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Official fuel consumption for the CUPRA Ateca mpg (litres/100km): 31.7 (8.9) – 32.5 (8.7). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 197-199 (g/km).

\*Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. Data correct at April 2020.



**F1 2020** All the action from the Austrian GP

# AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S BEST MOTORSPORT WEEKLY

9 JULY 2020

## How Bottas won on Formula 1's dramatic return

Hamilton gets penalised... twice!

Leclerc stars amid Ferrari struggles

Norris grabs stunning first F1 podium



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OF REPORTS  
AS RACING  
RESTARTS



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# Formula 1 comes back with a bang – and makes a stand

Formula 1 finally kicked off, seven months after the previous grand prix, in Austria last weekend and what a dramatic race it was. Close racing, contact and – almost unheard of in the modern era – unreliability made for an unpredictable event. It was probably a bit too messy to be called a *great* race, but few would have predicted a Mercedes-Ferrari-McLaren top three before the weekend, or even after qualifying.

The pace of the striking-looking Mercedes W11 was not a surprise, but Lewis Hamilton's rather fraught race was (see page 16). The five-second penalty for the unfortunate contact with Alex Albon (surely the definition of a 'racing incident') was harsh, but did mean that Lando Norris scored a well-deserved first F1 podium.

More important than that was that the drivers joined Hamilton's anti-racism stance, even if not all of them took a knee (p4). Some people have argued that sport should be kept separate from politics, but that is plainly ridiculous.

Firstly, sport has been used for many political aims over the years, such as gaining national prestige or to bring 'credibility' to dubious regimes. Secondly, nothing exists in a vacuum. Sport is a form of escapism, but it is still part of society. And finally, why shouldn't a key figure, such as Hamilton, use his platform to try to bring positive change concerning something he has personal experience of?



**Kevin Turner**  
Editor

kevin.turner@autosport.com

**NEXT WEEK**  
**16 JULY**

**Styrian Grand Prix**  
**Can anyone stop Mercedes? Will Hamilton bounce back?**



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Motorsport Images/Coates; Tee

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## F1 STARS EXPLAIN STANCES ON

### FORMULA 1

Formula 1 was vocal in its anti-racism messaging throughout last weekend's Austrian Grand Prix as the season finally got under way, but not all drivers agreed to take a knee on the grid before the start of the race.

F1 returned amid a vastly different global climate from the attempted season opener in March. Six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton has been leading F1's voice in recent weeks, encouraging his peers to use their platforms to amplify the messages against racial injustice. He also confirmed plans to establish The Hamilton Commission, a project aimed at improving diversity in motorsport starting at a grassroots level by getting more BAME students into engineering.

F1 itself announced its new 'We Race As One' campaign, focusing on aiding inclusivity and diversity in the sport. Mercedes switched to a black livery for the 2020 season in a firm anti-racism message, and the team also recognised the need to improve on the figure of 3% of its workforce identifying as belonging to an ethnic minority background.

With a number of other sports leagues taking public actions to condemn racism upon their resumption, discussions began between the F1 drivers over a similar move. In the Premier League, all players took a knee before kick-off in each of the first games back, and wore shirts with 'Black Lives Matter' in place of their names.

Talks between the F1 drivers over taking a knee – a gesture first made famous by NFL player Colin Kaepernick that has since become synonymous with the Black Lives Matter movement – intensified through the week before their first group meeting in Friday's

drivers' briefing at the Red Bull Ring.

Hamilton did not ask the other drivers take a knee, and revealed that the suggestion was first made in the briefing by Sebastian Vettel and Romain Grosjean. The idea was not met with complete support, with some expressing concerns over taking a knee and the implications within their own cultures and nations.

"There was a little bit of difficulty with some drivers and their nationality, and what something like taking a knee would represent," Daniel Ricciardo explained. "Obviously the reasons why we would do it is purely to support Black Lives Matter. It is for nothing political or anything else. But there is a little bit of a fine line with

**"EVERYONE HAD A RIGHT TO THEIR OWN PERSONAL CHOICE. FOR ME, THAT WAS WHAT I FELT WAS RIGHT"**

some drivers and their nationalities and how it is perceived. We are not going to try to put anyone in jeopardy. No one is going to be judged or criticised if they don't stand there in a certain way or take a knee."

Hamilton described the meeting as "interesting" on Saturday after qualifying. He thanked those drivers who had spoken up about racial injustice, and encouraged those who had not yet to do so. "I just described the scenario that silence is generally complicit," he said. "There still is some silence in some cases, but I think it's also part of a dialogue of people trying to understand."

The Grand Prix Drivers' Association issued a statement confirming drivers would be free to act as they each saw fit ahead of the race, with time





End racism, start racing. The drivers on the grid at the Austrian Grand Prix

# SHOW OF UNITY

being allocated in the schedule for a public show of unity condemning racism.

In the build-up to lights out, both Charles Leclerc and Max Verstappen put messages on social media reiterating their committing to fighting racism, but confirmed they would not take a knee. "I believe that what matters are facts and behaviours in our daily life rather than formal gestures that could be seen as controversial in some countries," wrote Leclerc. "I will not take the knee but this does not mean at all that I am less committed than others in the fight against racism."

All drivers wore T-shirts reading 'End Racism' for the grid ceremony, with the exception of Hamilton, whose shirt carried a message reading 'Black Lives Matter'.

Shortly before the national anthem, a moment of silence and reflection was announced, at which point 14 of the 20 drivers took a knee. Leclerc and Verstappen were joined in standing by Antonio Giovinazzi, Kimi Raikkonen, Daniil Kvyat and Carlos Sainz Jr. A number of other team members on the grid, including Verstappen's car crew, also took a knee.

Hamilton said after the race that he was grateful to those who took the knee, but stressed the importance of the wider message the F1 community remained united in conveying. "I'm really, really grateful for those who did kneel along with me," Hamilton said. "I think it's still a really powerful message. But ultimately whether or not you kneel or do not kneel, that's not going to change the world. And it's a much, much bigger issue across the world."

"I think everyone had a right to their own personal choice. And for me, that was what I felt was right to do."

LUKE SMITH



## Is Alonso the 'big name' Renault wants for 2021?

### FORMULA 1

Renault Formula 1 boss Cyril Abiteboul has said that the French manufacturer is talking to "big names" as it seeks to fill the seat that will be vacated by Daniel Ricciardo at the end of 2020.

Former world champions Fernando Alonso and Sebastian Vettel have both been linked with the team since it was confirmed that Ricciardo will move to McLaren next year to replace Carlos Sainz Jr, who is off to Ferrari. At last weekend's Austrian Grand Prix, Renault driver Esteban Ocon said he would welcome Alonso as a team-mate in 2021.

Asked at the Red Bull Ring whether Vettel and Alonso were of interest to Renault, Abiteboul declined to comment on specifics, but did outline what the team wants from any signing.

"We need first a driver for each car," he said. "We need a quick driver, and we need a driver that can understand and buy into Renault's project. We are very clear about the nature of our team. We are a bit of a unique team in the F1 landscape, but at the same time also a young team, still in the making, with some struggles – in particular last year."

"So we need someone who's capable to understand all of that, and understand the value of all the work, effort and ethics we are putting into that. I'm not saying that Daniel has not understood

that, that's absolutely not what I mean. I'm talking about the future. So we are talking to a few names, some big names, some lesser known names. We are taking the time, making sure there is a good alignment between what we are and what a driver is looking to get in a team like ours."

Abiteboul declined to put any deadline on the driver decision.

If Renault were to look internally to replace Ricciardo, it could turn to its junior ranks, with Formula 2 drivers Guanyu Zhou and Christian Lundgaard already impressing last weekend at the Red Bull Ring.

Chinese driver Zhou qualified on pole position and was leading the F2 feature race prior to gearbox problems. Dane Lundgaard scored a fourth and a fifth on his F2 debut.

Alonso also scoffed at rumours that he would be replacing Ricciardo imminently at Renault for the remainder of the 2020 season, something the team described as 'nonsense'.

His only confirmed race outing this year – should he actually qualify this time – is his assault on the Indianapolis 500 on 23 August. Alonso will join the Chevrolet-powered Arrow McLaren SP team alongside the squad's full-time rookie IndyCar duo of Oliver Askew and Pato O'Ward.

ADAM COOPER

➔ P36 F2 REPORT





## Open verdict on success of new Pirelli 18-inch rubber

### FORMULA 2

Formula 1's future arrived in F2 last weekend at the Red Bull Ring when the series had its first race event with the new 18-inch wheels that will be introduced to the sport's elite category in 2022.

While there were some differences in set-up and driving style required, and the tyres offered vastly increased longevity, the picture was muddled because Italian supplier Pirelli brought a conservative choice of rubber to the first race weekend.

Teams used the hard compound as the prime tyre, and the soft as the option, but for this weekend's follow-up event at the same track it will be the medium and supersoft respectively, and teams are expecting to get a much clearer view.

"It was very good to see the hard tyre – not the ideal choice for the Red Bull Ring, but interesting to mix things up – working as well as the soft, which is well-suited to this track," said Pirelli chief Mario Isola. "Next weekend, we have a more appropriate selection. Most of all, both new 18-inch F2 compounds allowed drivers to attack continuously."

DAMS boss Francois Sicard, whose squad is the reigning F2 teams' champion, suggested that even with the supersoft one of his operation's advantages will likely be pegged back.

"It's changed a lot of things," Sicard told Autosport. "The impact of the 18-inch wheels is pretty big on the behaviour of the car. We are not restarting from scratch, but we have new things to take into consideration.

"We had to adapt to that and also to

the tyre compound that was chosen for the first event. We were on hard tyres, which meant less degradation than in the past, which meant a different way of setting up the car.

"We were pretty strong with [minimising] degradation in the past, so we have less advantage on the hard compound. And even with the softer compound we should have less degradation than in the past."

Prema Racing supremo Rene Rosin added that it will take F2's move on to the following rounds at the Hungaroring and Silverstone for the teams to really understand what they are dealing with. "I want to see next weekend when we run the supersoft," said Rosin. "For sure the set-up and driving style are different, but we are still on the safe side. We will see when we get to the high-demanding [on tyres] circuits like Budapest and Silverstone, because Spielberg [Red Bull Ring] is not a demanding circuit."

Prema was one of the squads that had to modify its management staff as the coronavirus protocols forced F2 and F3 teams to operate within their own separate bubbles. Rosin and overall team manager Guillaume Capietto stayed with the F2 squad, while former F3 European Championship ace Ralf Aron, who has managed Prema's Formula Regional team since giving up his driving career in early 2019, took over on the F3 team alongside Rosin's wife Angelina Ertsoy and oversaw victory for Oscar Piastri.

When asked whether it was frustrating not to celebrate, Rosin joked: "Of course, but we celebrate using [Microsoft] Teams and Zoom!"

**MARCUS SIMMONS**

## Aitken gets FP1 Williams debut

### FORMULA 1

Williams Formula 1 reserve Jack Aitken will get his first FP1 outing in George Russell's car at this weekend's Styrian Grand Prix at the Red Bull Ring.

With no in-season testing this year, opportunities for young drivers are rare, although one day has been set aside for them after the last race of the season.

Williams is the first team to make a commitment to using an FP1 session for a protege in 2020. While Aitken, who will also race this weekend in the FIA Formula 2 Championship with Campos Racing, has not yet driven the current Williams, he has previously tested for Renault. He ran a full day at Barcelona in 2018, and then two more at the Spanish venue and in Bahrain in 2019.

Williams head of vehicle performance Dave Robson explained plans for the run tomorrow (Friday), at the start of what will be the second part of F1's first single-circuit double-header weekend.

"If the weather allows, then this will be a rare opportunity to test some alternative approaches over a full race distance," said Robson. "On Friday we will also give Jack Aitken his first experience of the FW43 as he drives George's car during FP1. Jack has been working hard with the engineers in Grove and we are looking forward to working with him at the track as we continue our intensive test programme."

It's a clever move by Williams to give Aitken a chance to get up to speed so early in the season, given the fact that Russell won't lose out much, having already run a full weekend at the Austrian venue. In addition, the potential for a positive COVID-19 test to put a race driver out of action makes it even more important for a reserve to be familiar with the car.

Aitken took a best result of eighth in the F2 opening round last weekend.

**ADAM COOPER**







**BTCC** The British Touring Car Championship’s hybrid development car made its public debut – well, as public as you can get amid the current restrictions – at the Snetterton Goodyear tyre test on Tuesday. Darren Turner, hybrid developer Cosworth’s test driver, was at the wheel of the Speedworks Motorsport-run Toyota Corolla. Andrew Jordan was also set for a turn in the Corolla on Thursday, after the two-day official test had finished. **Photograph by JEP/MI**

## Rally Estonia set for world championship restart

### WRC

The World Rally Championship has revealed a revised calendar for the coronavirus-halted 2020 season, with the campaign now set to resume in Estonia in September.

The 2020 season was put on hold after just three rounds and several rallies have since been cancelled, including Finland, New Zealand and Rally GB.

The FIA and WRC Promoter have revealed plans to host at least five events scheduled between September and November. Kicking off proceedings will be Rally Estonia, a new fixture on the WRC calendar, on 4-6 September, followed by events in Turkey and Germany.

The news of Estonia’s debut on the WRC map was simultaneously announced at a press conference in the presence of prime minister Juri Ratas and WRC Promoter managing director Oliver Ciesla.

Estonia will become the 33rd nation to host a championship event, although it isn’t exactly a new venue for the WRC teams, having held candidate events for the past two years. The 2019 edition was won by home hero Ott Tanak in a Toyota Yaris.

The Italian round has been rescheduled

for 29 October-1 November, Rally GB’s former date, while Rally Japan has retained its November place on the calendar, despite the country cancelling its Formula 1 and MotoGP events in recent months.

WRC remains in talks with the Ypres Rally to bring WRC to Belgium for the first time. Should that plan come to fruition, the WRC field will run through the Spa Formula 1 circuit for one stage. The championship is also in discussions for a round in Croatia.

“Today’s restart announcement sends a clear signal that the 2020 WRC is back in business,” said Ciesla. “Today’s news allows the WRC to restart at an appropriate time and ensure a season worthy of world championship status.”

**RACHIT THUKRAL**

#### REVISED 2020 WRC DATES

ROUND	EVENT	DATE
4	Estonia	4-6 September
5	Turkey	24-27 September
6	Germany	15-18 October
7	Italy	29 October-1 November
8	Japan	19-22 November



Ogier is leading the WRC after the first three rallies...

MCKLEIN



...while Ciesla has worked to get new calendar

MCKLEIN





**WEC**

Reigning Formula 2 champion and Mercedes Formula E driver Nyck de Vries has joined Toyota's World Endurance Championship LMP1 squad as test and reserve driver.

The 25-year-old Dutchman has been signed up for the remaining three rounds of the 2019-20 WEC, which resumes at Spa on 15 August, and then the 2021 season. He replaces Thomas Laurent, whose deal covered the original timespan of the current campaign.

De Vries has come into the Toyota set-up after being given a try-out in a TS050

HYBRID in last December's WEC rookie test in Bahrain. He was placed with the Japanese manufacturer for the test by the championship organisation after a series of starring performances in the WEC at the wheel of the Racing Team Nederland ORECA-Gibson 07, which included an LMP2 class win at Fuji in October.

He will be at two of the three WEC races this year – the Le Mans 24 Hours in September and Bahrain in November – with RTN. His new role will include testing the 2021 Toyota Le Mans Hypercar, which is due to run for the first time in October.

De Vries has also joined the G-Drive

Racing squad for this year's European Le Mans Series. He will drive its TDS Racing-run ORECA together with team boss Roman Rusinov and Mikkel Jensen, who is graduating to LMP2 after winning the ELMS P3 title last year with EuroInternational.

**Remember when...**

...Julien Jousse was Toyota's reserve at Le Mans in 2012? The Frenchman, who'd won the 2011 Le Mans Series LMP1 crown with the Pescarolo team, was brought in as a back-up after Stephane Sarrazin sustained facial and back injuries in a cycling accident.

**GARY WATKINS**

## Le Mans class winner fights government in court

**LE MANS & COVID-19**

Le Mans 24 Hours class winner Simon Dolan has made an unsuccessful attempt to overturn the UK government's lockdown measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The accountancy and aviation entrepreneur, who won LMP2 at the French enduro in 2014 with Jota Sport, alleged that the restrictions are "unlawful

and disproportionate". He claims that they have been costing the country's economy £2.5 billion a day.

High Court judge Mr Justice Lewis refused permission for the case to proceed on Monday after a preliminary hearing last week. In his judgement he stated that there was no "realistic prospect" that the court could rule that the emergency legislation designed to slow the spread

of the virus could be ruled as disproportionate.

But the judge allowed for Dolan and his lawyer to make further submissions. An appeal has not been ruled out by Dolan.

Dolan and his supporters raised more than £200,000 to make the legal challenge. He was formerly a shareholder in Jota Motorsport, the operating company behind Jota Sport.

**GARY WATKINS**





## IN THE HEADLINES

**CZECH 16-YEAR-OLD IN F3**

Sixteen-year-old Czech Roman Stanek stunned in free practice on his surprise FIA Formula 3 debut at the Red Bull Ring last weekend when he went third fastest. Stanek, a Formula 4 star in 2019, replaced third-tier veteran Niko Kari at Charouz Racing System at the last minute. He qualified 10th but the races didn't go to plan, including causing a safety car when he smashed through a 'DRS' board, leaving polystyrene shards all over the track.

**QUINN'S RENAULT CALL-UP**

British Formula 4 race winner Alex Quinn is a last-minute addition to the Formula Renault Eurocup field for its season opener at Monza this weekend. Quinn has been called up by Arden International for the first two rounds to replace Australian Jackson Walls, who cannot travel due to COVID-19 restrictions. Another late entry is reigning Spanish Formula 4 champion Franco Colapinto – the highly rated Argentinian has been chased by many teams at this level over the winter and has finally completed a deal with MP Motorsport.

**MIKKELSEN'S PIRELLI GIG**

Former Hyundai World Rally Championship driver Andreas Mikkelsen has been named as development driver for Pirelli, which will become the series' control-tyre supplier from 2021-24. The Norwegian is understood to have beaten other out-of-contract contenders including Kris Meeke, Hayden Paddon and Jari-Matti Latvala to land the role.

**LORANDI IN GT MERCEDES**

The 2016 Pau Formula 3 Grand Prix winner, Alessio Lorandi, has moved into the GT World Challenge Europe ranks, where he will share a GetSpeed Mercedes-AMG GT3 with top Merc GT3 exponent Maximilian Buhk and fellow ex-F3 racer Fabian Schiller. The trio are confirmed so far for the Endurance Cup rounds at Imola, Nurburgring and Paul Ricard.



## Plato explains his BTCC hiatus

**BTCC**

Two-time British Touring Car champion Jason Plato has explained that the decision of the official Vauxhall team to pull its full-time entries from the series this season is based on a long-term view.

Vauxhall squad Power Maxed Racing announced on Tuesday morning that neither all-time BTCC wins record holder Plato nor Mat Jackson, who was scheduled to return to the series after two years on the sidelines, will race the Astra in 2020. The team explained in a statement that this was to “preserve our resources for next year”. Plato is already confirmed in the PMR line-up for 2021, while Jackson has what is described as a “first option to continue” next season.

The situation has arisen not only from the truncated BTCC schedule for 2020 and the COVID-19 protocols under which it will operate, but also from a projected economic decline.

“With the knock-on effect of where we are now, what's happened, and what could happen, we cannot fulfil our contracts and obligations to sponsors in a compact and rejigged BTCC in 2020,” Plato told Autosport. “We cannot provide corporate hospitality, if we have a shunt we'll

probably miss a race, and if a member of the team gets COVID-19 we're screwed.

“Also, and this is a very valid point, we are a matter of weeks away from what I believe will be a cataclysmic economic meltdown. Let's catapult ourselves forward. We've used up our budget for 2020, and come November we have to raise the budget again for 2021 – impossible.”

Plato said that his discussions with team boss Adam Weaver had resulted in a decision to “speak to our partners, put a line on our contracts through the 'o' at the end of 2020, and make it a '1' for 2021, and the country's got a chance to recover and we've got a whole year to work on our relationships and partnerships for 2022.”

PMR added that it plans to field at least one Astra as an independent entry in some rounds this year “as part of its plan to showcase and develop both young motorsport talent as well as giving surprise guest outings to some well-known touring car stars who aren't able to commit to a full season due to various other commitments. More exciting news on this will come in the days and weeks ahead.”

Plato said that he has offered his services to BTCC broadcaster ITV. “I know a little bit about telly and touring cars!” he said.

**MARCUS SIMMONS**

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#AUTOSPORT PLUS



## Farfus joins Aston line-up

### WEC

BMW factory driver Augusto Farfus will make a return to the World Endurance Championship and the Le Mans 24 Hours this year with Aston Martin.

The Brazilian, who contested both editions of Le Mans on the 2018-19 WEC superseason calendar with BMW, has been recruited to drive Aston's factory-run GTE Am entry for the final three events of the 2019-20 series by car owner Paul Dalla Lana. Farfus will share the #98 Vantage GTE with Dalla Lana and Ross Gunn at Spa in August, Le Mans in September and the Bahrain finale in November.

He is replacing long-time Aston Martin Racing driver Darren Turner. The Briton will be focusing on development of the marque's Valkyrie road car before a full-time return to the race track next season.

Farfus will also contest the second round of the European Le Mans Series at Spa on 9 August, a week before the WEC event at the Belgian track, alongside Dalla Lana and Mathias Lauda. The #98 Aston will also do the first round of the 2020 ELMS at Paul Ricard on 19 July with Dalla Lana, Gunn and Lauda driving.

Dalla Lana, 2017 WEC GTE Am champion with Lauda and Pedro Lamy, explained that he is good friends with Farfus and that "we've wanted to race together for a while".



### R Motorsport cans 2020 plans

The R-Motorsport Aston Martin squad has withdrawn from this year's GT World Challenge Europe and will instead focus on its 2021 campaigns.

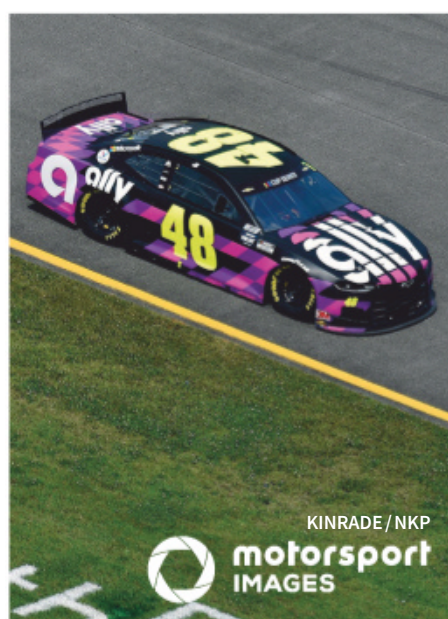
The series frontrunner, whose Aston Martin Vantage GT3s are jointly run by the British Arden and Jota Sport teams, has opted to put its racing activities on hold as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision covers all the Swiss entrant's programmes, which included a return to the

Intercontinental GT Challenge at Kyalami in November and the launch of a one-make Aston series known as the Vantage Cup.

R-Motorsport team principal Florian Kamelger explained that it "doesn't make sense from a business perspective to go racing with a non-profitable, artificially shortened race programme with a late start to the season".

The team had already withdrawn from the DTM, plunging that series into crisis.

**GARY WATKINS**



## Johnson and Nasr hit by coronavirus

### NASCAR/IMSA

Seven-time NASCAR Cup champion Jimmie Johnson and 2018 IMSA SportsCar king Felipe Nasr were both forced out of action last weekend after testing positive for COVID-19.

Johnson missed the Brickyard 400. He had not shown any symptoms, but had a positive result when he was tested after his wife developed allergies. He

therefore gave up his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet to Xfinity Series veteran Justin Allgaier, and has had to delay an IndyCar test this week.

Nasr had been feeling under the weather in the build-up to the Daytona 240 when he got tested, and was found to be positive. He relinquished his place in the Action Express Racing Cadillac alongside Pipo Derani and Colombian former

IndyCar racer Gabby Chaves.

Derani and Chaves finished fifth in this, the first IMSA round since January's Daytona 24 Hours. It keeps Derani in the picture for the title, but makes it impossible for ex-Formula 1 driver Nasr to add a second IMSA crown to his tally.

Both Johnson and Nasr will have to stay out of the cockpit until they are cleared to return by their doctors.

