprated brakes, the flared arches front and rear, and an aluminium bonnet and front wings.

Then there was four-wheel drive, via an active system that was cutting-edge for the day. It didn't have a catchy name – the ATTESA acronym stands for Advanced Total Traction Engineering System for All-terrain – but it was effective on race tracks. During cornering the car would essentially be rear-wheel drive, but under acceleration power would progressively be transferred to the front wheels in the name of traction.

There was four-wheel steering, too, operated by hydraulics that could be locked out for the track. Racing drivers, of course, don't want the car deciding what the rear end should be doing.

The high-tech Nissan was an immediate success in the Group A tin-top ranks. Nissan

NISSAN SKYLINE R32 GT-R

- **Price new** ¥102 million (c£42,000)
- **Price now** £20-£30,000
- **Engine** 2.6-litre, 24--valve twin-turbo in-line six-cylinder
- **Power** 276bhp
- **0-60mph** 5.6sec **Top speed** 156mph
- **Rivals** Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworth, BM3 M3 Evo.
- **Verdict** The forgotten homologation special road racer that punches above its weight for the money you'll pay today



Not the first, but the R32 was the Skyline that immortalised the GT-R badging, and earned the title 'Godzilla'





dominated on home turf in the Japanese Touring Car Championship, claiming the crown four seasons in a row between 1990 and '93. It won in Australia, too, though just the three times! It also claimed victory in the Spa 24 Hours in 1991, with a young David Brabham on the driving roster.

That was a rare success for the car in Europe, at least for the GpA version. But then the R32 GT-R road car was never sold in Europe. Its legend did, however, quickly spread all over the world, which explains an influx of 'grey' personal imports that continues to this day.

Japanese R32s – right-hand-drive cars, of course – started coming into the country almost from the moment they went on sale in Japan. How many have reached UK shores isn't clear, but it is estimated to be somewhere just shy of 150. That makes an early-1990s Skyline GT-R rare today, doubly so if you want one that hasn't been modified.

"Many reckon it's more than a match for a Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworth"

The engine is said to be good for 1000bhp with the right single-turbo set-up, and the R32 is loved by the *Fast and the Furious* set (although it was the R34 that featured in the franchise's 2003 film). But find an original one and you'll have a road car that will outstrip most things. Many reckon it's more than a match for a Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworth, only it will set you back perhaps a third of the price and will be much more useable on the road. It offers a rewarding drive even with the active rear-wheel steering. And the thing will rev up to 8000rpm!

Market view

Why it's boom time for Japanese classics

Over the last 10 years a modern classic market has emerged, led by Japanese brands.

As the generation raised on *Gran Turismo* now looks for affordable ways to get a foot onto the collector's ladder, Japanese performance cars such as the R32 GT-R are now a realistic option.

In 2014 as the oldest R32s struck the ripe old age of 25, it was possible to import them into the US. This heralded an uptick in prices as international demand grew. In March 2015, Brightwells sold a 1993 "fairly standard" vehicle with 78,000 miles for £7280. Fourteen months later Silverstone Auctions sold a 1994 model with 62,000 miles, non-original paint and part-service history for £20,250. Current vehicles range from £20,000 to £50,000, averaging £33,000.

Despite the R32 being hugely tuneable the market is being led by original, low-mileage cars; in 2017 Bonhams sold an original RHD 1992 R32 GT-R with 4200 miles for £67,000 at Monterey.

The R32 is the most plentiful of recent Skylines with just under 44,000 produced, four times that of the later R34, so apart from the best ultra-low mileage examples prices are unlikely to skyrocket.

Robert Johnson,
Classic and Sports Finance

TARGET DEAL

Original, unmodified example with under 50,000 miles, £28 - £30,000.

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ONE CURRENTLY FOR SALE

Nissan Skyline R32 GT-R

On the forecourt

A rare, unmolested R32 is a sound investment, especially with values holding up well thanks to American demand

'A rare find' is how James Henderson, proprietor of Greenside Cars in Norfolk, describes the R32 Skyline GT-R on his books. It's an unmolested 1993 car with just 75,000 miles on the clock and in white – that's 'Crystal White' in the Japanese firm's parlance of the time – rather than the seemingly *de rigueur* 'Gun Grey Metallic' in which nearly half the cars were sold.

"It is a rarity today to find one that's so original, because so many have been modified," says Henderson of the car that was imported into the UK in 2010. "It's not been chipped or breathed on in any way. It's as it left the factory, apart from the steering wheel, which has been re-trimmed somewhere down the line. It has Middlehurst Nissan provenance; they brought it into the country about 10 years ago."

Henderson has listed the car at £28,000 with a year's MOT, and reckons values are on the up, having broken through the £20,000 barrier in the past 12 months or so. The new '25-year rule' introduced in the USA allowing for the importation of cars that never met federal safety and emissions standards has increased demand for R32s in North America. Henderson points out that an early-90s Skyline GT-R recently sold at auction for in excess of $80,000 (£62,000).

Henderson admits that he's biased.

"I had one of the first cars to come into the country back in the early 90s, and have had a few more since," he says. "The R32 GT-R is fun to drive, reliable and sure-footed."

Greenside Cars, Holt, Norfolk. Tel: 01263 713362
www.greensidecars.com



ONE PREVIOUSLY RESTORED

Nissan Skyline R32 GT-R

In the workshop

Few know the Skyline like Middlehurst Nissan. Here's the key to keeping its turbocharged heart beating

Middlehurst Nissan is the specialist for Skylines. It has an association with the cars stretching back to the early 1990s when former British Touring Car driver Andy Middlehurst, who runs the business, won back-to-back National Saloon Car Cup titles in 1995-96 aboard a Group N-spec production R32.

It's just finished an engine rebuild of an R32, supplies parts around Europe and also has an R33-shape Skyline GT-R under restoration. It's even undertaken a ground-up rebuild of the car in which Middlehurst achieved his 1990s on track successes.

The 1994 GT-R came to Middlehurst after oil pump issues.

"The oil pumps tend to fall apart inside with mileage," says Middlehurst. "Once we'd got the engine out of the car, it made sense to undertake a full overhaul. It's important to check the oil pressure if you are buying one. At 4000rpm with 80deg C oil temperature you should have four bar of pressure."

The overhaul included a Middlehurst upgrade, replacing the original ceramic turbocharger impellers with steel.

"The turbos can be problematic, especially if you put too much boost through them," adds Middlehurst. "The blades can shatter. If the parts are ingested, it kills the engine. Too much boost can also stretch the conrods, which causes the bearings to rotate on the crank."

The customer's engine left Middlehurst Nissan with 360bhp. That's attainable with one bar of boost and won't cause any problems in the future.

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THE EX - WORKS, RICHIE GINTHER
1962 BRM P578 FORMULA 1

Built new for Richie Ginther, making its practice debut at Monaco in BRM's World Championship winning season. Driven by Ginther through to the end of 1963 with 2nd at Monaco, Monza and Watkins Glen. Joint 2nd in the 1963 World Championship. Campaigned for Scuderia Centro Sud with Gregory, Baghetti, Maggs, Scarfiotti and Bianchi through to 1965. Sold to collector Walter Grell through Jo Siffert and retained in his collection until 2000. Found to be in exceptional complete and original condition with the original bodywork. The opportunity to acquire such a historical example of a World Championship winning model just does not come up.



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THE EX – WORKS, PETER GETHIN, BRIAN REDMAN AND JOHN WATSON
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Returning to the UK in the late 1990’s, 0157/R was entrusted to marque specialists for a complete ‘body off’ restoration by its new owner, completed in 2003. Featured in Octane magazine, November 2003, pitched against a Ferrari 250 SWB, this superb car has since been part of an extensive UK based Aston Martin collection. Professionally housed and occasionally driven on weekends, whilst being regularly attended and serviced.

