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How Mercedes robbed Ferrari again

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# HAMILTON MAKES THE DIFFERENCE ONCE AGAIN

Great drivers are strong across a range of areas, that's what makes them the best. But the last two weekends have shown there is one box that Lewis Hamilton is currently ticking that his title rival Sebastian Vettel is not.

Ferrari had the best car – in dry conditions – at both the German and Hungarian GPs, but came away beaten on both occasions. Two rain showers, one during the race at Hockenheim and one in qualifying at the Hungaroring, gave Hamilton a window of opportunity and he delivered. Yes, he required some luck in Germany, but it was – by his own admission – Vettel's fault he went off the road while on course for victory.

Vettel is not a bad wet-weather driver – his first two F1 wins came in the rain – but he hasn't won in those conditions since 2009. Hamilton, on the other hand, has taken the last nine rain-affected GPs. You have to go back to the 2014 Hungarian GP and Daniel Ricciardo to find a non-Hamilton victory in the wet. That's not luck, that's a serious weapon the Briton has in his armoury.

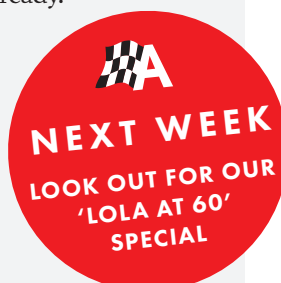
There was also a hint of frustration in the way Vettel uncompromisingly sliced across the front of Valtteri Bottas at Turn 2 last weekend. Bottas was probably braking a bit too late given he was on the dirty line and the state of his tyres, but Vettel's move was more like that of someone frustrated at being stuck behind a Mercedes for too long than it was of a driver with thoughts of winning a title.

If Ferrari continues providing Vettel with a quick car, the German undoubtedly knows how to go about winning in 98% of possible circumstances. The 2% he struggles with may not come up again this year, but if they do, Vettel knows Hamilton will be ready.



**KEVIN TURNER**  
EDITOR

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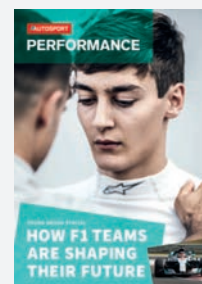
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## FREE INSIDE

### PERFORMANCE SUPPLEMENT



F1 junior driver programmes, and how much they can help or hinder, are part of this issue, which focuses on young racers.



## BUYERS WITH 'DEEP POC

### FORMULA 1

Force India was placed into administration ahead of the Hungarian Grand Prix weekend but there are many potential buyers “with deep pockets” in the running to take over the Formula 1 team.

The outfit went into administration last Friday after ‘heartbreaking’ action brought against the team by its driver Sergio Perez, who was supported by creditors including engine supplier Mercedes and team sponsor BWT.

While Perez brought the petition in conjunction with his manager Julian Jakobi – using unpaid funds as the trigger for action that he was coaxed into by members of the team that believe administration is its best chance of being saved – Mercedes and BWT are involved as all company creditors are asked if they wish to support such a petition or not.

Mercedes claims to be owed more than €10.5million across the F1 team, its engine division and parent company Daimler.

BWT, which joined as Force India’s title sponsor at the start of 2017 and has connections to Mercedes, has claimed its sponsorship came in the form of loans.

The logic behind the move and the support it has received is that the team needs to establish a viable strategy to

settle with its creditors and shore up its long-term future.

Vijay Mallya, Force India’s current primary shareholder, had stated last month at the British Grand Prix that he was yet to receive what he viewed as a satisfactory offer to buy the team, but moving into administration takes control of the sale of the team away from Mallya and the holding company Orange India Holdings Sarl.

That will lead to administrator FRP Advisory selling the team and Mercedes motorsport boss Toto Wolff says the chances of saving it looks promising.

Mercedes is keen for the team to end up in the hands of new, approved owners who can continue to operate it successfully in the long term.

In addition, as Ferrari has close alliances with Haas and Sauber, there is desire from Mercedes to retain two strong partners in Force India and Williams, and strengthen those ties in the future.

Wolff was keen to praise Mallya, who aligned his team with Mercedes in 2009, when he was asked about the situation by Autosport.

“First of all, credit must be given to Vijay for 10 years or so of funding the team,” he said.

“And having been not only a shareholder



# Key's move to McLaren delayed

## FORMULA 1

McLaren and Toro Rosso have become embroiled in a contractual tug of war over the services of James Key, who McLaren announced during the Hungarian Grand Prix would become its new technical director.

Red Bull motorsport advisor Helmut Marko indicated his frustration that negotiations between the two teams over Key's release had been trumped by public confirmation from McLaren of his hiring.

Marko hinted that Key would now not be available for a "very long time". Key is understood to have a contract that runs to 2020 and Marko says "it's sure we won't release him earlier".

Despite the apparent stalling of negotiations, McLaren boss Zak Brown remains confident.

"We have hired James Key, he will become our technical director," said Brown. "We do not have a start date. He does have a current agreement with Toro Rosso. Of course, we respect contractual situations.

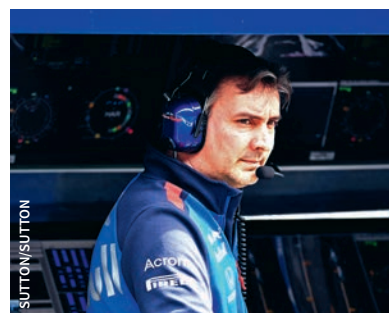
"I think Toro Rosso and Red Bull are understandably upset that they're losing a great talent like James Key. He's recognised as one of the best technical directors up and down pitlane, so we're very excited to have him join us in due course."

Brown insisted McLaren has a plan to negotiate Key's early release.

"There's always, in the world of F1, ways and opportunities to change situations," Brown said. "We have a plan. We obviously knew his current employment situation, and we're completely comfortable working around that situation."

Brown said McLaren is "not done yet" in terms of further bolstering its revamped technical team and revising the management structure, following the recent departures of Tim Goss, Eric Boullier and Matt Morris.

ADAM COOPER



# KEYS' EYE FORCE INDIA

— the key shareholder of the team — but also having had the enthusiasm to support the team and fund it.

"Obviously things have turned more difficult for him and that has had an effect on the team.

"Now that the process has been kicked off by the administrator, there are many potential buyers with great interest, with deep pockets, [and] with an understanding of what kind of spending levels are needed in order to perform in F1.

"It's something that is positive for the team, and for all its employees, I would say."

The team's administrators, Geoff Rowley and James Baker, have some knowledge of F1 as Rowley was previously involved in the Marussia/Manor cases. A meeting was understood to be taking place on the Monday after the race.

Mallya has yet to respond publicly to the move, but has issued a letter to allies that has been seen by Autosport.

In the letter, Mallya noted his surprise that the action was supported by sponsor BWT and disputes its claim that the sponsorship came in the form of loans. He also pointed out that the largest creditor was the holding company, Orange India Holdings Sarl, with over £159million outstanding, and that the largest of the

smaller creditors — which is believed to be Mercedes — is owed less than £10m.

Force India chief operating officer Otmar Szafnauer addressed team members in the Hungaroring pit garage on Saturday morning, explaining that the situation was in hand and was joined by F1 CEO Chase Carey, who stressed he is keen to see the team on the grid next year.

F1 sporting boss Ross Brawn has also promised the commercial rights holder's full support in that process — the team is due substantial payments from F1 based on finishing fourth in the constructors' championship in 2016 and '17.

With Force India still in business, those payments will continue to come through on schedule, providing that rival teams give unanimous support to do so under a new owner.

Force India deputy team principal Bob Fernley said the team had "achieved tremendous things" and could go on to "achieve greater things" with the right investment and support from F1 and its major creditors.

He added: "And with FRP and Geoff Rowley at the helm, who have tremendous experience in F1, unfortunate as the circumstances are, I don't think it could be in a better position to take the next steps."

SCOTT MITCHELL

# Ogier wants more speed from M-Sport as Citroen circles

## WRC

M-Sport needs to find more pace from the Ford Fiesta WRC if the team and Sebastien Ogier are to bag back-to-back World Rally Championship titles together, according to the five-time title winner.

The Frenchman finished a disappointed fifth at Rally Finland last weekend as Toyota's Ott Tanak stormed to victory. Ogier only made that position after M-Sport shuffled its other drivers Teemu Suninen and Elfyn Evans to elevate him.

Ogier said: "It's disappointing not to have any speed the whole weekend. It didn't work here, now we have to focus on the next one."

"We came here with the hope to fight not too far from Toyota, but we finished at the bottom of the list and were not able to fight for anything."

He added that in its current situation M-Sport would struggle to overcome the pace deficit to its rivals.

"Can M-Sport turn this around alone?" he said. "They can't turn this around – it's not a manufacturer team. We have to have support from Ford – we have had support from Ford Performance with the aero, but we need to test this more to get the full potential."

"If you analyse only this weekend, it looks like the others

are progressing faster than us."

Team principal Malcolm Wilson said he is ready to do whatever it takes.

"We want to be fighting at the sharp end and we're ready to work. We have got testing coming, we're ready. But what we're not going to do is panic. There's absolutely no need for that at all."

Citroen could offer a different path for Ogier as the French manufacturer is said to have begun negotiations with him. The effort could forge his return to the team for 2019, eight years after they split.

However, Ogier's preferred option is to remain with M-Sport next season, telling Autosport it would take a "good offer" to get him into a C3 WRC.

Citroen team principal Pierre Budar said: "I am thinking about the driver line-up for next year a lot right now. We have many options and we're talking with several drivers – there could be changes for next year."

Asked directly about the potential for an Ogier return, he added: "I talk with Sebastien Ogier like I talk with other drivers. Of course we would be very happy to have such a driver in our team."

Ogier would not be drawn further on talk of his future, beyond admitting he was considering his various options.

DAVID EVANS



# Aston DTM plans clarified

## DTM

R-Motorsport has opened the door on its rumoured DTM entry with Aston Martin. The Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup frontrunner has revealed a technical tie-up with HWA that could expand to incorporate a future assault on the touring car series.

The statement from R-Motorsport parent company AF Racing announced a 50-50 joint venture with HWA, whose long-term partnership with Mercedes in the DTM will end this year on the marque's withdrawal from the series. The deal is aimed at establishing "a strategic innovation partnership for development projects in auto racing and in the automotive sector in general".

The bosses of the team, whose cars are jointly run in the BGTS by the Arden and Jota squads, are yet to elaborate on what that will mean in terms of racing or confirm that it will encompass the rumoured 2020 DTM entry with the backing of Red Bull.

R-Motorsport co-owner Florian Kamelger stressed that the link-up with HWA was initially aimed at projects in the automotive sector. He explained that HWA would be involved in R-Motorsport's new 'Reforged' initiative, which will offer reworked versions of older Astons. But he also reiterated R-Motorsport's interest in the DTM.

"It is not a secret that I am interested in DTM and everyone knows that HWA races highly successfully in the series," he said. "But there is nothing concrete."

The announcement has come against a backdrop of rumours about possible contenders for seats in a potential R-Motorsport Aston Martin DTM team.

Red Bull-backed Sebastien Buemi and Brendon Hartley, plus Aston Martin factory drivers Maxime Martin and Nicky Thiim, who are both racing with R-Motorsport this season, have all been linked to the programme. It is also understood that HWA could have a say in the driver line-up and has put forward candidates from the current Mercedes roster.

Mercedes DTM driver Gary Paffett, meanwhile, has revealed that he is talking to Mercedes about racing in Formula E when it joins the series for season six in 2019/20 in partnership with HWA.

GARY WATKINS AND JACK COZENS

# Sergio Marchionne 1952-2018

## OBITUARY

Sergio Marchionne, who has died from complications following shoulder surgery, was a titan of the automotive industry.

The Italian-Canadian played the decisive role in reversing the declining fortunes of Fiat, and later the Fiat Chrysler Group – an alliance he brokered.

He earned a degree in philosophy before adding

accountancy qualifications, an MBA and a law degree to his CV. Marchionne worked in a variety of companies in legal and management roles, and first joined Fiat as an independent director in 2003, becoming CEO the following year.

In Formula 1, he reshaped the leadership of Ferrari, with Maurizio Arrivabene replacing Marco Mattiacci. Subsequently, the team re-emerged as a title-

contending force, and Marchionne retained a clear interest in improving the way the team operated.

He was also arguably the key player in ongoing negotiations with F1 commercial rights holder Liberty Media amid a period of political uncertainty.

Marchionne had a profound impact on the automotive industry, and in his final years wielded significant influence in F1.



MOTORSPORTIMAGES/HONE/LAT

## Five injured in Lambo crash

### SUPER TROFEO

A marshal and a driver were taken to hospital after a major crash during the second Lamborghini Super Trofeo race at Spa, with three other marshals also hurt.

Swedish competitor Fredrik Blomstedt was leading the Spa 24 Hours support race with nine minutes remaining, when he received a tap from Lucas Mauron between Pouhon and Fagnes in heavy traffic.

Blomstedt's car veered right on to the grass and struck a tyre barrier with huge force, injuring four of the marshals on duty at the post behind it.

Three did not require extra treatment, but one could not jump away in time and was hospitalised along with Blomstedt.

According to a statement by series organiser the Stephane Ratel Organisation, no-one received life-threatening injuries.

It read: "Four marshals and one driver were injured in the incident.

"All were immediately attended to by the circuit medical staff. One marshal and the driver have been transferred to hospital for medical checks. However, their injuries are not life-threatening."

The positions before the subsequent red flag were taken as the result. Therefore, Blomstedt and team-mate Patrick Kujala were declared winners.

The day's programme at the circuit was delayed by an hour and a half as a result of extensive repairs to the tyre wall.

FILIP CLEEREN

## Ratel revives GT2 name

### GT2

Yet another new class of GT car is being created. Predictably, the plan has emerged from the creative mind of Stephane Ratel, the architect of both the GT3 and GT4 divisions, and it looks on the face of it to be a clever attempt to reinforce the position of the amateur driver.

The initiative, which will revive the GT2 name in international racing for the first time since 2010, will create a new breed of car that will go up against GT3 machinery in the Stephane Ratel Organisation's sprint series around the world, including the short-format version of the Blancpain GT Series and the British GT Championship.

The idea is to create a category based on high-powered supercars that is more friendly to the driver than GT3.

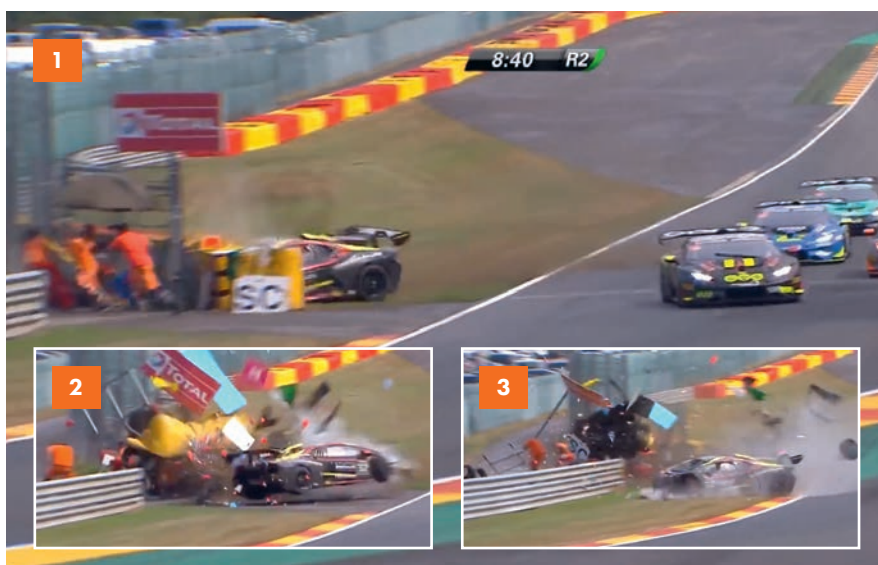
"The evolution of GT3 with more and more downforce has made them more out-and-out race cars that are difficult to drive for the amateur," said Ratel. "So we want to offer a way to be competitive with the GT3s in a more powerful car.

"The pros will definitely be quicker in a GT3 than in a GT2, which is going to be heavier and have less downforce."

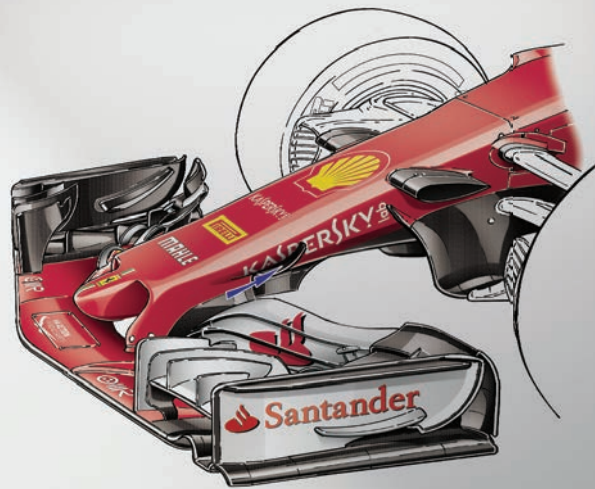
The category will be for cars with up to 700bhp, whereas GT3 power outputs are in the region of 560bhp.

Ratel is looking at holding a pilot race ahead of a full introduction into SRO's sprint championships in 2020.

GARY WATKINS



# THE ART OF RACING



  
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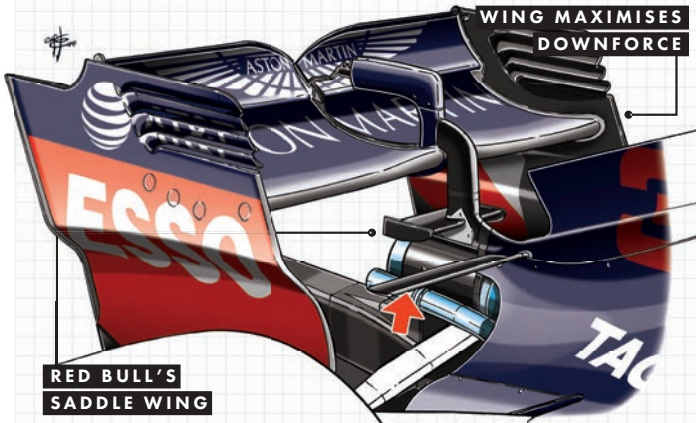
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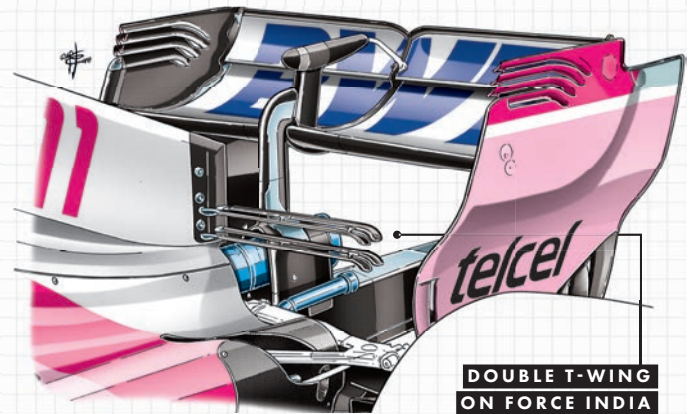


# DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA



RED BULL'S SADDLE WING



DOUBLE T-WING ON FORCE INDIA

## HUNGARORING SHARES CHARACTERISTICS WITH MONACO FOR F1 CARS

The Hungaroring is all about maximising downforce and cooling. It's a track similar to Monaco in that drag is not so important, but at low speed the cooling is not so good. All teams will have opened up their radiator exits, which unfortunately hurts downforce.

Williams used its largest-section rear wing (middle arrow). The outer section (left arrow) is more in line with the centre section and the twin T-wings (right arrow) have been added. Both of these measures increase rear downforce. The rear of the engine cover is also higher

and more open to improve cooling.

On the older Monaco-spec engine cover, Williams ran a Gurney flap (a right-angle trip) on the trailing edge, but this was inefficient and would have been an emergency solution, which is perhaps why it wasn't used in Hungary.

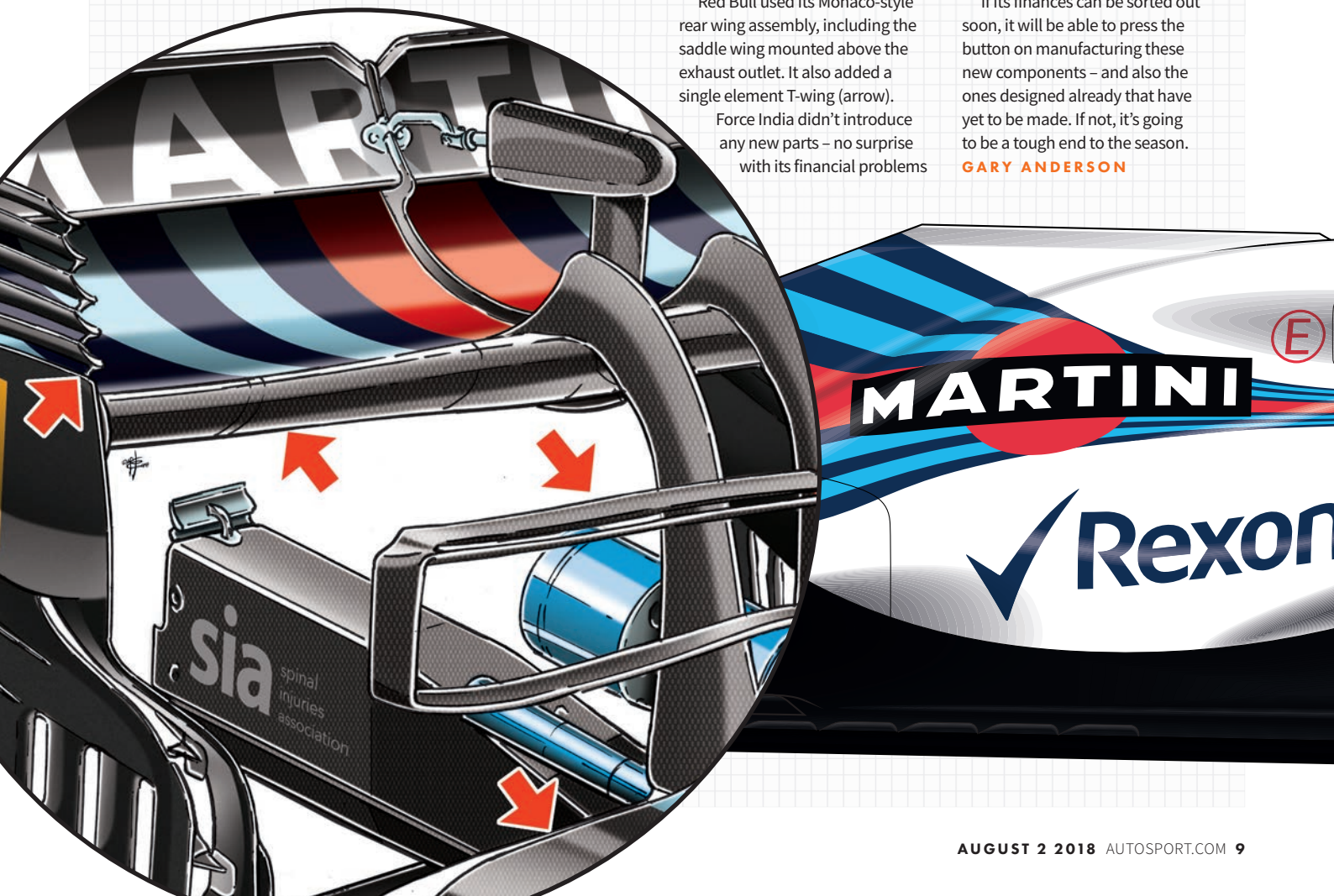
Red Bull used its Monaco-style rear wing assembly, including the saddle wing mounted above the exhaust outlet. It also added a single element T-wing (arrow).

Force India didn't introduce any new parts – no surprise with its financial problems

– but the Monaco package, including the double T-Wing, was used in Hungary. As the two tracks are similar, this makes sense and will have allowed the team to focus on positive research and development for the rest of the circuits after the summer break.

If its finances can be sorted out soon, it will be able to press the button on manufacturing these new components – and also the ones designed already that have yet to be made. If not, it's going to be a tough end to the season.

GARY ANDERSON





INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY, LLC PHOTOGRAPHY

# Lights by name, heavy by reputation

A host of new initiatives are on offer to attract new competitors into Indy Lights Presented by Cooper Tires for 2019 – and there’s a place in the 2020 Indy 500 field for the champion.

Paul Tracy, Tony Kanaan, Cristiano da Matta, Scott Dixon and Josef Newgarden are all Indy Lights champions who have subsequently become title winners in IndyCar competition. And then there’s James Hinchcliff and Helio Castroneves, who spent two seasons in Indy Lights *without* claiming the crown!

Thanks to the guarantee of a prize fund enabling the Indy Lights Presented by Cooper Tires champion to compete in a minimum three rounds of the Verizon IndyCar Series (including the Indianapolis 500), that number can only go up, but unfortunately such success can prove to be a double-edged sword. This year, 2017 champion Kyle Kaiser used the prize to progress to IndyCar, while Matheus Leist and Zachary Claman DeMelo also graduated to the pinnacle of US motorsport.

“We did our jobs too well,” admits Dan Andersen, owner and CEO of Andersen Promotions, which oversees the Mazda Road to Indy Presented by Cooper Tires ladder and also incorporates Pro Mazda and USF2000. “This season is a reflection of that effort. Graduating Kyle, Matheus and Zachary to IndyCar hurt our fields, as did the loss of Carlin to IndyCar. Our mission is to develop and advance – not just drivers but teams and personnel – and we are

succeeding. Now we are focused on our incentive programmes to begin rebuilding our fields for the future.”

Those incentive programmes are built upon stability. The Dallara-Mazda IL-15 chassis, introduced in 2015, will continue through to the end of 2022, and key partnership agreements with suppliers including engine builder AER, brakes supplier PFC, Motegi Wheels and electronics provider Cosworth are in place for the same period. The new discount programmes are intended to reduce budgets to as low as \$850,000 USD – comparable to those of similar worldwide championships, but with the series offering more in terms of track time, testing, training, prize money and scholarships.

For teams new to Indy Lights, the Dallara IL-15 chassis will be discounted to \$194,495 – a saving of over \$40,000 – with a 10% discount on Dallara spares. Among the discounts, AER is offering 1500 complimentary engine miles (worth \$30,000) for testing between October-December 2018 with a signed engine lease for 2019, Cooper Tires is giving six free sets of tyres for testing with a new car purchase and signed engine lease, and there is free entry into a two-day test at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in October 2018. With

a cap on in-season testing, the new incentive programme provides cost savings to new teams of over \$134,800.

“We introduced our new Indy Lights programmes to current and prospective Mazda Road to Indy and IndyCar teams during the Toronto race in July, and were met with extremely positive feedback and interest,” points out Andersen. “We have several teams looking to expand into Indy Lights next season, including Exclusive Autosport, which currently fields cars in Pro Mazda and USF2000. Carlin is also looking to come back next year.”

The Mazda MZR-R engine, developed with AER, has enjoyed 21,000 miles of usage so far this season with no loss of track time to engine-related matters, and is capable of running the whole season without a rebuild. Combined with a boost in Pro Mazda in 2018, that should encourage an influx of drivers to Indy Lights for 2019. “We have a lot of new talent for the Verizon IndyCar Series on the horizon in Pro Mazda and USF2000 with drivers like Parker Thompson, Rinus VeeKay, Carlos Cunha, Oliver Askew and Kyle Kirkwood all looking to move up the ladder in addition to our current Indy Lights drivers,” adds Andersen. “The success of Indy Lights as a springboard to IndyCar has never been more apparent, and we are very excited about the tremendous interest in Indy Lights for next season.”

There is no other similar championship in the world where you can say with certainty that the title winner will graduate to the top level the following season. So let’s say it now: the way things stand in the points, either Pato O’Ward, Colton Herta or Santi Urrutia will race in the Indy 500 next year. (It could be someone else, but they would need a long climb-back in the points!). That is surely why Indy Lights is a championship that any driver serious about an IndyCar career should contest.



2017 Lights Champion Kyle Kaiser stepped up to IndyCar in 2018

MOTORSPORTIMAGES/MILLER/LAT



# A FIGHT TO REMEMBER

*The 2018 Formula 1 season is shaping up to provide one of the most fascinating and exciting battles between two great drivers in a long time*

EDD STRAW

**S**ebastian Vettel and Lewis Hamilton have traded the points lead five times in 12 races so far in 2018. For all the griping about a 'boring' season, only two years have produced more at the same point in the campaign – 1986 (seven) and 2012 (six). Even with Hamilton carrying a 24-point advantage into the August break, this could be one of the closest world championship battles we've ever seen. And the closer the battle gets, the more significance every little incident and error assumes.

Both drivers have great strengths, but the small weaknesses, the tiny chinks in the armour, are just as likely to decide the destiny of the world championship. Neither is bulletproof, no driver can be, but based on recent evidence Vettel is the championship protagonist with the most clear Achilles' heel.

For the vast majority of the time, Vettel drives beautifully on track with a vibrant and attacking style, while off-track he is diligent with great attention to detail. Where things can change is in extreme stress, sometimes leading to errors in critical moments.

In the Azerbaijan Grand Prix, he attempted to pass Valtteri Bottas for the lead at the restart, locked up over the bump on the inside line and went off. That dropped him to fourth. Six points

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**"SMALL WEAKNESSES ARE AS LIKELY TO DECIDE THE CHAMPIONSHIP AS STRENGTHS"**

---

lost. In the French Grand Prix at Paul Ricard, he misjudged the level of grip into the first corner and hit Valtteri Bottas's Mercedes. A par finish from where he would have been third, but instead he finished fifth. Five points lost. In the German Grand Prix at Hockenheim, he made what he rightly characterised as a tiny mistake with a big impact as he slid off while leading the race. That's a mighty 25 points lost.

All told, that adds up perhaps to 36 points squandered, and that's before you factor in the resulting gains for Hamilton, given he was behind Vettel in two of those races at the moment in question.

By contrast, Hamilton has avoided such unforced errors. There have been mistakes he's not been punished for – such as the lock-up in Baku that forced him to compromise his strategy – but through a combination of minimising errors and luck, they haven't hurt him so much in terms of points. So Vettel is prone to unforced errors that have a decisive impact on his race prospects.

This could prove to be his key weakness in the fight with Hamilton.

It's inevitable that errors happen in elite sport. What matters is how the competitor responds to them, and Vettel doesn't let himself get into downward spirals as a result of mistakes.

Hamilton has done well to eliminate such blunders from his game. But while he hasn't squandered points with momentary lapses this year, he has given away points through overall pace – or the lack thereof – and there are times when struggles to get the car working seem to have a compound effect on his ability to get the most from the car.

This was particularly the case early in the season in races such as Bahrain and China. More recently, the Canadian Grand Prix – a race Hamilton basically owns – went poorly by his lofty standards. And by his own admission, qualifying and starts have not been a strong point for him this year.

The capacity to make countless calculations as the variables change rapidly is arguably the most vital for any racing driver, and this is where Vettel very occasionally struggles with overload, while Hamilton thrives.

It's a similar story in wet conditions, when Hamilton has the advantage not just over Vettel but the whole field. Vettel isn't bad in the wet, far from it, but either the Ferrari is a worse car in the wet or he isn't quite as remarkable in those conditions as Hamilton.

If we set aside errors and look at who most consistently extracts the most out of the machinery, then the balance swings from Hamilton back to Vettel. In keeping with the longstanding private criticisms from those who have worked with Hamilton, he does have occasional off days when things don't quite come together. But when everything is right, which is very often, he will get everything possible from the package.

Vettel tends not to have weekends where he gets too lost with the car. And while Hamilton goes into the break on a high, it might only take one difficult weekend when Mercedes flounders to put him back into a spiral of struggle. That's his potential weakness.

There is one other potential chink in Hamilton's armour that has not been exploited properly since the days when he was paired with Nico Rosberg. Anything you can do to impact your rival's mindset negatively – provided it's within the rules – is part of the game and perfectly legitimate.

This is what could make the second half of the season so thrilling – with every race, the stakes and the pressure rise. Given things are so close, there's even the possibility 2018 could claim the outright record for the number of changes in the championship lead in a season – nine, set in 2010.

What we are seeing is a potential battle for the ages between two brilliant drivers. And when that happens, who really cares who wins? It's all about enjoying an epic contest between two all-time greats. ✎



# SAVING FORCE INDIA

*Why legal action against his team was actually the best thing Sergio Perez could do to keep the wheels rolling in the face of financial strife*

ADAM COOPER

**T**he Force India legal saga dominated the headlines at the Hungarian Grand Prix, but while some initially interpreted it as a negative development – with the word ‘administration’ inevitably triggering memories of the painful demise of both Caterham and Manor – it is in fact the very opposite.

So how did we arrive at the unusual situation where a legal action launched by an unpaid driver, in the middle of a season, is the trigger that might save his team from a financial implosion?

It’s been clear for some time that to ensure the future of Force India Vijay Mallya and his co-shareholders either had to find substantial new investment, or sell outright. The challenge for them was to find the right buyer, and at the right price.

As so often in this business, the key is cash flow. Money is scheduled to come in down the line, be it from sponsors or hard-earned prize fund income from the F1 organisation, but the bills have to be paid now. You can juggle that equation for a few years, but eventually the gap becomes too great.

Over the past few months the need to find that cash injection grew in urgency. That became very evident when the team admitted that it wasn’t bringing updates to the car because the

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**“TOTO WOLFF REVEALED LAST SUNDAY THERE ARE AS MANY AS FIVE POTENTIAL BIDDERS”**

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funds were not available to progress parts from the design stage. There was some frustration in the camp that credible potential buyers were around, and making serious offers, but were being rejected by the shareholders. The concern was that, if Mallya held out too long for what he perceived as the perfect deal, it might be too late to save the team – the mounting debts would lead to a collapse from which it could not recover.

In recent weeks it was clear that a cash flow crisis was approaching. And that became a reality when a creditor, a technical supplier who literally could not afford to wait any longer to be paid, launched a winding-up order, which could have triggered insolvency.

In legal terms this could have been a point of no return. A winding-up process would compromise the team’s ability to compete and fulfil its obligations to Liberty, thus turning off the tap of F1 prize income. It would have been game over.

There was one strategy to avoid disaster: putting the team into administration would trump the winding-up order. Administration is a process of trying to keep a company alive, that judges give precedence to over any attempt to close it. Shareholders can voluntarily put their own business into administration, if it suits them, but that route was not taken.

And that’s where Sergio Perez and the Mexican’s company Brockstone come in. Perez was owed a substantial figure in 2017 salary payments, and as such was a major creditor. He had been waiting patiently for his money, and naturally had no desire to take an aggressive legal action that might harm the team, especially in the middle of the season.

However, it was made clear to him by his business advisors that such an action would actually be beneficial. It would enable the team to continue to operate and compete on track, and buy time to allow the administrator to entertain bids and find a suitable buyer. And crucially it would take the sale process out of the hands of Mallya and the other shareholders. Thus it would protect the team’s future and, most importantly, the jobs of the people Perez has worked with since 2014.

So Perez and Brockstone brought their administration order last week, and at a High Court hearing in London that ran late into Friday evening, it was granted by a judge.

The administrator is now in charge of the financial purse strings at Force India’s Silverstone base, and is conducting what in effect will be an auction for the team, in which all parties have some clarity. In theory it doesn’t have to be sold to the highest bidder – if somebody else has what appears to be a better long-term strategy, greater credibility, and crucially is favoured by major creditors such as Mercedes and Perez, they could win the day.

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff revealed last Sunday that there are as many as five potential bidders. At least three are known to be serious contenders, and are understood to be fronted by Lawrence Stroll, father of Williams driver Lance, IndyCar team owner Michael Andretti, and the father of Force India test driver Nikita Mazepin. Others could yet emerge, although they will have to be quick, as the process is already well under way. The only potential spanner in the works could be rival teams objecting to the reborn team maintaining its commercial rights.

Concerned employees have been told to hang tight and await positive developments – the team’s chief operating officer Otmar Szafnauer made a speech in the Budapest pit garage last Saturday, with F1 boss Chase Carey offering moral support – and everyone has been assured that the team is set to emerge fighting fit, and potentially stronger than ever.

And that has to be good for the sport as a whole. ✨

# YOUR SAY

*Something is surely wrong with the sport if an eager young buck can be held back to spend hours on the simulator rather than being given the chance to join the F1 grid*

**ELIOT WILSON**

### Set Giovinazzi free to race

Your news story 'Hamilton stays put to trigger driver-market jockeying' (Pit+Paddock, July 26) reports that, if a vacant seat opens up at Sauber for 2019, Ferrari might consider Antonio Giovinazzi (right) too valuable as their test driver to release him to race.

Something is surely wrong with the sport if an eager young buck can be held back to spend endless hours on the simulator rather than being given the opportunity to join the F1 grid.

Come on, Ferrari!

**Eliot Wilson**  
Sunderland

### Aero complexity sums up F1's bubble

It was with a sinking heart that I read Drawing Board with Gary Anderson and Giorgio Piola (July 26); ever-more complex, and expensive, solutions for ever-decreasing gains.

To be realistic, the designers/engineers are not building racing cars, they are building highly efficient and extremely fast machines. Nigel Roebuck quotes Christian Horner (July 26) as saying "anything within five seconds and you're in dirty air", yet they continue to produce these complex non-racing machines.

I think we're all hopeful (fans, that is, not teams) that the next batch of regulations would see at least some minimising of this complexity and a return to actual 'racing'; but no, the manufacturers want to continue the arms race. If ever there was a clear illustration of the bubble wherein F1 exists, this is it.

Is there any hope that the views of the fans and the writings of various commentators will be taken into account? Sadly I doubt that very much.

**Neil Davey**  
Newport, South Wales

### Are brakes just too efficient?

Interesting little story in Autosport Engineering (July 5), 'F1 stopping distances down by 22% since 2008'. Hats off to Brembo for improving the efficiency of braking, despite, as the text read, the vastly increased demands on the brakes.



I would suggest in the context of racing and indeed close racing, being *that* efficient is part of today's overtaking problems (along with aerodynamics, namely too complicated a front/rear-wing design and bargeboards being allowed). None of which is relevant to road cars, which I think is the party line with some manufacturers.

Clearly, in the name of safety the brakes need to be good and I know this technology will ultimately go on to road cars, which is fantastic, but doesn't help motor racing in my opinion in the grand scheme of things.

**MA Smith**  
By email

### McLaren must get its house in order

After another week of staff leaving the F1 team, surely someone at McLaren must realise that despite all the changes they make in middle and lower management, the rot is firmly set in until a part of the senior management is changed. Sarcasm towards previous directors of a more successful McLaren team is not the way to show maturity or team leadership.

**Nick Smith**  
Dorset

## HAVE YOUR SAY, GET IN TOUCH


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# RACE CENTRE

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# HOW MERCEDES STOLE FERRARI'S VICTORY

*Mercedes downplayed its chances at a track that should have favoured Ferrari, but Hamilton made the most of the weather to take another win*

EDD STRAW





ANDRE/SUTTON  
**motorsport**  
 IMAGES

THE HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX WAS SUPPOSED TO BE AN EXERCISE IN DAMAGE LIMITATION for Mercedes. Winning was a long shot and “wasn’t realistic”, in the words of team boss Toto Wolff, on Ferrari territory. Yet ultimately it was Mercedes and Lewis Hamilton inflicting the damage on Ferrari rather than sustaining it, thanks to what turned out to be a dominant victory.

That Mercedes came within six laps of an astonishing one-two, before Valtteri Bottas’s rearguard action disintegrated, makes what happened even more unlikely. At the end of a half-season of endless plot twists, Hamilton and the Mercedes team converting disaster into triumph for the second time in seven days is a hugely significant one.

“We came to the last race and they kind of blew us away a little bit in qualifying,” said Hamilton after his 67th grand prix victory. “They would have done here had it been dry, so we welcome the wet races.”

The Hungarian GP wasn’t a wet race, but it was won in the wet. Qualifying is as critical as ever on the twisty Hungaroring, and the sodden track and Saturday’s wet-shod Q3 session defined what happened on Sunday. Hamilton and Bottas annexed the front row, with a quarter-of-a-second separating them.

This was largely down to Hamilton’s brilliance in the final sector, where he was 0.426 seconds quicker. The key was taking an

unorthodox – in wet conditions – tight line through the Turn 13 left-hander while Bottas and Sebastian Vettel both scabbled for grip on the wider line.

Hamilton then had an immaculate run through the final corner, while Bottas had the rear step out on him and leaked more time.

“With the technology and data, it seems to be a little bit easier for drivers to get closer to each other,” said Hamilton of driving in the wet earlier in the weekend. “But when it comes to those conditions, when it is about feel, that is when the driver is able to make the biggest difference.”

Where the track was at its wettest, in the final sector, Hamilton excelled and his reward was the best possible track position for Sunday. The question is whether Ferrari’s drivers should have done better?

Kimi Raikkonen certainly believed he would have done had





Hamilton made the most of pole to lead Bottas at the start



Vettel (5) made a fine move on Raikkonen at Turn 2 on first lap

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**motorsport**  
 IMAGES

he nailed it in Q3. Raikkonen was still ahead of Vettel, who admitted he didn't have the tidiest lap, and was adamant with a clean run he could have taken pole. But as Vettel suggested, in the wet the Ferrari certainly didn't seem to have the advantage it did in the dry.

"Probably we are not as competitive in the wet as we are in the dry," said Vettel. "It came down to the final lap, I pushed quite hard and tried everything. Maybe it wasn't the tidiest lap, but it also wasn't awful.

"We've not had much running in the wet this year and in the little bit we had, we had some work to do. In the dry, it could have been a different outcome. It wasn't, so we need to make sure that in the wet we are there."

The fact that Ferrari runs with a higher-rake configuration than Mercedes – along with Red Bull, which looked likely to slot in between Ferrari and Mercedes on pace in dry conditions – was proposed by some as the reason. The wet tyres marginally increase the rideheight

and could compromise the sealing of the underfloor, thanks to changing the interaction between aero components and the ground.

But tyre preparation in full-wet conditions surely also played a part, and most significantly the drivers not getting the most from the car did, too. The Ferrari wasn't suddenly a bad car in the wet, and as Vettel was beaten by Raikkonen he could, objectively, have gone quicker. And if Raikkonen thought pole was on, you have to assume the failure to achieve that was down to the drivers not making the most of it. That Hamilton has won the last nine rain-influenced grands prix perhaps tells you something.

Once in this predicament, Ferrari was fighting a losing battle to overturn its track position disadvantage. Given its single-lap pace advantage in dry conditions, an edge that became far smaller in the race, this turned a GP it should have controlled, perhaps with a Red Bull or two as a buffer to Mercedes, into a very difficult one. >>

Both Mercedes drivers started on ultrasoft Pirellis, while Ferrari split its strategy with Raikkonen matching them and Vettel starting on softs. Ferrari's opportunity to change the race was to split, or even clear both of, the Mercedes drivers when the red lights went out.

But it was as-you-were at the start, with Hamilton assuming the lead from Bottas and the Ferraris falling in behind in grid order. Until, that is, Vettel went around the outside of Raikkonen at Turn 2 to take up the fight. While his team-mate was compliant, it was a superb move by Vettel that transformed his race.

The Red Bulls were out of the picture. Daniel Ricciardo was still fighting in the pack, thanks to qualifying 12th in the wet. Max Verstappen retired from fifth place with an MGU-K failure and caused a brief virtual safety car, having jumped Saturday sensation Pierre Gasly on the run to Turn 1, then Carlos Sainz Jr through the first corner. That left a straight Mercedes-Ferrari fight.

It was over to Ferrari to force the issue, which it did by bringing Raikkonen into the pits for softs after just 14 of the 70 laps. Mercedes covered that move by bringing Bottas in to set up two duelling pairs.

At that point, Hamilton had built a lead of 6.5s over Bottas, who had Vettel floating between a second and two seconds behind. Mercedes expected Ferrari to try something different, but it went aggressive in pulling Raikkonen, who was running just behind Vettel, in so early. Mercedes' response of bringing in Bottas meant he then faced a 55-lap run to the flag on a single set of softs. That would prove very significant in the race's denouement.

**“THE KEY FOR MERCEDES WAS THE SET-UP CHANGES, WHICH PROTECTED THE REAR TYRES”**

Hamilton then needed to draw out the life of the ultrasofts for as long as possible. He did this very effectively, attacking on laps 14-16 to extend his lead over Vettel to 8.8s.

“The tyres converge,” said Hamilton of the relative pace of ultrasofts versus softs. “If you draw a line of the tyre life, you’ve got the ultrasoft that starts quickest and it drops off and there’s a crossover between the soft and the ultrasoft [pace].”

“By the time Valtteri had pitted and Sebastian had clean air, I was able to react to the times that he was putting in. So we were matching that crossover – but I was able to match his times for a good period of time and that’s really what made the race.”

That he was able to do this is hugely encouraging for Mercedes, which generally struggles for pace on the ultrasoft compared to Ferrari, thanks to rear temperature management troubles. As Hamilton pointed out, that’s good news for another Mercedes trouble spot – September’s Singapore GP.



DUNBAR/LAT  
motorsport IMAGES

The key was the set-up changes made from Friday to Saturday, which protected the rears more and might even have meant Mercedes could have extracted some more qualifying pace had it been dry. It’s asking a lot to suggest that would have allowed Hamilton and Bottas to outpace the Ferraris, but it might have made things easier than they looked on Friday when neither Mercedes driver could keep their rears alive all the way to the final part of the lap on their qualifying simulations.

Hamilton went all the way to lap 25 before stopping. By that time, Vettel had closed to 4.6s behind, and it was clear he was going to stay out on softs with a view to attacking Hamilton on ultrasofts later in the race.