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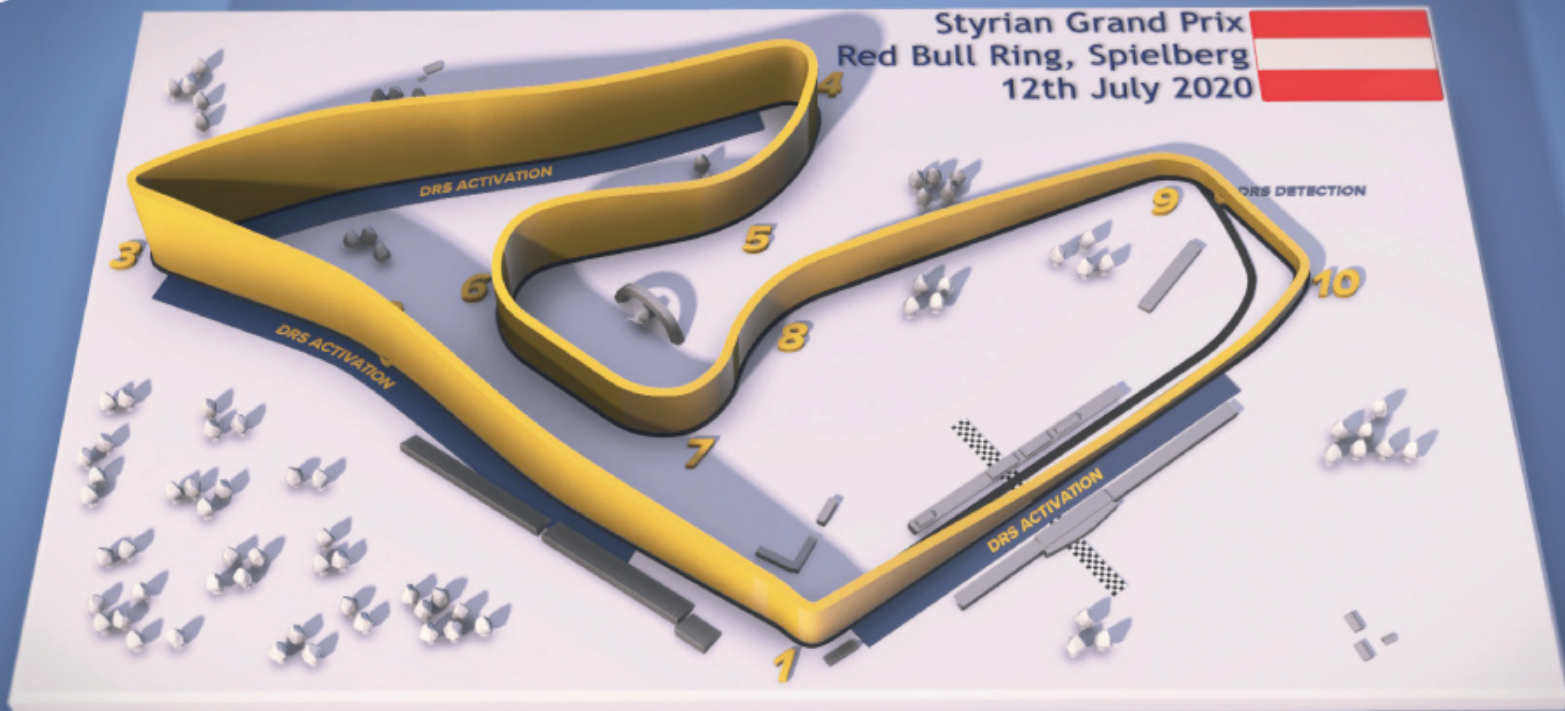
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# F1 STYRIAN GRAND PRIX PREVIEW



LENGTH 2.683 miles NUMBER OF LAPS 71



**2019 POLE POSITION**  
n/a

**POLE LAP RECORD**  
Valtteri Bottas 1m02.939s (2020)

**RACE LAP RECORD**  
Kimi Raikkonen 1m06.957s (2018)

## UK START TIMES

**Friday 10 July**

FP1 1000  
FP2 1400

**Saturday 11 July**

FP3 1100  
QUALIFYING 1400

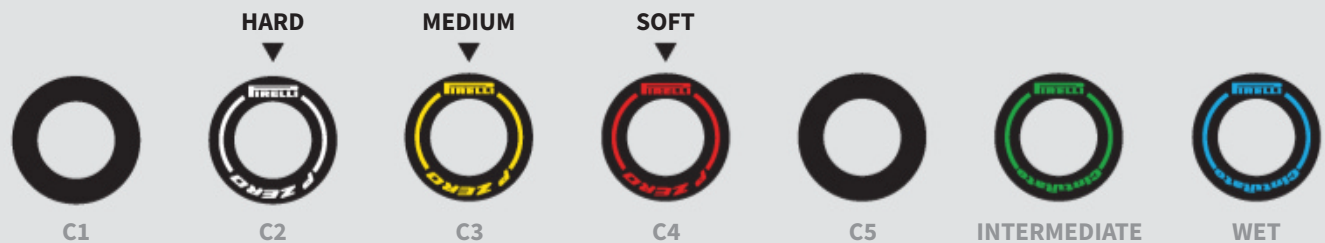
**Sunday 12 July**

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## TYRE ALLOCATION



## CHAMPIONSHIP

### Drivers

1	Bottas	25
2	Leclerc	18
3	Norris	16
4	Hamilton	12
5	Sainz	10

### Constructors

1	Mercedes	37
2	McLaren	26
3	Ferrari	19
4	Racing Point	8
5	AlphaTauri	6



## RACE STATS



### Red Bull Ring masters

Leading points scorers for grands prix at Red Bull Ring/ A1 Ring/ Osterreichring. All races converted to current points system.	<b>D Coulthard</b>	118
	<b>L Hamilton</b>	97
	<b>J Laffite</b>	96
	<b>A Prost</b>	95
	<b>V Bottas</b>	94
	<b>M Schumacher</b>	93
	<b>A Jones</b>	92
	<b>R Peterson</b>	78
	<b>K Raikkonen</b>	77
	<b>N Piquet</b>	76



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# Can the Mercedes drivers maintain their harmony?

*The good relationship and depth of trust that exists between Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas is one of the team's strengths – but this is no ordinary F1 season*

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

**I**n one way, the end of qualifying for the 2020 Austrian Grand Prix played out in the same way as Monaco 2014, when Nico Rosberg kept pole position ahead of Lewis Hamilton despite going off the road. The difference between that incident and the closing stages of qualifying last weekend was that at the Red Bull Ring Hamilton stayed on the gas, but was still unable to beat his team-mate's time. The result was Valtteri Bottas's 12th career pole and his third at the Austrian track. That wasn't the end, though, as Hamilton had improved his best Q3 time despite passing his team-mate floundering on the grass.

We know what happened next, with Hamilton eventually starting fifth. In the post-qualifying press conference, all was indeed well between the Mercedes drivers. Hamilton congratulated his team-mate for his "fantastic job with his lap – it's amazing".

After the wild Austrian GP – well, wild second half anyway – there was another potentially puzzling dynamic between the pair. As they raced to the flag ahead of Charles Leclerc, Hamilton needed to build a five-second gap to keep his position and was at risk of also losing third, which he ultimately did to Lando Norris.

**“Mercedes has said the gearbox problems that struck on Sunday would be expected to reappear”**

Mercedes considered asking Bottas to wave Hamilton through, but decided it was too risky. On lap 69, he'd gone 2.389s slower than the lap before – his fastest of the race – and this was questioned afterwards, but Bottas explained that he was simply slowing when arriving at the scene of Daniil Kvyat's late-race retirement.

Hamilton wasn't having any conspiracy talk: "I saw Valtteri just now and honestly, I know Valtteri better than probably a lot of other people. And that's not something that was on my mind and something that I would ever think that he would do."

So, two potential flashpoints in two days for Mercedes, and no issue between its drivers. It's been known for some time that Bottas's position at the team is strengthened by his good relationship with Hamilton, far better for internal harmony than the team-mate war that emerged in 2014 with Rosberg – the Monaco qualifying incident a crucial part of that breakdown.

Ordinarily, Mercedes would have conducted its debrief last weekend and then decamped to Silverstone for the British GP, but the results of the pandemic mean it remains at the Red Bull Ring for this weekend's inaugural Styrian GP. So now the teams will be able to put what they learned from the first race into practice for the second – on precisely the same course.

But Bottas now has an early advantage in the title race – one that was increased by Hamilton being bumped down to fourth. So far, F1 has only confirmed eight races on the 2020 calendar – the minimum number required to call a world championship result. None of this is to say the Bottas-Hamilton relationship will break down under the added pressure of a compacted season, but it's a consideration, and the next stage is set to play out immediately.

For the first time in F1's history it will effectively stage a repeat grand prix. So, the question is whether the result will be the same.

More than likely, it will. Mercedes took a 1-2 on the road last weekend, and only lost that because of the dramatic circumstances of the second half of the race. Had the safety car not intervened, and the order remained as it was before lap 26, Red Bull's Alex Albon would have more than likely finished 45s adrift of the leaders.

The weather could shake things up, with storms forecast to potentially impact qualifying. The calm wind last Saturday increased the power of a tow for the grid-setting session, which could also be different for the upcoming event. Then there are the upgrades some teams will bring – all eyes will surely be on Ferrari's fast-tracked developments given the deficit it currently faces.

What almost certainly won't change is Mercedes' ultimate pace – it remains F1's benchmark, and by some margin. But it seems reliability could be a problem it must manage again in Austria Part 2, as it has said the gearbox problems that struck on Sunday would be expected to reappear. This is because it concerns the way Mercedes currently has the W11 arranged, and that has the *potential* to wreck its weekend and therefore impact the title battle.

Combined with the pressures of the compacted season, where any failure to finish will be harder to make up for, this adds an extra dynamic to watch between the Mercedes drivers.

Hamilton must now strike back at Bottas. The former has tended to flourish the longer a campaign goes on, while the latter is yet to prove he can keep his game high enough for long enough. Both of those historical factors could yet be inverted if the season ends up being much shorter than usual – which would surely increase the pressure inside Mercedes. ❄️

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# YOUR SAY

*I do not see Sebastian Vettel making it to the end of the season, as he has clearly already mentally checked out*

**RICHARD NEWELL**

### Vettel's the biggest disappointment

In testing times, Formula 1 has provided a very entertaining start to the season, such is the case with any race of attrition. It was great to see Valtteri Bottas in truly dominant form (could this finally be his year?). However, I was even more impressed by Lando Norris's results. Admittedly an inherited podium, but even fourth on track is a stunning achievement. And while it was difficult to watch Alex Albon crash out, thus robbing us of a potentially great battle for victory, the penalty for Lewis Hamilton was even harder to digest.

However, the greatest disappointment was seeing Sebastian Vettel's ever-decreasing skill behind the wheel. A lowly 10th position (lucky to even get that), which he blamed on the car. The same car that Charles Leclerc scored a podium with.

Personally, I do not see Sebastian making it to the end of the season, as he has clearly already mentally checked out. My suggestion would be for Ferrari to show him the door early. The drive could then be re-allocated to Kimi Raikkonen (a safe pair of hands). This would release a seat at Alfa Romeo, which could be used to assess another member the Ferrari Driver Academy.

**Richard Newell**  
By email

### A racing incident should not result in a penalty

It has to be said that the penalty given to Lewis Hamilton was absolute nonsense. He didn't open the steering, stayed on his chosen line, Albon took the risk of an outside overtake and clipped Hamilton's front left with his rear right. A simple racing incident and nothing else.

Albon is talented and a good guy apparently, but to claim after the race that he was denied a win was wishful thinking to put it kindly.

Still, it has stoked up the increased level of intensity in the rivalry between Mercedes and Red Bull! Looking forward to the weekend and part two.

And it's great to have you back in print!

**Neil Davey**  
Newport, South Wales



### Ridiculous to blame Hamilton

Any fool could see that Albon drove his rear wheel into Hamilton's car; Lewis was already on full lock, and he didn't open his steering. What was he expected to do? That Mercedes may be good, but even Hamilton can't make it dematerialise! A ridiculous penalty. In other news, what odds on Vettel bailing before season's end?

**Phil Oakes**  
Portishead

### Thursdays are back to normal

After 40-plus years of reading Autosport, Thursdays meant only one thing: 'Autosport day'. Through my business life, Thursday was always my day off so I could read your magazine and now you are back. Normal life, as I know it, has returned.

**Peter Allen**  
Mini Miglia racer #89

### And finally...


Red Bull gives you whines?

**Graeme Innes-Johnstone**  
Elland, West Yorks


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# BOTTAS ON TOP AMID RED BULL RING DRAMA

*It's been a long time coming, but the first race of the 2020  
Formula 1 season delivered thrills and spills in spades*

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY



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Grid lines up, Bottas on pole – only three and a half months late

**D**

espite all that was different about the 2020 Formula 1 season opener given the major changes brought by the coronavirus pandemic, there were some reassuringly familiar themes in an action-packed Austrian Grand Prix.

So much happened during the 71-lap race at the Red Bull Ring that it emphasised again the tragedy of the pandemic, with spectators barred from attending an event that would have sent them into raptures multiple times. There was the political wrangling over the pre-season controversies ahead of the race – Red Bull’s protest of Mercedes’ dual-axis steering in particular – and a last-minute grid penalty for the reigning world champion after uncovered footage proved that Lewis Hamilton had infringed the rules concerning yellow flags in the closing moments of qualifying.

The race itself also recalled so many memories of 2019. Valtteri Bottas emerged victorious in the season opener, and Mercedes again faced dramatic and unexpected reliability concerns as it had done at the same track in the past two years. Red Bull rolled the dice on strategy with Max Verstappen, in the same way as it had done in 2019 – getting him through Q2 on the medium Pirelli tyre to start the race on the contra strategy – and there was another late, controversial wheel-to-wheel clash. In summary, the Red Bull Ring yet again delivered another thrilling grand prix.

It was a race that could be divided into three distinct phases and was ultimately a contest that was robbed of chess-like strategy planning, with heat-of-the-moment opportunistic tactical calls required. It was a race that favoured the bold and mercilessly punished the slightest error.

The first phase was undoubtedly the most conventional. Bottas comfortably led away from pole on his soft Pirelli tyres, stealing a 2.047-second lead on the opening tour as Verstappen was forced to resist a seemingly unending challenge from McLaren’s Lando Norris – the star of qualifying with fourth (which became third on the grid after Hamilton’s penalty). Once the Red Bull driver had established that second was firmly his, he set about chasing Bottas, armed with his medium-compound rubber and planning to run deep, hoping no one behind would attempt to undercut his strategy and cost him track position. But Verstappen wouldn’t get that far.

Bottas had stretched his lead to 3.333s at the end of lap 10, when Verstappen slowed on the long run up to the track’s Turn 3 uphill, tight right-hander. He’d lost drive approaching the opening corner and, try as he might, visibly urging the car to respond to the settings activations he was desperately triggering as he toured slowly back to the pits, Verstappen could not find a way back into the race. He was the first to fall in what would prove to be a very attritional contest.

Red Bull remained tight-lipped in the aftermath, with team principal Christian Horner cryptically saying the issue that had occurred on Verstappen’s Honda power unit was “not something that we haven’t seen previously”.





Power unit issue put paid to Verstappen's hopes

So Bottas suddenly found himself with a 7.9s lead, with a new threat coming from behind in the form of his team-mate. Hamilton had made little initial progress in the opening laps from his new starting spot of fifth – in no small part thanks to a pretty firm shove from Alex Albon at the downhill Turn 4 right-hander on the opening lap. The Red Bull driver was ahead and acceptably used his position to shut the door on the world champion at the same spot where 60 laps later they would come to actual blows. Hamilton tracked his rival in the early laps, after they'd both made it past Norris by the end of the fourth tour, and then

## “IT WAS GETTING QUITE EXCITING. THEN THE SAFETY CAR CAME OUT AND THAT PUT A SPANNER IN THE WORKS”

used DRS to breeze by on the run to Turn 4 on lap nine.

Another wave of déjà vu now crashed down – with Verstappen out, Mercedes led the way, both of its cars at the head of the pack and seemingly in a race of their own. The circumstances had changed drastically come the end, but for the rest of the first stint Bottas and Hamilton played a typical cat-and-mouse chase. Hamilton slowly eroded Bottas's lead, cutting it to 3.242s by the start of lap 26. It wasn't clear if Bottas was simply letting his team-mate close while preserving his tyres – an art that Hamilton has mastered and has proved to be one of the differences between the duo in the past three years.

Bottas said he “could really control” his pace to “really make sure we could get to the target stop lap”. He added: “And I tried to do the right things with the tyres and maintaining the car.” But Hamilton saw things differently, saying: “I was closing down Valtteri during that period. And it was just at the time where he was really starting to fall off the cliff with his tyres. And I could see the gain that I was having each lap, so it was getting quite exciting, because I needed to get in as close as possible. Then the safety car came out and that put a spanner in the works.”

The particular ‘spanner’ was Haas driver Kevin Magnussen, whose >>



Bottas reckoned he had things under control, but Hamilton saw it differently



retirement on lap 26 pushed the race into its second phase. The Dane had been under attack from the returning Esteban Ocon when they approached Turn 3 and, as the Renault came by on the inside, a sinister puff of carbon brake dust appeared from Magnussen's right-front wheel and he shot into the runoff beyond the corner, pirouetting to a stop by the barriers. His position was in the line of fire at the end of a high-speed straight, so the safety car was called into action to allow for the VF-20's safe recovery.

Mercedes brought the leaders in, Bottas's right-front soft looking particularly angry despite him being "less than 10 laps from the planned stop". We'll never know what would have happened had the opening stint played out as planned. Instead of a possible contest, Hamilton followed his team-mate in for fresh hard tyres and rejoined without losing time as Bottas had been serviced once he arrived.

When the race restarted on lap 31, the Mercedes drivers quickly pulled clear of the pack again, Bottas immediately leaping to a 1.026s lead as he demonstrated a skill with safety-car restarts that he would be forced to rely upon twice more before the day was done. But while the second phase again boiled down to a straight fight between the Mercedes drivers, it took on an altogether different nature when it

became clear that both leading cars were under threat of an early exit with mechanical dramas. Bottas had been warned as early as lap three that he needed to drive in a manner to protect his car, but at the time this simply seemed to be a reminder that he didn't need to over-exert himself given the advantage the W11 had over the field, albeit with the threat of Verstappen's alternative strategy while it was a factor.

Racing Point's Lance Stroll had joined Verstappen and Renault driver Daniel Ricciardo in making it three retirements in the opening 20 laps when he pulled out on lap 20, down on Mercedes power. The works Mercedes team then cited his issue in a call to Hamilton on lap 23 that a sensor problem was at play in the retirement of the customer power unit, and the leaders were advised to start avoiding kerbs to reduce the risk of the same problem plaguing their cars.

Bottas received a coded warning six laps after Hamilton had told Mercedes on lap 35 that he wanted to remain in control of his own engine-mode settings in the heat of his chase. Mercedes responded to warn it would soon be turning down the power on both cars, although team boss Toto Wolff insisted afterwards that this was not a move to freeze the race as Mercedes would "never interfere in a fight in the first few races of a season".

For several minutes after lap 42, Mercedes' team-radio airwaves were awash with ever more stark warnings about using the kerbs, such was the fear that a gearbox sensor was threatening to give in, and Hamilton was implicitly told it was not a concern regarding the suspension. In the end, Mercedes chief strategist James Vowles had to give an identical no-nonsense warning that the issue was "critical" for both Bottas and Hamilton to get them to adjust their driving away from the kerbs.

"Initially it was a tricky one because I was watching in the mirrors and I could see Lewis still pushing pretty hard and making use of all the track – but obviously you want to prioritise the reliability," said Bottas. "It took a couple of laps to really optimise the new way of driving and avoiding the kerbs. The kerbs here, the more you go onto them, the vibration just kind of ramps up. So, you get a feel for what is still OK and what is too much. There are only a few places where you really need to take care, so after one or two laps we got used to it."



Both Haas cars (this is Magnussen) were pitched off the track by brake problems





Leclerc upheld Ferrari honour with inspired drive to second place

## “MERCEDES’ TEAM-RADIO AIRWAVES WERE AWASH WITH EVER MORE STARK WARNINGS ABOUT USING THE KERBS”

Bottas, it seemed, adjusted better than Hamilton. The gap was 0.674s at the end of lap 43, and he was able to open it to 1.757s seven tours later, at which point the next development heralded the arrival of the race’s third and final act. Just a few moments after Romain Grosjean had gone off at Turn 4 as a result of an identical brake issue to the one that had put Haas team-mate Magnussen out (although Grosjean was able to recover to the pits to retire), George Russell pulled over on the opposite side of the track at the same corner. There was little time to reflect on what was a bitter twist for the Briton, who had shone in qualifying and was running 13th and in the hunt for points given that so many cars were failing. This was because the safety car was again called into action as Russell’s Williams was recovered.

Mercedes kept the now-subdued leaders out on their used hard tyres, but Red Bull opted to bring Albon in again, sacrificing third place in the snake to Racing Point’s Sergio Perez, but gaining fresh softs and a grip advantage. Behind, Norris and McLaren team-mate Carlos Sainz also pitted for new mediums, the Spaniard coming in one lap later and therefore remaining behind Ferrari’s Charles Leclerc, who had also put on new mediums for the run to the flag at the same time as Norris.

On lap 55, Bottas got the jump on Hamilton again, and behind them Albon passed Perez into Turn 3, a split-second before the safety car was required again. The reason for its sudden reappearance was that Kimi Raikkonen’s Alfa Romeo had dramatically shed its front-right wheel as he blasted towards the final corner at the restart. The wheelnut had been cross-threaded at his own stop under the Russell safety car and, once the wheel had worked loose and flown off, Raikkonen parked up on the pit straight. A tractor was required to remove his stricken C39.

The time it took to move the Alfa left the race with an 11-lap blast to the finish, and it suddenly seemed that Mercedes was in real danger. Albon had been allowed back ahead by Perez, after ceding third in the chaos of the safety-car system being activated for the third and final time, and the 22-year-old was set to bring his soft-tyre advantage to bear.

Albon did just that, but there was no fairytale ending, disaster coming upon him with glory in sight, just as it had done at the 2019 Brazilian GP – seven months but just two races earlier. What’s >>

## QUALIFYING



At 1541 last Saturday at the Red Bull Ring, the scale of Ferrari’s problems with its SF1000 car was fully revealed. This was the moment when the Q2 flag fell and Sebastian Vettel was dumped out of qualifying after Alex Albon had popped his Red Bull up the order. The soon-to-be-former Ferrari driver was left forlornly wandering down the pitlane, his day done.

“Obviously it’s a surprise,” said Vettel. “We thought we had a bit more in hand, but it looks like the others were probably running a bit more fuel, a bit more conservative in practice.”

Charles Leclerc managed to rescue some respectability for Ferrari with seventh, but he had been in serious danger of qualifying behind both McLarens, the Racing Points and Daniel Ricciardo’s Renault. A year ago Leclerc had been on pole in Austria – in 2020 his qualifying lap was 0.92s slower than that benchmark, which stood as the track record until Q3 last Saturday. It wasn’t just the works Ferrari that had stepped back: customer squads Haas and Alfa Romeo were 0.619s and 1.009s slower respectively than in 2019 qualifying. Given the short lap, it showed just how much the Ferrari power unit is giving away compared to 12 months ago, after, of course, the controversial engine settlement with the FIA.

In Q3, Valtteri Bottas took Leclerc’s record with a 1m02.939s on his first run, but the serenity Mercedes had been enjoying up to that point unravelled from there. On the final Q3 runs – this time with Bottas giving Lewis Hamilton a tow – the Finn improved his sector-one time but then slid a fraction too wide exiting the downhill right of Turn 4 and skated into the gravel. He stayed off the track, actually spinning further around on the grass inside Turn 5 as he went to rejoin, to keep out of Hamilton’s way. The world champion reported seeing “a pretty big puff of dust” but no yellow flag indicators so kept his foot in, improving his time at the end of the lap. But it wasn’t enough to stop Bottas sealing a 12th F1 pole.

**“HAMILTON REPORTED SEEING ‘A PRETTY BIG PUFF OF DUST’ BUT NO YELLOW FLAG INDICATORS”**

Long after the celebrations had ended, Mercedes found itself in its first spot of real difficulty when Hamilton was summoned to the stewards to explain his last-lap improvement despite passing Bottas’s off. He was initially cleared as the evidence showed he’d been given “conflicting signals” regarding yellow and green flags but, when more video evidence came to light on Sunday morning, Red Bull petitioned the decision and Hamilton was given a three-place grid penalty. This promoted Max Verstappen to the front row and Lando Norris to third – his best F1 grid spot.





## WHAT IT WAS LIKE WORKING AT THE AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX

The Austrian Grand Prix will go down as one of the most memorable, albeit bizarre, Formula 1 races I've ever reported on. While the action out on track and a thrilling race on Sunday looked like any other good F1 GP we've had in the past, the rest of the weekend was like nothing experienced before.

This was a weekend of no fans, social distancing, protective bubbles, COVID testing and face masks. The coronavirus pandemic has changed the world in ways that may never be fully rolled back and, for the 23 journalists who were invited as a select group to cover the event, the working practices were totally different.

Even beforehand the logistics were more challenging than normal. Part of the FIA's coronavirus protocols demanded that everyone who attended had tested negative for COVID-19 in the 96 hours before walking into the venue. That meant enduring the uncomfortable throat and nose swabs a few days before travelling, and then every five days throughout the event.

Once through the police roadblocks and checkpoints on the way into the track, the only entrance to the circuit required a forehead temperature check – to ensure you weren't carrying



a fever – and then a mandatory washing of your hands.

In the main entrance to the media centre was the first of many notices asking for two-metre social distancing to be maintained. And, at regular points, hand sanitisers were placed encouraging everyone to keep clean, stay safe and keep the virus away.

Where normally the media centre for an F1 season opener is buzzing with excitement and full of eager journalists, and PRs

gossiping after a long time at home, it was instead eerily quiet.

Social distancing meant desks were kept far apart, and everyone was required to wear face masks except when sitting at their computers. The media canteen desks were strictly for a maximum of two people only.

The paddock and pitlane were off limits, and no direct contact was allowed with any team members or drivers, as part of an FIA effort to keep more than

50 social bubbles across 2000 people separated.

It meant official press conferences no longer took place with media in the room. Instead, drivers were left in there alone, with just a handful of essential staff present, while the press asked questions across Zoom, or pre-submitted video.

The one IRL (In Real Life) press conference took place with FIA president Jean Todt, but journalists had to sit in chairs that were

**“SOMEONE TRIED TO PASS A MICROPHONE, BUT IT WAS QUICKLY SHUT DOWN IN CASE IT WAS A VIRUS CONDUIT”**

several metres apart, and everyone was wearing face masks.

Hearing the questions being asked was quite hard in such a vast room, but when someone attempted to pass a microphone to a press member to make things easier, it was very quickly shut down in case it became a conduit to spreading the virus.

Overkill maybe, but the fact that F1 got through 6000 coronavirus tests over the Austrian GP week with not a single positive result was the ultimate proof of the success F1 achieved in getting going again.

**JONATHAN NOBLE**



Noble somehow manages to wear a mask without his glasses steaming up

TEE





SUTTON

Lower-key podium celebration still involves a proper drenching

more, it was a clash with the same driver that cost him dear.

