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WILL COMEBACK KING RULE?

Why Schuey can win again

Mark Hughes reveals secrets
of champ's turnaround bid

- How it all started to click late last season
- Ross Brawn's high hopes for 2011 Mercedes

PLUS EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

NICO ROSBERG



"I've raised my game to keep beating Michael"



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CONTENTS

January 6 2011 – vol 203 no 1



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COVER IMAGES:
MAIN: www.wri2.net
INSET: LAT; Ferraro/LAT

NEWS

10 Brawn: Rosberg can win

Merc team principal reckons the young German can win the title given the right car

12 Russia ready for 2014

New circuit will be ready for country's first GP in three years' time, says mayor

16 Rossiter lands Lotus gig

Brit James Rossiter could race in IndyCar after securing Lotus test/development role

18 Lola-Aston for ALMS

'CytoSport' to run British LMP1 racer in American Le Mans Series

21 Dakar move likely for '12

A switch to Brazil and Peru could be enough to keep Dakar powerhouse VW in marathon competition

**Brawn big-up
Nico Rosberg
for 2011 P10**



DUNBAR/LAT

ASI PREVIEW

54 McLaren exhibition

In the first of our two-part AUTOSPORT International preview, we reveal details of the 11 legendary McLaren machines you'll be able to ogle over at the NEC – from F1 world-beaters, Indy 500 winners, Can-Am brutes and Le Mans legends to the all-new MP4-12C supercar

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to AUTOSPORT magazine and get a free pair of Bolle Anaconda sunglasses. **P52**

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The Racing Car Show

**McLaren M23 to
star at the NEC
P54**



LAT



“We had a lot of rain - we couldn't see anything. It was a bit like Rally GB”

DAKAR LEADER CARLOS SAINZ COMPARES THE SOUTH AMERICAN STAGES WITH, ER, WALES

22

The number of drivers who scored points in the 2010 World Touring Car Championship – from champion Yvan Muller (331) to single-round starter Leonel Pernia (1)
WTCC Review, page 42

Will Schuey win again in 2011?
P22

COVER STORY



FEATURES

22 Schumacher scrutinised

2010 was not a success for the seven-time champ but 2011 could be much better...

26 Rosberg ready

The first man to beat Schuey in a year-long fight on why he's now desperate to win

28 Meet Mr Mateschitz

Who is the man behind Red Bull? We get a rare insight into Dietrich Mateschitz

30 VW Touareg track test

AUTOSPORT gets its hands on the latest VW Race Touareg Dakar monster – and crashes it into a lake

36 Must-see moments

The biggest and best races, rallies and events you must get to during 2001

42 WTCC review

The full story behind Yvan Muller's second world tin-top title

SPORTS EXTRA

75 AMOC gets a shake-up

Refocusing of series to boost Aston club's 2011 fortunes

76 Jordans to race GT Merc

Father and son Mike and Andrew to campaign Mercedes SLS GT racer

79 Reports

Mallory Park BARC

80 Season review

BARC; HF1/Masters

82 Season review

CSCC; Irish racing



2010 BARC series reviews
P80



Shake-up of AMOC races to boost club P75

REGULARS

7 From the editor

8 Snapshot

15 Mark Hughes

52 Subscribe

And get a free pair of Bolle Anaconda sunglasses

84 Final drive

Letters and Xmas reviews

86 On track/on screen

The best motorsport action over the next seven days

89 Photo finish

Stuart Smith Sr beats rally aces at Wembley in 1974

90 Race of my life

Mike Wilds, US GP, Watkins Glen 1974 (below)





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POLE POSITION

Why 2011 should be a motorsporting classic

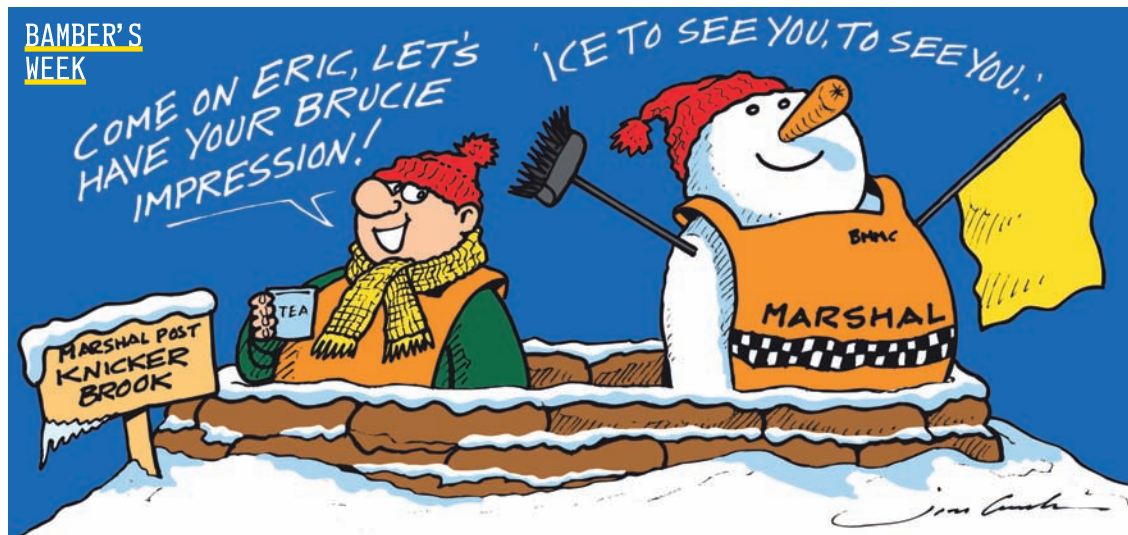


HAPPY NEW YEAR – and what a 12 months we have in store.

This time last year we asked whether Michael Schumacher's neck was healed and how he'd go in a head-to-head fight with Lewis Hamilton. We got the answer to both: yes it's fine, and Lewis got him (at the second attempt) in their thrilling duel in China. But the fact that Schuey failed to make our Top 50 drivers of the year reflected how poorly his comeback season had gone. The intrigue in 2011 is this: if Michael gets a winning car beneath him, has the seven-time champion still got the wherewithal to win with it? Mark Hughes has reason to think so (see p22) having spoken at length to Mercedes team principal Ross Brawn, but first Schuey has to overcome the intra-team threat of Nico Rosberg (see p10 and p26).

Throw Mercedes into the competitive mix of Red Bull, Ferrari and McLaren – add the variables of new Pirelli tyres, the return of KERS and moveable rear wings – and the ingredients are there for this year's F1 season to top 2010.

Charles Bradley, deputy editor



A HAPPY AND SAFE NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MARSHALS

DAKAR

Splash and grab for VW

Nasser Al-Attiyah crosses a river during the first day of the 2011 Dakar Rally – but it was VW Touareg team-mate Carlos Sainz who topped the first two stages between Buenos Aires and San Miguel de Tucuman to edge into a 3m05s lead over Frenchman Stephane Peterhansel's BMW X3 CC, with Al-Attiyah in third.

Picture: DPPI



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Brawn: Rosberg can be world champion

The Mercedes team principal has no doubts that the younger of his German charges could win the title... if he gives him a competitive car. By EDD STRAW

Nico Rosberg is good enough to win the Formula 1 World Championship, according to Mercedes team principal Ross Brawn.

Brawn believes that 25-year-old Rosberg can win the title if he is given a car capable of delivering. The Mercedes MGP W02 is expected to be more competitive than the disappointing 2010 car (see panel, below right) as the team bids to give Rosberg and team-mate Michael Schumacher a shot at the crown in 2011.

"He is a world-championship-calibre driver," Brawn told AUTOSPORT. "In the right situation and the right car, he can do it. He's consistent, fast, intelligent and has the spare mental capacity in a race to think about what's going on. I've certainly seen worse drivers win championships."

Brawn compared Rosberg to Jenson Button, who became world champion in 2009 after years driving uncompetitive machinery. Rosberg now has five full seasons in F1 under his belt without winning a grand prix.

FINDING CONSISTENCY

Brawn cited Rosberg's consistency as one of the major areas where he has impressed.

He added that he had been tracking Rosberg for several seasons, and attempted to recruit him when he first took over as Honda team principal late in 2007.

"We tried to sign Nico a couple of years ago when I first went to Honda, but he stayed at Williams," said Brawn. "I think Nico is probably even better than we expected."

"If you look at his time at Williams, it was a little bit inconsistent. Whether that was the team or him, I'm not sure. For us he was consistently in the top 10 and would have scored points in all of the races if he had made the finish. He has great consistency."

Rosberg also has the potential to become a popular figure among the fans once he starts winning races, with Brawn paying tribute to his little-heralded overtaking ability.

"He's a quiet driver in the sense that you don't see many flamboyant actions on the track," said Brawn. "But when he wants to get past someone, he's good in terms of overtaking. He just gets on with it and maybe that hasn't captured the public's imagination. Once he wins a race, which he will do, that will change."

HOW NICO BEAT SCHUEY

In 2010, Rosberg became the first of Schumacher's team-mates to beat him over a season, scoring two-thirds of the Mercedes team's points.

Brawn puts this down to two major factors: how Rosberg adapted to the Bridgestone tyres; and his pace in slower corners.

"There are certain areas of the track where there is not much difference in performance," said Brawn. "Nico is very good under braking and in slow and medium-speed corners. And he's very good at working out how to get the most from the tyres – that's where he was stronger than Michael."

"You can see Michael's pure talent and speed of reaction in the data, but he hasn't got the same technique in slow to medium-speed corners that Nico has. Nico faced a challenge with the tyres, but he found a way of using them."

Second in Singapore '08



ROSBERG IN F1

Starts: 89
Best finish: 2nd
Podiums: 5
Points: 217.5
Best qualifying: 2nd
Fastest laps: 2
Best championship: 7th (2009, 2010)
Debut: Bahrain 2006



P22
SCHUEY CAN WIN IN 2010



P26
EXCLUSIVE ROSBERG INTERVIEW



Mercedes confident about 2011 prospects

Mercedes insiders are confident that the new-for-2011 MGP W02 is a potentially world championship-winning car.

Although the team remains only cautiously optimistic in public, sources inside the team have revealed to AUTOSPORT that expectations are very high for the car. It is understood that downforce levels already exceed the team's original targets and that the design, a substantial departure from the unwieldy 2011 machine, is expected to win races from the start of the season.

The team has already stolen a march on its rivals by becoming the first team to run the new adjustable rear wing on track (during last November's Abu Dhabi test). Michael Schumacher said that he was "positive" about the new-for-2011 Pirelli tyres when he tried them late last year, meaning that the team has a good chance of overcoming the lack of front-end grip that restricted it to only three podiums last year.

The car is due to hit the track at Valencia on February 1.

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

EDD STRAW
F1 EDITOR

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So what if Ross Brawn says that Nico Rosberg is a world champion in waiting? Talk is cheap and he's hardly going to run down his own charge, is he? You would be right to reach that conclusion with some of the talking heads in the F1 paddock, but not Brawn. If he says he's impressed with Rosberg, he means it. And if Brawn is impressed with a driver, that's worth something.

Chances are, your impression of Rosberg is an unfair caricature. He has the image of being something of a poseur, more interested in his flowing locks and prancing around the paddock than in the serious business of driving. The reality is very different. He's an intelligent character and usually inscrutable – although in 2010 there were occasions when he revealed a little more to the press than his paymasters would like.

So he's a serious racing driver. Much of what Brawn says about him rings true. Certainly, he was incredibly consistent in 2010, generally outperformed Michael Schumacher and was very often best of the rest behind the big three teams.

The major unknown is outright speed. We know that he has most of what he needs in the locker – but does he have the famous last three tenths that conventional wisdom dictates separate the good from the great? If the 2011 Merc is as good as is hoped behind closed doors at Brackley, we'll finally find out.



Pirellis will be key to 2011 form

STREAKS

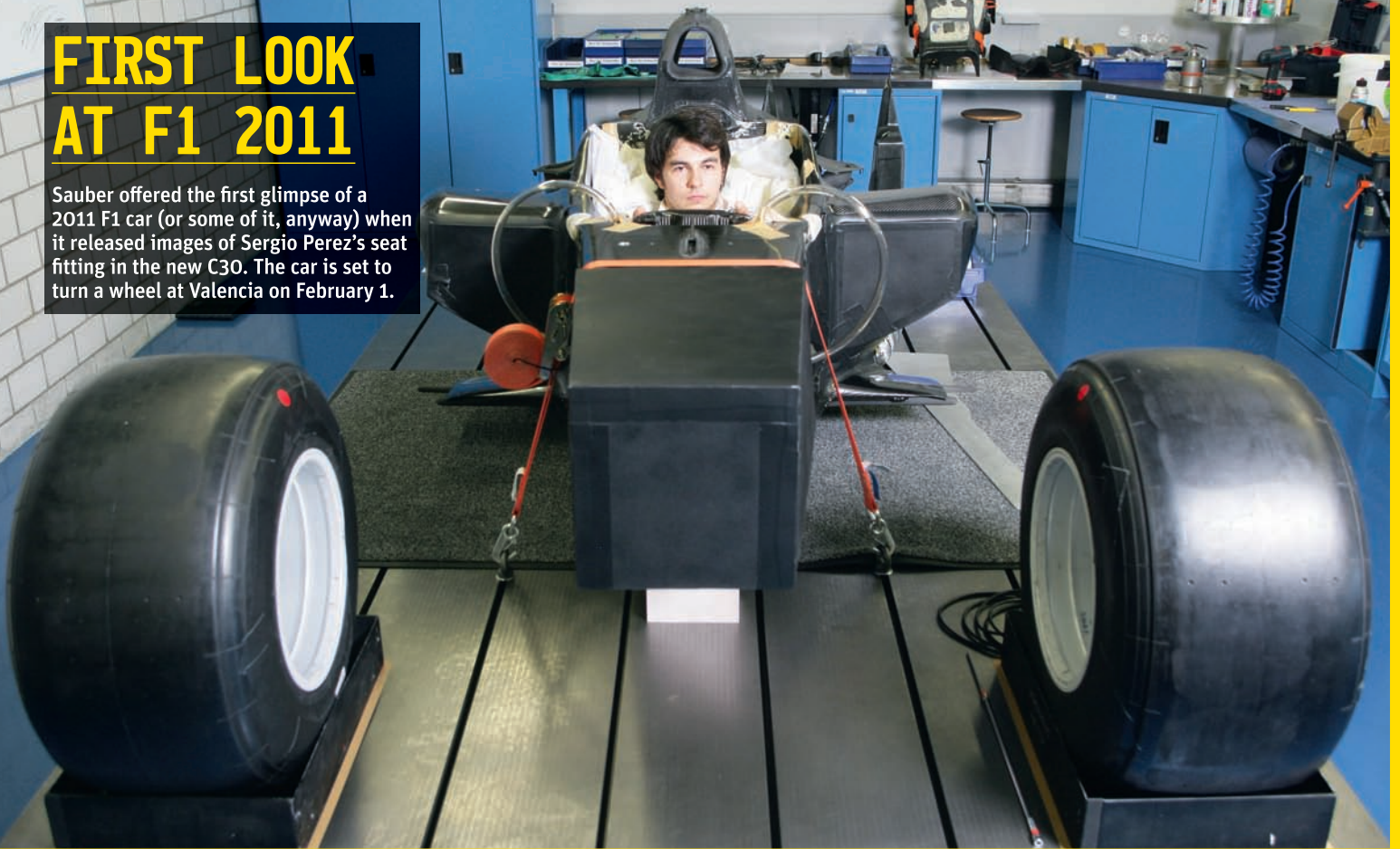
ROSBERG CLOSING ON WINLESS CENTURY

In 2011, Nico Rosberg could join the 10 drivers who have started at least 100 grands prix without winning one. The 10 are: Andrea de Cesaris (below), Nick Heidfeld, Martin Brundle, Derek Warwick, Jean-Pierre Jarier, Eddie Cheever, Pierluigi Martini, Philippe Alliot, Mika Salo and Jos Verstappen.



FIRST LOOK AT F1 2011

Sauber offered the first glimpse of a 2011 F1 car (or some of it, anyway) when it released images of Sergio Perez's seat fitting in the new C30. The car is set to turn a wheel at Valencia on February 1.



Russian GP track 'will be ready'

Winter Olympic infrastructure leads Sochi officials to declare no chance of Korean GP-style lateness

The new track that will stage Russia's inaugural grand prix in 2014 will be ready on time, according to the mayor of the city of Sochi.

Preliminary work to construct the 3.417-mile circuit, based around the Olympic Village that will be used for the 2014 winter games, is already underway and mayor Anatoly Pakhomov has no doubts that the track will be completed.

If any problem does arise, the preparations for the Winter Olympics, which will be held in February 2014, would act as an early warning. This should ensure that a repeat of the Korean Grand Prix scenario, which was in doubt to the eleventh hour, does not arise given that the new track is incorporated into the Olympic project.

"The contract is signed and is binding," Pakhomov told

AUTOSPORT. "The appropriate steps to see through its implementation and the team needed to manage that process are now being drawn up by the three layers of government that will work on the project.

"In fact, plans to alter the layout of the Olympic village to accommodate a potential F1 race were committed to back in February 2010, long before there was even direct negotiation with Mr Ecclestone. The progress on our Olympic village and other critical infrastructure projects is well within expectations and F1 deadlines will also be met."

Although there have been several plans to hold a grand prix in Russia over the past three decades, the organisers believe that this is the first time the project has had backing from both national and regional government.

Andrey Kraynik, the director general of telecommunications firm MegaFon, which has been integral in making the project happen, is confident that the backing is there to make the

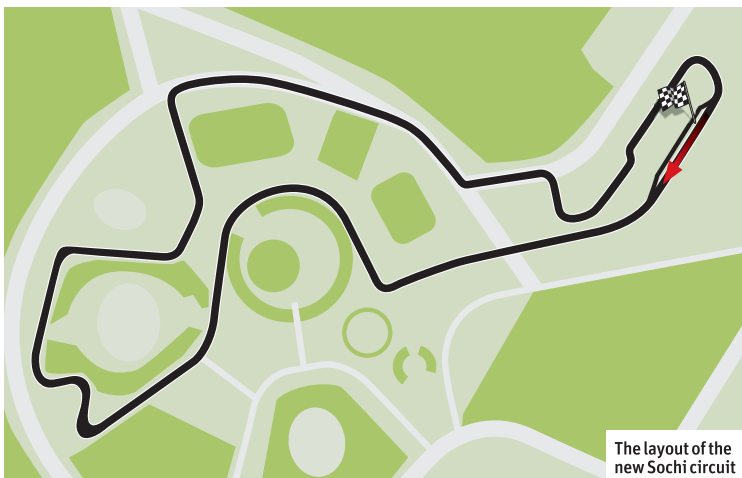
Russian Grand Prix a success.

"The main difference between this project and all other previous discussions is that all the involved parties are united in saying this is the right thing to do – the major, sponsor community, the city, the Region of Krasnodarski-Krai, as well as the federal government," Kraynik told AUTOSPORT.

"That's never been the case before. There is the money, there is the will to do it right, and a commitment to see it through.

"The government at all levels is investing in building the track, but with all of the investment already being made in the regional infrastructure [for the Winter Olympics], the cost required to develop a top-level track is nowhere near what it would otherwise have been."

The Hermann Tilke-designed track has yet to be named, and organisers have not yet settled upon a target crowd for the 2014 event. A sellout is anticipated, with the 50,000 hotel rooms in the city likely to be the limiting factor in the first year.



The layout of the new Sochi circuit

Petrov, d'Ambrosio seal F1 seats

RED BULL  SEBASTIAN VETTEL MARK WEBBER	FERRARI  FELIPE MASSA FERNANDO ALONSO	McLAREN  JENSON BUTTON LEWIS HAMILTON	MERCEDES  MICHAEL SCHUMACHER NICO ROSBERG
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TORO ROSSO  SEBASTIEN BUEMI JAIME ALGUERSUARI	TEAM LOTUS  HEIKKI KOVALAINEN JARNO TRULLI	HRT  ? TBA	VIRGIN  TIMO GLOCK JEROME D'AMBROSIO

FEW SEATS remain for the 2011 Formula 1 season after Vitaly Petrov and Jerome d'Ambrosio were confirmed as Renault and Virgin drivers respectively before Christmas.

Russian Petrov has been handed a two-year contract to continue with the rebranded Lotus Renault team, although he has been warned that he is expected to be more consistent after an erratic rookie season in 2010.

"My objective is to continue improving as a driver and to become more consistent," he said. "There were times when I made mistakes and lost points and I

know this is where I can improve.

"I think I showed that I have the speed, but I need to be consistent over the whole weekend and get the maximum from every session."

The deal means that Renault has tied down its driver line-up for the next two years, with team leader Robert Kubica also signed up until the end of the 2012 season.

After completing his Virgin deal, GP2 graduate d'Ambrosio will become the first Belgian to race in F1 since Philippe Adams contested two races for Lotus in 1994. D'Ambrosio will partner

Timo Glock after impressing the team during his Friday practice outings last season.

Team principal John Booth said: "He has secured this seat absolutely on merit and I think coupled with Timo we have the perfect blend of youth, experience, speed and potential. We can't wait to see what they can achieve together this season."

Only Force India and HRT have yet to finalise their driver line-ups. Force India is expected to confirm Paul di Resta and Adrian Sutil soon, while HRT is in negotiation with several well-funded drivers for the 2011 season.

Countdown to 2011 tests begins

FORMULA 1 teams have less than one month to complete work on their 2011 cars before pre-season testing kicks off at Valencia on February 1-3.

The majority of teams are set to hit the track for the first time on the first of 15 pre-season test days, which will be their only

opportunity to run outside of grand prix weekends before the end of the season.

Testing mileage is expected to be particularly valuable this year, with teams having to adapt to running KERS – many for the first time, having shunned the energy-recovery system when it

was first used in 2009 – and the new adjustable rear wing, designed to increase overtaking.

TESTING DATES	
February 1-3	Valencia
February 10-13	Jerez
February 18-21	Barcelona
March 3-6	Bahrain

THIS WEEK IN F1



RED BULL Mark Webber has described his relationship with Sebastian Vettel as "good now". The pair had a lengthy chat after the season to "do a better job without any friction".



McLAREN Team principal Martin Whitmarsh is set to be confirmed as the Formula 1 Teams' Association chairman for a second successive year. Originally, FOTA planned to rotate the role on an annual basis.



FERRARI The Scuderia's 2011 car has passed its mandatory crash tests. It is set to be launched at Maranello in late January prior to the first pre-season test at Valencia on February 1.



MERCEDES Michael Schumacher is set to become the first 42-year-old to race in Formula 1 since Jacques Laffite in 1986. He celebrated his birthday on Monday.



RENAULT Clive Chapman, the son of Lotus founder Colin, has backed new Renault backer Group Lotus's right to use the iconic marque's name in F1. "The Chapman family is looking forward to continuing to give its support to Group Lotus," said Chapman Jr.



WILLIAMS Rubens Barrichello believes that the return of KERS will give the team an advantage next year, despite the team never having raced such a system. "We do think we are strong, because we are developing it," he said.



FORCE INDIA Vitantonio Liuzzi is set to reach a pay-off agreement with the team, which had a contract to run him in 2011. The Italian is still believed to be hoping to remain in Formula 1 this season.



SAUBER Kamui Kobayashi is confident that the 2011 Sauber will be an improvement on 2010's C29. "I think our car is going in the right direction for the new regulations," he said.



TORO ROSSO Team principal Franz Tost has denied rumours in the Swiss media that the team has been sold to Arab investors. The team is believed to be up for sale, but only if the buyer gives a commitment to keep the team based in Faenza.



LOTUS Team principal Tony Fernandes has backed the switch to four-cylinder 1.6-litre powerplants in 2013. "We've now got the scenario of F1 being very relevant to the car industry," he said.



HRT Team owner Jose Ramon Carabante insists that the team is being patient in finalising its 2011 driver line-up. "There are five or six drivers we are talking to and we are in no hurry," he said.



VIRGIN Lucas di Grassi, who raced for the team last season, is now relying on securing a third-driver role to remain in F1. The Brazilian had been in contention to retain his race seat at Virgin, but lost out to Jerome d'Ambrosio.



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MPH Mark Hughes

AUTOSPORT grand prix editor

Playing with the weather systems is the latest possibility as F1 treads a delicate path between artifice and nature. We can only dream what the cars would look like had the techies been unshackled

Sitting in the Yas Marina circuit's press room during last season's final Formula 1 race weekend, a couple of hours before the cars were out for the first time, we were amazed to see it was raining heavily. The Porsche Supercup cars were leaving great rooster-tails of water, headlights blazing through the gloom, wipers on full speed. This was the desert, surely? Then someone mentioned that a race had been postponed here only a few weeks earlier because of the rain.