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Lola T290

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1969 Porsche 914-6 GT

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1964 Jaguar E-type Series 1 3.8 Fixed Head Coupe

This wonderful matching number car was first road registered in the UK as 7582WK. Supplied new in LHD it was then exported with this first owner to Hollywood, California. Restored in 2016 to the highest standard. Fast road specification with many sensible drivers upgrades.





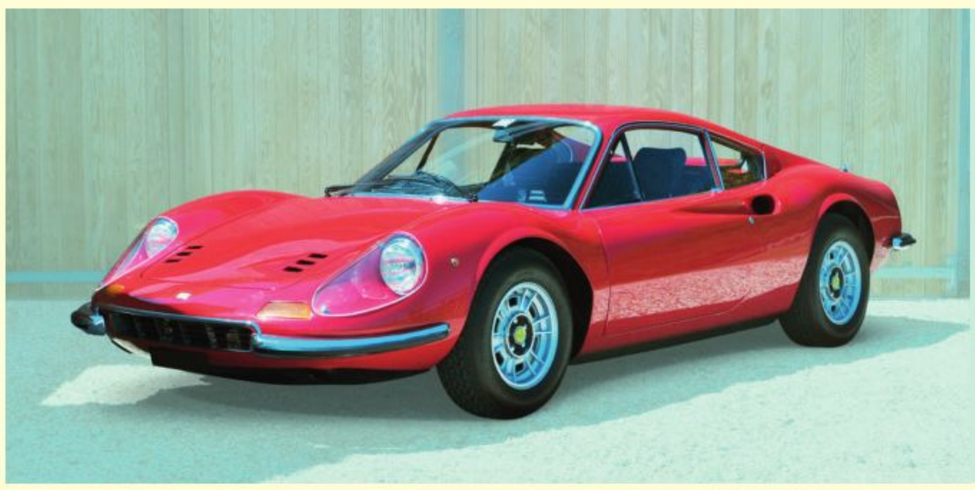
1934 Rolls Royce 20/25 Three Position Drophead by Gurney Nutting

With single ownership for over 40 years this is a wonderfully restored example of arguably the most elegant coachwork to grace a 20/25. Benefiting from a documented cosmetic refresh this year, it would score high on the judges' sheet in International concours d'élégance competition.

1960 Porsche 356 T5 Cabriolet

Original right hand drive example with complete ownership history from new. Subject of a cosmetic restoration in 2017, this stunning example has had its Super 90 engine rebuilt 300 miles ago by Charles Ivey and benefits from a recent service by Roger Bray.





1972 FERRARI DINO 246 GT

This right hand drive example was delivered new to racing driver Phil Scragg and has enjoyed only two subsequent owners since, covering just 31,000 miles in total. Subject of a comprehensive restoration in 2015 which consumed some 369 man-hours, this premium example has travelled just 200 miles since and comes with the desirable Ferrari Classiche.

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3-5 MAY	DONINGTON HISTORIC FESTIVAL
27 MAY	HRDC FESTIVAL LYDDEN HILL
1-2 JUNE	THRUXTON MOTORSPORT CELEBRATION
29 JUNE	VSCC RACE DAY at DONINGTON
5 OCT	AUTUMN CLASSIC at CASTLE COMBE

HRDC ULTIMA RATIO 2019 9

KEY:

ACD: ACADEMY

ALL: ALLSTARS

ASC: A-SERIES CHALLENGE

COYS: COYS TROPHY

TG: TOURING GREATS

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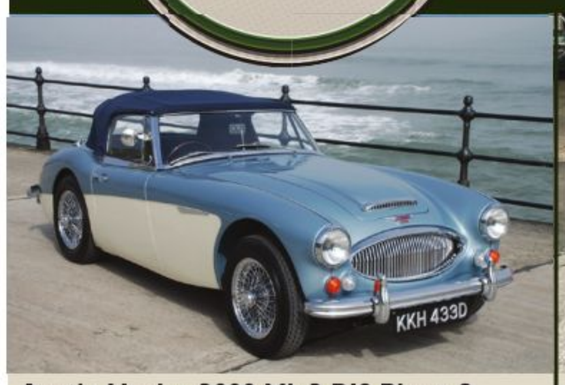
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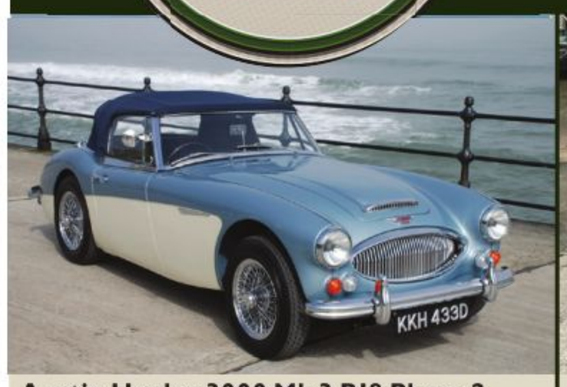
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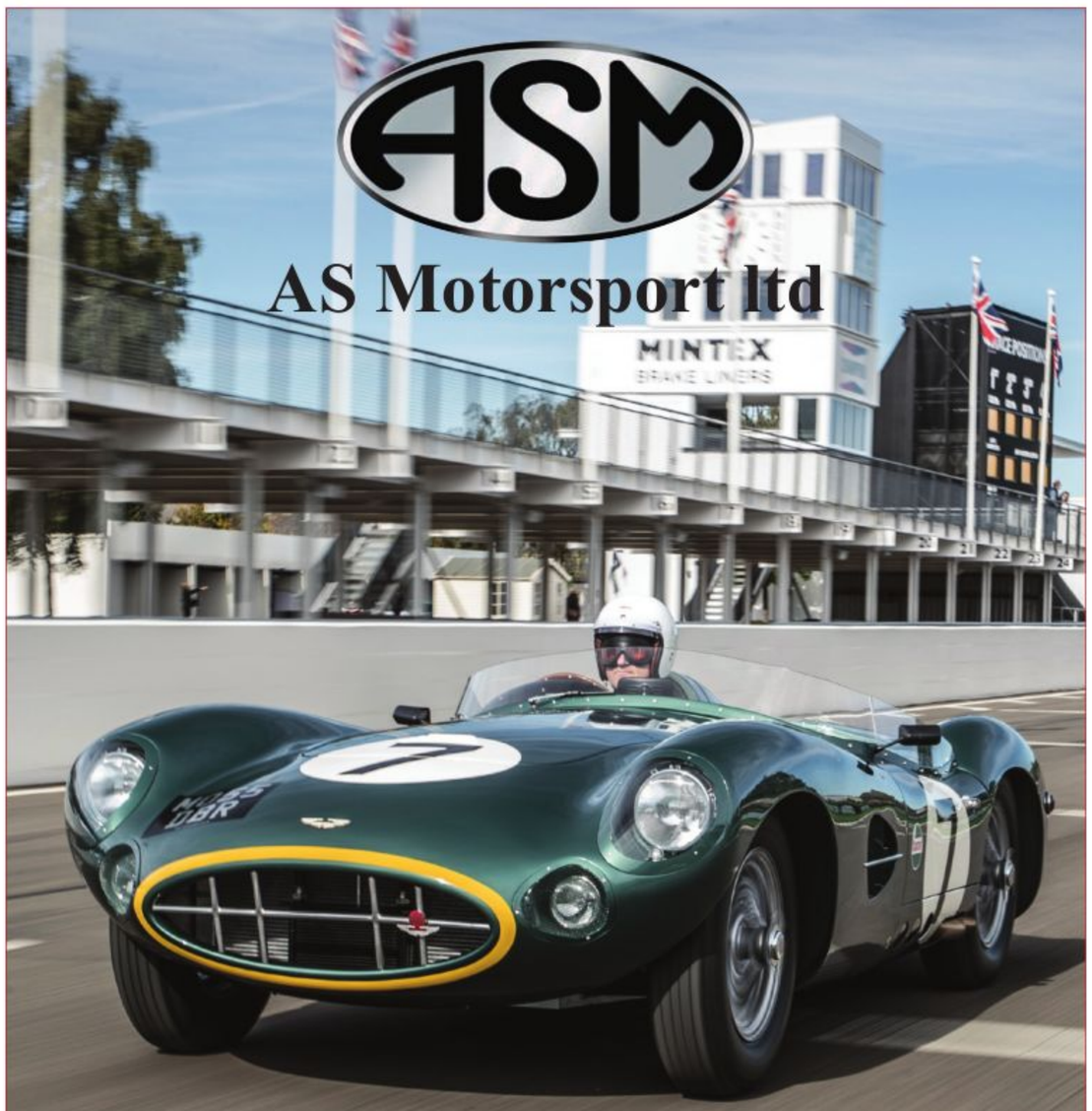
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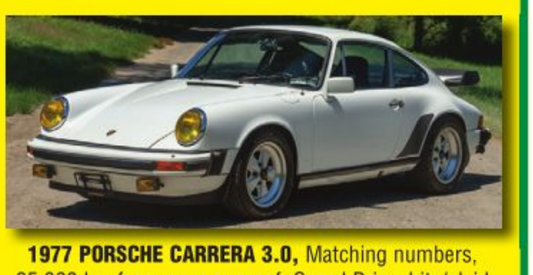
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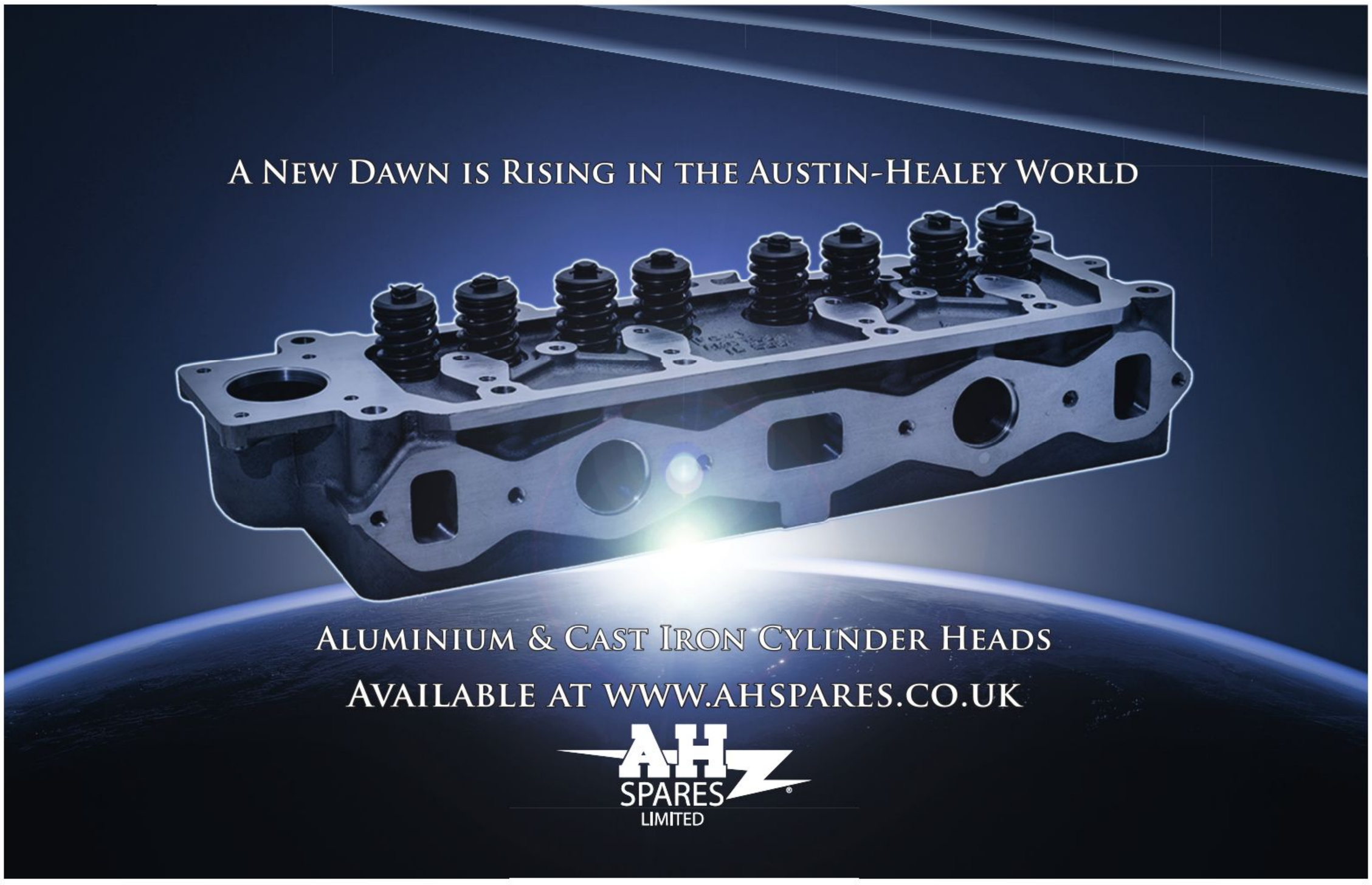