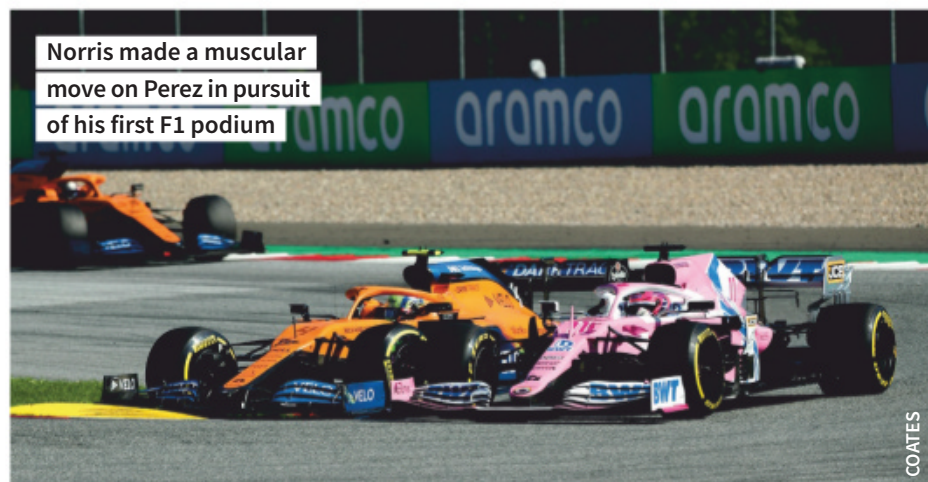
“The biggest advantage he had was on the warm-up of the tyre, because Mercedes had to get the hard tyre going after quite a few laps behind the safety car,” said Horner. “We could see the Mercedes was very quick today so he needed to make it work.”

Albon attacked Hamilton almost immediately, feinting to the outside at Turn 3 and then going around the outside of the Mercedes at Turn 4 to echo their opening-lap exchange. This time, though, there was contact – Hamilton, on full lock, clipped the Red Bull with his left-front to Albon’s right rear and spun him into the gravel just when it seemed he was past and looking onwards to Bottas. Albon later retired with power unit trouble, but he was insistent that he “could have won that race”.

“I felt like Brazil was a bit more fifty-fifty, this one I felt like I did the move already and I was already focusing on Bottas,” he added. “It was so late, the contact.”

Hamilton was initially apologetic but later said he felt it had been a “racing incident” as the pair disagreed on how much space Albon had on his outside before the contact. The stewards, though, swiftly blamed Hamilton and handed him a five-second race time addition.

This had all sorts of implications for the closing stages. Hamilton needed to build a gap to the chasing Leclerc, who had frankly mugged Perez at Turn 3 on lap 66 (after leaping past Norris two tours before) – a stunning move to the podium on a day when Ferrari would have been nowhere without the many race interruptions. When Norris bumped his way past Perez at the same spot on lap 69, he too suddenly had the chance to take an unexpected podium, but he had to charge.



Norris made a muscular move on Perez in pursuit of his first F1 podium

COATES



Hamilton: “A racing incident”; Albon: “I could have won”

Wolff said Mercedes briefly considered ordering Bottas to let Hamilton past to build a buffer in clean air, but felt that there was “too much risk” and “too much complexity to do such a switch”. Leclerc was close enough to run happily to the flag, overturning a low-key start to the weekend where he had lagged behind team-mate Sebastian Vettel in practice because he “hadn’t been driving well”, and claiming his 11th F1 podium 2.7s behind the victorious Bottas at the flag.

But the final word has to go to Norris. The 20-year-old set the race’s fastest lap on the final tour, aided by McLaren instructing him to deploy his overtake engine mode on multiple occasions to extract the maximum power, and beating Hamilton in the final classification by just 0.198s.

“I’m speechless,” Norris said. “There were a few points during the race where I thought I kind of fudged it up quite a bit. I dropped to fifth with a few laps to go. A pretty cool last few laps having to push as much as I can – I’m a bit out of breath.”

The 2020 F1 season might have been delayed and endangered, but it finally arrived in thrilling fashion at a track that more often than not hosts an enthralling grand prix. Thanks to the compacted nature of the new calendar, the field gets to do it all again in the same spot this weekend. Norris may not be the only one excited about that prospect. ❄

**NEXT F1 REPORT**

**STYRIAN GRAND PRIX  
16 JULY ISSUE**

Same circuit, different race. Will the Red Bull Ring deliver another thriller for round two of the 2020 Formula 1 season? There’s not very long to wait...



## Russell misses out on first points score

Williams's George Russell looked to be in with a shout of points before mechanical woes thwarted any ambition of a top 10 result.

Russell qualified an impressive 17th to start ahead of the two Alfa Romeos, and Williams felt he had a chance of progressing into Q2 – which the team didn't manage once in 2019 – had circumstances gone his way.

Russell dropped behind Antonio Giovinazzi and Kimi Raikkonen at the start, but he produced a calm and assured drive while chaos reigned. He managed to rise as high as 13th, partly thanks to his rivals' mechanical issues, before Russell endured his own problems as his car lost fuel pressure on lap 50 and retired.

Given that Russell was circulating ahead of Sebastian Vettel, who eventually finished 10th, and team-mate Nicholas Latifi at the time of his retirement, he was in consideration for a point or two. He could even have managed more, as his lap times at that phase of the race were in the same ballpark as Esteban Ocon's and Giovinazzi's. They took eighth and ninth.

After a dire 2019 and amid its off-track financial struggles, Williams appears to have slashed its deficit to the rest of the field. If the conditions are right, it can surely get more than the solitary point it managed last year.



FIA POOL

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COATES

## 'Gloves are off' between Mercedes and Red Bull

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff said "the gloves are off" between his squad and Red Bull given the off-track clashes between the teams last weekend in Austria.

After Friday practice, Red Bull protested the legality of Mercedes' dual-axis steering (DAS) arrangement. It argued that DAS is not a steering system, but the stewards ruled that it is – and crucially is not a suspension system – and cleared Mercedes to use it.

Red Bull indicated it had lodged the protest early to avoid threatening the race results and, while accepting the decision, team boss Christian Horner continued to question how the decision would impact parc ferme rules.

"I found that the protest on Friday was actually fair play," said Wolff. "Not on Sunday, so I recognise that. And fair enough. If you want to have a clarification, you can do that."

But the teams were at loggerheads again ahead of the race when Red Bull petitioned the stewards regarding Lewis Hamilton escaping

sanction for improving his final Q3 time despite passing Valtteri Bottas's incident. New footage was presented to the stewards and Hamilton was given a three-place grid drop because "a yellow light panel was flashing on the left side of the track in Turn 5".

The tension between the two squads increased once the action got under way, with Alex Albon squeezing Hamilton wide at Turn 4 on the opening lap, and the pair then clashing at the same spot in the closing stages.

"If you have new evidence, that is what the rules allow and you have to take that on the chin," said Wolff. "I think that in the race, putting all these things together, the penalty was too harsh. But, coming back to the question [of Red Bull], the gloves are off."

Horner explained that, after seeing the video of Hamilton passing the yellow marker board on social media, the team had acted because Max Verstappen had lost pole in similar circumstances in Mexico last year.

### BIG NUMBER

# 11

There were 11 finishers (though two others were classified) – the lowest number in a Formula 1 season opener since 2015.



DUNBAR



# Vettel suffers another spin

Sebastian Vettel was left welcoming the two safety-car periods that followed the Ferrari driver's clash with Carlos Sainz's McLaren just before the race's half-distance, as the incident had dropped him to 15th.

Vettel appeared to misjudge his braking as Sainz was attacking Charles Leclerc's Ferrari ahead at the tight uphill right of Turn 3, and was already sliding before he nerfed the side of the McLaren and went fully around.

He later explained he was trying to keep as close as possible to the battle of the 2021 Ferrari team-mates and "was just on the edge". He also felt he was close to losing control on several occasions as he did not have confidence in a car he found difficult to drive.

Vettel recovered to 10th after the late retirements for Alex Albon and Daniil Kvyat, but his quickest lap was 1.1 seconds off the race's fastest and 0.7s behind Leclerc's best.



## Racing Point flatters to deceive

Never mind that Sergio Perez was at the sharp end of the field towards the end of the race – Racing Point had a particularly inauspicious day at the Red Bull Ring.

Practice form had looked impressive, with Perez a frequent top-five fixture in the preliminary sessions, but in qualifying he was beaten to the punch by the Red Bulls and McLaren's Lando Norris, and started sixth. Lance Stroll, meanwhile, only did one run in the final part of qualifying and could achieve no better than ninth, but at least it gave him his first non-Monza Q3 appearance.

The race was trying too, and Stroll was an early departure – apparently thanks to a sensor failure. Max Verstappen's early retirement handed Perez fifth place, but he struggled to overtake Norris for fourth in the early stages, eventually making the move on the McLaren driver during the middle of the race.

He then assumed third after Alex Albon pitted under the safety car and, after Albon's clash with Hamilton, Perez looked set for a podium finish. But, stranded on worn tyres and with a five-second penalty for speeding in the pitlane, Perez was then overcome by both Norris and Sainz and ended the day sixth.

There's lots for Racing Point to dissect for next weekend if it's to deliver on the promise of its RP20.



### Q & A

**ANDREAS SEIDL**  
MCLAREN TEAM PRINCIPAL



**How did it feel to get a second podium as McLaren team principal?**

To pull it off like we did this weekend is the best thing that could have happened to us going into this new season. Also, it's a great confirmation that we are going in the right direction with everything we want to do in the team. We made a good step forward with the car. Also on the team side in how we operate, we made a good step.

**What did you tell Lando Norris about closing the**

**gap to Lewis Hamilton late on?**

To be honest it was a bit of a rollercoaster those last laps, because at some point we all thought

we missed the podium when Charles Leclerc went through. But obviously we were communicating the gaps to Lando about Lewis. Then when Lewis got his penalty, Lando was prepared for his last laps in terms of getting the maximum of everything the car had. For Lando to pull it off like that is impressive. And if you look at the whole weekend it is impressive what Lando has done. It also shows that he has developed, or made the next step as a driver, which you would also expect after

your rookie season in Formula 1. I was very impressed, so I'm sure we will have a lot more fun with him in the future.

**Where do you think you are relative to Racing Point on pure pace?**

Obviously it's difficult to judge, with Racing Point and us splitting strategy in the first pitstop, as Sergio Perez went on the medium tyre and we went on the hard. So it was difficult to know if the medium would have gone down towards the end and we would have got him. What was encouraging for us to see today is simply, after we had some doubts on Friday in terms of our pace, we were actually even with Racing Point and the Ferraris.



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# DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA

## MORE TWEAKS FOR PACESETTING MERCEDES

Mercedes took some amendments to its W11 chassis for the Austrian Grand Prix – more than just the new black paint scheme, which is the face of the team’s new efforts to improve the overall diversity within its workforce and make a stand against racism.

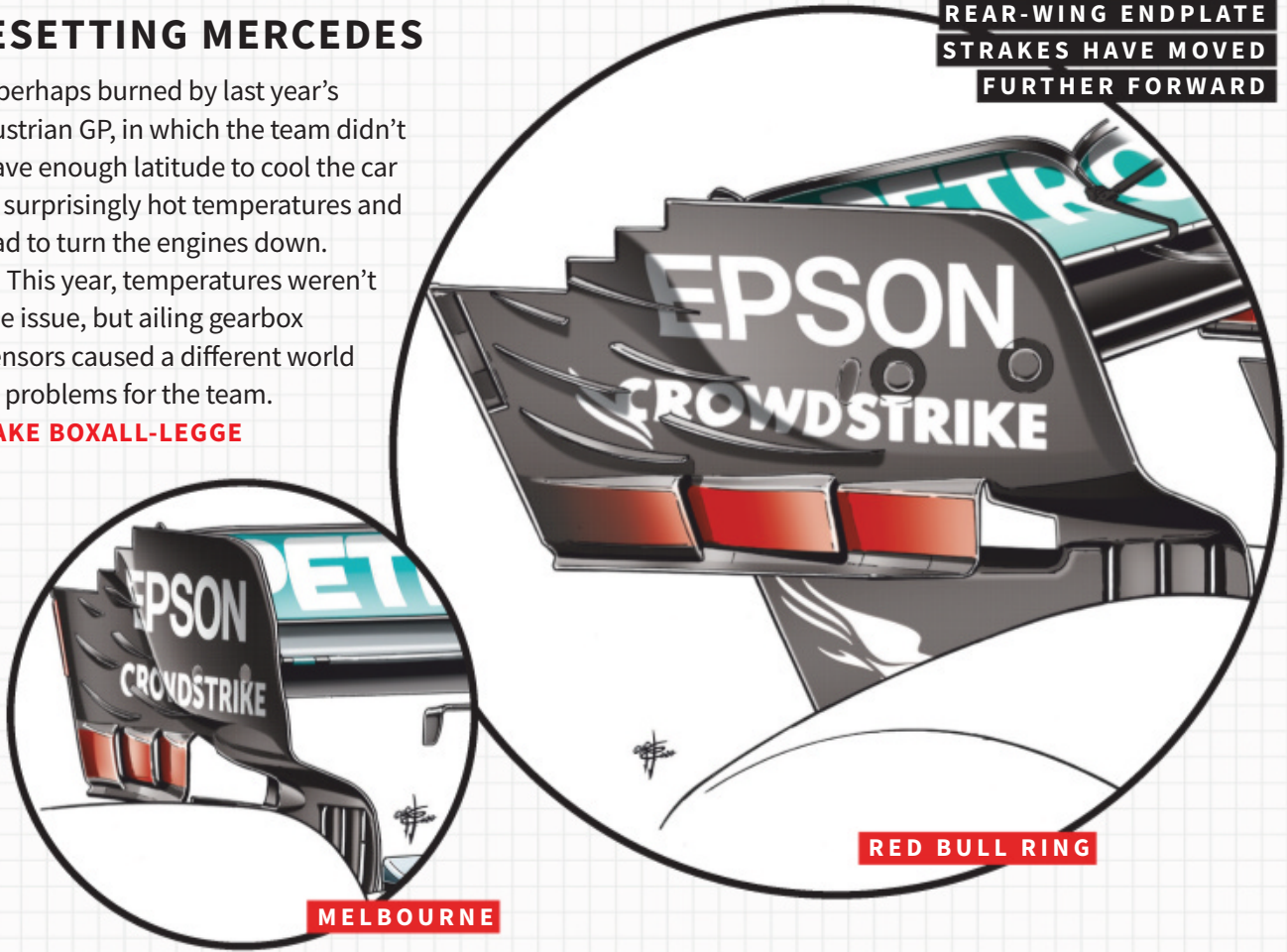
The team had a new rear-wing endplate to bolster its already impressive package, shuffling the strakes further forward to create a more gradual transition to bring airflow outwards. In doing that, the car’s diffuser has a bigger effective volume as the low-pressure zone behind the car – which increases the suction of the floor – is widened.

Mercedes also boasted a new turning vane on the top of the bulkhead and had opened out the cooling apertures next to the halo to cover any threat of high temperatures

– perhaps burned by last year’s Austrian GP, in which the team didn’t have enough latitude to cool the car in surprisingly hot temperatures and had to turn the engines down.

This year, temperatures weren’t the issue, but ailing gearbox sensors caused a different world of problems for the team.

**JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE**



## RED BULL’S AUSTRIAN ‘RHINOPLASTY’

Red Bull also carried a collection of new parts to its ‘home’ race at the Red Bull Ring, but Max Verstappen was the only driver to get use of them.

In testing, Red Bull was a team that had made an evident change to its front-end philosophy, making the nose thinner in its geometry to accommodate a ‘cape’ design to improve the front-end downforce and interaction with the front wing.

While retaining the snorkel-like crash structure at the front, it also added a range of openings around it to open up the underside of the nose to a greater supply of clean airflow, increasing the efficiency of the floor.

But already the team has seen fit to make a change. The new

nose moves the mounting pylons to the front wing closer together, and they now fit on the underside, meaning that the team had more freedom to reshape the array of nostrils, presumably to get the flow paths of the air more to the designers’ taste.

Only Verstappen received the reshaped RB16 nose, as only two new designs were available, so Albon had to contend with the old snouts. Verstappen said that the team was “still understanding the difference between the wings, but [there are] different philosophies behind it.

“I can’t really tell you how much of a difference it is because I don’t know. But we’re learning, we’re understanding different things.”

**JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE**

## RENAULT RENOVATIONS

Touting a triple-upgrade package, having pooled the planned updates for the early flyaways, Renault made a litany of additions to its RS20 chassis – most notably, a new front wing.

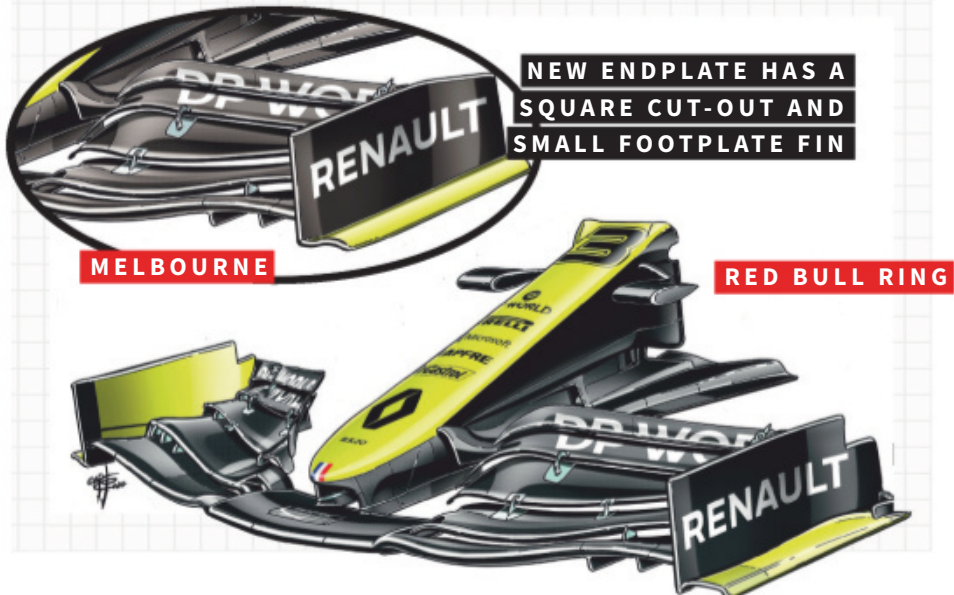
The new wing’s upper flap has a smaller chord length on the outside compared to the old wing, ultimately reducing the overall downforce but improving the outwash characteristic that aerodynamicists crave. The square cut-out in the endplate means the air passing the front wing elements can also help achieve that outwards airflow.

The endplate’s footplate is

now squarer and flatter on the bottom. This is to shape and release a vortex that helps push air around the front tyre earlier, while the small fin on the back of the footplate on the bottom wing (below the ‘T’ of Renault) also helps push that air outwards to reduce the drag created by the front tyre.

Renault also had new bargeboards, adding a collection of vertical serrations to the bottom grating. They’re minor additions, but have an important job in managing the flow from the front end of the car.

**JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE**





<b>20 Latifi #6</b> 1m05.757s		<b>18 Giovinazzi #99</b> 1m05.175s		<b>16 Magnussen #20</b> 1m05.164s		<b>14 Ocon #31</b> 1m04.643s		<b>12 Gasly #10</b> 1m04.305s	
	<b>19 Raikkonen #7</b> 1m05.224s		<b>17 Russell #63</b> 1m05.167s		<b>15 Grosjean #8</b> 1m04.691s		<b>13 Kvyat #26</b> 1m04.431s		<b>11 Vettel #5</b> 1m04.206s

**FREE PRACTICE 1**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m04.816s
2	Bottas	1m05.172s
3	Verstappen	1m05.418s
4	Sainz	1m05.431s
5	Perez	1m05.512s
6	Norris	1m05.621s
7	Albon	1m05.701s
8	Ricciardo	1m05.860s
9	Magnussen	1m05.907s
10	Leclerc	1m05.924s
11	Stroll	1m06.074s
12	Vettel	1m06.077s
13	Ocon	1m06.270s
14	Giovinazzi	1m06.360s
15	Raikkonen	1m06.365s
16	Gasly	1m06.404s
17	Russell	1m06.495s
18	Latifi	1m06.906s
19	Kvyat	1m06.943s
20	Grosjean	1m46.361s

WEATHER Overcast, air 17-19C track 22-24C

**FREE PRACTICE 2**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m04.304s
2	Bottas	1m04.501s
3	Perez	1m04.945s
4	Vettel	1m04.961s
5	Ricciardo	1m04.972s
6	Norris	1m05.087s
7	Stroll	1m05.135s
8	Verstappen	1m05.215s
9	Leclerc	1m05.298s
10	Sainz	1m05.352s
11	Ocon	1m05.415s
12	Kvyat	1m05.443s
13	Albon	1m05.453s
14	Giovinazzi	1m05.608s
15	Magnussen	1m05.678s
16	Grosjean	1m05.908s
17	Gasly	1m06.016s
18	Russell	1m06.125s
19	Raikkonen	1m06.278s
20	Latifi	1m07.124s

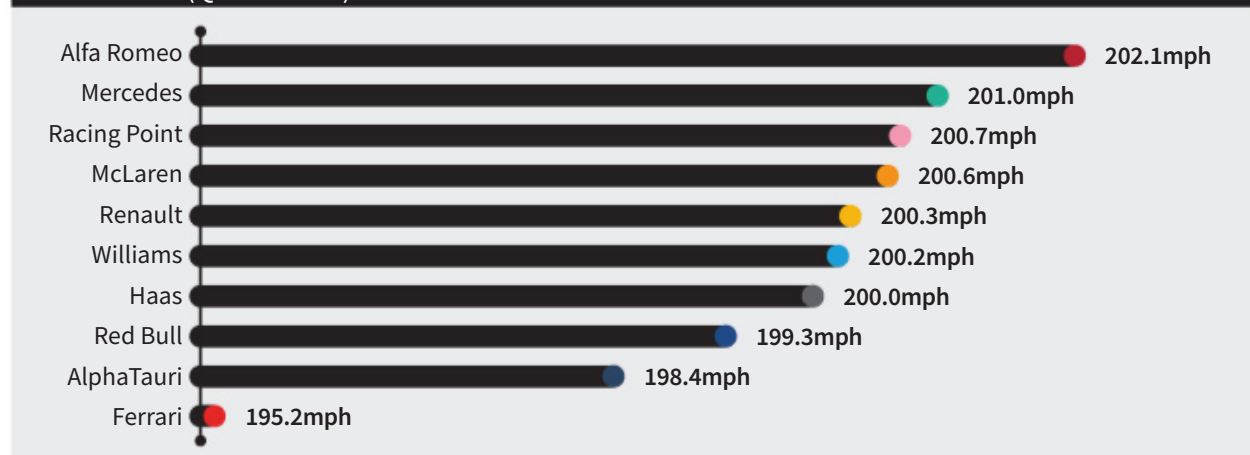
WEATHER Overcast, air 20-23C track 29-36C

**FREE PRACTICE 3**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m04.130s
2	Bottas	1m04.277s
3	Verstappen	1m04.413s
4	Perez	1m04.605s
5	Leclerc	1m04.703s
6	Albon	1m04.725s
7	Vettel	1m04.851s
8	Stroll	1m04.918s
9	Gasly	1m04.949s
10	Norris	1m04.950s
11	Ocon	1m05.037s
12	Ricciardo	1m05.088s
13	Sainz	1m05.177s
14	Kvyat	1m05.290s
15	Grosjean	1m05.363s
16	Russell	1m05.565s
17	Magnussen	1m05.648s
18	Giovinazzi	1m05.654s
19	Raikkonen	1m05.773s
20	Latifi	1m07.049s

WEATHER Sunny, air 22-23C track 43-49C

**SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)**



**QUALIFYING 1**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m04.024s
2	Bottas	1m04.111s
3	Hamilton	1m04.198s
4	Stroll	1m04.309s
5	Leclerc	1m04.500s
6	Sainz	1m04.537s
7	Perez	1m04.543s
8	Vettel	1m04.554s
9	Ricciardo	1m04.556s
10	Gasly	1m04.603s
11	Norris	1m04.606s
12	Albon	1m04.661s
13	Ocon	1m04.933s
14	Kvyat	1m05.031s
15	Grosjean	1m05.094s
16	Magnussen	1m05.164s
17	Russell	1m05.167s
18	Giovinazzi	1m05.175s
19	Raikkonen	1m05.224s
20	Latifi	1m05.757s

**QUALIFYING 2**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m03.015s
2	Hamilton	1m03.096s
3	Albon	1m03.746s
4	Norris	1m03.819s
5	Perez	1m03.860s
6	Stroll	1m03.955s
7	Sainz	1m03.971s
8	Verstappen	1m04.000s
9	Ricciardo	1m04.023s
10	Leclerc	1m04.041s
11	Vettel	1m04.206s
12	Gasly	1m04.305s
13	Kvyat	1m04.431s
14	Ocon	1m04.643s
15	Grosjean	1m04.691s

**QUALIFYING 3**

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m02.939s
2	Hamilton	1m02.951s
3	Verstappen	1m03.477s
4	Norris	1m03.626s
5	Albon	1m03.868s
6	Perez	1m03.868s
7	Leclerc	1m03.923s
8	Sainz	1m03.971s
9	Stroll	1m04.029s
10	Ricciardo	1m04.239s

WEATHER Sunny, air 23-26C track 48-54C

**NEXT RACE**  
**12 JULY**  
**STYRIAN GP**  
Red Bull Ring

**SEASON STATS**

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Bottas	25	1	1
2 Leclerc	18	2	7
3 Norris	16	3	4
4 Hamilton	12	4	2
5 Sainz	10	5	8
6 Perez	8	6	6
7 Gasly	6	7	12
8 Ocon	4	8	14
9 Giovinazzi	2	9	18
10 Vettel	1	10	11
11 Latifi	0	11	20
12 Kvyat	0	12	13
13 Albon	0	13	5
Raikkonen	0	-	19
Grosjean	0	-	15
Russell	0	-	17
Magnussen	0	-	16
Stroll	0	-	9
Ricciardo	0	-	10
Verstappen	0	-	3

**CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

1 Mercedes	37
2 McLaren	26
3 Ferrari	19
4 Racing Point	8
5 AlphaTauri	6
6 Renault	4
7 Alfa Romeo	2
8 Williams	0
9 Red Bull	0
Haas	0

**QUALIFYING BATTLE**

Hamilton	0	1 Bottas
Vettel	0	1 Leclerc
Albon	0	1 Verstappen
Norris	1	0 Sainz
Ricciardo	1	0 Ocon
Gasly	1	0 Kvyat
Perez	1	0 Stroll
Raikkonen	0	1 Giovinazzi
Grosjean	1	0 Magnussen
Latifi	0	1 Russell

Scores ignore sessions if a driver didn't participate in qualifying or had a serious technical problem

**WINS**

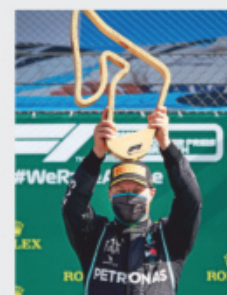
Bottas	1
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**POLE POSITIONS**

Bottas	1
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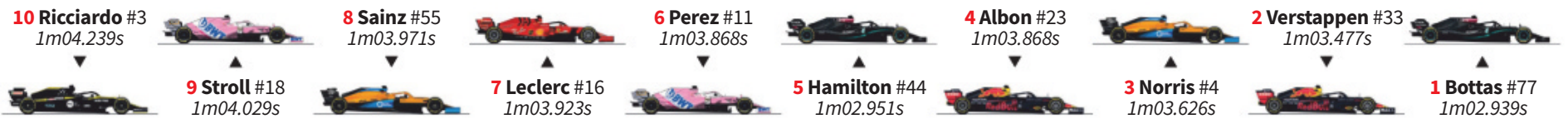
**FASTEST LAPS**

Norris	1
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**STARTING GRID**



**RACE RESULTS ROUND 1 71 LAPS - 190.43 MILES**

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISHTIME	LED	TYRES
1	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Mercedes	1h30m55.739s	71	Su, Hn
2	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	+2.700s		Su, Hn, Mn
3	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Renault	+5.491s		Su, Hn, Mn
4	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	+5.689s		Su, Hn
5	Carlos Sainz Jr (ESP)	McLaren-Renault	+8.903s		Su, Hn, Mn
6	Sergio Perez (MEX)	RacingPoint-Mercedes	+15.092s		Su, Hn
7	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Honda	+16.682s		Mn, Hn
8	Esteban Ocon (FRA)	Renault	+17.456s		Mn, Hn
9	Antonio Giovinazzi (ITA)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+21.146s		Mn, Hn, Sn
10	Sebastian Vettel (DEU)	Ferrari	+24.545s		Mn, Hn, Sn
11	Nicholas Latifi (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	+31.650s		Mn, Hn, Sn
12	Daniil Kvyat (RUS)	AlphaTauri-Honda	69 laps-suspension		Mn, Hn, Sn
13	Alexander Albon (THA)	Red Bull-Honda	67 laps-power unit		Su, Hn, Su
R	Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	53 laps-wheel		Mn, Hn, Sn
R	George Russell (GBR)	Williams-Mercedes	49 laps-fuel pressure		Mn, Hn
R	Romain Grosjean (FRA)	Haas-Ferrari	49 laps-brakes		Mn, Hn
R	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	24 laps-brakes		Mn
R	Lance Stroll (CAN)	RacingPoint-Mercedes	20 laps-power unit		Su
R	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	Renault	17 laps-overheating		Su
R	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda	11 laps-power unit		Mu

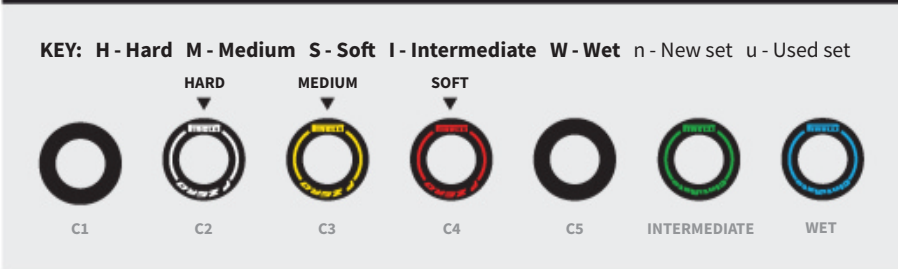
**FASTEST LAPS**

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Norris	1m07.475s	-	71
2	Bottas	1m07.657s	+0.182s	68
3	Hamilton	1m07.712s	+0.237s	67
4	Leclerc	1m07.901s	+0.426s	64
5	Sainz	1m07.974s	+0.499s	63
6	Perez	1m08.305s	+0.830s	63
7	Albon	1m08.432s	+0.957s	50
8	Vettel	1m08.623s	+1.148s	71
9	Giovinazzi	1m08.796s	+1.321s	70
10	Ocon	1m08.932s	+1.457s	64
11	Gasly	1m09.025s	+1.550s	64
12	Raikkonen	1m09.031s	+1.556s	48
13	Kvyat	1m09.135s	+1.660s	50
14	Russell	1m09.317s	+1.842s	49
15	Verstappen	1m09.351s	+1.876s	5
16	Latifi	1m09.662s	+2.187s	63
17	Grosjean	1m10.228s	+2.753s	46
18	Stroll	1m10.326s	+2.851s	4
19	Ricciardo	1m10.610s	+3.135s	8
20	Magnussen	1m10.720s	+3.245s	23

**WEATHER** Sunny, air 27-30C track 44-55C

**WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED** 125.66mph **FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED** 143.16mph

**TYRES**



**RACE BRIEFING**

**GRID PENALTIES**

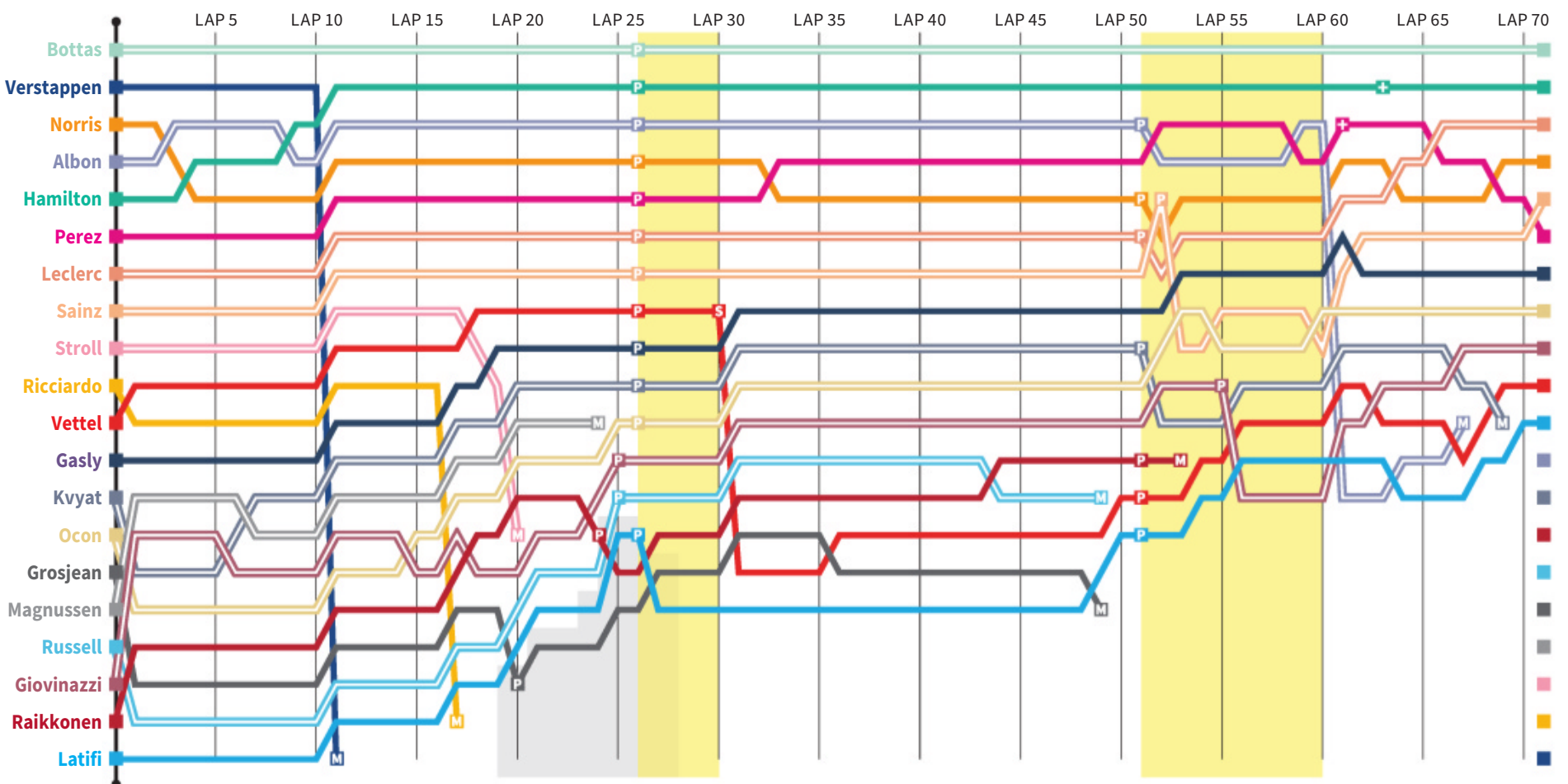
**HAMILTON** Three-place penalty and two licence points for failing to slow for a yellow flag

**RACE PENALTIES**

**HAMILTON** Five-second penalty and two licence points for causing a collision with Albon  
**PEREZ** Five-second penalty for speeding in the pitlane

**STAT**  
**155**  
 Norris scored McLaren's 155th fastest lap, the first since Alonso's 2017 Hungarian GP effort

**LAP CHART** What happened, when



P Pitstop C Crash M Mechanical failure S Spin + Penalty Car lapped Safety car



# LECLERC, NORRIS AND GASLY ARE THE STARS

The Ferrari, McLaren and AlphaTauri drivers open the 2020 season's score sheets with performances straight out of the top drawer

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

## MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

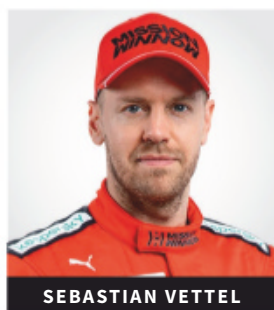
**7** Might have scored higher had errors not proved so costly. Says he never saw the yellow marker board when Bottas fell off in qualifying, though caution might have been wiser given his pace. Late clash with Albon wasn't clear-cut, but the Red Bull was ahead so he must take most of the blame.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

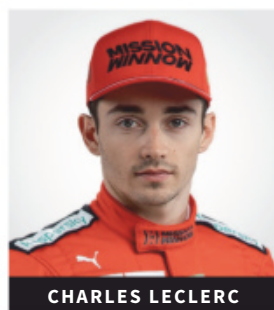
**9** Executed a brilliant race to take the win, but misses a perfect score because of his Q3 error. We must take him at his word that he was managing the gap to Hamilton before the first safety car, but the qualifying mistake meant he left "time on the table" and sparked a chain reaction of woe for Mercedes.

## FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

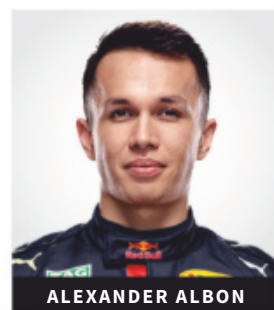
**4** Seemed to have an edge over Leclerc in FP2 and shone well over longer runs. But it all unravelled with his Q2 exit, which meant starting behind Ricciardo. Had no confidence in his car, but the spin against Sainz was *yet another* unforced error and he couldn't pass several slower cars late on.



CHARLES LECLERC

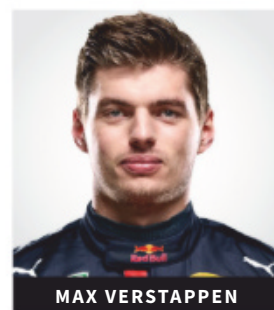
**10** Admitted he was not at his best on Friday, but corrected this in qualifying, beating Sainz's McLaren, which looks on the same pace level as the Ferrari. Didn't make a mistake in the race, capping his day with a daring pass on Perez to seal a near-unimaginable podium.

## RED BULL



ALEXANDER ALBON

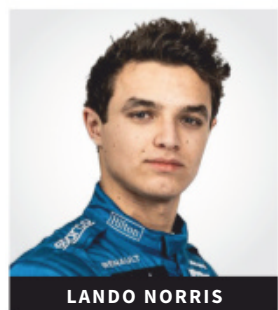
**8** Again showed he's not afraid to take it to F1's best with his feisty moves on Hamilton. Can't score any higher because he was 0.391s off Verstappen in Q3 and got outqualified by Norris. Also perhaps could have waited a touch longer before making the move that ended in disaster.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

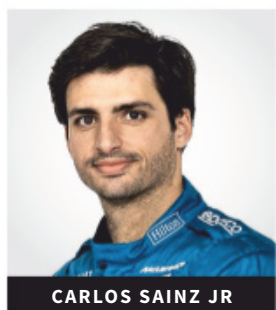
**9** Not getting a perfect mark is probably harsh given he was not at fault for the power unit problem that dropped him out of second early on. He had produced a great lap in Q2 to make it through on the slower mediums and got as close as realistically possible to the Mercs in Q3. Very unlucky.

## MCLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

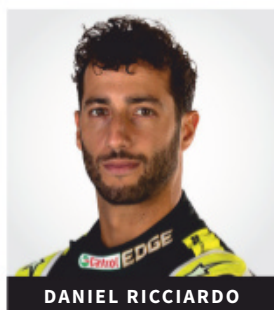
**10** Felt he made errors that meant he was fifth on the road in the final stages, before he bumped past Perez. But any transgression that might have threatened a perfect score is overridden by his chase to clinch a maiden F1 podium, and because he'd starred in qualifying.



CARLOS SAINZ JR

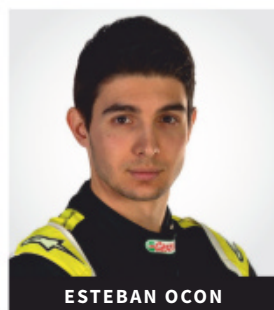
**8** Wasn't happy with his car's handling over the weekend, yet managed a great result. The reason he is marked down is because of what his team-mate was able to achieve and because he was defeated by Leclerc in qualifying when it looked as if the Ferrari was behind on ultimate pace.

## RENAULT



DANIEL RICCIARDO

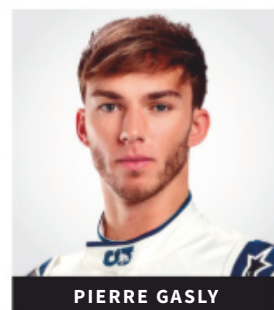
**7** Certainly seems to have problem with bad luck at season openers, with another potentially good result lost due to a cooling problem. Did have a bad start, compared to Vettel, which costs him a mark, but he was in the ratings' upper echelons because of his superb lap to reach Q3 and start 10th.



ESTEBAN OCON

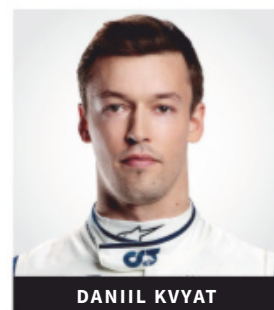
**6** Can point to missing a chunk of FP3 for not getting a final flying-lap simulation in ahead of his first qualifying since Abu Dhabi 2018, but ended up starting behind the slower AlphaTauri cars. Slipped back at the start and, although he battled back into the points, this was a disappointing return.

## ALPHATAURI



PIERRE GASLY

**10** Had a largely unseen rise to an excellent seventh, which he put down to managing to stay out of trouble. Beat Kvyat in qualifying, with both AlphaTauris besting Ocon in the faster Renault. Also beat Ocon in the race despite a brake-pedal issue.



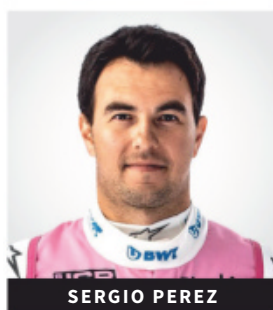
DANIIL KVYAT

**7** Loses marks to Gasly for being beaten in qualifying and being behind his team-mate in the race, which he failed to finish after a tyre blowout/suspension breakage. He blamed a clash with Ocon on the outside of Turn 6 for the damage, but it's not clear if there was even contact.

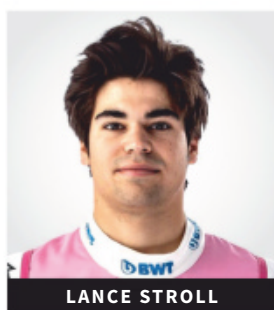




## RACING POINT

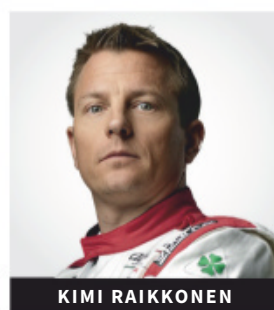


**6** Proved that Racing Point's pace is real with his long-run efforts on Friday, but a series of errors cost him the glittering result his team had eyed. He picked up a penalty for pitlane speeding and made a mistake that allowed Albon to nip past just before the final safety car.

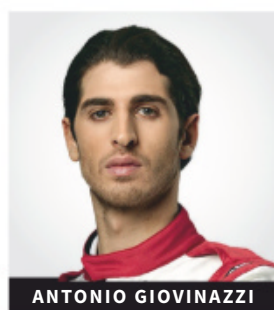


**6** Was unfortunate to be one of the early race retirements when a sensor issue seemingly manifested itself. But like his team-mate he underwhelmed in qualifying given the clear pace of Racing Point's car. Can't score higher because he was generally slower than Perez all weekend.

## ALFA ROMEO

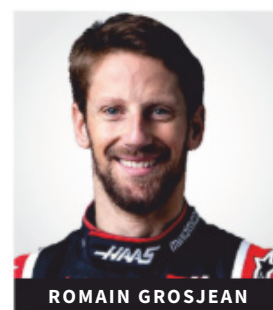


**6** The 2007 world champion was firmly behind Giovinazzi in qualifying and he couldn't stay with him in the race. He never got a chance to show what he could do with fresh soft rubber in the final stint when his wheel flew off, but he seemed to be rooted towards the back of the pack at the time.

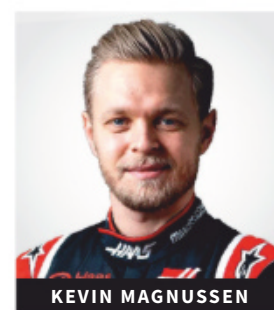


**7** Had the edge over his world champion team-mate in qualifying and the race. Made a great start to jump up the order on lap one and from there took advantage of the chaos to bag ninth and two points, well clear of the recovering Vettel. Marked down one for his late Q1 off.

## HAAS

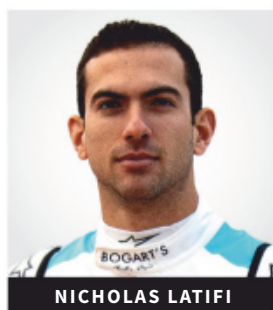


**6** Beating Magnussen into Q2 was the high point on a tough weekend for Haas, which is also bearing the brunt of the Ferrari power unit deficit. Went backwards at the start with a slow getaway and an off, with a trip through the gravel coming before overheating brakes forced his retirement.

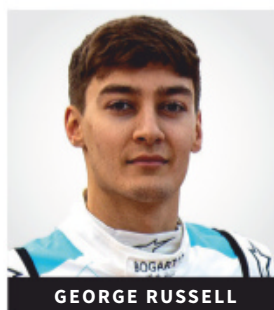


**7** Missed out on a Q2 spot when Grosjean edged him by 0.07s, but made amends with a great start, leaping up to run 13th by the end of the first lap. Made progress towards the points even before most of the chaos started, and his brake issue actually triggered much of the race's action.

## WILLIAMS



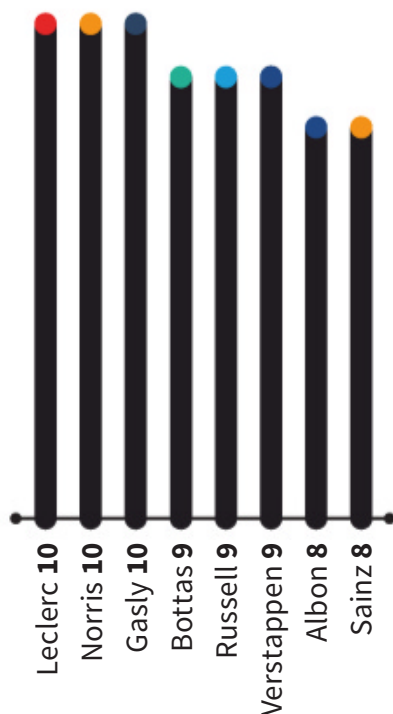
**6** Finished his F1 debut by equalling Russell's best 2019 rookie-year result, but this was all to do with the drama ahead of him. Was 0.59s behind Russell in qualifying and that followed a needless FP3 crash. Was lapped by lap 25, which he got back only thanks to the safety car.



**9** Showed the progress Williams has made by holding a Q2 spot until the last gasp, which the team felt he could have kept had his last lap been perfect. But besting both Alfas was a great result. Felt the car didn't have the same race pace, but was in P13 and eyeing points when he retired.

### TOP 8 AVERAGE RATINGS

AUTOSPORT'S RATING AFTER ROUND 1



SCORING SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Drivers are rated for their performance through the whole weekend, with the focus on qualifying and the race.

- 10** Exceptional performance, maximising the result and excelling, either through overturning a major obstacle or dominance over rivals.
- 9** Outstanding performance, but without quite reaching the heights required for a maximum score.
- 8** Very good performance with no major errors and a final result that, relative to circumstances, reflected the car's pace.
- 7** Good performance, perhaps one that's a little inconsistent in some aspects or without extracting the maximum from the car but still yields a reasonable result.
- 6** Solid performance but without getting the most out of the car or nailing it when it really mattered.

- 5** Patchy performance, not necessarily off the pace but failing to string together the weekend well and coming away short of a good result.
- 4** Disappointing performance, failing to get close to the maximum of the car and making mistakes at key moments.
- 3** Poor performance, either through struggling to get the most out of the car or falling short through a massive error.
- 2** Very poor performance, with mediocre pace and mistakes adding up to a wasted weekend.
- 1** Terrible. A performance with no redeeming features.







Dixon ruled on the Indy road course, finishing 20s ahead of Rahal

# Dixon extends his lead – and closes on Mario Andretti

*Two races into the season and the five-time champion is already looking good to net number six, and beat a legend's tally of victories in the process*

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport  
IMAGES

**I**ndianapolis Motor Speedway's flat 2.439-mile, 14-turn road course and Texas Motor Speedway's banked 1.5-mile oval are about as different as two tracks can get. Yet these venues, which have hosted the opening two races of the hugely delayed, disrupted and shuffled 2020 IndyCar calendar, have seen Scott Dixon and his Chip Ganassi Racing Dallara-Honda in imperious form on race day. Consequently, for the first time in his 20-year IndyCar career, the five-time champion has opened his campaign with back-to-back wins.

While Dixon's Grand Prix of Indianapolis triumph, which broke the Simon Pagenaud/Will Power stranglehold on this event since

its inception in 2014, was not quite so dauntingly dominant as his Texas success, the few (maybe only two) drivers who might have stopped him had their dreams dismantled by misfortune.

Early in the race, Team Penske's Chevrolet-powered polesitter Power led from Meyer Shank Racing's Jack Harvey, who had excelled in qualifying at the track where he and the team had scored their first podium in the wet 14 months earlier. They were tracked by Graham Rahal's Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing Dallara-Honda, which had beaten the fastest Andretti Autosport car, that of Colton Herta, at the drop of the green flag. Herta led the second Penske car of reigning champion Josef

Newgarden and Dixon, both of whom had got ahead of one of the stars of qualifying, Arrow McLaren SP rookie Oliver Askew.

Rahal found it easy to run at the pace Power was setting up front, and he and the team decided at this point to go for a two-stop strategy. By contrast, the Ganassi squad – Dixon, Felix Rosenqvist (who had started ninth but fallen to 15th on the opening lap) and Marcus Ericsson (who ran 14th) – had before the race decided on a three-stop strategy, and elected to start on the Firestone primary tyres and short-stint them to 'get them out of the way'.

As in Formula 1, in a dry race IndyCar drivers must run each compound for at least one complete lap. The Ganassi cars





therefore stopped as early as lap 10 in this 80-lap race and switched to sticker (brand new) alternate red-sidewalled tyres.

Power and Harvey pitted on laps 17 and 18 respectively, leaving Rahal up front with an enormous lead over Ed Carpenter Racing's Conor Daly, who had started an impressive eighth but on scrubbed reds was struggling to keep his fuel mileage sensible while maintaining a decent speed. On lap 22, he had to cede second place to one of the surprises of the day, Spencer Pigot in a third RLLR-run machine under the Citrone/Buhl Autosport banner, which so far is guaranteed only one more entry, in August's Indianapolis 500. The 2015 Indy Lights champion doubtless took some pleasure in snatching runner-up slot from the car of his erstwhile employer Ed Carpenter.