It has recently been confirmed that experiments in artificially inducing rainfall have been ongoing in Abu Dhabi. A few days ago

the air to create cloud formation. A rainstorm duly follows. This has profound environmental implications in that it opens the possibility of growing vital forest in previously arid areas.

But, putting the important stuff aside for a moment, think what it might mean for F1. Race reached a bit of a stalemate? Any moisture in the air? Switch on the ionisers! Pity it couldn't have been done during the grand prix itself, preferably once Ferrari had committed its tactical error. Fernando Alonso would surely have been better able to claw his way back through the field had it been raining – and maybe even Mark Webber could have somehow got himself back into contention.

The new rain technology could be the easiest solution to the only real downside of the Yas Marina circuit – its lack of overtaking zones. It's a plus point of the 2011 calendar that the season finale has returned to Interlagos, a track much more suited to a final-round showdown, and where you don't need trick new technology to make it rain at fantastically random moments.

Here's a circuit that almost by chance has the perfect layout for inducing drama, its contours formed by the lakes that lie beneath the ground. Back in the late 1940s, before the population of Sao Paulo had exploded, this place was out in the sticks and two guys from the local motor club thought it the ideal venue to build a track – a place the members could go and make some noise without disturbing too many people. Contrast that with the super-financed, scientific way in which new venues such as Yas

Marina come to life and it's clear something vital is being missed in the modern creation process. For all the research and numbers, we still haven't properly understood how to create tracks where cars can pass.

So instead, with the combination of adjustable rear wings and KERS, has F1 in 2011 artificially created cars in which overtaking will be too easy? Will they even be passing and repassing around a dry Yas Marina or Hungaroring, and will the moves cease to mean very much?

Artificially-created circuit contours, artificially-induced overtaking and now artificially-induced rain: the sport has long since passed the point in which such things were naturally in equilibrium and it's now all about using technology to find the delicate balancing point that makes the racing appealing for the casual TV audience but still meaningful for the purist. So that who wins and how is still a matter of merit.

That it has to be controlled in this way is a necessity to keep the whole thing viable, but there is still a regret that we will never see how the cars would have evolved if left simply to chase the objective of being ever-faster. Adrian Newey's virtual-reality X1 Red Bull gives a glimpse of just how sensational those cars would have looked and performed – a car in which Sebastian Vettel took a 'virtual' 20s off his Suzuka pole time on his first flying lap and which looks like we'd have expected F1 cars of the future to have looked 30 years ago, given the evolution up to that point. Wonder how fast it would have been in the artificial rain... ☼

Red Bull X1: 190mph average at Suzuka!



The Sunday Times reported that, while the local weather centre had predicted no rainstorms for 2010, there were in fact as many as 52 – and that this was all through a technology project initiated by the government in which charged ions are released into the atmosphere when there is enough moisture in

“Race in stalemate? Moisture in the air? Switch on the ionisers!”



Sato has raced with Lotus/KV; Rossiter (inset) could in '11

INDYCAR Rossiter's IndyCar chance

Role as Lotus development driver could lead to IndyCar road-course outings in 2011

Ex-Formula 1 test driver James Rossiter could race in the IndyCar Series this season as part of a deal that has made him official test-and-development driver for Lotus.

Rossiter, who was on the books at the BAR/Honda F1 team in 2005-08, has been part of the British sportscar manufacturer's GT programmes since September and has contested the Britcar 24 Hours and the Vallelunga 6 Hours in Lotus Evoras. Now his involvement with

the marque has been cemented with a test contract that could encompass race outings with Lotus's IndyCar partner, KV Racing Technology.

Lotus Motorsport director Claudio Berro said that he hoped Rossiter can be part of the company's IndyCar programme in 2011.

"I would like to have James racing for us in IndyCar," he said. "It could happen this season, though most likely only on the road and street tracks."

Berro explained that one possibility was for Rossiter and an unnamed US driver to share a seat at KV, which is expected to race under the Lotus KV Racing banner in 2011.

"We would like to have an American driver and we have a name, but we do not have the full budget," said Berro. "We could split the drive in half; one driver could do the ovals and one the road courses."

Rossiter, who tested for KV last February, explained that both he and

Lotus were "working hard to find the partners" necessary to make the IndyCar deal happen.

The primary focus for Rossiter in 2011 will be developing the new Lotus T125, which has been billed as the ultimate track day car, and taking part in a number of long-distance races in the GT-Endurance and GT4-spec Evoras.

Rossiter said that it was "great to be back with a manufacturer" and was looking forward to using his "F1 experience developing the T125".



MIRALLES/GETTY

Duno: unpopular with the likes of Franchitti

INDYCAR

Indy chief wants slow drivers out

INDYCAR BOSS Randy Bernard has declared that there will be no space on the grid for slow drivers if the series continues to develop at its current rate.

While there was strong competition at the front of the field last year, the series attracted criticism over some of its slower drivers, with Milka Duno the main

target. The Venezuelan was placed on probation after she was repeatedly parked for failing to keep pace, as well as complaints from rivals about blocking.

Bernard told speed.com that he aimed to raise the overall standard of the grid.

"Quality is what we're aiming for," he

said. "I'm embarrassed when drivers who don't belong in our field are able to make it in. That tells me we need to have a stronger field from top to bottom, so that even the person who starts last is one heck of a driver. I want the best drivers, so we don't have to accept those who aren't."

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IN BRIEF



VAINIO PROMOTED TO GP3

Formula Renault Eurocup ace Aaro Vainio will remain with Tech 1 Racing for his step up to GP3 this season. The 17-year-old Finn (above) was fourth in last year's Eurocup.

FARFUS, ENGE IN DUBAI

BMW touring car ace Augusto Farfus will race in next weekend's Dubai 24 Hours. The Brazilian will share a Need For Speed BMW Z4 GT3 with Tommy Milner, Claudia Hürtgen and Edward Sandström. Aston Martin GT star Tomas Enge has landed a drive; the Czech will race a Gravity Mosler MT900 alongside Vincent Radermecker, Loris de Sordi, Eric Lux and Renault F1 team luminary Gerard Lopez.

BELL, SUGDEN FOR DAYTONA 24

British sportscar stalwarts Rob Bell and Tim Sugden have joined the Paul Miller Racing Porsche team for this month's Daytona 24 Hours. They will share the team's 911 GT3 Cup with US racers Bryce Miller and Bryan Sellers.

DTM

Premat looks to BMW

FORMER AUDI driver Alexandre Premat has targeted a drive with BMW when the manufacturer returns to the DTM in 2012.

Premat (below) was fired by Audi ahead of the DTM finale last season, after he ran the New York Marathon while he was supposed to be recovering from a huge crash at Adria.

The Frenchman is currently without a drive for 2011, but he hopes that his experience in the DTM will appeal to BMW.

"My aim is to get back into the DTM in 2012," Premat told AUTOSPORT. "I like the championship, I like the cars,

I like the platform. I think it suits my driving style.

"There is only BMW coming in for now, so I will get in contact with them. I have four years of experience, so maybe it's good for them to have a driver who has already driven in DTM."

Premat added that he hoped to race in sportscars this year while he hunts for a DTM drive for 2012.

"I'm working to find a good seat," he said. "There is nothing in DTM for 2011, so I'm working to drive in sportscars. There are still some good drives available, so we are talking."



AUTOSPORT SAYS...

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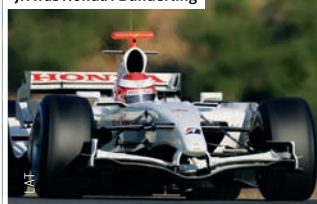
You could pick worse starts to the year than that of James Rossiter.

It's well over two years since he linked up with Franck Montagny to win the Detroit round of the American Le Mans Series in 2008 at the wheel of an Andretti Green Racing Acura LMP2, the last of three events that he contested that season. Since then he's done a couple of endurance races, tested an IndyCar and... not much else. His efforts to get himself onto last year's F1 grid were rewarded with the offer of a contract for a race seat, but the fact that the team doing the offering was USF1 tells you all you need to know about how well that worked out.

Previously, he'd been part of Honda's roster and had test outings with BAR, Honda and Super Aguri between 2005 and '08, but when the Japanese manufacturer's F1 programme went the way of velour tracksuits, so did that aspect of Rossiter's career.

All in all, he's been a hard driver to keep track of. His talent has long been recognised – he was a highly-regarded finalist in the 2003 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Awards – but it's easy to fall off the radar when you are not regularly strapped into a seat. Who knows where things could lead with Lotus, but the possibility of a few IndyCar outings is something a lot of other drivers would happily trade him for.

JR was Honda F1 underling



F3 EURO SERIES

VW backs Euro future

VOLKSWAGEN MOTORSPORT boss Kris Nissen believes that the F3 Euro Series will retain its prestige in 2011, despite the question marks over the championship's continued viability.

Shrinking grids – caused in part by the emergence of the GP3 Series in 2010 – and the loss of blue-riband squad ART Grand Prix for 2011 had led to speculation over the series' future. But Nissen, whose engines power the leading Signature team, said that the series' track record, combined with the FIA's introduction of the F3 International Cup, were cause for optimism.

"The Euro Series has brought the most drivers from Formula 3 to F1 in the last few years," Nissen told AUTOSPORT. "Which F3 series has made the most professional drivers? The Euro Series. Which F3 series has the most spectators? The Euro Series. Which F3 series had the best TV? The Euro Series.

"So I am not worried about it. I think they will have a strong set-up for 2011. And now, with the cooperation from the FIA, it will stay as the top F3 series."

GP2 SERIES

Addax, ART seats filled

THE 2011 GP2 Series grid continues to take shape, with three more top seats having been filled during the break.

Frenchman Charles Pic, who took one win during his rookie season, will race with Barwa Addax. He will be joined at the team by Dutch GP2 veteran Giedo van der Garde, who claimed four podiums with Barwa Addax in 2010.

Meanwhile, ART Grand Prix has confirmed that French Ferrari protege Jules Bianchi will remain with the team for a second season. GP3 champion Esteban Gutierrez will complete the multiple championship-winning

squad's line-up. Both teams will field the same line-ups in the Asia Series.

● The 2011 GP2 calendar has been confirmed. The main series will open with two two-day tests at Silverstone (April 5-6) and Barcelona (April 19-20). Races will be run at Istanbul Park (May 7-8), Barcelona (May 21-22), Monte Carlo (May 27-28), Valencia (June 25-26), Silverstone (July 9-10), Nurburgring (July 23-24), Hungaroring (July 30-31), Spa (August 27-28) and Monza (September 10-11). Abu Dhabi, which was on the 2010 schedule, is back on the Asia Series.



Addax's line-up is sorted

BIG NUMBER

4.185

The average gap in seconds between Milka Duno and the polesitter in qualifying during the 2010 IndyCar season. It doesn't take into account the five rounds where she was parked or failed to register a time.

ALMS

Aston for full ALMS

Pickett's team commits to British LMP1 leviathan for US campaign

An Aston Martin Racing LMP1 car will race full time in the American Le Mans Series for the first time this season.

Greg Pickett's team, which won two ALMS races with a Porsche RS Spyder as CytoSport in 2010, will field one of the Lola-based Aston Martin Racing coupes that have competed at the Le Mans 24 Hours for the past two seasons. The factory-assisted car will run under the 'Muscle Milk AMR' banner in the nine-round series.

The California-based squad, which is being branded an official partner team by AMR, opted to run an Aston after Porsche decided not to extend the competitive life of the RS Spyder. Pickett said that running the Aston was "the best of all the possibilities" available to the team.

Klaus Graf, who will race the car with Pickett, said: "We were spoiled a bit with the RS Spyder, but in terms of performance and reliability, the

Aston was the best choice for the future. We felt the deal with AMR had all the right ingredients."

Graf said that remaining in the Porsche camp and stepping down to a 911 GT3-RSR was among the

possibilities for 2011. He said that the team had decided to remain in the premier category because Pickett "loves the challenge of prototypes" and because it "offers the chance to continue to fight for overall victories".

Old-style prototypes such as the AMR coupe are allowed to race on under Le Mans rules, despite the introduction of new regulations for 2011. Their performance will be restricted down to the level of the new generation of prototypes.

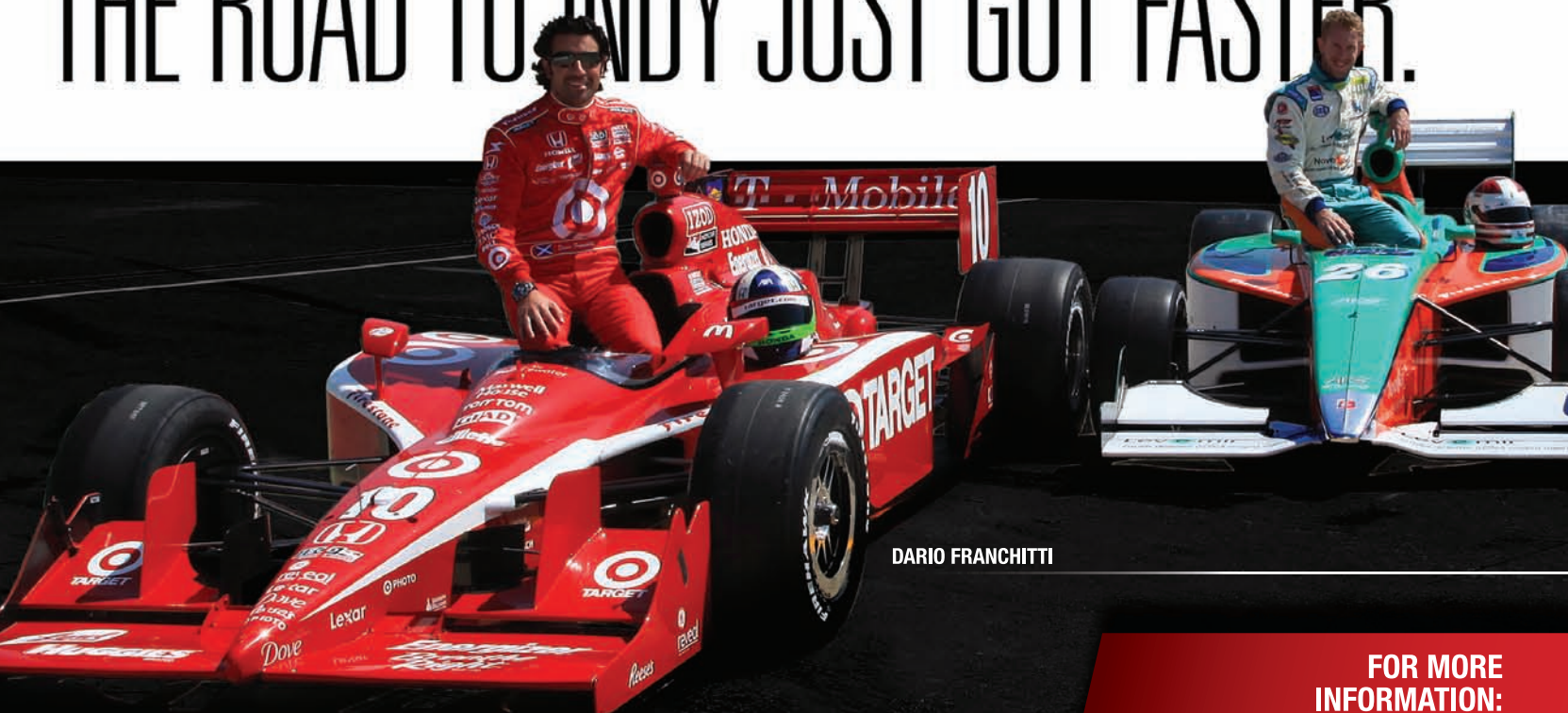
The Muscle Milk team is due to take delivery of the car next week and run it for the first time at the official ALMS test at Sebring in early February. The deal with AMR could include the loan of a factory driver for the long-distance races.



Aston leads CytoSport's old Porsche at Sebring

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WTCC

Door open to all S2000s in WTCC



'Oldies' can race on through 2011

THE WORLD Touring Car Championship has confirmed that all Super 2000 cars will be eligible for 2011, meaning that the older-spec 2.0-litre cars will be permitted to race alongside the newer 1.6-litre turbos.

Minimum weights have also been set. The weights for the newer cars have been fixed at 1150kg for front-wheel drive and 1170kg for rear-wheel drive, while limits for older-spec

cars have been set at 1150kg for normally-aspirated FWD, 1155kg for normally-aspirated RWD and 1170kg for FWD turbos.

The WTCC will be joined this year by a new endurance series that will run on the support bill at six European rounds. Titled the European Production Series, it will be open to SEAT Leon Supercopa cars and various specifications of touring cars and one-makes.

LE MANS SERIES

Strakka targets LMP1 return

THE BRITISH Strakka Racing prototype team has revealed aspirations to return to the LMP1 class after re-signing Jonny Kane on a three-year deal.

The deal means that last year's LMP2 class-winning team at the Le Mans 24 Hours now has Kane and Danny Watts under contract until the end of 2013 and '12 respectively. Strakka team manager and technical director Piers Phillips said that he hoped the team would be back in LMP1 before their contracts expire.

"It is not usual for a team like us to have guys on such long contracts, but Strakka is a long-term project," said Phillips. "Ultimately we want to go back to P1, hopefully in 2012, and we want continuity for when we do that."

Phillips explained that Strakka, which ran an LMP1 Zytek in 2009, hoped to continue its relationship with Honda Performance Development for its projected move from LMP2 to P1. It will continue to use its chassis and engines in LMP2 in the coming season.



Kane, Strakka in for the long haul

Kane was described by Phillips as the "unsung hero" of Strakka's 2010 LMP2 campaign, which included an overall Le Mans Series victory at the Hungaroring.

"Danny got a lot of the plaudits, but Jonny did an excellent job," said Phillips. "He brings a lot of stability and balance to the team."

Kane, 37, said he was "thrilled

that Strakka has the faith and confidence to sign me up for the next three years".

Strakka will attempt to win the 2011 LMP2 LMS title with the unchanged line-up of Watts, Kane and team owner Nick Leventis. They will drive the same HPD chassis as in 2010, now powered by the new twin-turbo V6 powerplant.



INDYCAR's Mazda Road to Indy driver development ladder is proud to have recently announced **\$2,500,000** in scholarships to advance entry-level open-wheel drivers and teams to the top of the IZOD IndyCar® Series and the Indianapolis 500®. The ladder includes the **IZOD IndyCar Series**, **Firestone Indy Lights**, **Star Mazda Championship** presented by Goodyear and **USF2000 National Championship** presented by Cooper Tires.

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Dakar Rally looks set to move in '12

DAKAR

Dakar move to tempt VW

Expected plan to reroute South American event may keep German marque on board

Despite one million spectators turning out to wave off this year's Dakar from its Buenos Aires start, it is widely expected the event will shift to Brazil and Peru for 2012 – with the move possibly delaying Volkswagen's entry into the World Rally Championship.

Speculation over whether the Dakar would return to Africa for 2012 has been rife, but sources close to event organiser the ASO are now adamant a fresh agreement has been made to keep the marathon rally in South America. The choice of a Rio de Janeiro

start is a shrewd one from the ASO, with Brazil being a key market to Volkswagen, the only manufacturer committed to this year's Dakar.

Argentina and Chile, home to Dakar since 2009, are likely to be included in next year's route, with the event running from Rio through Paraguay, Argentina, Chile and into Peru for a finish in Lima.

Volkswagen has been widely tipped to end its Dakar programme following this year's event, in favour of a switch to the WRC. The German manufacturer is running the third evolution of its Race

Touareg, the car which has won both South American Dakars, and motorsport director Kris Nissen has previously admitted the firm could run the current car in the 2012 Dakar.

Nissen said: "If they [the ASO] move the Dakar to other countries, in South America, or North America, we trust them, and we believe in them. We do not believe that [moving to other countries] can be a reason to stop. We will only have to evaluate the market, and how interesting it is for Volkswagen to be there. Any

countries where we are selling cars are very interesting. I am confident the ASO will bring an attractive race for 2012.

"From our side, we have been investigating and researching for quite a long time the World Rally Championship, and we have all of the results and the facts. We are very pleased with what we see, we really think it can be a very good alternative. The board members will take a decision in the beginning of 2011 regarding the strategy for the next years. Personally, I believe the choice will be between a long-term commitment to the Dakar or a long-term commitment to WRC."

Nobody from the ASO was available for comment on the host countries for next year's Dakar when AUTOSPORT closed for press this week.

IRC

Rally Scotland eyes merger

RALLY OF SCOTLAND officials are holding crisis talks with other events in the hope a merger will safeguard Britain's Intercontinental Rally Challenge round.

Senior organisers of the Perth-based event met with the organisers of the nearby Colin McRae Forest Stages Rally before Christmas, but were told an alliance between the two was unworkable. Rally of Scotland has lost money for both years and joining up with another event is seen as its only lifeline.

The RoS organisers are ready to consider a date change in an effort to source a partner event. A move to the spring might work better for the IRC, with increased speculation surrounding Rally de los Alerces – a new round in Argentina in March.

RoS may need to merge to survive



Should the South American event be dropped, the IRC would have a gap of almost four months between the Monte Carlo Rally in January and the Tour de Corse in May.

The Scottish Rally Championship Granite City Rally, which runs on April 16, could provide a potential alternative. Another April attraction for RoS would be the potential to avoid a clash with the McRae event that runs through the same stages.

IRC

Kubica denied Monte Carlo entry

RENAULT FORMULA 1 star Robert Kubica will not take part in this month's Monte Carlo Rally.

For the second year in succession the Polish driver's attempts to get into the French Alpine stages have come unstuck – last year it was due to an engine failure on the prologue stage, but this time it is reported to be a contractual issue with his full-time employer. Kubica had been looking to drive a Super 2000 car from a manufacturer other than Renault.

Sources within the organising Automobile Club de Monaco have confirmed the 2008 Canadian GP winner will not start this year's opening Intercontinental Rally Challenge round.

On the eve of this year's Monte, clerk of the course Rene Isoart has stated that he sees no quick return to the World Rally Championship for the event, despite FIA president Jean Todt's determination to return

the event to the WRC calendar.

"I get the impression that Todt is not listening to what we want," said Isoart. "He wants the Monte Carlo Rally to come back and that's it. Our philosophy is to unite the highest number of amateurs – in the WRC, that's just not possible."

This year's Monte Carlo Rally centenary starts on January 19 with 100 entries, all of which have been free.



Kubica won't contest this month's Monte Carlo Rally



A MAN WHO NEEDS SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT

Michael Schumacher's comeback season was not a resounding success, but the signs show that things could improve in 2011. MARK HUGHES assesses

There were a couple of little moments towards the end of last season that suggested that Michael Schumacher may – *just may* – be able to turn around his so-far underwhelming comeback.

He reckons something clicked towards the end of his error-strewn race in Singapore, some sort of breakthrough made in how to drive that crazy Mercedes. It was too late to rescue that race but, in the remaining four events, there was a definite upturn: racing wheel-to-wheel with team-mate Nico Rosberg in Japan; a solid fourth-place finish in Korea; outqualifying Rosberg in Brazil and Abu Dhabi.

At Suzuka he'd had the upper hand over Rosberg throughout practice, but into qualifying his f-duct malfunctioned, not for the first time, to leave him behind the younger German on the grid for the 13th time in 16 races. It was this that caused

Schumacher's facade to finally crack. In his near-17-year F1 career, up to this point, he'd never so much as given a raised eyebrow of public criticism about his team. Now, on the grid, he explained to Martin Brundle live on TV what his problem had been and how it hadn't been the first time this year. In the German press last week he was still vocal about it: that he seemed to get a disproportionate amount of the team's technical problems, that the team should publicly acknowledge as much. It was actually probably a good sign: it showed that he cared, that the competitive fire still burned. Because for much of the year Schumacher was apparently doing a very good impersonation of a guy just enjoying being back, even if it was as just one of the pack rather than The Man.

The combination of those two things – that he may finally have understood these cars, and that he has the competitive fire in his belly – suggest that in 2011 maybe, just maybe, Schumacher can once again be a serious force. ▶

◀ Team boss Ross Brawn acknowledges the technical hitches Michael suffered. “Yes, it was unfortunate,” he says. “On several occasions he seemed to have the upper hand, but going into qualifying he’d suffer a problem with the car. Basically our f-duct was much too sensitive. Literally a change in the wind direction could make it not function and he did suffer disproportionately.”

That’s a long way from explaining the entire shortfall to Rosberg – no two ways about it, Schumacher’s overall performance was mediocre by the white-hot competitive standards of F1 – but Brawn takes some encouragement from his late-season upturn: “If either one or the other of the drivers had shown a significant advantage over the other at the end of the year, then we’d have been disappointed with the performance of one of them. But, as it turned out, they were very evenly matched for the last few races and that was a highly encouraging sign.”