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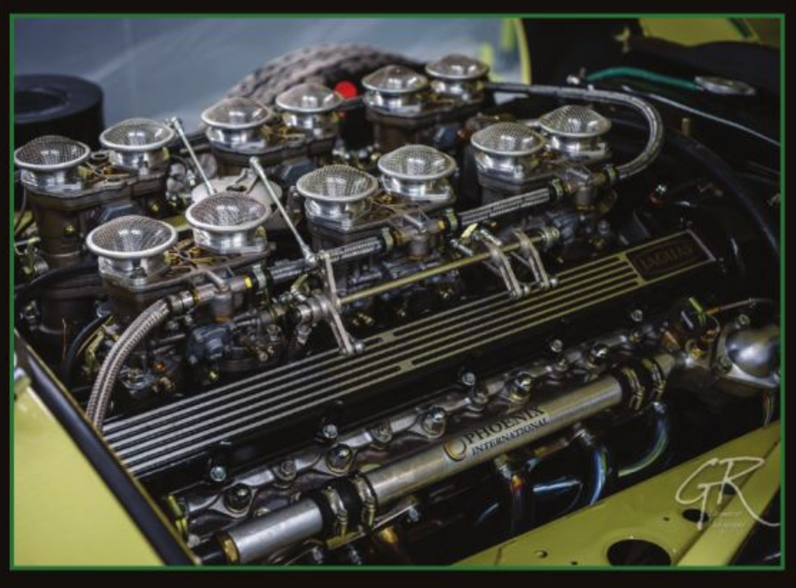
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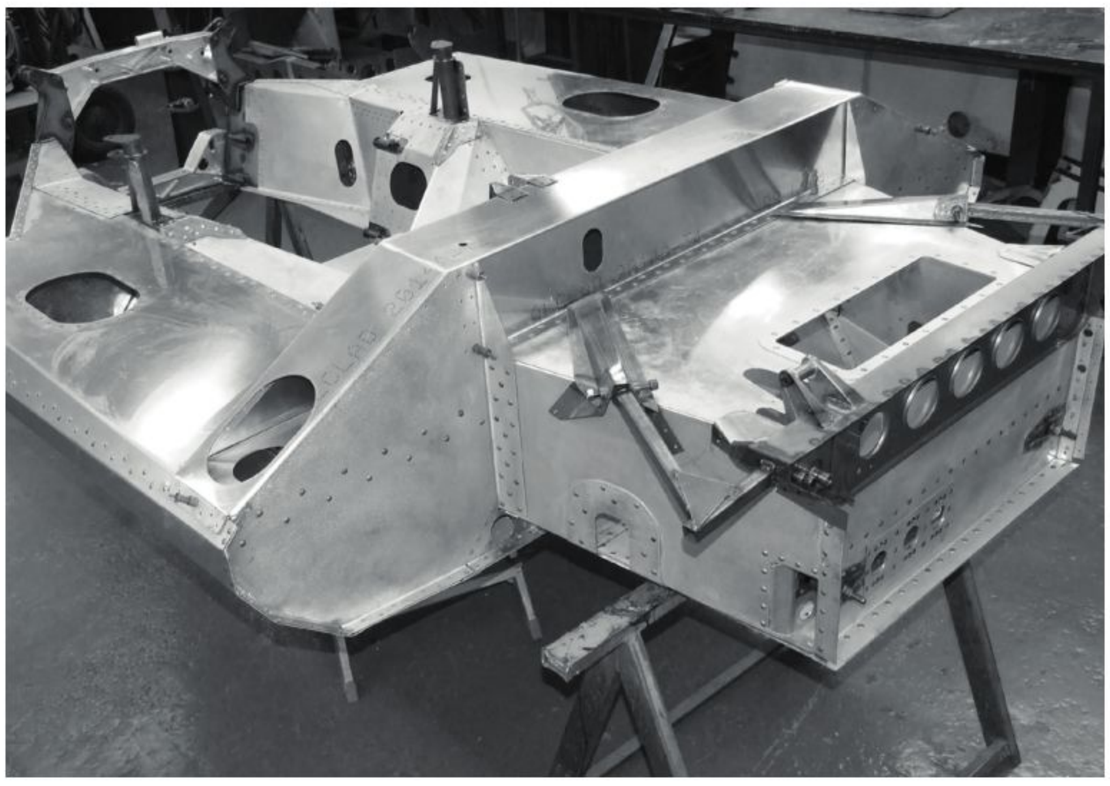
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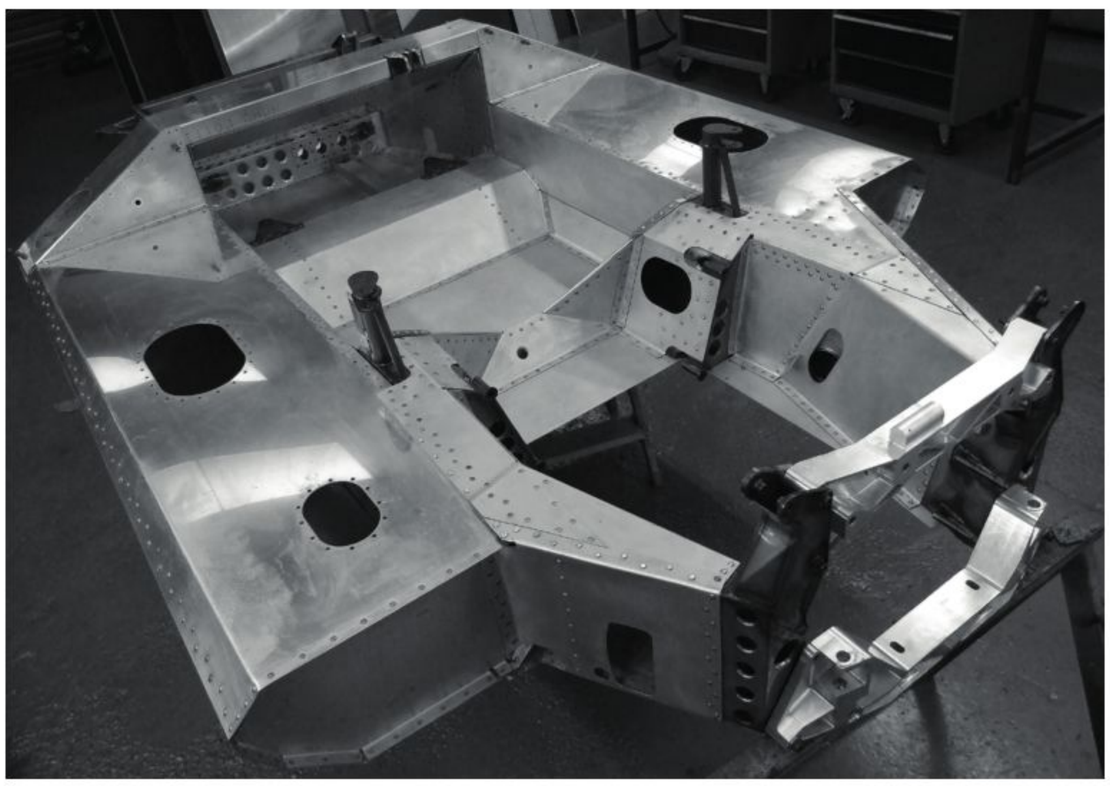
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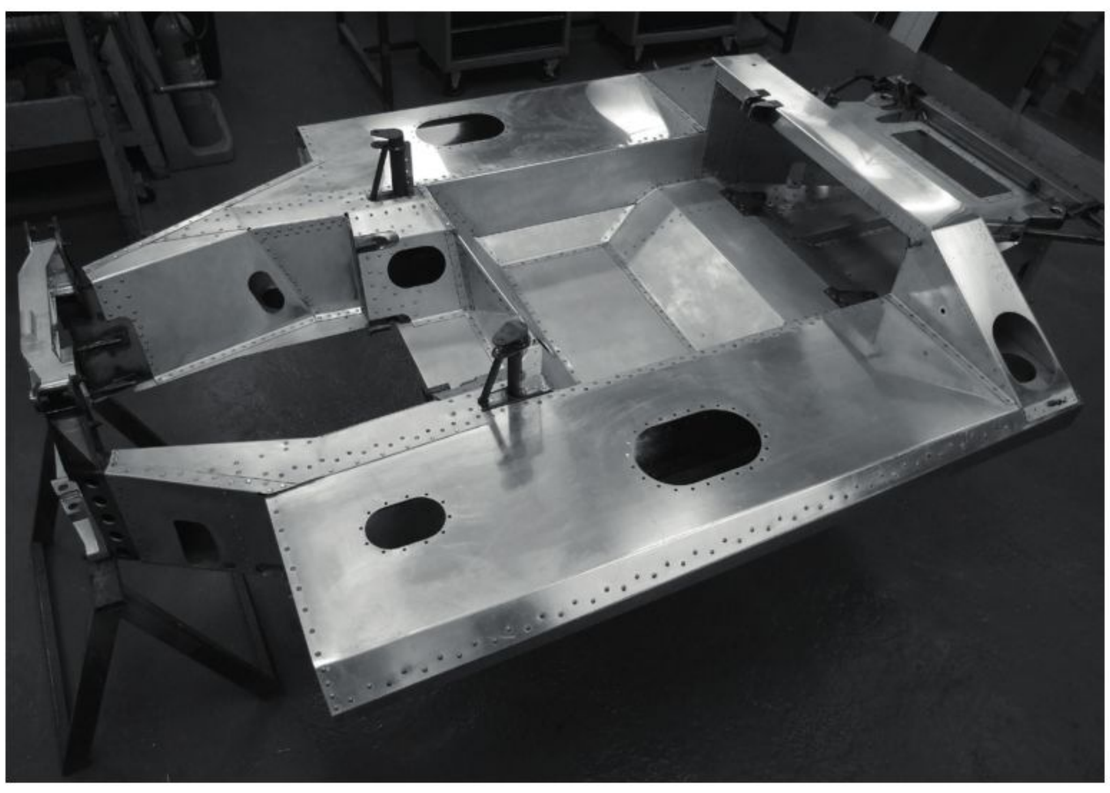
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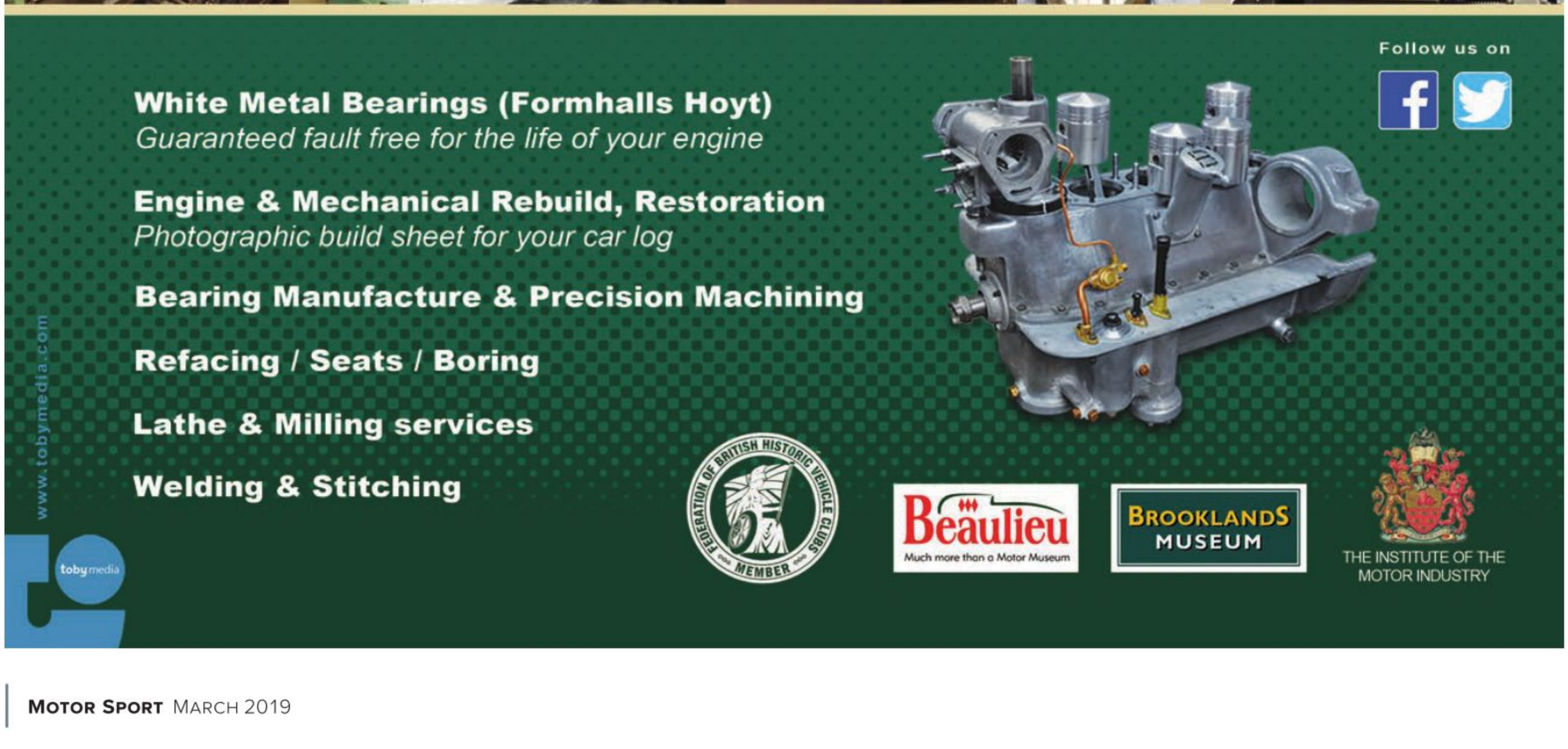
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Bright news for older cars