After Hamilton’s stop, the Mercedes pitwall made it very clear to him that the priority was to look after the rear tyres to ensure they had the necessary life to go to the end with enough performance to keep Vettel at bay. That led to an uncomfortable period of 10 laps



Verstappen retired from fifth with MGU-K failure

GORIA/SUTTON  
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Ricciardo passing Vandoorne on his climb from 16th to fourth

ANDRE/SUTTON  
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Vettel's Ferrari emerges from pits behind Bottas

QUALIFYING

LEWIS HAMILTON AND MERCEDES HAD NO HOPE OF TAKING pole position for the Hungarian Grand Prix. Until it rained. Even when the track was initially dampened before the session, with intermediate tyres being used at the start of Q1 before everyone switched to slicks, that wasn't enough. Then the rain came again, meaning everyone switched to intermediates early in Q2. A help, but not necessarily enough.

But then the weather gods committed to the Mercedes cause and soaked the track, ensuring Q3 would be wet and so allowing Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas to lock out the front row of the grid.

Hamilton's lap in sodden conditions was an excellent one. Although he shed a couple of tenths to Bottas in the middle sector, he showed perfect judgement of where the grip was in the twisty final sector to outpace Bottas by 0.426s. On top of his slight edge in the first sector, this added up to a 0.260s advantage.

This was where Hamilton excelled, holding a tighter line than most through the long Turn 13 left-hand hairpin, then keeping it smooth and tight through the final corner. Bottas, by comparison, struggled on the wider line in Turn 13 and had the rear step out on him in the last turn.

The Ferraris locked out the second row, with Kimi Raikkonen shading Sebastian Vettel after setting his time on his first run. Vettel struggled most in the final sector, going so wide at Turn 13 he was on the green paint beyond the edge of the track.

Carlos Sainz Jr was the only driver not to take on fresh wets during Q3 after defying Renault's instruction to pit, setting the fifth fastest time on the lap he was told to abort. That put him ahead of Pierre Gasly's sixth for Toro Rosso, with Max Verstappen finding the Red Bull very difficult in the wet and down in seventh. He also incurred the ire of Romain Grosjean, whose Haas he impeded enough to delay but not enough to earn a penalty. That left Grosjean 10th behind team-mate Kevin Magnussen, with both beaten by Q3 debutant Brendon Hartley.

At least Verstappen did better than team-mate Daniel Ricciardo, who ended up 12th and missed Q3. He blamed this on Lance Stroll crashing and causing yellow flags in sector two combined with bad conditions, but it should be noted that Raikkonen set a Q3 time while running around 11s behind him on track – outpacing him by 2.6s in the first and third sectors.

EDD STRAW

**“HAMILTON SHOWED PERFECT JUDGEMENT OF WHERE THE GRIP WAS”**

when Vettel had enough of a lead to pit under a virtual safety car and emerge ahead. Fortunately for Mercedes, that VSC didn't crop up, but it illustrates how serious the concerns about tyre life were.

Vettel had extended the gap to third-placed Bottas, who was under pressure from Raikkonen, to around the 25s mark. But by the time he dived into the pits on lap 39, Vettel, thanks to a combination of traffic and Bottas unleashing prodigious pace and setting a couple of fastest laps, was down to just 20.7s ahead.

Vettel came in to take on ultrasofts, and the time lost on track was compounded by spending 4.2s in his pitbox thanks to a delay getting the front left wheelnut tightened. Vettel emerged from the pits around 1.5s behind Bottas, immediately asking the pitwall if he couldn't have been left out for a few more laps before stopping to rebuild the gap.

Had he stopped a few laps earlier, and had there not been the gunning delay, Vettel would have been ahead. But as Vettel pointed out, that was down to the fear the ultrasofts might not hold up to the end of the 70-lap race.

“It was good that we were faster on an older tyre than Valtteri and pulled a gap,” said Vettel when asked about the reason for delaying the pitstop. “It's a bit difficult to foresee the traffic and I lost quite a lot. Then we had the pitstop [problem].

“They [Mercedes] don't call us and say, ‘Our tyres still look good, you can come in earlier’. Obviously, the worst that can happen is that you come in earlier, you gain the position and then you fall apart at the end.

“With the circumstances, we lost out and we came out behind. I think without that it would have been a much more relaxed last part of the race, probably hunting down Lewis. But with the gap that he had, I think it would have been difficult to catch him. And then it's a completely different story, especially around here, to overtake.

“I think we could have done the catching bit, but not really the overtake. So it doesn't change the final result, it's just that it was a bit more work than coming out ahead.” >>



ANDRE/SUTTON motorsport IMAGES



TRACKSIDE VIEW

The Hungaroring is a circuit, for grand prix cars at least, that has got better with age. Once derided as Monaco without the walls and the scene of processional races (albeit with a knack for producing the odd sensational overtaking manoeuvre), it's a track where growing downforce levels have made it ever-more spectacular.

There are few places on the calendar where a driver gets so little respite, particularly in the run from Turn 4 to the end of the lap, where near-constant lateral loads make it so difficult to keep the rear tyres from overheating.

There are plenty of medium and slow-speed corner entries here. Watch at Turn 2 during FP3 and you can see the differences between the most convincing cars on turn-in and the worst. The two that stand out are the Haas and the Ferrari. Kimi Raikkonen, in particular, is silky-smooth through here, turning in effortlessly, then able to get on the power as he makes the corner more rounded, with team-mate Sebastian Vettel taking his trademark more aggressive approach and rotating the rear more. The Ferrari responds well to both.

It's less straightforward for others. Both Williams drivers



struggle on turn-in, with the rear requiring a moment to calm itself. It's more a hesitation than anything else, but you can detect varying levels of uncertainty in most cars.

Hamilton's Mercedes has a slight hesitation as he experiments with lines on the way in. He attempts a more Vettel-like, tighter line but the rear steps out between turn-in and apex and he has to correct. Thereafter, he doesn't go so tight.

Moving to the Turn 13 left-hand

hairpin, and you can see a similar thing. On one lap Hamilton is too aggressive and he's spat onto a wide line because the rear won't stand up to turning in at that speed.

Others have similar problems. Within 30 seconds of each other, the Saubers run very wide – Charles Leclerc loses the rear after going in too hot and has a huge slide, and Marcus Ericsson just can't get the front end to turn in. It says a lot about their different styles – Leclerc

more aggressive on turn in and Ericsson more progressive, that basically the same misjudgement leads to an oversteer moment and an understeer moment respectively.

Ericsson is trying extremely hard. Earlier, he is too aggressive on the power exiting Turn 2 and pushes himself onto the grass at the exit. It's difficult to keep up with a hot-shot team-mate at a track where your car isn't working so well.

**EDD STRAW**



Raikkonen demonstrates how to take Turn 2



A bit more work is an understatement. Up front, Hamilton was effectively home free and Ferrari had missed its opportunity to give Vettel track position over Bottas.

There were a few question marks about tyre management, but Hamilton drove immaculately with the Bottas buffer keeping both of the Ferraris at bay – Raikkonen had rapidly closed up after making his second pitstop on lap 38. He regained fourth when Ricciardo finally made his sole pitstop on lap 44 and Raikkonen latched onto the back of the second-place battle with 12 laps to go.

There was a point during this phase of the race when a VSC triggered by Stoffel Vandoorne's retirement meant Mercedes briefly considered pitting Bottas again to guarantee third ahead of Raikkonen, but the decision was made to go aggressive – and rightly so.

Vettel's final attack on Bottas was made on lap 65, when he closed rapidly with DRS assistance on the run to Turn 1. Bottas defended, putting him on a wide line at the exit while Vettel cut back inside him.

On the run into the Turn 2 left-hander, Vettel was ahead but, with Bottas squeezed on the inside line, he turned across the Mercedes. Bottas was still half-thinking about trying to hang on despite the pass being as good as done, and, as he desperately tried to avoid the Ferrari once it became clear contact was inevitable, he clipped Vettel with his front wing.

"I still had my nose inside into Turn 2, he was on the outside, he turned in very early for me and there was nowhere to go," said Bottas. "We touched and I was the only one who got damaged. Fair enough, I think racing incident."

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**"I COULD ONLY HAVE DREAMED WE WOULD BE IN THE POSITION THAT WE ARE RIGHT NOW"**

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The stewards noted the incident but clearly agreed as there was no investigation. Vettel, who escaped unscathed, believed he was already ahead but didn't blame Bottas for what happened because he knew how little grip the Mercedes driver had.

With Bottas quickly relegated to fourth behind Raikkonen and struggling with front wing damage, he soon fell into the clutches of Ricciardo. The Australian had spent 27 laps climbing from 16th, where he ended the first lap, to fifth and clear of the midfield. After a 44-lap opening stint on softs, he was flying on ultrasofts and tried to go around the outside of Bottas three laps from home.

Bottas tried to compete on the brakes, but didn't have the front end, locked up the front-right and clattered Ricciardo. The stewards hit him with a 10s penalty despite Mercedes then ordering Bottas to let Ricciardo past – something he didn't seem willing to do but that happened on the last lap anyway – which was the right thing to do.

Bottas knew his car was hobbled and should have accepted Ricciardo was going to relegate him to fifth. For 64 laps, Bottas had done what Mercedes needed him to before it all unravelled, and the usually-cool Finn seemed to lose his head as a result.

This was the only thing that could in any way compromise Hamilton's day as he reeled off the remaining laps to take victory by 17.1s. But although Vettel doing his own bit of damage limitation by recovering to second means Hamilton 'only' takes a 24-point lead into the August break, the reigning champion couldn't hide his delight at having put one over Ferrari for the second time in seven days.

"I could only have dreamed we would be in the position that we are in right now, considering all factors and based on our pure performance compared to the Ferraris," he said after back-to-back wins at Hockenheim and the Hungaroring.

And all because of one factor – the weather – changing at key moments and transforming the competitive balance twice in the space of seven days. ✎



SUTTON/SUTTON

## On-form Vandoorne denied points

Stoffel Vandoorne is enduring a wretched second season as a Formula 1 driver. His retirement with suspected gearbox failure in the Hungarian Grand Prix marked the eighth consecutive race in which he has failed to score points.

Vandoorne has amassed only eight points to McLaren team-mate Fernando Alonso's 44 so far in 2018, and has failed to escape Q1 at every race since June's Canadian GP. But Vandoorne suggested that his performance in Hungary "was a good sign that everything is back to normal" after a miserable recent run of form.

He qualified slowest of all at the previous race in Germany and said he was struggling even to match his team-mate in a single corner. Alonso backed Vandoorne in public, saying there was a clear discrepancy in downforce between the two cars, and McLaren changed Vandoorne's chassis ahead of the Hungarian GP.

Although he again failed to escape Q1 in mixed conditions, Vandoorne drove a strong race and ran very close to Alonso's pace. He tracked his team-mate closely and was set to finish right behind Alonso in ninth before losing drive at around two-thirds distance.

"From a personal side [this weekend] felt good," Vandoorne said. "We showed the pace was back to where it's been [in the past]."



STAT

81

Bottas is now 81 points behind team-mate Hamilton in the drivers' table

ETHERINGTON/LAT  
motorsport  
IMAGES

## 'Balls on the line' as Toro Rossos star in wet qualifying

Toro Rosso pairing Pierre Gasly and Brendon Hartley starred in a rain-hit qualifying session at the Hungaroring, with Gasly taking sixth and Hartley a career-best eighth.

Gasly claimed he almost crashed "three or four" times on the lap that put him on row three, while Hartley said he had "put my balls on the line" to get to Q3 for the first time in his career.

Gasly held sixth place at the start after passing Carlos Sainz Jr's Renault but slipping behind Max Verstappen's Red Bull. Although he was passed by the recovering Daniel Ricciardo, he picked up a place

when Verstappen retired early on and, having outpaced Kevin Magnussen in the first stint, was clear of the rest of the midfield.

Despite making a good getaway, Hartley slipped to ninth at the first corner after backing off to avoid contact with Gasly. He finished 11th thanks to stopping early to cover off the risk of a Nico Hulkenberg undercut, which allowed both McLarens, one of which retired, and Romain Grosjean to get ahead.

This was Gasly's third points finish of 2018, after his fourth place in Bahrain and seventh at Monaco.



HONE/LAT  
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# Bottas given penalty for collision with Ricciardo

Valtteri Bottas was hit with a 10-second penalty after the Hungarian Grand Prix, a punishment that did not cost him fifth place but also earned him two superlicence penalty points.

While the FIA stewards said they had noted the earlier clash between Bottas and Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, there was no official investigation. But when Bottas hit Ricciardo while trying to hang on to fourth place three laps from home at Turn 1, he was found to be "wholly or predominantly to blame", as the rules demand.

Ricciardo had a run on the hobbled Bottas, who was struggling with front-wing damage sustained in the Vettel clash. Bottas defended and Ricciardo went around the outside, with the Mercedes driver briefly locking up and hitting the sidepod of the Red Bull. Ricciardo survived to finish fourth after passing Bottas at the same corner on the final lap.

The stewards' verdict stated: "Bottas had a damaged front wing from an earlier incident.

As the two cars approached Turn 1, Ricciardo was on the outside of the turn and gave plenty of room. With the compromised line and less downforce from the front wing Bottas locked up, and collided with Ricciardo forcing Ricciardo off the track and causing damage."

Vettel, who escaped the earlier collision with

Bottas without damage and finished second, said he believed he was clear of the Mercedes driver.

"I was quite comfortable into Turn 2 knowing I got him," said Vettel. "I wanted to make sure I didn't overshoot the braking. I hit the brakes and when I turned in I felt the contact from behind."

Mercedes motorsport boss Toto Wolff backed his driver despite the way Bottas's race unravelled.

"The tyre was completely shot," said Wolff of the final six laps of the race, when Bottas slipped from second to fifth. "We were surprised he managed to hold Sebastian and Kimi Raikkonen behind him for 25 or so laps and we knew the last five laps would be really critical.

"Sebastian made a good move into Turn 1 on the inside, and there was no traction on Valtteri's car anymore. He stayed on the inside on the dirty line, braked late, there was also nowhere to go – completely normal racing incident. The second one the same.

"The second one looked a bit harsh when you look at the pictures, but considering that he was on the dirty line and the tyre was shot and the car was damaged on the front wing – there was nowhere to go. Then Daniel tried on the outside, didn't know that Valtteri's car was not in a perfect state anymore, and this is how they collided."



CORIAN SUTTON

## Verstappen furious with Renault failure

Red Bull driver Max Verstappen says the Renault Formula 1 engine's lack of reliability and performance is "difficult to accept", with the latest failure in Hungary leaving him "very angry".

Verstappen had passed Carlos Sainz Jr and Pierre Gasly at the start of the Hungarian Grand Prix to run fifth behind the Mercedes and Ferrari cars, but an MGU-K failure put him out of the race after five laps.

"Honestly, it's just not at all how it should be," said Verstappen. "You pay millions as a team for, you hope, a decent engine. But it keeps breaking down. We are also the slowest out there.

"Honestly, at the moment it's difficult to accept."

Verstappen was livid over team radio when the failure occurred, first suggesting that he runs the car until the engine "blows up", before an expletive-laden tirade.

"I was very angry on the radio," he said. "I think there was a lot of beeping out there, which was a shame that they beeped it away – it would've been better if they allowed it."

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner also hit out at his outgoing engine supplier.

"We pay multi millions of pounds for these engines, for a first-class product, a state-of-the-art product, and you can see it is quite clearly some way below that," said Horner.

This is the eighth time a Red Bull has failed to get to the chequered flag in 2018.

### Q & A PIERRE GASLY

Toro Rosso driver

**Pierre Gasly banked his third big points finish of the season after finishing sixth, earning 'Class B' honours in the process**



**You took 'Class B' victory here – do you think about that?**

Of course, we know it's impossible for us to do better. And I think I was the only guy in the B-class

is at the maximum and it's a pretty exciting feeling. Then Q2, on inters, you've got only one lap because rain is coming. It's really on the edge all the time. And wet conditions for the last run, I almost crashed four times.

**Do you prefer running on your own like that?**

It's the same for everyone. The car behaves a lot better when you're not following other cars. As soon as I started to arrive behind the Williams... actually the first time I saw blue flags for cars ahead of me I thought, 'It means I am doing a good race now'. Usually the blue flag is for me [to let] the Ferrari or the Mercedes [through]. Yeah, it's the first time that I lapped other cars. I didn't lap other cars [in Bahrain].

**Was that a lonely race for you?**

I had quite a lot of pressure from Kevin [Magnussen] behind, but the car was great. I was pushing flat-out because I knew that the Haas is pretty fast, and we're saving quite a lot of fuel. I thought that they were doing the same and they were going to push at the end, which is what they did. If it looked like a lonely race, it was really hard work. I knew that I had my chance, it was in my hands. It just went exactly like in a dream.

not lapped in the race, so it's a pretty nice feeling. I'm really happy because we knew that with Toro Rosso, two or three times in the year you have big opportunities like these. I really wanted to make sure that this year I take all these opportunities.

**How exciting was qualifying?**

Qualifying was so exciting. Adrenaline was just so high because in Q1, the rain, it's drying, you've got only one lap. That lap you need to perform, it's like pressure



THE BRITISH RACING LEGEND

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**Ricciardo recovers to fourth after collision with Ericsson**

Daniel Ricciardo recovered to finish fourth in the Hungarian Grand Prix despite dropping to 16th after a clash with Sauber driver Marcus Ericsson on the run to the first corner.

Ricciardo started 12th after a combination of Lance Stroll causing a yellow flag and his own struggle for pace in the wet led to him dropping out in Q2 – he was 2.6s slower than Kimi Raikkonen, who was facing

identical conditions, in sectors one and three where yellow flags did not compromise his lap. Ericsson lunged between Ricciardo and Stoffel Vandoorne and ended up hitting the left side of the Red Bull. Both drivers escaped the clash.

From 16th at the end of the first lap, Ricciardo had cleared the midfield by lap 27, with Kevin Magnussen the driver who put up the most robust fight.

“It’s nice to finish on a high. There have been a few races where I haven’t been that happy, so it’s nice to get a good one today,” said Ricciardo, who passed Valtteri Bottas on the last lap after an earlier collision.

“The start was hectic and I got beaten around a little bit, but managed to climb our way through so that was fun; with Valtteri too, but I got him on the last lap so that felt better.”

## Qualifying star Sainz slips from fifth to ninth

Renault driver Carlos Sainz Jr matched the best qualifying performance of his Formula 1 career with fifth on the grid.

Sainz, whose previous fifth place came in his first season with Toro Rosso in 2015 at the Spanish Grand Prix, opted to stay out to complete a

lap on which he was called in in wet conditions during Q3.

While this stopped him using a second set of tyres, unlike the other nine drivers in Q3, he did set the fifth-fastest time on that lap.

Sainz’s race did not go so well, however, as he slipped

behind Max Verstappen, Pierre Gasly and Kevin Magnussen at the start.

After losing a place to the recovering Daniel Ricciardo, he was then jumped by Fernando Alonso, who ran long in the first stint, to finish ninth.



## Leclerc out after first-corner clash

Sauber rookie sensation Charles Leclerc retired at the end of the first lap after being squeezed between the Force Indias of Sergio Perez and Esteban Ocon at the exit of Turn 1.

Leclerc was attempting to go around the outside of Perez into the corner when Ocon went around the outside of him. This led to the trio converging at the exit, with Perez initially making contact with Leclerc as the Sauber driver attempted to back out of it.

Leclerc survived the initial impact, but pulled into the pitlane at the end of the first lap to register the second retirement of his first Formula 1 season.





**FREE PRACTICE 1**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Ricciardo	1m17.613s
2	Vettel	1m17.692s
3	Verstappen	1m17.701s
4	Raikkonen	1m17.948s
5	Hamilton	1m18.036s
6	Bottas	1m18.470s
7	Grosjean	1m18.975s
8	Hulkenberg	1m19.025s
9	Sainz	1m19.128s
10	Magnussen	1m19.187s
11	Gasly	1m19.352s
12	Alonso	1m19.690s
13	Hartley	1m19.841s
14	Stroll	1m20.012s
15	Ocon	1m20.065s
16	Vandoorne	1m20.151s
17	Perez	1m20.159s
18	Giovinazzi	1m20.293s
19	Sirotkin	1m20.307s
20	Ericsson	1m20.697s

WEATHER Sunny 28C

**FREE PRACTICE 2**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m16.834s
2	Verstappen	1m16.908s
3	Ricciardo	1m17.061s
4	Raikkonen	1m17.153s
5	Hamilton	1m17.587s
6	Bottas	1m17.868s
7	Grosjean	1m18.065s
8	Sainz	1m18.495s
9	Gasly	1m18.518s
10	Ocon	1m18.761s
11	Perez	1m18.850s
12	Alonso	1m18.857s
13	Magnussen	1m18.880s
14	Hulkenberg	1m18.913s
15	Hartley	1m18.916s
16	Ericsson	1m19.043s
17	Leclerc	1m19.137s
18	Stroll	1m19.645s
19	Vandoorne	1m19.712s
20	Sirotkin	1m19.770s

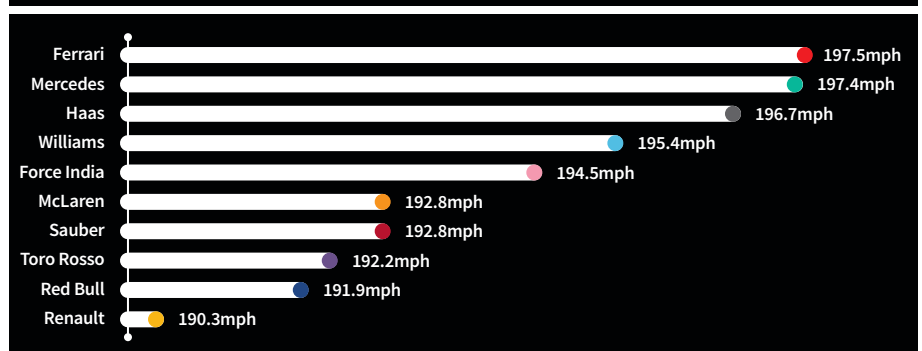
WEATHER Sunny 32C

**FREE PRACTICE 3**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m16.170s
2	Bottas	1m16.229s
3	Raikkonen	1m16.373s
4	Hamilton	1m16.749s
5	Ricciardo	1m16.803s
6	Verstappen	1m16.946s
7	Sainz	1m17.754s
8	Hulkenberg	1m18.083s
9	Grosjean	1m18.084s
10	Gasly	1m18.139s
11	Magnussen	1m18.230s
12	Hartley	1m18.252s
13	Leclerc	1m18.376s
14	Alonso	1m18.467s
15	Ocon	1m18.512s
16	Sirotkin	1m18.630s
17	Vandoorne	1m18.789s
18	Ericsson	1m18.842s
19	Perez	1m18.962s
20	Stroll	1m19.132s

WEATHER Sunny 29C

**SPEED TRAP**



**QUALIFYING 1**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m16.666s
2	Verstappen	1m16.940s
3	Bottas	1m17.123s
4	Hamilton	1m17.419s
5	Raikkonen	1m17.526s
6	Sainz	1m17.829s
7	Grosjean	1m17.901s
8	Hulkenberg	1m17.905s
9	Alonso	1m18.208s
10	Magnussen	1m18.314s
11	Hartley	1m18.429s
12	Ricciardo	1m18.540s
13	Stroll	1m18.560s
14	Gasly	1m18.577s
15	Ericsson	1m18.641s
16	Vandoorne	1m18.782s
17	Leclerc	1m18.817s
18	Ocon	1m19.142s
19	Perez	1m19.200s
20	Sirotkin	1m19.301s

**QUALIFYING 2**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m28.636s
2	Sainz	1m30.771s
3	Verstappen	1m31.178s
4	Hamilton	1m31.242s
5	Gasly	1m31.286s
6	Bottas	1m32.081s
7	Hartley	1m32.590s
8	Raikkonen	1m32.762s
9	Magnussen	1m32.968s
10	Grosjean	1m33.650s
11	Alonso	1m35.214s
12	Ricciardo	1m36.442s
13	Hulkenberg	1m36.506s
14	Ericsson	1m37.075s
15	Stroll	no time

**QUALIFYING 3**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m35.658s
2	Bottas	1m35.918s
3	Raikkonen	1m36.186s
4	Vettel	1m36.210s
5	Sainz	1m36.743s
6	Gasly	1m37.591s
7	Verstappen	1m38.032s
8	Hartley	1m38.128s
9	Magnussen	1m39.858s
10	Grosjean	1m40.593s

WEATHER Wet 22C

**SEASON STATS**

**DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

1	Hamilton	213
2	Vettel	189
3	Raikkonen	146
4	Bottas	132
5	Ricciardo	118
6	Verstappen	105
7	Hulkenberg	52
8	Magnussen	45
9	Alonso	44
10	Perez	30
11	Sainz	30
12	Ocon	29
13	Gasly	26
14	Grosjean	21
15	Leclerc	13
16	Vandoorne	8
17	Ericsson	5
18	Stroll	4
19	Hartley	2
20	Sirotkin	0

**CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

1	Mercedes	345
2	Ferrari	335
3	Red Bull	223
4	Renault	82
5	Haas	66
6	Force India	59
7	McLaren	52
8	Toro Rosso	28
9	Sauber	18
10	Williams	4

**QUALIFYING BATTLE**

Hamilton	7	5	Bottas
Vettel	10	2	Raikkonen
Ricciardo	2	9	Verstappen
Perez	3	9	Ocon
Stroll	5	7	Sirotkin
Hulkenberg	7	5	Sainz
Gasly	7	3	Hartley
Grosjean	3	8	Magnussen
Vandoorne	0	12	Alonso
Ericsson	3	9	Leclerc

**WINS**

Hamilton	5
Vettel	4
Ricciardo	2
Verstappen	1

**FASTEST LAPS**

Ricciardo	4
Bottas	3
Verstappen	2
Hamilton	1
Raikkonen	1
Vettel	1

**POLE POSITIONS**

Hamilton	5
Vettel	5
Bottas	1
Ricciardo	1



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## STARTING GRID



## RACE RESULTS 70 laps - 190.54 miles

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISHTIME	LED	TYRES
1	Lewis Hamilton (GB)	Mercedes	1h37m16.427s	56	USn, Sn
2	Sebastian Vettel (D)	Ferrari	+17.123s	14	Sn, USn
3	Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)	Ferrari	+20.101s		USn, Sn, Su
4	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	Red Bull-Renault	+46.419s		Sn, USn
5	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Mercedes	+1m00.000s		USn, Sn
6	Pierre Gasly (F)	Toro Rosso-Honda	+1m13.273s		USn, Sn
7	Kevin Magnussen (DK)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap		USn, Sn
8	Fernando Alonso (E)	Mclaren-Renault	-1 lap		Sn, Mn
9	Carlos Sainz (E)	Renault	-1 lap		Sn, Mn
10	Romain Grosjean (F)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap		USn, Sn
11	Brendon Hartley (NZ)	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap		USn, Mn
12	Nico Hulkenberg (D)	Renault	-1 lap		Sn, Mn, USn
13	Esteban Ocon (F)	ForceIndia-Mercedes	-1 lap		Sn, USn
14	Sergio Perez (MEX)	ForceIndia-Mercedes	-1 lap		USn, Sn
15	Marcus Ericsson (S)	Sauber-Ferrari	-2laps		USn, Mn
16	Sergey Sirotkin (RUS)	Williams-Mercedes	-2laps		Sn, Mn
17	Lance Stroll (CDN)	Williams-Mercedes	-2laps		Mn, USn
R	Stoffel Vandoorne (B)	Mclaren-Renault	49laps-gearbox		Sn, Mn
R	Max Verstappen (NL)	Red Bull-Renault	5laps-powerunit		USn
R	Charles Leclerc (MC)	Sauber-Ferrari	0laps-collision		Sn

## FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Ricciardo	1m20.012s	-	46
2	Vettel	1m20.056s	+0.044s	70
3	Raikkonen	1m20.292s	+0.280s	55
4	Hamilton	1m21.107s	+1.095s	63
5	Hulkenberg	1m21.261s	+1.249s	69
6	Magnussen	1m21.302s	+1.290s	60
7	Gasly	1m21.685s	+1.673s	64
8	Bottas	1m21.736s	+1.724s	39
9	Alonso	1m22.090s	+2.078s	68
10	Grosjean	1m22.606s	+2.594s	58
11	Hartley	1m22.612s	+2.600s	62
12	Stroll	1m22.660s	+2.648s	51
13	Sainz	1m22.774s	+2.762s	58
14	Ocon	1m22.876s	+2.864s	63
15	Vandoorne	1m23.077s	+3.065s	46
16	Perez	1m23.263s	+3.251s	56
17	Ericsson	1m23.671s	+3.659s	53
18	Sirotkin	1m23.708s	+3.696s	53
19	Verstappen	1m23.985s	+3.973s	5
-	Leclerc	notime		

WEATHER Sunny 28C

TYRES n - New set u - Used set Available | SH - Superhard H - Hard M - Medium S - Soft SS - Supersoft US - Ultrasoft HS - Hypersoft Int - Intermediate W - Wet

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 117.53mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 122.49mph

## RACE BRIEFING

**FP1 ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI** replaced Leclerc at Sauber**FP2 SAUBER** fined €5000 for releasing Ericsson's car in an unsafe condition

## GRID PENALTIES

**STROLL** required to start from pitlane as car modified while under parc ferme conditions

## RACE PENALTIES

**BOTTAS** 10-second penalty and two licence points for causing a collision with Ricciardo

## STAT

**125**

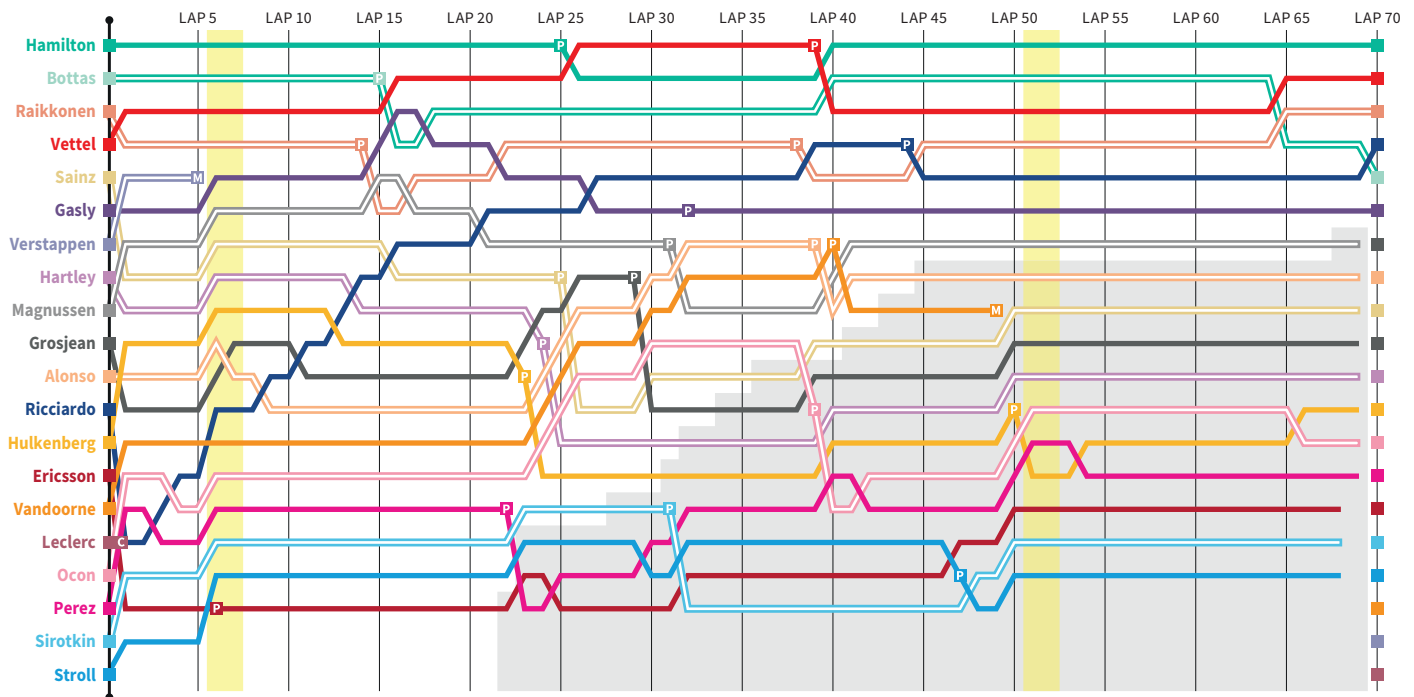
Hamilton has now started 125 F1 races from the front row

## NEXT RACE

**AUGUST 26  
BELGIAN GP**

Spa

## LAP CHART What happened, when



■ Pitstop 
 ■ Crash 
 ■ Mechanical failure 
 ■ Spin 
 ■ Penalty 
 ■ Car lapped 
 ■ Safety car

# MADNESS AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

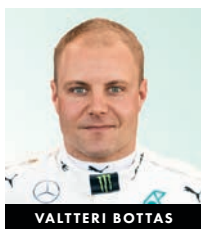
*Just one driver earns a perfect score after a Hungaroring weekend marked by squandered chances and brain-out-of-gear manoeuvres*

EDD STRAW

## MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

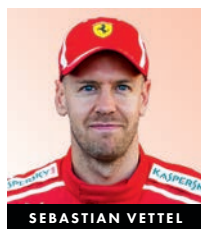


VALTTERI BOTTAS

**9** Hamilton made the difference in the sodden final sector on his way to pole position. After that superb display, his strong first stint extending the life of the ultrasoft was the key to victory. The only question mark is we'll never know how he would have responded to Vettel pressure late on.

**6** Bottas almost came out of this race with a sensational second place after a good qualifying performance, but loses marks for his involvement in two incidents. He might also have found a little more pace in the first stint so he didn't have to rely on Vettel hitting traffic to stay ahead.

## FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

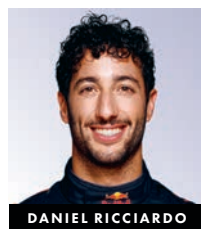


KIMI RAIKKONEN

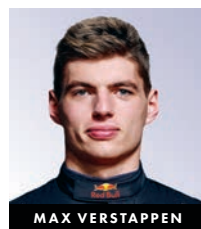
**8** He could have got a little more out of the car in qualifying and, given Raikkonen thought pole was on, the front row at least was possible. Vettel did what he could in the race, and although it would have been wise not to assume he was clear of Bottas at Turn 2, he got away with it.

**7** Yet another potential win missed. He thought pole position was on the cards, but couldn't nail his final run. Had he done so, he'd have had every chance of winning given his race pace. He did end up on an unorthodox strategy, and third place was just reward for a decent drive.

## RED BULL



DANIEL RICCIARDO

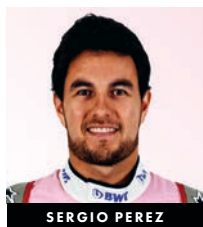


MAX VERSTAPPEN

**7** It was possible for Ricciardo to make Q3 even with Stroll causing yellows in the second sector, but it wasn't made easy by his track position. He made up for it in the race after dropping to 16th thanks to an early clash with Ericsson, clearing the midfield in 27 laps and taking fourth late on.

**8** Verstappen's race lasted only five laps, and he deserves credit for clearing Gasly and Sainz immediately and joining the Mercedes v Ferrari battle. But how he's rated depends entirely on whether you believe the Red Bull was as bad as he made it look in qualifying. He gets the benefit of the doubt.

## FORCE INDIA



SERGIO PEREZ

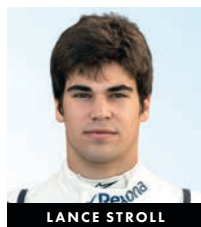


ESTEBAN OCON

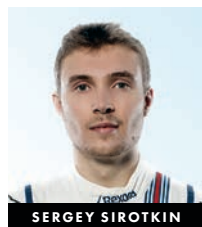
**6** It's perhaps no surprise Perez was a little distracted this weekend given the off-track shenanigans at Force India. Quali didn't go well, and he was unable to do anything to change things in the race, finishing behind his team-mate. That's about where Force India was on pace.

**7** The lack of rear brakes in Q1 meant he was eliminated, although he was ahead of Perez. That set the tone for the race at a track where Force India generally isn't at its best. Mired in the pack, there was no way to make progress, although he should have kept Hulkenberg behind.

## WILLIAMS



LANCE STROLL



SERGEY SIROTKIN

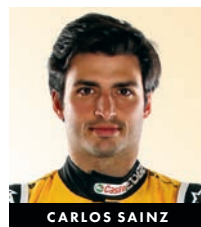
**6** Undid the good work of making Q2 by spinning. That robbed him of his one version of the new-specification nose, forcing a change to the old one and a pitlane start. On different strategies, it's difficult to compare his race pace with Sirotkin, although he came close to beating his team-mate.

**6** Sirotkin didn't make the best of the conditions in qualifying. In the race he was only really fighting with his team-mate, and at least won that battle with a little help from Stroll's pitlane start. His race pace looked reasonable enough considering he was plunged into blue-flag hell from lap 28.

## RENAULT



NICO HULKENBERG



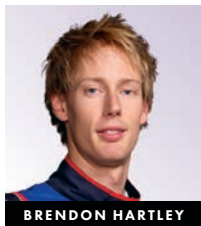
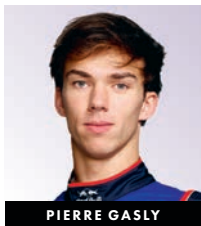
CARLOS SAINZ

**6** Hulkenberg's hopes of reaching Q3 were ruined by a fuel bowser problem that kept him in the pits for too long. That, combined with the fact Renault tried to undercut the cars ahead rather than running longer, condemned him to a race stuck just outside the points.

**8** Sainz made the inspired call to complete a lap he was called in on for new wets during Q3, earning himself fifth on the grid. The race didn't go so well, since being pushed wide by Verstappen at Turn 1 dropped him to eighth. Strategy, rather than pace, led to him slipping to ninth at the finish.



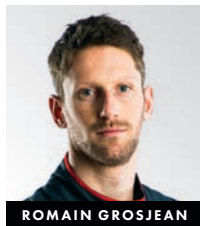
## TORO ROSSO



**10** Superb Q3 lap earned him 'Class B' pole position. What really impressed was his composure in the race, lapping faster than Magnussen during the first stint to pull away and make sure of midfield victory. A beautifully executed race after opportunistic brilliance in qualifying.

**7** Hartley did a good job in the wet qualifying session, albeit not quite as good as Gasly. On paper, starting eighth, losing a place in Turn 1 after having to back off to avoid Gasly in Turn 1 and then finishing 11th sounds bad, but it was mostly strategy owing to the team covering Hulkenberg.

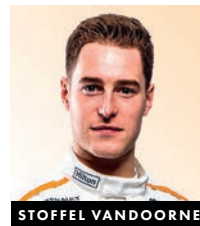
## HAAS



**8** Grosjean was justifiably unhappy with Verstappen impeding him in qualifying. Didn't get a great launch, which dropped him to 12th, and stopping earlier meant he lost the place to Alonso he'd made up with a great bit of opportunism. A better performance than 10th suggests.

**8** The Haas looked fourth-quickest in the dry, but wet conditions in qualifying made life more difficult for Magnussen. It was a surprise to see him slip back from Gasly in the first stint, but partly this was in order to attack later in the race. Time lost at the pitstop didn't help his cause, though.

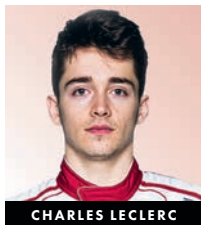
## McLAREN



**8** After two lost weekends, a change of chassis, among other components, brought Vandoorne's season back to life. Should have made Q2, but when running behind Alonso in the race, he was only fractionally slower in both stints until a gearbox problem denied him ninth.

**7** Probably could have made it to Q3 thanks to the wet conditions, for he wasn't among the last to pick inters in Q2. His race was well-executed, save for being mugged by Grosjean coming out of the VSC. Eighth place was his reward, but could it have been better had he aced it in wet qualifying?

## SAUBER

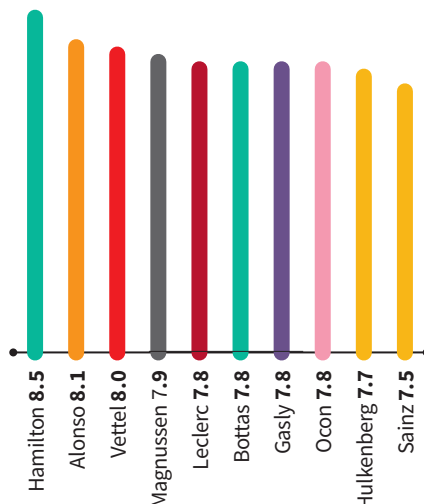


**6** There were a few too many offs during practice, but Ericsson did a good job to reach Q2. The start clash with Ricciardo was partly down to him not reading the situation right and partly the circumstance, and he could do little on an out-of-synch strategy other than beat the two Williams drivers.

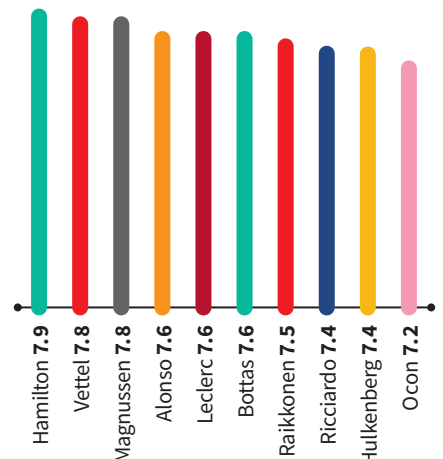
**5** Leclerc was harder hit by missing FP1 than he expected, but justifiably blamed himself for not nailing it in Q1. Finding himself sandwiched between the two Force Indias at the start was a rookie mistake, but it was largely circumstances that conspired to put him in that position.

### TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS

AUTOSPORT'S RATING AFTER ROUND 12



READERS' RATING AFTER ROUND 12



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# 'He's on another planet'

*Even the mighty Sebastien Ogier was wowed by Ott Tanak as the Toyota star put in one of the great rally performances in Finland*

DAVID EVANS

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY MCKLEIN



**I**van Drago. Remember him? I'll jog your memory: *Rocky IV*, scary big Russian and a man of few words whose sole aim in life was to break America's grip on heavyweight boxing. Having swept aside Apollo Creed, he uttered the classic line: "I cannot be defeated."

Ott Tanak's blonde hair, blue eyes and square jaw are similar to actor Dolph Lundgren, who portrayed Drago, so it wasn't too much of a stretch to imagine him standing over his Rally Finland rivals last weekend and running the same line past them. Maybe even adding another Drago pronouncement: "I defeat all men."

Toyota's speed was telegraphed in

Finland. We knew it was coming after watching Esapekka Lappi's brilliant maiden World Rally Championship victory at home 12 months ago. But who would it be this year? Could Lappi do it again, or would fellow Finn Jari-Matti Latvala score a most memorable win for the team based around the corner in Puuppola?

On paper, Tanak's chance was the slimmest. He had to start third on the road on one of the hottest, driest and loosest Rally Finlands in history, so few observers accorded the Estonian much of a hope. At least not on Friday. *Maybe* if he could cling to the coat tails of those further down the order – those finding grip on a road swept clear of the ball-bearing gravel –

then *maybe* he could do something at the weekend. Sensibly, that was the best he could hope for.

A fortnight earlier, Tanak revelled in the sort of home support a driver can only dream of when he won Rally Estonia as part of his preparation for the trip across the Baltic Sea. The Tartu-based event was partly Tanak giving something back to the hardcore support, which follows him to the Earth's four corners, but it was also a better than expected warm-up.

First on the road at home, Tanak was confronted by deep, loose gravel of the sort he would face in Finland. And jumps? There were plenty. The organisers had installed 28 manmade leaps into their >>

toweringly quick roads. The data gained was real and very worthwhile – not least in terms of tuning the damper to precisely what he wanted from a flying and very fast Yaris WRC.

After Estonia, Tanak talked of his desire to “make life difficult for the locals”. Last Thursday night, he was ready.

“They know the roads,” he said on the eve of the event. “But I won’t complain, I can’t complain. I have the same tools. I just need to be quicker. It’s up to me now...”

To battle. To Moksi. Shortly after eight on Friday morning and it was hot and getting hotter. Any hope that a layer of damp just beneath the surface might offer the opening cars a touch more traction was dashed.

Championship leader Thierry Neuville was first in. Sending up a huge cloud of dust, the i20 Coupe WRC searched in vain for somewhere, some way to put down almost 400bhp. No chance. Beneath each corner a Michelin spun helplessly; there was nothing to hold on to.

The Belgian’s plight was confirmed when, second into the stage, Sebastien Ogier completed the first 1.8 miles of gravel 1.1 seconds faster than his championship rival.

Over to Tanak. The first split was good. The second was good as well; the third, simply outstanding.

The blue touch paper had been lit; the scene set. A forest full of fans were torn: he’s Estonian, but the car’s Finnish-born.

Back at base, that tension built with every metre, every split. Later that morning, Toyota’s sporting director Kaj Lindstrom admitted that surprise had bordered on concern, if only briefly.

“We saw the first split and he was a second a kilometre ahead,” Lindstrom said, “OK... second split another second per kilometre. Third? Same, he was 10.6s up after 10km. This is not looking good, maybe he’s going *too fast!*”

Tanak was cool as you please at the stop line. “That was close to the perfect run,” he offered. No grin, no smile, no emotion. Just fact.

He’d been on it, though. The front left aero on his Toyota was tattered and torn. Corners had been cut, the fastest line found.



Ostberg’s Citroën was Toyota’s only real challenger

And that was just the start. He won half of Friday’s gravel stages. Ogier, the man directly in front of him and with a very similar level of grip beneath him, was half a minute down by lunchtime. His appraisal of his former team-mate was forthright: “He’s on another planet.”

An enquiry as to whether Ogier could come back at Tanak in the afternoon drew the sort of withering expression that required no words.

Since Latvala was also Toyota-mounted, his midday feedback was even more telling: “I don’t know how he’s doing it.”

Pushing his cap up and rubbing an already furrowed brow only served to add to the effect of apparent bewilderment at just what a Yaris was capable of. Clearly, in set-up terms, Tanak had dialled the Toyota

into the demands of this route – in these conditions – better than anybody.