Schumacher tells it that the control Bridgestones didn’t offer him enough front grip to drive the way he naturally wants to, that they didn’t allow him to maintain high momentum into the corners the way he used to. Much, therefore, seemed to hang on the traits of the new Pirellis in the Abu Dhabi tests the week after the last race there. Rosberg drove on the first day and his initial comments didn’t seem to bode well for Michael. “They’re worse,” he said. “If anything the front tyres are weaker than the Bridgestones.” But Schumacher was far less negative after trying them on the second day, feeling they were an improvement. Just how were the tyres behaving on the Merc?

“There was a difference between the two days,” Brawn confirms. “On the first day the cars weren’t attuned to the Pirellis, with set-ups derived from the Bridgestones. We came up with a better solution for the second day. There was also the fact that on the first day there was still a lot of Bridgestone rubber down from the young-driver tests. The exact tyre pattern is still not totally clear, and I think it will be like this for much of the year as Pirelli build up their references.”

“There will be races where there will probably have to be multiple pitstops, and that will liven it up. But in terms of how they might suit one car or driver compared to another, I don’t think it’s possible to tell at the moment. Certainly, I think that the traits of our car are going to be more influential than those of the tyres, and I’m quite optimistic about that. We will have a much better range of chassis balance available to us than with the 2010 car, and that can only help.”

Essentially last year’s MGP Wo1 lacked front-end grip, regardless of the

Running off-track at start of Australian GP



GILHAM/GETTY

tyres. Even when the drivers were full throttle through high-speed corners, the video overlays to the Red Bulls revealed the Merc to be losing big chunks of speed as it scrubbed off speed with understeer, while the Red Bull retained its balance and hence its momentum. “It was the balance from entry to mid-corner that was the problem,” says Brawn, “and if you tuned the mid-corner understeer out it became too unstable on entry. Michael struggled particularly with this on the slow corners. Through the fast ones he was as fast, sometimes faster, than Nico. But you’re in the slow corners longer.”

Schumacher seemed to have trouble accepting the car’s limitations into the slow corners, would attack them in a way that the neater Rosberg was showing was inappropriate. That much was readily understandable. What wasn’t was seeing Michael seemingly unable to adapt as the season went on – at least until that moment of truth between the incidents in Singapore.

For 2011 Schumacher gets a new car that Brawn describes as much more

aggressive in its design, with greater set-up flexibility built into its concept, new tyres that *may* not be so unsuited to his driving style – and a year’s head-start in understanding how the latest generation of cars need to be driven. What he also gets is a new race engineer, as Andrew Shovlin has been promoted to overall charge of both cars. Although it had yet to be confirmed at the time of writing, the expectation was that Mark Slade – ex-Hakkinen and Raikkonen at McLaren, of late at Renault – would be Schumacher’s engineer.

Having left the party, the intensity, the level of control he enjoyed, then stayed away for three years, it’s difficult to see how he could ever again become ‘The Man’, especially at 42. His best days are definitely behind him but, whereas previously that realisation might have been demotivating, now the realistic challenge of making his comeback a success – with success defined as proving fully competitive with a glittering younger generation – is surely motivation enough. On paper, that looks feasible. ❧



Did Schuey rediscover his mojo in Singapore?

MASON/GETTY



Winning the Race of Champions with Vettel

BONGARTS/GETTY



Chasing Sutil's Force India at Monza

DUNBAR/LAT

TRACKSIDE SCHU

HOW SCHUMACHER USED TO LOOK

The Ferrari would turn in earlier and more gradually, staying on the power longer than those taking a more geometrical line. He'd brake late and at the same time increase the steering lock. As the curve unfolded, so he'd reduce the brake pressure and the rear of the car would pivot around the outer-front so that it was pointed at the apex as the braking was completed, ready for full throttle. In doing this he'd achieve the seemingly impossible of fast in/fast out.



ETHERINGTON/LAT

HOW SCHUMACHER LOOKED IN 2010

The front end of the Merc was unable to support his technique of simultaneous braking and cornering. He used conventional lines but an aggressive approach in the braking zone, braking as late – maybe later – than anyone. But between there and the apex of slow corners it would get messy. Sometimes it was as if he was still trying to get the car to pivot around the outer-front in the way he seemed reluctant to apply more steering lock. From there he'd be wrestling the car.



ETHERINGTON/LAT

Nico Rosberg - ready to deliver

Misunderstood man

Nico Rosberg became the first of Michael Schumacher's team-mates to beat him over a season, but has yet to convince everyone that he is race-winning material. EDD STRAW caught up with him to talk about perceptions, being team-mate to a legend and expectations for 2011

Do you feel that you are under-appreciated as a driver?

That's probably the case in the media, but I am not really concerned about that. For me, it's important that I have a better car next season and I am able to win races. Career-wise, it is important that the people who make decisions in F1 see my performance and I think that, to them, my performance has been evident this year. They have seen that I have done a good job.

From the outside, it's difficult to make a definitive judgement about your speed because recent team-mates – even Michael Schumacher – have not shown ultimate pace. Does that make it difficult for you to judge your own performance?

I understand where you are coming from, but it's not a problem because I am confident in my ability and my performance level. I strongly believe that I've done a very good job and I can do well in the future.

Is the perception from some quarters that you are a 'pretty boy' driver that some don't take as seriously as they should a problem?

No, it doesn't really worry me. But also I don't hear it.

I don't particularly like the nicknames – one in particular I do not like [he means Britney]. But other than that I am not too bothered!

You raced for Williams for four years before switching to Mercedes in 2010. What has the change of environment allowed you to improve?

I have stepped up my game and one of the reasons for that has been the team change. It has been very good for my career, and for me personally. It's always a problem if you settle into a norm and stop questioning things. A change can make you open your eyes, so from that side it is positive and I have improved. It's a continual process. Ross Brawn is someone who will praise you for the good things and criticise you for things that can be done better.

Do you head into the new season expecting to win races?

That's the mindset, definitely. It's not easy for us, because from where we were in 2010, it's not so straightforward to make that jump because everyone else has a head start. It's difficult, but it's achievable. We need to wait and see.

How difficult is it to have been in F1 for so long and not won any races?

It's strange to think about it. All through my career getting to F1, I won in everything, but I've been in F1 for five years now and I haven't won a single race. And I'm not sure how many races I've done.

It's 89...

You're joking? I've not looked at my numbers in a long time. I can't believe that I'll hit 100 grands prix in the middle of 2011. That's a weird feeling.

Does Singapore 2009, when you got a penalty for crossing the line exiting the pits, stand out as the race win that got away?

When I was at Williams for all those years, I had a mediocre car and if you look at the big picture, finishing

seventh in that year's championship was a good result for that car. It's funny to think that I finished in the same position with Mercedes because I'd never have thought that before the season. But I definitely would not say that there were missed opportunities with Williams.

Given that he retired four years ago, do you ever find it strange being Michael Schumacher's team-mate?

Of course! Sometimes I turn around and ask is this really happening because sometimes it can feel a bit strange! But it has been a great experience and a good working environment in the team.

Does it matter to you that you became the first team-mate to beat him over a full season?

It does because he is one of the best of all time and in terms of the comparison with my team-mate I have exceeded my expectations. But I was always confident that I would be on a level playing field.

Why were you faster than Michael for most of last year? Was it down to Michael's problems with the car's lack of front-end grip?

A lot of the things that have been said in the press are rubbish – for example that he's not been able to cope with the front tyres because if anything I'm the one who struggles more with that and always have. The few times that Kazuki Nakajima beat me at Williams was because we were really struggling with the front of the car and I can't drive with a lot of understeer. But I did a good job in terms of driving and set-up.

Do you expect this pattern to continue in the new season?

I don't know about that, but I have every reason to expect a strong season from myself in 2011. Whether Michael's level with me or a few tenths behind, I believe that I will have a strong year. ☘

GILHAM/GETTY





The German is now ready to win in F1

ETHERINGTON/LAT

“I have stepped up my game. The team change has been very good for my career and for me personally”

Nico Rosberg



FERRARO/LAT

Rosberg spent most of 2010 ahead of Schuey

MATESCHITZ

Red Bull owner Dietrich Mateschitz lets his brand – and his team – do the talking and keeps a low profile. But who is F1's newest title-winning team owner?

By GERHARD KUNTSCHICK

When Dietrich Mateschitz decided to bring Red Bull into Formula 1, it was clear that he wouldn't be satisfied with simply being a sponsor.

That was in early 1995, and Red Bull was already involved in personal sponsorship deals with leading Austrian racers, from Gerhard Berger and Karl Wendlinger (in F1) to Raimund Baumschlager (rallying) via Dieter Quester (touring and sportscars).

Today, Red Bull not only owns (instead of just sponsoring) the 2010 world championship-winning F1 team, but football teams in Salzburg and New York, the ice hockey team in Salzburg, Red Bull Racing Team in NASCAR and the Red Bull Air Race series, which was recently suspended for safety reasons.

"When we invest money in marketing tools, we must be sure of a



THOMPSON/GETTY

certain return on investment and of control in what is going on," explains Mateschitz. "Therefore we started with Sauber as a partner and co-owner."

Mateschitz acquired a 33 per cent stake in Sauber Motorsport AG, which was soon increased to 66 per cent when Mateschitz took over the stakes of Liechtenstein-based Fritz Kaiser Group. Though Mateschitz remained majority owner of Sauber until the conclusion of the 10th season of the partnership in 2004, the management control and decision were still in the hands of Peter Sauber. All decisions were taken unanimously, though in 2001 a rift seemed to be near with a disagreement drivers: Sauber brought Kimi Raikkonen into F1 from Formula Renault, whereas Mateschitz's motorsport advisor Helmut Marko wanted to run Red Bull-backed F3000 racer Enrique Bernoldi. At this time, Mateschitz began to think about taking full control of a team.

"The possibility had to be the right one," says the 66-year-old billionaire from Styria, who has lived in Salzburg for several decades. "When Jaguar was up for sale [at the end of 2004] it was the moment we had waited for. We had to take it step by step, but the plan and the schedule were quite clear."

In only the sixth season of Red Bull Racing, both F1 championships came to Milton Keynes. The recruitment of Adrian Newey in 2006 was the key move, and came just four years after Bobby Rahal narrowly failed to bring him to the team in its Jaguar form.

Mateschitz's further strategy was based on the value of customer teams. He bought Minardi from Paul Stoddart in autumn 2005 and set up Scuderia Toro Rosso as the junior Red Bull team to run proteges of Marko's young-driver programme, which had started with the ex-F1 driver's F3000 team in 1999.

When Sebastian Vettel took the chequered flag in Abu Dhabi to win the 2010 world championship, Mateschitz was overwhelmed with emotion.

"I was incredibly nervous throughout the race – it was a thriller," he says. "Then the feeling and emotions were exceptional, when we celebrated and we heard the Austrian anthem on the podium."

He even forgot his personal attitude – to make an interview with him mission impossible. He agreed to talk to Austrian radio and TV, Germany's RTL and, infamously, with Eddie Jordan on the BBC!

Mateschitz is a real sports and racing enthusiast, but he doesn't let that cloud his judgment. He applies the same philosophy as he does in his Fuschl-based drinks company, which achieved another record year in 2010, selling 4.4 billion cans worldwide at a



Delight with Vettel and team boss Horner



Early days of Red Bull team, with Klien in car



Mateschitz supported Webber



The boss speaks to his troops

turnover of €4.2billion. He demands the maximum effort from everyone and, if he is convinced that his people are doing a top job, it can be theirs for life. World champion Vettel is the crowning glory of the programme, but it is well-known for its ruthlessness, with dozens of drivers being dropped over the years. As Marko explains: "We support drivers with a perspective into and in F1, regardless of nationality. If this perspective is not there anymore, we have to split up."

Success also breeds success, and the victories of 2010 will be a huge boost to the team. Marko estimates that the "immediate income from winning both world titles will equal more than 50 per cent of next year's F1 budget."

Though Mateschitz is a tough businessman, and extends this into

F1, he remains emotional and a true supporter of his sportsmen and women. "I will never forget what Dietrich and Red Bull did for me after I had my cycling accident," says Mark Webber. And Mateschitz was one of only a few people in the F1 community who answered questions about a world championship candidate in his own team, publicly backing Webber to have a fair shot at the title. "Of course Mark can become world champion this year too, why not?" he said during the 2010 title run-in.

Against all odds, he denied any interfering with his drivers' racing positions through to the very last lap of the season.

Dietrich Mateschitz is not only the employer of his sports personalities, he is their friend too. ❧

Drown jewels

Volkswagen's Race Touareg off-road monster is tricky to drive. Rallies editor *DAVID EVANS* thought he was getting somewhere in the Dakar winner. Then he tried to sink it...

Modern rally cars talk to you, apparently. They listen to what you're doing, they feel you and they respond to your input. Find their wavelength and it's poetry. For the perfect illustration, see Sebastien Loeb and his Citroen C4 WRC or Carlos Sainz and the Volkswagen Race Touareg. I, too, had a relationship with Carlos's motor. Unfortunately my all-too-brief dalliance failed to establish the kind of rapport I'd been hoping for. I don't think the car's talking to me any more.

I got it wet, you see. There's potential that, somewhere in these five pages, you might see a picture of Carlos's motor parked in a slightly odd fashion. It's fair to say, I'm as much to blame as anybody for it getting there. Seems I might have taken, "It'll go anywhere..." a little bit too literally.

In fairness, the pond I ended up in was under a foot of snow. The one emotion the car and I did share was complete surprise when the tide came in. Not only was I driving Carlos's car, his engineer Gerard Zyzik was alongside me when I 'finished' my test. He wore the look of a man who'd seen a journalist attempting to get in touch with a rally car before.

The idea had been a simple one: come to Germany, to an off-road arena near Oschersleben, drive Carlos's car. Go home. Ahead of my trip, I'd checked out the website for the place. Looked simple enough, set in 10 hectares with what appeared to be vast swathes of northern Germany for run-off. Nice one. I might even press on a bit and have a bit of a go, see what the old Race Touareg's good for.

Then it snowed. And snowed and snowed. Remember when November became December, autumn became ►



TRACK TEST
VW RACE TOUAREG



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Evans fights the Touareg's propensity for understeer

◀ winter and Britain stopped working? Well it had snowed even harder in Germany. And harder where we were in Oschersleben.

Unfortunately, my arrival had been timed to perfection as the photographer asked for the Race Touareg to be turned around to make his picture work better against the flattest of flat light. At walking pace, the wheels spun and locked as the driver attempted the most straightforward of manoeuvres.

The car looked about as comfortable as Bambi on rollerskates. This did not bode well. The surrounding hills, suddenly taller than the Andes through which Carlos is currently racing, were deemed out of bounds. Instead, a track had been carved through the snow with a mixture of corners, but mercifully few inclines.

Nasser Al Attiyah's car chief Martin Hassenpflug was the man moving the car around, so I hopped in alongside in the hope of a few pointers. I talked him into taking me around the stage in an effort to give me an idea of a) where the road went and b) what the car was capable of in these conditions.

The snow had pretty much stopped falling by now, so finding the right path wasn't too much of an issue and things were looking up on the car front, too. There was grip, but you had to work at it to find it. You would also have to work hard to get rid of the terminal understeer the car suffers in these conditions.

With Zyzik installed in the co-driver's seat, my time had come. A couple of practice prods at the clutch before firing the thing up had me worried – it was seriously heavy. And I was bound to stall it. Actually, I didn't. Heavy as the clutch is, it was surprisingly progressive and easy to use. But I would only need to use it off the line and then from first to second, once I got into it and started to settle down in the car. On my first exploratory lap, clutchless gearchanges were a long way from my mind.

A brief aside here. Have you ever heard a Race Touareg running? It's a long shot because I'm guessing that a good number of AUTOSPORT readers are reading this in Blighty rather than on their iPads in the middle of the Atacama desert waiting for Sainz and his three team-mates to come by. If you do happen to be waiting for the car to come, it's a great noise. I thought a turbodiesel engine would be pretty dull, but it's not. It's got a low, resonating, urgent-sounding throb and when you bother the throttle and wake the blowers it sounds fabulous – almost like an aeroplane engine.

And it certainly does the trick. Having tasted the road-going V10 turbodiesel engine in the Touareg, I thought I knew what 700-plus NM of torque would be like. I didn't. The frustration in the race car was that there was little hope of putting much of the torque, let alone the power, to use in these conditions.

Following my tour of the cockpit, I had a rough idea of which buttons to pull and push to get us going. The aircraft-style toggle switches for the intercoolers would remain untouched today, but I was intrigued by the red lever sitting next to the gearshift. It looked like a handbrake.

"Diff lock," says Hassenpflug, anticipating my question. "You won't be needing that today..."

Into my second lap, I understeered from well before the apex to well after the exit. It looked horrible. Even the photographer had put his camera down. And, sensing my anxiety, Zyzik had seen enough.

"Use the left foot," he shouted. "It works better if you use the left foot!"

I suspected he was talking about braking. Unless he was seriously trying to confuse me.

"The car will always understeer in ▶



Well, at least he vaguely resembled a Dakar ace



Taking the "go anywhere" approach to new dimension

German weather even worse than in England



◀ the snow, but you can balance it better with your left foot on the brake," was his fuller explanation. "And don't worry. This car can go anywhere."

Bet he wishes he hadn't said that. Astonishingly, the harder you pushed the more grip there was. But it was the most bizarre feeling I've ever had in a car; there was no grip from the tyres, nothing. The 235-80/16 BF Goodrich boots on all four corners are labelled "all terrain". All terrain clearly does not include snow. The tyres are bullet-hard with a tread pattern designed to disperse soft sand. They have nothing to offer here. Yet we are pushing harder and harder and actually getting somewhere. The grip is all mechanical. I write that as though I know what I'm talking about. And, I have spoken to a wide variety of technically minded and deeply gifted engineering sorts in search of a practical and communicable explanation. But it was beyond me. I could have illustrated this piece with diagrams drawn by way of further clarification, but I'd probably put them in upside down or something.

There's nothing hugely trick about the transmission on the Race Touareg, it's just three limited-slip differentials at the front, middle and rear. The Dakar regulations don't allow for hydraulic or electronic assistance, which makes this a fairly rudimentary – by modern standards – piece of kit. But you could feel those diffs working with you. Once you got over the initial wheel spin, you could feel the car pulling you and forcing you forward. It was incredible.

Slowing it down was a bit lively too.

Having nudged a couple of banks and taken the odd imaginative line here and there, I realised the Touareg was a bit of a go-anywhere machine, so I did decide to push on a bit. Being aggressive with the car was the way to make it work. The harder you were on the car, the more you got from it. The only problem was that I was only scratching the surface. Ninety-nine per cent of that was down to me not wanting to bend Carlos's motor, but one per cent was down to the fact that the level of workable grip was limited and the physical properties of rock-

hard rubber on sheet ice dictated that, no matter who you are, your ability to keep the car under control is limited.

I demonstrated that with a couple of spins, courtesy of too much throttle and not enough weight on the brakes. I'd managed to get rid of the understeer, by being brave enough to hold the throttle open long enough for the car to start sliding. And, once it did start, I felt vaguely in control. But there was always the sense that anything could happen next. And it wasn't just me that sensed that, I noticed Gerard had tightened his belts a couple of times and the German car was clearly struggling to interpret my English instructions. We weren't on the same wavelength yet.

And then, I think we did. For about 10 corners, I got it. I let the car drift wide, let it ride up the bank into the softer snow where there was more grip and when it came to braking, feathered the left foot on the middle pedal to avoid the wheels locking, while banging it down the gearbox.

And I'd stopped worrying about the bumps in the road. Time and again, I'd braked for some of the undulations in the white way ahead, but not now. I set the car on its course and we diverted for nobody and nothing. Admittedly, I did have one terrifying moment when we caught a big bump while sideways. It felt like it had thrown the car about three feet in the air. I stayed on it and Zyzik didn't flinch.

That was probably where the problems started. I felt I was in the groove. I'd be in it for about 20 minutes and was starting to feel tired from the physicality of driving it, but it was just an awesome thing.

Then came the longish right-hander. I pushed on and let it slide, holding it in third, but it slid and slid some more. Suddenly, it felt like quite a big car on quite a small road. There was a tyrewall and bank on the inside of the corner. You'll note the "there was a tyrewall and bank..." There wasn't when I'd finished with it. We went through it and into white nothingness.

And then we went down. The speed, thankfully had gone now. But we were

The '87 Dakar featured a snowy French prologue



THERE'S SNOW GOING BACK

WHILE THE sight of Volkswagen's beautiful Race Touareg 3 sliding around in the snow might look a little incongruous, it's actually not unheard of for Dakar cars to have to deal with the white stuff.

Granted, there's been no chance since the event's shift to South America and a southern hemisphere summer, but when the rally retained its traditional Paris-Dakar route, snow on the run down through France on the liaison section was common-

place – and on the competitive prologue section as well. Back in 1987, the man-made 'stage' at Cergy-Pontoise to the north-west of Paris was hit by snow.

More recently, it snowed heavily when Colin McRae made his Dakar debut with Nissan in 2004. The Scot was only too glad to leave the start and the one-kilometre special in Clermont-Ferrand behind and head to Africa – his Pickup wasn't fitted with a heater!



Replacement rubber not needed on this 'adventure'



This is a motorsport brand that's used to winning

definitely off the road. And definitely not where we should have been.

"Keep going forward!" Zyzik shouts.

I did. Given the complete snow cover, I had no idea where we were. Until I realised I was trying to mount the same bank I'd demolished on my way into the corner. We ground to a halt.

"Try the diff lock," said Zyzik, on a different page from his VW colleague.

I pulled the red lever, locking the differentials tight and forcing the Touareg to grit its teeth and really put its shoulder to the wheel. It didn't work. We were going nowhere. And when I got out I realised why.

The Race Touareg and its diff lock work everywhere. Except under water.

Fortunately for Carlos, it hasn't rained in the Atacama desert since time began. But, if there is a meteorological break with tradition on the Dakar this week, I'd like to think I've done my bit to help with some additional set-up data for driving it under water.

I didn't venture this opinion to Zyzik, who had by now opened his door to ponder a wet exit. I considered a plea for him not to mention my indiscretion to Carlos. But legged it. I had a cancelled flight to miss. ☒



Touareg's hard tyres were next to useless in the snow



Massive torque needed to pull heavyweight along



Hope he cleaned it before giving it back to Carlos

"Does my bum look big in this?" Evans ponders parking



Big Events of 2011

The 2011 season has all the makings of a classic for motorsport. Let AUTOSPORT guide you through the events you simply must watch this year



JANUARY

AUTOSPORT International,
Birmingham NEC (GB), January 13-16,
www.autosportinternational.com

A magnificent array of some of the most evocative McLarens in the marque's history are the main attraction at the year's AUTOSPORT International Show. From the fire-breathing Can-Am M8 through the all-conquering MP4-4 of '88 to Lewis Hamilton's title-winning MP4-23, it's a fabulous display. There will be plenty more to see and do too, with a host of top British and international drivers on hand for an AUTOSPORT stage interview and autograph, while the Live Action Arena provides a rare sniff of petrol fumes in the quiet winter months.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Dakar Rally (RA-RCH-RA), January 1-16,
www.dakar.com
Monte Carlo Rally (MC), January 19-22,
www.acm.mc
Daytona 24 Hours (USA), January 29-30,
www.daytonainternationalspeedway.com



02

FEBRUARY

Daytona 500 (USA), February 20
www.daytonainternationalspeedway.com

From the always-frenetic Truck race on Friday night through Saturday's Nationwide bash to the main event on Sunday, the Daytona 500 is a must-see for any self-respecting stock car fan. You get a good view of most of the track from pretty much anywhere you sit, although the prime spots are the entry to Turn 1, exit of Turn 4 and, of course, at the chequered stripe for those wild finishes. Don't forget to allow for a rain-delayed Monday race; it's rare but it is only February after all.

ALTERNATIVELY...

F1 testing, Jerez (E), Feb 10-13,
www.circuitodejerez.com
WRC: Rally Sweden (S), February 11-13,
www.rallysweden.com
V8 Supercars & GP2 Asia, Yas Marina (UAE),
February 11-12, www.yasmarinacircuit.com



GIBSON/LAT



MIGEL KINRADE

03

MARCH

Bahrain Grand Prix, Sakhir (BRN),
March 13, www.bahraingp.com

Sakhir doesn't have the pull of Melbourne, Spa or Monza, but it is the starting point for the 2011 Formula 1 season, so it's a must-see GP in any fan's book. Will Adrian Newey's latest Red Bull give Sebastian Vettel the perfect start to his title defence? Will Ferrari impose team orders from round one? Will McLaren's British duo seize the initiative? All those questions that loomed during the winter will finally be answered. And let's face it, it can't be any worse than last year's offering.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Sebring 12 Hours (USA), March 19,
www.sebringraceway.com



GIBSON/LAT

V8 Supercars, Adelaide (AUS), March 18-19,
www.clipsal500.com.au
Australian GP, Melbourne (AUS), March 27,
www.grandprix.com.au

DUNBAR/LAT



APRIL

British F3/GT, Oulton Park (GB), April 23-25, www.motorsportvision.co.uk/ouulton-park

It's not the season opener for F3 this year (the championship gets underway at Monza a week earlier), but it will be your first chance to see Britain's premier single-seater series take to the track in the UK in 2011. Oulton is a beautiful setting, and the crowd is always out in force after a winter of thumb twiddling. Plus, the British GTs always provide a good spectacle, and with Audi and Mercedes machinery joining the party full-time, it could be the best season yet.

