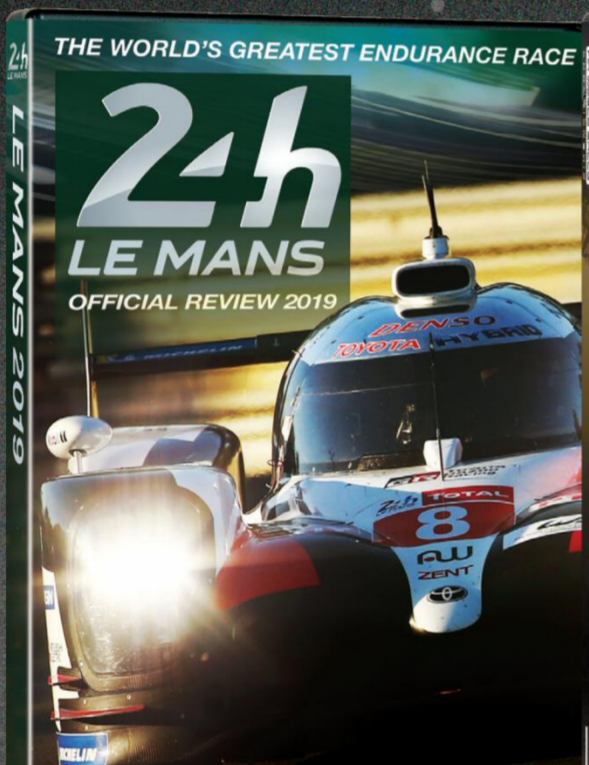


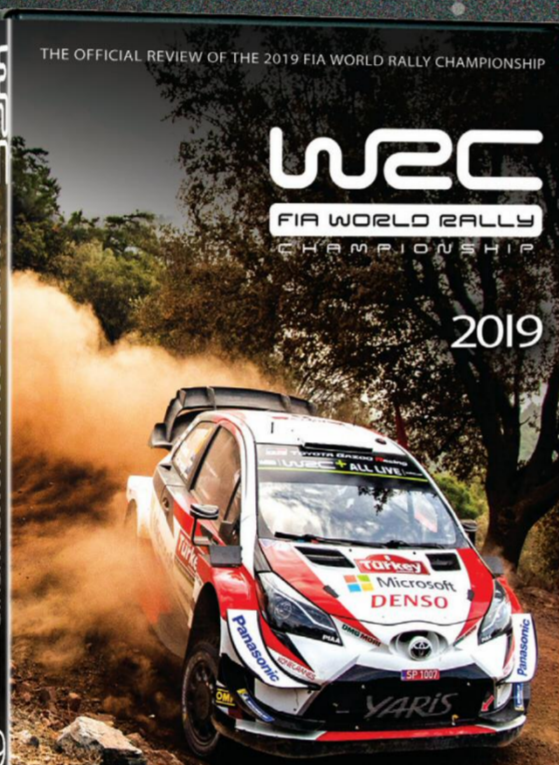
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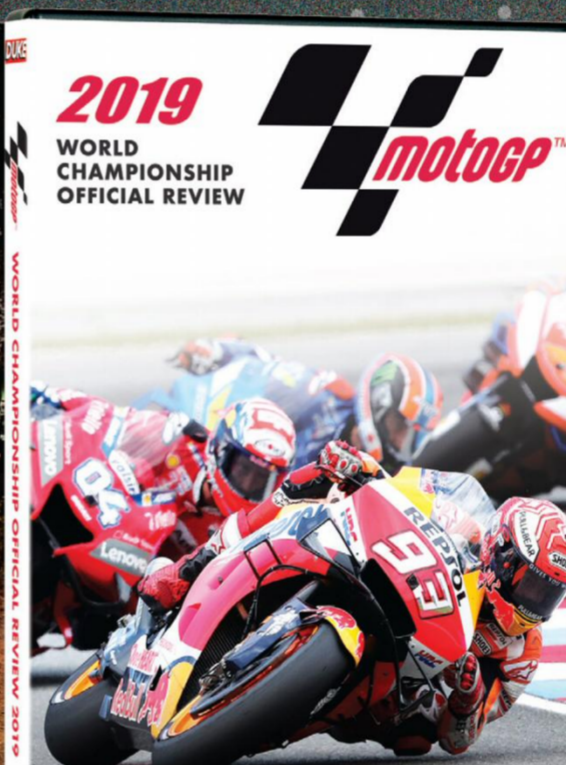
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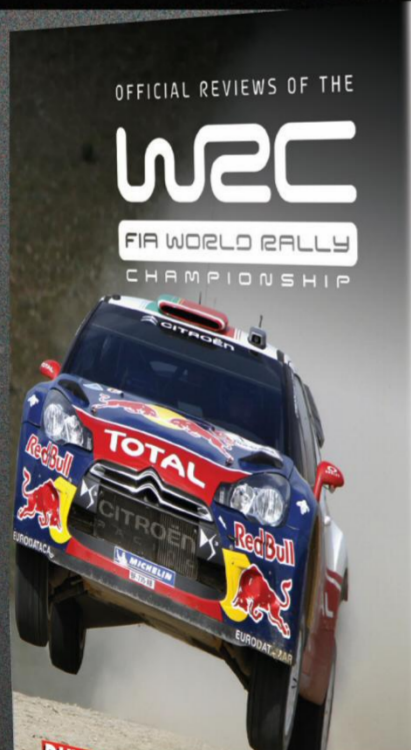
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V I D E O



# PETTER PICKS HIS FAVOURITES

TEN OF THE BEST FROM A WRC LEGEND P18

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## French firm exits rallying as star Sebastien Ogier joins Toyota

# CITROEN AXE PROMPTS WRC ALARM BELLS



Citroen has pulled its WRC programme



Ogier is headed for Toyota

By David Evans

Senior figures in the World Rally Championship have insisted the series needs to look to its own shortcomings for the real reason why Citroen has departed.

The French firm announced its decision to leave the WRC last week, citing Sebastien Ogier's move to Toyota as the reason for its exit.

Citroen team principal Pierre Budar told MN: "When you want to be involved in the championship and the fight for the title you need one of the big three drivers."

Full story, p2-3



## McCORMACK WINS THE ULTIMATE NATIONAL RALLY

FULL REPORT FROM THE ROGER ALBERT CLARK SHOWPIECE P20



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## The Brits shine in Saudi Arabia

P10



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## McCORMACK BAGS THE HAT-TRICK



P20



## INGRAM AND TOYOTA'S JOURNEY IN THE BTCC

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FOR MOTORSPORT NEWS STAFF CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE SEE P31

# NEWS ANALYSIS

OGIER JULIEN INGRASSIA



The costs in the WRC have caused some problems

By David Evans

**Citroen team principal Pierre Budar says delays in introducing hybrid power and a lack of return on investment in the World Rally Championship are contributing factors in the French firm quitting the series.**

As outlined in Motorsport News last week, the French firm announced its decision to leave the WRC with immediate effect. Citroen's communication was not exactly news, but pointing to Sebastien Ogier's move to Toyota as a key reason for the departure certainly caught the attention (see page 12).

Citroen team principal Pierre Budar admitted to MN, however, there were other contributing factors regarding both the governance and promotion of the WRC.

Asked if the series' inability to embrace hybrid or alternative technologies quicker and the lack of presence in key markets like India and Russia was an issue for Citroen, Budar said: "For sure, it's part of the problem. It's very important for a brand like Citroen to make sure the situation [in the championship] is in line with its marketing expectation.

"What you have mentioned [hybrid and key markets] is not available today on WRC, so it gives WRC some lack compared with some other disciplines.

"When you see how much we need to push for the electrification of our brand and products and the marketing we need to push these cars on sales, it's really difficult for a brand like Citroen not to focus on this. If the sporting discipline cannot help, it's a real problem.

"One of our main targets is to develop in international markets; India is a major project for the brand and there is nothing on this side possible for the motorsport: this is not very good. China is the same situation.

"We are not very strong when we go to the CEO to explain what we could do for the marketing of the brand when we cannot give any answers on these items – which are major items today for our marketing department. It's part of the lack of our proposal."

The WRC will deliver a hybrid solution for 2022 – a timeframe which FIA president Jean Todt has admitted is coming too late. The FIA insisted the teams had been part of the problem in slowing down that initial hybrid timetable, when they were unable to agree on the regulations and requirements.

FIA rally director Yves Matton told MN the remaining manufacturers are offering positive feedback on the current cars and the incoming 2022 regulations.

"The manufacturers request this kind of car we have for the moment," said Matton. "I have



Matton: sadness for the staff

some quite positive feedback for 2022. It's what they request from the car at the top level. We ask this question on all of our meetings: how do we reduce the cost involved? We are working together to keep this at the best level possible, while maintaining the technologies they request. The feedback is that we need this kind of car and we need to do the best we can to keep them as cost-effective as possible, but this high-level of technology comes at the cost."

Matton confirmed there would be no cost-saving on the horizon with 2022's new regulations.

"We never say we will cut the cost," said Matton. "What we have to do is work to maintain the cost to the same level – it's not possible to bring hybrid and reduce the cost. The only way to reduce the cost would be to go to an R5-based championship, but it's not what the manufacturers want for the top-level car."