Team principal Tommi Makinen offered insight into the technical side. “Ott’s driving style is so smooth; smooth and sure. His braking and throttle is always under control. Look at EP [Lappi], he is wild-style. It’s his style: he controls the car with the front wheels and the rear is just coming. But when the tyre is wearing or the grip is coming less, then the car is sometimes snapping.

“Ott drives the car with the rear wheels and it’s always so sure, so nice and never any problems whatever the condition – it’s a different driving style.”

A style tailored to the fastest roads in the world. But still – from third on the road, how had he done that?

“I think the others were sleeping a little bit in the morning,” he said. “In the afternoon, it was not quite the same – I lost the feeling a little bit with the car, but I made some changes and it came back. Then I could make a little bit the gap on [Mads] Ostberg.”

Ostberg had been the only driver able to come close to Tanak. And, for four stages, the Citroën driver led Tanak. But he was doing that from a starting slot six cars further back; through the morning at least, the C3 had a different road under it.

Tanak led by 5.8s on Friday night, when he said: “Tomorrow the conditions will be more fair, we are in a more level playground.”

The next morning, he took away all the toys and made the playground his own.



Lappi (left) and Latvala had no answer to their team-mate’s speed





## “I think the others were sleeping in the morning. In the afternoon it was not quite the same”

He won every stage and built a lead of 39s with one day remaining.

The service park was silenced. Apart from the tens of thousands of Estonians, who were making more than enough noise to make up for the slightly subdued locals.

Some incredible stories have been told on this rally down the years, but few can compare with Tanak's. George Donaldson is a man who saw plenty of those incredible stories first hand. As the mastermind behind Toyota, Mitsubishi and finally Subaru's WRC campaigns, the Scot has seen it all. But only once has he seen anything like Tanak's performance.

“Remember,” he said, “when Juha Kankkunen crashed early in the event, damaged the car, but came back and set fastest time after fastest time? That was the only time I've seen a driver in the same place Ott's been in on this rally.

“At a time when everybody else is in a wave and riding it out, Ott is on top of that wave and not showing any sign of coming off. Where he is now, Ott can do >>

## TOYOTA'S BOSS AND THE NEXT BIG FINN

Lining up for breakfast, the Toyota Gazoo Racing team member turned his tired head as a fellow black and red shirt joined the line behind him. On the verge of offering a weary good morning, he was woken from his semi-sleepy state in the most shocking fashion.

The man behind him was Akio Toyoda, the president and CEO of Toyota Motor Corporation. Not for him the corporate comforts of the hospitality next door. He joined his fellow Toyota workers and ate breakfast in the equivalent of the staff canteen – this after he'd arrived by bike.

And shortly before he spotted a birthday cake sitting before racing driver and Toyota Gazoo Racing brand ambassador Juichi Wakisaka.

“Ah...” Toyoda cried, bursting into song. “Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you...” Those surrounding one of the most important men in the motor industry couldn't join in quickly enough.

I had just one question. Could he talk? Turns out he could. What's immediately obvious is that Toyoda-san is a complete rally fan, one for whom the best interests of the sport and the championship come a very, very close second to those of Toyota.

He made for a deeply engaging and entertaining 10 minutes, but we'll save the rest of it for another occasion because this space was originally set aside for a Finn who's still not legally allowed to drive – yet still managed to set the world alight with some breathtaking speed in WRC2. Step forward Kalle Rovanpera.

The Finnish government gave Harri's son special dispensation to take his driving test a year early in October. Good move. Had it not been for Ott Tanak all but walking across 1000 Lakes last week, Kalle would have stolen the show.

Last time we saw him in the WRC, he was spiralling a factory Skoda through the air



Toyoda (left) is a big fan of rallying

before landing on a parked car complete with a snoozing lady in the passenger seat. Nobody was injured in the making of that incredible story. But it got me thinking about what Rovanpera's approach should be this week. Given that he'd shown current WRC2 champ Pontus Tidemand a clean pair of heels for a day or two in South America, I thought it best he concentrate on gaining experience on Rally Finland.

Coming home and going hard wouldn't necessarily make for the best result. Kalle isn't a crasher and he doesn't need to cultivate a reputation as one. No, steady as she goes last week. That was my advice. Aim for a top six. Pick up some points, learn the roads and the ropes.

And that's exactly what he did. All except for the top-six bit. He aimed for the win. And, had there been any justice in Finland last week, he would have got it. And here's the scary bit... he barely broke a sweat. Had it not been for a broken damper on his Skoda, he would have won WRC2 at a canter.

Estonia might have silenced Jyvaskyla on Sunday, but the Finnish future is safe in Kalle's hands.



Young Rovanpera again starred in WRC2



Paddon led the Hyundai charge and was rewarded with fourth spot

anything. He's a driver full of confidence and when you're in a place like that, nothing's a problem."

Kankkunen 1994 is a classic 1000 Lakes tale. One worthy of a few paragraphs. Let's go there with the man on the other side of the Celica Turbo 4WD: Nicky Grist.

To set the scene, the pair led after the opening stage in Valkola and were now bound for Lankamaa, a stage included on the 1000 Lakes itinerary under the name 'Kankkunen'. The road ran through the family farm. Not for the first time, familiarity would breed contempt.

Grist: "We went wide over a crest, dropped into a ditch and whacked a boulder that spun us around and we rolled. The car was a mess. We got out the stage and the boys worked on the rear wheel, got it almost

straight, but we only had front-wheel drive. After the one after that, we did a bit more work and got the rear diff changed at the side of the road. While the boys were working a police motorbike turned up; Juha talked to him and then the policeman said, 'Boys, you've got another five minutes'"

"When we left, we drove flat-out down the road following this policeman and went into Myhinpaa. The car still had five degrees of camber on that one rear wheel. I asked Juha what he thought. 'It's oversteering on left-handers, but it's OK.' We were fastest.

"And then we were fastest again. Taking away all of the emotion of winning rallies, that was one of the best results of my whole career. To come back from last to ninth overall on a fast rally was incredible. To sit next to Juha and read notes to a driver

doing what he was doing on that rally was something I'll never forget."

And Tanak won't forget what he did last week. Not least because of what happened 15 years ago, when his friend and mentor Markko Martin became the first Estonian to come over the water and win this rally.

That made last weekend extra special, for the pair of them. Martin has seen his man through thick and thin. With a grin, Martin recalled some choice conversations with Malcolm Wilson which he rates among his finest moments.

"Not many people can talk Malcolm into giving a driver a second chance," he said. "I did that. Twice!"

Markko knew, like Malcolm knew, the boy Ott was worth it. They knew he would come good. And he did just that in Finland.



Neuville struggled and lost six points to title rival Ogier



Kankkunen's 1994 recovery is part of Finnish legend

“This is a nice one,” said the typically understated Tanak. “I’ve never won a rally Markko has won before, so that’s good as well. But to be here, in front of so many Estonian fans is incredible – I saw more of my flags than Finnish flags, I think the Finns have been a bit lazy!”

Three months ago Tanak delivered a truly outstanding drive to win Rally Argentina. But that was a slightly different story. He spun and spilled 24s on the first gravel test, so Tanak’s tale in South America was one of a frustration-fuelled fight back. Last week was simple supremacy. Nobody came close.

Citroen and Ostberg were closest. Drafted in to replace sacked 2016 Rally Finland winner Kris Meeke, the Norwegian openly admitted he expected to be fighting for fourth place and first non-Toyota.

Instead, he was a thorn in the side of the Yaris drivers from the very start. Set-up changes, allied to new front geometry on the C3 WRC ahead of the start, had left him happier than he’d ever been with a car in Finland. And he put it to good use and took the fight to Tanak on day one and only slipped back when he found his more aggressive approach used the Michelin tyres too much, costing him vital seconds.

Latvala whittled the gap between him and Ostberg down to 2.5s ahead of the final stage. For those two, the powerstage was about position as well as points. And Ostberg delivered, beating his rival, the local hero, by 0.3s.

“Those were some of the best stages I’ve driven in my life,” said a delighted Ostberg at the finish. Typically, Latvala was magnanimous, putting his manifest disappointment to one side to congratulate a rival on a great fight.

Not for the first time it was left to Hayden Paddon to demonstrate that Hyundais do work in Finland as he edged all three Ford Fiesta WRCs to fourth. “I’ve never felt as comfortable in this car as I did here,” said Paddon, who had been under instructions not to even consider pushing for the podium and risking team points.

Despite that, M-Sport narrowed the gap to Hyundai in the makes race, while Ogier took six points out of Neuville’s 27-point lead coming into the event. Neuville finished ninth, never recovering from running first on the road on Friday.

And it will take a while for the rallying world to recover from what it saw in Jyväskylä last week. Tanak delivered a driving masterclass, banging in a five-point powerstage just to underline his pace and prowess in Finland.

Typically, he wasn’t about to get carried away and talk titles. “I said it’s rally-by-rally now,” he said. “This is a great result, but it doesn’t change that.”

Maybe that’s where Tanak and Drago differ; the Toyota star didn’t say: “Soon I defeat real champion.”

Few would have argued if he had. ✎

**RESULTS ROUND 8/13, RALLY FINLAND 2018, JULY 26-29**

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Ott Tanak (EST) Martin Jarveoja (EST)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	2h35m18.1s
2	Mads Ostberg (N) Torstein Eriksen (N)	Citroen Total / Citroen C3 WRC	+32.7s
3	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN) Miikka Anttila (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	+35.5s
4	Hayden Paddon (NZ) Sebastian Marshall (GB)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+1m35.6s
5	Sebastien Ogier (F) Julien Ingrassia (F)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m15.0s
6	Teemu Suninen (FIN) Mikko Markkula (FIN)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m19.2s
7	Elfyn Evans (GB) Daniel Barritt (GB)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m29.5s
8	Craig Breen (IRL) Scott Martin (GB)	Citroen Total / Citroen C3 WRC	+3m08.4s
9	Thierry Neuville (B) Nicolas Gilsoul (B)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+3m51.8s
10	Andreas Mikkelsen (N) Anders Jager (N)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+8m37.4s
<b>OTHERS</b>			
R	Esapekka Lappi (FIN) Janne Ferm (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	Accident

**DRIVERS’ CHAMPIONSHIP**

- 1 Neuville 153; 2 Ogier 132;
- 3 Tanak 109; 4 Lappi 70;
- 5 Sordo 60; 6 Mikkelsen 57;
- 7 Latvala 55; 8 Evans 52;
- 9 Ostberg 48; 10 Meeke 43.

**MANUFACTURERS’ CHAMPIONSHIP**

- 1 Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT 228; 2 M-Sport Ford WRT 202; 3 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT 201;
- 4 Citroen Total 153.



**STAGE TIMES**

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Harju 1 (1.44 miles)	Tanak 1m49.2s	Tanak	Neuville +0.7s
SS2 Moksi 1 (12.45 miles)	Tanak 9m56.1s	Tanak	Ostberg +3.1s
SS3 Urria 1 (7.63 miles)	Latvala 6m09.8s	Tanak	Ostberg +4.3s
SS4 Assamaki 1 (7.66 miles)	Ostberg 5m49.1s	Ostberg	Tanak +0.5s
SS5 Aaneoski 1 (4.79 miles)	Tanak 3m32.1s	Tanak	Ostberg +1.1s
SS6 Oittila (12.02 miles)	Ostberg 9m45.3s	Ostberg	Tanak +0.1s
SS7 Moksi 2 (12.45 miles)	Tanak 9m49.3s	Ostberg	Tanak +0.1s
SS8 Urria 2 (7.63 miles)	Breen 6m07.0s	Ostberg	Tanak +1.9s
SS9 Assamaki 2 (7.66 miles)	Tanak 5m47.0s	Tanak	Ostberg +1.0s
SS10 Aaneoski 2 (4.79 miles)	Tanak 3m29.1s	Tanak	Ostberg +4.3s
SS11 Harju 2 (1.44 miles)	Ogier 1m48.7s	Tanak	Ostberg +5.8s
SS12 Pajjala 1 (14.86 miles)	Tanak 11m36.4s	Tanak	Ostberg +14.3s
SS13 Pihlajakoski 1 (9.26 miles)	Tanak 6m50.8s	Tanak	Ostberg +19.0s
SS14 Kakaristo 1 (14.70 miles)	Tanak 11m40.4s	Tanak	Ostberg +22.7s
SS15 Tuohikotanen 1 (5.56 miles)	Tanak 4m31.5s	Tanak	Ostberg +23.7s
SS16 Tuohikotanen 2 (5.56 miles)	Latvala 4m26.0s	Tanak	Ostberg +27.0s
SS17 Kakaristo 2 (14.70 miles)	Lappi 11m26.3s	Tanak	Ostberg +32.4s
SS18 Pajjala 2 (14.86 miles)	Lappi 11m31.1s	Tanak	Ostberg +34.4s
SS19 Pihlajakoski 2 (9.26 miles)	Lappi 6m50.4s	Tanak	Ostberg +39.0s
SS20 Laukaa 1 (7.29 miles)	Ostberg 5m28.4s	Tanak	Ostberg +36.1s
SS21 Ruuhimaki 1 (6.91 miles)	Latvala 5m32.9s	Tanak	Ostberg +33.3s
SS22 Laukaa 2 (7.29 miles)	Latvala 5m21.8s	Tanak	Ostberg +32.2s
SS23 Ruuhimaki 2 (Power Stage) (6.91 miles)	Tanak 5m26.2s	Tanak	Ostberg +32.7s

1958

BTCC

2018

60  
YEARS

Look out for our special 'BTCC at 60' supplement in the August 16 issue



Goff repasses Sutton on the run to the line in a dramatic race one

# The BTCC celebrates its birthday in style

*Jack Goff, Ash Sutton and Matt Neal were the winners on a fine weekend for Britain's leading tin-top series*

MATT JAMES

**T**his was the weekend when the British Touring Car Championship put its 60th anniversary celebrations front and centre. It was also the weekend when it demonstrated, with three highly competitive races, exactly why it has existed for so long.

Jack Goff's Eurotech Honda and reigning champion Ash Sutton in his Subaru struck the early blows, while it was old hand Matt Neal who took his factory-backed Honda to a glorious triumph in the double points contest marking the championship's birthday.

Goff was the man on form last weekend, which was what he needed to be to put himself back in the hunt for the title. He slipped from third in the points to seventh after a handling-afflicted disaster at Croft at the end of June, and his return to the top had the driver scratching his head.

"We haven't done anything to it since Croft, because it had been fine before that," said Goff. "We were straight on the pace

here, so that makes what happened last time even more unusual. We don't understand it."

He broke the qualifying record in the opening session, and then lowered it with no ballast in qualifying for the double points race, which was a separate session.

His race one win was superb. He opened up an early gap in the wet, but knew he had to make waves while he could. Sutton started ninth but was up to second by the end of a brilliant opening lap, and was in his foe's wheeltracks on the final tour.

Sutton tried – and completed – a stunning move around the outside for the lead at Coram, only to wrong-foot himself on the exit of Murrays and Goff regained the initiative on the blast to the line to win by 0.152 seconds. "My heart sank when I saw it was Sutton behind me," said Goff. "I know he doesn't give up."

Race two was a slump: confusion over the start time for the event meant Goff's Eurotech team was still working on the Honda as the pitlane shut, meaning he had to start his fully ballasted car from the very

back. The result was 17th and no points.

In race three, Goff had a solid lead, and should have landed his double-point bonus. However, a mid-race shower meant he slipped slightly wide at Riches to hand the advantage to Neal. "I could have pushed back, but I am a Honda ambassador..." said Goff afterwards, still delighted with second and now up to a competitive fourth in the points. "With where we had come from after race two, I will take it."

Sutton's race two win had as much drama as his battling second in the opener. He had a clear front row with Goff's problems, but there was no time to take things easy. A four-second lead was eradicated with a late-race safety car, and the challengers were queuing up to have a pop at the champ.

Josh Cook got his Power Maxed Vauxhall Astra into second place at the restart – a position he had actually taken into the Esses when the race was neutralised on lap 10. "I had been unsighted as I passed [Dan] Cammish, and I wasn't sure if I had passed an SC board or not," explained



ALL PICS: JAKOB EBREY

SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR THE WEEKEND



Cook. “At that stage, I was only going for a potential win, so I handed the place back. It wasn’t worth risking a penalty. I am here for the long game...”

He repassed in the final two-lap dash and hounded Sutton, only narrowly failing to unseat the Subaru.

“That safety car certainly made things hard,” said Sutton. “We know we don’t have the performance in the dry, and the track was drying all the time. I had to hold on.”

He won by 0.2s but disaster struck in race three, when the team was still working on the car at the three minutes to go signal. He was handed a 30s stop and go penalty, but his first attempt to take it was too short. He had to return for another, and was classified last.

While one champion was at the bottom of the result sheet, one of the others was at the top. Neal, who had lifted £250,000 from BTCC organisers in 1999 when they had put up a prize for a privateer to win a race outright, had been opportunistic to leapfrog Goff when his rival slipped up in race three, but he had put himself in a position to capitalise with a stunning qualifying lap to land a front-row start.

Neal, who had lugged 57kg to 14th in race one and was then battered around in race two for 21st, needed redemption. He was even more surprised it came amid the showers.

“We were really not sure about the handling of the car in the wet, because this is such a new programme,” said the Team Dynamics driver, who proved to be the man for the big occasion. “But the car was superb in that final race. Jack was very fair with me when I got alongside him and gave me room, and this is a special win. [Series director] Alan Gow handed out the trophy and I >>

The idea for the double points special was devised over the latter part of 2017, and it was a journey into the unknown. All points would be doubled – including those for leading a lap, gaining pole position and for fastest lap, and the race ran to 20 laps (even though it was extended by one for a safety car). The regular distance was 12 laps.

All cars ran without ballast, and Dunlop chose the medium tyre to put up with the demands of the extra mileage.

There were plenty of new factors to take into account, and some of the aspects of the special event proved a huge hit with the fans. The first was the 15-minute-only qualifying session, which left drivers with virtually a one-shot run. The pressure was on, and slip ups were punished badly, such as Colin Turkington being pinged for track limits. This success has not gone unnoticed by series bosses.

The race spread out quite quickly with the top three powering away, and such is

the efficiency of Dunlop’s rubber now that tyre wear didn’t really become an issue – especially in the cooler-than-expected temperatures on Sunday afternoon.

Those are factors the organisers couldn’t foresee, but there was a feeling that an extra element in that race could have added even more spice. A pitstop to change at least one tyre, for example, could have brought the teams into play and made strategy calls important, rolling the dice even further.

The choice of venue for the special race was well thought out, too – any later in the season, and it could have had a dramatic effect on the points table. Now there are four meetings left, it gives the losers from Sunday a chance to fight back.

The BTCC isn’t afraid to innovate, and the final double-points race did add an extra element of intrigue to the meeting. Given the ever-evolving BTCC, it is likely that something special will be tried again.



Neal (above) held off Goff and Ingram for a special victory



Sutton starred for Subaru and is now in title contention

ALL PICS: JAKOB EBREY

collected it and then put my hand out expecting a cheque, too, but there was no money with this one!”

The double points on offer mean that Neal is now third in the standings, well in touch with the top. Team-mate Dan Cammish was on the pace across the weekend, too, and qualified on the front row in his ballast-free car. He was feeling the benefit of the pre-event Dunlop tyre test, where he was able to get to grips with the track in a front-wheel-drive car. That is not a privilege he has had at other venues.

He was a podium finisher in the damp race one and collected a competitive fourth place in the second event, too – only narrowly missing out on repeating his race one result. He slipped off in the wet in race three and was later spun in the midfield, but has learned a great deal more about the hatchback.

The points leader walking away from the meeting was Tom Ingram in the Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Avensis. When he pulled off the track and onto the grass at the Esses on lap three of the opener with a broken alternator, that had seemed very unlikely.

His qualifying lap to put himself fifth with 66kg of success ballast had been one of the unsung highlights of the opening session. “I knew I was in trouble from the

start,” said Ingram. “The battery warning came on during the opening lap and the power-steering failed. It was only a matter of time after that before she cried enough.”

He started 27th for race two, but his progress up the order was helped by several of those ahead darting for the pits to swap to slicks in the build-up to the race. Nevertheless, he sliced through the pack to run 12th at the end of lap one. He chipped away until he got to fourth, and then won a drag race with Cammish’s Honda to pip his rival to the line for a remarkable podium.

It looked like he could improve on third in the finale, but decided discretion was the better battle plan as he ran in the slipstream of Neal and Goff. “I put the pressure on Jack a bit to see if he would make a mistake, but we were faster at different parts of the track,” said Ingram. “With double points on offer, and given my race one, I was happy to bank what I had.”

Team boss Christian Dick explained: “We have worked hard to find something in the set-up of the car and I think we clicked it all together here. It is very encouraging.”

There was only a glimmer of encouragement for WSR BMW 125i M Sport Colin Turkington, who was the points leader coming in to the event. He was therefore saddled with 75kg of ballast and the rear-wheel-drive cars have an extra

30kg of base weight this season after a regulation tweak. That seemed to have tipped the car’s handling over the edge, and he could only line up in 15th – which is where he finished in the wet opening race.

Worse was to follow in race two, when he was the innocent victim of a shunt at the opening corner, and then was collected as he rejoined the circuit, which substantially damaged the rear suspension and led, ultimately, to retirement.

Race three was his chance to earn something, and he did – but only after a huge dogfight with the BTC Norlin Honda Civic of Chris Smiley, which had proved something of a roadblock. Patience prevailed for Turkington, who finally took his battle-scarred car past his stubborn foe on lap 18.

He might have only earned 21 points from the three events, but it was enough for the Northern Irishman to remain only six points from the title summit.

He was pragmatic afterwards. “You have to take the good weekends and the bad ones, and at least we walked away from this with something positive,” said the two-time title winner. “It has been a struggle, but we have taken what we can.”

His team-mate Andrew Jordan had another under-the-radar weekend collecting points, but he never really featured at the front in a car that the team couldn’t quite balance properly. Tricky conditions over the three races didn’t help – a rear-wheel-drive car that is compromised between a wet and dry set-up is harder to drag a result out of. He took a ninth and a fourth in the final two races. He still fared better than the sister machine of Rob Collard, which was ruled out of the meeting completely after smacking the wall at Riches midway through the second race of the weekend.

Power Maxed man Cook was another big winner of the weekend, without necessarily grabbing the headlines. He qualified sixth and improved that to fourth in race one before his dogged pursuit of Sutton in race two. He collected seventh in the final double-points race to climb up to fifth in the standings. ✨



Turkington topped a fierce battle for sixth in race three

**RESULTS** ROUND 6/10, SNETTERTON, JULY 29 RACE 1 (12 LAPS – 35.627 MILES)

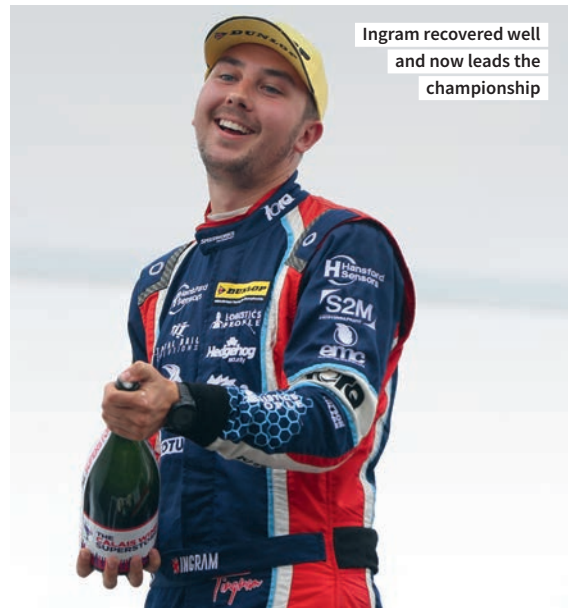
POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	<b>Jack Goff</b> (GB)	Eurotech Racing / Honda Civic Type R (27kg)	28m07.346s
2	<b>Ash Sutton</b> (GB)	Team BMR / Subaru Levorg (21kg)	+0.152s
3	<b>Dan Cammish</b> (GB)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R	+9.659s
4	<b>Josh Cook</b> (GB)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra (15kg)	+13.619s
5	<b>Sam Tordoff</b> (GB)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS	+15.023s
6	<b>Rob Austin</b> (GB)	HMS Racing / Alfa Romeo Giulietta	+27.772s
7	<b>Chris Smiley</b> (GB)	BTC Norlin / Honda Civic Type R	+28.082s
8	<b>Tom Oliphant</b> (GB)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes-Benz A-Class	+30.690s
9	<b>Daniel Lloyd</b> (GB)	BTC Norlin / Honda Civic Type R	+31.116s
10	<b>Adam Morgan</b> (GB)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes-Benz A-Class (33kg)	+37.164s
11	<b>Brett Smith</b> (GB)	Eurotech Racing / Honda Civic Type R	+37.214s
12	<b>Andrew Jordan</b> (GB)	WSR / BMW 125i M Sport (48kg)	+41.088s
13	<b>Tom Chilton</b> (GB)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS (39kg)	+41.856s
14	<b>Matt Neal</b> (GB)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R (57kg)	+43.115s
15	<b>Colin Turkington</b> (GB)	WSR / BMW 125i M Sport (75kg)	+43.265s
16	<b>Aiden Moffat</b> (GB)	Laser Tools Racing / Mercedes-Benz A-Class	+44.947s
17	<b>James Cole</b> (GB)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS	+46.141s
18	<b>Bobby Thompson</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	+50.407s
19	<b>Michael Caine</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	+53.040s
20	<b>Stephen Jelley</b> (GB)	Team Parker Racing / BMW 125i M Sport	+1m04.086s
21	<b>Daniel Welch</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC (45kg)	+1m08.664s
22	<b>Sam Smelt</b> (GB)	AmD Tuning / Audi S3 Saloon	+1m12.613s
23	<b>Ant Whorton-Eales</b> (GB)	AmD Tuning / MG6 (45kg)	+1m47.039s
24	<b>Jason Plato</b> (GB)	Team BMR / Subaru Levorg	-1 lap
NC	<b>Senna Proctor</b> (GB)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra	9 laps-accident damage
R	<b>Matt Simpson</b> (GB)	Eurotech Racing / Honda Civic Type R	4 laps-accident damage
R	<b>Tom Ingram</b> (GB)	Speedworks / Toyota Avensis (66kg)	2 laps-alternator
R	<b>Rory Butcher</b> (GB)	AmD Tuning / MG6	2 laps-alternator
R	<b>Mike Bushell</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	2 laps-overheating
R	<b>Rob Collard</b> (GB)	WSR / BMW 125i M Sport	0 laps-accident damage
R	<b>Ollie Jackson</b> (GB)	AmD Tuning / Audi S3 Saloon	0 laps-accident damage

**Winner's average speed** 76.01mph. **Fastest lap** Sutton 2m18.290s, 77.28mph.

**QUALIFYING 1** Goff 1m55.556s; 2 Cammish 1m55.630s; 3 Simpson 1m55.726s; 4 Smith 1m55.777s; 5 Ingram 1m55.934s; 6 Cook 1m56.055s; 7 Austin 1m56.096s; 8 Tordoff 1m56.149s; 9 Sutton 1m56.196s; 10 Oliphant 1m56.202s; 11 Jordan 1m56.238s; 12 Neal 1m56.319s; 13 Morgan 1m56.407s; 14 Bushell 1m56.425s; 15 Turkington 1m56.429s; 16 Chilton 1m56.516s; 17 Collard 1m56.594s; 18 Butcher 1m56.652s; 19 Proctor 1m56.685s; 20 Thompson 1m56.696s; 21 Smiley 1m56.799s; 22 Jackson 1m56.840s; 23 Lloyd 1m56.942s; 24 Cole 1m56.942s; 25 Plato 1m57.011s; 26 Moffat 1m57.045s; 27 Caine 1m57.403s; 28 Jelley 1m57.545s; 29 Smelt 1m57.551s; 30 Whorton-Eales 1m57.594s; 31 Welch 1m57.775s.



Despite the weather, the fans were out in force for 60th birthday celebrations



Ingram recovered well and now leads the championship

**RACE 2** (14 LAPS – 41.565 MILES) **1 Sutton (66kg) 31m41.033s**; 2 Cook (48kg) +0.221s; 3 Ingram +2.799s; 4 Cammish (57kg) +2.841s; 5 Smiley (27kg) +4.683s; 6 Tordoff (39kg) +5.151s; 7 Proctor +5.420s; 8 Oliphant (21kg) +6.039s; 9 Jordan +6.225s; 10 Whorton-Eales +6.844s; 11 Chilton +7.055s; 12 Smith +7.426s; 13 Moffat +10.831s; 14 Thompson +11.041s; 15 Lloyd (15kg) +11.498s; 16 Bushell +11.717s; 17 Goff (75kg) +12.115s; 18 Cole +13.349s; 19 Simpson +14.467s; 20 Smelt +14.887s; 21 Neal +15.302s; 22 Jelley +15.601s; 23 Butcher -2 laps; R Welch 12 laps-gearbox; R Collard 9 laps-accident; R Plato 6 laps-accident damage; R Turkington 6 laps-accident damage; R Jackson 3 laps-accident damage; R Austin (33kg) 2 laps-accident damage; R Caine 2 laps-gearbox; R Morgan (9kg) 0 laps-accident damage.

**Winner's average speed** 78.71mph.

**Fastest lap** Ingram 2m00.227s, 88.89mph.

**GRID RACE 2** Decided by result of Race 1.

**QUALIFYING FOR RACE 3** 1 Goff 1m55.171s; 2 Neal +1m55.459s; 3 Chilton 1m55.624s; 4 Ingram 1m55.649s; 5 Cammish 1m55.669s; 6 Jordan 1m55.737s; 7 Morgan 1m55.762s; 8 Turkington 1m55.795s; 9 Smith 1m55.850s; 10 Oliphant 1m55.962s; 11 Cook 1m56.071s; 12 Cole 1m56.146s; 13 Simpson 1m56.158s; 14 Smiley 1m56.178s; 15 Sutton 1m56.210s; 16 Tordoff 1m56.268s; 17 Lloyd 1m56.456s; 18 Collard 1m56.525s (non-starter); 19 Jackson 1m56.682s; 20 Proctor 1m56.749s; 21 Butcher 1m56.828s; 22 Bushell 1m56.863s; 23 Plato 1m56.898s; 24 Moffat 1m56.914s; 25 Austin 1m56.977s; 26 Caine 1m57.235s (non-starter); 27 Jelley 1m57.276s; 28 Thompson 1m57.706s; 29 Whorton-Eales 1m57.816s; 30 Welch 1m58.205s; 31 Smelt 1m58.403s.

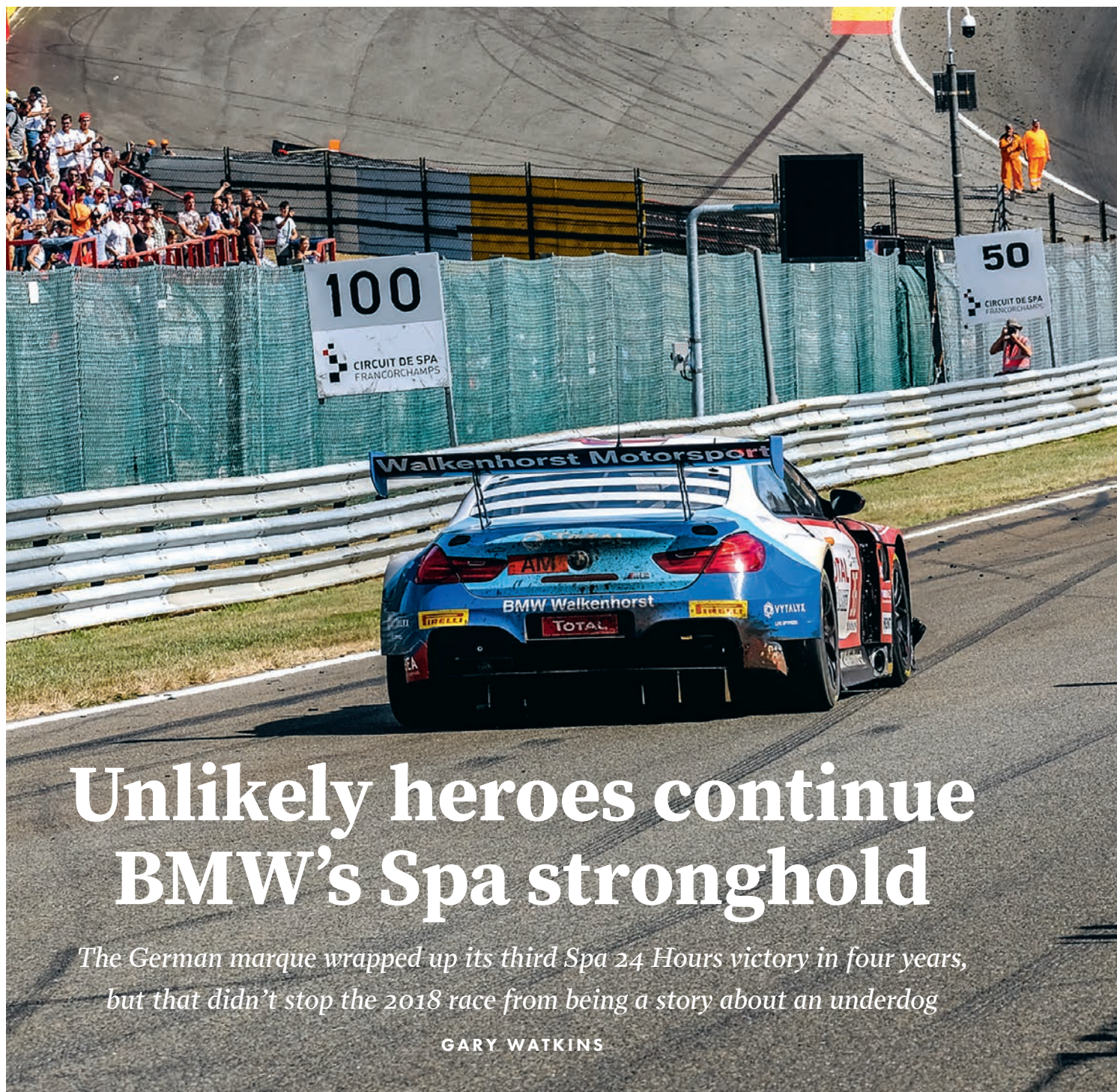
**RACE 3** (21 LAPS – 62.347 MILES)

**1 Neal 43m09.041s**; 2 Goff +0.243s; 3 Ingram +0.611s; 4 Jordan +4.372s; 5 Chilton +5.389s; 6 Turkington +24.111s; 7 Cook +24.824s; 8 Simpson +28.191s; 9 Lloyd +28.472s; 10 Thompson +31.337s; 11 Jackson +31.369s; 12 Proctor +31.404s; 13 Austin +33.911s; 14 Cammish +34.211s; 15 Plato +34.335s; 16 Whorton-Eales +34.874s; 17 Jelley +35.723s; 18 Smelt +36.098s; 19 Welch +51.616s; 20 Sutton +1m34.899s; R Smiley 17 laps-accident damage; NC Moffat 17 laps-accident damage; R Morgan 14 laps-accident damage; R Tordoff 12 laps-handling; R Bushell 8 laps-accident damage; R Cole 4 laps-steering; R Oliphant 2 laps-accident; R Smith 2 laps-accident; R Butcher 0 laps-accident; W Collard; W Caine.

**Winner's average speed** 86.69mph. **Fastest lap** Neal 1m58.142s, 90.46mph.

**CHAMPIONSHIP**

**1 Ingram 189**; 2 Turkington 183; 3 Neal 173; 4 Goff 172; 5 Cook 157; 6 Jordan 157; 7 Sutton 150; 8 Chilton 148; 9 Morgan 122; 10 Proctor 115.



# Unlikely heroes continue BMW's Spa stronghold

*The German marque wrapped up its third Spa 24 Hours victory in four years, but that didn't stop the 2018 race from being a story about an underdog*

GARY WATKINS

**B**MW was one of the favourites heading into the Spa 24 Hours last week and its odds only shortened as its rivals dropped from contention one by one. But it wasn't the manufacturer's factory representative in the Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup, Rowe Racing, that came through to claim its third victory in the Belgian classic in four years. Rather, it was the Walkenhorst Motorsport squad, fielding a frontrunning car in the race for the first time.

The German squad's Pro class M6 GT3, in which factory drivers Philipp Eng and Tom Blomqvist joined team regular

Christian Krognès, was in the mix pretty much all the way. And when it came to crunch time after lunch on Sunday, they had the edge over the Rowe Bimmer shared by Alexander Sims, Nicky Catsburg and Jens Klingmann. It was a close-run thing, as the 10-second final margin of victory suggests, but Eng always appeared to have just enough in his pocket during a final stint in the car that lasted two hours and 45 minutes.

The #99 Rowe M6 emerged as a contender early in the second half of the race when it was one of four cars that was able to take its mandatory five-minute technical pitstop under yellow flag conditions. Cars cannot enter the pits

under the yellows to begin this stop, essentially a mechanism to even-up the time it takes for a change of brake pads and discs, but if you happen to be in the pits when the flags come out, then all well and good.

Walkenhorst had to make its stop under green-flag conditions and lost out big time, although the multiple yellow periods that interrupted this race allowed Eng and co to make up the time. The technical pitstops, which have to be taken by the end of the 15th hour, coincided with a purple patch for the best of the Rowe entries. In the cool of the night and the early morning, it was at least a match for its in-house rival.

But the balance changed as the





temperatures rose. The battle for victory in the 70th running of the Spa 24 Hours appeared finely poised with just under three hours, the duration of a regular BGTs enduro, left on the clock. Catsburg looked for a brief moment to have the edge when he went up against Eng before the Austrian began to eke out his advantage. The gap had come down to a scant three seconds, but, by the time the two frontrunners stopped again, the margin was out to 15s.

"In the cooler temperatures we could hold onto our tyres, but as soon as it got hotter they could keep pumping in the times and we couldn't," explained Sims.

There could have been one final twist, >>



The #1 WRT Audi R8 was stripped of pole, given a penalty and then retired

ALL PICS: SRO/PECKS

however. New rules for Spa this year allow for each car to take one so-called ‘joker pitstop’ – a stop shorter than the 1m52s minimum for all other refuelling pit calls – in each quarter of the race. Rowe played its final joker at its last pitstop, which cut the deficit in half to just 10s.

That was as close as Sims was able to get. “I think those guys pretty much had us covered all of the way,” reckoned Catsburg.

It was a remarkable victory for a team that was established as recently as 2014 and specialises in the VLN long-distance championship races on the Nurburgring-Nordschleife. Never before had it run a Pro class car at Spa, though it did field a car in the top division of the BGTS in the shorter enduros last year.

“We’re just a tiny privateer team who races around the Nordschleife,” said Blomqvist. “We put a Pro car in and have gone and won the thing.”

Blomqvist was probably underplaying

## “We’re just a tiny privateer team. We put a Pro car in and have gone and won the thing”

the team’s credentials and the level of support Walkenhorst received from BMW, but impressive it was nonetheless.

It might have been very different, however, but for an ultra-late Balance of Performance change that blunted the challenge of Audi, which was looking for a fifth Spa victory. The best of the Audi R8 LMS on the entry ended up third and fourth despite the full flotilla of the German cars receiving an extra 15kg just hours before the start of the race.

Audi had a chance of getting between the Bimmers until some late-race drama for last year’s winners, Sainteloc Racing. Frederic Vervisch, who shared the factory-backed car



The cooler night temperatures meant the #34 car’s lead was temporarily reeled in

ALL PICS: SRO/PECKS

with Markus Winkelhock and Christopher Haase, was closing in on Sims as the penultimate stint drew to a close and was only 2.5s behind when he stuttered out of fuel as he headed for the pits.

The seconds lost were enough to drop the car behind the Land Motorsport customer Audi in the final reckoning. The team, winners of the Nurburgring 24 Hours in 2017, was making its BGTS debut with an R8 LMS shared by brothers Kelvin and Sheldon van der Linde plus Jeffrey Schmidt. It looked like Audi’s best bet for much of the race despite an early puncture that put it out of sync on pitstops with the rest.

The Land team ended up 38s arrears at the chequered flag and Sainteloc 54s. Winkelhock reckoned the extra weight cost Audi somewhere between two and three tenths a lap, so it was easy to imagine a scenario where the best of the R8s dominated this race.

The problem for Audi was that Dries Vanthoor dominated ‘superpole’ qualifying for the fastest 20 cars on Friday evening. The Belgian did two laps good enough for the pole that were six tenths beyond the rest of the field led by Maxime Martin’s R-Motorsport Aston Martin.

More than 12 hours later, it was announced that the WRT entry of Vanthoor, Christophe Mies and Alex Riberas had lost its times from superpole and been awarded a three-minute stop-go in the race. A couple of hours after came the BoP change.

The exclusion was for a violation of the car’s homologation. Part of the inlet system had been sealed with duct tape and in the process attachment lugs had been removed.

The increase in minimum weight resulted from series organiser the Stephane Ratel Organisation finding that the performance of the engine exceeded the figures measured during its BoP testing process.

Audi’s head of customer motorsport, Chris Reinke, didn’t use the term witch hunt, but he might as well have done.

“If we hadn’t participated in the top-20



Audi’s best finisher was also an independent outfit – Land Motorsport finishing third



qualifying, we would probably have won this race," he said. "If SRO has a rule that the local hero should not do qualifying, then we need clarification on that."

That was a reference to the undoubted talents of the younger of the Vanthoor brothers, the implication being that Audi has gone too fast for SRO's liking.

The other manufacturers that might have challenged BMW all hit problems at Spa last weekend. Mercedes wasn't among them, although a metronomic race from the factory Black Falcon entry driven by Yelmer Buurman, Maro Engel and Luca Stolz yielded fifth position on the same lap as the leader in their AMG GT3.

Aston Martin, Bentley, Ferrari and Lamborghini did, however, have the pace to win – most notably the two British marques. The pair of R-Motorsport Aston V12 Vantages and M-Sport's two second-generation Continental GT3s were all contenders, even though one car from each team had to come through from the back after encountering problems in qualifying.

The two Astons, jointly run by the Arden and Jota teams, led the race, but a myriad of problems for both meant that R-Motorsport came away with a best result of ninth for the car shared by Nicki Thiim, Jake Dennis and Matthieu Vaxiviere despite the need for two changes of brakes. The sister car driven by Maxime Martin, Marvin Kirchhofer >>

## BARWELL SMASHES SPA 24H DUCK



The Barwell team and its founder, Mark Lemmer, have long connections with Belgian motorsport in general and the Spa 24 Hours in particular. But one thing they had failed to do prior to last weekend was take a victory in the endurance classic. The Lamborghini team finally put that right, and very nearly twice over.

Barwell Motorsport followed up on class podiums in the 24 Hours in 2014, '16 and '17 with a win in the Am Cup category with Patrick Kujala, Leo Machitski, Adrian Amstutz and Richard Abra (above). The team's other Lambo Huracan GT3, which was shared by Martin Kodric, Sandy Mitchell, Michele Beretta and Rik Breukers, came within a couple of seconds of making it a double for the Surrey-based team in the Silver Cup division.

Kujala and co pretty much dominated the amateur class on the way to a clear victory over the Target Racing Lambo that was shared by Alberto di Folco, Stefano Costantini, Bernard Delhez and Sylvain Debs. The Barwell machine was well established in the lead, and a clear one at that, by the end of the third hour and never lost it on the way to finishing five laps in front.

Easy it might have been, but it was an emotional victory. Twelve months ago at

Spa, Amstutz had suffered serious burns after being T-boned as he rejoined the track at Stavelot following an off. The car burst into flames, the Swiss driver remaining in the car for two and half minutes before he was extricated.

"It's an amazing comeback for Adrian, and probably makes this one of the most special results we've ever had," said Lemmer. "They had a fantastic race – it was perfect in every respect. The margin was bigger than it might have been because we gained quite a lot in the yellows."

Barwell's Silver Cup car came back from some early delays to challenge the winning Ombra Lambo driven by Andrea Rizzoli, Alex Frassinetti, Romain Monti and Kang Ling. Kodric, who drove the last two hours, caught Frassinetti with 20 minutes to go, but couldn't pass.

The Pro-Am division was won by the Rinaldi Ferrari team (below). Its 488 GT3 driven by Daniel Keilwitz, Alexander Mattschull, David Perel and Rinat Salikhov established itself in the lead in the final quarter of the race on the way to a two-lap victory over the Strakka Mercedes-AMG GT3 driven by Lewis Williamson, David Fumanelli, Chris Buncombe and Nick Leventis, which had led for much of the middle portion of the race.



and Dominik Baumann also needed multiple brake changes and was handicapped by a fuel system issue that forced it to short-stint for the majority of the race on the way to 35th position at the finish.

“If you’d told me at the start of the week that we’d qualify second, end up starting from pole and lead with both cars and get one to the finish in the top 10, I would have been happy,” said Jota boss Sam Hignett. “But we have to be disappointed, though that’s tempered with a dose of reality because we realise how serious this championship is.”

Bentley left Spa disappointed yet again. The Continental shared by Andy Soucek, Maxime Soulet and Vincent Abril led on multiple occasions during the first six hours, only to drop out of contention in the eighth hour. Soulet had contact at the Bus Stop to the detriment of the steering.

Soucek was subsequently an innocent bystander in an incident involving the Porsche run by Timo Bernhard’s team at Stavelot on Sunday morning. The car retired with gearbox issues not long after lengthy repairs, which were almost certainly a knock-on from the impact.

The second Bentley of Steven Kane, Jules Gounon and Jordan Pepper started from the pitlane after a gearbox glitch in qualifying, but the car was up to second and not far behind the winning BMW on Sunday morning when it was hit by a double problem. A lump of rubber debris pierced



New Bentley Continental had led before contact at the Bus Stop chicane

the radiator and the M-Sport team had to change the right-rear corner to address a problem with the upright.

The car made it home in 25th, the only consolation being fastest lap for Gounon.