ALTERNATIVELY...

BTCC, Brands Hatch (GB), April 3, www.motorsportvision.co.uk/brands-hatch



NASCAR, Talladega (USA), April 16, www.talladegasuperspeedway.com
European Rallycross, Lydden (GB), April 24-25, www.lyddenracecircuit.co.uk



EBREV/LAT

MAY

Indianapolis 500 (USA), May 29, www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com

With Indy more of a Festival than a race meeting, you'll need to spend time at the track and its surroundings to get a true feel for the place, which is huge. The heritage of the 100-year-old event is awe-inspiring – a trip around the museum is a must. On raceday, the sight of Indycars heading into Turn 1 at full tilt (230mph) and then changing direction is truly mindblowing. Don't think you'll get a great panoramic view – you won't – but at least they come around quickly!

ALTERNATIVELY...

Pau Grand Prix (F), May 21-22, www.grandprixdepau.com
Monaco Grand Prix (MC), May 29, www.acm.mc
Masters Historic Festival, Brands Hatch (GB), May 29-30, www.motorsportvision.co.uk/brands-hatch



LABERGE/SHUTTER

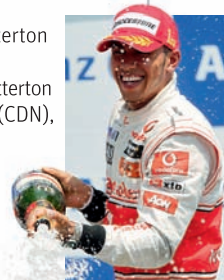
JUNE

Le Mans 24 Hours (F), June 11-12,
www.lemans.org

For one week, a town in the middle of France becomes the centre of the motorsport world, and if you've never been, 2011 is the perfect time to make your first voyage (the journey is half the fun). With the new generation of finned LMPs and Audi's new R18 taking on Peugeot's 90X, plus the current surge in manufacturer interest in the GT (nee GT2) category, we could be talking 'classic'. The race is only part of the magic of Le Mans, though. You'll never forget your first time perched in a tree at Arnage at 3am. That's a promise...

ALTERNATIVELY...

AUTOSPORT Three Hours, Snetterton (GB), June 11,
www.motorsportvision.co.uk/snetterton
Canadian Grand Prix, Montreal (CDN), June 12,
www.circuitgillesvilleneuve.ca
Nurburgring 24 Hours (D), June 25-26,
adac.24h-rennen.de



GIBSON/LAT

JULY

British Grand Prix, Silverstone (GB),
July 10,
www.silverstone.co.uk

It's July and for a British motorsport fan, that can only mean it's time to dig out the tent and the barbeque and head to Silverstone for the British GP. There's never been a better time to be an F1 fan in this country with Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button both sure-fire title contenders and world champion team Red Bull based just 15 miles away (Mercedes is even closer). Plus, it's the first British GP that will use the new startline, dominated by the spectacular 'Silverstone Wing' pit complex. Be warned, though: tickets are selling fast already.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Goodwood Festival of Speed (GB), July 1-3,
www.goodwood.co.uk



BLOCH/HAMIL/LAT

DTM, Norisring (D), July 3, www.norisring.de
Silverstone Classic (GB), July 23-24,
www.silverstoneclassic.com



GEORGE/LAT

AUGUST

**British Touring Cars, Snetterton (GB),
August 6-7, www.motorsportvision.co.uk/snetterton**

If you're not hardy enough to head to Norfolk for Snetterton's maiden event on the new '300' layout, you could do far worse than waiting for the BTCC to roll into town for the revised track's first high-profile, four-wheeled event. With viewing over the new infield section set to be superb, not to mention three action-packed touring car races and a full support schedule – remember Adrian Newey's Ginetta crash last year? – it makes compelling viewing during the summer holidays.

ALTERNATIVELY...



Renault Word Series, Silverstone (GB),
August 20-21

www.worldseriesbyrenault.com/en

NASCAR Sprint Cup, Bristol (USA), August 27,

www.bristolmotorspeedway.com

Oulton Park Gold Cup (GB), August 28-29,

www.motorsportvision.co.uk/oultion-park



EBREVILAT

SEPTEMBER

**Goodwood Revival (GB),
September 16-18
www.goodwood.co.uk**

The first Goodwood Revival took place in 1998 and immediately became one of the highlights of the British racing calendar. There is a fine array of side events and air displays, but the real appeal comes from what happens on track. Just as it should. The Revival offers a rare chance to see some of the greatest racing cars ever built driven by a selection of the best drivers in the world. And they race hard. It's not to be missed.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Italian Grand Prix, Monza (I), September 11,

www.monzanet.it/en

Sanremo Rally (I), September 22-24,

www.sanremorally.it

Singapore Grand Prix, Marina Bay (SIN),

September 25, www.singaporegp.sg



BLOKHAM/LAT



PHOTO 4

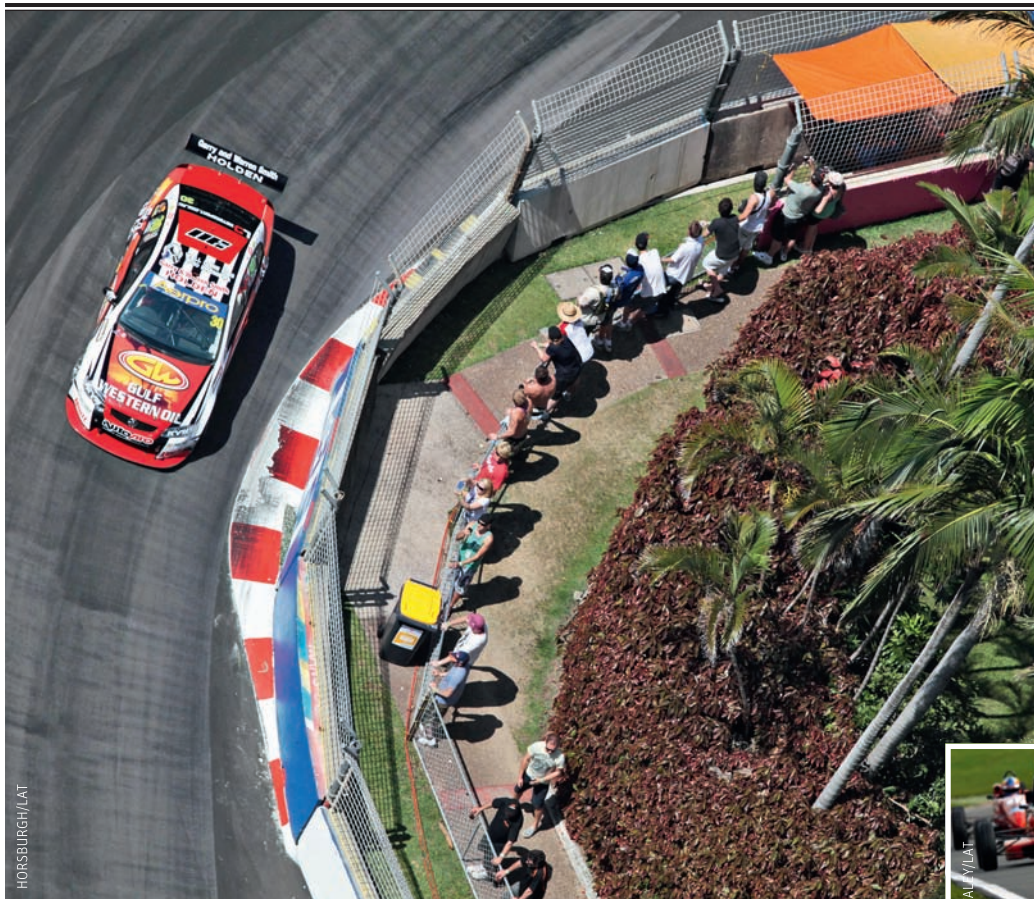
OCTOBER

Gold Coast 600, Surfers Paradise (AUS), October 22-23

Last year 18 of the world's top drivers were enticed over to Australia's Gold Coast to do battle in the fearsome V8 Supercars. This time there will be a full grid of big names from the world of IndyCar, sportscar racing and maybe even F1! The beach-side street track makes you feel as though you could reach out and touch the cars. And another thing: the girls there are, quite frankly, out of this world.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Silverstone 24 Hours (GB), October 1-2, www.silverstone.co.uk
MSA Rally of Scotland (GB), October 14-16, www.msaevents.co.uk/ros
Formula Ford Festival, Brands Hatch (GB), October 15-16, www.motorsportvision.co.uk/brands-hatch



HORSBURGH/LAT



STAL/VLAT

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Rally Great Britain, Wales (GB), November 11-13, www.walesrallygb.com

The 2011 World Rally Championship is not a done deal. With Sebastien Ogier alongside namesake Loeb full-time and no guarantee that Citroen's new DS3 will be the dominant force the C4 was there's every chance that Wales will host a monumental title showdown. Discussions are still underway as to whether the rally will remain in its Cardiff base or move to Llandudno in the north of the country. Whatever the location, you're guaranteed a good show. Just remember your anorak, bobblehat, wellies and thermos.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Walter Hayes Trophy, Silverstone (GB), November 5-6*, www.silverstone.co.uk
Brazilian Grand Prix, Interlagos (BR), November 27, www.gpbrasil.com
Andros Trophy, Val Thorens (F), December 3-4*, www.tropheeandros.com *Date TBC



MC KLEIN/LAT



WHAT MAKES YVAN MULLER SO GOOD?



Muller was already champ when he arrived in Macau

Two WTCC titles with two different makes put the Frenchman top of the elite. By STEVEN ENGLISH

The championship itself wasn't anything out of the ordinary. Yvan Muller won the season opener, added a couple more victories in the next couple of months, but mainly just kept stacking up the podiums – 14 in total. It was the momentum he gathered through consistency that put the title out of everyone else's reach, rather than him blowing them away.

Three wins out of 22 isn't exactly inspiring stuff, but that's not how you win a title in a series like the World Touring Car Championship.

You could argue that all Muller had to do was put the best car on the grid (the RML-run Chevrolet Cruze) consistently in the top three and the title would land in his lap. Obviously, motorsport is never as straightforward as that, and the most impressive aspect of Muller's achievements is the way he earned his status as a world-renowned touring car star in the first place, rather than anything he accomplished on the circuits in 2010.

He is regarded as one of the best touring car drivers in the world – up there with the best of all time. Perhaps only Andy Priaulx could have something to say about Muller being

revered as the most complete driver today in the two-litre tin-top world. And the Frenchman has now joined Priaulx, Gabriele Tarquini and Fabrizio Giovanardi in becoming a multiple premier-level touring car champion.

Muller has only once failed to end a season as champion or runner-up since 2000, that being his first year in the WTCC, with SEAT, in '06.

James Thompson was team-mate to Muller for four years with Vauxhall in the BTCC, and then for another season with SEAT in the WTCC, so he's better placed than most to assess his rival.

"He ticks all the boxes: you can't be

a double world champion in an arena this competitive by accident," says Thompson. "We have a lot of mutual respect. I know that if he is presented with an opportunity he will take it, but he's usually very fair. He's very good under pressure. Some people are prepared to jeopardise a finish for the sake of one position but Yvan is probably not in that bracket. He's very measured; he knows what he's doing."

Muller's role has evolved over the years as he's become older and more experienced. He no longer has the wild, unpredictable streak that made him so entertaining to watch a decade ago. His driving may be less exciting now, but it's effective.

"The world championship isn't as frenetic as the BTCC was – it's

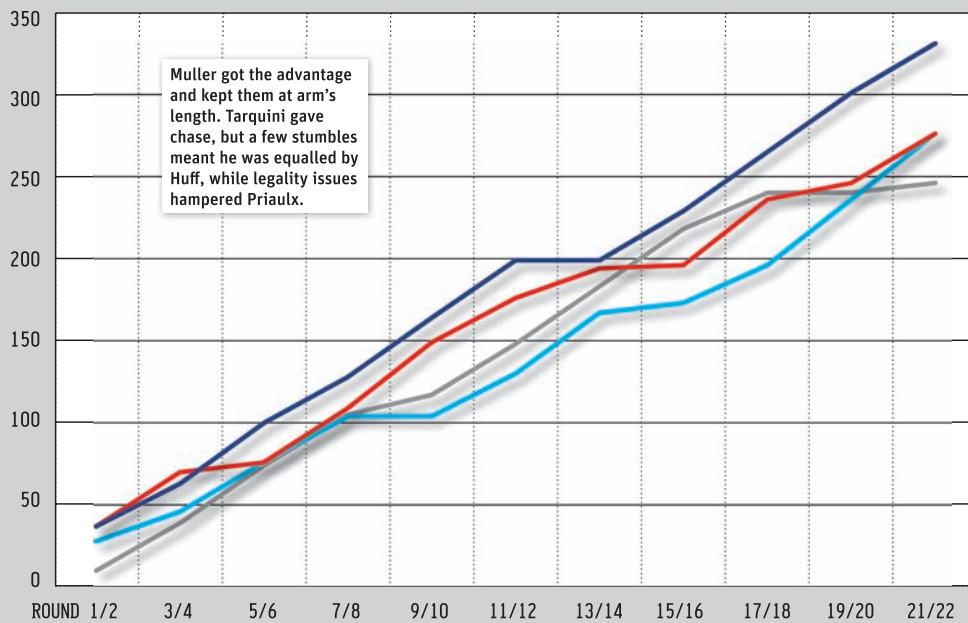
Muller fans hail their hero



ROUTE TO THE TITLE

PROGRESS OF THE TOP DRIVERS

● Muller ● Tarquini ● Huff ● Priaulx



Muller got the advantage and kept them at arm's length. Tarquini gave chase, but a few stumbles meant he was equalled by Huff, while legality issues hampered Priaulx.

Ian Harrison was Muller's team boss at the Vauxhall BTCC team and rates him as one of the best drivers he's ever worked with – on a list that includes Thompson, Giovanardi, Alain Menu and Jason Plato.

"He's got incredible natural talent," says Harrison. "With front-wheel drive he can drive it so the rear end takes more of a pasting than it normally would, but he manages to keep the front on it too by driving it a little bit like an Andros Trophy [ice-racing] car.

"I don't know if he's calmed down since then – he had a pretty lairy style, but it worked for him. His technique was certainly not orthodox, but effective. In the late '90s when he came here he was a pretty full-on guy to deal with. He was pretty high maintenance, but as he's got older he's got more mature... or maybe just older! I had a great time working with him, we were sad to see him go and I'd absolutely love to work with him again in future."

One man working with him now gets both the positives and the negatives of the arrangement. "From a team point of view it's been great to have him on board," says Chevrolet team-mate Rob Huff. "From a personal point of view, it's made my life harder. But that's the challenge – you want to go against the best and there's no bigger test than when he's in the same team.

"Fair play to Yvan – he's driven better than me this year. Over the full season he did the best job and that's why he won the championship. My challenge is to come back and try to do a better job than him next year."

A difficult future p44



BTCC entry with Audi was spectacular

a different sort of carry-on," Thompson continues. "Like anything, as you get older you take a more methodical approach. You're not as worried about one race's result.

"Also, in the early days when I raced against him, he was at Audi [when the team lost its way with front-wheel drive]. A good result for them was being in the top few places as opposed to fighting for championships. To win a title you have to drive differently. Back then he was prepared to take more risks and be more flamboyant."

TOP 10 DRIVERS

The drivers who stood out in the eyes of STEVEN ENGLISH



1. YVAN MULLER

A class act. He only won three times, but a relentless string of seven podiums late in the year stopped anyone else even thinking about the title.

Defining moment: Leading home Chevrolet's dominant 1-2-3 in the opener set the tone for the year.



2. ROB HUFF

A much more consistent frontrunner than in previous seasons. It was always going to be a big ask to beat team-mate Muller, but he was in the hunt until his debateable exclusion in Germany.

Defining moment: The Oschersleben disqualification that ended his title hopes.



3. ANDY PRIAULX

Three-time WTCC champion won the most races, but the fact that five of his six victories came from reversed grids illustrates the BMW's limitations.

Defining moment: Exclusion from second place at Okayama ended the chances he'd been somehow keeping alive.



4. GABRIELE TARQUINI

A tough season for the outgoing champion. He was, once again, the man to beat in qualifying, but as the year wore on the loss of full works backing from SEAT took its toll.

Defining moment: Victory from pole in Morocco proved SEAT would still be a force in 2010.



5. NORBERT MICHELISZ

A new name to most, but he mixed it with the works cars in Q2 for the first seven rounds. Makes enthusiastic mistakes, but he's fast and was finally rewarded with his maiden win in the finale.

Defining moment: Pounced on the opportunity to win in Macau.



6. AUGUSTO FARFUS

Seemed to get the better of Priaulx in 2009, so move to RBM for '10 provided a disappointing season. Couldn't drag as much from the car, but there were some great qualifying laps and fewer mistakes than in the past.

Defining moment: Being disqualified from his only win, at Okayama.



7. TIAGO MONTEIRO

Popular Portuguese returned to form. Recovered well from some early bad luck, while showing potential race-winning pace, but qualifying remains relatively weak.

Defining moment: Dominant win from pole on home soil in the Algarve.



8. ALAIN MENU

The Swiss spent plenty of time in the top four, but he was either not quick enough to win or was forced to play the team game.

Defining moment: Pitting with damage in race one at Monza seemed no biggie, but the lost points spelled the end of his charge painfully early.



9. TOM CORONEL

Solid, but not the spectacular debut in works-level machinery he hoped for. Got up to speed with the diesel quickly, but there were only two podiums.

Defining moment: Reversed-grid pole on day one in Brazil ended in Turn 2 gravel. He never got a chance as good again.



10. COLIN TURKINGTON

Quite a cameo, and potential was evident from first outing in Portugal. He was flattered by running lighter than the works BMWs, but still a hugely impressive foray into the WTCC.

Defining moment: It may have come in the courtroom a week after Okayama, but a win is a win.

THERE MAY BE TROUBLE AHEAD...

...so who'll face the music and dance in the WTCC? STEVEN ENGLISH looks ahead

This was supposed to be the survival year, the stopgap before the introduction of the regulations that will revitalise the World Touring Car Championship in 2011.

This was the year SEAT departed and BMW reduced its effort from five to two cars, leaving things looking a little thin. But, come the first race, there were still plenty of top drivers in mostly capable cars to make it a proper competition. But now, instead of salvation lying on the other side of this winter break, an even bigger abyss awaits.

The new regulations are here. The 1.6-litre, turbocharged petrol engines are well under way and will be sitting under some bonnets when cars roll out for the opener in Brazil. But it doesn't look as though they're going to bring the renaissance the series bosses were hoping for – and need.

Instead, BMW will vanish completely – as a works team at least – and SEAT as a factory entity isn't going to be around any more than it was this year, which wasn't much.

Independents will be the only people running BMWs this year, with rumours of six new engines having been sold. There are a few SUNRED deals drifting through to get some Leons on the grid again, but the plans of the front-line

SEAT drivers are still unconfirmed.

Either way, it looks as though the 1.6-litre petrol engine from SEAT will not be ready in time for the start of the season. So the TDIs will turn up for the first couple of rounds, while SUNRED fingers are crossed for the new units to arrive in time for the third event of the year, at Monza in May.

There'll be three factory Chevrolets again, with new engines developed by RML in house – so they're already looking pretty certain to dominate the championship.

But the fact that there will still be diesels on the grid at the beginning of 2011 means that one of the major attractions of the new era – no more agony of trying to equalise completely different engine philosophies – will also have to wait.

As will the arrival of the new manufacturers that were intended to breathe new life into the series. Valiant attempts from promoter Marcello Lotti to entice more car makers didn't totally fail, but nor were they successful.

Honda Argentina's plans to join in fell apart due to the lead time of Mugen building the engine it needs. Toyota sniffed around for a while but decided against a programme. Ford was almost on the cards, and has a suitable engine, but needs an independent team to



drive the project, and British squad Arena is sticking to the BTCC for now. Subaru was always planned for 2012 anyway. Chinese manufacturers were talked up, but none have anything concrete, even though the Guangdong round has now been confirmed.

Volvo is the only one of the mooted newcomers likely to make it onto the track in 2011, though for now this is the semi-works Polestar team in place of a factory effort, with just one car.

So the revolution has been postponed until 2012. Later this year there'll be the same discussions about whether Honda Argentina can get its programme together, whether anyone will take the plunge to combine the new Focus with Ford's 1.6 engine, whether Subaru will come good on its word, whether Volvo will up its effort, whether SEAT will return with its full might.

In the meantime, the series will just roll on as it is.

You can make a pretty strong argument that a world championship should not be mostly made up of privateers. In an ideal world there'd be four or five manufacturers, each with a couple of teams and a roster of professional drivers. That's the world the WTCC bosses are striving to create, but until it happens there's little choice but to bolster the grid with amateurs.

This year, the series could be as bare as a couple of paid Chevrolet drivers squabbling between themselves. Long term, there's an encouraging plan that will revitalise the WTCC – if it comes to fruition. But then again, there was a once-promising plan for 2011 too. ❧



Farfus and BMW have crashed out



A privateer future in the interim?

Can Tarquini get going again with SEAT?



STEVEN ENGLISH
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 @haymarket.com

THE MOMENTS OF THE YEAR

Drive

Rob Huff, Algarve race two. He started 18th after a puncture pitched him into the gravel earlier in the day. He stormed past seven cars on the first lap, picked off the remaining independents next time round, Farfus, Monteiro and Coronel in the late laps, and then ducked ahead of team-mate Menu on the last lap. A 30-second penalty for contact with Farfus dropped him all the way back to 15th, but it was still a great drive.

Shunt

Macau, race two, lap one, Police Bend. Mid-field madness equals roadblock/dozen-car traffic jam.

Surprise

Norbert who? I'd have said the same before this year. But right from the opening round Michelisz and the Zengo team did a fantastic job. He's a bit lairy, overdrives at times, is unpredictable, and mistakes robbed him of some great results. But above all he was fast and gave most of the SUNRED SEAT drivers a good hiding more often than not.

Surprising statistic

Yvan Muller, with 33 laps led, was behind Andy Priaulx (68), Gabriele Tarquini (57) and Rob Huff (45).

Disappointment

Augusto Farfus: from six wins in 2009 to none in '10. On sheer speed he still may be the fastest



Huff provided the drive of the year

driver in the series, but it just wouldn't come together this year. Priaulx showed him the way more than he would have liked, and it was a shame his only win [in Japan] was taken away.

Relief

Not having to go back to Puebla.

Grumble

Having a 20-minute qualifying session in Macau last two and a half hours – and still not reach its conclusion.

Venue

Algarve: it was the first visit for me and the WTCC this year. The facility, scenery, town (Lagos) and general holiday atmosphere were a fabulous setting for a height-of-summer trip – and, of course, the drivers bombing into the circuit pool post-podium.