While they're not acceptable at

OGIER AND EVANS CONFIRMED AT TOYOTA FOR 2020

# HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Citroen's departure has unearthed deeper issues

## WRC NEEDS TO EVOLVE TO STOP EXODUS, SAYS CITROEN BOSS

### World Rally Championship in crisis as Citroen confirms withdrawal

the highest level of the sport, R5 category cars remain at the heart of the FIA's plans to develop manufacturer interest in the series.

"We have the target for 2023 to have 20 manufacturer-supported cars competing regularly in the world championship," he added. "I don't say 20 World Rally Cars, we know that's impossible – the maximum we ever achieved was 16 or 17. But working with the WRC2 and WRC3 categories for next year, this is when we start to see more cars supported by the manufacturers and we will see more interest in this next year."

"We want a pro-am championship, but if we say we go to an R5 [World Rally Car] then the manufacturers will not follow. We need to have the balance between the top cars and some cars supported by the manufacturers from the lower categories."

In an effort to combat Citroen's perceived lack of potential world championship-winning drivers at the top of rallying, the FIA will reveal a new initiative helping the next generation of talent into the top tier.

"I cannot say too much about this," said Matton, "but we will be [announcing] in December. We are working at the FIA on a talent selection programme – it will be a global programme concerning rallying. As a rally tool, it's really useful. We are working really

hard for this and again, to bring new talents, this is one of the reasons we make the changes to the WRC and WRC3 layers."

Matton pointed out that several drivers were capable of winning WRC rounds, but accepted the title contenders remained Ott Tänak, Thierry Neuville and Sébastien Ogier.

In his time with Citroen, Matton managed Citroen's own junior team and he said the lack of such manufacturer programmes was telling.

"Maybe in the last two or three years – since the launch of the new World Rally Cars – we missed something," he said. "Maybe we did not anticipate the gap between R5 cars and World Rally Cars. But now the tools will be in place to have a quite proper pyramid. As well, we need to make sure the manufacturers really understand how important it is to have junior teams. Citroen was one of the main providers [of drivers]. When you see [Kris] Meeke, [Dani] Sordo, Ogier, Neuville, [Sébastien] Loeb, all of these drivers were involved in the Citroen junior programme and now some other manufacturers can understand the value of this to the championship."

WRC Promoter was contacted regarding the costs involved in competing in the WRC and on Citroen's departure, but it declined to comment.

Budar blamed a lack of top drivers



Teams are not keen on using R5 cars as the headline act in the WRC

# RACING NEWS

## F1 ROUND-UP

### Dutch banking

Zandvoort has revealed the Formula 1 banking at its final corner will be akin to an American oval, and is set to be twice as steep as turns at Indianapolis. Ahead of its return to the F1 calendar for 2020, Zandvoort is undergoing a revamp to bring it up to current grand prix circuit standards. One of the well-publicised changes will be to bank the final corner, and Zandvoort has confirmed this will be angled at 32% – the equivalent of 18 degrees. Zandvoort CEO Robert van Overdijk told Dutch radio station BNR Nieuwsradio: "That corner will for sure be the most spectacular part of our renewed circuit."

### Racing Point woe

Racing Point's disappointing season is not "surprising" to team boss Otmar Szafnauer given the "turmoil" the team was in while its 2019 car was being created. When Force India went into administration in the summer of 2018, Racing Point was born after a consortium led by Lawrence Stroll bought the squad's assets but this coincided with a crucial development phase of the 2019 car. Szafnauer's team is seventh in the constructors' standings and he said: "We definitely wanted to be a little bit further ahead. We were hoping to be fifth or fourth this year, so from that regard, it's a bit disappointing."

### Extra scrutiny

Formula 1 teams will be required to run a second fuel-flow sensor next season as the FIA escalates its efforts to prevent the rules being exploited for performance gains. The governing body investigated a trio of fuel systems after the Brazilian Grand Prix, one believed to be from a Ferrari, another from a Ferrari customer team and a third from a non-Ferrari powered car. Though it is not known if this latest technical directive was an explicit response to the checks the FIA conducted after the race at Interlagos, the new sensor will further strengthen the FIA's ability to police engine rules next year.

### Ocon's release

Renault has announced new signing Esteban Ocon will officially join the team on December 2, the day after the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. The French driver will then take part in the post-season 2020 Pirelli tyre test at Yas Marina, driving for Renault on both the Tuesday and Wednesday. He has been released early by Mercedes GP, with whom he retains a management relationship. He will however still be on call as reserve driver until Saturday's qualifying session.

# HAMILTON: RED BULL A "SERIOUS" THREAT IN '20

## Champion expects three teams to be battling for the F1 titles next season

By Scott Mitchell

**Lewis Hamilton reckons Honda's progress sets up a potentially "serious" battle between three manufacturers for the 2020 Formula 1 title.**

Hamilton and Mercedes swept to the drivers' and constructors' title again in 2019, giving the team its sixth consecutive double and Hamilton his fifth crown in six seasons.

Conversely, Ferrari's challenge fell away early in the year and Red Bull's transitional season with Honda meant it has taken three victories but has failed to mount a sustained championship bid.

However, after being beaten by the Honda-powered Red Bull of Max Verstappen in the Brazilian Grand Prix, and out-dragged to the line for second by Pierre Gasly's Honda-engined Toro Rosso, Hamilton believes Red Bull will join the title fight in 2020.

"The Honda's obviously made some big steps and it's great to see another manufacturer as strong as they are now," he said. "It means that hopefully next year we're going to have a serious three-way, four-way battle and

Verstappen (l) fought Hamilton in Brazil



that's great for Formula 1."

Verstappen has avoided big predictions throughout the first year of the Red Bull-Honda project but has enthused greatly about the Japanese manufacturer's progress, which has facilitated his strongest season in F1.

Gasly's surprise second-place finish in Brazil gave Honda its first 1-2 in F1 since the 1991 Japanese Grand Prix, and

Verstappen admitted "I always get reminded with the stats".

"The pole was the last time in 1991 here in Brazil," he added. "I think it's a good time to start doing these things again. We keep relying on the results from the '90s.

"I think Honda is definitely on a very good way. Throughout the season they have been improving massively so I am very pleased with it."

If Honda can power Red Bull to a full title challenge, it will put Hamilton up against Verstappen for the first time.

After fighting Verstappen, and the other Red Bull of Alex Albon in Brazil, Hamilton said: "It's inevitable that the youngsters are going to come through.

"There's often a wave of young talent that manages to make its way through to Formula 1. I think Formula 1's got a lot of

new young blood with a lot of potential and they really are the future of the sport.

"Fortunately I feel that while the number [of years] shows a little bit higher, I feel like I'm able to still kick it with these guys.

"So I'm excited for the future, racing with these guys and if we can get these teams to be closer, then we're going to see more awesome battles like [Brazil] and I think that would be great."

Photos: LAT



Hamilton is way of Verstappen



## FERRARI NEEDS TO CLARIFY TEAM RULES

Ferrari needs to clarify what is "silly" with Formula 1 drivers Charles Leclerc and Sebastian Vettel following their crash in the Brazilian Grand Prix.

After a season that featured tense moments with team orders, Vettel and Leclerc came to blows late on in Brazil in a collision that took both out of the race.

Team principal Mattia Binotto declared the accident "silly" post-race and is now focused on avoiding a repeat, but dismissed replicating the "rules of engagement" Mercedes employed with Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg a few years ago. "I don't know what Toto [Wolff,

Mercedes boss] did," said Binotto. "I don't want to judge.

"But certainly we need to clarify with who is in the team, what is silly and what's not. We are at the limit of the actions. But when you have a crash, something was wrong, no doubt.

"When you're free to fight, you're free to fight and it's only a driving matter how much you can take as a risk. But certainly here the risk was not necessary.

"What happened, I would say it is even lucky it happened this season because at least there will be opportunities to clarify with them, in the view of next year, what we need not to happen."

## Horner reckons Gasly's strong form triggered by "relief"

Pierre Gasly's strong form in Formula 1 has been triggered by the "relief" of escaping the intense pressure during his time at Red Bull, reckons his former boss Christian Horner.

Gasly scored the first podium finish of his F1 career with second place behind Max Verstappen in the Brazilian Grand Prix, Toro Rosso's third podium in F1.

The podium comes during a season where he was dropped by Red Bull over the summer break and moved back to Toro Rosso, after being replaced by F1 rookie Alex Albon.

Horner says Gasly's approach after being moved, and the way he felt liberated when some of the pressure on him fell away, has aided his upturn in form.

"I think the way he embraced the change, he had two choices," said Horner, when asked about the reasons for

Gasly's turnaround.

"He could either have got depressed about it, or be grateful for the fact that he was still involved in Formula 1 and that Red Bull still believed in him.

"I think he embraced it rather than got dejected by it. And I think there was almost a slight relief as well because obviously the pressure only mounts [in

F1], and he came into the season after two crashes [in testing].

"Then, there were some really tough races for him and you guys [the media] don't cut much slack either. So the pressure only builds, and I think it was the right thing to remove him from that pressure.

"It's been good to see him really find his confidence at Toro Rosso."



Gasly took an impressive maiden podium last time out

## BRITS ON TOP AS NEW FORMULA E SEASON BEGINS

PAGE 10



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'Solberg picks his greatest drives'  
Retiring legend's best moments, p18



Photos: LAT



Ticktum hasn't given up on F1 dream and says he's had enquiries from teams

# TICKTUM SAYS HE HAS F1 TEAM INTEREST

## Dropped Red Bull junior tipped to land F2 drive for next year

By Jack Benyon

**Dan Ticktum says he has had interest from multiple Formula 1 teams about a junior-programme role, and that he would consider quitting motorsport if reaching F1 is not possible.**

Red Bull dropped Ticktum from its driver programme and his Super Formula seat in June, and he has spent most of the remainder of the year working on a deal for 2020.