Older Rolls and Bentley cars can be challenging to drive in modern traffic conditions. The main issue is one of visibility and the failure of other road users to understand outmoded methods of signalling. Modern cars have brighter lights and sharper indicator systems and motorists see what they expect to see, or in this case, don't.

Better Car Lighting of Warwickshire have been busy developing neat and invisible solutions to make these cars safe and convenient to use in modern traffic. At the front, special replacement LED bulbs have been developed to give white sidelights but change to orange for indicating. These are a straight swap for the originals. If the current bulbs are single circuit, alternative bulbholders can be fitted to make use of these new bulbs.

The bulbs in semaphore arms can be upgraded to bright orange flashing ones, to make them useful instead of decorative.

At the rear of early cars, the tail and brake lights are often very dim and again, the lack of orange flashing indicators can be a safety issue. Better Car Lighting can help here too. Most of the usual suspects can have conversions which not only give brighter tail and brake lights, but also have orange flashing indicators which shine through the red lens.





new orange & white bulbs no bigger than originals



All models are catered for, and as these upgrades are designed in-house, tech support is always available.

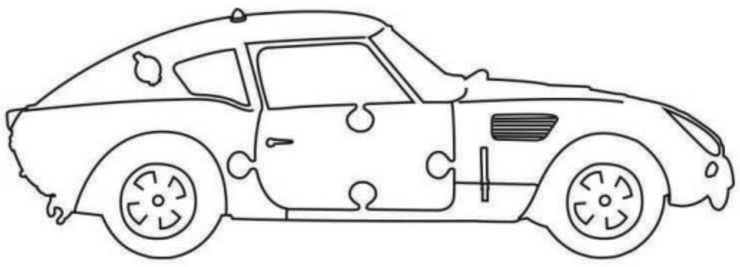
All of the other lights, including dashboards, interior, etc. can be upgraded and a great deal of equipment designed to make these cars safer and more comfortable is available.