When Rahal finally pitted on lap 26, Power moved back into the lead, his closest pursuer now Newgarden ahead of Harvey. But Rahal was able to rejoin in fourth (Pigot suffered a less-than-smooth stop but would swiftly emerge from the midfield mob).

Then on lap 36, Askew, his car on worn tyres, lost too much traction on the inside kerb at the fast Turn 14 onto the pit straight. The rear stepped out, he kept his foot on the gas and applied opposite lock, but the car's tail continued its wayward journey and he spun across the strip of grass that defines the outside of the corner, and struck the outside wall hard. Thankfully he stepped from the car unharmed, but he was

mad at himself, and everyone who had not recently stopped – including Power, Newgarden, Harvey and the well-driven Carlin car of Max Chilton, which had qualified 10th and run in the top eight – were no less angry at their misfortune. As per usual, the field backed up under yellow and the pits were closed, so by the time this quartet were able to dive in for their second stops, they had dropped to 14th through 17th.

The race restarted with the fastest two-stopping cars – those of Rahal, Pigot and Daly – occupying the top three positions, but their strategies of course meant they couldn't run full-rich on fuel, and they were also on the less-favoured primaries so couldn't make up laptime in the turns. Behind them, on red tyres and with no fuel worries as a three-stopper, was Dixon. One would like to imagine him humming in basso profundo manner the ominous *Jaws* theme tune at this point.

Dixon had to be slightly careful though. In his second stint, he had burned off the reds too quickly in a tail-happy car. At his second stop, his Ganassi crew dialled out some front wing to neutralise the #9's handling and now he was raring to go.

It took Dixon just two laps to pass Daly, who would also lose out to Herta. Daly would in successive laps also concede places to two drivers who had benefited from the caution period by pitting just before the field was iced – namely his rookie teammate Rinus VeeKay, up from 18th on the >>

## GUNNING FOR MARIO'S RECORDS



Motorsport legend Mario Andretti is under attack in Indycar racing's history books. In terms of wins, he's on 52, 15 behind AJ Foyt but only four ahead of Scott Dixon. In terms of pole positions Andretti sits on top of the table with 67, but since last weekend that margin has gone down too: Will Power landed pole number 58.

Dixon's success last Saturday meant that he also surpassed Andretti's record for Indycar wins on 'natural terrain' road courses (18-17). Asked about what it feels, Dixon – who has always professed that he won't be too engrossed by the numbers until he retires – responded: "It's amazing. It's amazing just to be in the same conversation as these people. I remember looking back and watching races of Mario when I first came to America in 1997 and watching races of AJ Foyt. They are legends of the sport. I just feel lucky to be doing what I'm doing."

'Amazing' is also the word Power uses when mulling the prospect of catching up with Mario in the pole-position table. Power, who has a 26% pole rate in his career (58 from 223), said: "That would be amazing to match Mario. Obviously I'm a massive fan of his. When you look at his career, all the different races and series he's won in..."

"It's just amazing having your name up there with him and AJ [on 53 poles]. To get to [Mario's tally] would be really, really cool. I hope that I could do that before my career is out."



Andretti has Dixon and Power coming up fast



grid, and the third Penske entry of Pagnaud, who had started from a (seemingly) disastrous 20th.

Five laps from the restart, Pigot could hold back Dixon no longer and the Kiwi then closed in on leader Rahal. While Rahal fought the good fight, and immediately set his fastest lap of the race, Dixon easily outbraked him for the lead two tours later into the classic overtaking spot at Turn 1. Each would have to make one more stop – Rahal’s second, Dixon’s third – but unless something went severely wrong in the pitlane, or there was a late yellow once the RLLR car was back onto red tyres again, this deal was done. By the time he ducked into the pits, Rahal was already 10 seconds adrift of the leader. Dixon, just to protect his position in case of another yellow, felt obliged to stop a lap later.

That meant he temporarily lost the lead to the long-stinting Newgarden and Andretti Autosport’s Zach Veach, but a few laps later they stopped, were out of the way, and Dixon was able to run unchallenged to the chequered flag.

Power had recovered to seventh when he made his third pitstop but, as in Texas a month ago, he encountered trouble in the pitlane. This time the crew serviced his car swiftly enough, but the 2014 champion sensed an air hose in his exit path and, naturally keen to avoid a drivethrough penalty for hitting pit equipment, he came off the gas and that was enough to stall. By the time the #12 crew had dragged him back to his pitbox to jump-start him, he had plummeted to 23rd. He would come home a despondent 20th.

If the yellow flag had hurt Power’s victory chances and Newgarden’s hopes of making it a Penske 1-2, it had boosted team-mate Pagnaud’s hopes of a strong finish. Running a three-stop race but each time stopping slightly earlier than his rivals so as to take advantage of the new rubber and undercut the cars ahead, he had also done a fair amount of passing on track too, having trimmed his car out to give himself an edge in straightline speed down the long front and back straights.



Pagnaud looked set for fourth but that became third when sadly Pigot’s strong drive – one of his best since becoming an IndyCar driver four years ago – was thwarted by engine issues. He would drop down the field and eventually pull into the pitlane six laps from the end. That gave Pagnaud a clear run at Rahal and, with five laps to go, he was onto his former Atlantic championship rival’s tail; a pass looked inevitable.

But in order to save enough fuel to make his strategy work, Rahal had been miserly with his push-to-pass boost so he now had some in hand when it mattered most, whereas in order to make up positions from

his lowly grid spot, Pagnaud throughout the race had been pushing the extra boost button like a lab rat on amphetamines, and was now out. In addition, Rahal was very good at placing his car at just the right spot on the entry and exit to corners to discourage his pursuer from trying anything. The pair would cross the finishing line 0.6s apart... and 20s down on Dixon, who had scored his 48th victory and is now just five wins short of passing Mario Andretti for second in Indycar racing’s all-time winner list (see panel, page 33).

Herta, despite a trip down the Turn 1 escape road during the race, came home a subdued fourth, but he could at least draw some satisfaction from the event – which made him unique among the six-strong Andretti Autosport squad (James Hinchcliffe was in action in the #29 car again). The team as a whole will have been alarmed that Alexander Rossi and Ryan Hunter-Reay were outqualified by such as Daly and Chilton, to start from the sixth row, and then both of them encountered terrible luck in the race. Hunter-Reay had an airgun failure at his first stop that dropped him to 22nd, and he did well to tiger his way back to 13th at the end. Rossi took the race’s only restart in seventh but then encountered a fuel pressure issue that had already afflicted his car in the previous day’s practice session,







Power looked strong in early stages before yellow flag's intervention



Potted blooms aid podium social distancing

**RESULTS ROUND 2/11, INDIANAPOLIS (USA), 4 JULY (80 LAPS - 195.120 MILES)**

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	<b>Scott Dixon</b> (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	1h41m59.3232s
2	<b>Graham Rahal</b> (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+19.9469s
3	<b>Simon Pagenaud</b> (FRA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+20.5642s
4	<b>Colton Herta</b> (USA)	Andretti Harding Steinbrenner Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+25.0882s
5	<b>Rinus van Kalmthout</b> (NLD)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+25.6361s
6	<b>Marcus Ericsson</b> (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+25.7133s
7	<b>Josef Newgarden</b> (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+31.8973s
8	<b>Patricio O'Ward</b> (MEX)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	+33.8363s
9	<b>Santino Ferrucci</b> (USA)	Dale Coyne Racing with Vasser Sullivan / Dallara-Honda	+43.0469s
10	<b>Takuma Sato</b> (JPN)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+44.8913s
11	<b>James Hinchcliffe</b> (CAN)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+46.1674s
12	<b>Conor Daly</b> (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+49.9774s
13	<b>Ryan Hunter-Reay</b> (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+50.4892s
14	<b>Zach Veach</b> (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+52.2172s
15	<b>Felix Rosenqvist</b> (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+56.6884s
16	<b>Max Chilton</b> (GBR)	Carlin / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m00.2317s
17	<b>Jack Harvey</b> (GBR)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m03.8457s
18	<b>Charlie Kimball</b> (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m05.5192s
19	<b>Alex Palou</b> (ESP)	Dale Coyne Racing with Team Goh / Dallara-Honda	+1m06.4782s
20	<b>Will Power</b> (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m11.6129s
21	<b>Dalton Kellett</b> (CAN)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
22	<b>Marco Andretti</b> (USA)	Andretti Herta with Marco & Curb-Agajanian / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
23	<b>Sage Karam</b> (USA)	Dreyer & Reinbold Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
24	<b>Spencer Pigot</b> (USA)	Citrone/Buhl Autosport with RLL / Dallara-Honda	74 laps-engine
25	<b>Alexander Rossi</b> (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	41 laps-fuel pressure
26	<b>Oliver Askew</b> (USA)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	34 laps-accident

**Winner's average speed** 114.789mph. **Fastest lap** Dixon 1m11.7514s, 122.373mph.

**Q3 1 Power** 1m10.1779s; **2 Harvey** 1m10.3653s; **3 Herta** 1m10.5197s; **4 Rahal** 1m10.5844s; **5 Askew** 1m10.8404s; **6 Newgarden** no time.

**Q2 Askew** 1m09.8780s; **Harvey** 1m10.0238s; **Rahal** 1m10.0707s; **Herta** 1m10.0985s; **Power** 1m10.1313s; **Newgarden** 1m10.1420s; **7 Dixon** 1m10.1990s; **8 Daly** 1m10.2169s; **9 Rosenqvist** 1m10.2310s; **10 Chilton** 1m10.3055s; **11 Rossi** 1m10.3426s; **12 Hunter-Reay** 1m10.5764s.

**Q1 - GROUP 1 Power** 1m10.2548s; **Herta** 1m10.4114s; **Dixon** 1m10.5000s; **Harvey** 1m10.5157s; **Rahal** 1m10.5647s; **Rossi** 1m10.5947s; **14 Ericsson** 1m10.6287s; **16 Pigot** 1m10.6350s; **18 van Kalmthout** 1m10.7070s;

**20 Pagenaud** 1m10.7438s; **22 Veach** 1m11.2762s; **24 Kimball** 1m11.4026s; **26 Kellett** 1m11.5876s.

**Q1 - GROUP 2 Askew** 1m10.5306s; **Chilton** 1m10.5465s; **Rosenqvist** 1m10.5558s; **Daly** 1m10.5658s; **Hunter-Reay** 1m10.5880s; **Newgarden** 1m10.6188s; **13 O'Ward** 1m10.7333s; **15 Ferrucci** 1m10.7902s; **17 Sato** 1m10.8853s; **19 Hinchcliffe** 1m11.1478s; **21 Palou** 1m11.1815s; **23 Karam** 1m11.7774s; **25 Andretti** 1m12.0513s.

**CHAMPIONSHIP**

**1 Dixon** 104; **2 Pagenaud** 75; **3 Newgarden** 64; **4 Herta** 58; **5 Rahal** 54; **6 Veach** 50; **7 Daly** 46; **8 O'Ward** 42; **9 Hunter-Reay** 41; **10 Ericsson** 40.

and he was forced to stop altogether.

Last year's GP Indy polesitter Rosenqvist stalled in the pitlane, compounding his issues following his terrible opening lap, and he rolled home 15th. Compatriot and team-mate Ericsson, meanwhile, stayed out of trouble and rose to finish sixth, ahead of Newgarden but not quite able to find a way past the ebullient VeeKay, who was only 0.6s behind Herta. Given Askew's exit, McLaren SP could draw some satisfaction from Pato O'Ward's eighth place.

The coming weekend features a double-header at Road America, which will be physically tough on the drivers, especially given that they're still not used to the severely reduced airflow caused by the aeroscreen. Yet it'll be tougher still for such pre-season championship hopefuls as Newgarden and Pagenaud, and in particular Power, Rossi and Hunter-Reay, if they are forced to concede any more points to Dixon. Right now, you wouldn't bet against it. 🏆

**NEXT REPORT**

**ROAD AMERICA**  
**16 JULY ISSUE**

Can anyone stop Dixon in his quest for a sixth IndyCar crown?



## WORLD OF SPORT

Ilott leads Zhou just after the pitstops

# Virtuoso Ilott, virtuous Zhou, Virtuosi supreme

SUTTON  
motorsport  
IMAGES

### FORMULA 2 RED BULL RING (A) 4-5 JULY ROUND 1

Callum Ilott has always had an affinity with the Red Bull Ring. He won amid the backdrop of the Styrian mountains in Formula 3 in 2016 and 2017; he did so again in GP3 in 2018 for his only non-reversed-grid success in the category. And, last weekend, he broke his duck at the same venue in Formula 2.

While it was a breakthrough success for the Ferrari Driver Academy charge, it came only after Ilott's Virtuosi team-mate Guanyu Zhou was cruelly denied a similar landmark. Renault F1 Junior Zhou, still yet to record his maiden F2 win, was the absolute dominant force on pace, although Ilott and Prema Racing's Mick Schumacher were running him close when a gearbox malfunction struck him with 14 laps to go.

This was the first competitive appearance for F2's meaty new 18-inch tyres, which made the F1 and F3 machinery look like shopping trolleys. Pirelli brought the soft and hard compounds to Austria, although the company admitted that the supersoft and medium it will provide for this weekend's sequel at the same venue are more suitable to F2-style action. Whatever, it meant that teams were extracting far more laps from a set than they're used to, and it appeared that Norfolk-based Virtuosi has perfected the art of set-up on the new rubber.

The Red Bull Ring has a pretty simple layout, yet Zhou somehow qualified almost half a second clear of the rest, with Ilott pipped to the front row by the weekend's surprise package, F2 debutant Felipe Drugovich. The Brazilian faded in the race, and Ilott burst through at the start to lead, only for Zhou to sweep around the outside of the Brit at the left-handed Turns 6 and 7.

Zhou then worked on pulling just out of DRS range of Ilott and Schumacher, and became the first of the leading trio to pit to get rid of his soft tyres – on lap 17 of 40. Ilott, then Schumacher, came in on successive laps, and Virtuosi nailed the fastest stops, but such was the disadvantage of getting the hard tyres up to temperature that the order was now reversed, with

Schumacher leading Ilott and Zhou.

It was a thrilling three-way fight, Zhou showing tremendous composure as he picked his way back into the lead, once again putting himself just out of DRS range – and then he dramatically slowed. Ilott was now in front from Schumacher, who was able to latch onto the leader's tail thanks to a safety car that set up a 10-lap sprint to the finish.

Schumacher, who had recovered well from engine problems in free practice that necessitated a fresh Mecachrome engine for qualifying, immediately undid his good work by flying into the gravel at Turn 7, and this promoted Marcus Armstrong and Robert Shwartzman to second and third. This was a terrific drive from Armstrong. Traffic problems in qualifying restricted

Alesi's retirement caused a safety car in the second race



SUTTON  
motorsport  
IMAGES





Zhou celebrates a crushing pole



Canny Armstrong was superb second in race one

**RESULTS ROUND 1, RED BULL RING (AUT), 4-5 JULY RACE 1 (40 LAPS – 107.245 MILES)**

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	<b>Callum Ilott</b> (GBR)	Virtuosi Racing	54m21.050s
2	<b>Marcus Armstrong</b> (NZL)	ART Grand Prix	+8.856s
3	<b>Robert Shwartzman</b> (RUS)	Prema Racing	+9.291s
4	<b>Christian Lundgaard</b> (DNK)	ART Grand Prix	+10.878s
5	<b>Dan Ticktum</b> (GBR)	DAMS	+11.277s
6	<b>Giuliano Alesi</b> (FRA)	HWA Racelab	+12.828s
7	<b>Louis Deletraz</b> (CHE)	Charouz Racing System	+16.267s
8	<b>Felipe Drugovich</b> (BRA)	MP Motorsport	+17.033s
9	<b>Nobuharu Matsushita</b> (JPN)	MP Motorsport	+17.435s
10	<b>Roy Nissany</b> (ISR)	Trident	+19.543s
11	<b>Mick Schumacher</b> (DEU)	Prema Racing	+20.049s
12	<b>Jehan Daruvala</b> (IND)	Carlin	+22.008s
13	<b>Pedro Piquet</b> (BRA)	Charouz Racing System	+24.996s
14	<b>Nikita Mazepin</b> (RUS)	Hitech GP	+25.885s
15	<b>Jack Aitken</b> (GBR)	Campos Racing	+30.138s
16	<b>Guilherme Samaia</b> (BRA)	Campos Racing	+53.934s
17	<b>Guanyu Zhou</b> (CHN)	Virtuosi Racing	-1 lap
18	<b>Yuki Tsunoda</b> (JPN)	Carlin	-1 lap
R	<b>Artem Markelov</b> (RUS)	HWA Racelab	26 laps-lost power
R	<b>Sean Gelael</b> (IDN)	DAMS	16 laps-lost power
R	<b>Marino Sato</b> (JPN)	Trident	2 laps-engine
NS	<b>Luca Ghiotto</b> (ITA)	Hitech GP	lost power

**Winner's average speed** 118.391mph. **Fastest lap** Zhou 1m16.983s, 125.470mph.

**QUALIFYING**

**1 Zhou 1m14.416s; 2 Drugovich 1m14.880s; 3 Ilott 1m14.884s; 4 Lundgaard 1m14.922s; 5 Schumacher 1m14.952s; 6 Daruvala 1m15.028s; 7 Ghiotto 1m15.044s; 8 Shwartzman 1m15.051s; 9 Ticktum 1m15.128s; 10 Deletraz 1m15.151s; 11 Mazepin 1m15.152s; 12 Tsunoda 1m15.157s; 13 Armstrong 1m15.208s; 14 Aitken 1m15.264s; 15 Piquet 1m15.376s; 16 Nissany 1m15.457s; 17 Gelael 1m15.604s; 18 Alesi 1m15.688s; 19 Samaia 1m15.703s; 20 Markelov 1m15.746s; 21 Matsushita 1m15.897s; 22 Sato 1m16.011s.**

**RACE 2 (28 LAPS – 75.048 MILES)**

**GRID FOR RACE 2** Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed.

**1 Drugovich 42m05.526s; 2 Deletraz +2.469s; 3 Ticktum +2.790s; 4 Shwartzman +3.330s; 5 Lundgaard +5.396s; 6 Matsushita +9.177s; 7 Schumacher +9.741s; 8 Aitken +14.041s; 9 Ilott +14.272s; 10 Mazepin +15.395s; 11 Tsunoda +17.528s; 12 Nissany +18.471s; 13 Piquet +19.118s; 14 Zhou +19.668s; 15 Samaia +22.082s; 16 Daruvala +24.290s; 17 Sato +24.909s; 18 Markelov -1 lap; R Armstrong 13 laps-lost power; R Ghiotto 7 laps-accident; R Gelael 3 laps-lost power; R Alesi 1 lap-engine.**

**Winner's average speed** 106.976mph. **Fastest lap** Drugovich 1m17.277s, 124.993mph.

**CHAMPIONSHIP**

**1 Ilott 27; 2 Shwartzman 23; 3 Drugovich 21; 4 Ticktum 20; 5 Deletraz 18; 6 Armstrong 18; 7 Lundgaard 18; 8 Alesi 8; 9 Matsushita 6; 10 Zhou 4.**

him to 13th, but an early stop on lap seven got him out of the train and he managed to nurse the hard tyres on his ART Grand Prix car through a 33-lap stint to beat his perpetual rival Shwartzman, the Prema man in turn unwilling to try a risky move to deprive Ferrari stablemate Armstrong of bragging rights as the top F2 debutant.

Armstrong's lack of pace also allowed his ART team-mate Christian Lundgaard and DAMS-run Dan Ticktum to hove into view, and they finished fourth and fifth.

Drugovich was eighth, earning himself pole for Sunday's reversed-grid race, and the MP Motorsport team set to work improving the car. Drugovich did the rest in a race that was hit by three safety cars – the final caused by Armstrong's car grinding to a halt, ill reward for a scintillating opening lap in which the Kiwi burst from seventh to third.

Louis Deletraz could do little about Drugovich – either the restarts or his pace – and the Charouz man focused on keeping it tidy in front of Ticktum and Shwartzman, Ticktum explaining that on the hard tyres the lap time discrepancy was insufficient to pass, even with DRS. Ilott ran eighth behind Schumacher, before a late error gifted the final point to Jack Aitken.

But even with no points from this race, Ilott leads the standings. And this weekend he's got another round at his favourite win-giving venue. Not bad for a driver dropped by Red Bull at the end of 2015!

**MARCUS SIMMONS**



Drugovich shocked with pace, and won the reversed-grid race

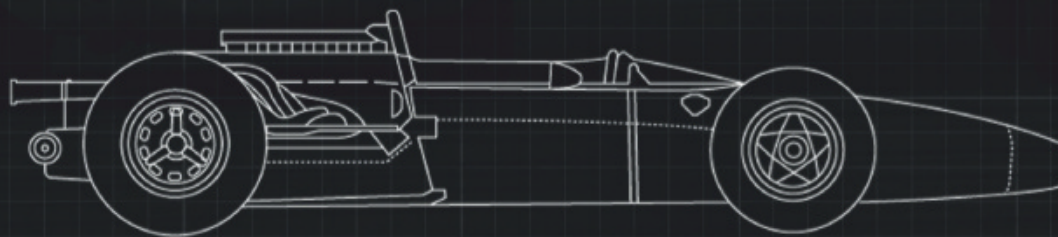
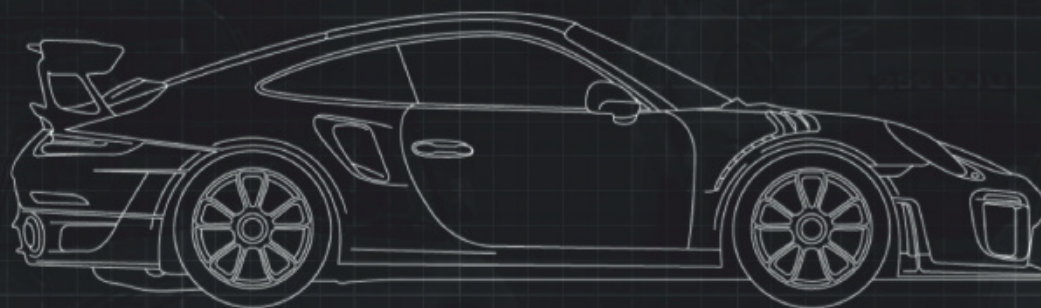
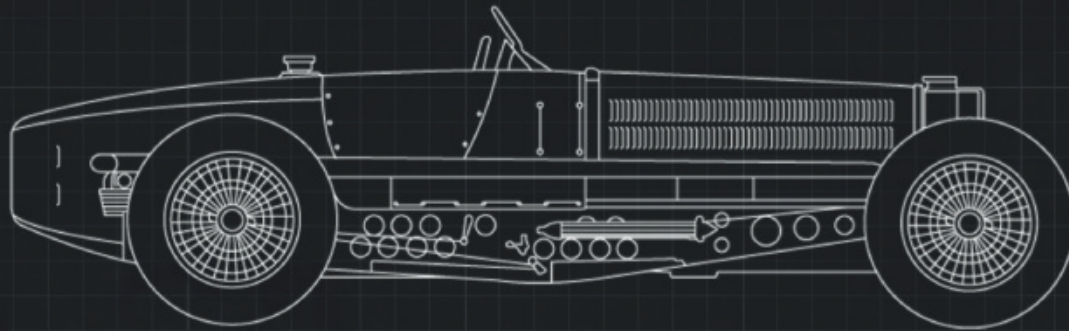




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Collision looms!  
Zendeli, Piastri and  
Fernandez (left to  
right) approach  
Turn 1

SUTTON  
motorsport  
IMAGES

# Piastri makes perfect debut

**FIA FORMULA 3  
RED BULL RING (AUT)  
4-5 JULY  
ROUND 1**

Australian Formula 1 hero Mark Webber took to social media last Sunday in fury that his country's media had ignored the FIA Formula 3 Championship opener at the Red Bull Ring, and you could see his point. Victorian Oscar Piastri, the reigning Formula Renault Eurocup champion and a Webber protege, had driven a beautifully judged race to victory on his F3 debut. And Tasmanian Alex Peroni, in his first race since he was injured in a horrific shunt at Monza last September, finished third.

But while Webber was fuming on Sunday, they were celebrating across the Tasman Sea in New Zealand. As if having Jacinda Ardern as their prime minister and Scott Dixon as their greatest racing driver isn't reason enough for joy, the country's Red Bull Junior Liam Lawson picked and paced his way skilfully from fifth on the reversed grid to take his maiden F3 success. Yep, it was a ripper event for the boys from down under.

'Beautifully judged' Piastri's win for Prema Racing on Saturday may have been, but it also owed something to luck – thanks

to the not so beautiful judgement of some of his rivals. Poleman Sebastian Fernandez was slow away, allowing front-row starter Lirim Zendeli and Piastri to draw abreast, but the Venezuelan decided to ignore the fact that cars were inside him and turned in at Turn 1 regardless. The bump sent Piastri into Zendeli, and Fernandez to the pits and retirement. Even so, Piastri – remarkably unscathed despite tyre marks down both sides of the car – outdragged Zendeli on the run to Turn 3, and took a lead he never lost.

While Zendeli held up the pack behind, Piastri raced into a comfortable three-second lead, and it was lap six before the Trident driver's defences were breached. Zendeli appeared not to be so comfortable on the brakes into Turn 4, and he was divebombed simultaneously by Logan Sargeant and Peroni.

Sargeant brought the gap down to Prema team-mate Piastri so that the interval was 1.7s at the flag, with the Campos Racing car of Peroni in tow, but nothing could deny Piastri a debut win in F3. And with Sargeant second and Frederik Vesti also passing Zendeli to claim fourth, there was little sign that Prema's position as the pre-eminent F3 force is coming to an end.

Lawson, from 12th on the grid, had put



Lawson leads as  
Verschoor shadows

SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

## WEEKEND WINNERS

**FIA FORMULA 3  
RED BULL RING (AUT)**  
Race 1 Oscar Piastri (below)  
Prema Racing  
Race 2 Liam Lawson  
Hitech Grand Prix



**motorsport  
STATS**

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in a brilliant opening lap to rise to seventh, then made up one further place on David Beckmann for sixth. But it was on Sunday that he really starred.