2010 FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	DRIVER/ NATIONALITY	TEAM	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOTAL
1	YVAN MULLER (F)	CHEVROLET (RML)	CHEVROLET CRUZE LT	1/4	6/2	4/1	2/5	2/2	1/5	R/12	3/3	2/2	2/2	2/4	331
2	GABRIELE TARQUINI (I)	SR-SPORT (SUNRED)	SEAT LEON TDI	4/1	1/6	7/20	1/6	3/1	4/3	2/18	R/9	1/3	5/R	4/2	276
3	ROB HUFF (GB)	CHEVROLET (RML)	CHEVROLET CRUZE LT	2/5	2/R	3/3	5/2	18/15	2/6	1/4	18/7	3/6	1/3	1/3	276
4	ANDY PRIAULX (GB)	BMW TEAM RBM	BMW 320Si	5/R	8/1	1/5	7/1	R/4	7/1	5/1	5/1	5/4	EX/R	NC/7	246
5	TIAGO MONTEIRO (P)	SR-SPORT (SUNRED)	SEAT LEON TDI	11/7	3/4	9/7	4/3	1/7	8/R	9/6	4/18	6/1	R/R	3/8	177
6	ALAIN MENU (CH)	CHEVROLET (RML)	CHEVROLET CRUZE LT	3/3	9/R	17/9	3/4	5/3	22/NC	3/3	1/8	8/11	7/4	7/R	173
7	AUGUSTO FARFUS (BR)	BMW TEAM RBM	BMW 320Si	6/6	10/R	2/4	9/8	4/5	6/8	4/5	2/2	18/8	EX/EX	6/5	167
8	TOM CORONEL (NL)	SR-SPORT (SUNRED)	SEAT LEON TDI	8/R	5/3	5/2	8/10	6/6	5/4	R/10	6/5	10/9	19/8	12/6	136
9	NORBERT MICHELISZ (H)	ZENGO-DENSION TEAM	SEAT LEON TDI	10/9	7/10	19/8	6/7	7/R	9/7	R/14	8/11	11/12	3/7	5/1	104
10	COLIN TURKINGTON (GB)	WSR	BMW 320Si	-	-	-	-	12/10	3/2	6/2	-	-	4/1	R/13	97
11	MICHEL NYKJAER (DK)	SUNRED ENGINEERING	SEAT LEON TDI	12/8	11/7	8/19	18/R	17/R	15/9	7/R	7/4	9/7	6/6	R/11	66
12	JORDI GENE (E)	SR-SPORT (SUNRED)	SEAT LEON TDI	7/2	13/8	16/6	EX/R	R/18	10/10	R/13	12/10	4/5	-	-	61
13	FREDY BARTH (CH)	SEAT SWISS RACING BY SUNRED	SEAT LEON TDI	9/16	4/5	6/14	10/18	8/8	11/R	12/8	11/20	7/R	R/13	R/R	51
14	KRISTIAN POULSEN (DK)	POULSEN MOTORSPORT	BMW 320Si	-	-	R/15	11/11	11/R	23/R	8/19	9/6	12/10	14/11	8/R	20
15	DARRYL O'YOUNG (PRC)	BAMBOO ENGINEERING	CHEVROLET LACETTI	15/15	17/13	R/12	20/12	10/9	21/R	17/7	R/12	14/17	10/9	R/R	15
16	SERGIO HERNANDEZ (E)	SCUDERIA PROTEAM MOTORSPORT	BMW 320Si	13/10	14/R	12/16	13/9	9/17	16/12	11/11	10/13	19/15	11/R	11/9	9
17	Franz Engstler (D)	LIQUI MOLY TEAM ENGSTLER	BMW 320Si	14/11	12/12	R/NS	R/16	13/14	14/13	13/R	13/15	15/14	13/10	9/10	5
18	YUKINORI TANIGUCHI (J)	BAMBOO ENGINEERING	CHEVROLET LACETTI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17/14	17/18	9/16	13/R	4
19	Stefano D'Aste (I)	SCUDERIA PROTEAM MOTORSPORT	BMW 320Si	17/14	R/11	11/11	16/13	14/13	18/11	10/9	15/16	R/NS	R/17	-	3
20	Mehdi Bennani (MA)	WIECHERS-SPORT	BMW 320Si	18/12	15/9	14/17	14/19	R/12	19/R	14/16	14/R	R/16	15/19	10/12	3
21	HARRY VAULKHARD (GB)	BAMBOO ENGINEERING	CHEVROLET LACETTI	16/13	16/R	10/13	15/R	15/11	17/14	15/15	-	-	-	-	1
22	LEONEL PERNIA (CRA)	CHEVROLET v'SPORT SWEDEN (RML)	CHEVROLET CRUZE LT	-	-	18/10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

KEY TO RACES: 1 Curitiba, March 7; 2 Marrakech, May 2; 3 Monza, May 23; 4 Zolder, June 20; 5 Algarve, July 4; 6 Brands Hatch, July 18; 7 Brno, August 1; 8 Oschersleben, September 5; 9 Valencia, September 19; 10 Okayama, October 31; 11 Macau, November 21. **POINTS SYSTEM:** 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1.

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INTRODUCING

RICKY TAYLOR

A risky signing to his dad's team has paid off well for this rising US sportscar star



CLEAR/GETTY

There were accusations of nepotism when Wayne Taylor installed son Ricky alongside Max Angelelli in his SunTrust Racing Dallara Daytona Prototype for the 2010 Grand-Am season. One year on, it's looking like a smart move.

Taylor Jr, then only 19, was on the pace from the get-go at the Daytona 24 Hours in January. It got better from there on. He was on pole for round three at Barber Motorsports Park and ended the season second in the DP points and with a first win to his name.

DAD SAYS...

Taylor Sr, winner of three major US sportscar titles as a driver, describes signing the elder of his two racing sons as an "incredibly difficult" decision. "People were always going to claim that Ricky was driving for us because he was my son," he says.

The path that led to son driving

for father started with another front-running team, Michael Shank Racing, showing interest in Ricky after his impressive first full DP season with Beyer Racing in '09. With January's Daytona test days approaching, it was decided to put him in the SunTrust car.

SON SAYS...

The decision to sign him was a "big risk," says Taylor Jr. But he believes he repaid his dad's faith. "I was fast at Daytona, but that's a track where I've done so many laps," he says. "I could have performed better in some of the early races; I needed time to get up to speed in the sprints. I improved through the season and in Max I had the perfect teacher."

WHAT'S NEXT?

Year two with the SunTrust team could be even better for Taylor Jr. The squad has switched from Ford to Chevrolet engines,

and this could be crucial.

Taylor describes the Chevy V8 as "really strong" and points out that last year the SunTrust Dallara had to "run trimmed out" to keep up with the title-winning Ganassi Riley-BMW in a straight line.

"The package has improved," says Taylor Jr, who is joined alongside Angelelli for Daytona by Ryan Briscoe, "so winning the championship is realistic."

LONG-TERM FUTURE

Taylor Sr's aspirations for his son include him leaving SunTrust. That's not as bizarre as it sounds.

"The best thing for Ricky's career would be if he is hired by someone else," says Taylor Sr. "That would take away the stigma of a son driving for his dad."

Taylor Jr, meanwhile, says he'd be happy to stay with SunTrust and "continue doing exactly what I'm doing now". The most important thing, he says, is that he "earns a living from motorsport".

Another target is to try to race in Europe, specifically at the Le Mans 24 Hours: "Le Mans

CV

NAME Ricky Taylor
DATE OF BIRTH March 8, 1989
BIRTH PLACE Guildford, Surrey
2010 Grand-Am DP, SunTrust (2nd, one win)
2009 Grand-Am DP, Beyer Racing (best result 4th)
2008 IMSA Lites (4 races), Grand-Am DP (8 races)
2007 Skip Barber National Series (2nd, two wins)
2006 Skip Barber Southern Series (1st, six wins)



is definitely among my goals."

If he makes it, we Brits can always claim him for ourselves. He was born in Surrey when his dad was racing in Group C. He only lived here for a couple of months, but he has a British passport... ❧

"I want to continue what I'm doing now, but Le Mans is definitely among my goals"

Plato took BTCC title in 2010...



...to add to teams' and drivers' LMP2 crowns...



Muller led Chevrolet to its first WTCC title

... and WTCC success with Chevrolet



Success on all fronts

Ray Mallock's eponymous squad cleaned up in 2010. *JAMIE O'LEARY* talks to the main man



Ray Mallock Ltd, or RML as it is universally known in motorsport circles, reached a new high in 2010. Not content with sealing its third British Touring Car drivers' title with Jason Plato, it then added the World drivers' (Yvan Muller), teams and manufacturers' (Chevrolet) championships plus the drivers' (Mike Newton and Tommy Erdos) and teams' crowns in the LMP2 division of the Le Mans Series. In short, the Northamptonshire-based squad celebrated its 27th birthday by winning every championship it entered.

So what did Ray and his 130-strong staff at Wellingborough do differently in 2010 compared with previous years?

"Nothing really," says the founder of the organisation modestly. "I guess what we achieved last year in touring cars was the culmination of years of honing and tweaking the package we have with Chevrolet and everyone – from the drivers right through to the guys back at base in the paint shop – all pulling together as a team.

"With the LMS programme there was the change from the Mazda engine – which had been pretty unreliable in 2009 – to the HPD powerplant, and we had 100 per cent reliability from it. Other than that, everything was done much as it always had been."

Mallock has had some time to get his shop in order, RML having been founded in 1984 in order to develop and run the Nimrod-Aston Martin Group C car. The foundations for his involvement in racing had been laid long before that though; Ray's father Arthur was a driver of some repute and competed in his own Austin Seven-based car as early as 1936.

"His passion was for engineering though," Ray remembers. "He never ran a team, but was a car constructor,

selling kits of his Mallock Clubmans and Formula Junior cars to lots of people. In fact, Patrick Head, Max Mosley and Harvey Postlethwaite all had their first involvements in motorsport with dad's cars.

"I had some proper engineering training when I did an apprenticeship with Aston Martin, but most of everything I learned in the discipline was down to dad. He was an exceptionally gifted engineer."

Ray, who dreamed of a life in motorsport as a 10-year-old boy after seeing Arthur race at Brands Hatch, made his race debut in a Mallock Mk9 Formula Ford car at Silverstone in 1969 and, significantly, went on to claim British Formula Atlantic titles in '79 and '81 – both in Ralts run by his own Ray Mallock Atlantic Racing squad.

It was the onset of engineering projects connected with Aston Martin's racing programme that led to RMAR's metamorphosis into RML. Back then though, it had just five members of staff to its name – a far cry from its current numbers.

Success followed quickly. A new project to develop the Ecurie Ecosse Group C2 sportscar resulted in the team winning the baby class of the World Sports Prototype Championship in 1986 with Mallock, David Leslie and Mike Wilds among the drivers. There were also runner-up spots in the '85 and '87 championships with Ford engines (Austin-Rover powered the cars in the title-winning season) and second in class at Le Mans in '87.

Until 2010, that WSC crown remained RML's only world title success, but there have been plenty of championships won since then, in series as high-profile as the BTCC during its Super Touring heyday in the 1990s, the oval-based ASCAR category and even the Super 1600 division of ▶



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LMS LMP2 titles were won by Erdos/Newton

organisation to achieve this, knowing that we've been in charge of the whole process and a real testament to the skills and attitude of everyone here."

Since 1984 over 50 drivers, such as touring car legends Aiello, Muller and Alain Menu have passed through the employment of RML-run projects, but Mallock is reluctant to say who has had the biggest impact.

"Rating our drivers against each other is unprofessional and impossible – how do you compare a Group C racer from the '80s to Yvan today?"

"One driver who did stand out from a personal point of view though, was David Leslie. Until David came into the team I used to consider the testing and development work as my job, but he was the first driver I trusted enough to hand over the reigns to."

The bearded Scot did a top job too, his work on RML's Ecurie Ecosse Vauxhall Cavalier in 1993 helping to establish Ray's squad as a top-line touring car team as he took five poles and his maiden series victory.

◀ the British Rally Championship, with Kris Meeke at the wheel of the Opel Corsa developed by RML.

In all, there have been 123 victories by RML-run cars to date (including class wins) and its British Touring Car drivers' titles with John Cleland (Vauxhall), Laurent Aiello (Nissan) and now Plato (Chevrolet) have made it only the second squad – after Andy Rouse Engineering – to win the crown with three different marques.

Two Le Mans 24 Hours class wins with the MG-Lola EX264 (the car originally devised to carry the MG brand to LMP2 success) came in 2005 and '06. RML was also responsible, in 2000, for the design and build of the Saleen S7R that even this year – a decade since its introduction – took GT1 honours at both Le Mans and in the LMS for the French Larbre squad.

It is the Chevrolet link, though, that has been the conduit for RML's greatest success to date. Brought in to build (from the ground up) its Lacetti touring car in works trim for 2005, Mallock's squad was, for the first time, given complete control over the project.

"It's made a huge difference," says the boss. "Before, we always had situations where the manufacturer had its own specialist working on the engine, or contracted its own drivers. But now we have it all under one roof."

"It means that everyone has the same agenda rather than some groups pulling in one direction and others going another way. It also means that if there's a problem, we can solve it more quickly and effectively. It helps us hone and develop the package in a very effective manner."

The Lacetti was no world-beater when it first appeared in the WTCC, but a year later it became a race-winner (and took 14 wins until the end of '08). It's replacement, the Cruze, has already notched up 13 and made Muller world champion for a second time.

"I'm still enjoying that now," Mallock reflects. "Maybe even more so than when I was driving, it's thoroughly satisfying for everyone within the

Mallock was quick back in the day...



... and still is now, winning Classic Clubmans this year



Mallock (l) and Leslie formed a strong bond

1987 Ecosse-Ford gave RML second in class at Le Mans



RML HIGHLIGHTS



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The cars are the stars

A beautiful array of iconic McLaren racers is one of this year's must-see displays at AUTOSPORT International, says ANDREW VAN DE BURGT

With its current Formula 1 driver line-up of Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button, McLaren should be the team of choice for the discerning British fan these days. And while the Woking-based team is rightly revered for its grand prix successes with legends such as Ayrton Senna, Alain Prost and Emerson Fittipaldi, the outfit set up by Bruce McLaren back in 1963 has also achieved notable success in Can-Am, Indycar and sportscar racing during its long and illustrious history.

All of these disciplines are celebrated in the fantastic collection on display at AUTOSPORT International. There's nothing quite like getting up close to a real racing car. The attention to detail of the modern cars is stunning, while the beauty and frailty of the older machines never fails to inspire awe in the drivers who took them to the edge on circuits where safety was, at best, an afterthought.

Here are the cars you can see in all their glory. It's a unique opportunity to view genuine, historic racers in the same place at the same time, so don't miss it.

**DON'T
MISS**



AUTOSPORT STAGE

INTERVIEW Former F1 racer-turned-TV analyst Martin Brundle is a must-see

HALL 20, STAND 2580

CLASSIC McLAREN DISPLAY

You're about to read about some of the most iconic Formula 1, sportscars and Indycars to be produced on these shores



McLAREN M7C-1

Raced in 1969 by marque founder Bruce McLaren, this chassis took him to podium finishes in Spain, Great Britain and Germany and third overall in that year's drivers' championship. It raced on for two further seasons in the hands of the legendary John Surtees in '70, before going to Jo Bonnier. In fact, it was the final F1 car the Swede raced in his long career.

In 1971, young Argentinian Carlos Reutemann used the chassis to take third in the non-championship Argentinian GP, while Red Bull's current motorsport boss Helmut Marko drove it in the 1971 German GP.

ALL PICS: LAT

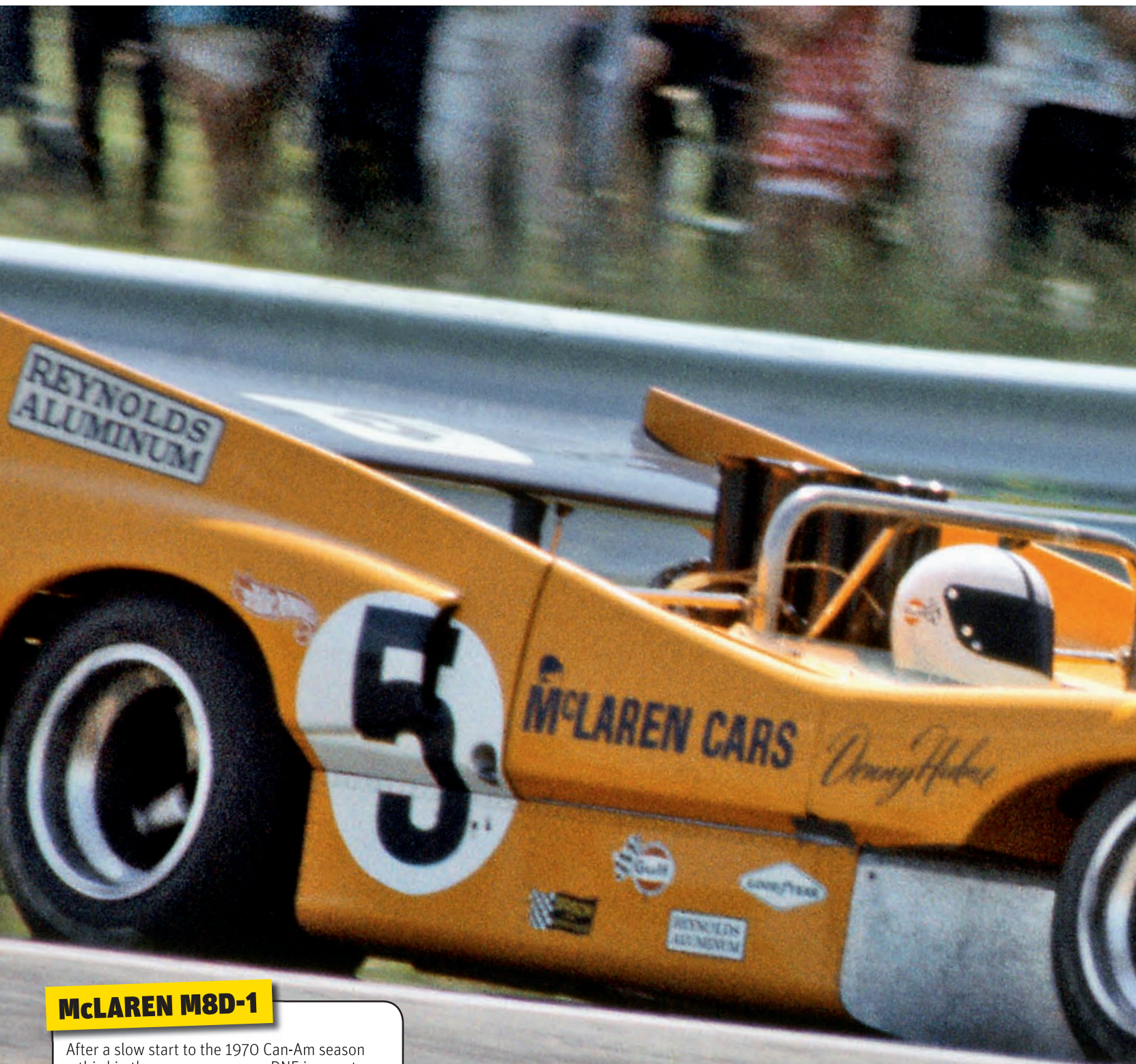
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AUTOSPORT STAGE

INTERVIEW Audi sportscar ace Allan McNish is always good value on our stage**HALL 4**

CATERHAM DRIVING EXPERIENCE

For a tenner you can sit in a Caterham 7 Roadsport next to an expert driver in the Ford-powered pocket-rocket, as he performs doughnuts and drifts



McLAREN M8D-1

After a slow start to the 1970 Can-Am season – third in the season opener, a DNF in race two – Denny Hulme used this car to dominate the championship. On two separate occasions he scored a hat-trick of wins, firstly at Watkins Glen/Edmonton/Mid-Ohio and then again at Donnybrooke/Laguna Seca/Riverside. It was easily enough for ‘The Bear’ to sweep to title glory in the Chevrolet V8-powered monster.

AUTOSPORT STAGE

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INTERVIEW Murray Walker is always a star turn on the AUTOSPORT main stage

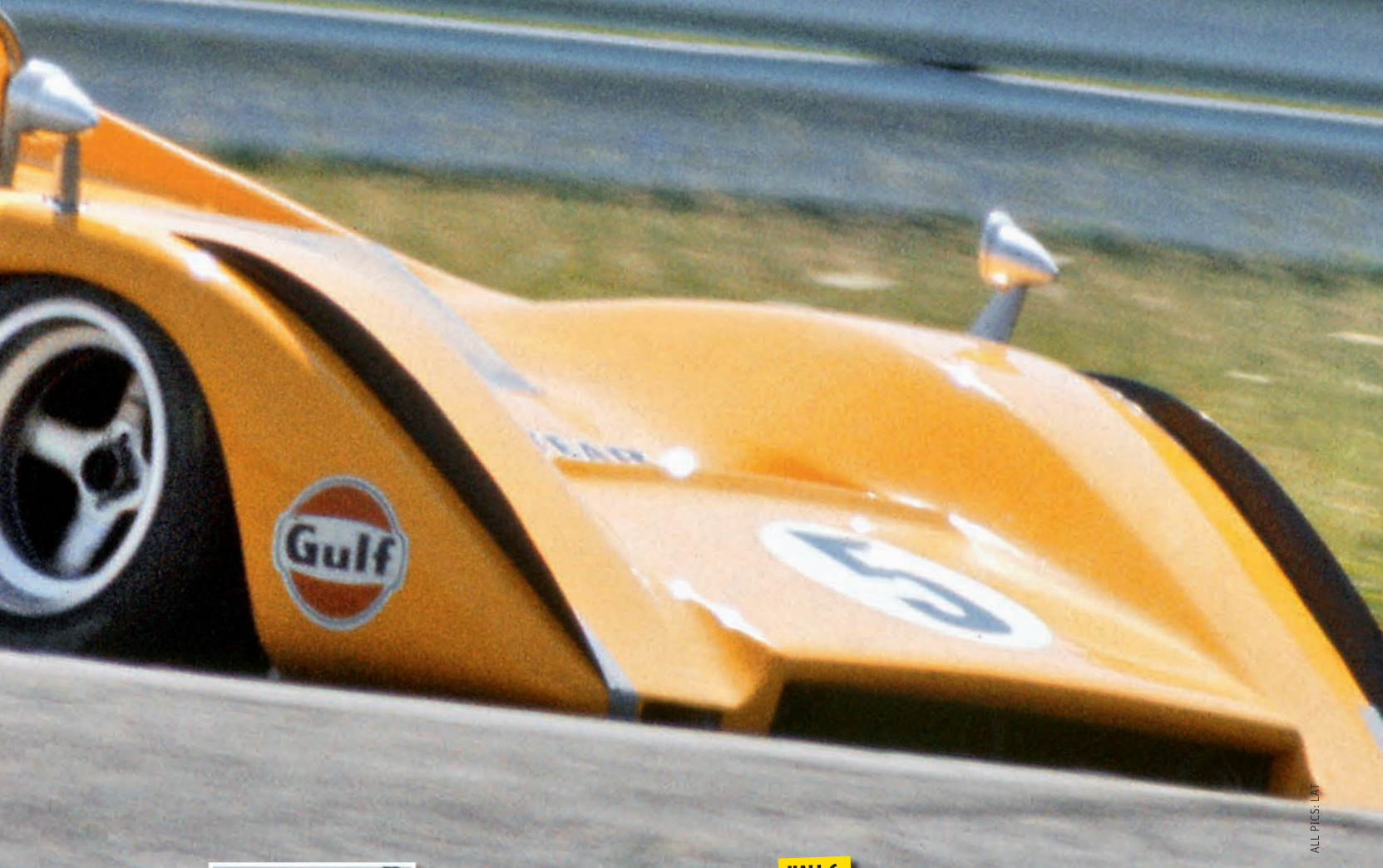
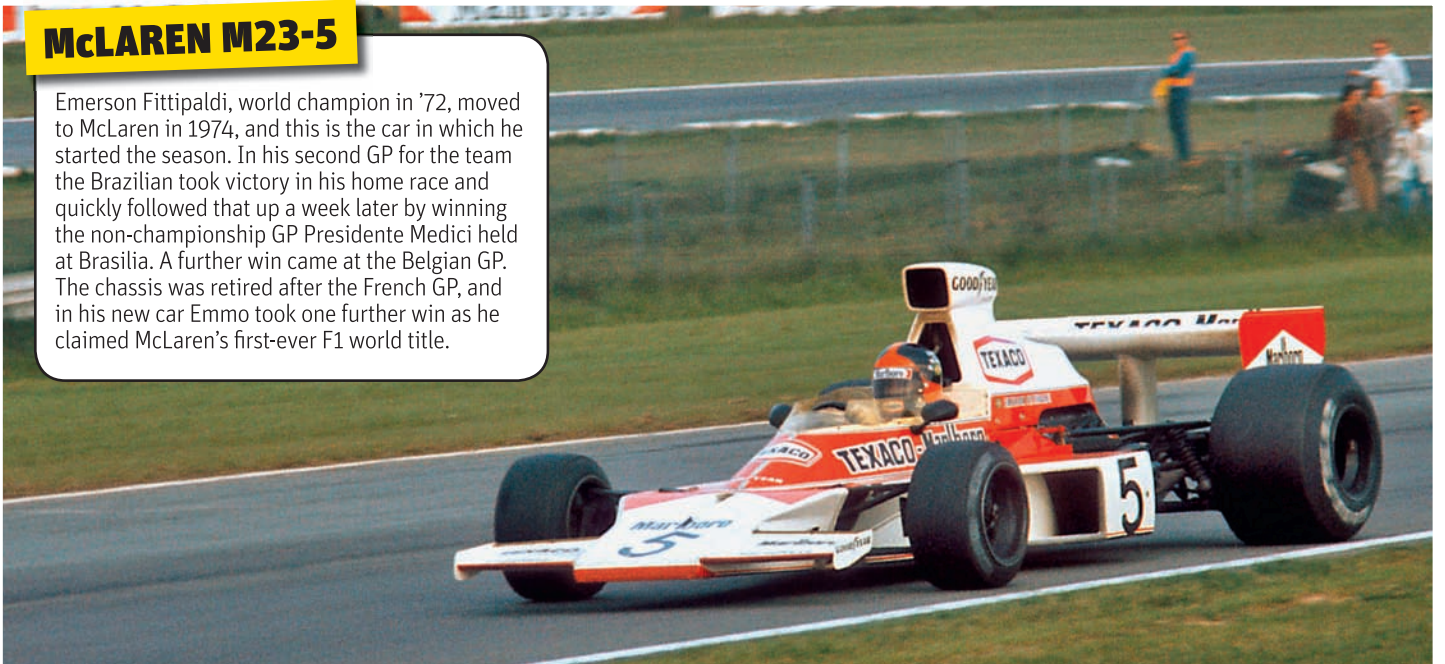
HALL 20, STAND 2600

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McLAREN M23-5

Emerson Fittipaldi, world champion in '72, moved to McLaren in 1974, and this is the car in which he started the season. In his second GP for the team the Brazilian took victory in his home race and quickly followed that up a week later by winning the non-championship GP Presidente Medici held at Brasilia. A further win came at the Belgian GP. The chassis was retired after the French GP, and in his new car Emmo took one further win as he claimed McLaren's first-ever F1 world title.