For more details, visit

www.bettercarlighting.co.uk

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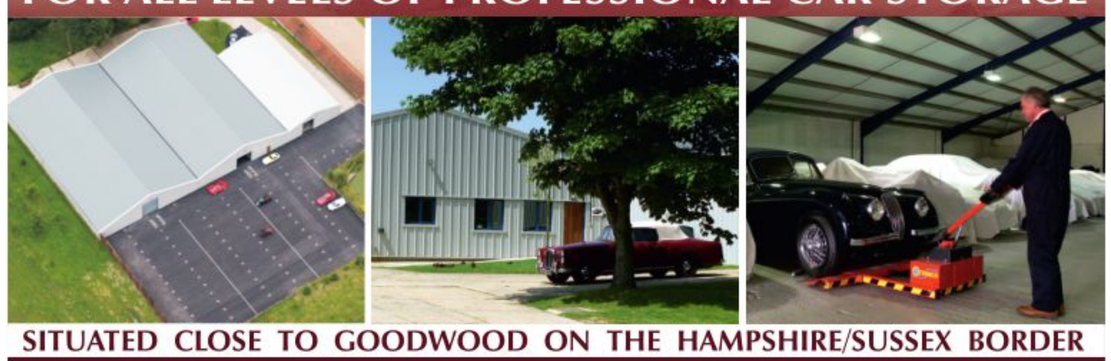


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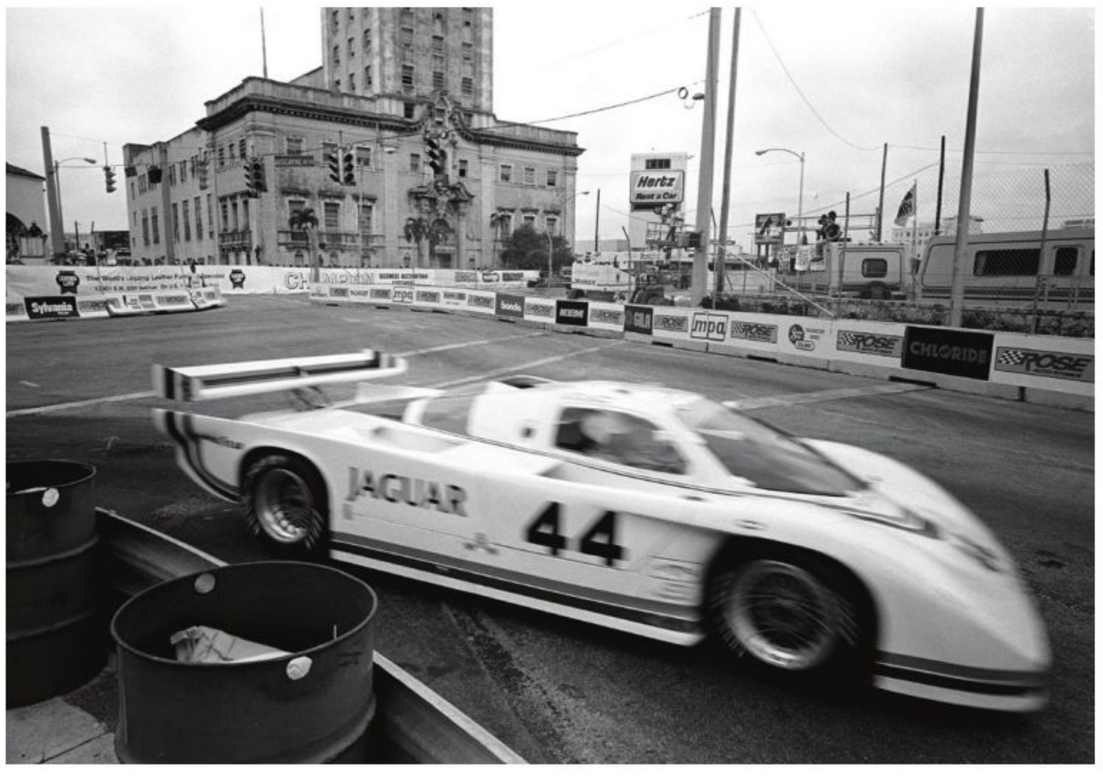
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Porsche at work during the 1977 Daytona 24 Hours: the 935 of Jacky Ickx/Jochen Mass was quick, but suffered two accidents because of sudden punctures. The second proved terminal



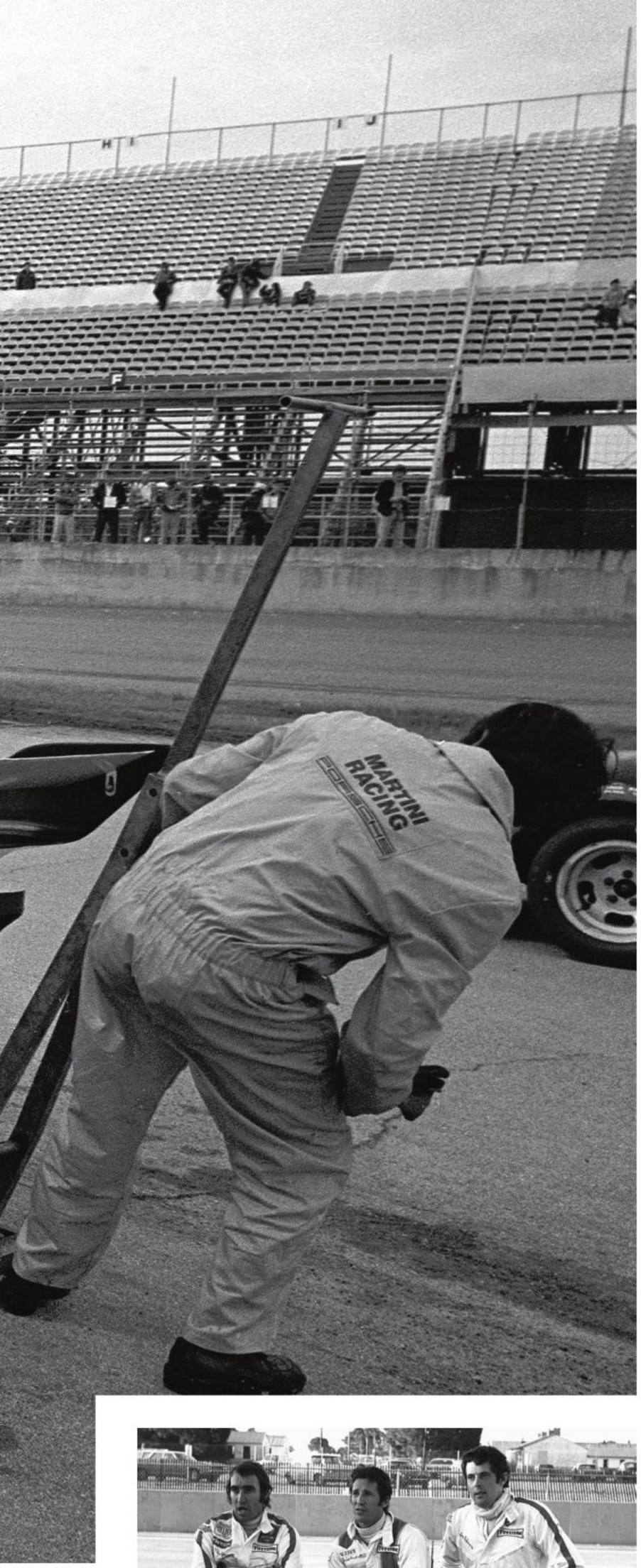
Everyday America drifts past in the background as Ronnie Peterson races in the 1972 Sebring 12 Hours. He and Tim Schenken took their Ferrari 312PB to second, behind team-mates Mario Andretti and Jacky Ickx