The two-time Macau Grand Prix winner has been heavily linked to a Formula 2 seat, with DAMS rumoured to be the most likely destination for the 20-year-old.

Ticktum said he believes that if he performs in his destination championship next year, he has a chance of joining an F1 team.

"We've got something sorted [for next year], I can't go into more detail than that," Ticktum said. "A lot of people will know which direction I'll be going in. It will all come out very soon."

"F1 is the end goal. I've been like that since I started going down the single-seater route.

"If I can't get to F1, I'll probably – unless I get a very good deal in something else –



Briton tested F1 car with Red Bull this year

forget motorsport if I'm honest.

"You never know when you're in the situation, if you don't get to F1 and you're given an amazing Formula E contract, you probably wouldn't turn it down."

"It's very different when you're in the position [being offered something outside of F1], but the end goal is very much Formula 1. I'm always quite realistic with my goals and I think it is realistic."

Asked if he had looked at joining another junior programme, Ticktum said: "I've had interest from a few people and a few teams, they're all saying more or less the same thing,

which is, 'go and prove yourself' in what I'll be doing next year."

"Hopefully if I have a good year next year I think that will open a lot of doors. Even Red Bull's, who knows."

Ticktum returned to competition with Van Amersfoort at the end of the Formula Regional European season – finishing no worse than eighth in six races – and returned to Macau in an attempt to become the first driver to win the Grand Prix three consecutive times.

He was caught up in a pile-up in the qualification race, but fought back to 13th from the rear of the grid in the main race.

## QUICK LAPS THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP

**Billy Monger headlines the latest drivers to have joined the Extreme E driver programme for competitors expressing an interest in racing in the off-road electric championship. He is hoping to compete in the FIA Formula 3 Championship in 2020 after testing the car at Valencia earlier this month. FE**

**racers Jerome D'Ambrosio, Daniel Abt and Oliver Turvey have also signed up to the Extreme E driver scheme, along with ex-Formula 1 and FE driver Karun Chandhok, DTM driver Loic Duval, and DS Techeetah FE test and development driver James Rossiter...** Artem Markelov will compete in Formula 2 for a seventh

season as the ex-Renault Formula 1 junior joins the new HWA team for 2020. Markelov first contested the series in 2014 when it was known as GP2. His best finish came in the first year of the F2 era in 2017 when he was runner-up to Charles Leclerc but, after concluding his stint with the Russian Time squad, he joined Super Formula in '19...

**Richie Stanaway may have driven his final race as a professional driver, with the New Zealander contemplating a permanent retirement. Stanaway, who has previously competed in GP2 and the World Endurance Championship has no Supercars deal for the 2020 season, having been left without**

**a drive as Garry Rogers Motorsport exits the category...** Shane van Gisbergen dominated the opening race of Supercars' Newcastle 500 weekend as a late mistake from Jamie Whincup cost Triple Eight a 1-2 finish. But Whincup made up for the error by winning the second contest, taking a comfortable win over Fabian Coulthard.

## Buemi bemoans Formula E's attack zone placement

Nissan e.dams driver Sebastien Buemi has criticised the attack mode zone placement at last weekend's Formula E season opener in Diriyah following his clash with Antonio Felix da Costa.

Buemi was running second in the second race in Saudi Arabia when a touch from DS Techeetah driver da Costa at the exit of the Turn 18 right-hander – the race's first corner, where the attack mode zone was located tight to its inside wall – spun him around.

Buemi, the 2015-16 FE champion, was able to get going but was deemed to have rejoined in an unsafe manner, forcing several cars to avoid him, and was later handed a penalty for his actions. Da Costa was also penalised.

"Obviously, you need to slow down more to make it into the attack mode, you cannot just carry the same speed," Buemi said. "I braked as late as I could to try to create a little bit of a gap, and

as I slowed down to go to the attack mode, he basically kicked the back of the car."

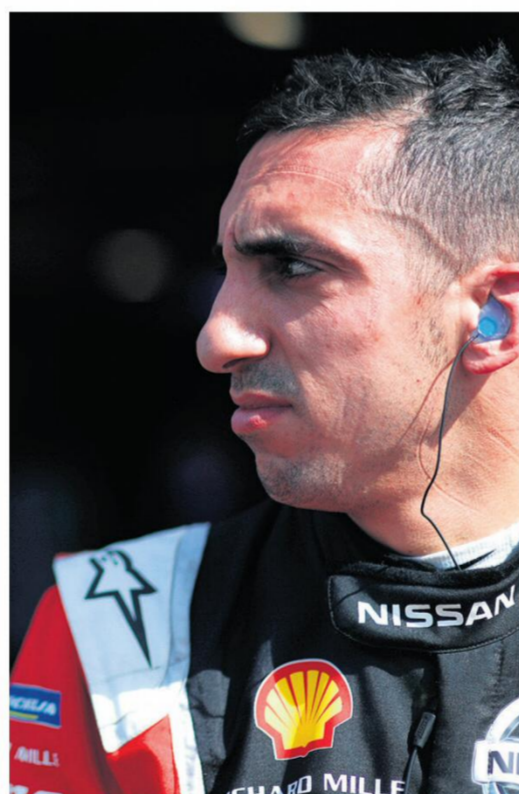
"We discussed it in the briefing that the attack mode was not in the right place, because the attack mode shouldn't be in a place where you need to slow down more than the racing line. It's pretty obvious that the guy behind you doesn't know you're going to take it."

"I just don't understand why the FIA still puts the attack zone in such a place."

Race director Scot Elkins also explained why that second contest restarted following a safety car with a tractor and marshals still on the track.

"Unfortunately, there was something blocking the tractor," he said. "So, when the tractor backed up, he wasn't able to go all the way back."

"And so we saw that, unfortunately, and we had to call another full course yellow to neutralise that issue, but we were able to get it back in and get it taken care of."



Nissan driver was hit entering zone

## Bourdais to leave the Dale Coyne IndyCar team after sponsor deal falls through

Sebastien Bourdais will leave the Dale Coyne Racing IndyCar squad following the recent collapse of a proposed sponsorship deal for the 2020 season.

Four-time Champ Car champion Bourdais has raced for Coyne for the past three seasons, and recently tested IndyCar's new aeroscreen protection device with the team.

The split was confirmed last week when it was announced Bourdais will race alongside Joao Barbosa at the JDC-Miller Motorsports Cadillac DPi squad in next year's IMSA SportsCar Championship.

"Letting Sebastien go is sad and it's got nothing to do with other drivers on the market or anything like that," Coyne said. "It's very unfortunate. It's due to

a funding issue. Something big fell through about two and a half weeks ago."

"We got the bad news just before we went testing with Sebastien at Sebring [with the aeroscreen] on November 5."

"We broke it to everyone the night of that test. It was sad. It is sad. He's a victim of circumstances that were largely out of our control."

## NASCAR CUP LEGEND JOHNSON TO RETIRE

Seven-time NASCAR champion and Hendrick Motorsports driver Jimmie Johnson will retire from the Cup Series at the conclusion of the 2020 season.

Johnson was keen to delay his call on when to retire for as long as possible, although one of his major sponsors had committed to 2023.

The 44-year-old's seven cup championships is equal with Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt for the most all-time. Five of those titles came in succession between 2006 and 2010, a NASCAR record, Johnson proving a master of NASCAR's playoff system.

Johnson announced his decision

on social media, saying: "I'm so thankful for 18 incredible years of racing in NASCAR."

"This sport has been good to me and allowed me to do something I truly love. I showed up chasing a dream and achieved more than I ever thought possible."

"I'm looking forward to next season and celebrating what will be my last year as a full-time NASCAR Cup driver. I know what this team is capable of and I hope that 2020 is one of the best yet."

However, he currently faces the longest winless streak of his career with his most recent victory coming at Dover in June 2017.