The Grasser Lamborghini Huracan of factory trio Mirko Bortolotti, Andrea Caldarelli and Christian Engelhart didn’t make it to six hours, the point at which the first tranche of points is awarded at Spa. Caldarelli drove into the rear of the Garage 59 McLaren 650S GT3 to the detriment of the front-right corner. The car did make it back on track but was subsequently retired as a result of the damage.

Ferrari’s hope for top honours, the

AF Corse-run SMP Racing 488 GT3, driven by Mikhail Aleshin and factory drivers Davide Rigon and Miguel Molina, ended up 10th. The car was never a factor after Aleshin sustained a puncture early on in traffic at Les Combes.

The race was red flagged for nearly two hours early in hour 10 after a serious accident at Eau Rouge. Former Bentley factory man Andy Meyrick, who was racing a first-generation Continental for Team Parker, and Attempto Lamborghini driver Jurgen Krebs both sustained fractures.

That made the race a kind of 22 Hours of Spa, but that shouldn’t detract in any way from Walkenhorst’s surprise victory. ✨



Walkenhorst clawed back time lost during pitstop to finish on the top step

**RESULTS** BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE CUP ROUND 4/5, SPA (B), JULY 28-29 (511 LAPS – 2223.915 MILES)

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Philipp Eng (A) Tom Blomqvist (GB) Christian Krognes (N)	Walkenhorst Motorsport / BMW M6 GT3	24h01m34.979s
2	Alexander Sims (GB) Jens Klingmann (D) Nicky Catsburg (NL)	Rowe Racing / BMW M6 GT3	+10.408s
3	Kelvin van der Linde (ZA) Sheldon van der Linde (ZA) Jeffrey Schmidt (CH)	Montaplast by Land-Motorsport / Audi R8 LMS	+37.941s
4	Frederic Vervisch (B) Markus Winkelhock (D) Christopher Haase (D)	Audi Sport Team Sainteloc / Audi R8 LMS	+53.645s
5	Maro Engel (D) Yelmer Buurman (NL) Luca Stolz (D)	Mercedes-AMG Team Black Falcon / Mercedes-AMG GT3	+1m17.916s
6	Raffaele Marciello (I) Tristan Vautier (F) Daniel Juncadella (E)	Mercedes-AMG Team Akka ASP / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-1 lap
7	Alex Buncombe (GB) Lucas Ordóñez (E) Matt Parry (GB)	GT Sport Motul Team RJN / Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3	-1 lap
8	Rene Rast (D) Robin Frijns (NL) Nico Müller (CH)	Audi Sport Team WRT / Audi R8 LMS	-2 laps
9	Nicki Thiim (DK) Matthieu Vaxivière (F) Jake Dennis (GB)	R-Motorsport / Aston Martin V12 Vantage	-3 laps
10	Miguel Molina (E) Mikhail Aleshin (RUS) Davide Rigon (I)	SMP Racing / Ferrari 488 GT3	-3 laps
11	Maximilian Buhk (D) Maximilian Gotz (D) Alvaro Parente (P)	Mercedes-AMG Team Strakka Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-3 laps
12	Gary Paffett (GB) Edoardo Mortara (I) Renger van der Zande (NL)	Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-4 laps
13	Christian Kliën (A) Albert Costa (E) Marco Seefried (D)	Emil Frey Lexus Racing / Lexus RC F GT3	-4 laps
14	Marco Mapelli (I) Ezequiel Perez Compagnon (RA) Raffaele Giammaria (I)	GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	-5 laps
15	Daniel Keilwitz (D) Alexander Mattschull (D) Rinat Salikhov (RUS) David Perel (ZA)	Rinaldi Racing / Ferrari 488 GT3	-5 laps
16	Vitaly Petrov (RUS) Denis Bulatov (RUS) Michael Meadows (GB)	SMP Racing by AKKA ASP / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-6 laps
17	David Fumanelli (I) Nick Leventis (GB) Chris Buncombe (GB) Lewis Williamson (GB)	Strakka Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-7 laps
18	Andrea Rizzoli (I) Alex Frassinetti (I) Romain Monti (F) Kang Ling (PRC)	Ombra Racing / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	-7 laps
19	Rik Breukers (NL) Michele Beretta (I) Martin Kodric (HR) Sandy Mitchell (GB)	Barwell Motorsport / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	-7 laps
20	Thomas Jäger (D) Kenny Habul (AUS) Martin Konrad (A) Bernd Schneider (D)	Sun Energy 1 Team HTP Motorsport / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-8 laps
21	Matt Griffin (IRL) Duncan Cameron (GB) Rino Mastronardi (I) Aaron Scott (GB)	AF Corse / Ferrari 488 GT3	-8 laps
22	Ben Barnicoat (GB) Come Ledogar (F) Olivier Pla (F)	Garage 59 / McLaren 650S GT3	-8 laps
23	Hubert Haupt (D) Gabriele Piana (I) Abdulaziz Al Faisal (SA) Manuel Metzger (D)	Black Falcon / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-10 laps
24	Pierre Kaffer (D) Kim-Luis Schramm (D) Clemens Schmid (A)	Attempto Racing / Audi R8 LMS	-10 laps
25	Jordan Pepper (ZA) Steven Kane (GB) Jules Gounon (F)	Bentley Team M-Sport / Bentley Continental GT3	-12 laps
26	Marco Cioci (I) Niek Hommerson (NL) Louis Machiels (B) Andrea Bertolini (I)	AF Corse / Ferrari 488 GT3	-12 laps
27	Richard Abra (GB) Leo Machitski (GB) Adrian Amstutz (CH) Patrick Kujala (FIN)	Barwell Motorsport / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	-15 laps
28	Alex Fontana (CH) Adrian Zaugg (ZA) Mikael Grenier (CDN)	Emil Frey Jaguar Racing / Jaguar Emil Frey G3	-15 laps
29	Dirk Werner (D) Romain Dumas (F) Frederic Makowiecki (F)	Manthey Racing / Porsche 911 GT3-R	-18 laps
30	Stefano Costantini (I) Alberto di Folco (I) Sylvain Debs (F) Bernard Delhez (B)	Target Racing / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	-20 laps
31	Rui Aguas (P) Kriton Lendoudis (GR) Saud Al-Faisal (SA) Tom Onslow-Cole (GB)	Black Falcon / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-21 laps
32	Bertrand Baguette (B) Riccardo Patrese (I) Loic Depailler (F) Esteban Guerrieri (RA)	Castrol Honda Racing / Acura NSX GT3	-21 laps
33	Felix Rosenqvist (S) Salih Yolcu (TR) Darren Burke (GB) Euan Hankey (GB)	RAM Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3	-22 laps
34	Pierre Ehret (D) Rick Yoon (ROK) Murad Sultanov (D) Nick Boule (USA)	Rinaldi Racing / Ferrari 488 GT3	-23 laps
35	Maxime Martin (B) Dominik Baumann (A) Marvin Kirchhofer (D)	R-Motorsport / Aston Martin V12 Vantage	-26 laps
36	Greg Teo (SGP) David Tjapobiantoro (RI) Christian Colombo (I) Matteo Cressoni (I)	T2 Motorsport / Ferrari 488 GT3	-29 laps
37	Struan Moore (GB) Ricardo Sanchez (MEX) Jordan Witt (GB) Sean Walkinshaw (GB)	GT Sport Motul Team RJN / Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3	-29 laps
38	Immanuel Vinke (D) Henry Walkenhorst (D) Ralf Oeverhaus (D) Anders Buchardt (N)	Walkenhorst Motorsport / BMW M6 GT3	-33 laps
39	Wolfgang Triller (D) Jurgen Haring (D) Edward Lewis Brauner (D) Alfred Renauer (D)	Herberth Motorsport / Porsche 911 GT3-R	-36 laps
40	Christopher Mies (D) Alex Riberas (E) Dries Vanthoor (B)	Audi Sport Team WRT / Audi R8 LMS	-55 laps-gearbox
41	Marc Lieb (D) Tim Pappas (USA) Jeroen Bleekemolen (NL) Marc Miller (USA)	Black Swan Racing / Porsche 911 GT3-R	-64 laps-punctures
42	Chris Harris (GB) Alexander West (S) Chris Goodwin (GB) Andrew Watson (GB)	Garage 59 / McLaren 650S GT3	-120 laps
43	Pierre-Yves Paque (B) Gregory Puisse (B) Bob Wilwert (L) Gilles Petit (F)	Speedlover / Porsche 991 Cup	-121 laps
44	Jamie Green (GB) Pieter Schothorst (NL) Steijn Schothorst (NL)	Attempto Racing / Audi R8 LMS	-127 laps
45	Tim Verbergt (B) Koen Wauters (B) Sam Dejonghe (B) Nicolas Van Dierendonck (B)	Brussels Racing / Aston Martin V12 Vantage	-135 laps
46	Gianluca Giraudi (I) Juan Perez (USA) Loris Spinelli (I) Giacomo Altoe (I)	Antonelli Motorsport / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	-137 laps-transmission
47	Sarah Bovy (B) Andrew Haryanto (RI) Andres Josephsohn (RA) Beniamino Caccia (I)	GDL Racing / Lamborghini Huracan Super Trofeo Evo	-147 laps-clutch
R	Earl Bamber (NZ) Timo Bernhard (D) Laurens Vanthoor (B)	KUS TEAM75 Bernhard / Porsche 911 GT3-R	353 laps-acc damage
R	Maxime Soulet (B) Andy Soucek (E) Vincent Abril (F)	Bentley Team M-Sport / Bentley Continental GT3	349 laps-transmission
R	Philipp Frommenwiler (CH) Nikolaj Rogivue (CH) Loris Hezemans (NL) Tobias Dauenhauer (D)	Aust Motorsport / Audi R8 LMS	342 laps-acc damage
R	Franck Perera (F) Rolf Ineichen (CH) Phil Keen (GB)	GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	311 laps-suspension
R	Nico Bastian (D) Jack Manchester (GB) Jules Szymkowiak (NL) Fabian Schiller (D)	Akka ASP Team / Mercedes-AMG GT3	261 laps-acc damage
R	Jurgen Krebs (D) Sven Heyrowsky (A) Tim Müller (D) John-Louis Jasper (D)	Attempto Racing / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	227 laps-acc damage
R	Norbert Siedler (A) Stephane Ortelli (MC) Markus Palttala (FIN)	Emil Frey Racing / Lexus RC F GT3	196 laps-acc damage
R	Seb Morris (GB) Derek Pierce (GB) Rob Smith (GB) Andy Meyrick (GB)	Team Parker Racing / Bentley Continental GT3	195 laps-acc damage
R	Marco Wittmann (D) Jesse Krohn (FIN) Ricky Collard (GB)	Rowe Racing / BMW M6 GT3	194 laps-alternator
R	Stefano Gattuso (I) Arno Santamato (F) Fabrizio Crestani (I) Nicolas Pohler (D)	Daiko Lazarus Racing / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	135 laps-acc damage
R	Felipe Fraga (BR) Rubens Barrichello (BR) Christian Vietoris (D)	Strakka Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3	117 laps-suspension
R	Mirko Bortolotti (I) Christian Engelhart (D) Andrea Caldarelli (I)	GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3	113 laps-acc damage
R	Marcel Fassler (CH) Stuart Leonard (GB) Daniel Serra (BR)	WRT / Audi R8 LMS	93 laps-lost wheel
R	Ross Gunn (GB) Ahmad Al Harthy (OM) Charlie Eastwood (GB) Euan McKay (GB)	Oman Racing Team with TF Sport / Aston Martin V12 Vantage	72 laps-acc damage
R	Phillippe Giauque (F) Eric Debard (F) Fabien Barthez (F) Nicolas Jamin (F)	Akka ASP Team / Mercedes-AMG GT3	43 laps-acc damage
R	Marc Rostan (F) Nyls Stievenart (F) Simon Gachet (F) Christian Kelders (B)	Sainteloc Racing / Audi R8 LMS	39 laps-acc damage

In each car, first-named driver started the race. **Winner's average speed** 92.561mph. **Fastest lap** Gounon 2m19.464s, 112.340mph.

**SUPERPOLE 1** Martin 2m19.183s; 2 Müller 2m19.366s; 3 Rigon 2m19.433s; 4 K van der Linde 2m19.493s; 5 Ledogar 2m19.512s; 6 Winkelhock 2m19.515s; 7 Eng 2m19.517s; 8 Bortolotti 2m19.697s; 9 Soulet 2m19.706s; 10 Engel 2m20.167s; 11 Catsburg 2m20.239s; 12 Green 2m20.253s; 13 Mortara 2m20.519s; 14 Perera 2m20.546s; 18 Makowiecki 2m19.649s; 15 L Vanthoor no time; 16 Serra no time; 17 Costa no time; 19 D Vanthoor no time.

**CHAMPIONSHIP 1** Marciello 48; 2 Engel/ Stolz/Buurman 47; 3 Krognes/Eng/ Blomqvist 43; 4 Riberas/D Vanthoor/ Mies 37; 5 K van der Linde 36; 6 Kliën/ Seefried/Costa 35; 7 Linde 34; 8 Vautier

33; 9 Adam Christodoulou 33; 10 Vaxivière/Dennis/Thiim 29.

**OVERALL BLANCPAIN 1** Riberas/Mies 103.5; 2 Marciello 92.5; 3 D Vanthoor

## WORLD OF SPORT



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# Rossi teaches everyone an old lesson

**INDYCAR**  
**MID-OHIO (USA)**  
**JULY 29**  
**ROUND 12/16**

Five years ago at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, Charlie Kimball scored his only IndyCar triumph by making three pitstops to some of the more fancied runners' two, on a day when there were no full-course cautions.

This year at Mid-Ohio, two stops was absolutely the right way to go in another caution-free race, and yet only Alexander Rossi and his Andretti Autosport Honda-powered machine attempted it. They ran out comfortable winners, scoring the team's first triumph at the 2.258-mile road course near Lexington, Ohio.

Rossi and the engineers made the strategy decision on the fly because they had to. The four-car Andretti squad had elected to test

at Gateway's 1.25-mile oval the previous week, rather than join some of their rivals at Mid-Ohio, and were thus missing useful data. On top of this, there was no race day warm-up, as IndyCar has started deleting that half-hour session on tracks where the teams can test beforehand. In a year when all are desperately trying to figure out the 2018 aerokit, that produces an area of uncertainty pre-race.

"Without a warm-up, you don't know what fuel mileage you're capable of getting because all the work leading up [to the race] is focused on qualifying," said Rossi, who beat Will Power's Team Penske Chevrolet-powered car to pole position by 0.2 seconds. "We went into it with the option of doing the two-stop if we could hit a fuel number in the first two or three laps. We were able to do that while opening up a gap on Will. It was at that point that we decided to commit to it.

"It's a huge testament to the pace of the car. To hit the fuel mileage we needed for two stops, I lifted [off the throttle] a lot of the lap, so you have to be able to carry a lot of rolling speed into the corners and have a balance you're comfortable with."

While Rossi's squad was now resolute in its decision to go for just two stops, Schmidt Peterson Motorsports, which *had* tested at Mid-Ohio, had concluded three stops could be as fast as two. It would also require no fuel saving, at which the team's star rookie Robert Wickens is still a novice. When he qualified fifth, behind Rossi, Power, Ryan Hunter-Reay (Andretti Autosport) and Josef Newgarden (Penske), SPM hatched a masterplan: start on scrubbed red primary tyres, pit early for fresh reds, and then make hay as those ahead pitted for blacks.

It worked. Wickens' first stop came on the 15th of the race's 90 laps, one lap after Hunter-Reay, who'd already said "no way" to the idea of following Rossi's two-stop example. Wickens emerged ahead of RHR and started setting personal best lap times. When Power stopped on lap 24, and Newgarden and ninth-place starter Scott Dixon did the same on lap 26 – all three taking on black tyres – Wickens was long gone.

Rossi finally pitted for the first time on lap 29, rejoining in fifth and having to defend hard from Dixon. Meanwhile, with a clear track and grippy tyres, Wickens kept pulling away and had a 14s lead over Power by the time he stopped for a second time on lap 39.

While Dixon and Newgarden pitted for a



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## WEEKEND WINNERS

### INDY LIGHTS MID-OHIO

**Race 1** Pato O'Ward  
Andretti Autosport  
**Race 2** Pato O'Ward  
Andretti Autosport

For full results visit:  
[motorsportstats.com](http://motorsportstats.com)



Wickens starred once again for Schmidt Peterson

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Rossi is now second in the points

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Bourdais stormed from 24th to sixth

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## RESULTS ROUND 12/16, MID-OHIO (USA), JULY 29 (90 LAPS – 203.220 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Alexander Rossi (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	1h44m15.2137s
2	Robert Wickens (CDN)	Schmidt Peterson Motorsports / Dallara-Honda	+12.8285s
3	Will Power (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+14.7086s
4	Josef Newgarden (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+18.0065s
5	Scott Dixon (NZ)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+18.9382s
6	Sebastien Bourdais (F)	Dale Coyne Racing with Vasser-Sullivan / Dallara-Honda	+19.5312s
7	Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+21.4614s
8	Simon Pagenaud (F)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+21.8246s
9	Graham Rahal (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+23.1494s
10	Zach Veach (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+24.3930s
11	Marco Andretti (USA)	Andretti Herta Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+36.5906s
12	Jordan King (GB)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+41.4002s
13	Spencer Pigot (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+43.3340s
14	James Hinchcliffe (CDN)	Schmidt Peterson Motorsports / Dallara-Honda	+1m04.0882s
15	Ed Jones (GB)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m07.1156s
16	Charlie Kimball (USA)	Carlin / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
17	Takuma Sato (J)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
18	Tony Kanaan (BR)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
19	Matheus Leist (BR)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
20	Jack Harvey (GB)	Meyer Shank Racing with Schmidt Peterson / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
21	Rene Binder (A)	Juncos Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
22	Conor Daly (USA)	Harding Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps
23	Pietro Fittipaldi (BR)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	-2 laps
24	Max Chilton (GB)	Carlin / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps

Winner's average speed 116.957mph. Fastest lap Dixon 1m06.7269s, 121.822mph.

<b>Q3</b>	7 Rahal 1m06.1804s;	16 King 1m05.7699s;	17 Pagenaud 1m05.9630s;
1 Rossi 1m04.6802s;	8 Sato 1m06.3755s;	18 Pigot 1m05.8133s;	19 Kanaan 1m06.0520s;
2 Power 1m04.8939s;	9 Dixon 1m06.4187s;	20 Harvey 1m05.9911s;	21 Leist 1m06.7354s;
3 Hunter-Reay 1m04.9896s;	10 Hinchcliffe 1m06.5549s;	22 Fittipaldi 1m06.2138s;	23 Binder 1m06.9555s.
4 Newgarden 1m05.1335s;	11 Jones 1m07.0999s;	24 Bourdais no time.	
5 Wickens 1m05.1747s;	12 Veach 1m07.2287s.		
6 Chilton 1m06.6172s.			

<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q1-GROUP 1</b>
Hunter-Reay 1m05.1573s;	Power 1m04.9930s;
Power 1m05.1891s;	Hinchcliffe 1m05.1649s;
Rossi 1m05.8750s;	Sato 1m05.3240s;
Chilton 1m05.9931s;	Jones 1m05.3408s;
Newgarden 1m06.0341s;	Rahal 1m05.3844s;
Wickens 1m06.0450s;	Dixon 1m05.4750s;
	14 Daly 1m05.7260s;

<b>Q1-GROUP 2</b>
Rossi 1m04.9219s;
Hunter-Reay 1m05.3285s;
Veach 1m05.3434s;
Wickens 1m05.3842s;
Newgarden 1m05.5510s;
Chilton 1m05.6344s;
13 Andretti 1m05.6353s;
15 Kimball 1m05.9471s;

**CHAMPIONSHIP**  
1 Dixon 494; 2 Rossi 448;  
3 Newgarden 434;  
4 Power 407;  
5 Hunter-Reay 399;  
6 Wickens 380;  
7 Pagenaud 344;  
8 Rahal 335;  
9 Hinchcliffe 328;  
10 Bourdais 293.

second time on laps 41 and 42 respectively, Power waited until lap 49 and he emerged in Newgarden's path. Newgarden hit push-to-pass and on warm tyres dived down the inside of Power at Turn 2 to grab third – a long way behind Rossi and Wickens – leaving Power to fend off Hunter-Reay and Dixon.

Wickens, now on black tyres, retook the lead when Rossi stopped again on lap 59, but this time the Canadian led for just six laps before pitting for a third time, as Dixon had done on lap 63, Newgarden on 64 and Hunter-Reay on 65. Power, again running longer, worked hard over the next four laps, and his efforts were not in vain. He emerged from his final stop on scrubbed reds and this time stayed just out of reach of Newgarden (fresh blacks) and Dixon (scrubbed reds).

Power closed to within two seconds of Wickens in the closing laps, the star rookie having been held up endlessly behind the red-tyred Takuma Sato and Tony Kanaan, who were lapped but engrossed in battle. Indeed, the SPM driver believed he could otherwise have challenged Rossi and pressured him into using too much fuel. Instead, he lost some 10s to the leader.

Behind Newgarden and Dixon, Sebastien Bourdais earned the unofficial 'driver of the day' award. Having spun out of qualifying and lost his two best laps, the Dale Coyne Racing with Vasser-Sullivan driver started from the back of the field and – without the aid of yellows – stormed from 24th to sixth, passing Hunter-Reay with six laps to go.

DAVID MALSHER



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# Norris shows wet weather brilliance

**FORMULA 2**  
**HUNGARORING (H)**  
**JULY 28-29**  
**ROUND 8 / 12**

The Pope, Jimmy Hendrix and that annoying Meerkat from the TV adverts could top the Formula 2 podium and still no-one would care, such is the momentum behind Lando Norris and George Russell right now.

Neither of the drivers won a race this weekend, and only Norris scored a podium, but it seems it doesn't matter where they finish; they bring plentiful entertainment and talent regardless of their starts/finishes.

Another topped practice session seemed like a sign of things to come for Russell, but in qualifying he admitted to a small mistake in not getting his tyres into the correct temperature zone. That led to a fourth-place starting spot, behind polesitter Sergio Sette Camara, Russell's team-mate Jack Aitken and Prema Racing's Nyck de Vries. Still Russell had put Luca Ghiotto between him and Carlin's Norris.

But en route to the formation lap, Russell knew something was wrong. He didn't make the start because of a technical issue for the second time this season, with his clutch jammed closed, forcing the car to burst forwards. He labelled it "dangerous" and retired having initially started from the pits.

Heavy rain preceded the start and, despite stalls in practice and qualifying, F2 and the FIA decided to keep a standing start, having reverted to a rolling start for the last four races due to clutch issues with the new car.

However, for this round, the series had brought a new clutch and ECU updates, which resulted in no stalls in either race.

Norris fell back initially with a relatively tentative start. But there was nothing conservative after that. He passed Jack Aitken and Luca Ghiotto, both around the outside at Turn 3, before a late but successful Turn 8 lunge on fellow McLaren junior de Vries. Norris was anywhere from 1.5 to 3.5 seconds quicker than any car around him in the wet, darting all over the race track looking for adventurous lines on his grooved tyres. It paid dividends. A circuit and a half later, on lap 10 of 34, Norris was into the lead. By the time it came to pit as the track began to dry, he'd stretched an unbelievable 14s margin over de Vries, who in turn jumped Sette Camara on lap 18 after both had stopped.

Norris appeared unstoppable but, after

a couple of strong laps in the dry, he fell away massively. His front wing had broken and it was enough to destroy his front tyres.

De Vries, driving a Prema that was equally as potent as that of his team-mate Sean Gelael – albeit the Indonesian driver had started well down the order – destroyed the margin and was through with under nine laps to go.

There was further drama as Sette Camara and Antonio Fuoco – who started 12th – attacked Norris. Sette Camara lost out to Fuoco and then dive-bombed the Italian, flicking him into a spin. The Carlin driver was demoted to seventh with an almost instant 10-second penalty, promoting Fuoco to third ahead of Aitken, Alexander Albon and Ghiotto. It was sickening for Norris to lose in such a way.

But he more than made up for it in the sprint race in the dry the following day.







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JIM CLARK

Norris was odds on for the top step before front wing damage

Artem Markelov dropped from pole to fourth, beaten by Ghiotto, Albon and Sette Camara into Turn 1.

Norris ran in sixth for most of the early stages but, for the second weekend in a row, incredibly, passed de Vries and Markelov at Turn 3 – instead of Club at Silverstone – to take fourth. He then reeled in team-mate Sette Camara but couldn't get close enough to pass for the rest of the race.

Albon passed Ghiotto at Turn 1 and the two touched wheels, Ghiotto complaining of his tyres while Albon equalled Markelov's tally of three wins this year.

Russell started dead last, but drove all the way up to eighth – passing his ART Grand Prix team-mate Aitken for the last points-paying spot with just a handful of laps remaining. Aitken had started fifth.

Russell took it as a massive mental blow to his competitors.

"I think it's about keeping the pressure on to show that we are not messing around and it doesn't matter if we're coming from the front or the back," he said. "We've got the pace. It keeps the pressure on."

The pressure is on as it's clear he is 2018's paceman. But Carlin and Norris fired a warning shot that they have the potential to match Russell, albeit not quite just yet.

The result of the weekend is that the points gap is down from 37 to 12 with the summer break looming. Whether caused by reliability issues for Russell or not, Norris is right back into the chase, and that wet drive has given him the ammunition of further attention from the F1 teams.

JACK BENYON

RESULTS HUNGARORING (H), JULY 28-29, RACE 1 (34 LAPS – 92.531 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Nyck de Vries (NL)	Prema Racing	1h00m16.996s
2	Lando Norris (GB)	Carlin	+16.508s
3	Antonio Fuoco (I)	Charouz Racing System	+20.752s
4	Jack Aitken (GB)	ART Grand Prix	+21.805s
5	Alexander Albon (T)	DAMS	+23.077s
6	Luca Ghiotto (I)	Campos Vexatec Racing	+28.696s
7	Sergio Sette Camara (BR)	Carlin	+29.099s
8	Artem Markelov (RUS)	Russian Time	+35.594s
9	Tadasuke Makino (J)	Russian Time	+36.304s
10	Nirei Fukuzumi (J)	Arden International	+37.114s
11	Roberto Merhi (E)	MP Motorsport	+37.983s
12	Arjun Maini (IND)	Trident	+38.336s
13	Sean Gelael (R)	Prema Racing	+39.120s
14	Alessio Lorandi (I)	Trident	+39.858s
15	Roy Nissany (IL)	Campos Vexatec Racing	+48.072s
16	Maximilian Gunther (D)	Arden International	+53.241s
17	Louis Deletraz (CH)	Charouz Racing System	+1m13.696s
18	Ralph Boschung (CH)	MP Motorsport	-1 lap
R	Nicholas Latifi (CDN)	DAMS	29 laps-shutdown
R	George Russell (GB)	ART Grand Prix	11 laps-clutch

Winner's average speed 92.096mph. Fastest lap Boschung 1m32.473s, 105.977mph.

QUALIFYING 1 Camara 1m27.400s; 2 Aitken 1m27.430s; 3 de Vries 1m27.631s; 4 Russell 1m27.762s; 5 Ghiotto 1m27.828s; 6 Norris 1m27.864s; 7 Markelov 1m27.957s; 8 Maini 1m27.958s; 9 Boschung 1m27.973s; 10 Deletraz 1m28.032s; 11 Fukuzumi 1m28.038s; 12 Fuoco 1m28.073s; 13 Albon 1m28.107s; 14 Latifi 1m28.124s; 15 Gunther 1m28.169s; 16 Nissany 1m28.348s; 17 Lorandi 1m28.533s; 18 Gelael 1m28.648s; 19 Merhi 1m28.724s; 20 Makino 1m28.750s.

RACE 2 (28 LAPS – 76.198 MILES)

1 Albon 44m47.130s; 2 Ghiotto +9.465s; 3 Camara +11.371s; 4 Norris +13.638s; 5 Merhi +28.210s; 6 Fukuzumi +34.144s; 7 de Vries +34.145s; 8 Russell +36.586s; 9 Deletraz +37.140s; 10 Aitken +38.976s; 11 Gelael +40.963s; 12 Makino +41.535s; 13 Markelov +52.230s; 14 Maini +52.379s; 15 Nissany +1m00.932s; 16 Latifi +1m17.184s; 17 Fuoco -1 lap; R Gunther 17 laps-shutdown; R Lorandi 0 laps-accident damage; R Boschung 0 laps-accident damage.

Winner's average speed 102.083mph. Fastest lap Fuoco 1m31.889s, 106.650mph.

GRID FOR RACE 2

Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Russell 171; 2 Norris 159; 3 Albon 141; 4 Markelov 114; 5 de Vries 114; 6 Fuoco 112; 7 Camara 106; 8 Ghiotto 79; 9 Deletraz 62; 10 Aitken 61.



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Albon joins Markelov as three-time winner

Hubert (2) kept Ilott (1) at bay in feature race to steal a points march

STANDINGS		
1	Anthoine Hubert (ART)	129
2	Callum Ilott (ART)	114
3	Leonardo Pulcini (Campos)	99

For more info: [autosport.com/gp3](http://autosport.com/gp3)



# Hubert extends lead as Mazepin wins

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**GP3 SERIES**  
**HUNGARORING (H)**  
**JULY 28-29**  
**ROUND 5/9**

While it was far from the strong weekend he benefited from at Silverstone, Anthoine Hubert extended his championship lead in Budapest, but Callum Ilott remains an ominous shadow in his team-mate's wake.

ART Grand Prix's Hubert started almost perfectly with second in practice and then pole position – his second in a row after taking his first in the series at Silverstone. But the weekend started to unravel at the start as a poor getaway left him swamped into Turn 1 on the opening lap of the feature race. Instead, it was team-mate Nikita Mazepin who came to the fore and dominated. All that despite one of the most bizarre incidents of the season.

Mazepin was part-way through preparing



Nikita Mazepin won the feature race by 10.5s

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his fresh Pirellis for a first flier in qualifying when he was smashed off the track by Niko Kari. The Finn had sent his car wide at Turn 4, a common error point, but then didn't slow down enough when he rejoined the track. He lost his left-rear wheel as it smashed into Mazepin's front-right.

"I think he was just expecting to be on a pole position lap at the beginning of the session," quipped Mazepin. "So he lost the car and ended up driving into me."

Kari was nonchalant about the move: "It's not necessary [to apologise] from my point of view, it was just a normal mistake and these things happen.

"OK, maybe I could have slowed down a bit more."

It meant a bent wishbone for Mazepin, but, happily, it held up and he set a stunning front-row time. He drove away at the head of the pack and eventually ended up over 10 seconds clear as his worries about his degrading Pirellis were not exclusive – everyone was struggling.

A DRS technical issue, not for the first time this season, meant it was tricky for drivers to pass, especially given this is Hungary, where it is hard enough to overtake on even with DRS.

Following Mazepin past Hubert was Leonardo Pulcini, who has to be the most improved driver from last year. He's now a constant top-five threat and, while he wasn't able to harry Mazepin for the win,

he had the measure of the other ART cars.

Hubert was a comfortable third in the end, while Ilott dropped back, furthering Hubert's title advantage. A pair of Tridents made their mark, with David Beckmann and Ryan Tveter both snatching positions away from Ilott to take fourth and fifth.

The sprint race spelled redemption for Dorian Boccolacci. Having had a win taken away this season as his car didn't have ample fuel for a sample after the Paul Ricard feature race, he is positive about the rest of the campaign, having ended a barren run between Paul Ricard and Budapest. He built an early gap to Ilott and the fast-starting Hubert, and it looked like the latter pair running in second and third were saving tyres. Indeed, they came back at Boccolacci, but not enough to rob the Frenchman of what felt like a deserved win. Ilott's runner-up spot limited Hubert's championship advantage, and there's always a feeling that when Ilott hooks it all up and keeps things tidy, he's capable of great things.

Pulcini took fourth in the sprint, allowing him to jump back in front of Mazepin – who could only manage 12th – in the points after the Russian's win the previous day had moved him ahead. Juan Manuel Correa was fifth, ahead of the Trident duo, reversed after Tveter passed Beckmann – who had a strong weekend after switching from Jenzer Motorsport.

**JACK BENYON**

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ART Grand Prix

Race 2 Dorian Boccia

MP Motorsport

PORSCHE SUPERCUP

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EUROCUP

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Race 1 Christian Lundgaard

MP Motorsport

Race 2 Victor Martins

R-ace GP

JAPANESE F3

OKAYAMA

Race 1 Ritomo Miyata

TOM'S Dallara-Toyota F317

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Ye (16) still leads the points despite missing out on Spa victories

LEMEUR/DPPI

# Podiums keep Ye in the lead

FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP  
SPA (B)  
JULY 27-28  
ROUND 6/10

A win last Friday at Spa enabled Christian Lundgaard to retake the Formula Renault Eurocup points lead overnight, but, by the close of play on Saturday, he'd lost it once more to Yifei Ye.

Renault Formula 1 junior Lundgaard's win was secured thanks to the traditional Spa slipstream up the Kemmel straight. Polesitter Lorenzo Colombo, who'd made a decent start in his JD Motorsport car, was a sitting duck on the opening lap. Initially it was Oscar Piastrì who towed past, only for Lundgaard to dive for the inside at Les Combes and insert his MP Motorsport machine in front.

Piastrì made it pay on the second lap and the Australian, having by far his best F1 Renault weekend yet, got his Arden International car ahead of Lundgaard. But the Dane reclaimed the advantage on the third lap and was never headed before an

early red flag thanks to Renault NEC class runner Sharon Scolari piling into the tyre wall at Raidillon. "I was lucky with the red flag," admitted Lundgaard, "because I knew I would be struggling with one more lap [if the race restarted]."

Ye also got past Piastrì and the Josef Kaufmann Racing driver looked to be homing in for a challenge, but the Chinese ace outbraked himself at the chicane, setting up a three-abreast scrap up the Kemmel straight with Piastrì and Arthur Rougier that he just survived to keep second.

Logan Sargeant took pole for Saturday's race, but could not contain inspired R-ace GP team-mate Victor Martins, who made it a weekend double for Renault proteges. Martins made his way from fifth on the grid to second on lap one, and got ahead of the American on the seventh lap of 12.

Sargeant held on to take second from Ye, while Thomas Maxwell beat team-mate Colombo to fourth. Lundgaard was involved in the scrap for second early on in the race, but faded to eighth.

MARCUS SIMMONS

# Preining edges Andlauer

PORSCHE SUPERCUP  
HUNGARORING (H)  
JULY 29  
ROUND 6/9

Thomas Preining claimed his second victory in the Porsche Supercup, defeating Julien Andlauer by 0.460 seconds in a close but predictably tedious race at the Hungaroring.

Preining was on pole by three tenths and aced the start, while Andlauer struggled off the dirty side of the grid and had to get his elbows out to resist Zaid Ashkanani at Turn 1.

Andlauer eased Ashkanani off the track as Ashkanani attacked around the outside. This incident allowed Preining

an early break, as Jaap van Lagen stole into third at Ashkanani's expense.

Andlauer gradually reeled Preining in as the 14-lap race wore on, but found no opportunity to overtake. Van Lagen lacked the pace to go with the top two, but held off Ashkanani to complete the podium.

Title contenders Michael Ammermuller and Nick Yelloly started down on row four, but quickly leapfrogged Christopher Zochling and Florian Latorre, with Yelloly also stealing past Ammermuller.

Yelloly came under increasing pressure from Ammermuller towards the end, but held on, cutting Ammermuller's championship lead from five points to three in the process.

BEN ANDERSON



Preining led from the start

# Schumacher Jr takes maiden F3 win on father's stomping ground



Mick Schumacher was 1.3s clear in race three at Spa

ALL PICS: FIA F3 / SUER

## EUROPEAN FORMULA 3 SPA (B) JULY 27-28 ROUND 5/10

A slippery but drying track used to be the kind of conditions in which Michael Schumacher excelled at Spa. Last Saturday morning, son Mick took over the family baton in identical circumstances to take his maiden Formula 3 European Championship victory with an exquisite drive from sixth on the grid. That was one feel-good story; the other was a weekend of sensational, hard racing that featured no fewer than 10 different race leaders.

Schumacher Sr, of course, made an art form of turning in qualifying laps in races; his lad's problem has always been producing qualifying laps in qualifying. He picked up a useful tow from Julian Hanses and

grabbed his maiden F3 pole for race two, but spun the wheels at the start, and a tag from Prema Powerteam stablemate Guan Yu Zhou at La Source gave him a puncture. But race three was superb: Schumacher survived another brush with Zhou on lap one, this time at Les Combes, then hunted down fellow Prema drivers Marcus Armstrong and Robert Shwartzman.

Armstrong, with a set-up to suit the drier conditions that would come later in the race, defended from Shwartzman into La Source, but the Russian got momentum down the hill to pass the Kiwi. Armstrong thought he'd let Shwartzman go and tow him back, only to find Schumacher on his inside at Eau Rouge and have to give way. Schumacher then slipstreamed Shwartzman up to Les Combes. "Robert did a move on Marcus, I had a higher speed in Eau Rouge and I just kept my

foot down, and it worked," he beamed.

The Zhou/Schumacher clash in race two, which had also sent Armstrong down the field in avoidance, allowed their Prema team-mate Ralf Aron to lead from fellow Estonian Juri Vips.

Aron's third place in the opening race, in which he survived a brush with Enaam Ahmed that broke his front suspension, had put him into a brief series lead. But he lost that thanks to a spectacular collision with Motopark F3 rookie Vips as they battled at the front. "This could have been my breakaway weekend in the championship," he bemoaned. "So many points wasted and it's nothing to do with me."

This race boiled down to a fight between two more Motopark men: Fabio Scherer and Dan Ticktum. From 10th on the grid, Ticktum stormed to a superb win after multiple lead changes with team-mate



Schumacher Jr celebrated his first victory in Euro F3



Scherer. Running a single-plane rear wing for straightline speed, he crucially kept the tyres alive with intelligent driving. This came after a dramatic first race, in which Ticktum was fourth but penalised out of the points for a first-corner clash with Nikita Troitskiy. Ticktum was fifth in the finale, his car not quite right in the wetter early-race conditions.

The spectacular Vips – who’d never seen Spa before practice – was given a five-place grid penalty for that Aron collision. “I shouldn’t have taken that risk so early in the race; he was ahead of me,” he confessed. But a stunning drive from 11th to fourth in the wet on Saturday was some recompense.

Apart from that battle with Ticktum in race two, Scherer could have won the finale. The Swiss started 10th and was spun around by Troitskiy on lap one, had to restart the engine, and continued with a damaged floor, suspension and rim. Despite being held up behind slower cars, he took just nine seconds longer than Schumacher to complete laps two to 16: “Our pace was amazing – without that crash it was possible to win.”

The other win, in race one, went to Jehan Daruvala on his best weekend yet in F3. His Q1 pole lap was massively boosted by a tow from team-mate Ferdinand Habsburg, but with a sluggish start he dropped behind Alex Palou. He repassed Palou after an early safety car, then broke free for an accomplished win. His drive from 12th on the grid to third in race two behind Ticktum and Scherer was, if anything, even better. “When I got close to them, it was hard to follow,” he said. “They raced well and didn’t slow each other down, and then I made a mistake at Pouhon and dropped back.”

Incredibly, Zhou – who is normally very good at finishing races – failed to score a point. Apart from his two Schumacher brushes, he sustained a mystery puncture in race one. He is one of many who could have ended the weekend in the points lead, but once again it’s Armstrong. That was despite sustaining a flat tyre in a clash with an impressive Ben Hingeley in race one as they battled for third.

MARCUS SIMMONS



Ticktum won the second race, rising from 10th on the grid

RESULTS SPA (B), JULY 27-28 RACE 1 (15 LAPS – 65.281 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Jehan Daruvala (IND)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	35m29.001s
2	Alex Palou (E)	Hitech Grand Prix / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+3.235s
3	Ralf Aron (EST)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F317	+11.905s
4	Mick Schumacher (D)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F318	+16.506s
5	Robert Shwartzman (RUS)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F314	+16.716s
6	Juri Vips (EST)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+17.625s
7	Marino Sato (J)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F314	+19.599s
8	Artem Petrov (RUS)	Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+20.065s
9	Fabio Scherer (CH)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F316	+21.075s
10	Keyvan Andres (D)	Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F317	+22.835s
11	Sacha Fenestraz (F)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F317	+28.572s
12	Ameya Vaidyanathan (IND)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F312	+30.700s
13	Dan Ticktum (GB)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F318	+32.569s
14	Sebastian Fernandez (VV)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F314	+38.970s
15	Petru Florescu (RO)	Fortec Motorsports / Dallara-Mercedes F318	+41.279s
16	Sophia Florsch (D)	Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+43.674s
17	Julian Hanes (D)	ma-con / Dallara-Volkswagen F312	+51.854s
18	Ben Hingeley (GB)	Hitech Grand Prix / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+1m16.389s
19	Enaam Ahmed (GB)	Hitech Grand Prix / Dallara-Mercedes F315	13 laps-accident damage
R	Jonathan Aberdein (ZA)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	9 laps-accident damage
R	Guan Yu Zhou (PRC)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F315	5 laps-puncture
R	Ferdinand Habsburg (A)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F317	3 laps-accident
R	Marcus Armstrong (NZ)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F317	3 laps-puncture
R	Nikita Troitskiy (RUS)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	0 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 110.386mph. Fastest lap Daruvala 2m13.552s, 117.313mph.

QUALIFYING 1 Daruvala 2m12.983s; 2 Armstrong 2m12.993s; 3 Palou 2m13.198s; 4 Zhou 2m13.351s; 5 Aron 2m13.357s; 6 Shwartzman 2m13.469s; 7 Ahmed 2m13.579s; 8 Hingeley 2m13.673s; 9 Vips 2m13.742s; 10 Aberdein 2m13.822s; 11 Troitskiy 2m13.837s; 12 Fenestraz 2m13.842s; 13 Ticktum 2m13.922s; 14 Florsch 2m13.929s; 15 Sato 2m14.021s; 16 Schumacher 2m14.203s; 17 Petrov 2m14.207s; 18 Scherer 2m14.316s; 19 Habsburg 2m14.822s; 20 Hanes 2m14.940s; 21 Vaidyanathan 2m15.135s; 22 Florescu 2m15.867s; 23 Andres 2m15.202s\*; 24 Fernandez 2m14.166s\*.

RACE 2 (16 LAPS – 69.633 MILES)  
 1 Ticktum 36m17.073s; 2 Scherer +1.483s; 3 Daruvala +1.666s; 4 Shwartzman +5.587s; 5 Ahmed +7.005s; 6 Armstrong +7.610s; 7 Fenestraz +7.706s; 8 Troitskiy +9.088s; 9 Aberdein +9.442s; 10 Habsburg +10.439s; 11 Palou +12.296s; 12 Andres +13.405s; 13 Fernandez +17.281s; 14 Hingeley +18.427s; 15 Sato +18.866s; 16 Vaidyanathan +20.511s; 17 Florsch +22.281s; 18 Hanes +28.054s; R Florescu 12 laps-handling; R Petrov 11 laps-handling; R Zhou 8 laps-saved car; R Vips 3 laps-accident; R Aron 3 laps-accident; R Schumacher 1 lap-puncture.  
 Winner's average speed 115.145mph.  
 Fastest lap Aberdein 2m14.568s, 116.428mph.

RACE 3 (16 LAPS – 69.633 MILES)  
 1 Schumacher 37m11.382s; 2 Shwartzman +1.352s; 3 Armstrong +2.186s; 4 Vips +11.003s; 5 Ticktum +19.775s; 6 Ahmed +20.861s; 7 Aberdein +21.749s; 8 Fernandez +22.580s; 9 Palou +23.476s; 10 Scherer +24.253s; 11 Daruvala +26.956s; 12 Habsburg +29.264s; 13 Zhou +30.861s; 14 Aron +31.939s; 15 Fenestraz +35.084s; 16 Sato +36.899s; 17 Hingeley +37.424s; 18 Petrov +38.085s; 19 Florescu +40.158s; 20 Andres +40.699s; 21 Florsch +42.211s; 22 Vaidyanathan +48.067s; 23 Hanes +1m03.436s; 24 Troitskiy +1m03.891s.  
 Winner's average speed 112.342mph.  
 Fastest lap Scherer 2m12.593s, 118.162mph.

GRID FOR RACE 3 1 Zhou; 2 Armstrong; 3 Shwartzman; 4 Daruvala; 5 Aberdein; 6 Schumacher; 7 Ticktum; 8 Ahmed; 9 Aron; 10 Scherer; 11 Vips\*; 12 Palou; 13 Troitskiy; 14 Habsburg; 15 Fenestraz; 16 Hingeley; 17 Fernandez; 18 Petrov; 19 Sato; 20 Florsch; 21 Florescu; 22 Andres; 23 Vaidyanathan; 24 Hanes. \* grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP  
 1 Armstrong 154; 2 Ticktum 153; 3 Aron 141.5; 4 Zhou 130; 5 Daruvala 111.5; 6 Ahmed 106; 7 Vips 102; 8 Schumacher 101; 9 Shwartzman 99; 10 Palou 92.

AWNINGS



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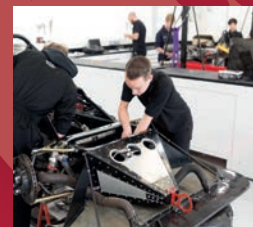
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## FUTURE OF BRITISH F3 AND REGIONAL STATUS STILL UNDECIDED

### BRDC F3

The future of the BRDC British F3 Championship is still undecided, as discussions over whether to switch to a new car and become one of the FIA's Regional F3 championships are still ongoing.

The sport's governing body has introduced a second 'regional' tier of Formula 3, with championships already formed in America and Asia that use a car fitted with the halo device.

Should the current British F3 series, which is run by Jonathan Palmer's MotorSport Vision, wish to become a Regional F3 championship in 2019, it would also need to adopt the new specification of car.

If it didn't and kept the current Tatuus-Cosworth that was only introduced for 2016 it would likely lose its F3 status, which it was allowed to keep for this season despite not being

acknowledged as an F3 Regional series.