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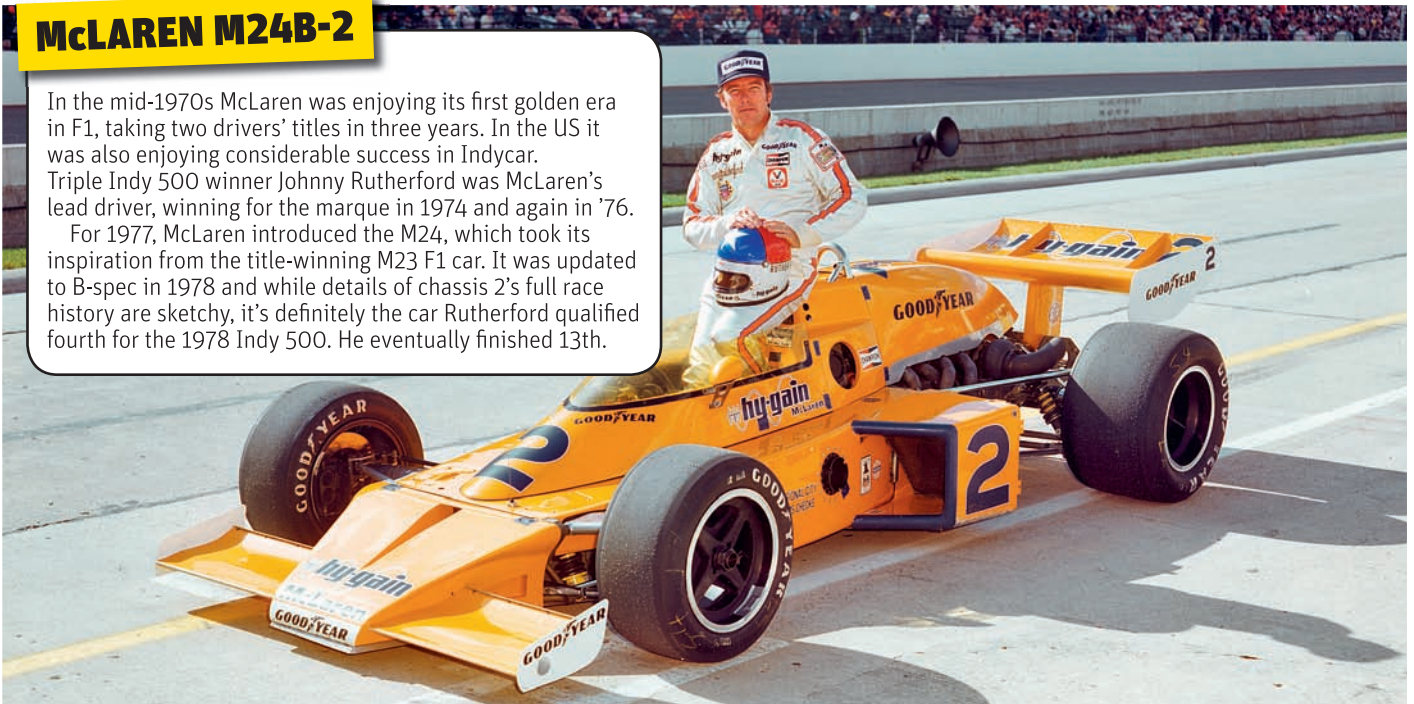
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LOOKING AHEAD TO THE SHOW!

McLAREN M24B-2

In the mid-1970s McLaren was enjoying its first golden era in F1, taking two drivers' titles in three years. In the US it was also enjoying considerable success in IndyCar. Triple Indy 500 winner Johnny Rutherford was McLaren's lead driver, winning for the marque in 1974 and again in '76. For 1977, McLaren introduced the M24, which took its inspiration from the title-winning M23 F1 car. It was updated to B-spec in 1978 and while details of chassis 2's full race history are sketchy, it's definitely the car Rutherford qualified fourth for the 1978 Indy 500. He eventually finished 13th.



McLAREN MP4/2-1

It had been seven long seasons since McLaren's last world title, but the TAG/Porsche-powered, John Barnard-designed MP4/2 changed all that. Legend has it that

Niki Lauda used chassis 1 throughout the whole of his championship-winning campaign in 1984, but that's not the case. The Austrian raced it for the opening four races; winning the only time he made the finish - in South Africa. After that, chassis 1

was employed as his spare in France, before being passed on to team-mate Alain Prost as his back-up in Monaco. Thereafter Lauda raced it for the remainder of the season, except at Zandvoort, when it was left back in the workshop.



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DON'T MISS



AUTOSPORT STAGE

INTERVIEW What's it like to be a Le Mans legend? Tom Kristensen talks on Saturday

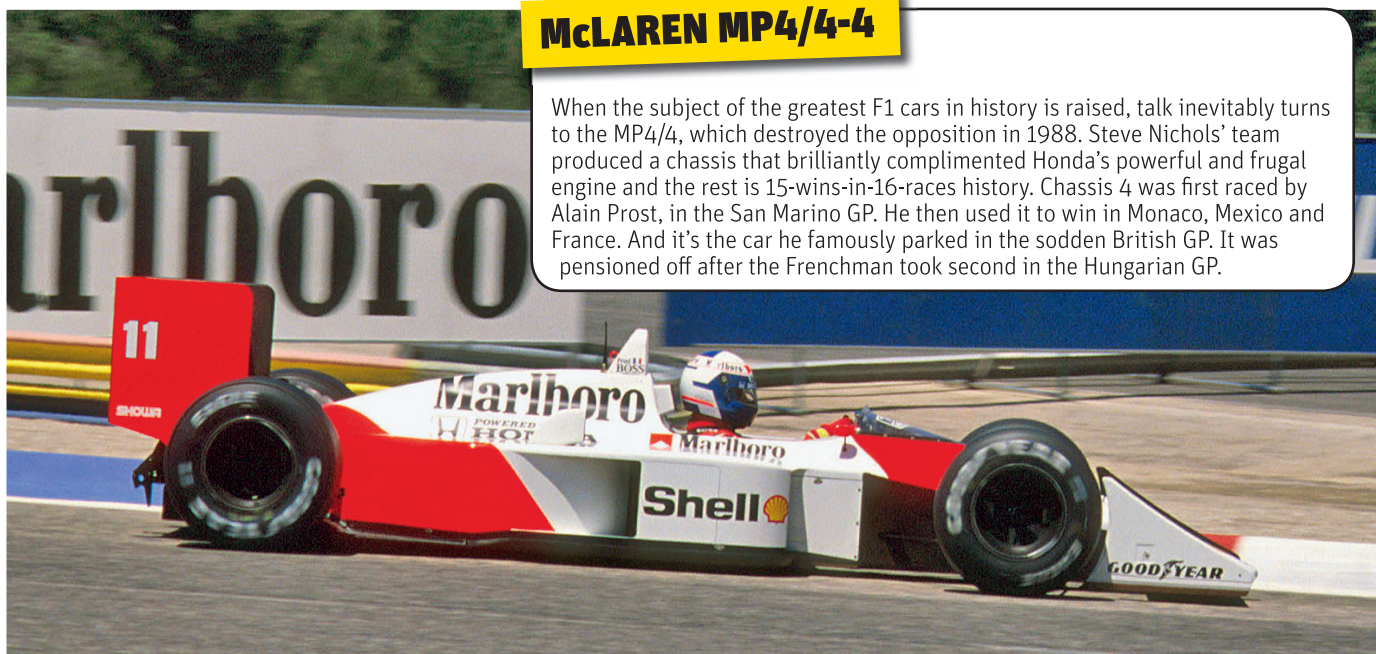
HALL 5

FIFTH GEAR LIVE ACTION ARENA

Hosted on Saturday and Sunday by Jason Plato and Tiff Needell, this show promises mesmerising action and stunts, plus interviews with star names

McLAREN MP4/4-4

When the subject of the greatest F1 cars in history is raised, talk inevitably turns to the MP4/4, which destroyed the opposition in 1988. Steve Nichols' team produced a chassis that brilliantly complimented Honda's powerful and frugal engine and the rest is 15-wins-in-16-races history. Chassis 4 was first raced by Alain Prost, in the San Marino GP. He then used it to win in Monaco, Mexico and France. And it's the car he famously parked in the sodden British GP. It was pensioned off after the Frenchman took second in the Hungarian GP.



McLAREN MP4/5-6

Few drivers have ever split public opinion like Ayrton Senna. At the British GP, the hordes of Nigel Mansell fans took great joy in booing loudly whenever the famous

yellow helmet zoomed by, so the brief history of chassis MP4/5-6 is probably fondly remembered by many. This was the car Senna raced, for the first time, at Silverstone in 1989. It featured a new transverse gearbox, and it was a botched

downchange at Becketts that led to the Brazilian spinning into retirement.

He had the last laugh, of course, winning next time out in Germany. The chassis became a museum piece after that; Senna a triple world champion.

DON'T MISS



AUTOSPORT STAGE

INTERVIEW BBC's F1 anchorman Jake Humphrey on life in the pits with DC & EJ

HALL 20, STAND 2450

NEW GINETTA G55 BREAKS COVER

See the new car that will compete in the new Ginetta GT Supercup in 2011. It boasts a 3.7-litre, 370bhp Ford engine and will race on the BTCC bill

McLAREN F1 GTR 01R

McLaren's first road car was conceived as the last word in supercar design, not as a racing machine. But it was inevitable that such a sophisticated piece of kit would find its way onto the race track. And given the rules at Le Mans in the mid-1990s, an attack on the most prestigious endurance race in the world was a given.

In order to make it a genuine contender, the GTR version of the F1 was created by Gordon Murray and his team. Nine of the cars were built. Chassis 01R was McLaren's test mule, but for the '95 Le Mans 24 Hours it was loaned out to Kokusai Kaihatsu Racing. In the hands of ex-F1 drivers JJ Lehto and Yannick Dalmas together with Japanese racer Masanori Sekiya the car ran almost faultlessly to claim an historic win – the first, and so far only, Le Mans triumph in the marque's history.



McLAREN MP4-13-3

Team orders are back in F1 now, not that they ever went away, and MP4-13-3 was involved in one of the most controversial incidents of their deployment. McLaren had spent six seasons struggling to recapture its dominant form of the late 1980s, but the

Adrian Newey-designed MP4-13, was a light-year ahead of the rest in the 1998 season-opener in Australia.

With the race theirs to lose, McLaren team-mates David Coulthard and Mika Hakkinen agreed that whoever led into the first corner would win. All was going to plan until Hakkinen misheard a pit call and made

an unscheduled stop. DC was now a clear leader, behind the wheel of chassis 3, but magnanimously opted to slow down and let Mika win.

The Scot would get his just deserts with victory in the San Marino GP, while there were a further four visits to the podium in chassis 3, as he took third in the title race.



ALL PICS: LAT

DON'T MISS



AUTOSPORT STAGE

INTERVIEW Jody Scheckter won the F1 world title with Ferrari and now runs a farm!

HALL 19

PISTONHEADS PERFORMANCE CAR SHOW

Featuring a raft of exotic supercars, rare and historical models, it also features the launch of the 2011 Nissan GT-R and the Ariel Atom 500 V8

McLAREN MP4-23-4

Like a good Hollywood producer, F1 loves a strong storyline, and MP4-23-4 was involved in just that. Having been cruelly denied the world title in his debut season at the final race, Lewis Hamilton set out to hit the ground running in 2008. Exploiting the maximum performance from chassis 4 he took an inspired win in Melbourne, Australia. He would also use 4 to claim another landmark win, showing the rest of the way around the streets of Monaco.

That was the last time Lewis drove the car, but he went on to take the title in F1's most dramatic final lap ever. Chassis 4 passed on to Heikki Kovalainen for three late-season races, but 10th in Singapore was the best he could muster.

**McLAREN MP4-12C**

The 12C marks McLaren's return to road-car construction after a break of 15 years. It bares more than a passing resemblance to the F1 that came before it, but this is no million-pound special, it's designed to take on the best from Ferrari and Porsche in the highly-competitive £200,000 supercar market.

And, as befits those aims, there will be a GT programme too, with CRS set to battle Ferrari and Porsche (and others) on track in 2012. Unfortunately a mock-up of the racer doesn't exist yet, but the road car is still a beautifully proportioned piece of automotive engineering.

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AMOC grids will look different in 2011

Aston club targets boost with big revamp for 2011

New series and longer races part of plan to revive Aston Martin Owners Club

» THE ASTON Martin Owners Club has replaced two of its series and moved its blue-riband St John Horsfall event to a new venue as part of a major revamp for 2011.

The AMOC has struggled in recent years. Internal issues and poor grids were a problem in 2010, but the club now hopes to reverse the trend.

The Aston Martin Historic and Classic championships will be replaced in 2011 by two multi-marque contests. The AMOC Pre-'66 Series will cater for GT and touring cars, such as Aston DB4GTs, Jaguar E-types, Ford Galaxies and Ford Lotus Cortinas. The AMOC Pre-'60 Series will be for 1950s sportscars.

The new series will get longer races than normal for the AMOC, running to 45 minutes. Driver changes will be allowed.

The AMOC's traditional St John Horsfall meeting, which has been held at Silverstone for over 50 years, will switch to Donington Park.

BACK TO BASICS

AMOC communications and marketing member Stephen Archer, who was part of the new competitions committee brought in during October, believes the changes underline the club's commitment to

racing. He said the committee will do "whatever the club needs" because it has to "re-establish" itself.

The new series will not allow cars that are highly modified as the AMOC hopes to attract more-standard machines.

"It's a fresh start," said Archer. "The trend is that people are less keen to invest in cars that are modified. Astons and other prestige cars are increasing in value and people don't want them changed."

Archer confirmed that developed "rocketships" will still be allowed in the club's Intermarque series and believes that keeping them away from the other series will attract original cars back.

"We haven't provided a home for those sorts of cars," he said. "This is a step back to our roots and it means we'll see some cars, including Astons, which have been racing elsewhere. We're optimistic people will come and race with us."

RACE LENGTHS AND VENUES

Archer believes the club needs to follow the trend of longer races, exemplified by the successful Classic Sports Car Club.

"The investment needed to get to a race meeting means people want races that are longer than 15 minutes," he said.

"We are competing with other series,

but we'll provide a competitive entry fee and want to avoid clashes – that's a challenge because of circuit availability."

Archer confirmed that the St John Horsfall switch to Donington was due to calendar issues. "We could only get a date at Silverstone in April and we didn't want our premium meeting that early in the year," added Archer, who did not rule out a return. "Donington's got plenty of history and the members like going there."

GT4 CHALLENGE

Aston Martin will again run its GT4 Challenge, launched last year, with the AMOC in 2011.

The endurance series, for N24s and Vantages, attracted modest grids in its inaugural year but is being expanded.

There will now be nine meetings instead of six, and races will be between 60 minutes and three hours.



Aston GT4 Challenge will expand this season

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

KEVIN TURNER
NATIONAL EDITOR

kevin.turner@haymarket.com



AS THE SON of an Aston Martin fan, some of my earliest race meetings were run by the AMOC. Strong grids, good racing and impressive cars are what I remember, but things haven't been so simple in recent years.

Battles between various factions within the AMOC, and competition from other strong historic clubs, contributed to falling grids. There was even talk of the club questioning its commitment to running meetings.

So the news that it not only wants to continue but revamp what it is doing is welcome. I've written before about my support for the big bangers of Super GT, but it's clear that kind of expensive series is no longer viable, given the current economic climate.

Attracting more-standard cars is a sensible move, but the one problem is that the AMOC is not alone. Masters, the CSCC, and Julius Thurgood's two new series all overlap the AMOC's new direction.

Of course, if there were no date clashes that might not be a problem, but given the logistical difficulties of putting together a calendar – let alone dovetailing with those of other organisations – that seems unlikely.

The AMOC has a great history – how many single-marque clubs can claim to have staged international events, as it did with the Martini Trophy in the 1960s and '70s? Let's hope it's able to find a niche for itself, perhaps with the help of Aston Martin's own GT4 Challenge.

Extra contact details

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ben.anderson@haymarket.com

CONTENTS

p79 MALLORY PARK BARC

p80 SEASON REVIEW BARC

p82 SEASON REVIEW CSCC

p83 SEASON REVIEWS IRELAND



GTs Merc GT car for Jordans

Andrew and Mike Jordan plan to race Eurotech GT3 machine in 2011

SLS will join Vectra in Eurotech stable

BRITISH TOURING Car Championship racer Andrew Jordan and the Eurotech squad plan to expand into GT racing this season.

One of Eurotech's long-term backers has ordered a new Mercedes SLS AMG GT3, and Jordan could race it in events that do not clash with the BTCC.

Eurotech, which has run Jordan's BTCC Vauxhall Vectra, has a GT background. It has competed in Britcar and last appeared in British GT in 2008, running an Ascari

for David and Godfrey Jones. Team boss Mike Jordan (Andrew's father) also helps the Team Pyro squad that now runs the Jones twins.

Jordan Jr said: "I'd like to do a couple of races, but I think what we do is dependent on which tracks will suit the car best and which ones we'll have the budget to race at."

Jordan Sr added: "Andrew's only 21 and I want him to get a broad brush. It's difficult to earn a living in touring cars,

whereas you can in GTs and sportscars, so it's something we have to look at."

Eurotech's car will be in the second batch of GT3 Mercedes to be delivered to customers, meaning the team is likely to receive it in June or July. "As we don't know exactly when, we don't know what we'll do with it yet," said Jordan Sr, who did confirm that the British Endurance Championship (formerly Britcar GT) and International GT Open were possibilities.

The former British GT champion and

BTCC race winner, who still tests cars for the Jones twins, also hopes to race the Eurotech SLS himself. "I want to get out there and drive more regularly again," said Mike. "I miss competing like hell."

"I'm doing the Spa 24 Hours with the Joneses [in their Mercedes] and I'm looking at it as a highlight of the year."

"I think the Mercedes will be an amazing long-distance car, though I think its weight may make it struggle on some British tracks."

Formula Renault UK

Malvern eyes Renault seat

BRITISH FORMULA FORD runner-up Scott Malvern is targeting a Formula Renault UK campaign for 2011.

The McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award finalist won two races in a Cliff Dempsey Racing-run Ray in 2010. He had been considering an F2 campaign, but now believes Formula Renault is a better possibility.

"I think the only real option is to do Formula Renault," said the 21-year-old. "The feedback from my Award tests was that I didn't have enough aero experience, so my aim is to get that before I go much further."

"I'd like to still be eligible for the

Award this year and if I do Renault I don't count myself out. But I need to have a good year."

Budget issues have prevented Malvern starting a testing programme, but he hopes to have something in place soon.

"I've got a couple of realistic options and I'm just hoping the seats don't fill up too fast," he said.



Malvern wants to learn slicks-and-wings craft

Formula Renault and Clio Cup

SRO takes over Formula Renault

FIA GT1 World Championship promoter SRO will take over running Formula Renault UK and the Renault Clio Cup in 2011.

SRO, which also administers various national GT series and British Formula 3, will replace Simon North's Grovewood Sport company, which had promoted FRUK and Clios for the past three seasons.

British F3 manager Lisa Crampton will become responsible for the two categories, which will remain on the BTCC-support package in 2011 as part of a renegotiated three-year deal.

Fortec Motorsport, which ran 2010 FRUK champ Tom Blomqvist and has



a leading British F3 team, welcomed the move. Team boss Richard Dutton added: "What might be nice would be a 50-50 deal, supporting F3 races in Britain and having rounds with TOCA."

Grovewood will continue to run FRenault BARC, which, for the last of its six double-headers in 2011, will replace the truncated Clio Cup on the BTCC bill at Silverstone in October.

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Toyota Racing Series

Hill heads to New Zealand races

RISING SINGLE-SEATER star Josh Hill will follow in his grandfather's footsteps by racing in New Zealand this year.

Double Formula 1 world champion Graham Hill twice won the New Zealand GP and contested the Tasman Cup, which included rounds in Australia and New Zealand. Now Josh, 19, will join a number of other European racers in the Toyota Racing Series.

Hill Jr will drive for ETEC Motorsport, alongside his 2010 British Formula Ford team-mate Scott Pye. Formula Renault Winter Cup champion Alex Lynn, FF1600 star Jordan Skinner and GP3 racer Ivan Lukashovich will also contest the series.

Josh's father, 1996 F1 world champion Damon, said: "There are lots of competitive drivers turning up so it's

not going to be easy, but Josh is a contender."

The series kicks off at Teretonga Park on January 13-16, includes the New Zealand GP at Manfeild in February, and concludes at Taupo in March.

Graham Hill contested the Tasman Series in the 1960s



LAT

Stuart Smith Sr 1947-2010

BRITISH STOCK car racing's most successful driver, Stuart Smith Sr, passed away on December 23 following a suspected heart attack.

During his 22-year short-oval career, Smith won the BriSCA F1 World Championship six times, and a record 500 meeting finals. He also claimed the National Points title for 13 consecutive years between 1969 and '81.

Smith recently featured in the



BBC1 series *Gears & Tears*, about the rivalry between his family and the Wainmans.

Frankie Wainman Sr said: "Life isn't going to be the same; stock cars revolved around Stuart."

Craig Dawson 1981-2010

CRS RACING engineer and ex-Hot Hatch racer Craig Dawson died from stomach cancer just before the New Year - aged 29.

A multiple teenaged kart champion, the Oxford Brookes engineering graduate guided Tom Kimber-Smith to the T-Car title in 2000, then into Formula Ford. Dawson won races during four part-seasons in the 750MC's Hot Hatch series, in a self-built Vauxhall Astra. He

also finished third in the Britcar 24 Hours, sharing a Ford Falcon.

More recently he engineered in sportscars for Intersport, Team Modena and CRS, and overcame considerable pain to race in Trofeo Abarth 500 GB.



STEVE JONES

MARCUS PYE

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing



Lloyd toiled hard in self-built FF2000

Surviving critical injuries but requiring constant care thereafter is the horror that everybody surely dreads more than death, yet only those in that situation can possibly assimilate. But as human interest stories go, the triumph of champion racer Phil Lloyd - who died on December 16, aged 60 - over astonishing adversity must inspire us all.

Lloyd loved tinkering with things mechanical as a young lad, says 'big' brother Peter. From the BSA Bantam motorbike 'kit' they turned into a hairy runner, to the Lotus 6 (PEW 202) Phil restored while studying at Imperial College, his genius was evident.

The boys built their own car, Nomad Mk1, for the 750MC's Formula 1200 championship in 1973, and it moved Phil up from seventh to fifth in '74 after a win at the opening round. His low-line Mk2 - new bar its home-brewed 1200cc Ford engine, which screamed to 11,000rpm - won third time out at Castle Combe in August '75, and carried number 3 the following season. Eight wins, against tough opposition, in the 22-round(!) '76 series earned Lloyd the F1300 title.

Having graduated with a First in mechanical engineering, Phil - who FF1600 legend Rick Morris recalls as "the top welder" at Vic Hollman's PRS concern (where Trevor Carlin cut his teeth) - then designed his own FF2000 single-seater.