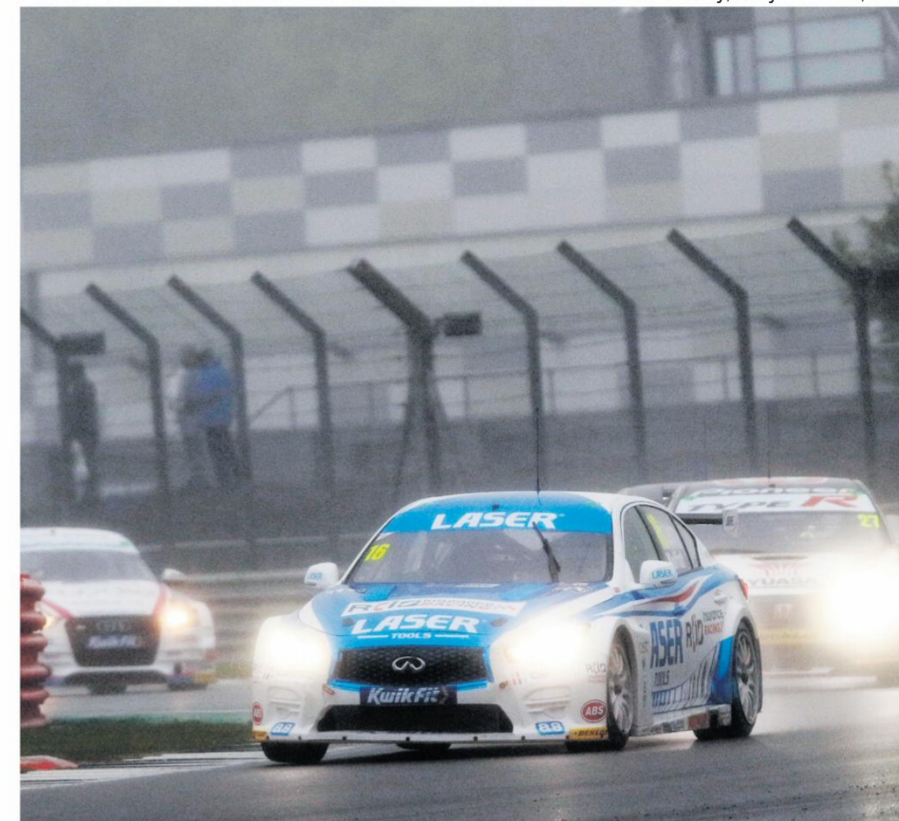
Seven-time champion will have one final NASCAR bid

# RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Gary Hawkins, LAT



Moffat (l) and Sutton have good relationship



Moffat switched from a Mercedes to the Infiniti Q50 mid-season

## BTCC ACE SUTTON TO DRIVE INFINITI IN 2020

The 2017 champion will team up with Moffat at Laser Tools Racing in rear-wheel-drive machines

By Matt James

**British Touring Car champion Ash Sutton will join Aiden Moffat in a two-car Laser Tools Racing Infiniti squad in 2020.**

Sutton, who took the 2017 title in a BMR Racing Subaru Levorg, will race a brand new Infiniti Q50 which is currently in build and will team up with three-time race winner Moffat for the 30-race campaign.

The design and build of the cars is expected to be finished by mid-February, when the machines are expected to begin an extensive pre-season testing programme.

Laser Tools Racing introduced the rear-wheel-drive Infiniti into the BTCC at the halfway point of

the 2019 campaign to replace its Mercedes-Benz A-Class. Moffat ran as a one-car team and took a second-place finish at the penultimate round of the season at Silverstone. Sutton tested the car at Snetterton in the middle of the season to offer some pointers on set-up.

Team principal Bob Moffat, Aiden's father, said: "For the 2019 season we made the decision to bring all race preparation and design work in-house to Laser Tools Racing. This paid great dividends and gave us the confidence to change cars mid-season.

"[The] accelerated development showed that the Infiniti has considerable potential, so with Ash Sutton joining the team we decided to

build two new cars, which will be engineered with considerable improvements in weight distribution and stiffness. We will also be concentrating on the car's aero package and indeed the car is booked into the windtunnel at MIRA in early December for this development.

"The result should be two very competitive NGTC cars and, with our dream team of young guns Moffat and Sutton, we are all going into 2020 with a sense of great excitement and determination.

"Ash is going to bring a wealth of skill and experience to the team and I know that Aiden is already looking forward to working with him."

Sutton, who will bring his 2019 engineer Antonio Carrozza

to the Laser Tools Racing squad, said that he had been impressed with the car when he drove it at Snetterton and a strong relationship with Moffat would help push the whole programme forward.

"I'm really looking forward to getting behind the wheel of the Infiniti — rear-wheel-drive is my comfort zone and with running a rear-wheel-drive car for the past three years I feel that we can roll over a lot that we've learned onto the Infiniti," said Sutton.

"What we've actually got going on behind the scenes is very exciting — I haven't had this excitement since 2017. It's giving me butterflies! We've got a lot to look forward to, the car has got a lot of potential and I think, between the pair of us,

we're going to extract some good performance out of it."

Moffat has contested the BTCC since 2013 and has operated in a one-car team since his debut.

The 23-year-old said that he was keen to begin the work towards his 2020 campaign. The racer said: "I can't wait to get going! I think it will be a very exciting year for myself and the team. We are all really looking forward to expanding to a two-car team and I am particularly looking forward to working with my new team-mate.

"Ash is one of the best drivers on the grid and I'll have my work cut out trying to keep up! But Ash is also a friend of mine and he's someone I can work with. We can work together and bring the best out in each other."



Sutton tested Infiniti in August



Sutton won title with Subaru



Honda driver Karthikeyan won

### Ex-Formula 1 driver Karthikeyan and Cassidy win as Super GT and DTM combine for Fuji dream races

Ex-Formula 1 driver Narain Karthikeyan won the 'Super GT x DTM Dream Race' finale at Fuji after a scrappy race in which BMW's DTM driver Marco Wittmann finished second.

Three safety cars interrupted the race and

led to several DTM and Super GT runners varying their strategies between a conventional one-stop or an unorthodox two-stop effort as the two series combined.

But Karthikeyan's Honda was able to hold off an early challenge from

2018 Super GT champion Naoki Yamamoto that came to a halt after polesitter Duval caused the first safety car following a puncture while running fourth.

Super Formula champion Nick Cassidy dominated

the majority of the first race for Lexus and held a lead of over five seconds, until a late safety car.

The DTM cars struggled more in the earlier race, with Audi's Benoit Treluyer the top finisher in sixth.

### Volkswagen decides to end all factory programmes featuring internal combustion engines

Volkswagen will end its factory support of all programmes using internal combustion engines after implementing a motorsport strategy focused on electric mobility.

In a statement released last week, Volkswagen said its motorsport division's "clear emphasis on fully electric racing cars" would be complemented by a "farewell" to all regular programmes, which would include stopping the production of its Golf GTI

TCR car at the end of this year.

Explaining the decision to adopt an electric-only strategy, Volkswagen Motorsport director Sven Smeets said motorsport could be used as a "trailblazer" for the development of electric vehicles.

Volkswagen said its ID.R electric prototype — which has set outright records at Pikes Peak, Goodwood and on the Tianmen Mountain, and also holds the Nurburgring

Nordschleife electric record — would continue to take over the "role as a technological pioneer".

It will also work on new projects for its ID. family of cars, which will be developed around the same Modular Electric Drive Toolkit that a number of its electric production vehicles will be based on.

"Innovative technology relevant to the car of the future is our focus," said Smeets.

A spokesperson confirmed

the decision will bring an immediate end to the development of a new TCR car based on the Mk8 Golf, and Volkswagen Motorsport's alliance with the Sebastien Loeb Racing World Touring Car Cup team.

Volkswagen's Polo GTI R5 model "remains an integral part of Volkswagen Motorsport's customer sport offering" and will continue to be produced, but factory-backed entries will no longer be lodged.



A proposed new TCR car based on Mk8 Golf won't now be built

# ACADEMY TO RUN MUSTANGS IN 2020

Long-time Aston squad to receive support from Multimatic to field Fords in British GT

Photos: Jakob Ebrej



Team will swap Aston for Mustang

By James Newbold

**Academy Motorsport will switch allegiance from Aston Martin to Ford next year and run two cars in the British GT championship and GT4 European Series with support from car-builder Multimatic Motorsports.**

The deal will mean Matt Nicoll-Jones's team becomes a Multimatic-approved agent for

the Ford Mustang GT4 in Europe and confirms that Multimatic, which ran Seb Priaulx and Scott Maxwell to second in the 2019 British GT4 drivers' championship, will focus on supporting customer teams instead of returning with a team entered under its own name.

Nicoll-Jones was the inaugural GT4 champion in 2008 and his team won the GT4 teams' championship in 2015, but endured a tough 2019

season with the new Aston Martin Vantage GT4. While fellow Aston outfit TF Sport secured the title, Academy's two cars only registered one points finish, an eighth at Silverstone, while Will Moore and Alex Toth-Jones were in position to win at Brands Hatch until Moore crashed at Druids.

"We are delighted to be representing Ford Performance and Multimatic in Europe," said Nicoll-Jones. "This is

what we have aspired to since we started Academy Motorsport, 19 years ago.

"Our aspirations have always been to excel in GT racing and I believe that this partnership with Multimatic and association with Ford Performance will provide us with a truly competitive package. The product and support speaks for itself, with the results of the Mustangs this year alone convincing us

that this was the right path."

Multimatic chief technical officer, Larry Holt added: "It's great to have the Academy Motorsport guys joining the Ford Performance family and we know they are the right people to continue the work we started in Europe with the Mustang GT4 in 2019. The car has already proven itself in North America so it is good to see its continued success in Europe."



Teenager is targeting a step up to GT3 machinery next year

## GT4 champion Canning wins Aston Martin Driver Academy prize

British GT4 champion Tom Canning has set his sights on a Le Mans class victory within five years after being announced as the winner of the Aston Martin Racing Driver Academy.

The 17-year-old was confirmed as the winner last Thursday, besting 22 other drivers including co-champion Ash Hand to be selected as the revived programme's second graduate, after Ross Gunn in 2015. This followed a year-long evaluation from a panel of judges that included Aston Martin Racing works drivers Darren Turner and Jonny

Adam, as well as team principal Paul Howarth.

Canning will receive career assistance and guidance from AMR next year, including a financial contribution to his race programme. Speaking to MN, Canning said that his target remains to step up to British GT3 next year, with a campaign in European GT4 also a possibility.