Giles Butterfield, group operations and engineering manager at MSV, said: "MSV has strong partnerships with Tatuus and Cosworth in the existing championship.

"We are interested in learning more about what opportunities there may be for Regional F3 championships in Europe and are making enquires via the Motor Sports Association to the FIA."

It is understood the championship could run the Tatuus chassis used in Asian F3, fitted with a Regional F3-spec Cosworth engine. Opinion among teams in the series remains mixed.

Sam Waple, team principal at Carlin, said: "If we don't move to Regional F3 we may get left behind, and we might also struggle to attract drivers, but it obviously depends what's happening around us.

"It's a shame – these cars are not broken and we get great driving and great drivers from them."

**STEFAN MACKLEY**





## RENAULT PUTS IN REGIONAL F3 TENDER



Eurocup name has existed for 28 years

Renault is planning to scrap its current Eurocup single-seater cars and transfer under the FIA's new Regional Formula 3 umbrella for 2019.

The move would mean the end of the Formula Renault Eurocup name after 28 years dating back to 1991. It is the latest development in a European single-seater scene that has been thrown into volatility at every level between Formula 2 and FIA Formula 4.

Renault Sport Racing commercial director Benoit Nogier, who said that the new series could be called 'F3 by Renault', told Autosport that the company has put in a tender with the FIA to run a Regional F3 series in Europe.

"The goal is to carry on Formula Renault after 47 years and take the opportunity of this new category – Regional F3 as the FIA call it – to carry on," he said.

"We already invest and make a lot of effort in the learning system for young drivers, and we have many in the Renault Sport Academy now.

"We want to be a part of Regional F3 – for us, the pyramid the FIA has created is a perfect system for where Renault wants to be.

"We are an official candidate with the FIA and we are discussing with them."

The FIA's Regional F3 initiative made its competition debut in early July with the inaugural round of the Asian F3 series, which uses chassis constructed by Italian company Tatuus, the same firm that has built one-make Formula Renault 2.0 cars from 2000-09 and then 2013 to date.

Nogier said that Tatuus is a contender, although Mygale is also working on a Regional F3 project.

"At the moment, we have visited two suppliers," he said, "and we will move on this if we get the right to promote the championship.

"We have been very surprised by the quality of the cars – it's exactly what we think should be done."

The current two-litre Formula Renault powerplant will be replaced by a 1.8-litre turbo unit from the Megane RS, which produces 270bhp and would need only minimal modifications for racing.

MARCUS SIMMONS



## Heat hits rideheight checks

### CARRERA CUP GB

Porsche Carrera Cup GB series bosses have said teams did not gain an advantage after a bizarre equipment failure left it unable to properly check rideheights at Snetterton last weekend.

Series chief James MacNaughton confirmed the high temperatures in the week had delaminated the pad that is used, and said it was the "only calibrated thing we are able to use".

But category chiefs said they were confident that teams will not have used the opportunity to gain an unfair advantage because of a series of safeguards already in place.

"The good thing is we only found out before qualifying and – because we had a Wednesday test and a Friday test – all the teams had come to a stage where they were happy with the set-up, so you would hope they don't go and change it," MacNaughton said. "Firstly, in the spirit of competition, but also the fact that they won't have any data about those car changes means it would be a very, very brave thing to change it."

The regulations state that teams are also not permitted to change rideheights in the pitlane.

A proper solution is set to be sorted for the next round at Knockhill.

JASON NOBLE

## Surprise Clio Cup outing just the start for Hand

### CLIO CUP UK

Former Renault UK Clio Cup runner-up Ash Hand is targeting more outings this season after making a surprise return to the series at Snetterton last weekend.

Hand, who was second in the 2015 standings behind last year's British Touring Car champion Ash Sutton, received a last-minute call up to the Matrix Motorsport team after one of the squad's regular drivers, Andy Wilmot, fell unwell.

Hand finished an impressive second on the road in the opener before being handed a penalty for

contact that demoted him to sixth place post-race.

He was ninth in race two, despite dropping down the order after getting caught up in an incident early on.

"I got shoved off but I still finished ninth as I started nailing them," said Hand.

"I might get to do some more races this year – a couple of people have asked if I will do some more with them. I got the call at 10am on Friday, turned up with no testing – and I haven't driven at Snetterton for four years and not been in a Clio for over a year."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

# Mondello Park targets more UK race series

## MONDELLO PARK

Mondello Park is aiming to attract more UK race series next season, with circuit bosses insisting it's "business as usual" following the recent death of the track's former owner Martin Birrane.

Birrane, also a former owner of Lola Cars, passed away in June and the track has now been transferred into the hands of his family. But the circuit's general manager, Roddy

Greene, says there is no immediate threat to Mondello's future, with the track celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

"From our point of view it's business as usual, and it is from Martin's family's point of view as well," said Greene.

"It's great that the family is fully supportive of the business – they support Martin's vision for Mondello and will be over for the historic racing festival in August.

"On a day-to-day basis there are no major changes, just a little change in the reporting structure for me."

Greene added that the circuit is putting a big focus on club racing – in terms of both Irish series and attracting major UK classes over. The circuit featured on the British Touring Car Championship schedule between 2001 and '06, and British Formula 3 and British Superbikes have also been frequent visitors.

Greene would like both high-profile and club classes to feature on the Mondello calendar more in the future.

"We're speaking to a couple of classes from the UK about getting them over and have a couple of meetings coming up," he added.

A number of tributes to Birrane are planned for the historic festival on August 18-19. The Sunday of the event would have been Birrane's 83rd birthday and the Derek Bell Trophy – featuring Lola cars – will be among the series competing.

Greene said: "Martin was fantastically interested in the event and we're planning a demonstration of Group C cars from Martin's collection, which would be a nice tribute."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



# Reid hails Sports 1000 as 'pinnacle'

## RGB SPORTS 1000

Anthony Reid called the 750 Motor Club's RGB Sports 1000 championship the "pinnacle" of club racing after making a one-off appearance in the series at Cadwell Park.

The British Touring Car race winner and 1990 Le Mans podium finisher Reid took part in the Lincolnshire double-header in a Spire Sportscars GT3-S that Billy Albone took

to last season's championship.

This was the latest one-off appearance by Reid in 750MC after last year trying Classic Stock Hatch at Brands Hatch and Historic 750 Formula at Anglesey, taking a win and second place in both. He was not able to repeat this in RGB, where he took a fourth and sixth place.

"It's not like the other races I've done recently where I come in and win – it's a bit



more challenging," Reid said. "In club-level racing this must be the pinnacle.

"Yesterday [in the pre-meeting test] was like being thrown in at the deep end. They are very quick little cars, [high] power-to-weight, and a superb motorcycle

engine. They rev through until about 13,000rpm.

"They're cheap to run compared to the sort of stuff I would test and race. But it gives you just as much satisfaction to go quickly in one of these as anything else."

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## Harrison returns to racing

### CITROEN C1 CHALLENGE

Former British Touring Car Championship driver Simon Harrison will return to racing after an absence of 13 years in this weekend's Citroen C1 Challenge round at Snetterton.

The 48-year-old, who raced for Peugeot in 1995 and won the BTCC Production class in 2001, will contest the four-hour event with Production GTI Championship frontrunner Tim Hartland. They will drive a car prepared by Mardi Gras Motorsport, which ran the Honda Civic in which Harrison began his tin-top career in the 1994 National Saloon Car Cup.

"Tim, an old school friend who got me into motor racing in the first place, told me about the series," said Harrison, who is still involved in motorsport through

his video production company.

"It looks like a good idea - the saloon car equivalent of Formula First — so I thought I'd give it a go.

"We've got Mardi Gras to build us a car. They are going to help us out when we test before the weekend, but then it will be up to us to run it in the race."

Harrison explained that he expects to do further C1 races this year, but not the second of the 24-hour fixtures at Rockingham later this month. "That's probably a bit ambitious for our first year," he explained.

The series will also trial a new race format this weekend, with four lots of 20-minute heats followed by a 20-minute final featuring the fastest driver from each car.

**GARY WATKINS AND JAMES NEWBOLD**

## Miles award to carry on

### 750 MOTOR CLUB

The 750 Motor Club intends to carry on the John Miles Award for at least the next four years after nearly £3000 was raised in his memory.

Miles, who participated in 15 world championship Formula 1 races for Lotus between 1969-70, was a life-long member of the 750MC before his death in April this year, aged 74. He had sponsored an award for the past three seasons and this will continue for the foreseeable future after a

Crowdfunding page was set up.

"John used to give us £1000 towards the award and we would match that with £1000 in entry fees," said Nicky Emmerson, assistant to the competition manager at the 750MC. "It's a fantastic award, John was so well respected and he was an absolutely fantastic person.

"We may carry on [with the award] longer than that but the money allows us to continue for four more years.

"It will be awarded for innovation or bringing on a new driver."

**STEFAN MACKLEY**

### IN THE HEADLINES

#### RECOVERY AFTER FIRE

Adam Christodoulou has left hospital and is recovering at home after his Team ABBA Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 caught fire in the recent British GT round at Spa. The AMG factory driver was taken to hospital in Liege for burns to his hands and feet, and was advised to miss last weekend's Spa 24 Hours while he recuperates. Team owner Richard Neary confirmed that ABBA will not return for this week's British GT meeting at Brands Hatch and will assess the damage ahead of the Donington season finale in September.

#### NO WIPERS, NO PROBLEM

Tom Roche put in a remarkable race two performance in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup in the Snetterton downpours last weekend to finish on the podium without any windscreen wipers. He said: "First lap, my windscreen wipers stopped working. The car felt great if it was out of the spray but as soon as I got close I had the pace but couldn't see, so it's a bit frustrating, really, because the car was quick."

#### BURGE'S BONNET ISSUES

Mazda MX-5 Championship driver Charlie Burge managed to finish fourth in the second A-race at Silverstone despite driving with his bonnet up for nearly two laps. Burge was battling John Langridge for third when rainwater got under the tape securing the bonnet, which in turn allowed air underneath and forced the catches open. Burge's lap times increased by only around two seconds as he held onto the place, earning a rousing reception from the BRDC grandstand for his efforts.

#### PRIMROSE TO LMP3 CUP

Regular sportscar racer Neil Primrose will compete in the final two LMP3 Cup races of the season in a Norma M20FC after the series created a new invitational class for CN-spec cars. "I got the Norma in March of this year," said Primrose. "It's a 2017 car and the chassis is amazing. My passion has been in sports-prototypes and it's been long overdue that there's an open event like this that lets all the cars compete in whatever class."

#### BAD LUCK FOR GIDDINGS

Sometime Clio Cup and 2014 British GT4 champion Jake Giddings endured a tricky debut in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB at Snetterton. He qualified ninth, before a mistake on the car weights left both Welch Motorsport cars having to start from the back. He suffered two punctures in the first race, but made a storming drive from 22nd to 11th in the second race.



## Kluge retires after FF1600 accident

### NORTHERN FORMULA FORD

Formula Ford driver Andrew Kluge has retired from racing as he recovers from serious injuries sustained in an Oulton Park crash.

The British Racing and Sports Car Club Northern Pre-'90 competitor suffered life-threatening injuries in June when he was knocked into a spin by fellow driver Seamus Wild at Deer Leap.

His Van Diemen made side impact with Andrew Thomas's Mygale, which had been left at the side of the track approaching the start/finish straight after an earlier incident.

The impact left Kluge with a torn aorta, broken hip, lacerated spleen and damage to his kidneys, lungs and liver, while Wild was disqualified for his role in the crash.

Kluge was flown to Royal Stoke University Hospital, where he underwent immediate surgery that likely saved his life.

"My recovery is going well," he said. "It is five weeks since the crash and I am able to walk with crutches and, as long as I take it easy, I am not in too much pain."

"Initially I was fairly chirpy as I hadn't really taken in the seriousness of my injuries and was pretty pumped up on medication. However, three separate consultants told me in no uncertain terms that I was very, very lucky to be alive."

"That comment certainly does make you think and in my case brought a few tears."

"I would like to thank everyone at Oulton that was involved in dealing with my accident. Their actions and those of the team in Stoke saved my life and for that I am grateful."

STEFAN MACKLEY

## Extra MGF contest planned

### MGCC

The MG Car Club will hold another race for MGF and TF models at its Oulton Park meeting in September, similar to the one held earlier this year at Silverstone.

A dedicated race for the MGF and TF models, to celebrate 20 years since the MGF Championship was first held, was run as part of MG Live event.

Only 11 entries took part in that race, which was won by Jonathan Harker, but organisers hope for more at Oulton.

John Hutchison, race competition secretary for the MGCC, said: "There's a hell of a lot of them [cars] out there and if it becomes a series or championship in the future, it has to start somewhere."

"At Oulton Park there are not so many clashes with other meetings like there

was for MG Live [the MG Owners' Club were at a BARC Donington Park meeting].

"If the demand is there for something we'll put on another race and if we do get more interest we will look at doing something for next year."

The MGCC also confirmed it will run a North West 100-mile race at the same meeting, split into two 50-mile contests.

It was originally intended to be a single race containing a pitstop for refuelling or a driver change. But after potential participants expressed concern about doing that mid-race, it will now be split into two legs with the overall result based on aggregate.

It will be open to sportscars, GTs and saloons run on moulded or treaded tyres and the race will be open to either one- or two-driver entries.

STEFAN MACKLEY

## Roberts desperate to race

### MX-5 SUPERCUP

Mazda MX-5 Supercup frontrunner Steve Roberts says he is desperate to compete again this season, after a race-winning weekend ended with his car being written off at Castle Combe.

The 37-year-old multiple Compact Cup champion had struggled earlier in the year with straightline speed but, after a new engine was installed at Rockingham in June, everything was falling into place as he won race one at Combe last month.

But after contact in race two with

title-rival James Blake-Baldwin, Rob Boston Racing driver Roberts faces a spell on the sideline with a bent chassis.

"We're so desperate to get back out, it's taken a season and we feel like everything is sorted, and we have the momentum now, so we're desperate to get back out and try and show everyone what we can do," said Roberts, who debuted in the category last year.

"I'm 37, my mum and dad shouldn't be paying for my racing again, but they just want to see me back out winning races!"

JACK BENYON





# THE RISE OF SIMULATORS: HELP OR HINDRANCE?

*With simulators becoming more accurate and cost-effective, they have a big role to play in the future of grassroots racing – but will it be positive or negative?*

JACK BENYON

**T**his timeline doesn't make any sense. In 2008: retires from club racing. In 2018? Red Bull Racing Formula 1 driver? It's an incredible story.

Scot Graham Carroll stopped racing Formula Fords one year after winning the National title and, although those around him could see he was naturally gifted and quick, he just didn't have the funds.

So, what about Red Bull? Don't worry, you've not missed the biggest story of the year – Max Verstappen or Daniel Ricciardo haven't been ousted.

Carroll has been chosen to drive for Red Bull in the Formula 1 eSports Championship. This year, he'll compete for a chunk of a £200,000 prize pot, having already challenged for part of a £1million prize fund in the Formula E tournament in Las Vegas, and he also got to drive a Formula E car in Marrakech.

It seems, for club racers, having loads of money isn't the only way to rise up the ranks in motorsport anymore, with sim racing only becoming more popular.

## “IT'S AN UNTAPPED POOL THAT COULD HELP TO BOOST CLUB RACING IN THE FUTURE”

Carroll was one of the 40 from 70,000 that made it to a shootout last month before Verstappen himself called his name out on stage. Amazingly, that wasn't the first time they'd met as Carroll had done work on Nelson Piquet Jr's simulator, and Verstappen happened to be there.

“It's a dream come true to have your name read out by Verstappen,” says Carroll.

“Just think, I retired from Formula Ford racing and 10 years later I'm driving for Red Bull in Formula 1, even if it is eSports.

“Every morning I have to go into my cupboard and make sure the Red Bull shirt is still in there!”

Now Carroll could be testing on the same simulator used by Verstappen, Ricciardo and the team's junior tester Dan Ticktum. Who knows where his career could go from here? If this is what's happened in the last 10 years, there could still be more surprises.

Sim racing has interesting implications for club racing, too.

One of Carroll's fellow sim racers in the last 40 for Formula 1 eSports was Sebastian Job, who won a scholarship to race a Formula Ford this year for the team Carroll won the Walter Hayes Trophy with in 2015, BM Racing.

And, of course, one of the first successes of sim racing to 'real' racing was Jann Mardenborough. The *Gran Turismo* racer is a works Nissan driver now, having gone from the sim to the track.

The real area of interest for club racing is the cost-saving implications sim racing could bring. Spend £400 on a proper sim racing rig for the garage at home and you have an unlimited resource of test tracks before you actually get to them, just like the Formula 1 guys do. Save on the trackday/testing, fuel, tyres and parts, and drive the car in the sim.

Of course, you can't set up your real car on a sim. But the prospect of club racers being able to turn up at a track and have a feel for it, at what is a low-cost spend out of the year, has real implications for club racing, especially as sim rigs are becoming more and more accurate.

So is there a drawback to all this sim stuff? There is one possible gap where it may actually hinder club racing rather than help it. If a grassroots competitor has the choice between a £400 sim or scrimping £5-10,000 together to complete a racing season in a club category, what do you think they are going to choose?

Barriers to entry are high, and the average person is less mechanically savvy than at any point since the automobile was invented. Doing it at home in your shed is the best option and that usually means guidance from a parent. Then we're back to relying only on people who have family in motorsport being opened up to it. And that won't be enough to sustain club racing in the future.

A possible answer could be to introduce eSports Championships at club level as well. Maybe having a round that anyone can enter on a sim would attract people – if they win or do well on the sim, they may be enticed into competing for real. Advertising the sim racing and letting entrants see how easy that championship is to get into could inspire new entrants.

I realise that sounds far-fetched and some of the more experienced club racers will hate the idea, but technology is evolving at a baffling rate, and motorsport's grassroots categories can't afford to be left behind. Wider interest in motorsport is nothing like it was 20 years ago.

Something radical will have to be done. We should be looking at how we can use less-specialised people racing on a sim to lift live-track participation. It's an untapped pool that could help to boost club racing in the future. #

TOCA SUPPORTS SNETTERTON JULY 28-29



Hauger was victorious from Priaulx and Simmons in the opening race

## Drivers do battle in three thrillers at Snetterton

### BRITISH FORMULA 4

A B-17 Flying Fortress bomber flew over Snetterton during the opening British Formula 4 race – and it was the perfect metaphor for what was happening on track as the F4 drivers were at war.

That Dennis Hauger won from Seb Priaulx and Ayrton Simmons tells a minuscule proportion of the story. Simmons was the early leader but Hauger was the man on a mission. Kiern Jewiss had attempted a move on Simmons out of Agostini but was delayed and Hauger saw

his opportunity. But he succeeded in only spinning championship leader Jewiss out at Hamilton and letting Paavo Tonteri through.

Tonteri was next to attempt a pass on Simmons but ended up divebombing down the inside at Agostini and spinning off. Then it was Hauger's turn, but his life was made easier by Simmons catching dust on the track at Turn 1 and running wide, allowing Hauger and Priaulx to squeeze ahead at Wilson.

"It was really hectic, there was lots of stuff going on and I had to keep my head calm," said Hauger. Of the Jewiss collision,

he added: "He went a bit wide as he had tried to pass Simmons and I was on the inside and kept my wheel straight." But the officials disagreed with him and he was handed a grid penalty.

The third race was another thriller but this time with fewer questionable overtakes from the drivers.

Patrik Pasma – who qualified fastest for the opener but had a grid penalty carried over from Croft – cut right across the fast-starting Jewiss as the lights went out. The points leader then damaged his front-wing at Wilson trying to recover to cap off a truly miserable weekend.

Pasma threw away his good position by running wide at Riches and spinning off, before new leader Johnathan Hoggard bizarrely did exactly the same just three laps later.

This gave Jack Doohan a comfortable lead but Hauger was closing fast and was right behind his fellow Red Bull driver by the flag.

The middle race was the calmest at the front, with Tonteri surging into the lead at the start to take his maiden win from Priaulx and Simmons. With three points finishes, Simmons was happy to have closed Jewiss's points advantage from 57 to 29 over the weekend.

"We got two thirds and a fifth – I never thought that was going to happen," he admitted. "I only did seven laps on Friday [testing] because the car broke but it shows you should never give up."

If he continues to put in such determined performances, there's a chance he can still triumph in his title war with Jewiss.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

## King, Ladell overcome the odds for victory

### GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

For two drivers struggling for pace at the beginning of the weekend, Harry King and Charlie Ladell emerged from the Ginetta GT4 Supercup races at Snetterton the happiest.

King admitted testing on Friday hadn't gone well, while fifth in qualifying for Ladell left him lamenting his pace.

Indeed, stripped of a race three win at the last round at Croft, King had a point to prove – and prove it he did, easing clear to two emphatic victories from pole. Winning by 6.213s in a first race "cruise" did no harm to his confidence before he then followed it up by controlling a treacherously tricky wet second encounter from the front.

"To be honest, they were the races we dreamed of. It really was about consistency,"



the Ginetta Junior graduate said.

But it was the third race where the weekend turned upside down.

Ladell started down in ninth as a result of a tough second race plagued by a second-gear issue, rev problems and a temperature sensor failure.

But a gamble on slicks for Ladell,



Adam Shepherd and Adam Higgins enabled them to get onto the podium after a handful of laps when the drying track switched in favour of the slicks.

"We really needed that," Ladell said. "From ninth I wasn't expecting it but we took a risk on tyres and it paid off."

JASON NOBLE

# Title rivals leading the field

## GINETTA JUNIOR

The third Ginetta Junior race at Snetterton proved to be a microcosm of the season.

Title rivals Adam Smalley and Luke Browning highlighted their superiority by finishing 27 seconds clear of the rest, while Louis Foster again impressed behind.

Smalley and Browning were inseparable throughout the contest and Smalley took the win, but Browning was twice able to get ahead. Both moves were at Brundle, both times the pair made slight contact and both times Smalley cut the corner to keep the position.

“He was all over me the whole race and

it was hard to hold on,” explained Smalley. “There was a little bit of contact but I didn’t deliberately go on the grass.”

Foster was a very distant third – still a great result after starting 13th following a grid penalty for race-two contact.

The two earlier races were scrappy demolition derbies, both won by Browning. He capitalised when Smalley hit his Elite Motorsport team-mate Foster in the opener at Agostini, while he grabbed the race two advantage as Smalley and Ruben Del Sarte fought through Brundle and Nelson.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



# Rowbottom finally triumphs

## RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

It has only taken 39 attempts with plenty of bad luck but Dan Rowbottom is finally now a Renault UK Clio Cup race winner after triumphing in a crazy wet race opener at Snetterton.

He had a tremendous fight with James Dorlin over the first four of the 10 laps – that was until Dorlin went straight on at Wilson and lost a handful of places.

“I went from ninth to third by Turn 1,” said a delighted Rowbottom, who won from Bradley Burns and Mike Epps.

Dorlin was also in the thick of the action in race two but again wasn’t able to hold on to an early lead. Coates – who admitted to locking up on a greasy part

of the track at Wilson in race one, causing him to plummet down the order – got ahead by going down the inside at Nelson having run side-by-side through Brundle.

But there was still time for more drama with the chequered flag failing to be waved at the scheduled end of the race, after the flag marshal misinterpreted an instruction from race control. Coates kept racing until the call came to pit from the clerk of the course at the end of the lap and he knew that victory was assured.

He now has a healthy points lead after an unwell Paul Rivett had a weekend to forget as contact with Bradley Burns dropped him to 19th after taking seventh in the opener.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



## BRITISH F4

**Race 1 (all 11 laps) 1 Dennis Hauger;** 2 Seb Priaulx +1.413s; 3 Ayrton Simmonds; 4 Jack Doohan; 5 Paavo Tonteri; 6 Sebastian Alvarez.

**Fastest lap** Kiern Jewiss 1m52.053s (95.38mph). **Pole** Simmonds. **Starters** 13.

**Race 2 1 Tonteri;** 2 Priaulx +0.780s; 3 Simmonds; 4 Jewiss; 5 Patrik Pasma; 6 Hauger. **FL** Hauger 1m52.773s (94.77mph). **P** Alvarez. **\$** 14.

**Race 3 1 Doohan;** 2 Hauger +0.869s; 3 Tonteri; 4 Johnathan Hoggard; 5 Simmonds; 6 Pasma. **FL** Tonteri 1m54.392s (93.43mph). **P** Pasma. **\$** 14.

**Points 1 Jewiss 279;** 2 Simmonds 250; 3 Hauger 233; 4 Doohan 201; 5 Tonteri 199; 6 Priaulx 160.

## GINETTA GT4 CHAMPIONSHIP

**Race 1 (7 laps) 1 Harry King;** 2 Charles Ladell +6.213s; 3 Carl Boardley; 4 Jac Constable; 5 Tom Roche; 6 Reece Somerfield. **FL** King 1m56.337s (91.87mph). **P** King. **\$** 18.

**Race 2 (11 laps) 1 King;** 2 Constable +5.692s; 3 Roche; 4 Boardley; 5 Angus Fender; 6 Adam Higgins. **FL** Roche 2m18.507s (77.17mph). **P** King. **\$** 18.

**Race 3 (10 laps) 1 Ladell;** 2 Adam Shepherd +2.814s; 3 Higgins; 4 Colin White; 5 Roche; 6 King. **FL** Shepherd 1m58.293s (90.35mph). **P** Boardley. **\$** 18.

**Points 1 Ladell 428;** 2 Boardley 408; 3 Roche 271; 4 King 268; 5 Constable 251; 6 Carl Shield 217.

## GINETTA JUNIOR

**Race 1 (7 laps) 1 Luke Browning;** 2 Patrick Kibble +2.585s; 3 Ruben del Sarte; 4 Adam Smalley; 5 Jonny Wilkinson; 6 Louis Foster. **FL** Browning 2m22.080s (75.22mph). **P** Foster. **\$** 20.

**Race 2 (9 laps) 1 Browning;** 2 Smalley +3.786s; 3 Foster; 4 Matt Luff; 5 James Taylor; 6 Greg Johnson. **FL** Browning 2m21.882s (75.33mph). **P** Smalley. **\$** 20.

**Race 3 (8 laps) 1 Smalley;** 2 Browning +5.875s; 3 Foster; 4 Taylor; 5 Johnson; 6 James Hedley. **FL** Smalley 2m40.766s (66.48mph). **P** Browning. **\$** 20.

**Points 1 Smalley 411;** 2 Browning 375; 3 Foster 356; 4 Kibble 283; 5 del Sarte 280; 6 Johnson 229.

## RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

**Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Daniel Rowbottom;** 2 Bradley Burns +1.595s; 3 Michael Epps; 4 Lee Pattison; 5 Dan Zelos; 6 Ash Hand. **FL** Nicholas Reeve 2m25.911s (73.25mph). **P** James Dorlin. **\$** 23.

**Race 2 (9 laps) 1 Max Coates;** 2 Dorlin +1.237s; 3 Pattison; 4 Zelos; 5 Zak Fulk; 6 Jack McCarthy. **FL** Fulk 2m25.618s (73.40mph). **P** Coates. **\$** 23.

**Points 1 Coates 239;** 2 Paul Rivett 212; 3 Dorlin 209; 4 Rowbottom 169; 5 Pattison 151; 6 Epps 145.

## PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

**Race 1 (both 14 laps) 1 Dino Zamparelli;** 2 Daniel Harper +7.152s; 3 Tio Ellinas; 4 Lewis Plato; 5 Tom Wrigley; 6 George Gamble. **FL** Gamble 2m02.335s (87.37mph). **P** Ellinas. **\$** 23.

**Race 2 1 Wrigley;** 2 Plato +0.874s; 3 Zamparelli; 4 Harper; 5 Ellinas; 6 Gamble. **FL** Harper 1m52.739s (94.80mph). **P** Wrigley. **\$** 23.

**Points 1 Zamparelli 76;** 2 Ellinas 72; 3 Wrigley 64; 4 Plato 60; 5 Gamble 42; 6 Harper 40.

For full results visit:  
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TOCA SUPPORTS SNETTERTON JULY 28-29



Zamparelli mastered the conditions for a win in race one

## Zamparelli proves to be old hand in changing conditions

### PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

An apology to the Redline Racing team for failing to get pole was how Dino Zamparelli started his weekend, but he more than made up for it with a race one win.

A better start allowed him to pass his old JTR team-mate Tio Ellinas for the lead, followed by Lewis Plato through the inside line at Wilson.

GB-series debutant Valentin Hasse-Clot

looked set to challenge Zamparelli's lead early on, but it was experience that shone through in the end.

"I got a good start but that was only the first element – there were two or three elements after that – keeping the tyres cool and not making any mistakes," Zamparelli said.

"The young Frenchman was going well but fortunately for me he went off, and I knew there was that potential to go off,

so I had to stay on top of the conditions."

Hasse-Clot's off put Dan Harper in the challenger seat, and a series of fastest laps from the Irishman looked to set him up for a game of cat and mouse.

But, as the track dried and Zamparelli's tyre management proved its worth, Harper's pace dropped off and he was forced to settle for second.

Drying conditions characterised the weekend's second race, but this time it was Tom Wrigley who won from out front.

Plato – who finished third on track in the first race but was dropped to fourth behind Ellinas as a result of a yellow flag infringement – was on a charge once again in race two, using the outside line to go side-by-side into Riches.

But Wrigley was hungry to add another win to his Oulton Park silverware, and held him off to romp to an otherwise unchallenged win.

Zamparelli had started fifth, but a strong opening four laps featured him passing George Gamble on lap one, and he then capitalised on title rival Ellinas's mistake at Riches for third.

Zamparelli said: "It's bittersweet because we were fast, really fast, but there was nothing more we could do."

"You are starting fifth and the aim was to really push and claim a podium, which we did, so that's good. But I knew I had the pace."

JASON NOBLE

### HASSE-CLOT THE LEADING LIGHT IN MOTORBASE'S RETURN TO TOP

After seven years away from top-level Porsche competition, the news that Motorbase Performance was returning to the Carrera Cup GB for 2018 with a single-car entry was welcomed like an old friend.

And, while this season has been a rebuilding year in the series, work has been underway to restore its place at the front.

Snetterton marked the next step of that journey, with the running of a second car in the hands of French Carrera Cup GB rookie champion Valentin Hasse-Clot.

But that's not all.

"We want to get back to three cars," team boss David Bartrum said.

"We finished 2011 with five cars, and we want to go back to three cars next year.

"We had another car in the workshop and he [Hasse-Clot] has done really well in France.

"It's having a different set of data and hopefully as he adapts himself into the team he will get used to what he wants."

He added: "We may even have a third

car later this year."

Plying its trade between 2004 and 2011, the team's best year came in 2010 with a four-car outfit claiming 26 wins to scoop the team's title and a Pro-Am1 title for Ollie Jackson.

Somewhat surprisingly, though, the team failed to take the overall drivers' championship, despite the wealth of talent on its books over the years – Tim Harvey, Michael Caine and Steven Kane among them.

But if there was ever a signal of intent as to just how much Motorbase want to win, it came in the form of Hasse-Clot.

The 22-year-old made a mistake in the wet first race, crashing out at Riches, but had put himself into podium contention early on.

He was kicking himself afterwards, but the raw talent was on display once again in the second race, storming from last on the grid to 10th by the end of lap one, eventually crossing the line seventh.

At the moment, Knockhill is the only other round on the cards, although



"probably three" rounds is the likelihood.

Hasse-Clot said: "In France, we only have six races so it's not enough miles when I need to get more experience.

"Carrera Cup GB is the closest series to the French one to continue my learning.

"My pace is in the top three for sure, but there's still a lot to learn."

It may only be a part-time campaign at the moment, but don't rule out seeing more of both Motorbase and Hasse-Clot in the Porsche paddock soon.

JASON NOBLE

# Coveney wins on Locost return at Cadwell

**CADWELL PARK**  
**750MC**  
**JULY 28-29**

Jack Coveney returned to Locost action at Cadwell Park after missing the previous round at Pembrey with victory in the first of three races.

From third on the grid he led by the Mountain chicane, but had to battle title contender Ben Powney until the flag. Powney retook the lead into Coppice on the final lap but Coveney fought back at the Mountain, and defied his rival's slipstream along the pit straight to win by just 0.03 seconds.

Championship leader Mark Burton beat his nearest rival Martin West to the win in race two. Radical racer Dominik Jackson had fought Burton for the lead until he spun at the Mountain as rain began to fall.

Jackson, who was making his wildcard appearance in the championship, made up for his error with victory in the final

race. He dived with Tim Neat throughout, but as the conditions worsened Neat struggled and ran off the circuit at the crest of the Mountain. That promoted Coveney to second, while Tom Gadd scored his first podium.

Pip Hammond in his unballasted Vauxhall Astra GTE took a dominant win from pole in Classic Stock Hatch, ending the four-race winning streak of Marcus Ward (Ford Fiesta XR2i). Double champions Matt Rozier (Peugeot 205 GTi) and Lee Scott (Ford Fiesta XR2i) battled for second in the opening stages before Pete Morgan's Fiesta XR2i came through, firstly dispatching Rozier into Coppice and then going around the outside of Scott at Park.

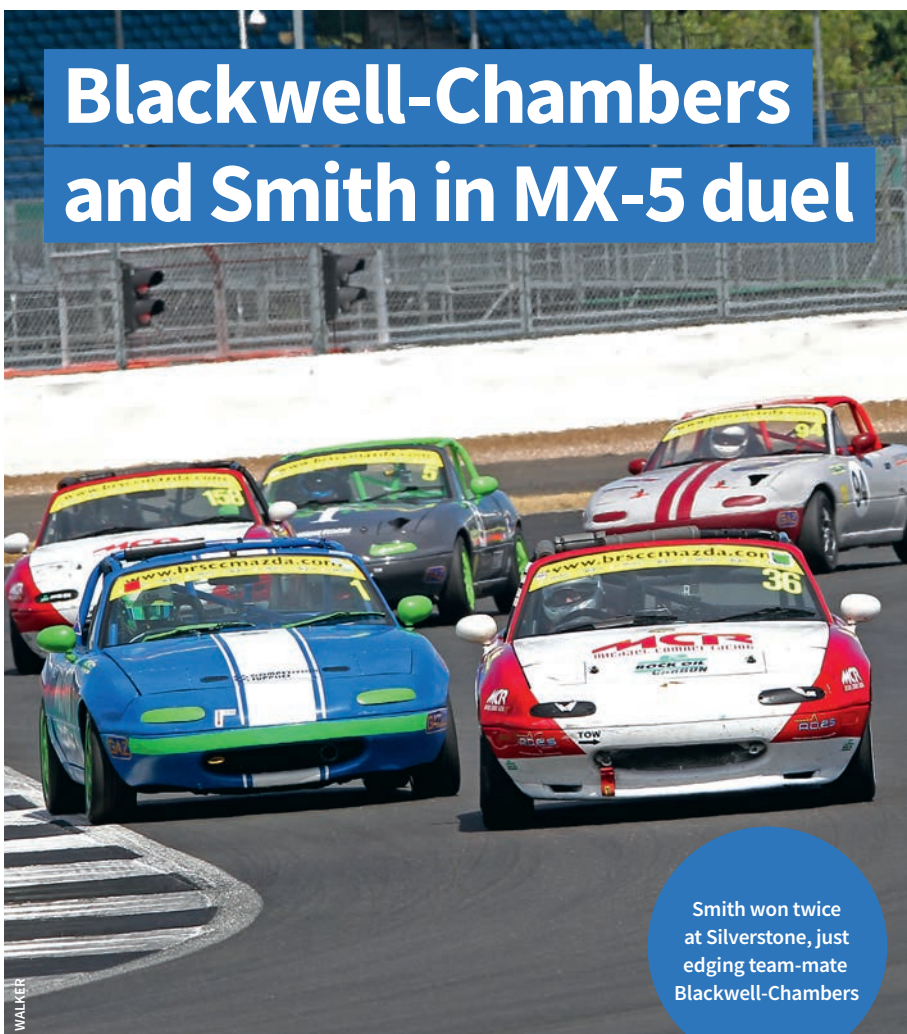
New front tyres on Morgan's car allowed him to carve his way past Hammond, who got excessive wheelspin away from the line, Rozier and Scott in one lap during race two. Rozier made a move on reigning champion Scott at Park to take second but later ran off the circuit at Charlies, which would leave him in eighth by the finish.



Coveney resisted the efforts of Powney to win

Billy Albone (Spire GT3) got back to winning ways in RGB with a double victory, defeating double Pembrey winner Paul Smith (Mittell MC-53) in both races. Smith beat Albone to the first corner in a wet race two, but Albone immediately came back at him a lap later through Coppice, with Smith running wide as they struggled for grip.

John Cutmore beat touring car ace and Le Mans podium finisher Anthony Reid in a similar Spire GT3-S to the podium in race one, and a spin for Reid at Park in race two



WALKER

Smith won twice at Silverstone, just edging team-mate Blackwell-Chambers

**SILVERSTONE**  
**BRSCC**  
**JULY 28-29**

Sam Smith kept himself in contention for the Mazda MX-5 Championship by twice winning from row four of the grid at Silverstone last weekend.

Smith picked his way through to lead the opener, then worked with team-mate Will Blackwell-Chambers to eke out a margin over the rest. That was eroded as Smith's tyres started to go off, and championship leader Blackwell-Chambers dived past at Copse on the penultimate lap. But Smith hit back on the exit, with a four-car train headed by polesitter John Langridge also relegating Blackwell-Chambers, who could only recover to fifth.

It was a similar story in race three, Smith engaging in battle with Blackwell-Chambers over the final quarter. He fended off Blackwell-Chambers' challenges at Brooklands for three laps, twice losing the lead before retaliating on the exit of the corner.

In between times, in the wettest race, Blackwell-Chambers used his smooth style to prove his prowess, while Smith went off at Brooklands on the opening lap and struggled to eighth. Brian Trott was catching Blackwell-Chambers in the closing stages and, with third in each of the other races, was the weekend's top scorer, lifting him to third in the points.

The Mazda MX-5 Super Series' 21-car field was its largest to date, but three drivers shared the podiums evenly. Jake Bailey fought off the attentions of Ben Short, deputising for his customer Nick Riley who was ill, to win the

## WEEKEND WINNERS

### CADWELL PARK

#### LOCOST

- Race 1 Jack Coveney
- Race 2 Mark Burton
- Race 3 Dominik Jackson

#### CLASSIC STOCK HATCH

- Race 1 Pip Hammond (Vauxhall Nova GTE)
- Race 2 Peter Morgan (Ford Fiesta XR2i)

#### RGB

- Race 1 Billy Albone (Spire GT3)
- Race 2 Billy Albone (Spire GT3)

#### CLIO 182

- Race 1 Mark Balmer
- Race 2 Patrick Fletcher

#### MR2

- Race 1 Ben Rowe
- Race 2 Shaun Traynor
- Race 3 Shaun Traynor

#### 750 FORMULA

- Race 1 Peter Bove (Darvi 88 P)
- Race 2 Bill Cowley (Cowley MkIV)
- Race 3 Mark Glover (Racekits Flacon)

#### HOT HATCH

- Race 1 Ben Rushworth (Honda Integra DC2)
- Race 2 Steve Sawley (Honda Civic)

#### SPORT SPECIALS

- Race 1 Darren Berris (Westfield V8)
- Race 2 Darren Berris (Westfield V8)

#### HISTORIC 750 FORMULA

- Race 1 Christian Pedersen (Austin 7)
- Race 2 Christian Pedersen (Austin 7)

#### ROADSPORTS

- Wayne Rothwell (Vauxhall VX220)

For full results visit:  
[750mc.co.uk](http://750mc.co.uk)

### SILVERSTONE

#### MAZDA MX-5 CHAMPIONSHIP

- Race 1A Sam Smith
- Race 2A Will Blackwell-Chambers
- Race 3A Sam Smith
- Race 1B Jon Pethick
- Race 2B Paul Tucker
- Race 3B Scott Leach

#### MAZDA MX-5 SUPER SERIES

- Race 1 Jake Bailey
- Race 2 Ben Short
- Race 3 Josh Jackson

#### FF1600 NORTHERN CHAMPIONSHIP

- Race 1 Michael Eastwell (Spectrum 011C)
- Race 2 Michael Eastwell (Spectrum 011C)

#### ALFA ROMEO CHAMPIONSHIP

- Race 1 Graham Seager (GTV)
- Race 2 Graham Seager (GTV)

#### FUN CUP

- Team Racelogic (Julian Thomas/  
David Denyer/Jon Tomlinson)

#### NIPPON CHALLENGE, TRICOLORE TROPHY & MULTI MARQUES

- Race 1 Will Di Claudio (Peugeot 106 GTi)
- Race 2 Will Di Claudio (Peugeot 106 GTi)

For full results visit:  
[tsl-timing.com](http://tsl-timing.com)



limited him to sixth. Cutmore's race ended when car racing rookie Chippy Wesemael, who had a fuel starvation issue that put him out of race one, rear-ended the Spire at Park in the battle for third and brought out the red flags.

Title contender Mark Balmer won the first Clio 182 race after taking the lead away from polesitter Andy Tibbs, which he held until the flag to deny Tibbs a third consecutive win. Championship leader Patrick Fletcher, who scored a podium in

race one, pounced on Balmer on the opening lap to win a restarted race two after Stephen Langton and Scott Edgar had crashes.

Series leader Ben Rowe won the first of three MR2 races, but reigning champion Shaun Traynor took the remaining two in dominant fashion. Chris Thomas was the victor of a three-way battle for second in race two.

**CHRIS STEVENS**



opener. Short then turned the tables in race two, before Josh Jackson took the third. On-the-road victor Bailey, who had caught and passed Jackson at Becketts, dropped to second after being penalised for earlier contact with Short at Brooklands.

Michael Eastwell celebrated a maiden Formula Ford win in the first Northern Championship race by adding another later on. Nervous tension made Eastwell sick before race one, but he looked at ease in both races as he performed faultless displays. Matt Rivett rose from seventh to second in the opener, beating Jonathan Browne and Rory Smith after passing both with committed moves at Copse corner.

Rivett might have scored a second podium, but for contact with Nico Gruber that left him in the barriers at Becketts – and Gruber excluded from third. Browne inherited the podium position, while Smith set fastest lap on his way to second, recovering well from an early off at Brooklands.

The Alfa Romeo races brought two

relatively routine wins for Graham Seager's GTV, the only Modified class runner, despite an excursion at Brooklands in race two. Scott Austin looked set to challenge in race one, but he threw away the lead by skating off on the first lap, before recovering to second. In race two, Austin was beaten to second by Ray Foley (147 GTA), another victim of Brooklands in the opener. Tom Hill twice dominated the Twin Spark Cup to take the overall championship lead from the absent Paul Webster.

Team Racelogic took its first Fun Cup win for three years by a convincing margin from Team 7 Fun:Bikes 2 and Team Honeywell, for whom Neil Plimmer snatched third from Track Torque 2Rent in the closing stages. It looked like Sherardize had been gifted victory by a second-hour safety car that allowed it to extend its lead to over a lap, but the Peter Belshaw/Marcus Clutton car then suffered a broken upright, costing it 10 laps in the pits.

**MARK PAULSON**

Wantling's car  
livery promotes  
CALM's message



# HOW MOTORSPORT IS RAISING AWARENESS FOR A LIFE OR DEATH PROBLEM

*Male suicides are frequent in the UK, 12 per day on average, but one racer is looking to get men talking about it by using his car as a charity billboard*

JACK BENYON

In a very short while, this feature will explore some of the good club motorsport can do, including its ability to unite communities to combat social and health issues in what – quite frankly – can re-energise your faith in humanity.

First, though, the shock-and-awe approach. According to the Office of National Statistics, every day in the UK 12 males commit suicide. That's 4380 people dead every year. Three in four suicides are males, and one of the key reasons for this is depression.

CALM, or the Campaign Against Living Miserably, is a charity organisation that aims to raise awareness about the issue, and prevent suicides by fighting on the frontline, offering a helpline and information on its website. Its ambassadors are as diverse as footballers, such as Rio Ferdinand, and the Duke of Cambridge, Prince William.

But this year, CALM has reached a new audience in motorsport, and it's down to a newcomer to the sport and his intention to do things a bit differently.

Julian Wantling – like many of you reading this – remembers being chucked out of Silverstone after Formula 1 qualifying as a child, and queuing to get back in the next day. But at the age of 48, the Essex driver decided it was the right time to get involved and did so with the Ginetta Racing Drivers Club series, which

offers an arrive-and-drive format for novices to get a taste of racing. The championship supports British GT.

Wantling didn't have any sponsors, and decided he could use this opportunity to exploit the male-dominated nature

## ANXIETY IN MOTORSPORT

While the above is tough and a slap-in-the-face of reality, it's important to acknowledge it as a key issue.

Depression is something that can affect drivers at the top of the sport, just as it does at the bottom. Former Indy 500 racer Martin Plowman can attest to it. He announced last year that he had suffered for a long time with anxiety. His body produces more cortisone than most

people, and that can lead to a build-up that eventually results in panic attacks.

"Anxiety is something you're born with," he says. "You can't ever get rid of it or beat it, but you can learn to live with it. I wanted to show that, despite having anxiety, you can still chase your dreams. I felt strong enough in myself that I could come out and tell people about this. I could prove that, just



**“IT’S RIDICULOUS. IT’S THE BIGGEST KILLER OF MEN UNDER 45 BUT NO-ONE TALKS ABOUT IT”**

of motorsport to raise awareness about an issue he’s passionate about. Two of his close friends have been affected.

“When I got the car it was white and blank, and then obviously most people go off to get sponsorship,” says Wantling, who races for Assetto Motorsport. “I wanted to try and make a bit of a statement in a positive way.”

Making a statement came in the form of handing the metaphorical pen and pencil over to CALM to design his livery, and the G40 he drives is a stunner. Both in terms of pleasurable aesthetics and the message it represents.

“There are 12 male suicides in the UK every day. It’s ridiculous. It’s the biggest killer of men under 45, but no-one wants to talk about it,” he continues.

“It’s a strange thing as this is my first year in motorsport and I’ve never really experienced a paddock before. The number of people who have come up to me, and instead of talking about tyre pressures or set-up, people have been coming up to me and saying I lost my friend to this six months ago. This is provoking so much conversation in the paddock on a British GT weekend.