The Hitech GP driver got up to third on the opening lap, with reversed-grid poleman Clement Novalak leading from Beckmann. On the fourth tour Beckmann got in front, and Novalak's retaliatory bid resulted in the 2019 British F3 champion running wide and Lawson moving into second. Two laps later, Lawson pulled off a lovely outside move on Beckmann into Turn 4, and he was in front.

Richard Verschoor, last year's Macau Grand Prix winner, had picked his way through to second before a late safety car, but the MP Motorsport man could merely shadow Lawson over the two laps to the finish, while Carlin driver Novalak got back ahead of Beckmann to claim third.

**MARCUS SIMMONS**



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THE CAR IS MY BRUSH”** GRAHAM HILL



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# Harvick wins again amid pitstop scare

**NASCAR CUP**  
**INDIANAPOLIS (USA)**  
**5 JULY**  
**ROUND 16/36**

A dramatic late crash for Denny Hamlin handed Kevin Harvick his second consecutive Brickyard 400 victory at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Stewart-Haas Racing Ford runner Harvick and Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota driver Hamlin spent the race battling one another after they opted for a long opening stint, which put them on different strategies to most of the field. Chase Elliott joined the pair through most of the contest, but the Hendrick Motorsports crew mistimed Elliott's final pitstop and he fell backwards to an eventual 11th.

Hamlin held the advantage after the final round of stops, and appeared to be cruising to victory when a tyre failure sent him into the wall with only seven laps to go.

The heavy collision brought out a ninth caution, which sent the race into overtime. Harvick comfortably pulled away from the Chip Ganassi Racing Chevrolet of Matt Kenseth at the restart to take his fourth win of the interrupted season, all of them coming after the coronavirus break.

The race was red-flagged early on after a member of Ryan Blaney's pit crew was injured in a multi-car accident. Most of the field came into the pits during the competition caution in the opening laps, with Ryan Preece spinning as the field bunched up. Multiple drivers were



caught up in the incident, including Justin Allgaier, who stood in for Jimmie Johnson after the seven-time champion tested positive for COVID-19.

Blaney's tyre changer was squeezed between the car he was working on and that of Brennan Poole, injuring his leg. He was taken to hospital for further evaluation, but managed a quick 'thumbs up' before he was whisked away for treatment.

Blaney was able to continue after the incident and found a quick turn of pace to climb to 12th before he hit the wall in the closing stages of the second stint.

**BETHONIE WARING**

## WEEKEND WINNERS

**NASCAR CUP**  
**INDIANAPOLIS (USA)**

Kevin Harvick  
 Stewart-Haas Racing (Ford Mustang)

**PORSCHE SUPERCUP**  
**RED BULL RING (AUT)**

Jaxon Evans  
 Lechner Racing

**motorsport**  
**STATS**

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# New signing Evans picks up the imperious Lechner mantle

**PORSCHE SUPERCUP**  
**RED BULL RING (AUT)**  
**5 JULY**  
**ROUND 1/8**

To win the Porsche Supercup title in the past decade, pretty much the only option has been to drive for Lechner Racing. Since 2010, only once has a driver from another team clinched the championship spoils – Nicki Thiim with Attempto Racing in 2013.

For the past three years, Lechner's lead driver Michael Ammermuller has had it

all his own way. But Ammermuller is absent from the Formula 1 support series in 2020 as he focuses on an ADAC GT Masters assault alongside Christian Engelhart in a Porsche.

That meant Walter Lechner's squad needed a new posterchild for the restarted season, and so it has turned to Porsche Junior Jaxon Evans to lead the way after he finished sixth in last year's standings.

On the team's home turf at the Red Bull Ring, 23-year-old New Zealander Evans picked up the baton from Ammermuller in dominant style. He snared pole position by 0.1 seconds, and then led every lap



on his way to victory.

A clean start left Evans unchallenged for the duration, which meant the battle fell to Dylan Pereira and Leon Kohler to dice for second, 0.7s behind Evans. The bragging rights went Pereira's way, as Lechner-run drivers wrapped up a commanding podium lockout.





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Bomarito/Tincknell led a team 1-2 ahead of Jarvis/Nunez

# Mazda comes to the fore in the hands of Multimatic

**IMSA SPORTSCAR DAYTONA (USA) 4 JULY ROUND 2/11**

The second round of the 2020 IMSA SportsCar Championship, held more than five months after the first, produced a very different result, despite it again being held at Daytona. This time Mazda, now run by Multimatic, scored a 1-2.

The 24 Hours-winning Wayne Taylor Racing Cadillac, driven by Ryan Briscoe, did well to qualify within 0.7 seconds of Helio Castroneves's pole time in the Team Penske Acura ARX-05. But when the rain and lightning that delayed the race start failed to return, all bar one of the normally aspirated Cadillacs were simply unable to match the pace of the Mazda RT24-Ps on a dry track.

The Cadillacs of Action Express Racing – Gabby Chaves subbing for COVID-19 sidelined Felipe Nasr – and WTR ran slick tyres on a damp track at the start and so

moved into the top two positions after 15 minutes, when the Mazda and Acura Team Penske drivers were obliged to duck into the pits to change from wets as the course dried.

But as the asphalt's latent heat dispersed the last of the dampness from the racing line, the inherent pace advantage of the Mazdas meant they came to the fore again.

With the Acura of Castroneves/Ricky Taylor retiring with mechanical difficulties and Juan Pablo Montoya and Dane Cameron apparently at a pace disadvantage – despite Montoya's strong effort in the early stages – the Mazdas were able to dominate.

The Jonathan Bomarito/Harry Tincknell car led home its Oliver Jarvis/Tristan Nunez-driven stablemate by 10s, while Sebastien Bourdais and Joao Barbosa did a great job in the top Cadillac to claim third ahead of the remaining Acura.

Despite there being only six cars in GT Le Mans – two Corvette C8.Rs, two Porsche 911 RSRs and two BMW M8s – that was enough to create excitement. Nick Tandy

## WEEKEND WINNERS

**IMSA SPORTSCAR DAYTONA (USA)**

**DPI** Jonathan Bomarito/Harry Tincknell Team Joest (Mazda RT24-P)

**GTLM** Antonio Garcia/Jordan Taylor Corvette Racing (Chevrolet Corvette C8.R)

**GTD** Jack Hawksworth/Aaron Telitz AIM Vasser Sullivan (Lexus RC F GT3)



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

qualified his Porsche sixth, so at the start elected to run on wets and was into the lead by Turn 2 and got as high as seventh overall.

When he had to pit early to grab slicks, the car remained off-strategy, and so Tandy and co-driver Frederic Makowiecki were fortunate that the polesitting Corvette of Oliver Gavin and Tommy Milner was also slightly off in terms of fuel mileage and had to cede third place in the closing stages.

Their team-mates were in the battle at the front, and Antonio Garcia and new co-driver Jordan Taylor did just enough to hold off the 911 of Laurens Vanthoor and Earl Bamber to claim the C8.R's first victory and Corvette Racing's 100th on US soil.

In the GT Daytona class, once Compass Racing's McLaren 720S was consigned to a pitlane start for failing to reach the 'pitlane parade' at the given time, Lexus had no opposition. The AIM Vasser Sullivan-run RC F of Aaron Telitz and Jack Hawksworth led home team-mates Townsend Bell and Frankie Montecalvo in a dominant display.

**DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ**



New Corvette C8.R came up trumps in the dwindling GTLM class





# INSIGHT

THE STATE OF PLAY IN FORMULA E • ANDY PRIAULX: STEPPING BACK, NOT STEPPING DOWN



Saudi Arabia no longer hosts opening round, instead moving to late-February slot

## FORMULA E 2019-20 DRIVER STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	POINTS
1	Antonio Felix da Costa	DSTecheetah	67
2	Mitch Evans	Jaguar	56
3	Alexander Sims	BMW	46
4	Maximilian Guenther	BMW	44
5	Lucas di Grassi	Audi Sport Abt	38
6	Stoffel Vandoorne	Mercedes	38



# WHAT'S NEW IN FORMULA E

*Quite a lot! Here's your guide to the state of the electric nation*

MATT KEW

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport  
IMAGES

**O**f course, the global health crisis has dominated every aspect of life over the past four months. It's also triggered a chain of events in Formula E that kick-started the driver market into life, reshaped the next 12 months of racing, and forced the championship to introduce a raft of cost-saving measures aimed at preserving the future of its smaller teams. Here's the lie of the reprofiled land...

## IN, OUT, SHAKE IT ALL ABT

There were honourable intentions behind the plethora of online Esports competitions set up during lockdown, offering motorsport fans some form of entertainment while the real racing was on ice. FE presented its Race at Home Challenge virtual series, which ran in support of the UNICEF coronavirus relief fund.

Mercedes driver Stoffel Vandoorne was crowned champion, but the biggest talking point came when Daniel Abt was effectively sacked by Audi after he had a sim racer take his place in a race in Berlin. He was fined €10,000, donated to charity, but that wasn't enough to redeem him in the eyes of his employer.

Audi issued a statement that read: "Integrity, transparency and consistent compliance with applicable rules are top priorities for Audi – this applies to all activities the brand is involved in without exception. For this reason, Audi Sport has decided to suspend Daniel Abt with immediate effect."

The two-time E-Prix winner issued a full apology in a video uploaded to his YouTube channel, but confirmed that he and Audi had parted ways for good. That looked to end his 100% record of having competed in every one of the 63 FE races to date.

But the 27-year-old German will reprise his role, this time at backmarker team NIO 333, now that driver Ma Qinghua is unavailable to contest the remainder of the 2019-20 season owing to European and Chinese travel restrictions.

FE ever-present Audi has only ever fielded Abt and 2017-18 champion Lucas di Grassi, but fortunately it had a stellar replacement waiting in the wings. Double DTM champion Rene Rast, arguably the best driver outside of single-seater racing, will take the wheel of the e-tron FE06 for the rest of the season.

"I've been following Formula E very closely for a long time and am now looking forward to this new challenge," he said. "The demands on the drivers in Formula E are high: in addition to pure speed, it's also a question of efficiency, battery management and the perfect strategy – and all of this on tight city circuits, where things are usually quite turbulent."

Rast made a one-off FE appearance for Team Aguri in the 2016 Berlin E-Prix, his first single-seater race since German Formula

BMW in 2004. The triple Porsche Supercup champion qualified 13th but retired from the race after a collision with Bruno Senna.

Fortunately, in addition to extensive sim testing, Rast was able to acclimatise to the open-wheel experience in a test at the Lausitzring last Friday. For now, he's only enlisted to round out the current season but, with the demise of the Audi DTM programme coming at the end of 2020, he's odds on to retain the seat next season.

Ex-Manor and Sauber Formula 1 driver Pascal Wehrlein will be absent for the near future. The Mahindra driver issued a brief statement on social media revealing his immediate departure from the team, which has since recalled former Jaguar and DS Virgin pilot Alex Lynn to the FE fold. In time, Wehrlein is expected to replace Neel Jani at Porsche to partner Andre Lotterer through the 2020-21 season.

## CALENDARS LIKE LONDON BUSES

### 2019-20 CALENDAR

RD	LOCATION	DATE
6	Berlin layout 1 (DEU)	5 August
7	Berlin layout 1 (DEU)	6 August
8	Berlin layout 2 (DEU)	8 August
9	Berlin layout 2 (DEU)	9 August
10	Berlin layout 3 (DEU)	12 August
11	Berlin layout 3 (DEU)	13 August

After a four-month wait to find out how the current campaign would end while FE was suspended, the championship issued two calendars in quick succession.

There will be six races held across nine days and on three different circuit configurations, all at the Tempelhof Airport in Berlin to conclude the 2019-20

season. These will take place over three double-header events – two of which are mid-week – for 5-6, 8-9 and 12-13 August.

To meet German government guidelines that remain in place until September, the races will be held behind closed doors and only essential staff and competitors will be granted access to ensure a site limit of 1000 people. As such, several team principals and, again due to travel restrictions, the Shanghai-based members of the NIO 333 team will be absent.

FE CEO Jamie Reigle said: "Since taking action to suspend our season in March, we have emphasised a revised calendar which places the health and safety of our community first, represents Formula E's distinct brand of city centre racing and offers an exciting conclusion to the compelling season of racing we had seen so far."

The announcement of the revised calendar also confirmed a delay for the inaugural Seoul E-Prix. Talks about a race in South Korea – which would pay a host fee to help stem the >>





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GALLOWAY

Tempelhof will host six  
races on three layouts

cashflow losses – had continued owing to the nation's rapid response to COVID-19. And, although series co-founder Alejandro Agag reckoned FE might have to move to races on permanent tracks such as Silverstone due to lasting unease over public gatherings, the provisional 2020-21 calendar is rather conventional. Inner-city races are back.

Despite the calendar's name, there will be no races in 2020, but the new schedule does feature the return of the Santiago E-Prix, which will become the opening round on 16 January 2021. It replaces a double-header in Saudi Arabia, which now hosts a 26-27 February date.

Elsewhere, there's a return to Sanya in China on 13 March,

## 2020-21 CALENDAR

RD	LOCATION	DATE
1	<b>Santiago</b> (CHL)	16 January
2	<b>Mexico City</b> (MEX)	13 February
3	<b>Diriyah</b> (SAU)	26 February
4	<b>Diriyah</b> (SAU)	27 February
5	<b>Sanya</b> (CHN)	13 March
6	<b>Rome</b> (ITA)	10 April
7	<b>Paris</b> (FRA)	24 April
8	<b>Monaco</b> (MCO)	8 May
9	<b>Seoul</b> (KOR)	23 May
10	<b>TBC</b>	TBC
11	<b>Berlin</b> (DEU)	19 June
12	<b>New York</b> (USA)	10 July
13	<b>London</b> (GBR)	24 July
14	<b>London</b> (GBR)	25 July

after the 2020 race became the first major motorsport event to be cancelled because of COVID-19. Monaco returns on 8 May, subject to circuit homologation, as part of a five-week programme where the principality will host F1 and the Historic Grand Prix.

Seoul will finally make its FE bow on 23 May, while an eventual return to the United Kingdom, after Battersea Park last featured in 2016, comes with a double-header in London across 24 and 25 July.

Continued political disruption means Hong Kong drops away, with Marrakech and an inaugural race in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta also not included.

## PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

The FIA and Formula E have also outlined a list of cost-saving measures in response to the economic flux resulting from the coronavirus pandemic, which will further reduce the championship's environmental impact.

Coming into play next season, each driver's tyre allocation will be reduced by 25% per race. Team operational staff – those working in the FE garages at a race weekend – will be cut from 20 to 17, while only one remote garage of six people will be permitted.





DTM superstar Rast takes Abt's seat at Audi

A statement from the FIA read: "Together, these two decisions to restructure team format will therefore provide competitors with an opportunity to better manage their staff and will have a substantial effect on the carbon footprint of the championship by reducing the amount of people travelling to the events."

There will also be a limit on the use of brake discs and pads to reduce the costs of consumable goods. Additional restrictions impacting software, bodywork and sensors are still being assessed to lower non-essential expenses.

A Logistics Working Group will be created for next season to "optimise logistics costs significantly", and there will be a revised distribution of prize money to support the smaller teams.

The FIA statement continued: "This long-term plan for greater efficiency and sustainability will lead to the future introduction of financial regulations to preserve the competitive balance of Formula E and its viability. The aim is to ensure that each competitor can continue to challenge for race wins with increasingly reasonable and controlled costs, while Formula E remains the pinnacle of electric racing and retains its relevance for manufacturers through the engineering challenge it poses."

These all follow alterations to the current homologation cycle. Manufacturers are now only able to modify powertrain components once over the next two seasons. Also, the facelifted Gen2 Evo car has been delayed by a year until 2021-22 – although it could be scrapped altogether, with the Gen3 car set to make its debut for the following season.

Meanwhile, Williams Advanced Engineering has been handed the contract to exclusively supply the battery system for the 450bph Gen3 machine. The technology firm produced the Gen1 battery system – designed and built in under a year – used in the inaugural 2014 FE season and continued through to 2018. The current Gen2 deal was awarded to McLaren Applied Technologies and its battery partner Atieva.

The Gen3 regulations will also be supported by a brand-new tyre supplier. Out goes Michelin for the first time, to be replaced by South Korean DTM and W<sup>o</sup>Series provider Hankook. 🏎️

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# RETIREMENT? THAT'S NOT A VERY ANDY PRIAULX THING TO DO

*The three-time World Touring Car champion last month announced his  
climbdown from full-time racing, but he has plenty of mileage left in yet*

MARCUS SIMMONS

LEAD PHOTOGRAPHY CLEMENT LUCK/DPPI OTHER PHOTOGRAPHY







Ragging on in the Promatecme F3 Dallara in 2000...



...before starring on a one-off BTCC debut at Oulton in 2001

SUTTON  
WESTON

“Y

ou’ve not only got the stress of performing well, but of whether you have a job next year. You’ve got your family, your travel, trying to organise something as a back-up in case things don’t happen. It’s a lot of juggling.”

Those are the words of Andy Priaulx, who last month lifted an enormous burden off his shoulders by finally pressing ‘send’ on an email to Cyan Racing chief Christian Dahl, with whose Lynk & Co squad he was due to make a second successive attack on the World Touring Car Cup this year. Priaulx is stepping down from full-time racing, but he’s not retiring, and it certainly looks as though full-time *driving* is very much still on his agenda.

So, after 18 consecutive seasons as a manufacturer driver – one with Honda, 13 with BMW, three with Ford and one with Lynk & Co – an era comes to an end.

It’s an era this writer was privileged to have seen begin. Back when Priaulx was making the transition in late 2001 from slightly-older-than-the-opposition British Formula 3 battler to the British Touring Car Championship, I was covering both series for Autosport’s

magazine and website. I was at Oulton Park in August 2001 when Priaulx – then battling for F3 honours on a frayed shoestring budget with Alan Docking Racing – made an unexpected BTCC debut in a Triple Eight-run Vauxhall Astra Coupe in place of the suspended Phil Bennett. He had beaten such well-supported talents as Takuma Sato, Anthony Davidson, Andre Lotterer, James Courtney and Gianmaria Bruni in F3 races, so it was no surprise that, without success ballast, he outpaced his only realistic opposition – Triple Eight stablemates Jason Plato, Yvan Muller and James Thompson – to top both qualifying sessions in the Astra.

Although he won neither race, he’d clearly impressed a few people. A couple of months later, Priaulx called your narrator up – he was sounding out a few motorsport acquaintances about

whether he should give up on the single-seater dream, at the age of 28, and accept the offer of a BTCC Honda drive. “Do it!” was the enthusiastic reply, not because of any doubts that he had the ability to go further along the road to F1, but because it was obvious that, without being a protege of an F1 team or big manufacturer, he’d never find the budget to move up to the next level, Formula 3000.

Here, it’s worth noting that he *had* enjoyed manufacturer backing in his rookie F3 season in 2000, with the Renault UK-supported team of Promatecme. As the runaway 1999 Renault Spider Cup champion, Priaulx was getting his first proper single-seater chance alongside the highly rated Matt Davies, who’d enjoyed a promising maiden F3 campaign and was expected to challenge for the title with the team that had run Jenson Button the previous season. It turned into a struggle, with huge question marks over

the Renault engine. Priaulx, showing the determination that would become a hallmark, suggested to Davies that they make the road trip together to visit the French base of engine builder Sodemo – far better than whingeing in the media, sounding ungrateful and annoying them. This they

did, and Priaulx scored three podiums, Davies none – nobody outside the Priaulx family would have expected that.

At that time Priaulx’s wife Jo was pregnant and, two decades on, one big factor in his latest decision is the career of son Seb and the family’s relationship with Multimatic Motorsports. While dad was good enough to win four rounds of the World Endurance Championship across 2016 and 2017 in a Multimatic-run Ford GT, lad is now also a fully fledged Multimatic driver – narrowly denied the GT4 crown last year as a British GT Championship rookie in the team’s Mustang, and now competing in the IMSA-run Michelin Pilot Challenge for the same category in the US.

Multimatic and its charismatic boss Larry Holt are clearly going to play a big part in the lives of the racing – or even semi-racing >>

“HE HAD BEATEN SUCH TALENTS AS SATO, DAVIDSON, LOTTERER, BRUNI AND COURTNEY IN F3 RACES”



Priaulx and son Seb are both part of the fold at Multimatic...

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Priaulx wins third WTCC title in 2007, and celebrates with BMW sport boss Mario Theissen, who called him the “Schumacher of touring cars”

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– Priaulx. “For me it’s about Multimatic and potentially some amazing things are happening there,” he says. “There are some good-quality programmes. I’ve always been very focused on set-up, Multimatic have seen that, and it’s great that I can give them what I’ve learned over the past 20 years.”

Does that mean we might see Priaulx getting heavily involved with test and development driving? “My deal is quite varied. I’m glad it’s a long-term contract. Definitely they’re going to be using me for testing and developing and some races, ambassadorial work, sporting work, and helping on the customer racing side. Over the next two to three years there’ll be some high-level races with them. I’m not hanging my overalls up. But what I didn’t want to do was to be the guy that’s continuing to try and do something when you should have stopped four or five years ago.

“So, I’ll be in the US quite a bit. Multimatic is one of the best-kept secrets in motorsport and the engineering expertise is phenomenal. They’ve built some of the best racing cars I’ve ever driven. Larry is a genius, and so are the engineers and his other employees. People want to work with him because he’s a loyal man, which you don’t find in motorsport very much.”

It’s appropriate that Priaulx should be working with his son at Multimatic. The family has always been like a little Guernsey gang, with ‘grandad’ Graham vociferously supporting Andy’s career from his first steps when they went hillclimbing together (Andy won the 1995 British title). Priaulx’s wife Jo experienced two premature births with Seb and little sister Danniella, and their subsequent work with the Priaulx Premature Baby Foundation resulted in Andy’s MBE. Unsurprisingly, Andy retains that ‘up-and-at-’em’ mentality regarding the exploits of Seb, claiming that ‘politics’ denied him the GT4 title last year and, before that, the Ginetta Junior crown.

Seb won’t remember this – he was only three months old at the time, after all – but he fell asleep during his dad’s drive to his maiden British F3 Championship race win in 2001 at

**“SO MANY ENGINEERS FORGET THERE’S A HUMAN SIDE. THAT’S WORTH AT LEAST TWO TENTHS”**

a wet Snetterton, something Andy and Jo were amused to relate to Autosport later that day.

“That was quite a defining moment for me actually,” recalls Priaulx. “I developed late in racing, and I thought, ‘I don’t want to screw this up for my family, I want to do everything I can to make it work’. People say you lose lap time when you have a child, but that’s bullshit. In F3 I put every commercial deal together. One minute I’d be checking up on 90 guests in the hospitality suite at Silverstone making sure they were OK, the next I’d be on pole position trying to win a race. I stalled on the grid – but at least I’d won the earlier race!

“Jo has brought the kids up in hotel rooms for 20 years, and made a lot of sacrifices. And [with the COVID-19 pandemic] we’d have been looking at one of us staying in Europe [for World Touring Car Cup], one in America [Seb with Multimatic], and the wife in between in Guernsey.”

Hence the message to Dahl: “They were shocked, but Christian was very nice, and he understood why I needed to do it. I’m very grateful to him.”

Cyan is just the last in a list of top motorsport organisations for which Priaulx has driven.

Apart from Multimatic and Triple Eight, in his BMW days he tested F1 cars for Williams and Sauber, and also raced for Schnitzer and – probably closest to his heart – RBM, the Belgian team with which he claimed his 2004 European Touring Car Championship crown and then the World Touring Car titles in 2005-07.

“That was a phenomenal team,” he sighs. “Bart Mampaey [RBM boss] made me realise what you need behind you to win, and I only realised when I left what I’d had there. So many engineers forget that there’s a human side in this sport, and that’s worth at least two tenths of a second. In touring cars, that can be the difference between 15th on the grid and pole.”

Priaulx still believes there are poles in him, so is keen to assert that “it’s not an immediate stop, it’s a tapering”, and that he wants to carry on competing in “the big endurance races. The Daytonas and Sebrings, and to drive Le Mans with Seb would be amazing.”

There’s still just too much passion for him to stand entirely back from competing to support his son, and besides, Priaulx knows what racing dads can be like: “I need to be there for Seb, and as much as dads screw it up at the race track he needs help away from it to structure his life and to be the best racing driver he can be. I still get hairs on the back of my neck standing up, whether that’s from watching Seb do well or driving out of a circuit when you’ve done a good job yourself.”

And that is a very gratifyingly Priaulx thing to say and illustrates the family DNA. After all the blood, sweat and tears of the racing career, the baby scares and the charity work, you wouldn’t expect a Priaulx to ever give up on something entirely, would you? ❧



It was a tough year in 2019 in WTCR, but Priaulx won in Macau

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HAWKINS

All five MotorSport Vision venues will allow spectators into race meetings from this weekend

## MSV OPENS ITS DOORS TO SPECTATORS ONCE AGAIN

### UK MOTORSPORT

MotorSport Vision will allow spectators to attend race meetings from this weekend, following the resumption of on-track action.

All UK sanctioned events had been suspended by the governing body, Motorsport UK, from March until the end of June due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Racing resumed last weekend, albeit behind closed doors, but MSV announced plans last week to let spectators into its five race circuits – Brands Hatch, Donington Park, Oulton Park, Cadwell Park and Snetterton – from this Saturday (11 July).

Chief executive of MSV, Jonathan Palmer, said: “We took the decision to admit day visitors to MSV race meetings from 11 July after many weeks of deliberation and close monitoring of the measures adopted by other outdoor attractions, such as zoos and theme parks. We’ve put in place a very detailed set of COVID-secure protocols to enable visitors to attend safely, which includes significantly reduced capacities, a closed paddock and advance-only ticket sales.