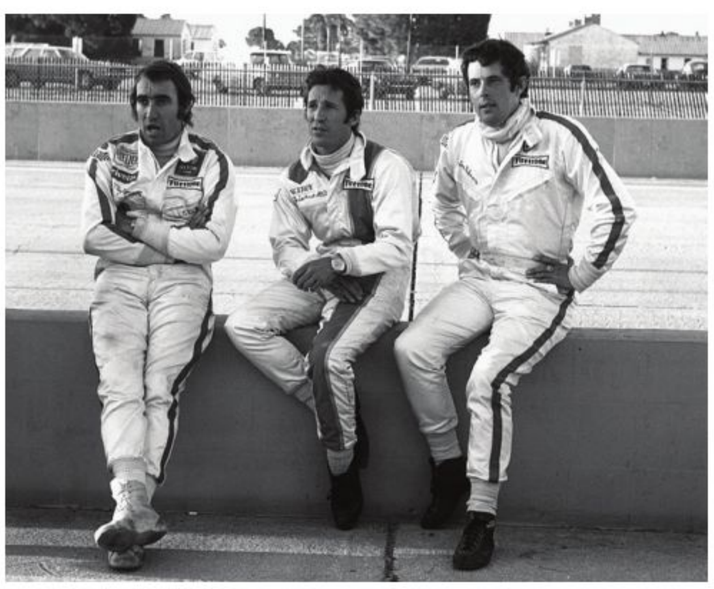


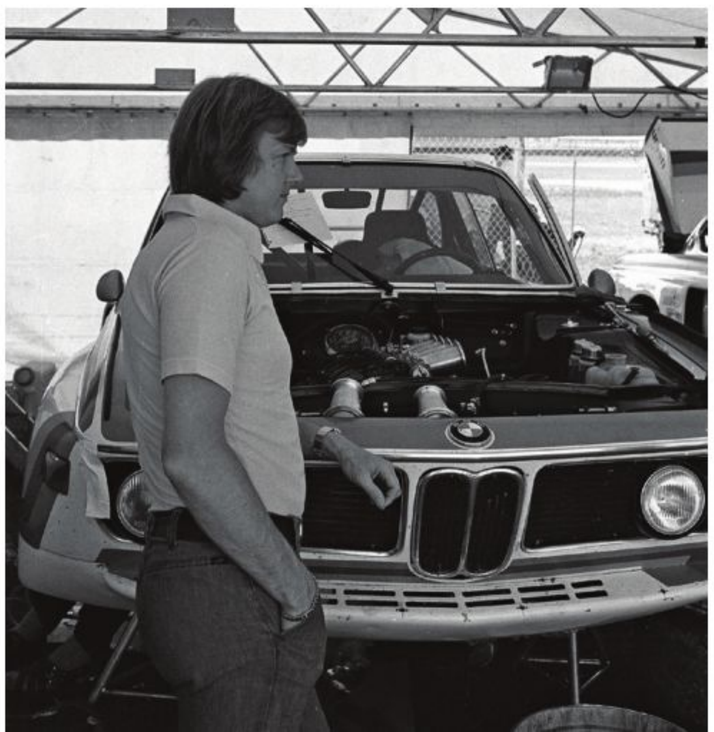
Group 44's Jaguar XJR-5s finished first and second in the 1984 Miami 3 Hours, Brian Redman/Doc Bundy and Bob Tullius/Pat Bedard (pictured) finishing more than a lap clear of their closest rival, Conte Racing's Lola T600

Framed in Florida

Miami-based reader William Tuttle picked up a camera while studying art and later worked as an official race photographer in America. He sent us a stunning collection of images that capture some of the greats of ‘70s and ‘80s racing in action in the US.









Above, after winning a junior FF1600 title in the UK in 1977, Willy T Ribbs returned to the US. Here, he’s poised for action in his Mercury Capri during the ’84 TransAm season. Left, from the top: Ferrari drivers Clay Regazzoni, Mario Andretti and Brian Redman at Sebring in ’72. Ronnie Peterson with the BMW 3.0 CSL he shared with Redman at Daytona in ’75

SEND US YOUR IMAGES

If you have any photographs that might be suitable for *You Were There*, please send them to: Motor Sport, 18-20 Rosemont Road, London, NW3 6NE or e-mail them to: editorial@motorsportmagazine.co.uk



MAY 5, 1968
LITTLE MADONIE CIRCUIT, SICILY, ITALY

Having withdrawn from the Monza 1000km to focus on the Targa Florio, Alfa Romeo took a class-winning second overall with its T33/2. Ignazio Giunti/Nanni Galli finished less than three minutes behind the Porsche 907 of Vic Elford/Umberto Maglioli. Left, rustic simplicity as the VDS-entered Alfa of Teddy Pilette/Rob Slotemaker passes a bystander on its way to fifth place.

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2004 Bentley Continental GT in Dark Sapphire blue with Pembroke beige hide interior. A beautiful motor car with a full Bentley service history with just 31,000 from new. Perfect throughout and sensibly priced at.....**£29,950**



1965 Bentley S3 Saloon finished in Burgundy with black hide interior. Remarkably only 56,000 miles from new and in splendid condition throughout. Bound to continue to appreciate and realistically priced for one in this condition at.....**£49,950**



1996 Bentley Continental "R" finished in Peacock blue with pale grey hide interior. 70,000 miles from new with a complete service history including a recent hydraulic overhaul at close to £7,000, very reasonably priced at.....**£47,950**



2002 Aston Martin Vanquish in Stronsay Silver with contrasting black and pale grey hide. A stunning 3 owner car with just 39,000 miles and a complete Aston service history. Sensibly priced to sell at **£77,950**



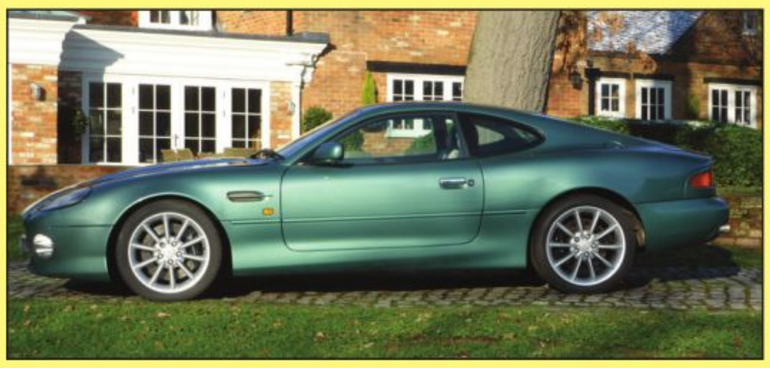
1997 Aston Martin V8 Coupe in Mendip Blue with Parchment hide interior. 29,000 miles only from new with full Aston Service history. Sold by us to the last owner. A superb motor car, bound to appreciate...**£89,950**



1997 Ferrari 550 Maranello finished in Grigio Titanio with sumptuous burgundy hide interior. A truly stunning motor car, highly rated by Ferrari enthusiasts as "A Keeper", 31,000 with full Ferrari service history. Priced to sell for one in this condition at..... **£125,000**



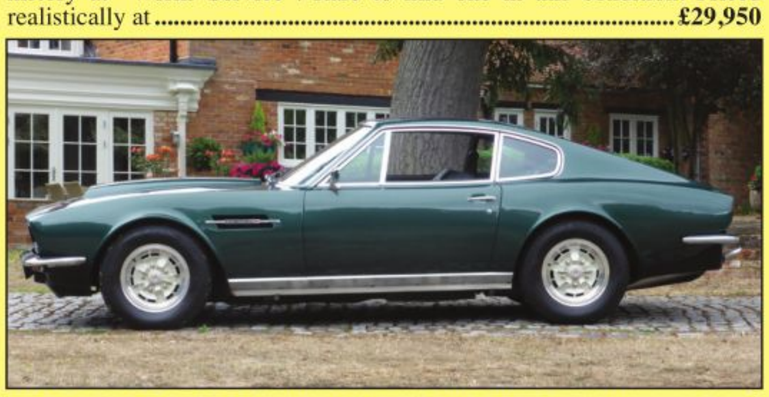
1998 Aston Martin DB7 i6 Volante, finished in Antrim blue with Pacific blue and Parchment hide interior with high gloss Walnut veneers. A fabulous example, only for sale due to bereavement. Full Aston service history at "Works Service". Rare to find one in this condition. Priced realistically at **£29,950**