“I think motorsport has a huge number of positives to bring to something like this. In the paddock, there’s so much community going on. People want to help each other, I think we need to activate

that more. I thought it was going to be isolated [in a motorsport paddock]. It’s a really supportive place.”

In the grand scheme of things, CALM have more important things to do than bring a gazebo to a motorsport event, like lobby the government for more funding into suicide prevention and helping people on the frontline. But the fact that the charity’s representatives have enjoyed going to race events and seen the community that motorsport offers, and want to continue with Wantling, shows how motorsport can be a great place to get men talking about their issues. We all know men can be truly terrible at that.

“It’s been a fantastic experience,” says Wantling. “I want to do the G40 Cup next year, and keep on raising awareness for CALM.”

Just look to your left or right and imagine your colleague, family member, chief mechanic or engineer is one of those 12 who see no other way out, every day. When it’s put bluntly like that, supporting Wantling and CALM in its pursuit of motorsport is a no-brainer and a necessity. ❦

• For more information on this very important topic, visit [thecalzone.net](http://thecalzone.net). You can see the car on track and chat to Wantling in his pit at Brands Hatch – the GRDC season finale – this weekend.

because I suffer with anxiety, I’m not weak.

“In a weird kind of way, going public and talking about it means there’s less pressure.”

Now competing in British GT, Plowman will wake up on some mornings just scared, not for any particular reason, just because that’s the symptom anxiety brings on. It’s not something that you have to be scared of, like spiders or going out onto the race track, that sets off anxiety. That’s a big

misconception. It can be something that some people may think of as trivial is enough to set someone with anxiety into a spiral. Plowey has learned to cope with his anxiety.

Again, motorsport is a male-dominated sport and is therefore the perfect place to encourage men to talk about it.

“One thing I was blown away with when I went public was the amount of people who messaged me,” he adds. “I was nervous about sharing it

because I thought there was going to be a bad reaction.

“I had drivers, mechanics, friends, all coming out of the woodwork saying they had something similar. They thought they were the only ones and it was shocking to see. It was nice to know I was sharing something with those people.”

If you do suffer from anxiety, Plowman says: “Anxiety UK [[anxietyuk.org.uk](http://anxietyuk.org.uk)] is a fantastic resource, it’s a great organisation.”



# FINISHING STRAIGHT

IN THE MEDIA • ARCHIVE • QUIZ



## PLANES, PAINS AND AUTO



### VIDEO GAME THE CREW 2

At *The Crew 2*'s preview event held at Mercedes-Benz World, much was made of the fact that this game was offering something unique and special.

After several hours of gameplay, there's yet to be anything truly ground-breaking though. Open-world racing? The *Forza Horizon* franchise has done it on a big-budget standing. Dropping into a variety of racing scenarios at the press of a button? The *Need for Speed* series has built its litany of games off the same mechanism.

But it's unfair to call *The Crew 2* a clone or a mismatch of gaming tropes. It does try to innovate, offering seamless switching between cars, motorbikes and planes. And yet it has the same problem as the first instalment. For every crumb of genuine greatness there are several reasons to avoid the game. Through various patches, the original steadily solved its launch bugs and became a genuinely good social racing game, although too late for the gaming community not to have moved on.

This time around, the main innovation is quick-fire online racing with friends, yet it falls flat. You can see rival drivers racing in the same world, but there's no instant way to interact without various menus. I spent several minutes following another gamer attempting to link-up without realising I'd

just driven a Citroën C3 WRC into a river.

This isn't an isolated incident. At the preview event, the fact that it was left to staff to set up online racing suggests it's overly complicated. Considering the mass market of low-budget, free-to-play games in recent years that offer simplicity, that's a big failing. Especially when it sells itself as a social-media-driven racer.

Unfortunately, the flaws don't stop there. Ubisoft, the game's publisher, has recent history for bug-filled games. Back in 2014, *Assassin's Creed Unity* was so full of glitches that plagued its launch, Ubisoft was forced to apologise. With *The Crew 2*, the game simply wouldn't launch without spending hours uninstalling and reinstalling. The silver lining is that such issues, which have been noted on forums elsewhere, are likely to be fixed.

Despite being told the game offers a true motorsport experience, any enthusiasts will have to put up with several stereotypical characters encouraging you to begin a career being a showboating social media star before the racing world eventually unlocks.

Finally, after cliches such as, "It's like the world's biggest buffet menu and we get to

---

**"THE F1 CAR SOUNDS LIKE A LAWNMOWER AND EVEN HAS NITROUS OXIDE"**



# MOBILES



take a bite of everything”, there’s a solitary powerboat race. Win that and you’re thrown into the world of GT and DTM cars and even Red Bull’s 2017 Formula 1 car, if you have sufficient in-game credits that is.

Fitting the classic over-the-top racing of such games that are orientated firmly towards the arcade end of the scale, the Red Bull features an engine that sounds like a lawnmower, changes gears every second and even has a nitrous oxide boost. Realism is not the order of the day.

But there is a saving grace to *The Crew 2*. Its open world is one of the greatest in gaming. Somehow, it’s condensed all of the United States into a map that doesn’t feel dauntingly big nor too small to feel realistic. Taking any car through tight city corners or expanses of green forests is a genuine thrill, with the various types of races making for a laid-back and fun experience you can lose hours to.

While few are likely to take much from the plane or powerboat options, they at least offer some variety and a different perspective to the map. That open world map matches a ‘Live TV’ vibe to the game, in which everything is treated as if it’s a live stream in a much more authentic fashion than other mass-market games have achieved to date.

In short, this game shouldn’t sit at the top of anyone’s list. Instead, wait for a discount sale to pick up a decent racing game buried among irritating failed ideas.

**TOM ERRINGTON**



## DUKE TOURING CARS – SPA 24 HOURS 1988

Relive one saloon car racing’s best eras through the iconic dogfight between BMW’s M3 and the Ford Sierra RS500 as they battled for supremacy in the late 1980s. The rises and falls of Spa play host to 24 hours worth of European Touring Car Championship action, handily condensed into 50 minutes of highlights. Go to <https://bit.ly/2v5dWYf>

## THIS WEEKEND’S EVENTS

### INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

#### IMSA SportsCar Championship

Rd 9/12  
Road America,  
Wisconsin, USA  
August 5

#### Super GT

Rd 5/8  
Fuji, Japan  
August 5

#### Australian Supercars

Rd 10/16  
Sydney Motorsport  
Park, New South  
Wales, Australia  
August 4

#### World Rallycross

Rd 7/12

Trois-Rivieres,  
Quebec, Canada  
August 4-5

#### NASCAR Cup

Rd 22/36  
Watkins  
Glen, New  
York, USA  
August 5  
**TV Live Premier**  
Sports, Sunday 1800

#### ADAC GT Masters

Rd 4/7  
Nurburgring,  
Germany  
August 4-5

#### V8 Stock Cars

Rd 6/12  
Goiania, Brazil  
August 5

### UK MOTORSPORT

#### Oulton Park BRSCC

August 4  
TCR, FF1600, VW Cup,  
Mazda MX-5, BMW  
Compact

#### Silverstone BDC

August 4  
Bentleys, Morgans,  
FISCAR, Aston  
Martins, Allcomers

#### Rockingham BARC

August 4  
Pickups, Intermarque,  
Clubmans, Hyundai  
Coupe Cup

#### Brands Hatch BRSCC

August 4-5  
British GT, BRDC F3,  
Ginetta G40,  
Caterham 420R,  
Ginetta Racing  
Drivers Club,  
Modified Saloons,  
Tin Tops, Equipe GTS

#### Croft Nostalgia Festival HSCC

August 4-5  
Historic Formula 3,  
Historic FF2000,  
Historic FF1600,

Historic Touring  
Cars, Guards Trophy,  
Classic Clubmans,  
Historic Road Sports,  
70s Road Sports,  
Classic FF2000,  
Formula Junior,  
Midgets/Sprites

#### Knockhill SMRC

August 4-5  
Super Touring,  
Mini Cooper, Fiesta  
and Hot Hatch,  
FF1600, Classic  
Sports and Saloons,  
Legends, Sport and  
Saloon, BMW

#### Snetterton BARC

August 4-5  
Caterham Graduate,  
Kumho BMW, Clio  
Cup, Citroen C1,  
Pre-’66 Touring Cars,  
Pre-’83 Group 1  
Touring Cars, Pre-’93  
Touring Cars, Pre-’03  
Touring Cars, Pre-’05  
Touring Cars, Blue  
Oval Saloons, Classic  
and Historic  
Thunder Saloons

#### Mallory Park BARC

August 5  
Classic FF1600,  
Mazda MX-5,  
Racing Fords



HARRELSON/LAT  
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## FINISHING STRAIGHT

### FROM THE ARCHIVE

By 1990 Juha Kankkunen had won the world championship twice, but still a 1000 Lakes victory eluded him. His home WRC round started well that year, with his Lancia establishing an early lead until the throttle cable snapped on the Kalliokoski stage. Undeterred, Kankkunen installed co-driver Juha Piironen in the driving seat and himself under the bonnet, where he operated the throttle by hand. They dropped five minutes in the stage, but continued to finish fifth. He even escaped the over-zealous stewards who contemplated excluding him for competing on a stage without wearing a seatbelt...

McKlein/Reinhard Klein/  
ColinMcMaster2018







TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

QUIZ

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN?



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WHO AM I?

This icon of a monstrous age had the world in his hands when tragedy struck and changed the shape of his sport for ever.

Born into a racing family, it was clear that he was always destined for centre stage. He starred at home, matching the outsiders when they came to visit.

When the sun finally shone on him his speed was obvious, but a trail of bent metal often followed in his shadow.

However, when it all came good he left the others in his dust, setting a new record as the youngest winner that would stand for almost 30 years. When he found himself with half the drive required results suffered, but when he was picked up by a legendary marque he was the only man who could tame its beast. Sadly, the beast bit back, robbing the world of a genuine superstar.

ON THIS DAY

**1** Which future F1 world champion started from his first pole position on this day in 1981?

**2** Ronnie Bucknum made his F1 world championship debut on this day in 1964. He only took one F1 points finish. Where?

**3** Which current circuit held its first world championship F1 race on this day in 1970?

**4** Today is Frank Biela's birthday. How many times did he win the Le Mans 24 Hours?

**5** Which Spanish rider scored his only top-class podium on this day in the 1992 British GP?

NAME THE HELMET



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

**Who, what, where, when** Fernando Alonso, Jaguar R3 test, Silverstone, May 27, 2002.

**Who is this?** Jos Verstappen **On this day** 1) Vitaly Petrov. 2) 19 years 125 days. 3) 2. 4) 2 – Matsushita and Kamui Kobayashi. 5) 1.146s. **Name the helmet** Patrick Depailler.

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE



WHAT'S GOING ON AT WILLIAMS?

PLUS WE CELEBRATE  
60 YEARS OF LOLA

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# PERFORMANCE

YOUNG DRIVER SPECIAL

# HOW F1 TEAMS ARE SHAPING THEIR FUTURE



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The BRDC British F3 champion went to unusual lengths to prepare himself for European F3

# THE COMING OF AGE FOR F1 JUNIOR PROGRAMMES

**T**he key decision makers on F1's junior programmes often get a bad rap when they make the difficult choice to let a driver go. Think back to 2012 and there was outcry when Lewis Williamson (above) was cast off by Red Bull after only five races in Formula Renault 3.5 with the justification that "it is a brutally competitive business".

A GP3 race winner and a McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner to boot, the Scot clearly had the ability to go far, and expectations that he could hit the same heights as Daniel Ricciardo, Jean-Eric Vergne and Sebastian Vettel had at Carlin with series newcomers Arden Caterham were maybe unrealistic.

But rightly or wrongly, Helmut Marko's decision to replace him with Antonio Felix da Costa paid off handsomely, as the Portuguese won more races than anyone else over the course of the season before going on to win the Macau GP.

Williamson's case serves to underline the point that, from the outside, we can only speculate on how far a young driver will progress up the junior single-seater ladder

before their patron's patience runs out.

F1 junior schemes ultimately exist to find the best of the best, and in this year's Formula 2 championship there is a case to answer that the current crop of juniors are as good as any that have come before, with series rookies George Russell (Mercedes) and Lando Norris (McLaren) set to contest the title between them.

It marks a key point for both development schemes – proving that Marko isn't the only one who knows how to groom young drivers – and poses the question of how each has equipped its drivers to make the most of their opportunities.

As Jack Benyon outlines in our cover feature on page eight, both men accept that their every move will be scrutinised intensely, but welcome the guidance and support that comes with the pressure.

Where they will be in 12 months' time is anybody's guess, but that our sport is a lot richer for such schemes is a certainty.



*James Newbold*

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## AUTOSPORT

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# MASTERCLASS

WITH ROB WILSON

THE ESTEEMED DRIVER COACH EXPLAINS WHY THE JUMP FROM KARTS TO CARS IS THE HARDEST OF ALL

Lewis Hamilton bucked the trend after karting with strong rookie year in Formula Renault



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**T**here are a handful of common mistakes that elite drivers at karting level can fall foul of when they make the step up to racing cars, which have the potential to derail otherwise promising careers before they have begun in earnest if they go unaddressed.

The graduation to cars is a far more creative task than many people realise. The successful drivers recognise it is a different game and that the skill set they honed in karting does not exactly translate to cars. They must start not quite from zero, but recognise that they need to develop almost an entirely new range of skills.

There are graduates who take too long to adapt to cars and lose that career momentum. The stark contrast in fortunes often stems from the fact that you only need to be good at five things to be successful in karting, while you probably need to be good at as many as 15 things to be successful in a car.

In karting, you learn how to ruthlessly outperform other people by having the best of everything – that includes sourcing the best engine. You learn a certain amount of racecraft that is often connected with how to ‘ease’ someone out of the way. Karters also learn that to extract the best lap time, an aggressive turn-in

is required. Usually without exception they need to tone this down when stepping into cars.

It’s quite normal to see a karting graduate drive with a lot of excess wheel movement as they feel the car move, so that always takes quite a few days to get out of their system. The coaching sessions could be separated by two or three weeks around their racing schedules, so it can often be a slow process.

Sometimes, a driver can get locked into a spikey way of driving – expending significant wasted energy on steering input that hurts the tyres and scrubs speed unnecessarily. It’s not that they necessarily have the wrong attitude, but instead that style has already become ingrained because they have developed across several years of fierce competition.

There have been a couple of drivers who progressed to Formula 1 after very successful karting careers and success in lower categories, though in the end were still limited by the fact that they were driving the car like a go-kart.

That is often the biggest thing they need to work on – finesse behind the wheel and rigidity in their bodies. They will usually understand the importance of avoiding holding onto excess steering lock through corners, because that applies equally in karts and cars, but they will

Jenson Button was quick in Formula Ford straight out of karts



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Sportscar man Ben Hanley still races karts to stay sharp



George Russell made an instant impact in cars in British F4



Tonio Liuzzi struggled to throw off karting techniques in F1



“Elite-level kart racers cannot expect to adapt seamlessly to a racing car”

often lack the subtle sensitivity to minuscule weight transfers that are difficult to recognise on telemetry but affect both cornering and braking, and of course most crucially lap times.

Fortunately, drivers I sit with are usually open to advice and guidance in this area. Where their progress can often falter is if they don't have an open mind to adapt and adjust to the aforementioned additional elements of the jigsaw to develop from karts to cars.

These elements are not exclusively driving skills, but the attributes of a successful racing driver that are not always explored in karting. Driver psychology, the need for race simulation tools and sometimes physical training can become prominent factors that can affect performance in car racing.

Often it can be that a driver signed to a young driver programme, or management group, can receive advanced levels of support in these areas. But sometimes there is the potential to get tied up in a management deal too young.

Rushing into a deal too soon can leave a driver facing significant and unnecessary pressures too early in their careers, such that they become cocooned. If they have grown up a little bit and have more experience, they are often better equipped to make the most of the opportunities

presented and flower rather than flounder.

The other potential pitfall is that what seems like a good idea when you are 14 might not be a good idea when you are 18. Formalising an arrangement early can limit a driver's options. Consider the scenario where a driver was tied to a contract that was signed in the fish and chip shop because the guy had a van he could transport the go-kart in. Then an F1 team knocks on the door presenting a contract that he or she can't accept because of the ongoing ties.

Unless it's someone reputable with a track record for taking their drivers to a top level, and there are a number of those, schemes should be looked at carefully. If drivers need help with specific elements of psychology or fitness, I would always recommend pursuing that.

With the skill set between the disciplines being so diverse, it is too simple to suggest that the best racing drivers must do karting alongside their full-time programmes.

For many top names in F1, karting is used as a means of keeping fit, but I don't think it makes you a faster driver. It could conversely start speeding up your inputs beyond what is required.

The great drivers can separate karting in their mind from a car, but as a general policy I believe you're better off spending the additional time in

a vehicle that gives you messages that don't require lightning reactions and inputs. Relying on your reflexes is not always a positive!

That returns us to the original concept – the differences between karting and car racing means that elite-level kart racers cannot expect to seamlessly adapt to a racing car. The level of development required to successfully transition from one to the other means the 'thinking' drivers that are responsive to advice progress further.

That being said, often a driver falls short not because of attitude, but because of the sheer scale of the challenge and the void between attributes that make a successful kart racer and those required to win in cars.

It's easy to point to the fact that all recent F1 world champions found success in karting, but that isn't the reason they won their titles. For a period of time, French was a compulsory subject at school and virtually everyone running a multinational company could speak French, but the fact that they could speak French wasn't the reason they were in a multinational company.

Everyone comes through karting now, and as a result everyone who wins a world title will have a karting history, but so did all the rest who didn't make it. Being an ace karter is only a small step towards a successful career in car racing.

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# INSIDE LINE

## FRED MAKOWIECKI

THE PORSCHE GT ACE AND NURBURGRING 24 WINNER EXPLAINS HOW TO CAPITALISE ON OPPORTUNITIES



### CAREER highlights

- 2018** Nurburgring 24H winner (Manthey); Sebring 12H winner GTLM; Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup
- 2017** 2nd in FIA World Endurance Championship GTE-Pro (Porsche GT Team); 6 podiums
- 2016** 4th in IMSA SportsCar Championship GTLM (Porsche), 1 win, 5 podiums
- 2015** 5th in WEC (Porsche), 1 win, 6 podiums
- 2014** 2nd in WEC (Porsche), 2 wins, 5 podiums
- 2013** 4th in Super GT (Dome), 1 win; 9th in WEC (Aston Martin Racing), 2 wins, 4 podiums; Blancpain Endurance (AMR), 1 win
- 2012** 3rd in FIA GT1 (Hexis Racing), 3 wins, 5 podiums; WEC (Luxury Racing), 2 podiums
- 2011** FIA GT1 (Marc VDS), 4 wins; Intercontinental Le Mans Challenge (Luxury), 2 podiums
- 2010** 3rd in FIA GT1 (Hexis), 1 win, 3 podiums; champion in Porsche Carrera Cup France
- 2003-09** Carrera Cup France, 11 wins

**B**eing a factory driver requires a lot of things that I could not imagine when I started. It's not only about driving and being fast, it's what you do with the media, how you represent your brand, what you can do to improve the car and bringing everything together as well.

When I started my career, I was not ready for that – I did not speak English! My full vocabulary was 30 words, so it was tricky to have a discussion with somebody. I pushed really hard to continue in single-seaters and wanted to progress in Formula 3, but it was impossible with no sponsors. I met with [ASM F3 boss] Fred Vasseur who told me, 'Sorry but I cannot help you.'

That's why I swapped to GTs. I started racing one-make Porsches in France and then moved to GT, where I could show what I could do because I was supported by gentleman drivers. This was not so common when I started because there were a lot less teams. Now there are some really good teams who are close to the factories that give you opportunities without bringing money, but at my time I could not do this.

When you get a chance, you don't want to

arrived in the world championship without much experience. The Aston was not totally ready, but the first round in Abu Dhabi I was P2 in qualifying. The only reference we had was the Young Driver team, who had all factory drivers. We beat them six times in 10 races, so we could be proud of that.

Then in 2011 with Marc VDS in the Ford GT we were really competitive, and if I had done the whole championship with Maxime Martin we maybe could have won it. But I could not miss the opportunity to do Le Mans with Luxury Racing – from the beginning of my career, my goal was always to show what I could do there. Many times I got the answer, 'Yeah but you've never done Le Mans', so I when I got the chance with Luxury in the Ferrari, I jumped at it.

The 458 was a really good car and I got pole in 2012 with this private team against the factory Ferrari and then again in '13 with Aston when I overtook two cars on the grass! I'd like to do it with Porsche as well – to get pole with three different types of car wouldn't be too bad!

You need to get all the elements together at the right moment because the opportunity to win big races doesn't happen every year. At

## “If I don't go over the limit and I'm performing at the right level, I'm sure I will get a second opportunity”

make a mistake. That's why if I don't go over the limit and I'm performing at the right level, I'm sure I will get a second opportunity.

My first time in a GT1 car was in Dubai in 2006, and I got the pole with the Ferrari 550 for Larbre. San Luis in '08 was also a good example that gave me an opportunity to show what I could do. I had a nice fight with Marcel Fassler and we were leading before the pitstop,

but my gentleman team-mate crashed on his outlap. That's just part of it – first I was there to bring him the car in a good position.

Going then to World GT1 in 2010 with 24 cars on the grid was just unbelievable. It was a small family atmosphere with Hexis and we

the Nurburgring 24 Hours this year, we had a deal together with my team-mates and our engineer to say, 'It's win or nothing', especially after the puncture with the three-minute loss. None of us had ever won this race, so they told me, 'If you cannot follow, push more. If you still cannot follow, push even more. If you crash, it's not a problem.'

When you have the speed and see you can win, you can maybe gain one tenth, but the reality is we already push as hard as we can – that's the minimum respect you can give. You're not driving only for yourself, but also for your team-mates, your engineer and for your mechanics as well. Motorsport has changed a bit with the politics and BoP, but for us as drivers our job did not change.

I don't want to finish a race with regrets. Some races you'll be second or third where you gave everything and have no regrets, but when you have the opportunity and the package to win, you must do it. From where we came from to win that race with Porsche and Manthey Racing was awesome!





# WHAT'S THE POINT



THIS SEASON, MORE THAN HALF THE FORMULA 2 DRIVERS HAVE AN F1 AFFILIATION. BUT WHAT DOES IT ACTUALLY MEAN FOR THEM AND WHAT DO THEY DO? BY **JACK BENYON**

**W**hether it's football, Formula 1 or basketball, the silly season is among the most exciting times of the year. The 'will they/won't they, how much will he go for and surely, he can't go there', has become every bit as dramatic as the season itself. We've become obsessed, especially in a social media age, with pre-determining what everyone is going to do the year after the one we are actually watching.

Next season's F1 driver market could be the most exciting in years, with Romain Grosjean, Carlos Sainz, Stoffel Vandoorne and Brendon Hartley all in danger of finding themselves without a drive.

Part of the reason for that is the abundance of talent waiting in the wings as part of F1 junior schemes. In Formula 2, Mercedes' George Russell and McLaren young gun Lando Norris lead the charge, and while fellow rookie Jack Aitken has

yet to hit the same heights, he is still a highly rated Renault reserve.

The three Brits (read British-South Korean for Aitken) are putting pressure on the current racers. Aside from raw speed, much of this comes down to the experience they bring thanks to their respective junior programmes, despite having never raced an F1 car.

Obviously, the key benefit for the juniors is F1 track time, if they can get it.



# OF AN F1 JUNIOR?



But that's actually the final piece of the puzzle that makes an F1 junior – not because it's the least important, but because, despite being known quantities to the teams, they still have a lot to learn on the way.

Arguably simulator work is the most significant tangible area where the juniors can impress and make a difference to teams. Talking the talk in public and walking the walk when it comes to fitness will of course help their cause, but drivers can do both of those things and still be terrible in a car. But deliver in the simulator and the teams can see that impact directly.

If Russell, for example, is successful in F2,

how does Mercedes determine what percentage is down to him or to the machinery he is driving? Spending time in the Mercedes sim week in, week out on the other hand gives them unfettered access to judge his strengths and weaknesses, and the same goes for the other F1 juniors.

"We can do simulations where they give me specific problems and I have to resolve them through the steering wheel, so if that happened during a test or a race, I'd be able to deal with it," explains Russell. "It's never really about lap time, it's about consistency and feedback.

"You need to have good consistency from the start of the day to the end of the day. If you are

trying a number of different updates or set-ups, you need to make sure the driving is consistent. We often do baselines in between the runs.

"It's only natural a driver produces better lap times as the day goes on as they become more confident in the car. Also, you can fatigue towards the end of the day and start to drop off a bit, so then it goes the other way."

In other words, the driver is the variable. If you can take the variance out, then data gleaned from the simulator becomes much more accurate and effective when implemented in real life.

One of the key tasks of a junior driver is to do live set-up work during a race weekend. ▶



Russell has close ties with Mercedes

DUNBAR/LAT

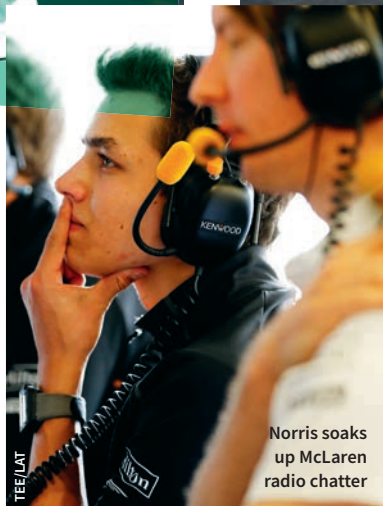
Nowhere is this demonstrated better than at Ferrari, where 2016 GP2 runner-up Antonio Giovinazzi has earned the plaudits for his contribution on the simulator back in Maranello. Between sessions at the Canadian Grand Prix in June, the Italian was pounding around the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve on the sim, experimenting with set-ups for qualifying. Such was the breakthrough Ferrari made that the updated package on Saturday helped Sebastian Vettel claim pole and convert it to victory at a track previously the domain of Mercedes.

While Giovinazzi wasn't the sole reason for this, his work in the simulator – while Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen were unable to influence proceedings – was a crucial factor in the outcome, and is becoming ever-more important as sims become increasingly accurate.

This role is diminished slightly for F2 racers, as the series shares 12 weekends with F1 and its drivers have their own weekends to prioritise.

One man outside the F2 bubble with a real chance of making F1 in the next two years is another Brit, European Formula 3 racer Dan Ticktum, who has become as much of a secret weapon for Red Bull as Giovinazzi has for Ferrari.

And it's not just a one-way street, with Ticktum or Giovinazzi being used as guinea pigs that receive nothing back from the agreement. The Macau GP winner is using the lessons learned from in and outside the sim over an F1 weekend to apply to his main programme with Motopark.



Norris soaks up McLaren radio chatter

TEE/LAT

"I do sim support, and it's so much for the team, that job," explains Ticktum. "But being a young driver who hasn't been to F1 yet, you do pick up a lot. Listening to the drivers debrief, on the radio, and in team meetings, that's really beneficial. You understand the language engineers use the more you get used to it.

"I have to say, I don't think anyone is better at doing a race run in F3 than me. In winter testing for example, the sim mindset you have is you need a baseline time and you need to push slightly under the limit and bang in the same lap time again and again.

"I use that in quite a lot of areas when I'm at a race weekend as well. I can do countless laps within one or two tenths in an F3 car."



Russell leads Norris in Monaco

Of course, a big part of the simulator work pertains to a driver's quality of feedback – the information they can retain and then impart to the engineers in the post-session debrief. This can be what allows Vettel to go to bed with a below-par Ferrari in Canada and wake up to a pole-worthy car thanks to Giovinazzi's input the previous day. Herein lies another key quality that an F1 junior can bring to a team and also goes some way to explaining the attraction of investing in a driver in the early stages of their career.

Although it has its risks, the potential pay-off that comes from moulding a driver to fit seamlessly into an F1 organisation is enormous. If they are familiar with the engineers and team's philosophy, it can save paying £20million a year for a prima donna who will demand to reshape everything in their preferred image. The junior coming in already knows the team and can use that familiarity to their advantage.

"Being in the debriefs is really helpful," says Norris, who has been one of the more active juniors in contemporary F1 machinery over the



Giovinazzi has been an invaluable asset to Ferrari

SUTTON/SUTTON



Ticktum applies F1 sim practice to F3 campaign



MAUGER/LAT  
motorsport  
IMAGES

past year. “You get to listen to the radio communications throughout the session and you get a feel for what Stoffel and Fernando [Alonso] are thinking about during a race.

“It’s simple things like people they are racing on a different strategy, all the way through to something you wouldn’t think about, like asking about what direction the wind is going in.

“There are a lot of things you wouldn’t need to focus on in F2. To have the car in the optimum zone, you have to pick up on all that and you have to learn what the drivers are thinking about.”

Ticktum, having also competed in the Japanese Super Formula this year, knows how important developing feedback can be and how badly it is done by some drivers competing today.

“The skills you pick up from listening in on all those debriefs, you start to structure your feedback in a much better way,” he says. “It’s having a structure to it. Some drivers can overcomplicate things. I’ve heard a few F2 guys give feedback and thought, ‘How would an engineer get anything logical from that?’ You have to make it clear and a lot of drivers tend to go round in circles or waffle on.”

Even though most of the juniors mentioned so far have had track time, it’s severely limited by the regulations. Red Bull was left frustrated by Ticktum not having enough superlicence points to take part in this week’s young driver test days in Hungary, which required sportscar racer Jake Dennis, another of Red Bull’s sim drivers, to fill in.

But that can be no excuse for not performing when the opportunity does arise – they had better impress, or be consigned to the reality that sim work is as close as they’ll ever get to involvement in F1.

That’s where the other benefit of the simulator work that may at first seem trivial can be useful, when it comes to testing: imagine the horror of going out to start FP1 to dial-in a car for a ▶

## WHEN F1 JUNIORS DOMINATED F3000

The Formula 1 junior phenomenon is nothing new. Wind the clocks back 20 years to the International Formula 3000 championship and everybody from Williams (Petrobras Junior) to Prost (Gauloises Formula), Arrows and Minardi were scrambling to get their hands on the next generation of talent by fielding dedicated junior teams.

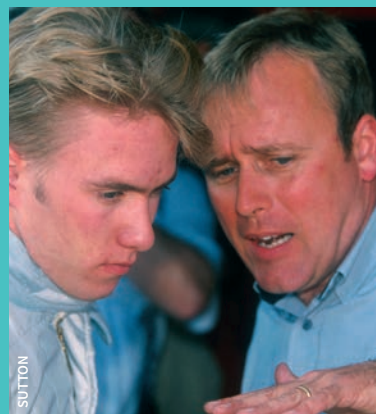
The pick of the bunch was West Competition, set up as a vehicle to assist the development of McLaren protege Nick Heidfeld and run by top engineer David Brown (right), who won back-to-back world championships at Williams with Nigel Mansell and Alain Prost in 1992 and ’93.

Although it wasn’t as sophisticated as today’s schemes, West was run out of the McLaren Cars base in Woking and had access to the F1 arm’s facilities. For his part, Brown prided himself on grooming drivers to fit with Ron Dennis’s ethos for the F1 team.

“The idea was that it would be a representative of McLaren in the F3000 paddock, seen as a stepping stone into F1 and a demonstration of McLaren’s commitment to developing drivers,” he says. “McLaren was written all over it.”

Unusually for F3000, both drivers received a salary and were chosen on merit. Nicolas Minassian was a disappointment alongside Heidfeld for the team’s first year in ’98, in which Heidfeld finished runner-up behind Juan Pablo Montoya, before British F3 champion Mario Haberfeld assumed the second seat in ’99. But while Heidfeld (below) romped to the crown on his way to F1 with Prost, Haberfeld’s five DNQs irretrievably damaged his credentials – although Brown insists both got equal treatment.

Stephane Sarrazin was signed as the lead driver for 2000, but couldn’t get to grips with the new qualifying format and was replaced mid-season



“The idea was it would be a demonstration of McLaren’s commitment to developing drivers”

by Tomas Scheckter, son of Jody.

“It was a real shame, he could evidently drive, there was no question about it,” says Brown on Sarrazin. “The problem was always starting from at least halfway down the grid, it was very difficult to accommodate that. He hadn’t got to the level where he could just jump in the car and nail it. I felt genuinely that we’d failed him, it didn’t sit well with me at all.”

Tomas Enge led Scheckter in a one-two at Hockenheim, but it was the team’s last win before it was folded at season’s end when Brown left for Jordan.

Ironically, despite a strong 2001 season with Sauber, Heidfeld was passed over for his team-mate Kimi Raikkonen for the vacant McLaren drive when Mika Hakkinen retired. **JAMES NEWBOLD**



LAT  
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## PERFORMANCE

potential future team-mate and being unfamiliar with the buttons on the steering wheel. In the 1970s, that would have been easy – off and on – but in today's hybrid monsters, there are a dizzying array of frequently used switches and plentiful opportunities for embarrassment. Thankfully, the sim gives juniors the chance to get au fait with the concoction.

Then there's the question of whether getting into the car – beyond the initial realisation of a dream that they've reached an elite club – is an unnecessary distraction, especially on race weekends for F2 or GP3.

"I think you'll see George and Lando get more opportunities later in the year when the championship starts to die down," reckons

Russell combined GP3 and FP1 with Force India last year



Latifi has personal performance trainer from Hints



ANDRE/SUTTON

Alexander Albon, an F2 title contender without a junior link. "At the minute, when it's all so close, you don't want to be adjusting your rhythm and relearning the F2 car.

"I can't speak about F1, but in GP3 I remember I did a one-off in F3 [at the Masters invitational at Zandvoort], and when I came back to GP3 it took me until the last run in qualifying to get back into my rhythm. I understand if you want to do F1

Norris by 12 points, while Albon is another 18 behind. Artem Markelov, who got his first current F1 test this week with Renault, is tied with Nyck de Vries – another McLaren junior – in fourth spot, 57 points behind Russell.

The latter doesn't see switching between the cars as trouble, if it can be done.

"I've only ever done one of those, in Abu Dhabi [with Mercedes customer Force India] last year,"

While simulator work and actually getting mileage in an F1 car are key for the top juniors, fitness is held in equal esteem. In the current day and age, it's a given that any driver competing at international level should be keeping a close eye on nutrition and diet, but where an F1 affiliation can help is having dedicated performance coaches assigned to them.

There are a few areas that are factors here. Chief among them is sleep; with the worldwide travel involved in F1, time zones and jet lag are important to get on top of.

"It's definitely something you have to think about and consider for F1," agrees Force India-linked Nicholas Latifi, who works with a performance coach from industry leader Hints. "Sleep is always important, I need at least eight hours if I want to perform mentally and physically.

"When there's jet lag and travelling it's really important to counteract that. With Hints, if there's travel involved we'll get a sleep chart to help us adjust, to help prepare. The best way to tackle jet lag is to prepare a few days in advance."

F2 gives drivers a good grounding in this process with four flyaway rounds in Bahrain,

## "If it's not a guaranteed pass, you're putting yourself in a bad situation"

sessions, but I don't think I'd want to do that [on the same weekend as F2]."

Fortunately, a fair chunk of running is done in post-race one-off tests these days; Giovinazzi with Sauber exempted, none of the drivers mentioned have contested an FP1 session so far this season. That's probably due to how close the F2 title battle is at the moment. After his reliability problems in Hungary, Russell leads

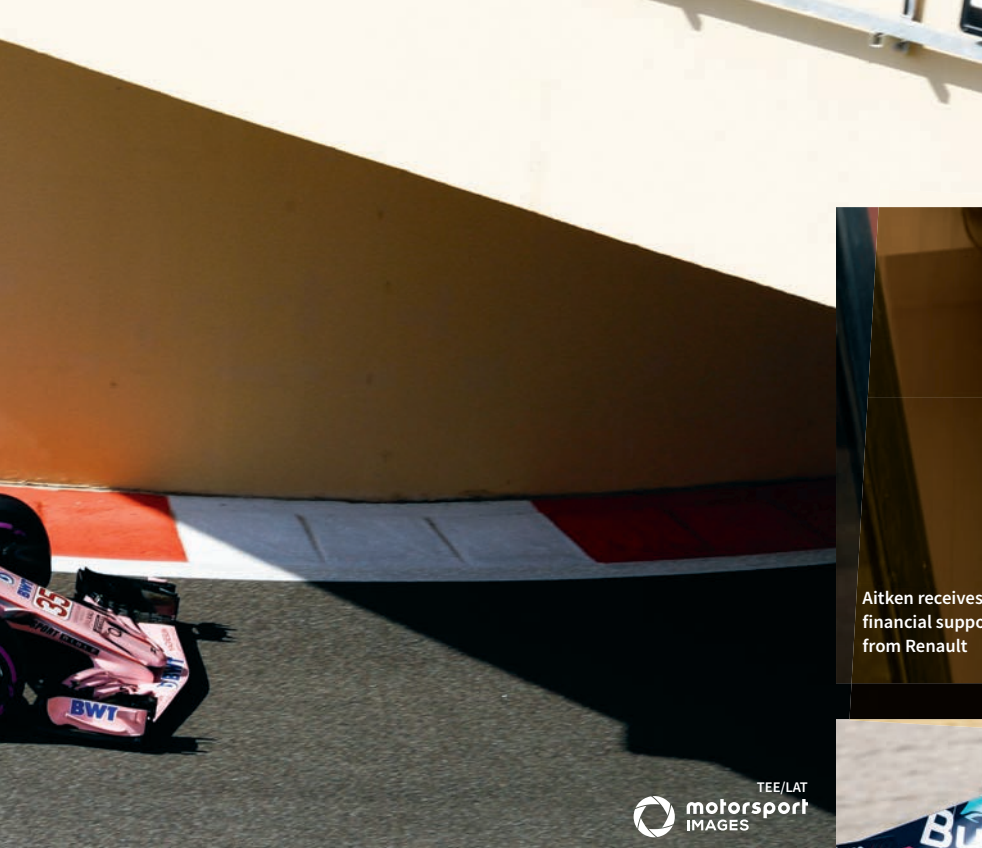
says Russell. "There was a 30-minute gap between the F1 and GP3 sessions.

"By the time you've got into the garage and jumped out, you've already lost five minutes. I spoke to the team – that was another 15 – got changed, then ran to the grid and jumped in the car, and arguably it was my best performance of the year. The cars were so different but I was used to the GP3 car by then."



Sette Camara prefers having no junior ties





TEE/LAT  
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Aitken receives financial support from Renault



Albon is third in F2, without any F1 support

Azerbaijan, Russia and Abu Dhabi. But it's an issue that a lot of the paddock have had little exposure to prior to reaching that level, and have to work on – especially Norris, who enjoys staying up late and competing on his sim at home.

Injuries and illnesses are something else to consider. F1 juniors can't afford to be suffering with niggly colds or similar ailments that hinder performance, and one-to-one access to a performance coach can help alleviate that.

"The personal trainer I have is courtesy of Renault," says Aitken, who finished runner-up to Russell in GP3 last season. "With the step up to F2, a personal trainer can add a lot.

"They do your warm-up and any tweaks or injuries you may have, even away from the track, they can give you a programme to try and fix it.

"I had a [pre-race] warm-up before Renault, but it wasn't as well thought out as it is now. Certainly things like sleep, especially for the long hauls, and managing what you eat properly, people don't teach you that before you become an F1 junior."

Russell, Aitken's ART Grand Prix team-mate, has had a similar experience.

"Mercedes have provided me with a

performance coach. I've been with him for two years now, and that's made a world of difference not only from a physical point of view, but from a general health point of view," he says.

"I'm ill less often and have more energy. I remember last year I had a problem with my ears at one round and [having a trainer come to his aid] was really helpful."

So, is there any reason to not be an F1 junior?

"When you aren't affiliated, then you have availability," says ex-Red Bull junior Sergio Sette Camara, Norris' team-mate at Carlin. "If it's a really solid shake of hands, like for example with George and Lando, you can see it's a really solid partnership.

"But if it's not a guaranteed pass [to F1], you're putting yourself in a potentially bad situation where the manufacturer may not have room for you, and others may have the space. You have all those contracts and you may not reach F1 for a silly reason."

And yet the last 20 drivers to reach F1 have been affiliated to an F1 team in some form during their junior single-seater careers. Many bought their way onto a junior scheme, but some force the door open on sheer talent alone, and all produce a mutually beneficial situation.

In fact, some of the F1 juniors are actually paid, or at least get help with their budgets.

"Renault bring financial support for me, which is massive," says Aitken. "In effect it's a relationship where you have to have some trust; they invest in your racing career to allow you to race at the level we do, and at the same time you sign up to be their junior and if you make it to F1, it's going to be with them.

"They develop you as a driver, teach you the crucial things and immerse you in the F1 paddock. There's running in an F1 car and they

generally prepare you for a seat with that team. That's the investment pay-off. When you get to F1 you'll be a lot cheaper than signing someone."

As a worst-case scenario, a paying junior will get in and see how a team operates on a race weekend, have access to a world-class simulator and advice from its staff, while the team will receive funding and simulator talent.

Let's not forget that just because a driver is a 'pay driver' at this level, it does not mean that they are not as good as others around them. There's a lot of stigma attached to paying juniors, but there are plenty of benefits to both parties that make it worthwhile.

As a best-case scenario, a junior scheme yields a driver custom-built to slot straight into an F1 team. The manufacturer gets a driver with significant potential to improve, likely on a cheap deal while they prove themselves, and the driver builds an understanding of the team ethos and how it operates.

With Toro Rosso's credentials as Red Bull's junior team well-established over the past decade, Ferrari increasingly likely to tighten its links with Sauber as a feeder team and Mercedes actively looking to blood its drivers in teams it supplies engines to – as it has done with Esteban Ocon at Manor and Force India – it's a great time to be a well-connected young driver.

And the best part of it is that fans are seeing some of the best crop of drivers in a long time getting a chance to show why they are so highly regarded.