“Our plan is to gradually and cautiously build up those visitor numbers over the coming weeks and months, assuming the UK continues its current path of emerging from the COVID-19 crisis successfully. We’re yet to determine capacities for August when we start to hold British Touring Car Championship and British GT events but will review this in mid-July.”

Test and trackdays at MSV venues still only remain open to participants at the moment.

The other main circuit operator in the UK – the

British Automobile Racing Club, which manages the Thruxton, Croft and Pembrey venues – has said it will not be letting spectators attend events at its tracks until at least next month.

“Our position is we took the decision when we decided to go back racing that July would be behind closed doors,” said BARC chief executive Ben Taylor. “We’re not going to change that – we’ve only got a couple of meetings in July and we’ve already refunded everyone that had bought a ticket for the Classic Sports Car Club meeting at Thruxton. We’re going to leave it and take a view for August.”

Taylor stressed that the BARC doesn’t “disagree with what MSV are doing necessarily” but said that, without any major events in July, there is no reason to reverse the earlier decision.

“It’s really difficult – there’s no specific government guidance for our sector and there’s not likely to be,” he added. “We each have to understand and interpret the regulations the best we can.”

Motorsport UK released guidelines on how motorsport could resume safely back in May, stating it would only allow 50% of event permits issued for July 2019 to be granted for this month to limit demand on marshals.

A statement said: “The governing body has jurisdiction for the competition and sporting elements of any event, in conjunction with the club, promoter and venue. All other matters are at the sole discretion of the venue owner and, where they have queries on the guidance, Motorsport UK will refer their enquiry to insurers.”

**STEFAN MACKLEY AND STEPHEN LICKORISH**



## More McLarens for British GT

### BRITISH GT

Two additional McLaren 720S GT3s will compete in the British GT Championship's Silver Cup this year.

Reigning GT3 Silver champion Oliver Wilkinson will return with frontrunning operation Optimum Motorsport alongside GT4 graduate Lewis Proctor, while Jenson Team Rocket RJN has switched its planned assault on the GT World Challenge Europe for British GT with Esports convert James Baldwin and 2018 GT4 title contender Michael O'Brien.

It comes as both of Optimum's GT4 Pro-Am entries have been withdrawn due to scheduling conflicts for amateur drivers Nick Moss and Brendan Iribe, while Graham Johnson has also pulled his Balfe-run McLaren GT4 Pro-Am entry.

McLaren Professional driver O'Brien told Autosport the opportunity to join car racing rookie Baldwin, winner of the World's Fastest Gamer competition, was too good to pass up.

"As soon as it came up, it was an

opportunity that I was really keen to do," he said. "The partnership that we've got is going to be really exciting. Once [Baldwin] is up to speed in the GT3, I'm confident we can have a good season."

Optimum team boss Shaun Goff told Autosport that its previously announced GT3 line-up of Australian pair Nick Foster and Martin Berry could also withdraw due to travel restrictions imposed on Singapore-based Berry.

But Goff said he was confident that Wilkinson and Proctor, who had planned to do European GT4 with HHC Motorsport after two years with McLaren's Driver Development Programme, would be "a great fit".

**JAMES NEWBOLD**



## New Porsche series gets 13-car entry

### PORSCHE SPRINT CHALLENGE GB

Organisers of the new Porsche Sprint Challenge GB series are pleased to have secured a 13-car entry for the inaugural round at Snetterton this weekend, despite the coronavirus pandemic, and believe more drivers will join later in the year.

The category begins at the Snetterton MotorSport Vision Racing event, where it will race alongside the Porsche Club GB championship, before joining the British GT and British Touring Car Championship support bills for selected rounds.

The manufacturer-backed series for the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport will still feature its originally planned 12 races across six events but in a much shorter timescale due to the COVID-19 lockdown.

"We've got 13 cars, which is a good number of cars for a first year of a championship and the situation we find ourselves in with COVID-19," said Porsche GB assistant motorsport manager Ian Fletcher. "We've also had some positive talks with [additional] teams and drivers both from this country and further afield who have seen what we've been doing and what we can offer."

"We're really excited to show off these cars and show how this can be a stepping stone into Carrera Cup and British GT – it's about building momentum this year into next year."

Among the additional drivers to sign up to the championship in recent weeks is British GT racer Alex Toth-Jones, who will drive for the In2Racing squad.

**STEPHEN LICKORISH**

## SPEEDWORKS SUPRA GT4 HAS A 'POSITIVE' TEST

### BRITISH GT

Speedworks Motorsport boss Christian Dick says he is "very positive" about the team's return to British GT after completing a first test with its new Toyota GR Supra GT4 at Donington Park last week.

Drivers Sam Smelt and James Kell completed over 90 laps, with Dick reporting that they were "happy with the way the car felt and had a good all-round feeling".

Dick, whose outfit last contested British GT with a Corvette in 2012, said Speedworks has so far received remote support from Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe (previously TMG) in Cologne due to travel restrictions, but is benefiting from information sharing with other GR Supras in Europe, including the Nurburgring-based NLS series, which started last month.

"We knew that there were going to be some bits that we've got to work with them on and that excites us as a project to take on," he said. "Obviously the hope is that, by the time we get to racing, the quarantine rules will have been relaxed a little and we'll get some support over for the weekends, but so far it's all working really well."

"We've got some more testing before we actually get racing and so hopefully we'll have a much clearer picture then of where we fit into the grand scheme of things."

He also confirmed that the team will be run independently of its British Touring Car Championship Toyota Corolla effort, with long-time Triple Eight team manager Micky Sergeant and Autosport technical expert Tim Wright heading the engineering staff.

**JAMES NEWBOLD**





## New British F4 car won't be introduced until at least 2022



Current F4 car will now be used for at least seven seasons

### BRITISH FORMULA 4

The new second-generation Formula 4 car won't race in British F4 until at least 2022, after the FIA World Motor Sport Council ratified plans to delay its worldwide introduction last month.

The halo-fitted machine was due to become available for championships to use from next year but, in the wake

of the coronavirus pandemic, that date has been pushed back to November 2021.

British F4 promoter Sam Roach believes this was the right decision and avoided the 12 individual F4 championships having to make the choice of whether or not to proceed with plans to introduce a car next year.

"It's a shame because work had started with everybody, but it's completely

understandable and the right decision," he said. "It would just be too much of a stretch now to be ready for teams to have cars available to buy and test by the winter."

Roach added that it is still the intention for the British championship to switch to the new car "as soon as it becomes available".

Teams agreed that it is the right course of action and means they do not have to make additional expenditure on new cars at an already-uncertain time.

"It's a very sensible thing to do – people just don't have the budgets to go out and buy new cars at the moment," said Fortec owner Richard Dutton. "This [pandemic] is going to hurt a lot of people because they've not been able to go racing. It would be massively difficult [having to buy new cars in the current climate] – and if they did bring the new car, there would be a lot of teams who wouldn't be able to afford them."

JHR boss Steve Hunter added: "It's a wise choice, not just from the timescale of developing the cars but it also means budgets stay reasonable."

British F4 was also evaluating whether to introduce a new hybrid Ford engine for 2021, and the delayed introduction of the new car gives more time to test the motor.

Roach said the hybrid unit is at "the heart of our plans", but development was paused during the lockdown.

**STEPHEN LICKORISH**

## JHR joins BRDC British F3 ranks with Williams

### BRDC BRITISH F3

British Formula 4 squad JHR Developments will expand into BRDC British F3 this year, competing in selected rounds.

The squad has twice powered drivers to second in the F4 standings and will now step up to F3 for the first time, having initially bought cars ready for 2019.

Team boss Steve Hunter believes now is a good time to enter the series as it has undergone major changes

for this season, including Mountune becoming the engine builder, and a wide-ranging aero upgrade.

"It's something we've toyed with for a few years and I think we're joining at the right point because it's all change with the cars, so it's a more level playing field," he said. "We will learn from this year before having a full complement of races for 2021."

JHR will have a "toe in the water" entry into this year, predominantly running cars

in the rounds that do not clash with F4.

Carter Williams, who took three wins and finished seventh in the F4 standings with JHR last year, will be one of the squad's drivers. Former Formula Ford 1600 racer Max Marzorati has also been testing for the team.

JHR has become the second new team to join the F3 grid in recent weeks, as F2 and FIA F3 squad Hitech GP announced it is also entering for 2020.

**STEPHEN LICKORISH**



American Williams will step up from F4 with JHR

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## IN THE HEADLINES

## SPA WEC SLOT FOR MASTERS

The Aston Martin Masters Endurance Legends series will support the World Endurance Championship when it resumes action at Spa next month. The series, which caters for GTs and prototypes built between 1995 and 2015, will have two 40-minute races across the 13-15 August weekend. The extra Spa date will mark the second round of a revised five-event calendar that gets under way at Donington Park next weekend.

## GRENSINGER'S WRIST BREAK

Tom Grensinger, the 19-year-old son of Speedworks boss Christian Dick, suffered a broken wrist when he crashed his Caterham in qualifying for the CNC Heads Sports/Saloons race at Cadwell Park last Saturday. His father says Grensinger is "in good spirits". "He was looked after extraordinarily well, from his side of things he's not seen any difference [with COVID-19 protocols] other than the fact nobody is allowed to be in the med-centre with him," Dick said.

## SMITH'S MX-5 MOVE FOR 2020

Caterham Graduates ace Graeme Smith has swapped to a Mazda MX-5 for the CNC Heads Sports/Saloons. "I have raced the Caterham for 21 years so I will never sell it, but buying a Mazda was cheaper than a Lotus Elise," he said. His plans to contest both the CNC series and the Classic Sports Car Club's Future Classics division may have to be put on hold, though, after putting a rod through the block at Cadwell last weekend.

## RONCHETTI'S RETURN

Joss Ronchetti returned to racing at Cadwell Park last weekend after an eight-year absence. He took two Classic Thunder class wins, driving his Talbot Sunbeam Lotus (below). "I am building a Mitsubishi but it's not ready yet, so I decided to bring out the Talbot Sunbeam Bullet again," he said. "It has stood idle since my last race at Donington in 2012, when it was T-boned by 'Baby Bertha'"



WALKER



Smith was a double winner in his Cortina at Cadwell

WALKER

## BTCC team boss Hollamby and Le Mans winner Smith to historics

### HISTORICS

British Touring Car Championship team boss Shaun Hollamby and 2003 Le Mans 24 Hours winner Guy Smith are among the entries for this weekend's Historic Sports Car Club season opener at Brands Hatch.

AmD Tuning chief Hollamby has acquired a 1960s Ford Anglia and a 1971 Formula Ford Jamun T3, which he will race when his BTCC schedule allows.

"I've always wanted to do something in historic racing," Hollamby said. "I bought the Anglia because my dad Olly drove one on the road when he was a youngster. I've always fancied having a Cosworth DFV-powered Formula 1 car, but I've not raced

in single-seaters for a while so I've decided to start a bit lower down.

"I like the atmosphere at historic events and I like the fact that I can run more than one car during the weekend."

Smith, meanwhile, was a double winner in Pre '66 Touring Cars at Cadwell Park last weekend, and father Peter also took two podiums.

"We are going to Brands HSCC this week in the cars, but had originally intended doing Goodwood and the Silverstone Classic, as we want to share a car," said Smith Jr. "I had one test in the car, but my confidence is growing as I can feel it moving about more."

PAUL LAWRENCE & PETER SCHERER

## US FF1600 drivers get Combe outings

### CASTLE COMBE FF1600

The rebranded Low Dempsey Racing Formula Ford 1600 team debuted at Castle Combe last weekend, giving Americans Bryce Aron (16) and Grant Palmer (19) more seat time this year.

Palmer qualified third behind race winners Luke Cooper and Felix Fisher on a drying track, with Aron sixth, hindered by an engine issue. Aron left with a best result of third, while

Palmer managed a fourth place.

"Bryce and Grant both came over to contest the National FF1600 Championship but, with the calendar rescheduled, we'll be doing as many extra events as possible," said new team owner Andy Low. "For the little testing they've done I was impressed."

With three days under his belt, including Thursday at Combe, Palmer had only had dry running at Oulton Park, where the National series

opens on 18 July.

Aron, on six days' testing, earned his maiden UK podium with third in the damp opening contest.

"Combe is tough, with a lot of specialists, so we'll do the next round [on 1 August] and Champion of Brands races on the Grand Prix circuit in August and the Indy circuit in September," added Low. "Both drivers are looking strong and will develop."

MARCUS PYE





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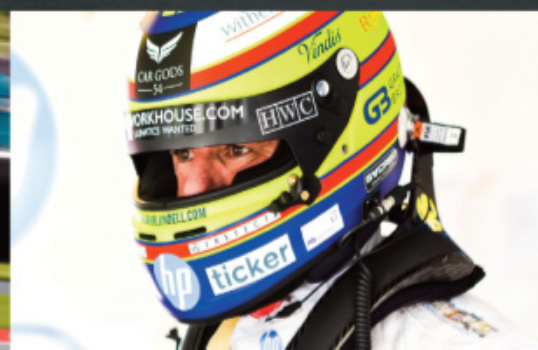
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 — RACING —





# Scottish FF1600 cancelled amid lack of post-hiatus entries

## SMRC

Scotland's Formula Ford 1600 championship has been cancelled for 2020 after a revised calendar was unveiled by the Scottish Motor Racing Club last week.

A new meeting format was announced by the club in June, which reduced a six-round season to three one-day meetings to save on track hire and accommodation for officials and marshals.

With club finances adversely impacted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, categories with the highest entries were prioritised, meaning FF1600 and the Supersports – the rebranded Saloon and Sports series – championships missed out.

Reigning FF1600 champion Jordan Gronkowski is disappointed by the cancellation of the series.

“I’m obviously gutted at not being



able to get out this year – that was what we were gearing up for throughout this [lockdown] period,” he said.

“Ironically, I’m probably in much better shape physically than I’ve been before, but we’ll refocus our efforts for next year and hope things turn out alright.”

It is the first time since 2006 that Scottish FF1600 has not been held.

The Citroen C1 Cup received 21 entries for the delayed 2020 season, while the Scottish Classic Sports and Saloons have 19 cars registered. The Scottish Fiesta ST and

Mini Cooper S grids will again amalgamate as part of the Hot Hatch category, while 12 Legends entries were filed.

The popular Scottish Mini Cooper Cup, which has produced the highest average grid size in SMRC meetings over the past five years, received 11 entries.

The SMRC added that the loss of Scottish FF1600 was not indicative of the long-term future of the category, stating that the revised calendar was a “temporary solution” during “clearly unprecedented times”.

**STEPHEN BRUNSDON**

# Special charity auction for Peking to Paris Volvo

## HISTORICS

A Volvo 144 that has twice competed on the Peking to Paris rally is being auctioned next weekend to raise money for the hospital that saved the owner's life.

Charles Cook used the car, which was built in 1970, in the marathon event in 2016. He became seriously ill at the start of the coronavirus pandemic, receiving treatment from the University College London Hospital, and now wants to give something back.

The car is being auctioned by Historics on 18 July and

has no reserve price. The highest bidder will not only receive the car but also free entry to an Historic Endurance Rallying Organisation event.

“If it wasn't for the skill and care of the UCLH Haematology team and their ICU colleagues, I simply would not be here today,” said Cook. “Whoever buys the Volvo will have the satisfaction of knowing the whole price they pay will go towards UCLH's cutting-edge haematology research.”

For more information on the car and to register a bid, go to [historics.co.uk](http://historics.co.uk).







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# Inside club racing's 'new normal'

*Castle Combe is often one of the best-attended venues for club racing. But the ongoing coronavirus pandemic meant last weekend's opener was a very different experience*

MARCUS PYE

Castle Combe Circuit had a strangely eerie air to it before 0800 last Saturday, the sky and paddock roads a sullen grey monotone. Surprisingly few people were about, revealing more grass than I've seen in years. I was cheerily waved in by marketing director Tom Davis to report on the renaissance of club racing, on hold since COVID-19 lockdown led to Motorsport UK cancelling all event permits for the three months to 30 June.

Thirty-three years to the day since front suspension failure pitched my ex-David Sears Argo JM6 Formula 3 car into the barrier approaching Tower Corner – the gouge in my shin inflicted by the strategically padded steering rack is a memento – my name was 'on the gate'. Alongside was that of Motorsport UK chief executive Hugh Chambers, there to observe, with colleagues also covering two-day Cadwell Park and Snetterton events.

This was not the start of Castle Combe's 70th anniversary celebrations that enthusiasts had yearned for. With Easter Monday's Howard's Day jamboree and May's Bank Holiday event cancelled, it was an unusual beginning to a new era of British club racing. One currently with no end date...

But for all the venue owners' disappointment at not being able to admit spectators – as much their lifeblood as the competitors who pay to entertain themselves and fans – the scene was not dissimilar to my first experience of Combe on 29 July 1967. And

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**“In uncharted waters, the logistics of the event's conduct evolved as it progressed”**

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while it was largely damp this time, Britain's fickle summer climate thankfully failed to serve up the torrential rain in which the Austin-Healey Club's closed permit meeting ran 53 summers ago.

Normally bustling with activity, the paddock resembled a ghost town from the set of an old Wild West movie, with some wearing facemasks and looking nervously over their shoulders as if anticipating the filming of 'Bunfight at Cafe Bar H'. Traditionally packed at breakfast time, the rebranded Tavern was operating on a one-in, one-out, one-way basis, offering fine fare for takeaway only.

It was quiet outside too. Competitors across the four Castle Combe Racing Club grids had entered online and filed self-declarations for scrutineering, obviating the familiar rigmarole of pushing the cars to the old bay adjacent to Camp Corner while others lined up for qualifying. Around 10% would randomly be

selected for spot-checking by Motorsport UK officials but, with only 85 to accommodate, an almost apologetic magnitude of social distancing was evidenced.

Per protocols, marshal numbers were restricted to two (post chief and flag) at each of the 14 points around the 1.85-mile circuit, with paddock and grid workers taking the number to around 50, around one third of the regular turnout. Not being called up for the 'season opener' inevitably upset some loyal volunteers, but rest assured the orange army will be rotated if guidelines cannot be changed.

Race control officials and timekeepers remained in the tower, but stewards were accommodated on The Strawford Centre's upper floor above the competitor liaison desk, manned by the circuit's Jo Lewkowicz and CCRC's Shirl Davis, who jointly oversaw the collection and return of rented timing transponders in sealed bags.

Repurposing the media centre for triage alongside the normal Peter Baskett Medical Centre left the press posse – all three of us! – homeless, albeit Paul Lawrence and Steve Jones were wielding cameras trackside. No printed programmes, entry lists or result sheets made us more reliant than ever on observation, beavering and the commentators to glean information.

Having the PA silent was not ideal, particularly for crew members trying to follow their charges from the pitwall. Instead, commentary was livestreamed over the TSL Timing portal, Chris Dawes doing a fine job of calling the action while satisfying his local Twittersphere tribes prior to virtual podiums out of view.

In uncharted waters, the logistics of the event's conduct evolved as it progressed. A major incident as the morning's third soggy practice session was flagged away – a rampant Lamborghini Gallardo smote both banks between the pitlane assembly area and the track – caused towards an hour's delay. Its driver escaped with bruised ego and pocket. With only four categories in attendance, there was sufficient slack in the timetable to finish. Precious track time would have been lost at a regular Combe event.

As always, there were excursions during the racing, but the Recticel buffers on the guardrails at Camp and Quarry reduced impacts and vehicle damage. No fast response emergency car intervention was required. The concern that reduced marshalling manpower to push a broken-down car to safety would bring a rash of red flags proved unfounded. It will remain firmly in clerks' minds as they strive to protect their colleagues in the front line.

“We called this pioneering event the Castle Combe Challenge, and we knew it would be a challenge,” said CCRC chairman Ken Davies before the action started. “Somebody had to be the first to run a race meeting under the current restrictions, but everybody rose to the occasion. We learned a lot today and got to the end. A great team effort. Maybe this is the new normal for a while, but thankfully we proved equal to the task.” ❁





## Cooper and Fisher share Combe FF1600 spoils

**CASTLE COMBE**  
**CCRC**  
**4 JULY**

Four days before the 70th anniversary of the venue's inaugural race meeting, the Castle Combe Racing Club brought sanctioned racing back to life in the UK's first post-COVID-19 lockdown event.

Pioneering new protocols (see page 69 for further details) in miserable conditions, which triggered a number of incidents to test them, officials passed with flying colours as seven happy winners emerged from a very strange eight-race programme in which the four resident grids each ran twice with no presence of spectators.

Six thousandths of a second split Formula Ford poleman Luke Cooper and Felix Fisher as an encouraging 23-strong entry tackled a drying track. It took 2018 champion Cooper four laps to depose fast-starter Fisher in the dry opener and the Swift driver held on as they finished comfortably clear. Fisher was imperious

in the contrasting sequel, walking on water as he drove his Tom Margetson-prepared Ray GR06 away from Cooper.

American visitors Bryce Aron and Grant Palmer (Low Dempsey Racing Rays) impressed, acclimatising for their National Formula Ford Championship outings, which begin later this month. Aron finished third in the opener, but a superbly judged last-lap dive into Tower allowed David Vivian (Kevin Mills Racing Spectrum 011) to demote Palmer and grab the last podium in race two. Class B standout James Tucker shaded fellow Swift SC92 pilot Paul Barnes in race one, then doubled up more easily. Four-time Combe FF1600 champion Bob Higgins's exhaust came adrift in the first stanza, then he threw his Van Diemen RF88 off at Quarry in the second. Marc de Rozarieux thus snared top class points both times.

The GT pack harboured a fine mix of cars, although opening-lap shenanigans sidelined Chris Everill's Ginetta G55 and Keith Butcher's Audi R8 LMS Ultra with suspension damage following contact.

Poleman Lucky Khera – in the magnificent Ferrari 488 he debuted at Brands Hatch's Britcar night race last November – powered clear of Oliver Bull in Jeremy Irwin's Ford EcoBoost-engined Vauxhall Tigra clone at the reshuffled restart. Kevin Jones (Noble M12), recovering from a moment, chased down Lee Frost's old-school BMW M3 for third, albeit embedded in the Recticel barriers after the timing line!

Khera withdrew from race two, not wishing to sacrifice new wets, which set Bull free. Buoyed by a 1m05.5s personal best in Thursday testing, which proved the winter's turbo, cylinder head and cam upgrades, the outright lap record is under threat but conditions precluded a shot last weekend. Nonetheless Bull lapped all but Tony Bennett (Caterham R300) and Jamie Sturges (SEAT Leon Eurocup).

The Castle Combe Saloon Championship's 25th year began with 0.347s covering the top four after a damp qualifying session. Second qualifier Rob Ballard (VW Scirocco, broken timing chain), British Touring Car Championship racer Josh Cook (Renault Sport Megane, buzzed engine) and Jon Lannon (Citroen Saxo) were all sidelined though, leaving 12 starters.

The attrition did not stop there as poleman Gary Prebble's SEAT Leon Cupra suffered turbo failure off the line, leaving younger brother Adam to take a comfortable win. Simon Thornton-Norris's Mitsubishi Colt's oil filter came adrift and Terry Thorne's Ford Fiesta clobbered the Esses tyre wall as spinner Kevin Bird (Nissan 200SX), the misfiring Dave Scaramanga (VW Scirocco) and Tony Dolley (SEAT Leon) followed Prebble minor's Vauxhall Astra turbo at a distance.

The younger Prebble and Scaramanga





CASTLE COMBE  
WEEKEND WINNERS



**CCRC FORMULA FORD 1600**

**Race 1** Luke Cooper (Swift SC18)

**Race 2** Felix Fisher (Ray GR06)

**CCRC GT**

**Race 1** Lucky Khara (Ferrari 488)

**Race 2** Oliver Bull (Vauxhall Tigra Silhouette)

**CCRC SALOONS**

**Race 1** Adam Prebble (Vauxhall Astra)

**Race 2** Simon Thornton-Norris (Mitsubishi Colt Ralliart, above)

**CCRC HOT HATCH**

**Races 1 & 2** Chris Southcott (Peugeot 205, below)



For full results visit: [tsl-timing.com](http://tsl-timing.com)

missed race two with transmission problems and a broken front strut mount respectively, leaving Thornton-Norris's repaired Colt to sizzle to the win. Double gyrotor Bird, on dry tyres, and Dolley – sideswiped at Quarry on lap one – completed the top three as only six finished.

Quickest qualifier Chris Southcott was the afternoon's only double race winner in the Hot Hatch series. But he had to drive his Peugeot 205 through from row four of the second race – ordered by second best qualifying times – and worked hard to demote demon debutant Dan Brown, his closest practice rival, who started his Honda Civic from pole. Tony Cooper and Shaun Goverd (Peugeot 106 GTis) landed thirds, as double Class C victor Goverd delighted with a maiden podium in his Will di Claudio-fettled car. Best of the Minis was ex-FF1600 driver Steven Jensen's zebra-striped example.

**MARCUS PYE**



**SHEPHERD'S HEAD-TURNER** Monoposto Moto 1000 champion Dominic Shepherd's 'Audi Supertourisme GT' turned heads last weekend. Built by the Mitjet International company in France, the 850kg tubeframe machine, powered by a 3.5-litre, 350bhp Nissan V6 engine driving through a six-speed Sadev sequential gearbox, was acquired from Niki Kristensen in Denmark four days previously. Shepherd played himself in gently during a damp practice but had no chance to progress from 13th as the bonnet detached on Avon Rise seconds after the first rolling start.



**RACING RETURN FOR HAWKINS** Thirty-three years after he shattered both ankles in an FF1600 crash at Brands Hatch's old Graham Hill Bend, Bob Hawkins made a welcome circuit racing comeback, driving a Swift SC92 alongside son Tim (Ray GR11), with technical back-up as ever from brother Ted. Despite a feeble engine he scored two class fourths. Far from turning his back on motorsport following his shunt – after which he set up successful soil and landscape materials business Springbridge Direct – Hawkins has for the past decade competed in nostalgia drag racing.