"We've got some support from Aston Martin now, so hopefully that should open up some more opportunities with their customer teams next year," he said.

"The biggest thing for me is to have the connection with Aston Martin and opening up the potential opportunity to race in something like WEC in a few years' time. I need to continue to perform, and I've got the connection where if I do perform, it can help me get to a much higher level and potentially racing with the factory team in the future.

"The ultimate goal for me is to win Le Mans in GTE Pro in the next five years with Aston Martin, and looking long-term after that, I'd like to win Le Mans overall."

## Fox Motorsport to enter Porsche Carrera Cup GB for the first time

GT squad Fox Motorsport will compete in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB for the first time next season.

The team has achieved success in a number of different categories in the past, including International GT Open, British GT and Britcar but this will be the first time it has competed in the Porsche series.

Fox is plotting a two-car entry with the first seat filled by regular driver James Townsend, who finished third in the Ginetta GT5 Challenge Am class standings this season.

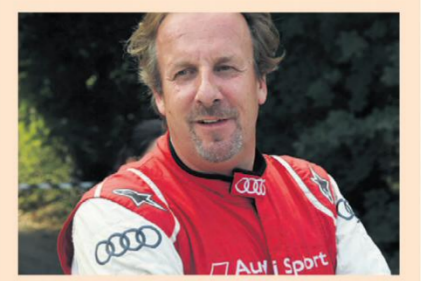
"The Porsche Carrera Cup GB is a series we've had an eye on for a while, so it's fantastic that we now have the opportunity to move into the series," said

team boss Paul McNeilly. "Few GT cars have both the brand presence and the racing pedigree of the Porsche 911, so this is a perfect move for James.

"We'd also like to run a second car and are currently working to make that happen, while also finalising our other race programmes for 2020."



Townsend will be first driver for Fox as it enters Porsche series



Ex-BTCC champ now Silver

## Biela among the FIA ranking changes

Frank Biela, the 1996 British Touring Car champion and five-time Le Mans winner, is among the prominent names to be downgraded to Silver in the new FIA driver ratings list, published last week.

Biela is one of several drivers who turned 55 this year to receive a lower grading, along with Super Touring sparring partner Peter Kox, and the main development driver on the Honda NSX GT3, and ex-Formula 1 and IndyCar racer, Andrea Montermini.

A quirk of the gradings means a Silver classification allows professional drivers to access opportunities as amateurs, with LMP2 and GTE Am line-ups at Le Mans requiring a Silver.

Drivers to have been given a Bronze rating include two-time British GT champion Tim Sugden, former BTCC racers Hunter Abbott and James Kaye, and Multimatic-contracted British GT4 runner-up Scott Maxwell.

Several young professionals have had their driver ratings elevated from Silver to Gold to reflect their status. These include Aston Martin factory drivers Ross Gunn and Charlie Eastwood, who will continue with their old grading in the 2019-20 World Endurance Championship, as well as Porsche Carrera Cup GB champion Dan Harper, and Ginetta LMP1 racer Charlie Robertson.

## Carlin misses out on sportscar triumph

Single-seater regular Carlin missed out on a first sportscar win since 2001 in the Asian Le Mans Series in Shanghai last weekend, after a post-race penalty dropped it to third.

Carlin's expansion into prototype racing in LMP2 this year was its first in sportscars since a season in the Porsche Supercup in 2001, when it won once with Sascha Maassen.

But it endured a trying European Le Mans Series campaign, with a best finish of ninth at Barcelona, and has entered the four-round Asian series with the aim of winning the guaranteed slot on the grid at next year's Le Mans 24 Hours that comes with the championship.

A last-lap pass from Harry Tincknell – sharing Carlin's Dallara P217 with Ben Barnicoat and Jack Manchester – on Roman Rusinov's Algarve Pro-run G-Drive ORECA looked to have secured victory in the first round of the four-race Asian series.

But when Barnicoat was found to have exceeded his maximum driving time by six minutes and 36 seconds, Carlin was handed a penalty of three laps plus 51s.



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# RACING NEWS

## Touring Car Trophy unveils calendar for 2020 season

Bosses of the Touring Car Trophy have announced a seven-date calendar for the 2020 season, which kicks off at Silverstone on April 18-19.

The championship was launched in 2019 with an 11-race programme and it included an overseas trip to Spa. The TCT will remain solely in the UK in 2020.

The category allows British Touring Car Championship cars to take part, although only those with the older-spec GPRM parts can tackle the series during the course of the year as the BTCC does not allow in-season testing.

The TCT also runs cars for the TCR UK series, S2000-spec tin-tops as well as SEAT Leon Supercopa cars. The dates have been designed to not clash with the 2020 BTCC schedule and series boss Stewart Lines hopes that current BTCC teams would look to enter eligible cars into the category.

Lines, who raced in the series this year, said: "Our team at Maximum Motorsport have worked hard to get to this stage and we aim to provide a fantastic and affordable platform to race touring cars in 2020."

### CALENDAR

#### Touring Car Trophy 2020

DATE	TRACK
April 18-19	Silverstone (International)
June 6-7	Croft
June 21	Brands Hatch (Indy)
July 18	Oulton Park
August 8-9	Snetterton (300)
August 22-23	Thruxton
October 17-18	Donington Park (National)

Cars from New Millennium may appear in category



Photos: Gary Hawkins, Steve Jones

# CSCC LAUNCHES SLICK SERIES

## Club creates category designed for those using slick or wet tyres

By Matt Kew

The Classic Sports Car Club has announced a new series for the 2020 season, which will cater for cars running slick or racing wet tyres.

The new Slick Series will feature the club's regular 40-minute race format, which includes a mandatory pitstop to cater for one or two-driver entries.

It is open to all saloon, hatchback, sports and GT cars with doors – excluding Radical-like sportscars and Caterham Seven designs – and follows enquiries over the past

couple of years from competitors.

The club's other series for more modern cars, including Future Classics, the Open Series and Tin Tops, only allow treaded tyres.

A statement from the CSCC read: "We anticipate a wide range of drivers participating in one or more rounds, including existing CSCC drivers looking for additional races and those drivers with cars more suited to racing on slicks such as Ginetta G50/55s, Porsche Cup cars, ex-British Touring Car Championship cars and those in existing championships running on these tyres. "Strict driving standards will be

enforced, making this also attractive for drivers looking for testing mileage with less risk of damage."

The inaugural season includes four rounds at Oulton Park, Thruxton, Silverstone and Donington Park ahead of a full calendar in 2021.

For the first year there will be no registration fees but all drivers must become a member of the CSCC.

The Slick Series will also maintain the club's use of penalties for podium finishers to prevent one entry from dominating and the field will be split into four classes relating to engine capacity.

### IN BRIEF

#### Caterham enduro

The British Racing and Sports Car Club Caterham season will again begin with a four-hour team enduro race next season. The event was introduced for the first time in 2019 and featured teams of four Caterhams with drivers graded to ensure parity between competing squads. "It's a good opportunity to shake down cars as a lot of people modify their car for a new category over the winter," said BRSCC chairman Peter Daly, who added that the Caterham Academy is already fully subscribed for 2020.

#### Mason's win

Two-time BRDC British Formula 3 race winner Josh Mason is second in the MRF Challenge standings after the first races of the Indian-based series' season at Dubai Autodrome last weekend. Mason, who has already been confirmed on the F3 grid for next year, took four podiums across the five races. The wins were shared by MRF regular Michelangelo Amendola, Australian Dylan Young and USF2000 racer Yuven Sundaramoorthy.

#### BARC series join

The British Automobile Racing Club's Classic VW Cup and BARC Saloons series are set to amalgamate next season in a bid to boost grid sizes. The two categories shared grids at half of their events in 2019 but this is set to be a more formal arrangement for next year. The futures of other struggling BARC categories MaX5 and Michelin Clio Cup Series are yet to be determined.

#### Ma7da drivers

A pair of 750 Motor Club regulars are among the latest drivers to sign up for the Ma7da series for 2020. Successful racer Danny Andrew – who has been a regular winner in both Locost and RGB Sports 1000 – will compete in the series next year and will be joined by Sian Stafford-Atkinson, who will return after a longer than expected break from competing.

#### Event cancelled

Due to logistical reasons, The Motorsport Show scheduled to take place at the RDS Simonscourt in Dublin last weekend had to be postponed. Rescheduled dates for the event will be announced shortly. Tickets purchased for the original dates will be valid for the new dates and refunds are also now available at the point of purchase.



MG Live is the MG Car Club's flagship event of the season

## MG Live to return to Silverstone next year after 2019 cancellation

The popular MG Live event is set to return to Silverstone next year after this season's edition was cancelled.

The MG Car Club's flagship meeting had to be axed this year after falling during the period where urgent resurfacing work took place at the Northamptonshire circuit. The club was unable to find a suitable alternative date or venue and therefore ran five meetings in 2019 instead of its usual six.

But MG Live will now be back at Silverstone again in 2020 with it having a provisional date of June 13-14.

"We understand that there will be some concerns from our loyal members following the difficulties with track resurfacing at Silverstone last summer and the subsequent resurfacing this summer that led to the cancellation of our 2019 event," said MGCC general manager Adam Sloman.

"We'd like to assure everyone that we found ourselves in an unprecedented situation then – that is now resolved. The management at Silverstone have been incredibly helpful and have bent over backwards to ensure we have the certainty we need to deliver a truly memorable MG Live event next year."