Watch this space... ■

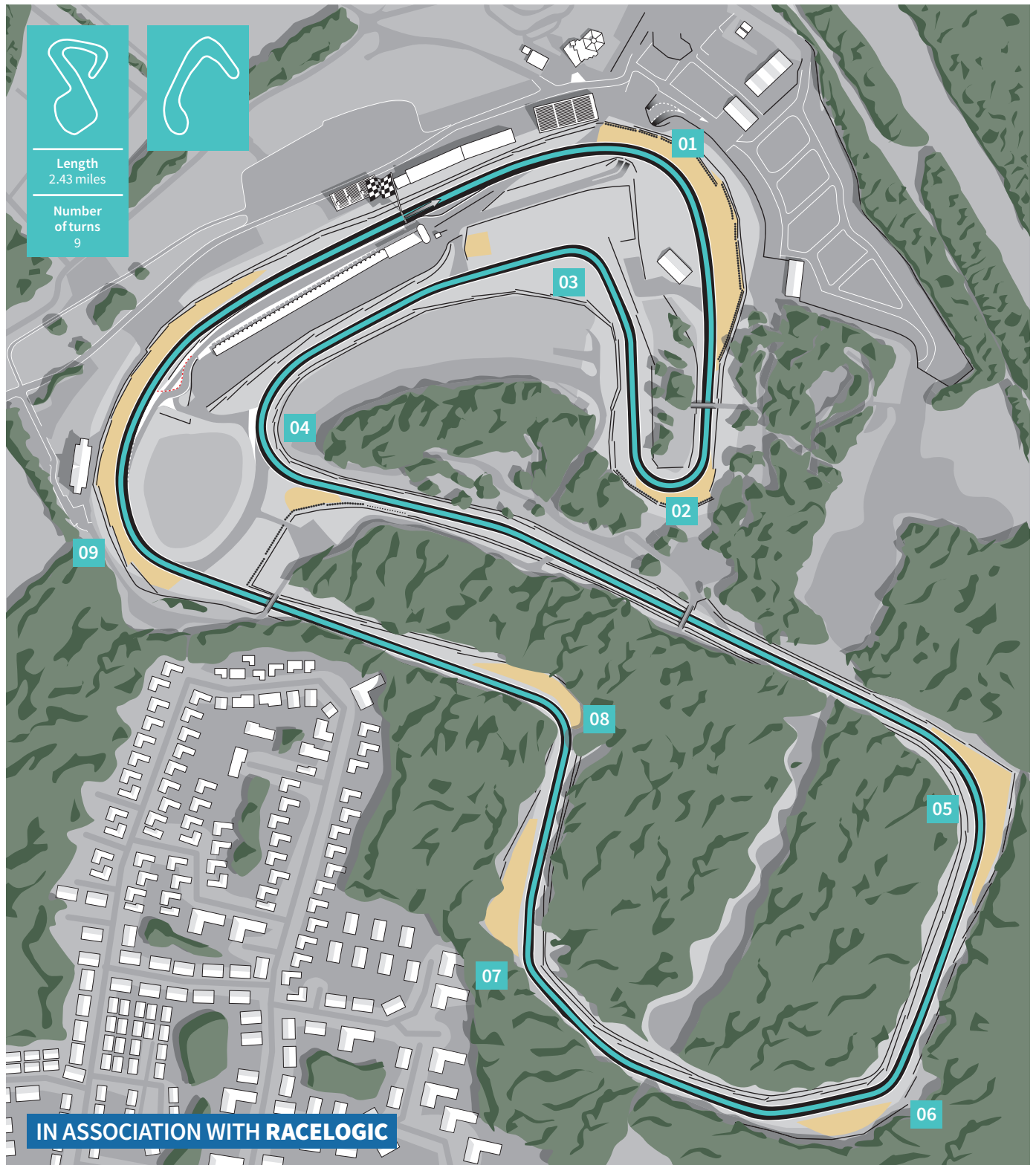


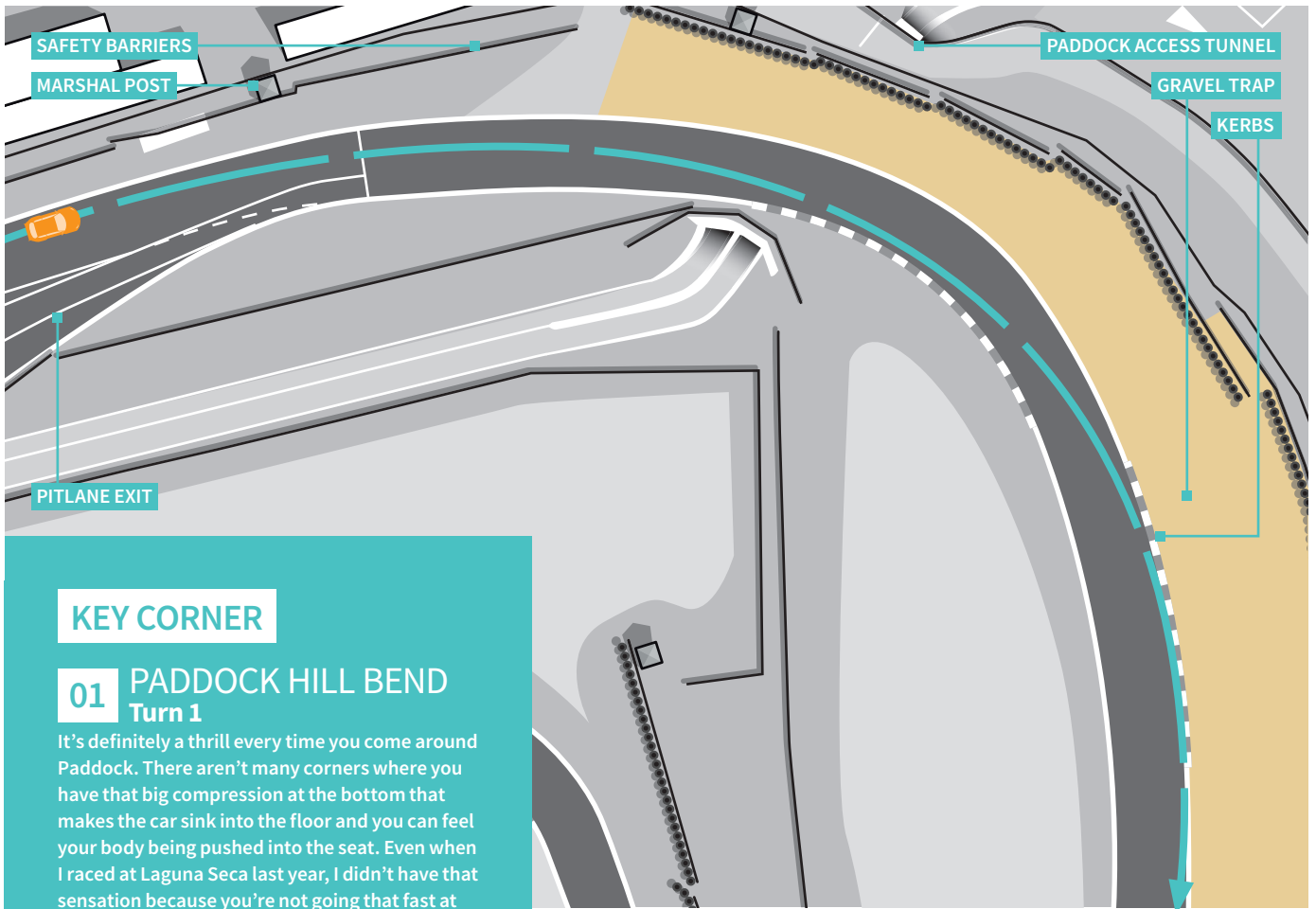


# BRANDS GP

JAKE DENNIS

RED BULL'S SIM DRIVER RATES THE GP LOOP AS ONE OF HIS FAVOURITES, AND IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY





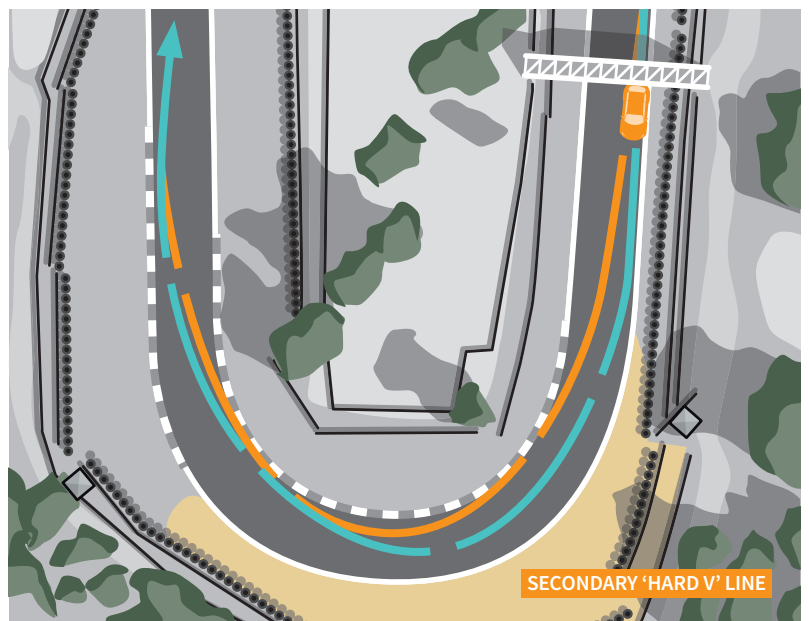
## KEY CORNER

### 01 PADDOCK HILL BEND Turn 1

It's definitely a thrill every time you come around Paddock. There aren't many corners where you have that big compression at the bottom that makes the car sink into the floor and you can feel your body being pushed into the seat. Even when I raced at Laguna Seca last year, I didn't have that sensation because you're not going that fast at the Corkscrew, but at Paddock you're still in fourth gear in a GT3 car and fifth in Formula 3.

It's blind as you approach so you don't really see where you're going, but you're trying to get as high up to the left as possible (below) to open the corner up. Over the crest, the car gets really light and oversteery, but you don't want to slow down too much. Even if it feels like you're about to run wide, the car gets maximum load in the tyre when you reach the compression and you fire it back up the hill. As the tyres get older, the challenge becomes more difficult and by the end of a stint you're on a knife-edge, so the hardest part is mentally carrying enough entry speed in and hoping the car will stay on line.

It's very difficult to overtake in single-seaters because it's such a fast corner, whereas in GTs it's the best passing place on the track. We have to open up the corner quite a lot, which makes the distance to the corner quite significant. You can overtake from a long way back if you go completely to the inside, but if they defend the corner well then you haven't got much chance.



### 02 DRUIDS Turn 2

You haven't really got too much time to compose yourself as you come up the hill before you're having to think about where the bridge is, because that's the braking point for most cars around here. There are a couple of lines you can take; you can either try and go slightly wider on entry to get a good cutback on the exit, which is known as a Soft U, or adopt the Hard V,

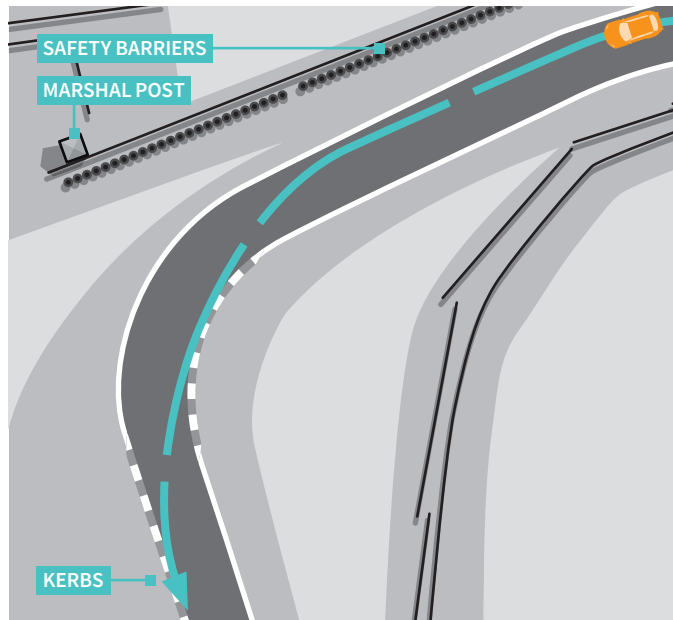
getting as close as you can to the kerb on the inside, then running wide in the middle by half a car length to form the apex and then cut back on the exit. It's almost impossible to overtake there in a GT, so you're just trying to get a good exit for a qualifying lap. In the race, you're just making sure nobody is coming around the outside of you and getting a good exit.

**03 GRAHAM HILL**  
Turn 3

The challenge here is getting the track width correct. You pull over to the right to open up the corner, but you're always looking at the apex, not at the grass on your right, so you need to know how wide your car is. There's no kerb as a buffer from the grass, so if you drop a wheel off, you will run wide and ruin the lap.

You don't need much apex kerb because it's quite aggressive, then the exit is all about track limits. You can gain time if you run off the track slightly, but it's a trade-off of taking too much kerb before the car starts bottoming out and you lose speed.

It tightens up on exit, so it's easy to overshoot and slide wide. Peg back the entry, go in slower and get a clean exit for the run to Surtees.



KEY CORNER

**04 SURTEES**  
Turn 4

Surtees is probably the most difficult corner on the circuit. It's so hard to judge your braking point because there aren't many references. There's a 150m board and a 100m board as well, but you brake in between them so they're not much use. I find the V-style route of attacking the corner, slowing it down in the middle and then getting a good exit works quite well for me.

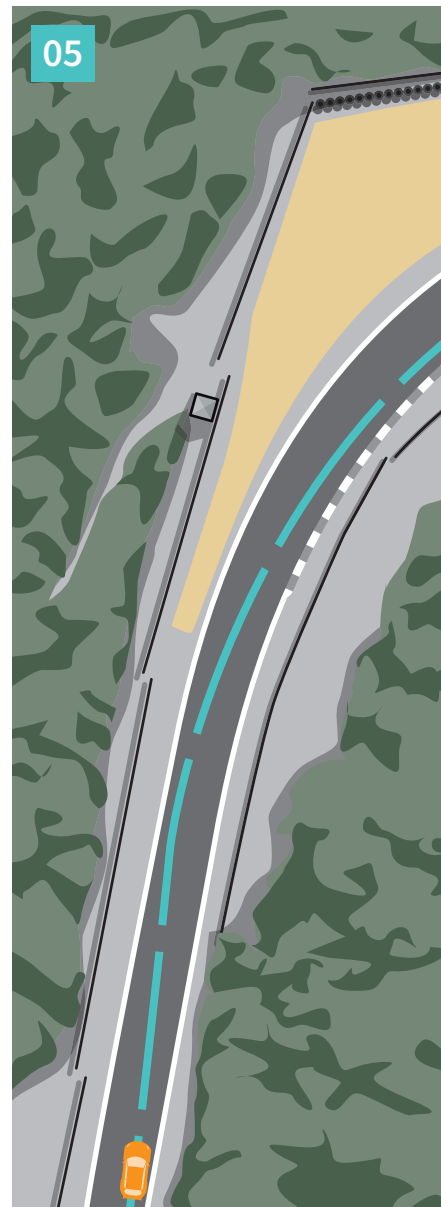
The biggest thing is you can't see the apex on your approach, it's so far around the corner. In the race you

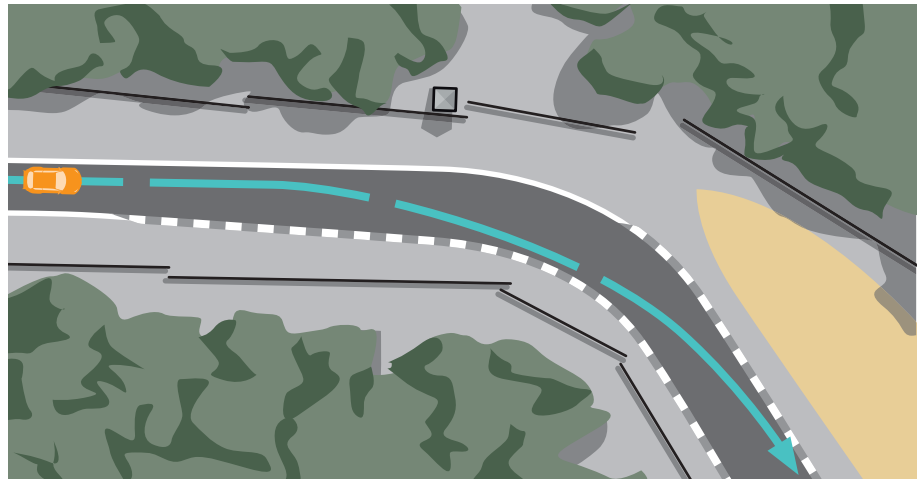
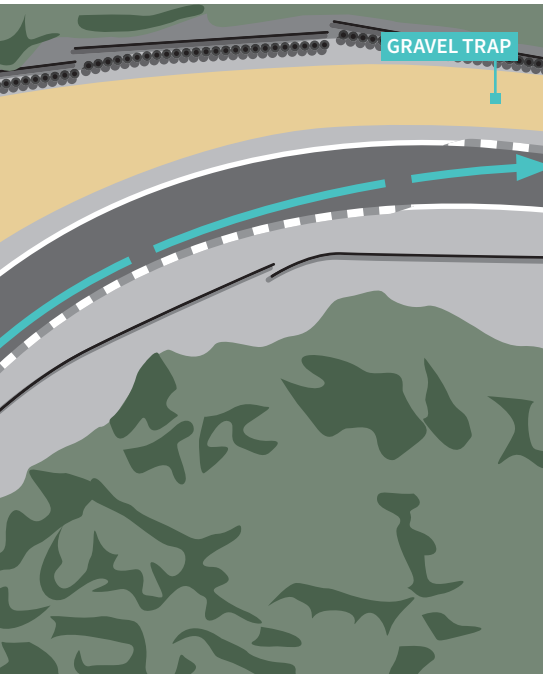


have to be careful because it's a very good passing place in a GT car and if you prioritise exit speeds, you will leave yourself vulnerable to being dive-bombed on entry, so you have to cover yourself as best you can.

It also has the most reward in terms of lap time. If you get Paddock

Hill Bend right you can gain half a tenth, but get Surtees right and you gain maybe one and a half tenths because it's such a long corner and it's followed by a long straight. It feels amazing to get Paddock Hill Surtees and gain more time there.





## 06 WESTFIELD Turn 6

This corner is really quite challenging. You drop it down one gear to fourth, but there's a massive bump on the entry, pretty much where you brake, which really unsettles the car.

It's really difficult to get it absolutely perfect; I would say I probably got it right once or twice over the whole weekend last year! It wasn't my favourite corner on the track because the bumps didn't suit the Audi all that well.

## VBOX MOTORSPORT RACELOGIC

The right lines and references are a great starting point, but driver improvement can yield the biggest performance gains. Combine these tips with Racelogic's variety of motorsport equipment to help maximise your development.

[www.vboxmotorsport.co.uk](http://www.vboxmotorsport.co.uk)



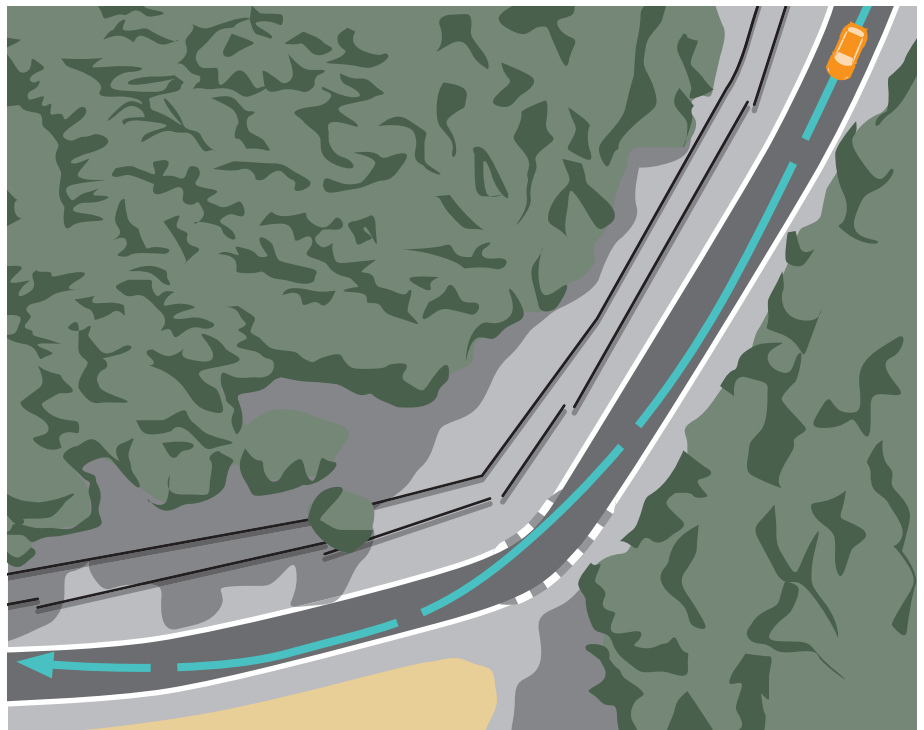
## 05 HAWTHORN Turn 5

Hawthorn is a very challenging corner, but also one of the most rewarding I've ever driven.

Where Paddock Hill goes off-camber and means you lose grip, Hawthorn is cambered into the corner so you gain grip. It's so fast, fifth gear with a little tiny brake and straight back on the throttle again.

It's a game of how much risk you can take, because there's no runoff at all. You've got a five-inch kerb on the exit and then a wall, so it's also pretty daunting for a driver.

The first time you attack it, you always leave a bit of margin and hold on to the brake a little bit longer than you need to, because although you do track walks, it's completely different when you're out there in the car. After qualifying, all my [WRT] team-mates were comparing who had the biggest moment there and who was fastest; it's the corner everyone talks about where you find out who is the bravest. Robin Frijns was quickest through there and Will Stevens definitely had the biggest moment!



## 07 SHEENE CURVE Turn 7

There are multiple apexes here, but the biggest challenge is trying to spot the edge of the track early on because it's massively uphill and the corner is completely blind. You don't see the apex at all until you're on top of it, and there's no reference again. You just have an educated guess of where the turning-in point is, take a short, sharp stab on the brake to get the nose slowed down, change down to fourth and try to carry as much speed as possible.

You can take quite a lot of apex kerb, especially in a GT, then pick up the throttle early and leave it on the limiter for Stirling's.

There is no exit kerb at all, so it's common to see people go off on the exit. If you make one small mistake, you're on the grass and that's the lap ruined. In the race you definitely peg it back a little bit, but in qualifying it can be the difference between starting fifth instead of first, so you've got to use all of your judgement to get it right.

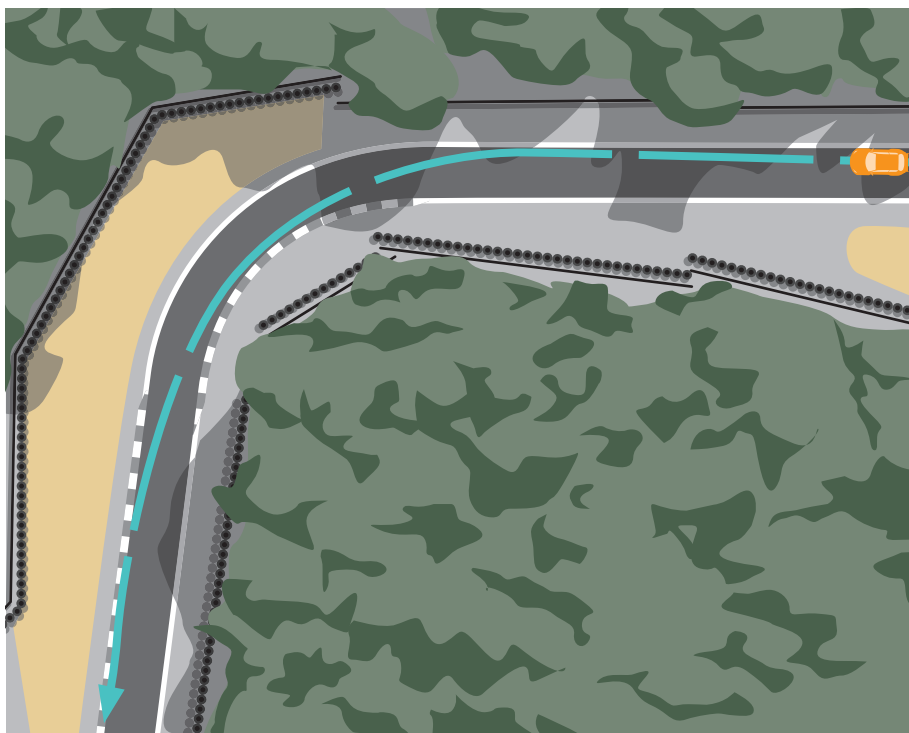
08 STIRLING'S Turn 8

The camber helps out a lot with the grip here. As you come out of Sheene, you force the car to the right to open up the corner, then have a short brake and carry as much speed as you can into the corner, relying on the camber.

It is quite an understeery corner, which gives us drivers confidence to roll off the brake and means you can really push the limits of the car.

It's only on the exit on the big serrated kerb where the car starts to oversteer. You can run up on that kerb ever so slightly, but not so much that it unsettles the car because it's very aggressive. One moment everything is fine, then all of a sudden there's a big drop that can make the car bottom out quite aggressively and creates these big oversteer moments we see on TV. Dani Juncadella's moment last year was definitely the save of the weekend!

Sometimes you can get lucky and just about get away with it, and other times it can punish you. Three people hit that inside wall from hitting that kerb and then making their cars slide last year, so it does punish you, but that's the kind of risk you have to take if you want to get that pole lap.



09 CLARK CURVE Turn 9

We approach Clark pretty quickly in fifth gear in a GT car. You think, 'I've done the perfect lap, I've nailed the hardest corners on the circuit' and then you can only mess up the final corner. It's difficult to gain time, but it's easy to lose it.

The braking references are pretty good. You don't use the marker boards, instead there's a piece of Tarmac on the entry to the left of the track you use as a reference

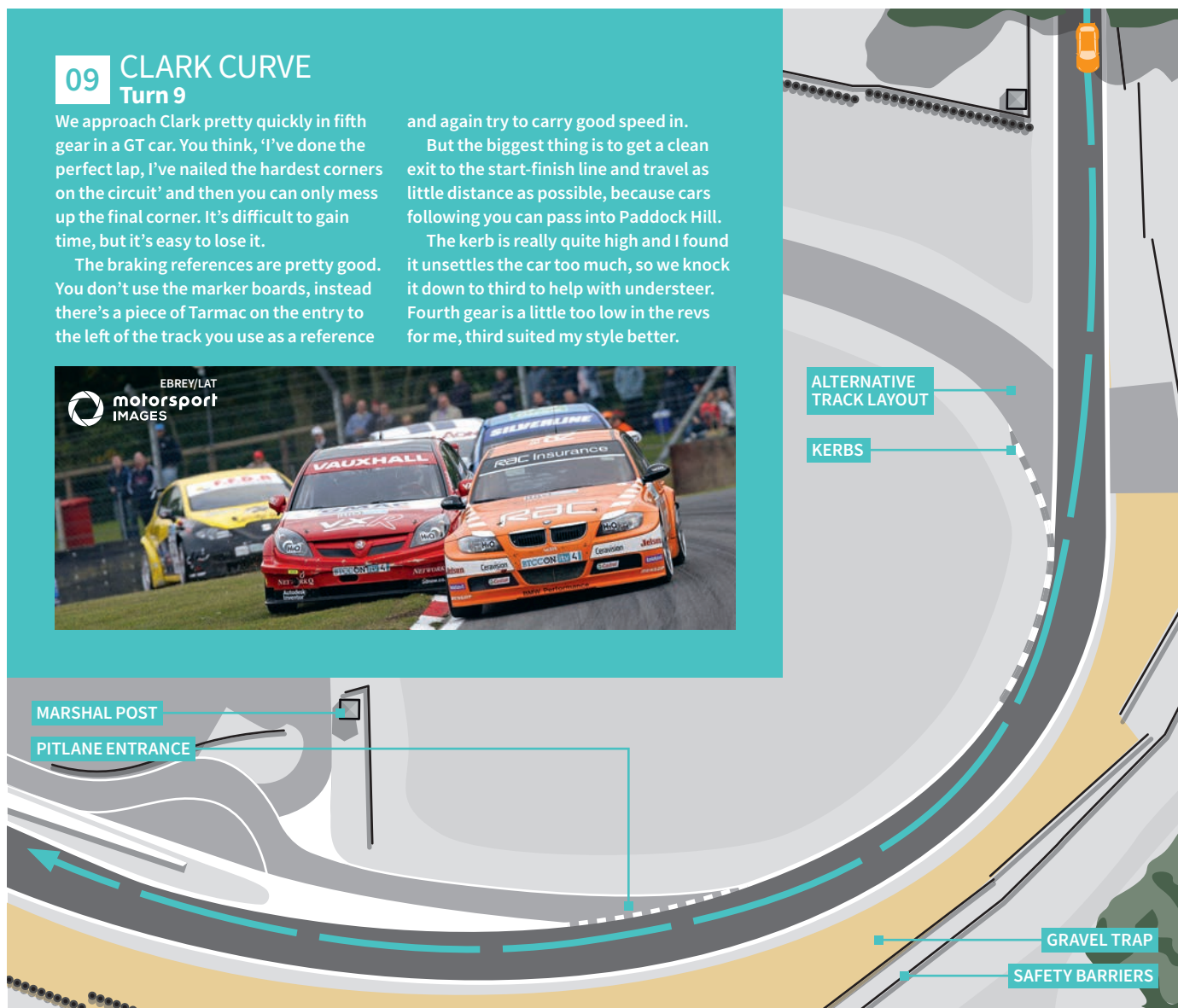
and again try to carry good speed in.

But the biggest thing is to get a clean exit to the start-finish line and travel as little distance as possible, because cars following you can pass into Paddock Hill.

The kerb is really quite high and I found it unsettles the car too much, so we knock it down to third to help with understeer. Fourth gear is a little too low in the revs for me, third suited my style better.



EBREV/LAT motorsport IMAGES



# RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Mark Murfitt is new to motorsport, but is making a splash in British GT



**R**ewind the clock 18 months, and Mark Murfitt had never sat in a race car, or even been on a track. Yet he celebrated his first British GT podium finish at Snetterton back in May.

It's been a whirlwind journey for Murfitt – head of the Murfitts Industries tyre recycling firm – and it all started with a chance trip to Silverstone.

“My fascination with the sport only began when one of my customers started talking to me about his racing exploits, and it caught my interest,” says Murfitt. “Obviously, as a business in the automotive sector, being involved in the sport made commercial sense, so I decided to go to Silverstone for some tuition to see if I could actually do it.”

His coach for that day was Michael Broadhurst, a professional race instructor with his own background in sportscar and GT racing. The day marked the start of a much larger journey for the pair.

Murfitt bought a Porsche Cayman Clubsport GT4 and made his racing debut in the GT Cup Championship in 2017 with the Fox Motorsport team. With Broadhurst alongside, the pair scored three top-six finishes in the GT4 division from the first three rounds and also enjoyed class wins in the Britcar Endurance category. However, mid-season the Cayman was sold in favour of a Ginetta G55.

“When we first got the Porsche it was very relatable to a road car,” says Murfitt. “The move to the Ginetta was a real baptism. It didn't have the ABS or traction control the Cayman had, so there was a certain pain barrier I had to get through at first, but racing a car like that really taught me how to drive.”

Two further top-six places came before the end of the season, proving the drivers' ability to adapt.

“I was impressed with Mark from the first time we were in a car together,” says Broadhurst. “He has the ability to take in information, process it and put it into action very quickly. There's very little lag in his thought process. He's ideal to coach.”

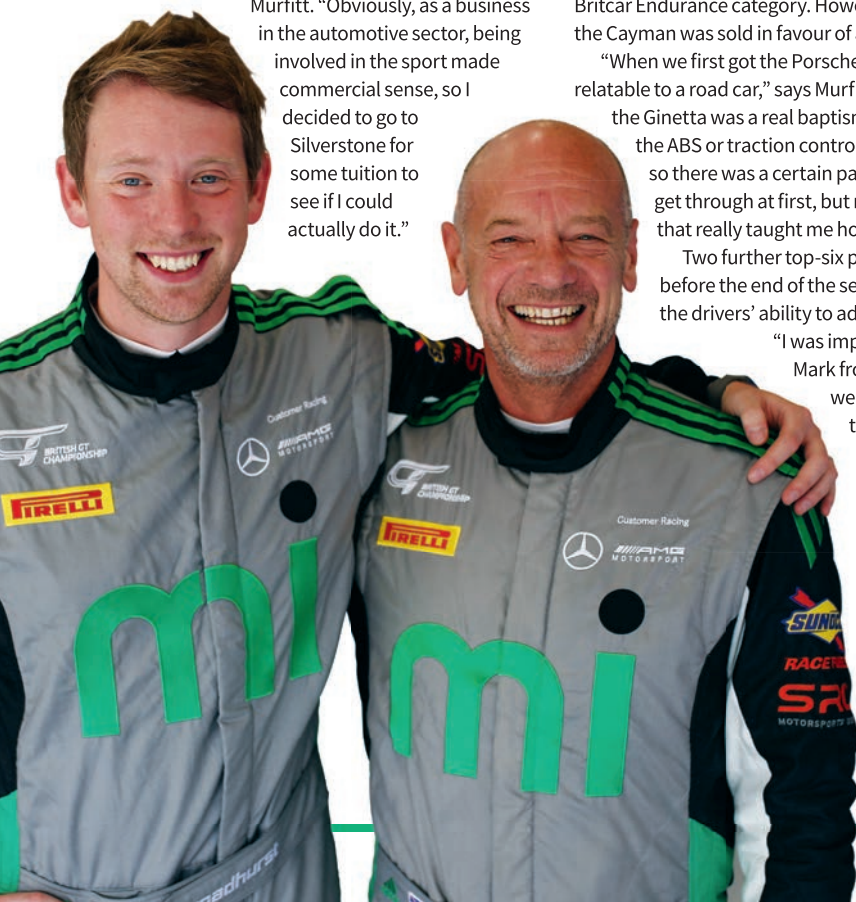
**“British GT is a different league, but we all like a challenge...”**

“His progress has been massive since that first day in a Renault Megane at Silverstone. We've put in a lot of hard work over the last 18 months to build trust between us as a driver pairing, with the team, and also now with our third new car.”

For this year a new Mercedes-AMG GT4 arrived, and British GT plans were laid on the table. It's a big jump, with Murfitt being one of the least experienced drivers on the capacity grid, but still holding his own. Murfitt and Broadhurst took just five races to hit form, finishing third in the GT4 Pro-Am category at Snetterton. Murfitt also showed his speed by qualifying as the top amateur driver for the Silverstone 500 showpiece, while Broadhurst topped the class overall at record pace, proving that both drivers and the Fox team are rapidly getting their heads around the new Mercedes-AMG.

“GT Cup was a great learning platform, but British GT is a different league,” adds Murfitt. “It's more daunting, hugely professional and it is the place to race GT cars in Britain. It's a big challenge for myself, and the team, but we like a challenge.”

Broadhurst adds: “The British GT paddock demands respect. There's some top teams and serious drivers, so you can't kid yourself that you'll walk straight in and win. It's been a learning curve for us all, having the new car – one of the first in the UK – and British GT isn't a place you can hide in. We're mixing with the works teams here, but so far we've done a more than respectable job.” ■



# INTO THE DEEP END

Behind the scenes with the Fox Motorsport team

**R**acing in British GT presents a unique challenge within UK motorsport as no other series offers such a differing competition format, making it a real test for both teams and drivers competing at the top domestic level.

British GT offers three different race formats – from shorter, sprint-style one-hour races, to two-hour endurance and then the annual three-hour 500km race at Silverstone. Each format offers its own particularities with managing fuel, tyres and differing levels of race strategy.

Fox Motorsport is no stranger to the British championship, having run a mixture of Ginetta and Ferrari machinery before fielding the Mercedes-AMG this season. Broadhurst too knows his way around, having won the first-ever British GT4 race back in 2008. For amateur driver Murfitt though, this season is an all-new challenge.

“It’s been a real learning experience, because the weekend format changes a lot,” says Murfitt. “I not only have to learn the new car, and some new tracks, but also how the weekends work, because they really are organised on a different level.”

A race weekend starts with two one-hour free practice sessions, which the team typically uses to

hone the car to its drivers’ liking. Being a Pro-Am driver pairing, Murfitt and Broadhurst have different roles. Murfitt’s job is to learn and get himself as dialled in as he can before qualifying, while Broadhurst’s role is more complex.

“Being the Pro, I’m both a race driver and a race coach to Mark,” he says. “My day job is coaching, so it’s familiar to me, but it’s also very demanding having to do both sides of the sport across a single weekend.

“I work a lot with Mark on not just his driving, but also his knowledge. We get very involved with the set-up of the car, always debriefing with mechanics and making notes about how the car feels throughout each session. That way when we make a change, everybody knows about it and Mark can then feel and understand the effects of that change. It’s about building up his racing armoury and giving him knowledge he can then take on to wherever the sport takes him.”

Being a true Pro-Am pairing, the Fox crew race regularly against more experienced semi-pro pairings in GT4. Many Pro-Am teams opt to give the Am the majority of the driving time, as that’s where the largest time increments can be found, but Murfitt and Broadhurst operate differently.

“We tend to share the driving 50/50 at the moment,” says Broadhurst, “purely because we’re also having to learn a new car in the Mercedes-AMG. We get through a lot of set-up work and my experience comes into play in judging the feeling the changes are having.”

During practice, Fox usually makes changes to the set-up in search of the best balance for the car, depending on the type of race it’s set for.

“We tend to avoid going into a weekend and making a radical change to the car,” explains Broadhurst. “Things like red flags can severely limit your mileage in practice, making it harder to gauge the effects of big changes, so we make a series of smaller adjustments that hopefully add up to a good step forward.

“Sharing a car is always a compromise. We have many settings that can make the car go faster over a single lap, but they may make it too tricky to drive at pace for longer periods. We may see a gain in single lap time, but we might lose too much in consistency over a longer race stint. It’s about making the car comfortable and consistent.”

British GT qualifying is perhaps the most demanding of any series in the world. Each driver only gets a 10-minute window to set their best







time, which basically equates to an out-lap to warm the tyres and car, and then a maximum of three laps to get a representative time in.

“Qualifying is a culture shock at first, and it’s all about confidence,” says Murfitt. “It’s really challenging and the hardest skill to master in my opinion. You have to be very comfortable with the car and trust everything because you basically have to commit on lap two to stand a chance. Mentally it’s a huge challenge.”

With qualifying done and grid positions set, another anomaly thrown into a weekend is the public pit walk, where all drivers are made accessible to the fans for photos, autographs and meet-and-greets.

For a driver in just their second season of racing, it can be a daunting prospect being thrust into the

public eye, but Murfitt says he finds it a source of motivation instead of pressure.

“I remember the first pit walk at Oulton Park [over Easter] – it was wet, freezing and miserable, yet so many people turned up that it shocked me a bit,” he says. “It’s an odd feeling, but it really makes the championship special. Motorsport can be a very selfish sport, but allowing the fans that sort of access I find really refreshing and it always gives me a lift, should I need one.”

Murfitt and Broadhurst typically debrief over the data after each session, but perhaps the most important meeting each weekend will come pre-race, when things get serious.

“Even though the race lengths vary, the first lap is always so crucial as it’s where the Amateur drivers lose the most time to the experienced

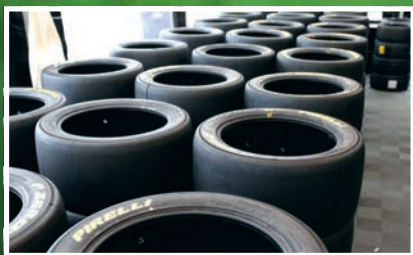
guys, so we do a lot of preparation,” says Broadhurst, who mostly drives second due to British GT’s amateur-first focus. “Where you place the car on the first lap is so crucial, because you can create gaps that can be difficult to close back up during a race, especially in the shorter races.

“We’ll watch a lot of video and talk through contingency plans. Such as where the safest places are off-line to put the car if we need to, or where the most likely overtaking spots are. We always head into the race with a clear plan, and often more than a few plan B options too.”

Once the lights go out, the Fox team actively juggles strategy, communication to its drivers from the pitwall and keeps close eyes on the data, hoping to get the car to the chequered flag in the best possible position. ■



**“It’s about building up a racing armoury of knowledge”**



# FROM TRACK TO PITCH

Murfitts Industries leading the way in tyre recycling

**S**ession done. You hop out of your car and survey your tyres. They're dead. To be fair, you probably didn't even need to look, the sheer lack of grip in those last few laps told you as much anyway.

Off the rims they come, and straight into the bin. End of story, right? Wrong.

Ever wondered where your tyres go after their life under your car is finished? Those black, round, rubbery things have a multitude of uses, and Murfitts Industries is a leading name in tyre recycling. You're sure to have encountered some of its products, probably without even knowing it.

Your carpet underlay at home is one example. Or remember that great goal you scored at five-a-side football? You were most likely treading on what used to be tyres when you did that. Those new anti-terrorism barriers that are rapidly popping up around concert venues, and at public and sporting events – they're often a recycled tyre product too.

The UK gets through around 35 million tyres each year – be they road, race, truck, agricultural – and as many as 13 million of those eventually end up with Murfitts Industries to be recycled.

Company head Mark Murfitt says: "The business started when I became intrigued to find out what happened to a product that is usually only 15 per cent used when we discard it. There was little going on in the tyre recycling sector, so we set up and the business has grown exponentially since.

"One of the best things about the recycling process is you can be very creative with it, and almost invent uses for the end material that is produced, hence the wide range of products that it can be made into."

Once a tyre's life is done, it will head to one of Murfitts' seven sites around the country – two of which are recycling plants. The tyres will then go through a size-reduction process, including shredding and grinding, depending on the specification of what the material will eventually become.

The materials used to create the tyre – most notably rubber, steel and fibre – are then separated for various uses. For the 3G artificial football pitches the rubber is reduced to a crumb, and then coated in Murfitts' new PRO-gran polyurethane coating, to ensure nothing inside the rubber can escape to

potentially cause any harm to the environment.

Murfitts' products are currently exported to 50 countries around the world, and to some very high-profile clients. As well as supplying pitches for the majority of Premier League football teams, FC Barcelona and the French national squad, Murfitts' products also line the Japanese national stadium and the New Zealand All Blacks' rugby training facilities, as well as many others.

It's not just rubber that gets used, as recycling a tyre efficiently leaves plenty of opportunities for the other materials also.

The valuable carbon black strengthening agent can also be recovered through a complex process of burning the tyres without oxygen at temperatures over 800 degrees. Once retrieved, the carbon powder can be used again in new tyre construction.

"From that process we get two products – the carbon black and heat, which we can turn into energy," adds Murfitt. "We can produce electricity, and we also get a gas, which we can distil into fuel. Not only can we bottle the gas, we can also produce a bio-diesel to power engines, so there's almost zero wastage.

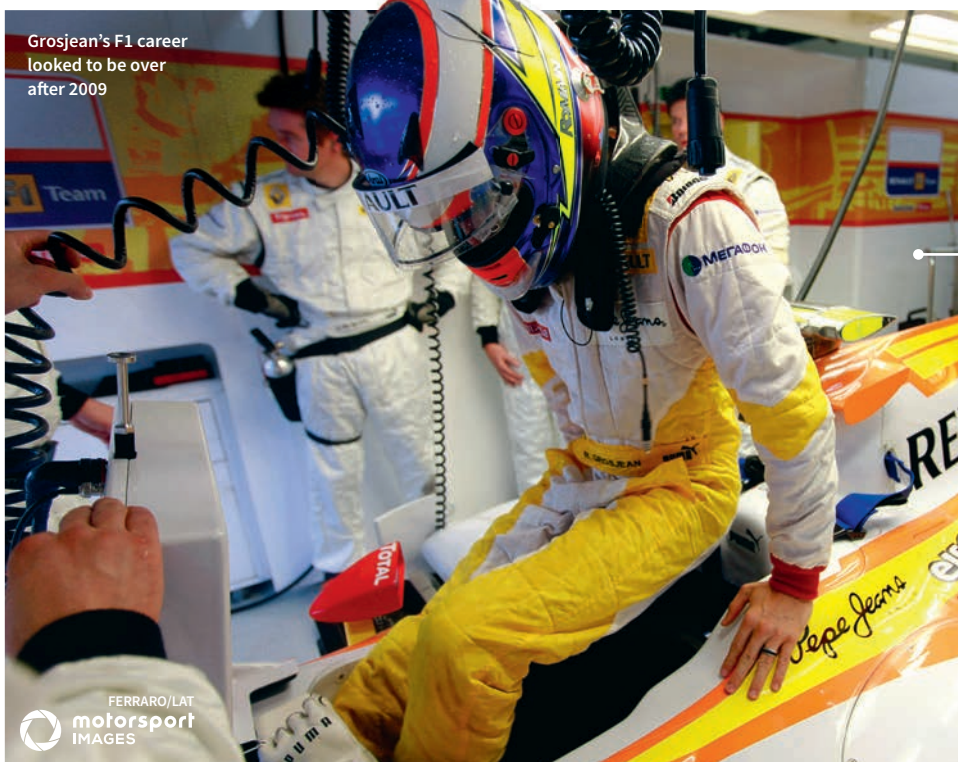
"A lot is being done to raise awareness of environmental issues, and a lot of major car manufacturers are demanding more and more recycled content as part of their conservation efforts. The sector is growing rapidly and getting a bigger profile, and that in turn drives the technology within it, and we're at the forefront." ■



## SNAKES AND LADDERS

## EXAMINING THE MOMENTUM MYTH

IT MAY NOT BE THE PATH DRIVERS WOULD CHOOSE, BUT TAKING A STEP BACKWARDS CAN BE JUST AS EFFECTIVE FOR BUILDING CAREER MOMENTUM AS MOVING FORWARD. JAMES NEWBOLD INVESTIGATES



It's the annual conundrum familiar to racing drivers the world over – do you step up to challenge yourself in quicker machinery against more established

opposition, or continue to build experience with a view to launching a title push in season two?

In an age when instant gratification is king, the temptation is invariably to continue up the ladder – assuming budget isn't an obstacle – particularly in the wake of Max Verstappen's astonishing rise to Formula 1 after only a single season in Formula 3. This redefined what the ideal progression should look like and heaped pressure on young drivers to learn a category in just one year in order to be taken seriously.

That perception has been fuelled in recent years by the ascent of Charles Leclerc (F3 to GP3, Formula 2 and F1) and Lando Norris (MSA Formula, Formula Renault Eurocup, F3, F2) but, while their achievements should rightly be celebrated, they

can create a misleading picture that maintaining forward momentum, at all costs, is the only way to reach the top. Even Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel spent two years in the F3 Euro Series on their way up the ladder.

Being hurried up the ranks too quickly, whether by impatient backers or a driver's fear of being left behind by their peers, can leave racers improperly equipped for the challenge and faced with three equally uninspiring options: plough on in the hope of a breakthrough, give up, or bite the bullet and look for opportunities elsewhere.

While it may seem counter-intuitive, the best means of regaining lost momentum can sometimes be a step backwards. The old adage that you learn more about yourself in the low moments is oft-repeated for a reason, after all.

Rewind to May 10 2009 and the future looked bright for GP2 rookie Edoardo Mortara. He had held off race-one victor Romain Grosjean to win the sprint race in Barcelona, while Nico ▶

## ROMAIN GROSJEAN

The most high-profile case and arguably the most extreme route

**2009** Advances from GP2 to F1 mid-season with Renault but is booted out at campaign's end

**2010** Begins rehabilitation in FIA GT1 (below) and Auto GP, winning races in both, before part-season GP2 return with DAMS



**2011** Claims GP2 title and makes testing return with Lotus in Abu Dhabi prior to full F1 season in '12



**2012-15** Survives one-race ban after instigating Spa pile-up in '12 to establish himself as the team leader post-Kimi Raikkonen

**2016-PRESENT** Leads Haas to points on debut in Australia in '16 and best finish in Austria in '18



## EDOARDO MORTARA

GP2 disaster led to Macau triumph and opened the door to DTM

**2009** Wins on first GP2 weekend but endures nightmare season thereafter; returns to F3 and claims Macau GP win



**2010** Contests full F3 Euro Series and wins the title. Also takes another Macau victory (below)



**2011-16** Audi factory driver in DTM and sportscars

**2017-PRESENT** Mercedes factory driver in DTM and GTs, plus Venturi Formula E racer



“I was lucky to survive that season, it almost destroyed my career. We struggled for many reasons”

Hulkenberg, the man who had beaten him to the F3 Euro Series crown in '08, came home outside the points after a difficult weekend.

But by the end of the year, the picture couldn't have been more different. While ART man Hulkenberg romped to the title and apparent superstardom, Mortara was facing a career crossroads; firmly in the shade of Arden teammate Sergio Perez – three years his junior – his confidence was shot after qualifying almost two seconds off the pace at Monza and Algarve.

Grosjean's situation didn't look any better, his F1 dreams apparently over before they had begun after a disappointing seven-race stretch filling in for the ousted Nelson Piquet Jr at Renault.

Yet in both cases, a step backwards would provide salvation.

Grosjean's story is well known. After spending 2010 out of the spotlight in Auto GP – where he won the title despite not contesting all the rounds – and the FIA GT1 championship in a Match Ford, he helped turn DAMS from GP2 midfielder into title winner in '11. And while he has continued to

divide opinion since his return to F1, Grosjean has helped establish Haas as a regular points scorer and achieved its best-ever result with fourth at the Red Bull Ring last month.

As for Mortara, he was invited by VW Motorsport boss Kris Nissen to return to F3 with his old Signature team for the 2009 Macau Grand Prix and duly won it, before sweeping the Euro Series and Macau the following year to put him at the front of the queue for an Audi DTM drive.

Now a regular in Formula E, DTM and GTs with Mercedes, the Italian knows just how important that Macau win was for injecting life into a career that looked in danger of hitting the skids, with his standing at rock bottom and the coffers empty.