After two underfunded seasons

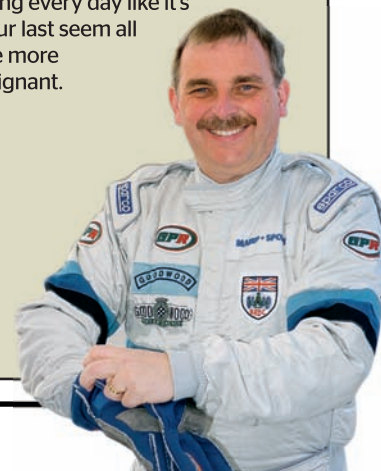
with Nomads Mk3 and Mk4 (he doggedly chased the works teams in the latter), Phil was offered a Reynard by Frank Bradley for '79. On October 14, at Mallory Park, his life changed. A multi-car startline incident fired the car onto the grass before Gerard's. It landed inverted and poor Phil's neck was broken. At almost 29, he was left tetraplegic, paralysed from the neck down. But 18 months later he discharged himself from Stoke Mandeville's spinal hospital, taking nurse Linda (his future wife) with him.

Remarkably, Phil fathered two children - daughter Vicky (a useful racer) and son Stephen - and never lost his passion for motorsport. Such was his brain's capacity that he was still designing, doing CAD drawings using a mouth tube, and completing the *The Telegraph's* cryptic crossword (in his head) shortly before his death.

Buoyed by the love of his family and zest for life, Phil defied medical predictions by living another 31 years. That 250 people attended his funeral in St Albans Abbey on December 29 speaks volumes.

As I wrote this column, news of CRS man Craig Dawson's tragically early death numbed me. Like Phil Lloyd, I admired Craig as both engineer and racer. While impossible, their passing makes living every day like it's your last seem all the more poignant.

“Phil was left tetraplegic, but defied medical predictions by living another 31 years”



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YOUR 2011 SEASON STARTS HERE...

MALLORY PARK BARC December 26
Wins for Ronchetti and Porter; Spencer double



STEVE JONES

Watson leads as Ronchetti (left) closes

Bullet and Pug defeat the cold

SNOW AND sub-zero temperatures were not enough to prevent Mallory Park hosting its annual Plum Pudding car races on Boxing Day. Amid Christmas-card scenes, Joss Ronchetti and Gareth Porter battled demanding conditions to take wins in the pair of Saloon car races.

From the outside of row four, the slick-shod (some elected to start on wets) Ronchetti – whose Talbot Sunbeam Lotus blew an oil pump prior to qualifying due to the extreme cold – drove around the outside of poleman Tim Watson and fellow local Ford Fiesta racer Chris Lester to lead at Gerard's Bend on lap one. Ex-Super Road Saloon competitor Watson got back in front at the hairpin, but the man on the move in the early laps was double VW Cup champion Phil House (Mini Cooper S), who was up to fourth by the end of lap two.

Ronchetti, meanwhile, was losing ground, thanks

to a misfire and a dirty windscreen. The Rover Tomcat of Ken Clarke passed 'The Bullet' into Lake Esses on lap two, with House briefly getting into third at the hairpin a lap later. The brute force of the Sunbeam soon shone through however, with Ronchetti blasting ahead of Clarke and Watson on Kirkby Straight by lap six. House climbed to second and made Ronchetti work hard to retain the lead for a few laps, until red flags came out after an unsighted Kevin Middleton (Subaru Impreza) rear-ended the Vauxhall Tigra clone of John Morris.

The reversed-grid format provided even greater entertainment in race two. Graham Brindley (Ford Escort Mk2) was on pole, after being stuck in the snow for quite some time in the first race, and he retained the lead for the first lap. Ex-ModProd frontrunner Gareth Porter (Peugeot 205) – another victim of the white stuff

earlier – then took over the lead. While Ronchetti and House stormed through the field, Porter was busy amassing a considerable advantage.

It was House who led the charge from the back, and he was third by the end of lap two, but Andrew Tsang's Fiesta delayed him for a lap and allowed Ronchetti (his misfire now worse) to close in. House did his best to keep the mightier car behind him but succumbed on lap six, allowing Ronchetti to pursue Porter. The Talbot closed, but did not quite have enough time to catch the Peugeot.

The entry for the Sports Car bouts was hit by several withdrawals – including that of likely winner Darren Luke – leaving Andy Cummings's Radical SR3 as the sole sports-racer to slither around the snowbound venue.

Rob Spencer's Stuart Taylor Locosaki was the car to beat, with the former BARC NW Sports/Saloon

Snowy Sports Car double fell to Spencer



STEVE JONES

champion taking both race victories. First time out he led from lights to flag, with the main point of intrigue surrounding the possibility of him lapping the entire field – a feat that he only just failed to achieve.

After battling through from a lowly grid position Cummings was second, while late entrant John Saunders (Caterham Supersport) got the better of Jonathan Blake's Mazda MX5 Mk3 for third. Former short-oval racer John Gil (Caterham) was next, while Kevin Middleton and Scott Leach provided typical MX5 action in their battle

for sixth spot, which Middleton finally took.

Middleton led the opening lap of race two, and was later involved in the decisive moment of the race. Spencer caught Cummings just as they arrived on the tail of another Middleton/Leach contest on Stebbe Straight.

The two frontrunners made it three abreast past the slower cars into the Esses, with Spencer emerging into what would become a clear lead. A lap down by the end, Saunders and Blake completed the top four.

■ By Ian Sowman

SALOONS (10 LAPS) 1 Joss Ronchetti (Talbot Sunbeam Lotus); 2 Phil House (Mini Cooper); 3 Tim Watson (Ford Fiesta); 4 Ken Clarke (Rover 220 Turbo); 5 Chris Lester (Ford Fiesta); 6 Kevin Middleton (Subaru Impreza). **Class winners** House, Clarke, Andrew Barrett (Piat Uno). **RACE TWO (17 LAPS)** 1 Gareth Porter (Peugeot 205); 2 Ronchetti +6.16s; 3 House; 4 Clarke; 5 Andrew Tsang (Ford Fiesta); 6 Lester. **CW** Ronchetti, House, Barrett. **SPORTS CARS (17 LAPS)** 1 Rob Spencer

(Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 2 Andy Cummings (Radical SR3); 3 John Saunders (Caterham Supersport); 4 Jonathan Blake (Mazda MX5); 5 John Gil (Caterham Supergraduate); 6 Kevin Middleton (Mazda MX5). **CW** Cummings, Blake, Clive Gimson (Triumph GT6). **RACE TWO (17 LAPS)** 1 Spencer; 2 Cummings +24.34s; 3 Saunders; 4 Blake; 5 Middleton; 6 Scott Leach (Mazda MX5). **CW** Cummings, Blake, Gimson. *No official timings were available for the opening races in each category.*

Power to Powell

It was another packed year for the BARC.
By PETER SCHERER

There were six different winners in Formula Renault BARC in 2010, and the title battle went down to Thruxton's final double-header.

Fortec's Mitchell Hale set the early pace with four consecutive podiums, including wins at Brands Hatch and Silverstone. He won again at Snetterton, but Hillspeed duo Alice Powell and James Theodore both came into the frame. FRUK refugee Powell (engineered by Manor's Sarah Shaw) won at Snetterton, and Theodore at Croft and Rockingham.

In the Thruxton finale Theodore won the first race from Powell, but roles were reversed in the second. With Hale down in ninth and fifth, it was Powell's title by eight points from Hale, with Theodore a clear third.

The Radical UK Cup headlined the Dunlop Great & British package. Terrence Woodward and Ross Kaiser's SR8 was the car to beat, but although they took their class title, Ross Allen's SR3 racked up enough points to claim the overall crown.

It was a straight fight between defending champion Colin Millar and Darren Luke in the Club Cup. Only Mark Abbott managed to break their dominance of the podium's top step with his win at Donington. Although Luke's PR6 won 13 of the 20 rounds, the lack of cars in his class restricted his points tally. It came down to a tie-break, with Luke taking the title.

The Mini Challenge provided thrills and spills from start to finish. The main rivalry was between outgoing champion Luke Caudle and Chris Knox, but as the season wore on both Chris Smith and Jason Richardson came into the frame to take their maiden wins. But the competitiveness of the R56 Class and Lee Allen's S Class dominance gave



Powell snatched title at Thruxton finale

Allen the overall title, from Caudle and top Club runner David Ogden.

Adrian Churchill's Vauxhall Astra VXR led the way in the Sport Maxx Cup. The Astras of Stuart Clarke and Alex Ashby, and Craig Currie's Nissan 370Z, each took victories, but Churchill had the measure of everyone bar guest driver Chris Ward, whose Nissan was a triple winner at Brands Hatch.

The CSL Cup and Young Guns were the other ever-presents on the package, as Nigel Rees's Pro1000 project failed to get off the ground. Although guest drivers often took overall CSL wins, Dan Stringfellow was the class act.

Once Leopold Ringbom had left the Young Guns after winning the first three rounds, the title fight became a duel between Patryk Szczerbinski and Max Cornelius. After three wins at Pembrey, Cornelius looked set for the crown, but in the Thruxton finale they collided on the last lap. Cornelius was excluded and Szczerbinski was champ.

Stuart Kestenbaum won his second Classic FF1600 title in three years by a comfortable margin. His Van Diemen RF79 took six wins, but might have been

pushed harder if Steve Hare had been able to make more appearances. In his four races he was never lower than second and took wins at Snetterton and Pembrey. Dave Lowe (Lotus 69) pipped Andrew Smith (VD FA73) in Class B.

In the FF2000s Ian Pearson's Van Diemen RF83 cemented a second consecutive title with four end-of-season wins to see off threats from Richard Wallington and Tony Hancock.

Des Thresh finished on the class podium in every round of the Kumho BMWs to secure his first title. Up front it was Garrie Whittaker battling with Dave Kempton and the Webb brothers. Five consecutive end-of-season wins gave Whittaker the class crown, but he was fourth overall, behind Class D men Stephan Lanfermaier and Paul Bellamy.

Alex Champkin started and ended the season with double wins, but it still was not enough to head the more consistent Russell Munns in the Clubmans Cup. The Classic Clubmans featured another season-long duel between Mark Charteris and Peter Harper. Charteris won that battle, but Spencer McCarthy's Class B Mallock topped the points table.

Sport Maxx was topped by Astra of Churchill



Kestenbaum (13) was FF1600 champ



2010 BARC champions

Formula Renault BARC

Alice Powell

Radical UK Cup

Ross Allen (SR3)

Radical Club Cup

Darren Luke (PR6)

Mini Challenge

Lee Allen (Cooper S)

Sport Maxx

Adrian Churchill (Vauxhall Astra VXR)

Young Guns

Patryk Szczerbinski

CSL Cup

Dan Stringfellow

Classic FF1600

Stuart Kestenbaum (Van Diemen RF79)

Classic FF2000

Ian Pearson (Van Diemen RF83)

Kumho BMW

Des Thresh (E36 M3)

Clubmans Cup

Russell Munns (Mallock Mk28/30)

Classic Clubmans

Spencer McCarthy (Mallock Mk20b)

Ginetta Challenge

George Murrells (G20)

Legends

Lawrence Davey

Pickups

Steve Dance

North west sports/saloons

Paul Dobson (Mazda RX-7)

Classic Group One

Steve Cripps (Ford Escort RS2000)

Classic Saloon & Historic

tourers Andy Messham (Mini)

Pre-'93 tourers

Roger Stanford (BMW M3)

Classic Thunder

Keith

Butcher (Nissan Primera)

Blue Oval Saloons

Graham Wait (Ford Escort Cosworth)

Post Historic tourers

Brian Stevens (Lotus Cortina)

Dunlop MN Saloons

Rod Birley (Ford Escort Cosworth)

Tin Tops

Andrew Mitchell (Peugeot 205 GTI)

Intermarque League

Steve Hall (Audi TT)

Austin Healey

David Smithies (3000)

MGOC

Martin Wills (MGF)

Caterham Classic

Graeme Smith

Super Graduates

James Sibbett

Mega Graduates

Paul Turley

Welsh Sports & Saloons

Russell Haggerty (Raw Stryker)

Citroen 2CV

Sammie Fritchley

MaX5 Racing

Paul Roddison

Meyrick makes it



Caudle was quick, but lost his Mini crown



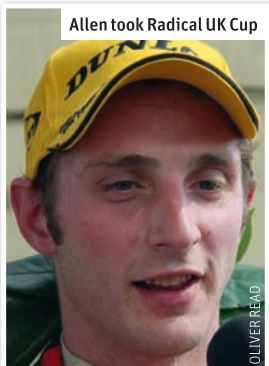
As ever, Legends provided fine racing



OLIVER READ



STEVE JONES



Allen took Radical UK Cup

OLIVER READ

Titanic battles for outright race victories between Bobby Verdon-Roe (McLaren MP4), Joaquin Folch (Brabham BT49) and Katsu Kubota (Williams FW07C) highlighted the 16th FIA Historic Formula 1 championship. With ground-effect class points being sprayed around like champagne, however, Peter Meyrick grabbed the title with five class wins from six starts in his late-built March 761.

With the briefest of shakedown at Estoril under his belt, defending champ Verdon-Roe won first time out at Hockenheim, but Folch shaded him by 0.05 seconds at Spa, and Kubota and veteran F1 engineer Colin Bennett's GGA team bounced back from a fire in practice at Monza to become the first Japanese podium-topper in the series' history. Thereafter the dynamic changed, with BV-R bagging a pair at Brands Hatch and Nogaro and Kubota reigning supreme at Dijon and Portimao.

While Meyrick did not appreciate being beaten into second in Class B by Formula Renault UK racer Michael Lyons (Hesketh 308E) at the finale, his sportscar young gun son Andy (Arrows A5) succeeded in a bid to suppress Verdon-Roe, with whom Meyrick Sr jointly led the table going in to the decider. Meyrick Jr's Michael Schumacher-esque pitwall squeezes in a car with a broken gear lit BV-R's ire, but with Kubota clear, Meyrick Sr scored the decisive points.

Verdon-Roe and Kubota finished second and third overall, ahead of ex-champion John Delane (Tyrrell 002) and the evergreen Terry Sayles (Osella FA1D), who won the early car and most modern flat-bottomed splits respectively. Folch completed the top six, despite an engine failure at Nogaro's 50th anniversary event, where just eight cars started against



Meyrick Sr was slightly controversial HF1 champ

a season high of 22 at Monza.

Kubota and Meyrick Sr were both on form in the March-dominated Historic F2 championship, run for the fourth time (and for 42 combatants) by Britain's HSCC. The gracious Japanese prevailed in his 1600cc BDA-powered 712 – dressed as his hero Ronnie Peterson's 1971 European title winner by season's end – while Meyrick wound up third (behind Daryl Taylor's Formula Atlantic 78B) having won races in his Toleman 782-Hart.

Masters Historic Racing recovered from losing its Abu Dhabi opener, and its disciples enjoyed racing all over Europe. Classic F3 champion Bill Coombs stepped up to F1 brilliantly, notching several victories in Peter Orlando's Tyrrell 009, none better than a tight one over former F1 HF1 champ Steve Hartley (Arrows A4) at the Silverstone Classic. Ex-British F3 race winner Rob Austin was another newcomer to excel, his wet Spa victory in another A4 impressing greatly.

The World Sports Car Masters events were not short of surprises either, particularly at Silverstone where Steve Tandy powered his Lola T70 Mk3B continuation car to a resounding win. Talk of the select Proto '70s fields was Abba Kogan's Matra MS670s, in which Rob and Rick Hall entertained at the reopening of Donington Park in September.

● By Alan Warren



Lola T70s again starred in World Sportscar Masters

MICK WALKER

Classics have a carnival

OLIVER TIMSON looks back on another strong year for the Classic Sports Car Club

Adams leads Future Classics at Cadwell



Muirhead's Lotus Seven starred in Swinging Sixties

The CSCC's traditional series continued to prosper in 2010, and they were joined by the fledgling Classic Ks.

Such was the Swinging Sixties' popularity that they were split in two for much of the year. John Muirhead's Lotus 7 set the pace in classes D-H, with early wins at Brands Hatch, Anglesey and Oulton Park, before the series' success penalties (in the form of added time during mandatory pitstops) blunted his charge. Nonetheless he ended the year in style with victory at Donington Park, having pressured leader Paul Turnbull's TVR Tuscan into an error. Turnbull himself had taken the spoils in the previous round at Snetterton, while the Lotus Elans of Nick Fleming and Stephen Bond and the Lotus Seven of Dave Boland/Roger Lee were among the other winners.

Sprites were to the fore in classes A-C, with Ian Hulett, Charles Marriott and the pairing of Tim Cairns/Richard McKoen enjoying success.

The Magnificent Sevens boasted eight different winners, with some terrific scraps throughout the year. Mark Coleing's three wins topped the pile, including outright success in the Inter-series races at Spa and Brands.

There were plenty of familiar faces in Tin Tops, with Hondas still the cars to

beat. The evergreen John Hammersley partnered Simon Taylor to victories at Snetterton and Mallory Park in their Civic, while Nigel Ainge/Alan Broad's Integra headed the Tin Top field in three of the last four events. One of the stand-out performances came from David Cox/Jerry Hampshire, whose newly acquired Peugeot 306 surged to success at Silverstone.

Last year's Future Classics pacesetter Nick Olson continued where he left off by leapfrogging Martyn Adams' TR7 to win the opener in his iconic Lotus Esprit. Despite the inevitable success penalties that followed, he also took third-placed finishes at Brands, Anglesey, Silverstone and Snetterton, before ending his year on top at Donington. Adams also remained at the sharp end, tasting success at Brands. A late burst from Riki and Joe Cann's Aston resulted in two wins from the last four races, while Mark Koeberle's well-driven Porsche 944 was also among the victors.

Although the new Classic Ks enjoyed a big grid for their debut, numbers ebbed away slightly as the year wore on. The Allen Tice/Chris Conoley Marcos won the inaugural race after Stephen Radcliffe's Jaguar E-type had fallen off. After missing a couple of rounds, Radcliffe bounced back to win at

Oulton. In a season that included a summer trip to Spa, other frontrunners included the Dave Thompson/Jon Wolfe TVR Grantura, Stephen Bond's Elan and Paul Castaldini's E-type.

Complementing the CSCC programme were the Jaguar XJSs and Saloons. Having scooped six wins and only once being outside the top three, Richard Dorlin deservedly took the Saloons championship. Andrew Harrison sealed the XJS title ahead of brother Alex, having battled for outright victories with reigning champion Chris Palmer and Lawrence Coppock all season. After sitting out much of the year with engine problems, Sam Clarke returned with a double victory at Snetterton.

With the new Deutsch Marque series for production German sports, saloons and GTs coming in for 2011, the club's future continues to look bright.

Hondas dominated Tin Tops field



TRACEY TAKES TOURING CAR TITLE



Tracey's Cosworth took new Irish tin-top title

The 2010 Irish season was whittled down to just seven meetings at Mondello Park, a continuing sign of the times that was also reflected in the cancellation of the historic Phoenix Park Motor Races due to insufficient entries.

At Mondello, the wise decision to cut the number of meetings ensured reasonable numbers for each event. Two success stories of the year were undoubtedly the Irish Touring Cars revival and the birth of the Ginetta Juniors. In the ITCC, Martin Tracey in his Westward Engineering Ford Sierra

Cosworth was a runaway winner, taking seven of the eight points races. Tracey's dominant run was halted only once, by June meeting victor Brian Sexton (Sierra). Barry Rabbitt (Honda Integra DC2) was second.

Niall Murray (15) took a leaf out of older brother (tin-top ace) Eoin's book to claim the inaugural Irish Ginetta Junior crown, winning six out of nine races and clinching the series with two rounds remaining. Andy O'Brien, who'd never raced anything before, was runner-up from Joel Richardson.

Dan Polley and Ray Moore went into

the final Formula Vee round at Kirkistown with the title to play for, Polley having won the Leinster Trophy. The pair collided at the County Down circuit and neither finished, leaving Moore to take the crown by two points. Despite having the same score as Polley, Robert Casey was third due to fewer wins. Ger Byrne and Damien Murphy took respective Class B and C titles.

The Fiats provided their own brand of entertainment, Alistair Kellett wrapping up the Abarth title at the Leinster Trophy meeting. Noel Greene and Gordon Kellett finished the series behind Alistair. Barry Travers was a runaway winner in the Punto class, from Barry Hallion, while in the Unos Anthony Connors was unbeaten in his debut year, with Ulick Burke runner-up.

Alan Watkins stole the Stryker title from Damian Roddy, while the Global Lights produced close racing and a dynamic battle, eventually won by Peter Drennan over Bernie Braden.

Dan Daly (Reynard 92D) became Formula Libre champ, but his son Stephen (FRenault) was a star of the show in a superb series. Kevin Sheane took Formula Sheane honours, while Jackie Cochrane won the Historic title.

● *By Linda Keen*

McMULLAN AND CRAWFORD STAR

Fears that 2010 might prove to be a barren one in the wake of the financial crisis proved to be wide of the mark – at least as far as Kirkistown was concerned. Certainly entries were slightly thinner on the ground than in the previous season, but only slightly, and any shortage of quantity was more than made up for by the quality of the competition, which provided excitement throughout the year.

In terms of sheer excitement, FF1600 again proved that it has still got it, while the fledgling one-litre Roadsports category ran it close for on-track thrills. A number of visits from the Irish Formula Vees and Sheanes also provided plenty of edge-of-seat moments for the fans.

Jonathan McMullan (ex-Wayne Boyd RF92) emerged as FF1600 champion, but there were four possible winners going into the final rounds. Non-contenders did the winning on that final day: Ivor McCullough (RF01) and Martin Donnelly Trophy winner Neville Smyth (Ray), neither of whom did a full season, emerged victorious, while McMullan did just enough to win the



McMullan beat older hands in FF1600

title with a fifth and a sixth.

Fellow title aspirants John Ferguson (Ray) and Morgan Dempsey (Van Diemen) were in the thick of the action, but both needed wins to top McMullan's score (gained from a couple of early-season victories followed by a string of solid places) and podium positions just weren't enough. The fourth contender, Mike Edgar, ended a good season with a bad day.

In the Pre-1990 Championship, John Stewart emerged on top after

a season-long Reynard battle with Nigel Smyth, with pre-1982 champion Ryan Templeton third in his venerable Crossle.

The one-litre 'Seven'-style sports cars increased in number during the year and entertained with some hectic racing, from which the wily Mark Crawford emerged triumphant ahead of Colin Reid. Newboy Ryan Magennis finished an impressive third on points.

Overall sports car honours once again went to Stephen Donnelly.

● *By Richard Young*

YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



McMillan says no to Formula 1 superteams

Customer concept is right for F1

Having read that Ferrari is promoting the idea about third cars being run by the top teams, and seeing the problems experienced by mid-field and new teams financing their programmes, there's a much better solution: simply allow customer cars to return.

Williams could make money and solve HRT's lack of technology by supplying fully-built cars, Toro Rosso would make sense again as a Red Bull B-team...

I don't think three or four superteams would be good for F1. I want 13 different teams with their own personalities and liveries.

Angus McMillan, by email

EDITORIAL CONTACT mail@autosport.com

What kind of nonsense is this? 1.6-litre turbo 'green' engines? How much fuel is going to be saved compared to the total amount used flying the F1 circus around the world?

How much is it going to cost developing these engines? Surely F1 would be better off donating a few million to 'green' research. It would bring positive publicity, save the teams a fortune, and F1 wouldn't be stuck with 1.6-litre engines.

For goodness' sake, 1.6 litres is not F1.
Nathan Beehl
By email

I hope Force India gives Paul Di Resta a racing seat this year. He has proved, without doubt, that he has all the necessary skills and natural ability to be in F1.

With only two British drivers currently on the grid, it's time the home of motorsport had another representative. Di Resta ticks all the boxes.

Vitantonio Liuzzi has had plenty of opportunities to impress, but should now be moved aside for this talented Scot.
Brendan Budgen
Woodley, Berkshire

Just before Christmas motorsport lost one of a rare breed, a true gentleman in the sometimes over-commercial sport we love.

Mac Daghorn was a successful driver competing against the likes of Jim Clark and Derek Bell. Lack of funding meant he turned to engineering: he was 'Mr Air Cool', building race-winning engines for Formula Super Vee and UK Formula Vee. But he was more than just that, turning up at tests and races, getting his hands dirty without payment.

A wonderful man.
Keith Atkins
By email

Having read about the pressure Jaime Alguersuari and Sebastien Buemi are supposed to feel at Toro Rosso with the introduction of Daniel Ricciardo for Friday practice, I feel this can be of no benefit to the team's campaign.

What good can come from taking an hour of valuable track time off one of the drivers who's required to get the job done on Sunday? STR exists to develop young Red Bull drivers, so give him one of the race seats and evaluate him properly.
Phil Beckett
Morecambe, Lancashire

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1. **CHAPMAN FAMILY BACKS GROUP LOTUS**
2. **BARRICHELLO: 2011 WILLIAMS IS 'AGGRESSIVE'**
3. **TEAM LOTUS UNVEILS WINNING DESIGN**
4. **STEWART: CURRENT F1 FIELD IS BEST EVER**
5. **THE TOP 10 F1 STORIES OF 2010**

AUTOSPORT.COM PLUS

TOP STORY ONLINE

A DAY BEHIND THE WHEEL OF AN F1 CAR

To read this exclusive feature and many others like it, log on to autosport.com/plus and choose which package you'd like. A month will cost £5.50, a year £46. Includes access to Forix – the ultimate stats website.