Next year will mark the club's 90th anniversary so special celebrations are planned for the MG Live event.

## Type R Trophy grids expected to double next season as drivers switch to it from Clio 182 series

The 750 Motor Club is expecting grid sizes for its Type R Trophy series to double for next season as the category will feature more standalone rounds.

The series is for the EP3 version of the Honda Civic Type R and was new for this

year but struggled for entries. It averaged eight cars this season – but had fewer cars than that at three events.

However, the club is confident entries will be much higher for the six-round 2020 season with more cars in build and a number of

Renault Clio 182 competitors opting to move across.

"With the Type R Trophy we started the year with 10 cars on the grid and had a few drivers start building cars but never actually got the cars finished," said competitions manager Giles Groombridge.

"We only had about a 10-car pool but we are now looking at 20+ cars in build or built."

"Area Motorsport have come on board and are building a couple of cars so I'm cautiously optimistic we will start the year with 16 drivers on the grid."



The Type R Trophy entries were small



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# FORMULA E: SAUDI ARABIA

## BIRD AND SIMS LEAD A LOCK-OUT FOR THE BRITS

**Jake Boxall-Legge** watched as UK drivers fend off the newcomers in Saudi Arabia

Photos: LAT



Bird landed opening win of year



Sims led away from pole in both races

**A**nticipation over the new Formula E season was palpable over the summer. The all-electric series, about to embark upon its sixth year of competition, had lured both Mercedes and Porsche to the fray. Both new teams performed admirably in the Saudi Arabian season opener – but were upstaged by the other two German automotive giants on the grid, Audi and BMW, with Britons Sam Bird and Alexander Sims drawing first blood in the contest.

Audi's customer team Envision Virgin had the early advantage. FE veteran Sam Bird began the weekend in exquisite form alongside team-mate Robin Frijns, and the two headed Friday's two practice sessions ahead of the first race. Track evolution was dramatic throughout the first day, as the weekend began with a layer of sand on the newly-laid asphalt, but Bird defied the improving conditions by setting the best time in the second of four qualifying groups.

BMW Andretti's Alexander Sims then made the difference in superpole, smashing in the fastest lap of the session. Mercedes impressed in its first qualifying session with Stoffel Vandoorne and rookie Nyck de Vries making superpole. But the duo had no answer for Sims, while Bird got onto the dust in the opening corners of his superpole lap to hand Sims his second consecutive pole.

Although Bird missed out in qualifying, he took the opportunity to produce a swashbuckling race drive. He unlocked his first attack mode on the 11th lap to move past Edoardo Mortara, then used the dregs of his extra 35kW of power to close in on the leading trio of Sims,

Vandoorne and de Vries. Bird cleared de Vries with his second hit of attack mode, and had Vandoorne seemingly on the ropes by lap 23 of 34.

However, the ex-McLaren driver's audacious late braking move pulled him into the lead ahead of Sims, who had to run wide to avoid a collision. Bird trickled past his compatriot too, having brought Porsche's Andre Lotterer with him into the battle for victory. Lotterer cleared Sims after the BMW Andretti driver took his final attack mode, and joined Bird in putting Vandoorne under immense pressure.

Bird then put a tidy move on Vandoorne into Turn 18, disappearing into the distance before a safety car was called to clear the stricken Audi of Daniel Abt, who came off worst in a skirmish with Antonio Felix da Costa. Bird held on after the restart to swoop to victory, as Lotterer and Vandoorne gave Porsche and Mercedes maiden podiums in their first FE races.

Bird seemed set to continue his form into the second race, setting a lap in Saturday's practice session just two-hundredths off of da Costa's pace-setting time. Da Costa's team-mate, reigning champion Jean-Eric Vergne, had no such luck as he hit the wall on the exit of Turn 17, having to take a new battery and a 20-place grid penalty as a result. Having retired in race one with a steering issue, Vergne was enduring a nightmarish start to his title defence.

While da Costa retained his pace into qualifying, it was Sims again who made it to pole as Bird missed out on making superpole. With Lucas di Grassi's superpole time to beat, Sims was four tenths quicker by the end of the first two sectors – losing a smidgen of time with a powerslide out of Turn 17. His lap remained strong and, while Sebastien Buemi got close, da Costa lost control in the second sector of his

lap to leave Sims's time untouched.

Sims suffered no repeat of his race one descent down the order on Saturday, and immediately pulled out a 1.1-second lead over Buemi in the opening corners. The second race began tamely, until da Costa punted Buemi into a spin at Turn 18 as the Swiss driver attempted to cut inside to get attack mode. This played into Sims's hands, and by lap 12 he held a 3.2s lead over da Costa – who fell behind di Grassi a lap later.

Making an attempt to repass di Grassi at Turn 1, da Costa forced his way through to return to second. Bird then had space to try and pass di Grassi on the outside, but combined with Mitch Evans before being collected by Pascal Wehrlein to bring out the first safety car.

Sims then played the restart to perfection, waiting until the safety car pulled in before taking attack mode and darting off into the distance. Di Grassi followed suit, while Sims's team-mate Maximilian Guenther overtook him and Vandoorne under yellows to move up to third – which became second after da Costa served a drivethrough for the Buemi incident.

Frijns – who hit the wall between Turns 9 and 10 – brought out another safety car, which Sims followed all the way to the restart, catching di Grassi napping before a brief full-course yellow appeared as Frijns's recovery truck was still on-track.

Di Grassi was passed by Guenther once the circuit returned to green running, and the two held position as Sims cantered to his first Formula E victory – and with it, catapulted to the top of the overall standings. Guenther lost his podium after his yellow-flag pass earned him a 24s time penalty, elevating di Grassi to second and Vandoorne to his second consecutive third-place finish.



Mercedes and Vandoorne impressed



After first race victory, Bird ended the second contest in the wall after contact

### RESULTS

Round 1-2/14, Diriyah (SAU), November 22-23, 34 laps - 53.057 miles

POS	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Sam Bird (GBR)	Virgin Racing-Audi e-tron FE06	46m17.371s
2	Andre Lotterer (DEU)	Porsche-Porsche 99X Electric	+1.319s
3	Stoffel Vandoorne (BEL)	Mercedes-Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 01	+1.672s
4	Oliver Rowland (GBR)	Nissan e.Dams-Nissan IMO2	+1.944s
5	Robin Frijns (NLD)	Virgin Racing-Audi e-tron FE06	+3.983s
6	Nyck de Vries (NLD)	Mercedes-Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 01	+4.560s
7	Edoardo Mortara (CHE)	Venturi-Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 01	+5.122s
8	Alexander Sims (GBR)	BMW-BMW iFE.20	+5.715s
9	Jerome d'Ambrosio (BEL)	Mahindra Racing-Mahindra M6Electro	+6.628s
10	Mitch Evans (NZL)	Jaguar-Jaguar I-TYPE 4	+7.048s
11	Pascal Wehrlein (DEU)	Mahindra Racing-Mahindra M6Electro	+7.460s
12	Felipe Massa (BRA)	Venturi-Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 01	+8.166s
13	Lucas di Grassi (BRA)	Audi Sport Abt-Audi e-tron FE06	+8.404s
14	Antonio Felix da Costa (PRT)	DS Techeetah-DS E-Tense FE20	+8.853s
15	Oliver Turvey (GBR)	NIO-NIO FE-005	+10.172s
16	James Calado (GBR)	Jaguar-Jaguar I-TYPE 4	+11.572s
17	Neel Jani (CHE)	Porsche-Porsche 99X Electric	+15.429s
18	Max Guenther (DEU)	BMW-BMW iFE.20	+25.662s
19	Brendon Hartley (NZL)	Dragon Racing-Penske EV-4	+52.219s
20	Ma Qing Hua (CHN)	NIO-NIO FE-005	-1 lap
R	Daniel Abt (DEU)	Audi Sport Abt-Audi e-tron FE06	29 laps/damage
R	Jean-Eric Vergne (FRA)	DS Techeetah-DS E-Tense FE20	21 laps/steering rack
R	Sebastien Buemi (CHE)	Nissan e.Dams-Nissan IMO2	3 laps/electrics
NS	Nico Muller (CHE)	Dragon Racing-Penske EV-4	accident damage

Pole: Sims 1m14.563s. Winner's average speed: 68.771mph. Fastest lap: Abt 1m13.742s (75.654mph).

Race 2: 1 Sims 46m48.327s; 2 di Grassi +2.817s; 3 Vandoorne +3.581s; 4 Mortara +4.294s; 5 Rowland +5.475s; 6 Abt +16.942s; 7 Calado +17.221s; 8 Vergne +19.394s; 9 Hartley +20.702s; 10 da Costa +22.634s; 11 Guenther +25.383s; 12 Buemi +26.291s; 13 Jani +27.493s; 14 Lotterer +29.046s; 15 Wehrlein +35.290s; 16 de Vries +36.318s; 17 Massa +45.758s; 18 Evans +1m01.105s; 19 Ma +1m28.165s; EX Turvey +16.544s; R Muller 28 laps/accident damage; R Frijns 18 laps/accident damage; R Bird 13 laps/accident damage; NS d'Ambrosio/technical. Pole: Sims 1m11.476s. Winner's average speed: 60.067mph. Fastest lap: da Costa 1m12.481s (76.970mph). Points (after 2/14 rounds): 1 Sims 35; 2 Vandoorne 30; 3 Bird 26; 4 Rowland 22; 5 di Grassi 18; 6 Lotterer 18; 7 Mortara 18; 8 Frijns 10; 9 de Vries 8; 10 Abt 8.