“I was extremely lucky to survive that 2009 season, it almost destroyed my career,” he says. “It started very well and then we struggled for many reasons. There were weekends where there was not any performance in the car, it was strange. We tried whatever we could to get better performance, but it was impossible.

“I have to be extremely grateful to Kris Nissen,

he had no doubts that I could perform in the right environment. I was coming from a GP2 season where I got lost; I didn't know if I was the cause, if the car was the cause. You can never be sure about this. We were trying to mention it to the guys from GP2 and nothing was changing. It was the year where it was a big difference from old engines to rebuilt engines; I had a small budget and I kept the same engine for pretty much the entire season.

“If I had the choice to do it again, I would not do it. It could have been possible to have a test with Audi and that would have been a much better choice at that point.”

While moving backwards can outwardly be viewed as a sign of failure – and certainly would never be a driver's first choice, as Mortara admits – it can also allow them to take their destiny into their own hands by proving their credentials in competition, rather than the anonymity of testing.

Porsche GT ace Gianmaria Bruni found himself in a similar position at the end of his sole F1 campaign in 2004. Once the honeymoon period was replaced by the realisation that he was in for

**GIANMARIA BRUNI**

From F1 backmarker to GP2 race winner and Porsche GT ace

**2004** Miserable F1 campaign in uncompetitive Minardi convinces him to look elsewhere



**2005** Step down to GP2 with Coloni yields win in Spain (below) before team's downward spiral prompts switch to Durango



**2006** Remains in GP2 with new Trident Racing squad and wins at Imola and Hockenheim (below); signs for Ferrari in GTs



**2007-17** Forms an integral part of Ferrari's sportscar successes, taking three class wins at Le Mans

**2017-PRESENT** Porsche factory driver, takes GT pole at Le Mans '18



a hard slog in a two-year-old Minardi running an underpowered Cosworth V10 – “when you finished three laps behind the leader it was like a win” –

it wasn't long before his enthusiasm faded.

Bruni was offered the chance to stay on for 2005, but didn't fancy the prospect of another year being lapped, so instead indulged his burning desire to compete by signing for Coloni in the new GP2 series – where he was joined by fellow F1 refugee Giorgio Pantano, whose foray with

Jordan in '04 hadn't gone to plan either.

“I really wanted to go back into racing, just fighting, if it was for winning or for second or third,” Bruni says. “I was always hoping that we could have a chance to do something with Minardi, or even battle with other teams, but we couldn't have any chance at all. The only thing you can do is beat your team-mate but [Zsolt Baumgartner] was not considered a good driver.”

The season started promisingly. Bruni was fourth in the points after the first four events following a win at Barcelona and a close second at

Monaco, but Coloni fell into a spiral when technical advisor Sergio Rinland left, prompting Bruni's manager Maurizio Salvadori to orchestrate a move to Durango as a stop-gap before joining Salvadori's own start-up team, Trident, for 2006.

Despite the low expectations for such a new squad, Bruni won only the team's third race at Imola, but found his Hockenheim feature-race victory over Lewis Hamilton and Timo Glock even more gratifying – proof that he could match drivers destined for bigger things given equal equipment. Although his form elsewhere was patchy, Bruni saw seventh in the standings as a job well done.

“We showed we could be up there and when we had a good car, we were in the top three; obviously what we missed was the consistency,” says Bruni, who joined Ferrari's GT programme for 2007.

“Normally people just look at the results at the end of the championship, they don't go deeper into the details to see the reality. But I knew that in circumstances when I had a good car and the other competitors had a good car, I could have a chance to win and at least have a chance to battle with very good drivers like Hamilton.

“From lap one to the last lap was unbelievably close [at Hockenheim] and at the end we won by 1.2 seconds, so I was proud of my drive and proud of the team – everything was perfect.”

Yet while Bruni was on his way to a successful career in sportscars that has since yielded multiple titles and Le Mans class wins, his good friend Pantano's career never took off, even after ▶

winning the GP2 title in 2008. With many believing that, at 29, he had already missed the boat, Pantano became the first series champion not to move into F1 the following year, proving that even a successful step back doesn't lead to further opportunities in every instance (see below).

"Giorgio had this obsession that he wanted to win GP2 and have a second chance in F1, but at the end he didn't get it," reflects Bruni. "It's a shame that he didn't have more opportunities. When he has a good car and he's on it, he's one of the best rivals I had of all time, in the top one or two.

"I also wanted to show that I can do better than what I did in the Minardi, but at the end I

know those drivers that are very confident, if not arrogant you can say, they know that they are going to perform, but I was never like that. Even if I was coming from a very strong race weekend, you always have to prove [yourself] and try to be fast. In 2010 I was not feeling like I was the favourite, I was going weekend by weekend."

Yet important as driver performance is, often the key differentiator between making a successful shake of it or not is how comfortable they feel in the team environment they land in. Roberto Merhi has managed only a single F2 podium with Campos, Rapax and MP Motorsport since the start of last year – hardly the ideal way to earn an extension to his bit-part 2015 campaign with

## “When I did the first race with iSport, then definitely I realised there could be a second chance”

had an opportunity to have a test with the GT cars and Ferrari took me, and from there my career changed. If I had to go back, maybe I could take this chance even earlier.”

As Pantano discovered, taking a step back in a bid to go forwards is a path laden with risk, with universal expectation on more experienced drivers to clean up. Mortara felt huge pressure to make sure he didn't find himself in an identical predicament to his compatriot and even had sleepless nights ahead of his Macau return.

"I had my back against the wall. Luckily everything turned out alright but it could have gone really wrong," he says. "To go back to F3 was a no-brainer; it was the only option I had to continue racing. But after GP2, everything I did for the next year or two after that, it was either win or you will never have a professional career in motorsport, so clearly you are under pressure.

"No matter what, I was not confident. You

Manor – while Glock was convinced that his gamble to join the unheralded BCN Competition in GP2 was destined for failure.

Having contested four races in 2004 with Jordan – in place of a cash-strapped Pantano – Glock was priced out of a seat when the team was sold. He switched to Champ Car, won the rookie of the year title and looked set to establish himself as a name to watch for '06.

"When I went to America I thought, 'That's it with F1, it will be hard to come back'," explains the BMW DTM ace. "My focus was already in America and it was definitely the plan to do another year in Champ Car, but it didn't work out in terms of the sponsorship, otherwise the journey would have been totally different I think."

When a proposed deal to switch to KV Racing collapsed, Glock was left in the lurch. Returning to Europe, he was one week too late to fill the second berth at iSport that instead went to Tristan

Gommendy. He eventually signed with BCN, but the opening rounds were "a total disaster". It didn't get any better at Monaco, where Glock was distraught after losing fifth to a gearbox failure, even going as far as informing his father that he wanted to start working with the family company.

But Glock had done enough to prove his worth and, with Gommendy's wallet empty, iSport boss Paul Jackson wasted no time in getting his man.

"Paul was standing in the pitlane taking sector times in the Swimming Pool area, and after that he told me I was the only guy matching Hamilton in that section," says Glock.

"When I did the first race with iSport, then definitely I realised there could be a second chance to get back in F1. When that happened, everything turned around."

Glock surged up to fourth in the points and won twice, laying the foundations for a successful title challenge in 2007 that opened the door to



### WHEN TAKING A STEP BACK DOESN'T WORK



#### BEPPE GABBIANI

Endured a miserable 1981 season with Osella, where he failed to qualify 12 times in 15 attempts, then spent a few years in F2 before drifting into obscurity. His cause wasn't helped by losing the '83 championship to Jonathan Palmer, despite winning four of the first five races with Mike Earle's crack Onyx team.



REINHOLD/LAT



#### ENRIQUE BERNOLDI

When Arrows folded in 2002, the Brazilian attempted to follow in Ricardo Zonta's footsteps and win the World Series by Nissan title, but endured two middling seasons before entering testing oblivion with BAR. Cropped up in Champ Car just as it merged with IndyCar in '08, then raced GTs and Brazilian Stock Cars.



another shot at F1 with Toyota.

While we're not about to see drivers dropping down a level en masse to bolster their trophy cabinets, it shows that there is "a second racing life", as Bruni puts it, for those who are willing to take a punt and think outside the box.

Yet this problem could largely be avoided by drivers sidestepping environments that do not allow them to shine in the first place. In hindsight, Mortara would not have subjected himself and his backers to that chastening season of GP2 in 2009, and warns that drivers should have a carefully considered plan in place before committing to a money-sapping programme in sub-optimal conditions that could damage their career prospects.

"The ones going to Formula 1 are the ones chosen by young driver programmes," Mortara says. "If you're not part of them, it's almost impossible to go to F1, especially if you don't have

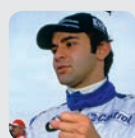
a lot of money or resources. Granted, you can force it a bit by trying to do some races in Formula 3 to catch the eye of some young driver programme, but when you get to F2, if you're not being pushed by a programme, you have no chance to get to F1 and no chance to succeed in F2 as well."

Pragmatism has always been a crucial trait in motorsport.

"It's not only fun, it's your job, you need to be earning money with it and that's what drivers need to realise very early," adds Glock. "If they have a chance to get a run with a manufacturer in GT or DTM, they should grab it."

While the F1 dream is still alive it takes a brave driver to head in a different direction. But that's the funny thing about momentum – sometimes you're served just as well by going sideways or backwards as you are going forwards.

It's not all about the journey – it's what you do once you get to the destination that counts. ■



### ANTONIO PIZZONIA

Impressed in substitute outings for Williams in 2004-05 after being ditched by Jaguar, but it wasn't enough to earn a full seat for '06. After a part-season in Champ Car, he couldn't settle in GP2 with Giancarlo Fisichella's team and flitted between Superleague Formula and Brazilian Stock Cars.



### GIORGIO PANTANO

A big lost talent. Shared a seat with Glock at Jordan in 2004, returned to GP2 and eventually beat Bruno Senna to the title in '08, but F1 wasn't interested. Sporadic IndyCar and Superleague Formula outings didn't amount to much and he last raced in Blancpain in '14. Now runs the Birel ART Junior karting team.

### TIMO GLOCK

Gamble to race in GP2 after Champ Car success yielded second F1 shot

**2004** Four races with Jordan in F1 after spending most of the year as the team's Friday tester



**2005** F1 prospects seemingly over, he switches to Champ Car and wins rookie of the year

**2006** Gambles on GP2 with BCN after deal to stay in the US falls through; initially a disaster until a mid-season switch to iSport after an impressive run at Monaco (left)

**2007** Beats Lucas di Grassi to win the GP2 title with iSport; signs for Toyota in F1



**2008-09** Collects second places in Hungary '08 and Singapore '09 before Toyota's shock exit



**2010-12** Leads the fledgling Virgin/Marussia team admirably before its financial concerns require paying drivers

**2013-PRESENT** BMW factory driver in DTM





# TAMING THE BEAST

THE LAMBORGHINI HURACAN IS A TRICKY GT3 TO MASTER, BUT MARTIN KODRIC DID SO FROM HIS FRONT ROOM IN CROATIA WITH THE HELP OF A SIMULATION TOOL BUILT IN SEVENOAKS. BY JAMES NEWBOLD

**M**otorsport is a game of fine margins, where putting in the hard hours to find a tiny competitive edge can make all the difference.

Natural talent is a good start, of course, but without the work ethic to back it up, a young driver's potential will end up unfulfilled.

This process starts before cars turn a wheel, the engineering debriefs and track walk are completed and even prior to arriving at the circuit. For Blancpain GT Asia Series title chaser Martin Kodric, it commences in his front room on a Pro-Sim home simulator, which he incorporates as part of his daily routine.

It's needed too, because the Lamborghini Huracan GT3 isn't the easiest of cars to master – strong on traction but hard on tyres, it's 'lively' on the limit and relies on aerodynamics rather than raw power, like a single-seater only with significantly more weight.

Even with previous experience in its baby brother, the Huracan Super Trofeo in 2016, it was a significant challenge to tame the raging bull, but Kodric's '17 campaign in the Blancpain Endurance Cup was a success as he claimed three

Pro-Am victories and finished second in the points. This year, he's added a race-winning programme in Asia with FFF Racing alongside another season in the main series, remaining with Barwell Motorsport in the Silver Cup.

The Croatian freely admits that one of the keys to his run of good form is the simulator in his front room. Developed as a driver training tool by former GP2 racer Adrian Quaife-Hobbs, the Pro-Sim unit has a vast array of car models programmed to match the characteristics of their real-world counterparts, each accompanied with set-up options that the driver can tweak to practise, among others, managing oversteer or understeer.

And while the limits of simulation are immediately evident – it's impossible to fully recreate the brutal conditions of a racing car cockpit with accurate g-forces, intense heat and impending sense of danger – Quaife-Hobbs' efforts to fit the best force-feedback steering and hydraulic brake systems available ensure the techniques needed to optimise the Huracan GT3 can be honed through constant repetition on the sim until they become ingrained in

the drivers' subconscious, ready for the track.

It's not about changing the car to suit the driver – after all, when it is shared between multiple drivers, Kodric will rarely have his preferred set-up – but learning how to use its inherent strengths to achieve quick lap times.

With this in mind, the 21-year-old has focused on refining his use of the ABS – “it's an advantage, but it can be a disadvantage if you use it too much” – and perfecting the 'Hard V' approach to cornering, which involves carrying plenty of speed in, then rotating the car and getting back on-throttle as quickly as possible.

“In the Super Trofeo, all you do is nail the brake very hard, whereas in the GT3 it's more crucial to stop efficiently without using too much ABS and then trying to roll speed in,” Kodric explains.

“The best thing on this simulator is that you can practise your routine and your consistency; you can spend two hours per day doing that so when you jump into the real car it feels like you were in it yesterday, when it's actually been three weeks. When you know how the car feels, it just helps you to stay on it.”

Prior to his move into sportscars, Kodric





Honing technique on the sim has helped Kodric to progress

struggled to consume all the information he was being presented with during race weekends, which contributed to a state of becoming overstressed – although that wasn't surprising given his quantum leap from karting to the unforgiving Formula Renault 2.0 Eurocup.

A key part of the problem identified by Quaife-Hobbs, who also coaches the drivers on his simulators, was that Kodric would take five or six laps before reaching his ultimate pace and allow rivals to steal a march on him. But having practised the procedure of getting up to speed quickly with highly concentrated bursts

## “I would waste two sessions because of something I could've done at home”

on the simulator, Kodric has noticed a tangible improvement from year to year and is now much closer to FFF team-mate Dennis Lind (winner of the Formula Ford Festival in 2010) than when they were Super Trofeo rivals in '16.

“I spoke to Adrian about what I need to do and we agreed to work on quality pace, so I get on the sim, do an out-lap, one flying lap and stop. You don't go on the sim for half an hour and

just circle around, you practise what you do in real life,” he says.

“Dennis is good at nailing it straight away and I wasn't, but in qualifying we are always within a couple of hundredths of each other. Sometimes I am faster, sometimes he is faster, but I am a lot closer. He did some GT racing before so he was a step ahead of me, but I think I have caught up.”

Importantly, he's also more confident and relaxed at the circuit, which is especially vital having only raced at three venues on the Blancpain Asia calendar prior to this year.

“If I didn't do any sim work and just rocked

up at Suzuka, it would take me at least 15 more laps to get it,” he says. “And when you have two drivers in a half-hour session, that would waste two sessions because of something I could have done at home.

“Already I know the corners where I'm going to gain more time, because it is the same philosophy – after a tight hairpin there is a long straight and you need to nail the exit.”

Kodric (left) is evenly matched with FFF team-mate Lind



BLANCPAIN GT ASIA



Pair took a first Blancpain Asia win at Suzuka

BLANCPAIN GT ASIA

Kodric has also benefited from specific simulator exercises devised by Quaife-Hobbs, including passing ghost cars to improve anticipation in slower traffic, one of the specialist skills needed for multi-class endurance racing.

“You can be half a second faster than somebody for 10 laps and then lose those five seconds in just one overtake by not seeing that you're going to catch somebody in the middle of a chicane,” he says. “If you back off the corner before and catch him on the exit, you lose only six tenths instead of five seconds.

With Quaife-Hobbs' data overlaid, Kodric had a clear reference point to beat.

“The first five-lap races I did against Adrian, he would be 20 positions in front of me because I wasn't handling the traffic, but eventually I was doing the same things as him. You would think 'it's lucky I caught him here' but it's not – it's about reading the situation.”

The hard work is paying off so far. After victory at Suzuka, Kodric and Lind were the Blancpain Asia championship leaders until a puncture at Fuji forced their first non-score of the year, but he is optimistic for the remainder of the season and hopes to forge a long career as a works driver with a manufacturer.

Away from the track, Kodric is doing all he can to make that dream a reality. Now it's all down to him to apply what he has learned.

# WILSON'S WORLD

EX-WRC DRIVER MATTHEW WILSON NOW RUNS M-SPORT'S BENTLEY GT3 PROGRAMME. IS THERE ANYTHING HE WOULD ADVISE HIS YOUNGER SELF? DAVID EVANS ASKS THE QUESTIONS ON THE ROAD TO SPA

**M**atthew Wilson is nervous, and not for the first time. But on this occasion it's not a World Rally Championship result on the line, or even a victory for his M-Sport Bentley race team. This time it's 21 inches of lovely forged alloy that has him on edge.

The Cumbrian is trying to thread a 2188mm-wide gap with 2187mm of shiny new Bentley Continental GT. We're in Rubino Red with 12 cylinders rumbling away in front of us and there's nowhere to hide from a Eurotunnel-full of soon-to-be-holidaying Brits watching and waving.

Wilson is inch-perfect and, as the door closes behind us, a relieved man.

"I would have looked a bit of a tit if I'd kerbed it," he laughs.

I remind him we've still got to get off the train on the other side. He reminds me I've got to bring the thing back a day later...

We're heading south to Spa, where M-Sport's racing version of Bentley's new motor is testing in preparation for the 24 Hours. Matthew's running the show and I'm along for the ride. He likes the car.

"The old one was good," he says, "but this thing..."

Fortuitously, we find ourselves on a deserted stretch of asphalt just south of the Channel. "This thing *really* shifts."

His right foot reminds 600-odd horses of their *raison d'être*, and hello Belgium.

Wilson's been here before. This is his fifth full season of racing with M-Sport and he's as comfortable in the Spa paddock as he is in service parks right around the world. He's made a real success of the transition from professional rally driver to team manager. Did the post-WRC playboy life appeal at all?

"Oh yeah," he grins, "could you imagine me getting away with that? Dad would



have kicked my arse!"

Matthew's a Wilson and the Wilsons are hard workers.

"The Bentley thing couldn't have come at a better time," he continues. "There was a chance I could've done some more rallying, but I broke my ankle while I was training at the start of 2012, then some deals fell down and that was it.

"I'd just started going through some of the departments at M-Sport to have a look at all aspects of the business when Bentley happened. It was perfect."

Unlike his father – multiple world championship-winning team principal and British Rally champion Malcolm – Matthew

is an old hand at circuits. At the age of 15, Wilson Jr was dominating the 2002 T Car Championship, winning 17 of 22 races. A year later he was Lewis Hamilton's team-mate at Manor Motorsport in Formula Renault 2.0 UK.

Success didn't come quite as readily in a single-seater, but he was signed and sorted for a second year in the series when he drove a Ford Focus RS WRC between the trees for the first time.

"I remember coming back from that test," he says. "I was hooked. But it was tricky – dad had done a deal with Manor for the following year. I was really worried – how ungrateful would it seem for me to say I didn't want a season of Formula Renault? But dad was brilliant, I think he knew



Wilson Sr has supported Matthew in rallying and racing



From top: single-seaters were ditched for off-road exploits; best WRC result came in Japan '07; Wilson now presides over M-Sport's GT3 programme with Bentley



what would happen once I got in that rally car.”

That’s not to say Wilson regrets his time on track. Quite the opposite.

“I look back now and think, ‘What were you doing, you bloody idiot?’ I had Lewis Hamilton for my team-mate, shared the same engineer, had access to all of his data and I don’t think I made the most of it. Of course in those times Lewis was just another racer. You could tell he was special, but he wasn’t a world champion.

“I got on really well with him, he came up and stayed at ours; he was so helpful. I was so new to all of that and he’d been at it for a long time. I wasn’t a threat to him and he did everything he could for me. I’d always follow him out in free

He just took everything in his stride and went on this incredible winning run.”

As Hamilton moved up the racing ladder, Wilson went rallying. There was, of course, nothing new about this world. Ahead of his first F1 Renault race in 2003, he won his first rally – the Malcolm Wilson Rally, obviously – as co-driver to his father. Twelve months on and he was defending that victory from the other side of the car, a fully fledged WRC Focus that Colin McRae had used to win the Cyprus Rally in ’01.

With hindsight, was the deep end a little too deep? After a couple of years of competing in Britain (and some Finnish Rally Championship rounds) an 18-year-old Wilson had set off for his

## “He wanted the best for me, it must have looked like I wasn’t committed”

practice, follow his lines and all that. Even at that age he was such an accomplished professional.

“The thing that sticks in my mind was his mental strength. He’s only two years older than me, but the way he dealt with stuff was really impressive. He had a lot riding on that season; yes, he had McLaren support, but he had to win the championship to move up and progress.

world championship adventure. Standing at the Monaco launch of the Stobart VK Ford Rally Team on the eve of the 2006 opener, he couldn’t have looked more ill-at-ease.

“I was just wondering what I was doing there,” he says. “I was standing next to drivers like Marcus [Gronholm] and Mikko [Hirvonen] and I felt like I didn’t belong.”

The first two years of his WRC career were spent learning the roads and the rallies. He did that, finishing events and bagging experience. Fourth in Japan towards the end of year two signalled that the speed was there as well.

For the remainder of his time in the WRC, Wilson was rarely outside the top 10, but that elusive first win never came. Usually arriving at an event without much pre-event testing, Wilson would find his feet on a Friday morning and find his rivals down the road by Friday afternoon.

“If ever there was somebody who’d had a bit of a problem or something on a Saturday or Sunday and we were in a fight with them, it was all there,” he says. “I remember Cyprus one year when Seb [Ogier] had been off in the C4. He was back on the road and we were both fighting for fifth place. Going into the last stage, I said to Scott [Martin, co-driver] that we were going to push, we weren’t going to lose that place. We were quickest and Seb went off.

“Dad would get so frustrated at times about that. He’d say to me, ‘You can do it, you’ve done it – now why can’t you do it all the time?’ I can understand that frustration now, but at the time it was tough. He wanted the best for me and it must have looked like I wasn’t completely committed all the time.”

A factor that had a major impact on Wilson’s career was one he steadfastly denied at the time. In 2005, when he’d just moved into the lead of a BRC round for the first time, he suffered a crash ▶





Evans (left) plays navigator on the road to Spa

LIEGE



that could easily have claimed both him and co-driver Martin. Too quick into a right-hander at the bottom of the infamous ‘ski slope’ in Gartheiniog, Wilson’s Focus thundered into the trees at over 100mph. “We went from 168km/h [104mph] to zero in 1.2 seconds,” he says. “It was a fair old stop.”

He and Martin suffered a host of broken bones. Matthew’s memory of the shunt and the aftermath is hauntingly clear.

Mark Higgins and his co-driver Bryan Thomas were first on the scene and immediately started working on Martin.

“They knew what they were doing – they went to the one who’d gone quiet,” says Wilson.

“But then I went quiet. I’d swallowed my tongue.”

Higgins sorted that one out.

“Because we were both in such a bad way, they loaded us both into the back of the ambulance,” adds Wilson. “I just kept telling Scott I was sorry. He reached up from the floor to pat me on the hand to say it was OK. Well, my hand was back here [he demonstrates an entirely unnatural angle for a hand to be sitting at] and I screamed. He said sorry and patted me on the leg... by then my knee was the size of a football and I screamed even louder. It was horrendous, I could literally see blood running out of the back of the ambulance.”

Wilson’s recovery was lightning-quick and fuelled by a desire to get straight back in the car.

Within weeks, that’s where he was. And by the end of the season he’d taken his first BRC victory and won three rallies in as many weeks.

Psychological effects?

“I was driving really well after the crash,” says Matthew. “I was a bit all over the place on the first event back, then we had a big slide, went into a ditch and came out the other side. I was fine then.

“For a good couple of years I didn’t give the accident a second thought. You don’t at that age, do you? But now it’s absolutely clear that it had a big effect. It was a massive crash.”

Apart from braking earlier for that right-hander in mid-Wales, there must be other advice the 31-year-old Wilson would give his younger self?

“I would think more about getting straight into a World Rally Car,” he says. “But, let’s face it, if somebody offers you a World Rally Car at the age of 17, you’re hardly going to say no, are you?”

“There were definitely times when I was starting out that the car was driving me. It probably would have been better to do a one-make series or build up to the WRC car.

“The other thing I would have changed is doing all the WRC rounds; people overlook the importance of winning rallies. If I had my time again I’d try to do 70 or 75% of the world rounds and then do four or five rallies to try to win them – those victories give your confidence a real boost.

“And I’d tell myself to appreciate what I had. How many people of my age get to drive a World



Wilson wishes he had built up to driving WRC machines more slowly

Rally Car on the best rallies in the world?"

In no time, we're on the outskirts of Spa and we've scarcely touched on his day job.

Having watched him in, out and around a rally car, I'm interested to see Matthew Wilson the team manager in operation. And within minutes of arriving we're in the back of the Bentley pit at Belgium's most famous race track, where Wilson is away and in the flow.

Testing starts tomorrow and he's keen to know how the set-up day has gone. He moves into a more detailed conversation about what's needed from this new-spec Continental GT3. But what happens when Wilson Sr arrives on the scene?

"Nothing really changes," says Matthew.

"We've got a good family atmosphere around the team here; mum comes and [wife] Katie-Anne can usually be found washing overalls at 1am during a 24-hour race. We're all part of it and I like that.

"If dad's not there from the start, he'll fly in from a WRC round and I make sure everything's sorted for him. He's coming out of a high-pressure

situation at the rally and I like everything to be perfect. Having said that, you can guarantee he'll spot some detail: 'Why's this different on this car to that car?' Bollocks! Why didn't I see that? *Nothing* gets past him. It's fantastic to have him around though, it's reassurance for me. He's dealt with pretty much every situation and to have that experience to call on is invaluable."

And having been on the wrong side of Wilson Sr as a driver, Matthew's well-versed in the appropriate setting for the hair dryer when one of the Bentley boys makes a mistake.

"Hey, if it's an honest mistake then you can't say anything about that," he says. "But we had this situation when one of the drivers collided with an amateur driver, we were nowhere in the race and he destroyed the car. I was off the rev-limiter then. Dad reckons I'm worse than him now. I'm not sure about that!"

All too soon, the fire is put out in 12 of Crewe's finest cylinders. Journey's end. Not just yet for Matthew though. ■



## EXPERIENCE SPA FOR YOURSELF

For those who aren't quite at the level where they can join Wilson's Bentleys on track for the 24 Hours at Spa-Francorchamps, RSRSpa is on-hand to provide expert instruction at its Premium Trackdays, which are held throughout the year.

The brainchild of experienced Porsche and Alfa Romeo test driver Ron Simons, RSRSpa has an extensive fleet of performance vehicles available to hire, allowing trackday fans to sample the 4.35-mile circuit as it was originally intended.

All levels of experience are catered for, with an obligatory safety briefing and a complimentary guided track walk led by Simons himself, while entries are capped at 90 cars to reduce traffic.

**For more information, visit [www.rsrspa.com](http://www.rsrspa.com)**



# PARTNERS' NOTICEBOARD

## BELL RACING HELMETS Stewart wears Bell at FOS

The Goodwood Festival of Speed offers a blend of past and present unlike any other and this year's 25th edition was no different, as the Pikes Peak record-shattering VW I.D. R clocked the fastest time in the shootout, while three-time Formula 1 world champion Sir Jackie Stewart was reunited with the Tyrrell 003 he used to win the 1971 title (below).

But it wasn't just the cars that were at the cutting edge of technology, as Bell Racing ambassador Stewart donned the brand's HP5 touring helmet

with trademark Stewart tartan (below right), designed using the same manufacturing techniques and advanced materials as the HP77 prototype that was unveiled at an FIA press conference in June.

Bell Racing USA CEO Kyle Keitzmann said: "Sir Jackie Stewart is an advocate of safety innovation in motorsports who competed in one of the most dangerous eras and played an important role in advancing helmet design.

"Working with racing icons like Sir Jackie, who

wore the Bell Star during his F1 career and continues to choose Bell, is a tangible link to the history, heritage and technical evolution of the brand."

Bell's HP77 is the first helmet designed to meet the new FIA8860-2018 Advanced Helmet Standard, which features more stringent impact tests than ever before and boasts new features including extended side protection and a visor lowered by 10mm to incorporate advanced ballistic protection in the forehead area.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON OUR PRODUCT RANGE, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE [www.bellracing.com](http://www.bellracing.com) OR [www.bellhelmets.eu](http://www.bellhelmets.eu)

## VALETPRO Trials new water spot remover at Lotus Driving Academy

ValetPRO successfully trialed a new water spot remover at the Lotus Driving Academy in Hethel last week, and is considering whether to develop it further for a consumer-based market.

Run by Lotus enthusiast Greg Spink, car care experts ValetPRO were called in to assist after the LDA's fleet of vehicles began to show the signs of water spot damage, caused by exposure to the recycled water used on the skid-pan.

"This one black car looked like it had been through a kettle," said Spink.

ValetPRO's team of in-house detailers made up a sample that utilised natural water softening agents to neutralise and dissolve the alkaline surface. Spink was delighted with the results, which transformed the appearance of the Elise in just 30 minutes.

"It will react with and loosen up the minerals that are deposited on the car, which makes rinsing and cleaning much easier and a lot more gentle," he explained.

ValetPRO will conduct stability testing on the formulation and add further due diligence tests to ensure it is compatible with multiple surfaces before contemplating a release of the product, but Spink was most encouraged to have proven ValetPRO's problem-solving credentials.

"This isn't a product that we're looking to



release at the moment, but it shows our capabilities and that we're able to solve these potential issues that companies and organisations might have, and that's important to us."

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## NANKANG Tom Ingram joins Autosport for Citroen C1 24 Hours

British Touring Car Championship leader Tom Ingram will team up with Autosport in a Citroen C1 for the C1 Challenge 24 hours at Rockingham on September 1-2.

Tin-top ace Ingram, who has previous experience of endurance racing from contesting the 24H Series 24H COTA last year in a GT4-spec Aston Martin, will be joined by Autosport's track tester Ben Anderson, junior journalist Stefan Mackley and a yet-to-be-confirmed fourth driver.

The car will be run by the C1 Racing Club, with support from West Bromwich-based tyre manufacturer Nankang, which has a growing presence on the UK club motorsport scene.



"It will be great to see Tom's feedback on the C1 Challenge as a one-make series where everything from brake pads to suspension to tyres are controlled to keep costs down," said Nankang motorsport manager Ben Lawson. "Having a high-profile driver like him along will be a very good thing for the championship."

C1 Racing Club chairman Meyrick Cox also welcomed Ingram's addition to the line-up, but warned that his pedigree would be no guarantee of success against a competitive field.

"None of the touring car drivers have won a 24-hour yet, although [British GT champion] Seb Morris won at Spa last year," said Cox. "It takes more than one fast driver to win a 24-hour race, it's all about consistency and you need four fast drivers. Look at Toyota, it just proves that 24-hour races are very difficult to win. But I'm sure he'll put some good laps in and be at the pointy end."

One of the challenges Ingram and his three co-drivers will face is Rockingham's famously abrasive surface, which will put the Nankang rubber on the front-wheel-drive C1 to the test.

To ensure the low-cost philosophy is combined with a difficult driving challenge, Nankang use an AS-1 road tyre with the tread shaved down.

"It's simply not to over-tyre the car so that it can



still be fairly loose if the driver wants it to be," explained Lawson. "We did trial the trackday NS2-R in the early days and that does perform better, but we found it felt too much like it was running on rails.

"It's out of the norm for us because it was developed for the road, not for the track, so we're learning every time that we go out, even from a tyre pressure point of view. We have some development ideas we're looking at for 2019 and beyond, so we will see what the future brings."

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR RANGE OF TYRES, VISIT OUR WEBSITE [www.nankangtyre.co.uk](http://www.nankangtyre.co.uk) OR CALL 0121 5005010

## PRO-SIM Perfecting techniques from home

One of the key differences in which young drivers prepare for motorsport today compared to a decade ago can be found in the increasing accuracy and accessibility of simulation.

When Adrian Quaife-Hobbs was making his rise up the single-seater ladder from Formula BMW to GP3, Auto GP and GP2, he was exposed to all manner of simulators ranging from the very basic to world-class F1 sims, but often came away feeling that they were built primarily as feats of engineering with driver experience secondary.

Inspired to develop the most relevant simulator for driver training that he could, Quaife-Hobbs embarked on a painstaking process of testing various components before he had a product he was happy with.

Retailing at £30,000, his flagship Evolution II comes equipped with an XAP paddleshift steering wheel as used in F2 and has an accurate force-feedback steering system, hydraulic brakes and an adjustable gas-spring throttle, all packaged around a fully adjustable aluminium frame.



"Why people like the feel of our sim is because I've done it from a driver's point of view," says Quaife-Hobbs. "If you do everything out of a textbook, the sims all come to a similar point, which I was disappointed with because the engineers writing it have never driven a car."

Since he put his driving career on hold to focus

on Pro-Sim, Quaife-Hobbs has seen first-hand how drivers can benefit from regular sim usage around their daily routines to improve techniques that can then be transferred to real life.

"I wanted to make something that was realistic and achieved the goals that any driver should be aiming for," he said. "Every component has gone through a long process to be selected - there's nothing on that sim that we've just put on it because we ran out of time. Every part is there for a specific purpose."

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PRO-SIM'S RANGE OF SIMULATORS, PLEASE VISIT [www.pro-sim.co.uk](http://www.pro-sim.co.uk) OR CALL 01732 441 007



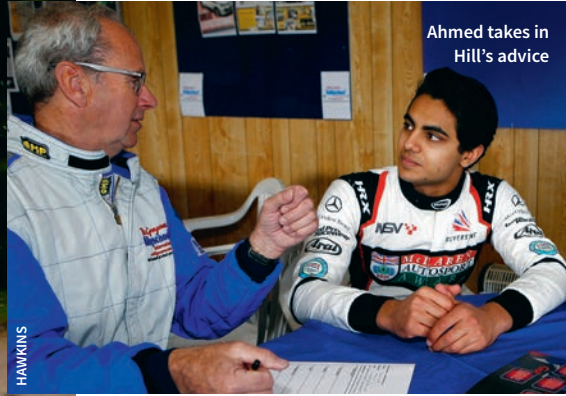


# OCEANS APART?

ENAAM AHMED WENT TO UNUSUAL LENGTHS TO PREPARE FOR HIS FIRST SEASON IN EUROPEAN F3 AT BILL GWYNNE'S RALLY SCHOOL. **MATT KEW** FOUND OUT WHY THE DISCIPLINES ARE CLOSER THAN YOU MIGHT THINK







**S**ince graduating to the Formula 3 European Championship, Enaam Ahmed has been faced with a plethora of new challenges to overcome. The 18-year-old set a record of 13 race wins in a season on the way to last year's BRDC British F3 crown, but now he's doing battle in a much bigger pond.

His Hitech Grand Prix-run Dallara might have a near-identical 237bhp to the British equipment, yet the two cars are far removed in their driving characteristics. Thanks to its ability to produce much more downforce and the fact that it's shod with Hankook tyres – rather than the Pirellis used in the UK – with their own unique behaviour, the Dallara is a new package to Ahmed that he must maximise on a host of circuits he's never raced at before.

What's more, the 2018 season brings with it even more pressure than normal. With a single-make F3 category set to join Formula 1's support package for next season, there is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the future of the current European series, leaving a finite timeframe for Ahmed to reach the sharp end and make his mark.

As he puts it, "the best racing driver in the world is going to be the most versatile", so it was crucial for Ahmed to show that he could

Streit, Ahmed swapped slicks, wings and smooth asphalt for a 40-year-old battle-scarred rally car and a gravel proving ground, all in the pursuit of becoming a more polished circuit driver.

"My coach recommended me to do it, that's how it came about," says the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award finalist. "He's wanted me to do rally car driving for a while – he felt it's something that I needed for F3, with how the driving style is.

"I wanted to learn, not so much for car control, but getting the flow right of sliding a car. It's not hard to learn car control, but it is hard to drift well and smoothly. It's more about the discipline with rallying. There's no grip, so you can't really push the car into the corners. You've got to get the flow to keep the speed high."

More than 100,000 people have passed through the Rallyschool's doors since it opened in 1982 and, to maximise Ahmed's time, first-rate tuition is called upon. Sitting alongside him in the morning is British Rallycross driver Steve Hill, swapping from his Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X Supercar. Then, in the afternoon, it's the turn of school founder and five-time road rally champion Bill Gwynne to ride shotgun.

Interestingly, Hill and Gwynne have contrasting approaches. Clip a marker or overcook the oversteer with Hill and it's a

## "It's hard to drift well and smoothly. You've got to get the flow to keep the speed high"

plug-in and play from the start of the campaign.

"A lot of people are on the limit of their driving style, not necessarily the car," he continues. "The trick to being the best racing driver possible is having an adaptable driving style – being able to change from aggressive to smooth, this to that."

That's why, before the season curtain-raiser at Pau, Ahmed took an unconventional route. Instead of relying solely on a simulator to learn the limits of the car or of a new track, he spent a day at Northamptonshire's Bill Gwynne Rallyschool International sliding a Ford Escort Mk2.

No, you haven't read that wrong.

At the recommendation of driver coach Roberto

quick change back into first gear and off Ahmed goes again. Gwynne, on the other hand, readily stops the car dead when he wants to see the front wheel mere inches closer to the apex.

Regardless of the differences, "they were awesome", Ahmed says of his teachers. "It was amazing learning with Bill because he's very experienced, I really enjoyed spending time in the car with him and seeing a master like that driving a rally car."

The 125bhp 1600cc Escort is kept deliberately close to standard specification. Restrained upgrades include Bilstein suspension and a limited-slip differential, but little else. It's even ▶



SUPER/FAI F3

HAWKINS

HAWKINS

fitted with normal road tyres. The aim is to better simulate low-grip conditions and keep speeds down should the driver lose control.

Paul Gwynne, son of Bill, reckons the venerable Escort is the perfect tool for the job. "They're the only car that allows you to learn the rear-wheel-drive technique comfortably," he says. "You don't have to make it slide, you can steer it on the throttle and it rewards you if you do it well but it doesn't spit you off."

Hill adds: "Some people might say, 'What's the point?' But it's great for wet-weather driving. It gives you a lot more insight of where to go and what you can do with a car."

With the machinery sorted, it's out onto the gravel proving ground. There's a simple slalom run marked out by cones running down either side of a very dusty and therefore slippery course, connected at both ends by a sharp turn that requires a tug on the handbrake. A Welsh forest stage it isn't – incidentally, testament to how much Ahmed enjoyed the day, that's now under consideration – but it's fit for purpose.

While Ahmed is fan of the discipline, he's quick to hold his hands up that he's no World Rally Championship fanatic. The tail-out frivolity is not about emulating his heroes, more a combination of "letting my hair down" and learning a skill set on gravel that has a direct application to the slippery surfaces of Zandvoort and the Norisring.

"The principles are still the same no matter what car you drive," Ahmed continues. "Every car has a limit of adhesion.

"The fundamental basis of that rally car is similar in a sense to F3: it's low power, it's fairly easy to drive but quite hard to get a lap time out of. It's also about having a flow, which in F3 is crucial because there's no power to bring it out of the corners. If you lose the fluidness through the corner, then you're not going to be good.



Ahmed's experimentation in Award test impressed Turner



Getting the tail out in the Escort wasn't just for fun

"I only get adrenaline when I drive a racing car. I get excited by anything with four wheels, even today. It's an old car but it's still fun."

Learning with the Escort doesn't offer a silver bullet for wet-weather driving or for threading the needle around narrow street circuits, rather its application is far more broad.

"It helps everywhere to be honest," Ahmed reflects. "At the end of the day, you drive a street circuit like you do a normal track. The only difference is that the walls are closer. The limit of the car is still the same.

"It helps too when you go to new tracks like Pau when you've got to feel everything and use your instinct. Rally driving helps pick that up a lot more and you just have to drive what you feel rather than what you know."

Now five rounds into the season and with two wins at the Hungaroring under his belt, Ahmed's had a chance to assess to what extent the Escort has improved his ability. When asked if he's noticed a change, he's unequivocal.

"Definitely!" he says. "My first pole position of the year was at Pau in wet qualifying. I went on the rally day just before Pau and I think it made a big difference – my car control was really good. I would definitely recommend it to young drivers coming out of karting because it's good for them to understand how you can drift a car. Even for older drivers, it'd still be beneficial."

The rally driving was only one day out of Ahmed's pre-season preparation and therefore not much in the way of a distraction. But thanks to a little bit of left-field thinking, perhaps there's another low-hanging fruit to be picked when it comes to developing young drivers. ■

## WILLINGNESS TO EXPERIMENT

How drivers deal with changeable conditions can tell you a lot about them. The obvious thing is their confidence, but often it also reveals who can think on their feet.

At last year's McLaren Autosport BRDC Award tests, Silverstone was wet-but-drying on the first morning. The four finalists had enough on their plates getting to grips with the turbocharged 420+bhp Williams-built JPH1B Formula 2 car, but after just a few laps the judges made the decision to put them on slicks on the drying track. It was a big challenge in a high-pressure situation.

At Stowe, the different approaches became clear. Eventual winner Dan Ticktum barrelled in, carrying apparently impossible speed. At first it seemed he was flirting with the limit too much, but over the course of the run he kept it on the island and ended up comfortably fastest.

Enaam Ahmed also impressed. He quickly identified that running across the river on entry using the normal line was a bad idea and tried several approaches as he looked for grip.

He wasn't as quick as Ticktum, but showed a propensity to try something different and to learn. So it's not a surprise that he has given rallying a go, or that he has caught many people off-guard with his pace in F3 this year.

KEVIN TURNER

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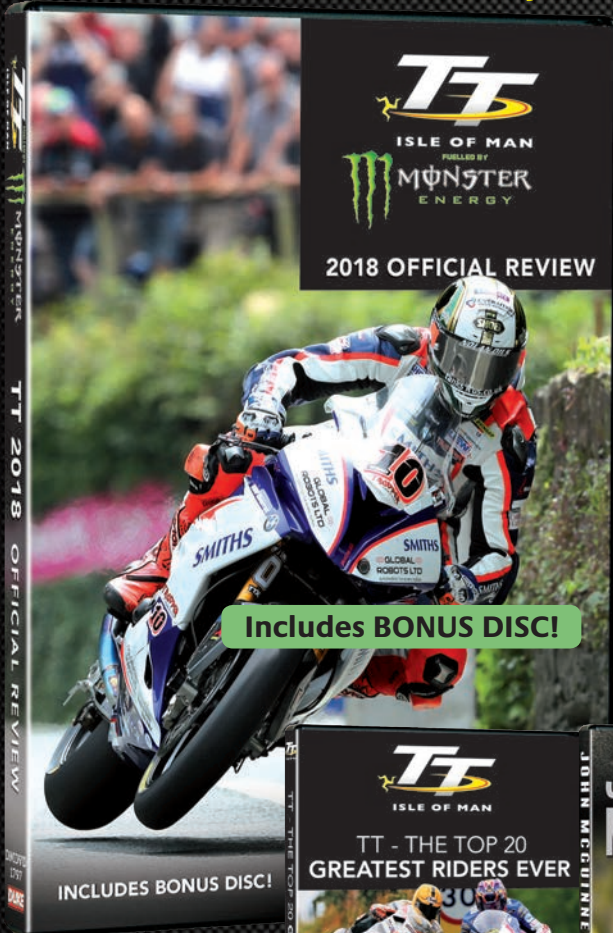


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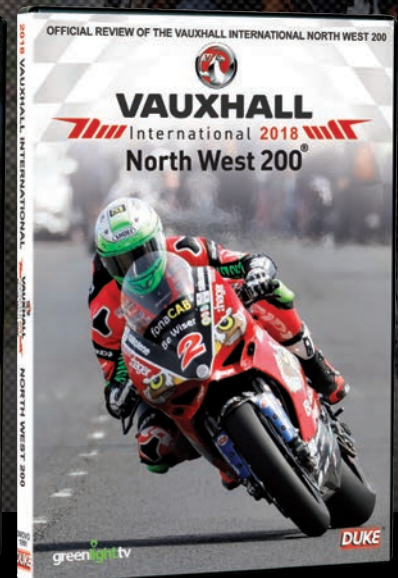


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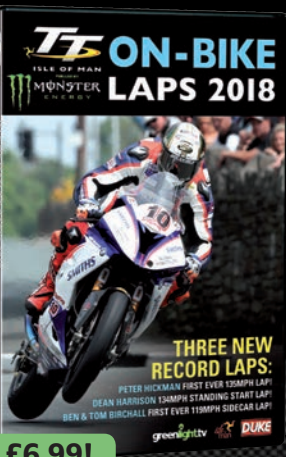
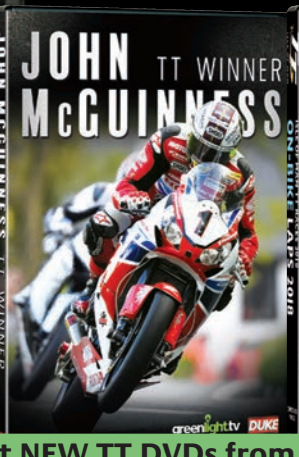
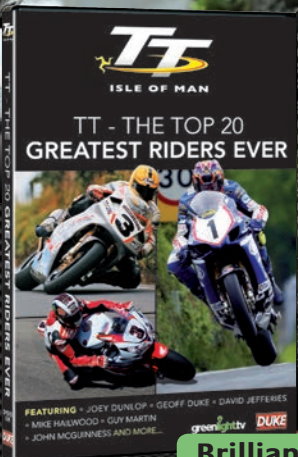
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