**BAPTISM OF FIRE** Hot Hatch competition is fierce, thus for a race debutant to run up front is exceptional. Having enjoyed track days in old Triumphs, Shaftesbury mechanic/MoT tester Dan Brown "decided to have a proper go while I could". He bought his Honda Civic VTEC in the spring, "ready to race, but it needed a lot of work". Following a couple of tests, Brown qualified second and on pole, led race two and was beaten only by the redoubtable Chris Southcott in his Peugeot 205. "I can't wait for the rest of the season here and, if I can afford to, some 750MC races," he said.





WALKER

## Saunders begins Junior Saloons season in style

**CADWELL PARK**  
**BARC**  
**4-5 JULY**

Lewis Saunders, the 2018 Junior Saloon Car champion, was in dominant form when the season finally got under way at Cadwell Park as he replicated his title-winning performances with a double victory.

Charlie Hand and polesitter Alex Solley had the initial duel for the lead, before Solley ran wide at the Gooseneck, leaving

Saunders free to challenge Hand. Ciceley Motorsport-backed Saunders went ahead through Charlies on the penultimate lap to seal the win, with Hand a solid second from Ben Greenhill.

It was a lights-to-flag triumph for Saunders in race two, with Hand and Solley a race-long second and third.

After an early battle with Paul Dobson's Mazda-powered Locost, Paul Rose was a comfortable CNC Heads Sports/Saloons winner in his Saker. Dobson managed to

hold onto second, but the twin Spires of Jon Woolfitt and Danny Bird remained a constant threat.

Rose managed to lead from the start of race two, but a gear-selection problem put him out after five laps. That left Dobson, Woolfitt and Bird to fight it out again. Dobson just held on to take the spoils, with Woolfitt holding off Bird for second.

Alec Graham was in charge for most of the opening 2CV race. Lien Davies nipped ahead briefly mid-race, before they were

## Snetterton 12-hour EnduroKa race is battle of endurance

**SNETTERTON**  
**MSVR**  
**4-5 JULY**

For the 36 crews, the 12 Heures du Norfolk round of the EnduroKa series at Snetterton last weekend proved to be a demanding start to the delayed season, and it was the Club Racing UK squad that secured victory.

The eventual winner fell down the order from fourth on the grid at the start, and it was Frugal Racing that took an early lead with Jim McDougall at the wheel. He settled in for a battle with the Peak Performance Reviews car of TCR UK frontrunner Lewis Kent for the opening hour, with the pair regularly swapping the lead position, but both cars fell away during the opening stops.

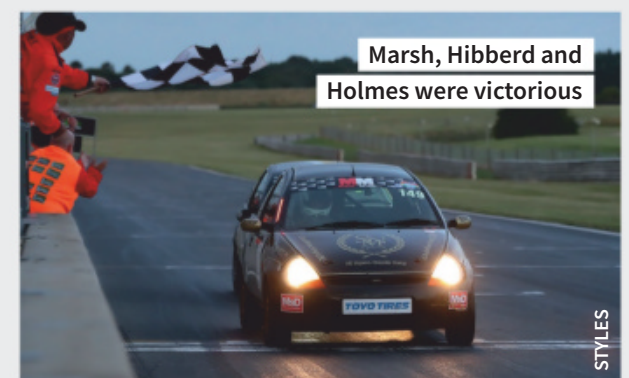
The order was then changed up

considerably when the safety car was sent out with nine hours remaining after the Al-Most Racers car spectacularly rolled at Murrays after clipping a kerb.

Another frontrunner that failed to finish was the IP Racing machine. It took the lead six hours into the race but its engine expired two and a half hours later, while running seventh.

With IP Racing out of action, the lead swapped between Frugal Racing and Club Racing UK, but it was the latter that took control in the final two hours after a pitstop, when the safety car was sent out with 90 minutes remaining, was timed perfectly. That gave enough time for the squad to re-emerge with its lead intact, and it was extended further when Mike Marais in the Frugal Racing Ka spun out of the race with 45 minutes left.

That incident promoted S&N Racing



STYLES

to second place, with Barwell Autosport moving up to round out the top three. The positions at the front remained the same from then on, with Club Racing UK drivers Stefan Marsh, Matthew Hibberd and Nick Holmes finishing almost a lap ahead of Reece Jones, Nathan Dew and Scott Kirwan in the S&N Racing Ka.

Peak Performance Reviews ended up crossing the line down in 13th, while the second Al-Most Racers car, featuring ex-Lotus and McLaren Formula 1 team boss Eric Boullier, finished 15th.

The BMW 130i of Luke Reade inherited victory in the Trackday Championship round on Saturday after finishing third



joined by Sandro Proietti to make it a three-way battle. Proietti led a lap from home, but Graham made the decisive move into Coppice, forcing Davies to settle for a lonely third, well clear of a duelling Mick Storey and Brian Heerey.

For a while it was a seven-car lead train in race two, with Graham still the driver to beat. But Luca Proietti went one better than dad Sandro, pouncing on a rare mistake from Graham at the Gooseneck to steal a last-lap win, while Storey held off Davies to complete the podium.

Le Mans 24 Hours victor Guy Smith was a double winner on his Pre '66 Touring Car debut. His Lotus Cortina was pursued in both races by Roger Stanford, while Smith's father Peter made it an all-Cortina top three. Smith Sr had his hands full of James Everard's Alfa Romeo Sprint GT in race one, but was on his own second time out.

Michael Pensavalle's BMW M3 E46 took a dubious Classic Thunder win, after diving past the Ford Falcon of Andy Robinson with all four wheels on the grass at the Hairpin on the last lap. Robinson's avoidance spin still gave him second, with Adie Hawkins (Alfa Romeo 33) third after Andy Wilson (Holden Monaro) clashed with a backmarker.

Although Pensavalle ousted Robinson on the opening lap of race two, his jumped-start penalty gave Robinson the victory, with Hawkins third again after an early duel with Stephen Sawley's Honda Civic.

The Honda Civic Type R of Alexander Owen was never seriously troubled on its way to a Pre '93 and Pre '03 Touring Car double. When Ian Bower's BMW departed



on lap three, the Civic of Ben Griffiths was clear in second. Griffiths then followed Owen home again in the second race.

Liam Morley was a triple Superkart winner, but didn't have it all his own way. After a dominant race-one win over Ross Allen, it took until lap five of 11 to hit the front in race two, when a piston seized in Allen's engine, leaving Carl Hulme second. Hulme led the finale initially, finally settling in third behind Morley and Lee Harpham.

**PETER SCHERER**



on the road, once the BMW Z4 of James Foard and Callum Tuckett and the Renault Clio of Simon Harrison had been penalised after the race.

The Z4 had started seventh, but pitted early and moved into the lead following a safety car period and the rest of the field pitting. But on-the-road winners Foard and Tuckett had stopped too early and were given a 30-second penalty, dropping them to third position on corrected time.

Harrison was the biggest loser from the safety-car period, dropping from the lead to 16th. But once the pit window had closed he was back up to third and battled Reade hard. Harrison eventually managed



to pass Reade at Murrays on the penultimate lap, but the contact involved in doing so meant he was given a two-second penalty, dropping him to second.

James Pinkerton won the opening Radical SR1 Cup race in commanding style, completing a lights-to-flag victory, but failed to repeat that feat in the second race thanks to making a mistake at the midway point. Pinkerton recovered to fifth, and it was Dean Warriner who was the eventual victor. Warriner passed Nick Zapolski – struggling for pace when the rain began to fall – for the lead in the closing stages of the race.

**ROB HANSFORD**

## WEEKEND WINNERS



### CADWELL PARK JUNIOR SALOONS

Races 1 & 2 Lewis Saunders

### CNC HEADS SPORTS/SALOONS

Race 1 Paul Rose (Saker RAPX S1-400, above)

Race 2 Paul Dobson (Locost 7 Mazda)

### 2CV CLASSIC

Race 1 Alec Graham

Race 2 Luca Proietti

### PRE '66 TOURING CARS

Races 1 & 2 Guy Smith (Lotus Cortina)

### CLASSIC THUNDER SALOONS & BOSS

Race 1 Michael Pensavalle (BMW M3 E46)

Race 2 Andy Robinson (Ford Falcon)

### PRE '93 & PRE '03 TOURING CARS

Races 1 & 2 Alexander Owen  
(Honda Civic Type R)

### SUPERKARTS

Races 1, 2 & 3 Liam Morley (Anderson/VM)

### GROUP 1 TOURING CARS (PRE '83)

Races 1 & 2 Stephen Primett (Ford Escort Mk1)

### SNETTERTON

#### ENDUROKA

Club Racing UK (Matthew Hibberd, Nick Holmes, Stefan Marsh)

#### TRACKDAY CHAMPIONSHIP

Luke Reade (BMW 130i)

#### RADICAL SR1 CUP

Race 1 James Pinkerton

Race 2 Dean Warriner

#### TRACK ATTACK RACE CLUB

Race 1 Steve Simpson (Peugeot 206 RC)

Race 2 Clive Haynsford (Mazda RX-8)

#### Z CARS, PRODUCTION BMW & RACING SALOONS

Races 1 & 2 Nigel Innes (BMW M3)

#### MSVT SUPERCUP

Nick Jackson/Ollie Pidgley  
(SEAT Supercopa Gen2, below)



For full results visit: [tsl-timing.com](http://tsl-timing.com)





# STAYING SHARP, STAYING HUNGRY

*The coronavirus pandemic has put Johnathan Hoggard's 2020 plans on hold, but the Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver Award winner is ready to get back on track*

STEFAN MACKLEY

**M**omentum in motorsport for any driver is crucial, but perhaps even more so for one trying to make their way up the career ladder, as campaigns blend into one another and riding the crest of a wave can make all the difference.

For Johnathan Hoggard, the coronavirus pandemic halted what had been much-needed and well-deserved momentum. After an impressive 2019 campaign – which included winning the prestigious Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year Award and finishing runner-up in the BRDC British F3 Championship in his rookie season – Hoggard's 2020 plans have had to be put on hold.

But that's not stopped the 19-year-old from keeping his name out there and impressing on the track – in virtual reality, at least. Last month he claimed the BRDC Esports Championship – which raised nearly £18,000 for the National Health Service – taking three victories from the opening four rounds and winning the title with a race to spare.

It may not have been in real life, but the importance of doing well against more established rivals, such as Formula E Nissan e.dams driver Oliver Rowland and Formula 2 race winner Callum Ilott, wasn't lost on Hoggard.

"It was important to do well against the big names, to really show where I'm at and to keep my name out there, and show why I won the Autosport Award as well," says Hoggard, who didn't let his lack of high-end sim equipment slow him down.

"I only had an office chair, and my pedals on the carpet. My wheel was bolted to my desk, but had to have a ladder behind me because whenever I hit the brakes I went backwards!

"I was using that in the BRDC Esports Championship until the final round. Then I got a new set-up, but clearly that didn't work for me because it was probably one of my worst rounds of the whole thing."

While sim racing has gone through a bit of a golden patch over the past few months, the virtual world is nothing new to Hoggard, who spent time racing against friends well before lockdown.

While it's partly for fun, he believes it has also helped him to keep mentally sharp by going through the same motions and disciplines of a race weekend, a process that enabled him to take >>







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IMAGES







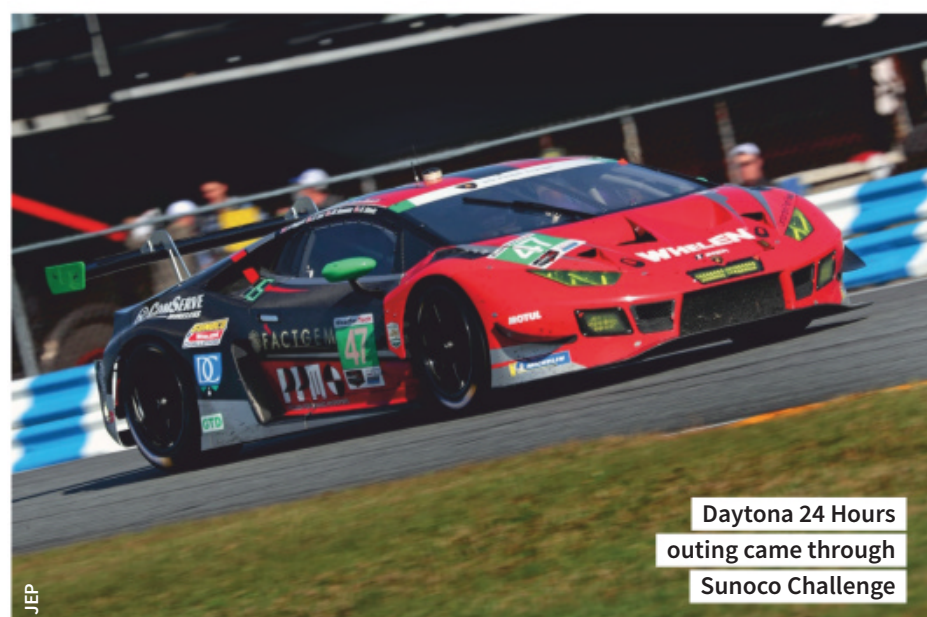
GT route beckons for Hoggard in Porsche Carrera Cup Asia

the most wins (seven), poles (seven) and fastest laps (nine) in the British F3 Championship last season.

“When you’re up against all the pro drivers you have to take it a lot more seriously, so I found myself doing what I would normally do on a race weekend,” he recalls. “Going through data, for example, which I thought was quite useful.

“In the BRDC series we had a qualifying set-up and a race set-up, so I was doing simulations in practice. For example, a two-lap qualifying stint and then maybe switching to the race set-up and doing a full 25-minute race run and just seeing how they all compare. Just doing quite a few of those to get yourself in the best shape for the race.

“Not having been at a race track for however many months, you can quite easily get out of the rhythm of it. So if you keep on doing it – keep it on your mind maybe not every day but



Daytona 24 Hours outing came through Sunoco Challenge

“WHEN YOU GO TO GTs, IT REALLY OPENED MY EYES TO WHAT ELSE IS GOING ON AROUND THE WORLD”

a couple of days a week – then when you do go back to a race track you’re always thinking, ‘Let’s have a look at the data.’

“When you get to a certain point in your driving where you don’t feel like you can improve massive amounts, it’s examining the data and finding half a tenth or whatever in each corner that can really make a big difference.”

It’s not just in the BRDC Esports Championship where Hoggard has had success in the virtual world, as he also claimed the Porsche Carrera Cup Asia Virtual Edition title, in the process earning the opportunity to do some ice driving with Porsche next year in Mongolia.

It bodes well for Hoggard, who for 2020 had planned to move beyond single-seaters and explore the GT route, confirming earlier this year that he would be driving in Porsche Carrera Cup Asia for Team StarChase – five-time winners of the championship and its most successful outfit.

While the pandemic has delayed the start to that season – the championship has yet to release a revised calendar – Hoggard still intends to compete in the series once it gets going.

“Team StarChase is the team to be with and I’m looking forward to getting stuck in,” he says. “I don’t really have any expectations at the start. I know it’s going to be tough because there are guys out there who have done it for a number of years and are really







experienced. So long as I do the right preparation and get a couple more days in the car before the first round, I should be in a good position to perform well.”

He’s already had experience of racing GT machinery thanks to competing in this year’s Daytona 24 Hours aboard a Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo, after winning the Sunoco Whelen Challenge.

While switching to GTs, especially in Asia, might not seem the most logical of choices given that the majority of his career has been spent in single-seater machinery – he finished third in the 2018 British Formula 4 Championship before his British F3 campaign – budget restrictions and the ambition to experience different championships has been the driving force behind the transition.

“It was good doing Daytona because it’s interesting to see what motorsport is out there in the world. When doing single-seaters you mainly think of Britain and then you go to Europe – and that’s kind of it,” admits Hoggard.

“But when you go to GTs, it really opens your eyes to what else is going on around the world. Porsche and Carrera Cup do a great job of bringing talented drivers through their programmes and hopefully eventually getting them involved with the factory team. So again, it’s another great opportunity to get involved with a really good manufacturer.”

As he demonstrated on his way to winning the Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year Award – when he switched between the MotorSport Vision Formula 2, Garage 59-run Aston Martin Vantage GT3 and Ligier LMP3 cars – Hoggard can quickly adapt to different machinery.

As Autosport described: “Whether it was on old tyres, new tyres, with or without F2 overboost, in the dry or the wet, Hoggard was consistently fast. He gave both benchmark drivers, Darren Turner (in the Aston Martin) and Alexander Sims (in the Ligier), something to think about.”

Hoggard doesn’t hide the fact that he has his sights on being picked up by a manufacturer, and for a young driver with a bright future it’s a sensible and mature approach. While Formula 1 is the ultimate aim for the majority of aspiring racing drivers, it’s a difficult and unlikely path that can easily end a driver’s career. The plethora of top-line GT championships around the world and various manufacturer-backed programmes makes for a more logical route, and one that more and more young drivers are following.

But that’s not to say Hoggard has turned his back on single-seaters completely. He competed in the official FIA Formula 3 test with Charouz Racing at the end of last season and more recently tested Fortec’s Euroformula Open car, both at Valencia.

He hasn’t ruled out trying to compete in Europe this season or attempting a dual campaign, but admits that differing travel restrictions and quarantine periods in each country could make it unfeasible.

“It will entirely depend on what the Porsche calendar looks like, whether I’ll be able to do anything [else] or not,” he says. “The plan was maybe to do something if it fits, but it’s going to be tough. Country to country the rules change quite a lot and, with most countries having the 14-day quarantine in effect, it might be quite difficult getting in and getting out.”

“That might be one of the reasons I have to stay in Asia for a while. The last thing you want is to travel out there for a weekend and have to stay two weeks beforehand, and then come back and have to stay in quarantine for another two weeks. That’s pretty much a month gone just for one weekend of racing, which isn’t ideal considering how busy I’m guessing the calendar is going to be.”

The curtailed 2020 season means that once championships do resume, adaptability and outright speed are going to be more important than ever. Which should bring Hoggard to the fore as he continues his impressive climb up the motorsport ladder. 🏆





## BRILLIANCE IN NICHE MOTOR



**VIDEOGAME REVIEW**  
**ASSETTO CORSA**  
**COMPETIZIONE**  
**RRP £34.99**

It took a full day to download *Aspetto Corsa Competizione* on Autosport's under-utilised Xbox One, so there was a great deal of anticipation when at last it

was ready to start. Boy was it worth it.

The official release of the GT World Challenge Series, newly out on consoles having been introduced to PC gamers in 2018, is an anorak's dream. It's everything that, as a teenager who spent many an hour with a controller in-hand, Autosport had imagined in a racing game playable from the sofa. The engine notes and gearchanges of each car – with all GT3 marques from 2018 and 2019 represented – are exquisitely accurate.

"The noise of the shifting, the pop of the gearchange is identical to how we have it in the GT3 cars," agrees four-time British GT champion Jonny Adam, whose Garage59 Aston Martin Vantage features in the game. "The Vantage felt very similar with the noise, the chassis balance, the tyre grip, the aero balance. I think they did a fantastic job of getting it as realistic as possible."

Satisfaction also comes from the attention to detail applied to the in-cockpit features, with different data read-outs on the steering wheel of each car.

It's incredibly niche – there aren't too many games where you can attempt to recreate Adrian Zaugg's Zandvoort A1GP mastery in an Emil Frey Jaguar – but that's a key part of its charm. For the record, in a randomised grid Autosport started 12th and rose as

high as ninth before clobbering the inside kerb at Turn 2, which put the Jag hard into the barriers on the outside and caused major damage.

But Zandvoort isn't the only track on the game where abusing the kerbs can throw you off in a split second. Laguna Seca is especially savage at the fast left-hander before the Corkscrew and, by contrast, it's the almost totally flat kerbs at Misano that can easily lull you into a false sense of security and invite you to run wide, invalidating the lap.

There isn't a huge selection of tracks if you don't have the Intercontinental GT Challenge pack – which also includes Bathurst, Kyalami and Suzuka – but there's enough to ensure variety and it makes a nice change to learn tracks such as Zolder, which rarely features in casual racing titles.

All are satisfying when you do manage to get it right at something close to the limit – banging down a gear at 130R or Pouhon before powering back on the throttle, threading the needle between the walls on the downhill stretch at Mount Panorama, and taking a deep breath as you ride the crest at Brands Hatch's Sheene Curve, desperately hoping you'll have enough road on the exit.

You can feel that the cars are heavy when trying to do a quick change of direction, for example through the first chicane at Monza, but that's part of the challenge you have to work with in order to achieve a half-decent lap time.

One disappointment is that you can only race against 19 other cars – 'only', as the smallest grid for a GTWCE race was 46, and 72 started the Spa 24 Hours – but fortunately the AI is excellent.

Autosport hasn't yet managed enough game time to get a sense for the various cars' differing handling





# SPORT GAMING



characteristics, but found the rear-engined Porsche especially tail-happy in the night at Spa when tyre temperatures were down.

ACC will gain a GT4 pack this summer, which will further increase the niche appeal and improve the level of depth still further, with the likes of the KTM X-Bow and Alpine A110 GT4 set to be added to the ranks of Audi, BMW, Mercedes et al.

The ultra-realistic noise – Autosport has frequently been asked to turn the volume down at the risk of waking the sleeping baby – and the challenge of mastering the tracks will keep players coming back for short bursts time and again.

**JAMES NEWBOLD**

*Assetto Corsa Competizione* is available to play on Xbox One, PlayStation 4 and PC.

motorsport.tv
HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

**LE MANS CLASSIC RETROSPECTIVE**  
 The 10th edition of Le Mans Classic was supposed to take place last weekend. It's now postponed, but there's a chance to relive the best parts from previous editions. Also, the first round of the Ferrari Challenge Europe – held last weekend at Imola – is also available on demand. [Go to uk.motorsport.tv](http://uk.motorsport.tv)

## WHAT'S ON

### INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

#### Styrian Grand Prix

**Formula 1 World Championship**

Red Bull Ring, Austria

**12 July**

**TV Live** Sky Sports F1, Sun 1405

**TV Highlights** Channel 4, Sun 1830,

Sky Sports F1, Sun 2100

#### FIA Formula 2

**Round 2/8**

Red Bull Ring, Austria

**11-12 July**

**TV Live** Sky Sports F1, Sat 1535,

Sun 1000

#### FIA Formula 3

**Round 2/8**

Red Bull Ring, Austria

**11-12 July**

**TV Live** Sky Sports F1, Sat 0920,

Sun 0835

#### Porsche Supercup

**Round 2/8**

Red Bull Ring, Austria

**11-12 July**

**TV Live** Sky Sports F1, Sun 1120

#### IndyCar Series

**Round 3-4/14**

Road America, USA

**11-12 July**

**TV Live** Sky Sports F1, Sat 2200,

Sun 1800

### NASCAR Cup

**Round 17/36**

Kentucky, USA

**12 July**

**TV Live** Premier Sports 2, Sun 1930

### UK MOTORSPORT

#### Snetterton MSVR

**11-12 July**

GT Cup, Lotus Elises, Sports 2000,

F3 Cup, Caterham Sevens, Porsches

#### Brands Hatch GP HSCC

**11-12 July**

Legends of Brands Hatch Superprix:

Historic Road Sports, 70s Road Sports,

Historic Touring Cars, Pre -1980

Thundersports, Historic F3, Classic

F3, Historic FF1600, Historic FF2000,

Historic Formula Junior, Guards

Trophy, XL Aurora Series

#### Donington Park MGCC

**11-12 July**

MG Trophy, MG Metro Cup, MG Cup,

Midget Sprite Challenge, BCV8s,

Triple-M Challenge, Equipe GTS

#### Croft BARC\*

**11-12 July**

Legends, Caterham Graduates,

Max5 Mazdas, Britcar, Junior

Saloons, Mighty Minis

*\*Behind closed doors*





#### FROM THE ARCHIVE

The trio of Tyrrell-Ford 010s due to take part in the 1980 Canadian Grand Prix are prepped for practice. Regular drivers Derek Daly (#4) and Jean-Pierre Jarier (#3)

are already in situ, while the tarp comes off the third car entered for 19-year-old Mike Thackwell. The Kiwi qualified at the back of the grid, which meant he sidestepped the multi-car crash at the

start of the race that took out both of his team-mates. What looked like fortuitousness ended up backfiring, because his car was then commandeered by Jarier so he could make the restart.



For classic 1980s Formula 1 DVDs head to [dukevideo.com/f1](http://dukevideo.com/f1)







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**New Focus takes shape ahead of long-awaited WRC glory**

7 July 2005

Autosport went behind the scenes at M-Sport to take a look at the new Ford Focus RS WRC 06 this week in 2005.

Citroen was on its way to a third consecutive World Rally Championship manufacturers' crown, a title Ford hadn't won since 1979, but technical director Christian Loriaux was working on something special for the following season.

Starting with the then-new second-generation Focus, Loriaux's team used CFD and windtunnel sessions to get on top of the revised shape. There was also a new engine to power Ford's latest challenger.

Despite tight timeframes, Loriaux was targeting October to start testing. "If we can get the car out this season, it would make a difference," he said. "When we get into next year, it's going to be really hard work. Once the events start coming it's one every week."

The team achieved its goal and

had the RS WRC 06 competing before the end of 2005.

The arrival of double champion Marcus Gronholm from Peugeot in 2006 helped create a potent mix. Gronholm (above on the Monte Carlo) won the first two rallies of the campaign and, although he lost the drivers' title to Sebastien Loeb by one point, the Finn and team-mate Mikko Hirvonen did enough to secure the manufacturers' championship for Ford. And they did it again the following year with an updated version of the car.

Elsewhere in the 7 July 2005 issue, we covered Tony Kanaan's remarkably tight victory in the IRL race at Kansas Speedway. The Brazilian beat Andretti Green Racing team-mate Dan Wheldon by 0.012 seconds, while at Magny-Cours Nico Rosberg bounced back from an ART team error in race one to score his first GP2 win in the sprint encounter.







THE

# RACER

Pit talk from the HRDC



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