# HISTORICS

*'Historic Touring Cars opened up'*  
New models will be allowed in 2020, below



## DOWN THE WORKSHOP

### LANCIA FULVIA

Historic rally car  
Owner: Steve Graham



Fulvia has a strong history

#### It was built for one event

"We put the car together specifically for the Roger Albert Clark Rally in 2006 and it has done every event since. We did the first two as well, but not in the Lancia Fulvia, so we've done all of them so far. I think last weekend was our 11th in the Fulvia."

#### It was a big project

"We started off with three cars we picked up on eBay, which were all a mess, and then tried to work out what to do with them. It was a learning curve for a number of years, starting off with trying to fix the suspension. The first year we ran it, it dragged so much on the ground that it wore a hole in the fuel tank."

#### They got the gearbox sorted

"So we got the suspension sorted out and then we had to try and work out what to do with the gearbox and eventually moved to a close-ratio box. But the big revelation for the car was putting a limited-slip diff in it because the steering box is horrible. At least with a LSD it does self-centre. But that was about a four-year battle."

#### It only does one or two events a year

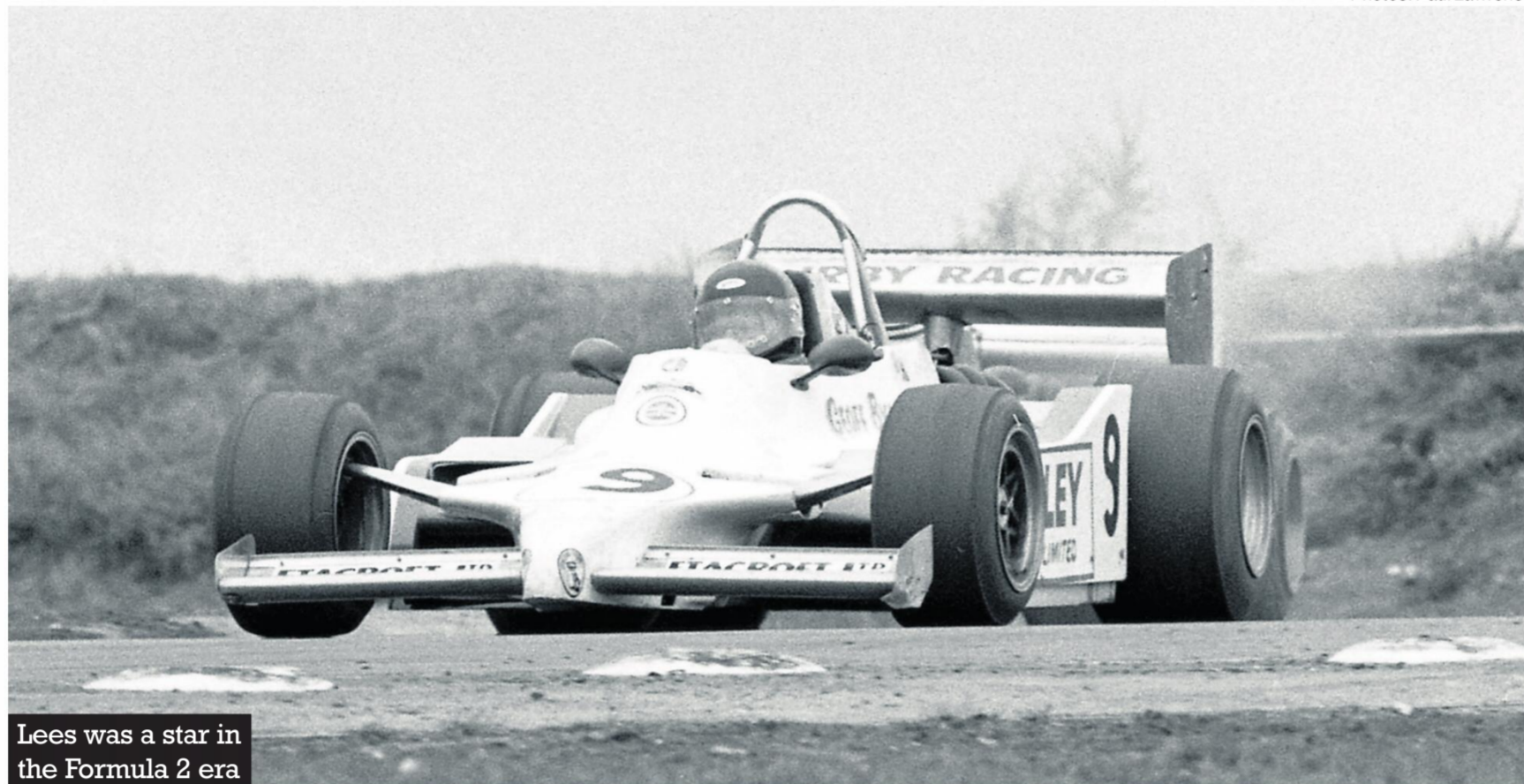
"The car is kept pretty much for the Roger Albert and the odd other outing. We run it at the Goodwood Festival of Speed if we get invited down there. I'd only ever rallied front-wheel-drive cars and so when I wanted to go for a Category 1 car it narrowed the choice down to a Mini, a Saab and the Fulvia. So it was Hobson's choice, really."

#### They have two Fulvias

"Now we've got two Fulvias as we've also got a 1600 HF to do the Monte Historique, which we've now done eight times. They look identical. We transferred all the knowledge we've gained onto the build of the 1600."

#### Parts are a problem

"Iain Chamberlain has done most of the work and he's gone through a massive learning curve to put the thing together in the first place and is now a Fulvia expert. The Fulvia was the highest production car that Lancia ever produced, 130,000 were built and most were left-hand drive. Not many HF's were built and they ran with aluminium doors and boot, so those parts are hard to find. However, a couple of Italian fabricators are now making them as a lot of people in Europe are still running them."



Lees was a star in the Formula 2 era

## EIGHTIES SINGLE-SEATERS TO CONTEST NEW GEOFF LEES TROPHY

### Historic Sports Car Club to gather eclectic field for new 2020 series

By Paul Lawrence

Single-seater racing cars of the 1980s will have a fresh chance to race next season in a new Historic Sports Car Club race category titled the Geoff Lees Trophy.

The series will be capped at two-litres and will be open to Formula 2, Formula Atlantic, Formula 3, Formula Ford 2000, Formula Vauxhall Lotus, Formula Renault and Formula

Super Vee cars raced during the 1980s.

The club's successful Historic Formula 2 class has a cut-off at the end of 1978, so the Geoff Lees Trophy will appeal to owners of two-litre F2 cars from 1979 to the end of the category in 1984. Pilot races are planned for the second half of 2020 before a fuller programme in 2021.

Lees has given enthusiastic backing for the series. He made

his name in Formula Ford in the mid-1970s and rose through F3 and F2 to race in Formula 1. He won the 1981 European Formula 2 Championship, went on to race extensively in Japan and competed at Le Mans 14 times.

Cars must be in original specification with only the addition of current safety requirements. The Geoff Lees Trophy will sit alongside the HSCC's current portfolio of

categories, most of which cater for cars up to the start of the 1980s.

The cut-off dates for all of the existing categories remain unchanged.

Andy Dee-Crowne of the HSCC said: "The HSCC is now the go-to club for period single-seater racing and so this new series is a logical development to accommodate a group of cars that don't currently have many chances to race."



AMOC events under threat

### Aston Martin Owners Club aiming to save race-organising arm

The Aston Martin Owners' Club is overhauling its racing programme to try and save the club's 80-year history of organising UK race meetings.

Faced with ever-rising cost of circuit hire and falling numbers of classic Aston Martins being raced, the club has come to a watershed in

terms of its place as a race meeting organiser.

Long-time club member and racer Peter Snowdon is leading a bid to keep AMOC in racing. "We're looking to offer a streamlined skeleton calendar for 2020 with perhaps one or two main races at Silverstone or Snetterton. We would then

like members to have the opportunity to race at least four or five times a year with races at other events," said Snowdon.

"We can then try and go forward in 2021. Right now, we're putting the club's racing on life support to try and maintain a near 80-year tradition."

### Campbell in the soup on R.A.C. bid

A year's work was dashed in just six stage miles on Thursday evening when the Davrian Mk8 of Charles Campbell was out of the Roger Albert Clark Rally with gearbox failure after the first stage.

Scotsman Campbell has owned the car since new in the early 1980s and rallied it for several seasons before putting it in storage on the Isle of Skye. A year ago he fetched it out of store with an ambition of doing the Roger Albert Clark Rally.

Peter Furber did a complete ground-up rebuild and the car was finished in time for a shakedown test last week. Sadly, the Ford Crossflow-engined car limped through the Radnor stage and retired.



Historic Formula 1 and Historic Sports Cars will tackle only three meetings next year

### MASTERS SLIMS DOWN CALENDARS FOR 2020 SEASON

Masters Historic Racing has announced that the FIA Masters Historic Formula 1 and Historic Sports Car Championships will be contested over just three events in 2020, covering summer races at Silverstone, Zandvoort and Spa in the

space of barely two months.