2000 DB7 Vantage Coupe finished in Aston Racing Green with Forest green and Parchment hide interior. Excellent service history, beautiful throughout, Sold by us to a previous owner. Very realistically priced at **£29,950**



2003 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Volante in Azzurro California blue with blue hide interior. 34,000 miles only from new and comes with an excellent service history with a full re-commissioning service after a period of storage. Dark blue mohair hood, most available options and competitively priced at **£42,500.**



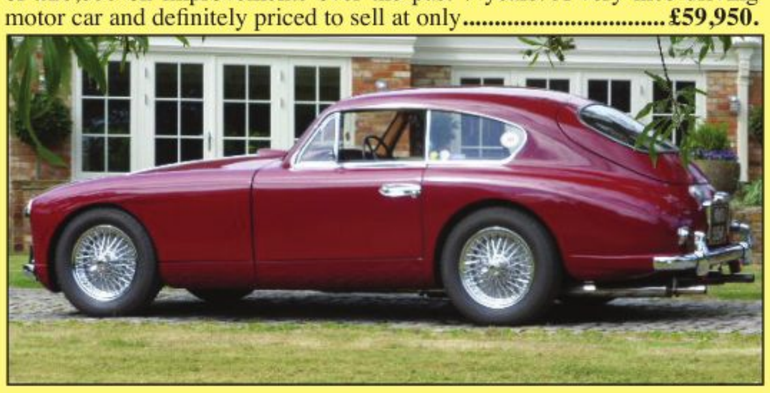
1976 Aston Martin V8 series III finished in Dark metallic green with black hide interior. Sold by us to a previous owner who has spent in excess of £28,000 on improvements over the past 7 years. A very nice driving motor car and definitely priced to sell at only.....**£59,950.**



1974 Aston Martin V8 series III finished in Storm Red with magnolia hide interior piped in red with beige carpets. Fitted with Vantage front apron, Factory fitted electric sun roof and automatic transmission, this car is a credit to its previous owner..**Please enquire for further information.**



1972 Aston Martin V8 series II finished in Dark metallic blue with Parchment hide interior. One of the best examples of this model we have seen in recent times. £135,000 spent on complete refurbishment by a recent previous owner. Please see our website for a full description. **£115,000**



1955 Aston Martin DB2/4 finished in Burgundy with tan hide. This is a really fabulous example, completely rebuilt by Four Ashes Garage only 4 years ago to a very high standard. More details can be found on our website..... **£200,000**



1954 Jaguar XK120 DHC jointly owned by 2 colleagues for the past 30 years. Matching numbers, UK supplied car always RHD example in very nice condition. Very good value at..... **£74,950**



1955 Aston Martin DB2/4 finished in pale metallic green with biscuit hide interior. Owned by an individual for over 30 years during which time it was the subject of fully documented expenditure in excess of £53,000 which included a full engine rebuild. Priced competitively for a quick sale at.....**£139,950**



1962 Jaguar E type series one, 3.8 FHC in British Racing Green with beige hide interior. This Left hand Drive E type was the property of an elderly gentleman in New York who had it restored 20 years ago but has barely used it since. Still in excellent condition and competitively priced at **£79,950**



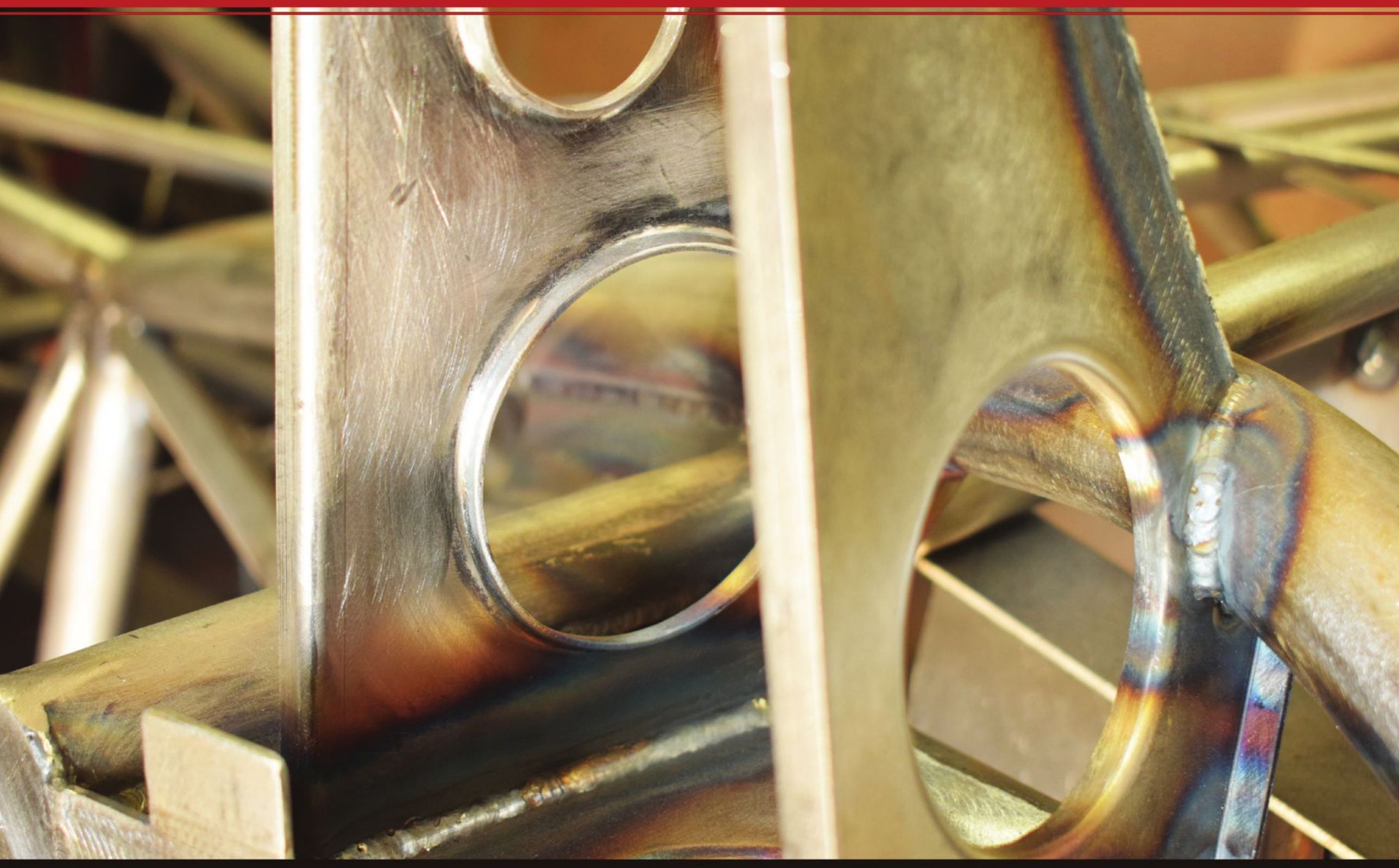
1964 Jaguar E type series one, 3.8 Roadster in Carmen red with black hide interior. This Left Hand Drive E type has been fully restored at huge expense and unused since. A perfect driving car and priced accordingly at.....**£159,950**



1973 Jaguar E type series III finished in Azure blue with beautiful dark blue hide interior. Fitted with manual transmission and chrome wire wheels, the car has been the subject of an older restoration but remains in excellent condition throughout. **£89,950**

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