WIN!



ROAD ANGEL VANTAGE

This week's star letter will receive a Road Angel Vantage – a dedicated safety camera and blackspot locator that displays the legal speed limit of every road you drive, automatically and wirelessly updating its database every few minutes as you drive. For more details on Road Angel please visit www.roadangelgroup.com Please ensure that your full address is included on all correspondence.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

It is the policy of AUTOSPORT to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please note the issue date and page number when contacting us on autosport.editorial@haynet.com

THE LATEST GEAR

The most desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts

LAMINATED WOODEN CIRCUIT ART

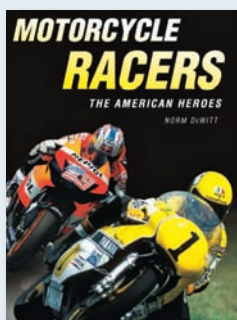
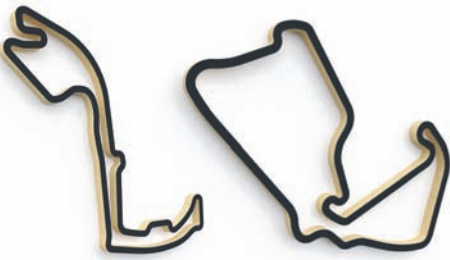
\$219

linearedge.com

Here's a unique and, we reckon, funky way to show off your favourite race track in wooden-block art form. You can choose from 18 Formula 1 venues (only South Korea's Yeongam is missing from the 2010 line-up), 18 MotoGP and 13 World Superbike tracks. NASCAR road courses Road America, Sears Point and Watkins Glen feature in the line-up, too.

All the circuits are constructed from high-quality Baltic birch plywood and then laminated before being precision cut to ensure accuracy. They also come with 3M Command Velcro mounting strips to allow you to mount them on the wall without having to drill any holes.

The guys behind the idea are also keen to do personal commissions and customised circuit blocks, so if there's a track not here that you'd like creating, get in touch with them online. Nurburgring Nordschleife, anyone?!



MOTORCYCLE RACERS
£18.99 (978 0 7603 3468 3)
[NDeWitt\(motorbooks.com\)](http://NDeWitt(motorbooks.com))

US bike racing aficionado Norm DeWitt profiles the seven American bike GP legends who lifted the title.

Featuring Kenny Roberts, Freddy Spencer, Eddie Lawson, Wayne Rainey, Kevin Schwantz, Roberts Jr and Nicky Hayden, this is the story of a dominant breed, with invaluable input from the aces themselves.



GOODWOOD REVIVAL DVD
£22.99 (120 mins)
autosport.com/shop

The world's finest historic race meeting is relived in this slick, two-hour highlights package that includes race action, lifestyle features and interviews with the stars.

The whole show is held together well by the uber-posh Ben Fogle and the rather-pleasing-on-the-eye Natalie Pinkham.



JAGUAR '88 T-SHIRT
£20 inc P+P
slickattire.com

Jaguar's 1988 Le Mans 24 Hours win – its first for 31 years – is commemorated with this retro T-shirt from Slick Attire.

It's a good time for Jag and Le Mans fans to honour the achievement, particularly following the death late last year of Tom Walkinshaw, the man who helped make the big cats roar again.

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YOUTUBE: INSIDE THE RML CHEVROLET WTCC TEAM



SEARCH FOR: Chevrolet WTCC - Meet The Mechanics (3:33)
Ray Mallock's squad lifted all three World Touring Car Championship titles in 2010 – you can read about it on page 48. Now, go behind the scenes and meet some of the guys who helped make it all happen...

WHAT'S ON...

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world this week – plus TV and online

They're going to Chile;
it won't be chilly...



VOLKSWAGEN MEDIA

DAKAR RALLY

Iquique, Chile - Chilecito,
Argentina

January 6-13

www.dakar.com

The Dakar features a modern classic of a stage today (Thursday) with the descent to Iquique. Opposite the sea, the competitors will descend a 1.4-mile slope, at an average gradient of 32 per cent! The week includes a spell in the Andes mountain range and ends in the white-hot dunes of Fiambala.

...but it will be
decidedly nippy here



ANDROS TROPHY

Rd 4/7

Isola 2000, France

January 7-8

www.tropheeandros.com

**ACCESS
ALL
AREAS**

Our guide on how to
keep the motorsport
flame burning
through the cold
winter months

HAYNES MOTOR MUSEUM

THE NAME Haynes always conjures up images of the workshop manual, that indispensable guide to car maintenance. And the success of these ubiquitous tomes allowed publisher John Haynes to build up an impressive collection of cars.

This led, 25 years ago, to the creation of the Haynes International Motor Museum. Situated in Sparkford, just outside Yeovil in Somerset, the museum has since developed into a celebration of the history of the motorcar and motorcycle.

From an original collection

of 29 cars, there are now over 400 exhibits, which go from the first car ever to be bought in Somerset, right up to modern classics such as the Jaguar XJ220.

The Hall of Motorsport houses a small collection, which include a gorgeous ex-Prince Bira Delahaye and a Van Diemen Formula Ford once raced by Ayrton Senna. There's also the chance to get close to Michael Schumacher's 1996 Ferrari and the 1974 Embassy Hill Lola driven by Graham Hill.

As well as charting the development of the car, the

Schumacher finds apex
in Sparkford town centre



museum also has some interactive displays, such as the history of cars in games – from Victorian slot machines to the computer games of today – and the development of car adverts.

The gift shop is packed full of great models and interesting books, making it a fabulous way to spend a few winter hours. Details are available at www.haynesmotormuseum.com.

Television

THURSDAY JANUARY 6

1240-1445 Motors TV
British Historic Rally review
1445-1650 Motors TV
Barbados Rally
1650-2000 Motors TV
Asian Festival of Speed
GT4, touring cars and FBW in Malaysia.
1945-2015 Eurosport LIVE
Dakar Rally stage 5
2215-2245 Eurosport
Dakar Rally stage 5

FRIDAY JANUARY 7

1515-1720 Motors TV
Scottish racing season review
Legends and the Scottish Mini Coopers.
1825-1855, 2235-2305 Motors TV
Australian Minis
1915-1945 Eurosport LIVE
Dakar Rally stage 6
2100-2205 Motors TV
Irish rallying review
2200-2230 Eurosport
Dakar Rally stage 6

SATURDAY JANUARY 8

0355-0420 Five
Motorsport Mundial
0700-0725 Channel 4
GT Academy
Computer-game racers compete for real-life GT4 drive.
0800-0900 Dave
Race Car Driver
Reality TV series following Paul Tracy's 2005 Champ Car exploits.

1005-1035 Motors TV
Australian Minis
1415-1720 Motors TV
Asian Festival of Speed
1825-1925, 2335-0040 Motors TV
Superstars season review
1925-2130 Motors TV
British Historic Rally review
2130-2335 Motors TV
Barbados Rally
2200-2230 Eurosport
Dakar Rally rest day

SUNDAY JANUARY 9

0900-1210, 2305-0215 Motors TV
Asian Festival of Speed
1310-1415 Motors TV
Superstars season review
1415-1620 Motors TV
Mazda Racing Review
A look back at a great year for British club racing's most popular championship.
1945-2015 Eurosport LIVE
Dakar Rally stage 7
2230-2300 Eurosport
Dakar Rally stage 7

MONDAY JANUARY 10

1915-1945 Eurosport LIVE
Dakar Rally stage 8

TUESDAY JANUARY 11

1915-1945 Eurosport LIVE
Dakar Rally stage 9

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 12

1915-1945 Eurosport LIVE
Dakar Rally stage 10

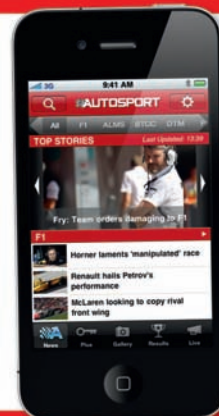
Online

AUTOSPORT.COM

Coming up on the web this week

DAKAR RALLY

As the 2011 motorsport season kicks off with the Dakar Rally, AUTOSPORT.com not only provides regular updates from the South American epic, but also a daily blog from office Essex man Glenn Freeman as he follows the route in one of Volkswagen's support vehicles. Back on firmer ground, the website will bring you all the very latest news and analysis from the 2011 Formula 1 season build-up.



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REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

We cast a critical eye over the best and worst of this year's TV coverage



FF1600 at Brands: dream telly in the olden days

WHEN *REVVED UP* was at school, double maths on a Friday morning was something to be dreaded. Even the teacher would get bored after an hour or so, but at least he was getting paid to dish out this form of mild torture. But there was sanctuary...

The graph paper, designed for quadratic equations and finding the hypotenuse (it was in the zoo with the rhinotenus – boom, boom!), was perfect for concocting my dream running order for the following afternoon's *Grandstand* on BBC1.

Football Focus at 12.15, naturally, but instead of the regular monotony of horse racing from

Kempton Park between Saturday's main events, it would be the latest instalment in the Champion of Brands saga, then Formula Ford 2000 from Cadwell Park, followed by Production Saloons from Mallory. All highlights from the previous weekend, the pick of the races that I'd pored over in that Thursday's AUTOSPORT.

But as my old maths teacher probably used to say (as if I was listening), be careful of what you wish for, you just might get it. In today's satellite age the listings are chock-a-block with British club racing. Maybe I'd have devoured hour after

hour of it in my younger years; now it's hard to see the wood for the trees.

I lament the passing of *Powersports International* on Screensport, my favourite-ever TV channel. A blend of Formula Ford, National Saloon Car Cup, Vauxhall Junior and Lotus and Porsches – plus some Australian action including its top-line touring car series of the day. It was only an hour long, but proved the maxim that less can be more.

The race I remember best was when some

young Aussie kid stuck it to an early-'90s Formula Ford field in an ancient Van Diemen RF85 around a soaking-wet Amaroo Park. It was a guy called Craig Lowndes. Wonder whatever came of him...

Featuring the vocal talents of the fantastically-booming Neville Hay, nasal brother Richard, the camp-as-Christmas Robin Bradford and an antipodean one, I could have listened to them all day. Well, anything but double maths. *Revved Up*

"The quality of *Powersports International* on Screensport proved the maxim that less can be more"

THE WEEK IN PICTURES

The lensmen pounding the beat, from Austria to South America



SAINZ SUPERB IN SOUTH AMERICA

VW ace Carlos Sainz got his 2011 Dakar off to the perfect start by winning the first two stages

MARCO LU/DPP



SWATCH WHAT YOU'RE DOING, FELLAS
F1 man Christian Klien leads rally ace Kris Meeke in the Swatch Snowmobile GP at Saalbach in Austria

ASSOCIATION IMAGES

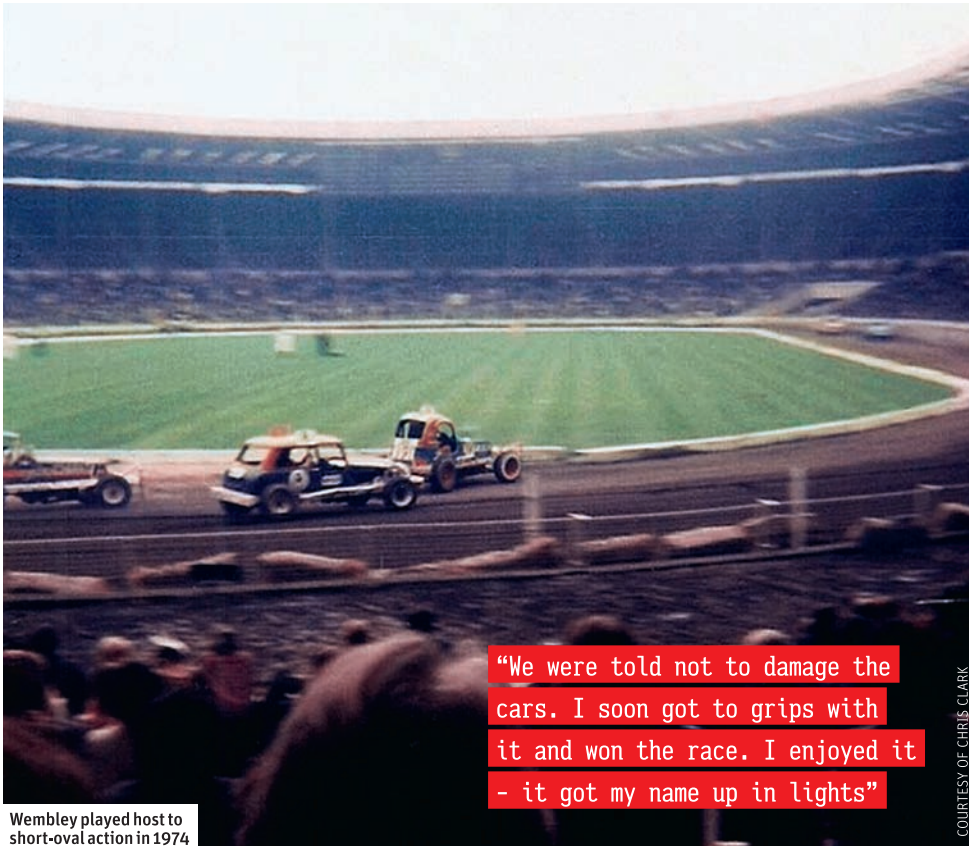
FERRARI'S EXTENDED BRAND AWARENESS

German artist Wolfgang Seidl showed off his skills at the Ferrari Sponsor Art exhibition in the Galleria Ferrari museum during the Christmas holidays



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Stock car legend Stuart Smith beats Alen, Clark and Hulme at Wembley



Wembley played host to short-oval action in 1974

"We were told not to damage the cars. I soon got to grips with it and won the race. I enjoyed it - it got my name up in lights"

COURTESY OF CHRIS CLARK

BrisCA FORMULA 1 stock car legend Stuart Smith Sr, who died just before Christmas, was the patriarch of one of the feuding families in BBC1's recent short-oval docusoap, *Gears & Tears*. As well as his six world and 13 consecutive National Points titles, 'the Maestro' had one victory that no Wainman can boast on his CV: a win at Wembley Stadium over rally stars Markku Alen and Roger Clark, and Formula 1 world champion Denny Hulme.

The date was June 29, 1974, when the British Stock Car Association held its first meeting at the 'Home of Football' - long before the Race of Champions landed there at 'New Wembley' in 2007-08. Admission charges ranged from 80p to £2 for a seat in the 'Royal Box Area'.

Apart from the stock car fare on offer, a 'Champion of Champions' event was also staged on the shale-oval track, which ran between the hallowed turf of the football pitch and the greyhound track. In identical Ford Escort Mexicos, the four heats provided wins for Hulme (who shoved fellow Kiwi John Nicholson aside at the last corner), Alen (who defeated RAC Rally winner Roger Clark), Smith and world hot rod champion Barry Lee.

In the final Smith grabbed the lead into the first corner and stayed there for the duration. AUTOSPORT's report claimed Alen "was noticeably quicker into the corners and excited the partisan [estimated 10,000] crowd into unruly yells and shouts as he threatened to nudge Smith out of his way". Lee finished third, ahead of Hulme.

Last year, Smith recalled: "It was organised by the promoter Trevor Redmond. He asked me if I would take part in it and I'd said, 'Sure, no problem'. I didn't get paid to take part - we were racing that night at Wembley anyway - but I think the others like Clark and Hulme did. It was just a bit of fun.

"We were told not to damage the cars. I soon got to grips with it and won the race. I really enjoyed it and it got my name up in lights."

Only one more BriSCA meeting was ever held at Wembley, with the programme notes including a derisory attack on the media's coverage of the inaugural event: "Perhaps if Markku Alen had beaten Stu Smith we would have managed a few more column inches, but he did not. The only ones we have proved anything to are ourselves: that oval racers are the greatest!" ❧

THIS WEEK IN...



JANUARY 11, 2007

McLAREN VOWED to build reigning double F1 world champion Fernando Alonso a winning car for his first season with the squad after jumping ship from Renault. On the eve of the launch of the team's new MP4-22, Alonso made his first official visit to the Woking factory.

"Fernando Alonso is a proven product," said McLaren's Martin Whitmarsh. "With Lewis Hamilton already doing an exceptional job, there are no excuses in our driver line-up."

In other news, multiple F3000 champion team Super Nova revealed reigning British F3 champ Mike Conway and Italian Luca Filippi would race for it in GP2, Dick Bennetts's West Surrey Racing concern landed a deal to campaign a pair of BMW 320si racers in the BTCC, and British F3 powerhouse Carlin Motorsport ended a 10-season association with Mugen-Honda to switch to Mercedes engines.



NEXT ISSUE



Why Branson's boys are most radical new team...

VIRGIN RACING

How keeping sleek is key to its future

On sale Jan 13

PLUS

Porsche 911 test; Monte Carlo preview; inside line on AUTOSPORT International

MIKE WILDS

United States GP, Watkins Glen ■ October 6, 1974 ■ Ensign N174-Cosworth ■ Relief over finally qualifying



Wilds got the Ensign to the finish first time out

I'VE RACED for 45 years in well over 100 cars from all the major disciplines so it's really hard to chose a favourite race. Two big events do spring to mind, however, so that narrows it down a bit!

Making my grand prix debut in 1974 for Ensign at the glorious Watkins Glen and scoring my first world sportscar championship race victory with my old mate Ray Mallock in the Ecurie Ecosse C285 at Silverstone in '85 are the two that stand out.

It has to be my F1 debut, though, because it was such a big deal for me to be finally sitting on the grid with my heroes Ronnie Peterson, Niki Lauda, Carlos Reutemann, Emerson Fittipaldi and James Hunt – alongside McLaren M23s, Lotus 72s and Brabham BT44s. I'd worked my nuts off to get there with no money, so it was a big relief – especially as I missed out on a works March ride for the Swedish GP after breaking my wrist in a big Formula 5000 stunt at Thruxton two weeks before.

We'd been having fuel-pressure trouble with the Ensign N174 that meant I'd failed to qualify for the previous races in Austria, Italy and

"It was such a relief to actually qualify - I'd got used to sitting in pitlanes thinking about where I was going to watch the race from!"

Canada, but we finally cured it at a test between Canada and the second North American race at the Glen. It was such a relief to actually qualify – I'd got used to sitting in pitlanes thinking about where I was going to watch the race from!

I was so excited about the race that I couldn't go to sleep on the Saturday night. I sat in the hotel

bar – drinking orange juice you understand! – when Graham Hill came back from a late-night party somewhere and came over to chat. He was wonderful and calmed me right down. It was weird that such a legend had qualified two places behind me in the Lola T370!

Sadly, my car developed a pressure-relief valve problem

at the start of the race so I trickled round on the first lap and pitted. I lost four laps while the problem was fixed and rejoined way down – but did have a great dice with Chris Amon in the BRM P201, which was a lot of fun.

I got to the finish, albeit unclassified in 14th, so I was pretty happy. Then I found out that Austrian Helmuth Koinigg had been killed when his Surtees submarined under the poorly fitted barriers. What a terrible waste. I'd met him a few years before when he was racing in Super Vee and we became good friends. We'd travelled to America together that weekend in '74.

It was an emotional weekend for me – on so many levels. **✘ Mike Wilds was talking to Henry Hope-Frost**

IN PROFILE



VERSATILE BRIT Mike Wilds has raced in every major discipline. He graduated from FFord in the early '70s before tackling F5000 and trying to qualify for GPs in March and Ensign chassis in '74. He realised his dream at Watkins Glen that autumn and went on to do two GPs for BRM in '75. He then raced in Group C and at Le Mans, winning Group C2 races in the mid-'80s. Now 64, Mike still races in Britcar and historics. He also has a highly-respected driving school and undertakes development work for numerous manufacturers. When time allows he runs a helicopter flying school!

NEXT WEEK
Michele ALBORETO



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PerformanceBox now features a real-time Predictive mode alongside the Lap-Timing, Performance tests and Data-logging of the existing product. For only £299+VAT, this represents serious value for money, and makes it the cheapest Predictive lap timer in the market. (Free upgrade for existing **PerformanceBox** users).

The unique 'LineSnap' method we have developed, allows you to see how much quicker or slower your current lap is compared with your best, in real time! It's ideal for trying new driving techniques or testing different setups by giving instant feedback, around the entire lap. Also, being based on position, not distance, the accuracy remains the same even on long circuits such as the Nurburgring. No beacons or transponders required!



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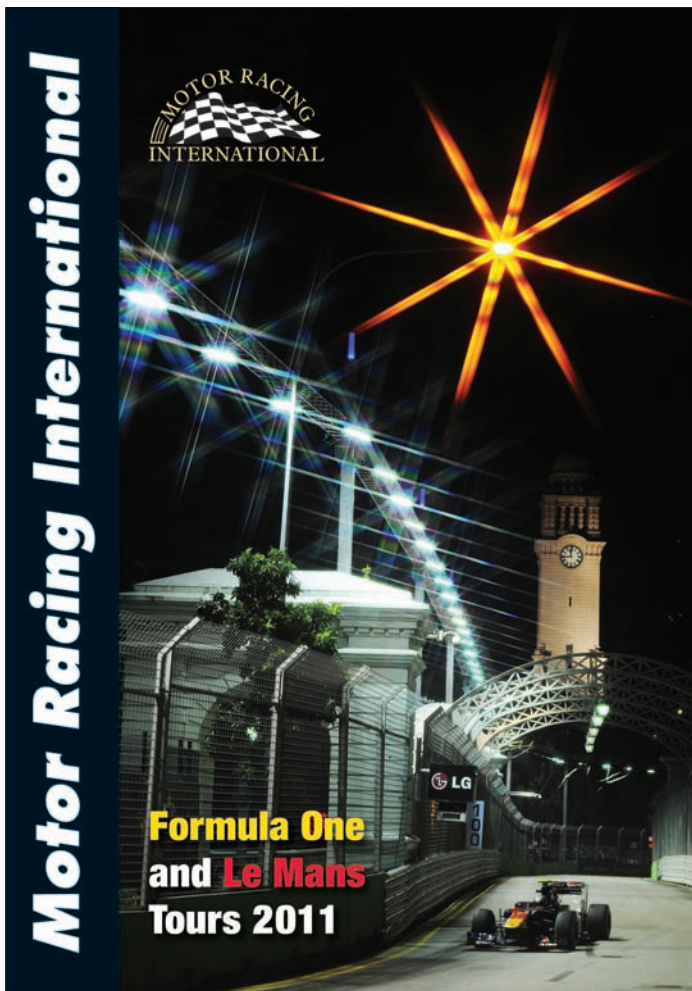
www.performancebox.co.uk

BAHRAIN GRAND PRIX
Sakhir - 13 March
 Direct Flights with
 5 nights in Manama

LE MANS 24 HOURS
June 11/12
 Self-Drive Packages with Hotel or Camping
 Coach Tours & Paris Stop-Overs

CANADIAN GRAND PRIX
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 Montreal & Niagara Holiday

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX
Melbourne - 27 March
 5 Nights Melbourne
 Melbourne & Sydney
 2-Centre Holiday



EUROPEAN GRAND PRIX
Valencia - 26 June
 Stay in Valencia
 Weekends & Longer Tours

MALAYSIAN GRAND PRIX
Sepang - 10 April
 5 Nights Kuala Lumpur
 Malaysia & China
 2 Grands Prix Holiday

GERMAN GRAND PRIX
Nurburgring - 24 July
 Tours by Coach or Air
 Self-Drive Packages

CHINESE GRAND PRIX
Shanghai - 17 April
 Direct Flights with 5 nights
 in Shanghai

HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX
Budapest - 31 July
 Weekend By Air
 Budapest & Vienna 2-Centre Holiday

TURKISH GRAND PRIX
Istanbul - 8 May
 3 Nights in Istanbul
 6-Day Holiday by Air

BELGIAN GRAND PRIX
Spa - 28 August
 Selection of Tours by Coach,
 Air or Eurostar
 Self-Drive Packages

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 Wide Selection of Weekend and
 Longer Tours by Air

MONACO GRAND PRIX
Monte Carlo - 29 May
 Full Programme of Arrangements
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ITALIAN GRAND PRIX
Monza - 11 September
 Weekends and Longer Tours
 Based in Como
 Swiss/Italian 2-Centre Holiday

Our 2011 Tour Collection is available now. As ever, we are featuring each and every round of the F1 World Championship and the Le Mans 24 Hour Race. A small selection of our vast choice of travel arrangements is outlined above. Put your trust in the UK's only fully bonded, independent motorsport travel specialist.