Ron Maydon from Masters said: "For some time we have been acutely aware of the hectic lifestyles, business schedules and family commitments of our drivers that make a long season of racing challenging.

"So, together with the FIA, we have decided to intensify the competition and make it more accessible by reducing the Historic Formula 1 and Historic Sports Cars Championships from seven to three rounds and having a summer-only schedule."

## IN BRIEF

### Crew's new challenge

Will Onions and Rob Smith, best known for rallying Ford Escort Mk2s, will have a change of pace next spring when they contest the Flying Scotsman Rally for pre-war cars. They will tackle the three-day event in a 1934 MG Magnette K3 that Onions recently added to his stable. It will be their first experience of such an event.

### Masters rejigged

Masters Historic Racing has refocused its main calendar with more northern European races, and only the season-opener at Portimao in Portugal taking most categories to southern Europe. The Nurburgring Oldtimer event has been replaced by the Zolder Historic Festival (August 22-23). Masters' Donington Park event in late June will feature non-championship Formula 1 and Sports Car races.

### HRCR confirmed

The Historic Rally Car Register Clubmans Rally Championship will feature 11 rounds in 2020, starting with the revamped Ross Traders Rally on Saturday February 1. The season concludes with a new event, the Dansport Historic Rally in Derbyshire on October 17. Also new is the Cotswold Historic Rally from Tavern Motor Club on Sunday July 19.

### Chateau's success

The Chateau Impney Hillclimb was announced as the event of the year during the inaugural Royal Automobile Club Historic Awards in London last week. Other winners included Historic Formula 2 as the race series of the year and the newly redeveloped Jim Clark Rooms as the best museum.

### Walker's thanks

Following his early retirement from the Roger Albert Clark Rally, Alan Walker has asked Motorsport News to record his gratitude to fellow competitors Gregoire de Mevius, Stefaan Stouf and Phil Collins for stopping to help when his Ford Escort Mk2 suffered an engine fire. "Without their help I may well have lost the car," said Walker after the fire early in the Radnor forest stage.

### Discount at Retro

Motorsport UK has partnered with Race Retro to give licence holders discounted tickets to the annual historic motorsport show in February. Ian Berry of Motorsport UK said: "Attending Race Retro is a key element of our membership engagement programme, and we will have key staff on our stand to help with technical and licence enquiries."

### Touring cars widened

The Historic Sports Car Club has opened up the class structure for its Historic Touring Car Championship for 2020. The rules for the championship for Pre-'66 Touring Cars are being changed to allow 1300cc Austin A30s, A35s, A40s and Morris Minors to join the grid. Previously, these cars were only admitted with engines up to 1150cc.

### Backstrom's debut

Leading Swedish historic rally competitor Arne Backstrom brought his Volvo 240 to the UK for the first time to contest the Roger Albert Clark Rally. "It's new to me but I've watched the DVD," said Backstrom of his first experience of the UK forests. Clutch and gearbox woes effectively ended his rally in the Kershope stage on Saturday.

# RALLY NEWS NEWS ANALYSIS

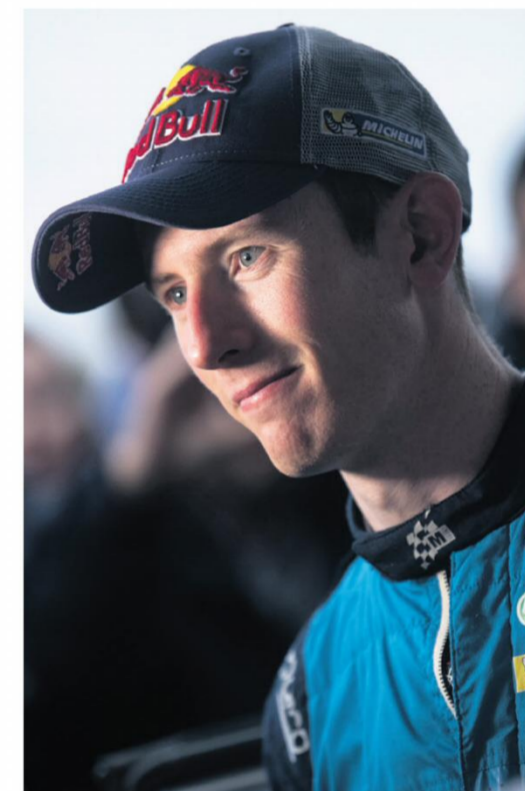
# OGIER AT TOYOTA AS WRC EXPERIENCES A TURBULENT WEEK

French champion changes camps as service park goes wild in an explosive seven days

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Citroen will drive away from the WRC



Evans has been confirmed at Toyota

By David Evans

**The World Rally Championship has gone through seven of its most troubled days with Citroen Racing now departed and Sebastien Ogier and Elfyn Evans confirmed as Toyota drivers.**

These events began last week, when Citroen's announcement arrived. Not for the first time, the communication coming out of Paris raised eyebrows within the sport.

It read: "Following the decision of Sebastien Ogier to leave Citroen Racing after the 2019 World Rally Championship season, Citroen decided to withdraw from its WRC programme in 2020 due to the absence of a first-class driver available for the 2020 season."

Blaming Ogier for its own downfall did not go down well. And it did not say much for Citroen's consideration for Esapekka Lappi, Ogier's team-mate, Rally Finland winner in 2017 and a Finn regarded widely around the world as a first-class rally driver.

Speaking exclusively to Motorsport News, Ogier said: "Maybe communication hasn't always been the strongest point for Citroen... When they say there is no other drivers available, in this moment, I feel this is disrespectful for my colleagues in [rallying]."

This week's Motorsport News was supposed to spill the details on Toyota's all-new line-up for 2020, but the decision to move the announcement – a decision which has come for entirely logistical reasons – from Monday to today (Wednesday) made it impossible to talk to Ogier, Evans or Kalle Rovanpera about the season to come.

What Ogier would talk about was the reasons he had decided to leave Citroen halfway through his two-year deal.

The six-time champion added: "One of the main things which drove this decision was the rhythm of development on the car and the speed the car was progressing, which was not [fast] enough.

"Already this year, we could agree there wasn't enough development coming and we were down in performance against our competitors and it's not just me saying that – anybody who drove this car, I think, is feeling the same way."

Despite being unable to stop Ott Tanak stealing his crown and the way his departure was communicated, Ogier said he had no regrets about his second stint with Citroen.

"I was aware since I joined the team about the difficulty of this challenge and I was never afraid of this," he said. "That's why, even today, I have absolutely no regrets to try this challenge, even if it failed."

Citroen team principal Pierre Budar told MN he started to understand Ogier's early exit could be on the cards on the Sunday night of Rally Germany. The Bostalsee-based event was arguably the team's nadir. Ogier and Lappi finished seventh and eighth, but they were miles off the pace and almost two minutes off eventual winner Tanak by the end.

In his final interview of the event, Ogier admitted he simply could not drive the car.

Hours later, he was outlining a potential exit strategy to Budar. Things had to improve if Citroen wanted to keep Ogier for the expected second season.

Things improved, but not nearly quickly enough. Planned homologations didn't arrive through the second half of the year and when Tanak made his move away from Toyota it paved the way for the Frenchman's arrival at his fourth team in five years.

One of Ogier's ambitions when he joined Citroen was the chance to match Juha Kankkunen's record of winning world titles with three manufacturers. The all-French alliance failed, but the 35-year-old has one more shot with Tommi Makinen's squad next season.

While Welshman Evans's deal is understood to be a two-year agreement to drive a Yaris WRC, Ogier's original plan to retire from rallying at

the end of 2020 is likely to remain.

While many of the Citroen Racing team is expected to be absorbed into Peugeot's new World Endurance Championship commitment, Budar admitted the news that his team would finally end a WRC effort that has run pretty much consistently from 2001 had come as a shock.

"WRC was at the heart of Citroen Racing for more than 20 years," said Budar. "You can expect this to be quite tough for the whole team. It's quite emotional to hear this programme is stopped. Some of the people are working on WRC since the beginning and so it's quite difficult for the people here. Very difficult.

"They need some time to accept this, but we are working in PSA Motorsport area. Here the people who don't carry on WRC programme for Citroen Racing will be able to be involved in another project – as you know, we have a new programme for Peugeot and you can expect most to be involved in this one. Most people will have some new opportunities in this programme."

Budar insisted he had done all he could to convince Ogier to remain – a decision which would have kept the two factory C3 WRCs in rallying until the end of next season.

He added: "We have made our best to

convince him to stay and at the end of the day he made his decision."

Asked about that statement regarding the lack of a first-class driver for next season, Budar added: "When you want to be involved in the championship and the fight for the title then you need one of the big three. So, as far as you have tried your best to get one of them and you couldn't get them then you need to do a decision. That's what we have done."

Budar's predecessor as team principal, Yves Matton – now FIA rally director – worked with Citroen for much of the firm's time in the WRC. Matton said his thoughts were with the whole team.

"It's very sad to lose one of the majors in the WRC after 16 years," he said. "Maybe sad is not the right word, maybe there is concern that Citroen was not able to build on the victories and the progress they have made in 2019 with Ogier to fight for the title next year. The process with this two-year programme was logical and well-built.

"Personally, for sure, I'm really sad for the people who were involved in the team for a lot of years and they put a lot of energy in – especially the mechanics. They always kept their motivation in sometimes difficult times. I hope they will be able to find some interesting programme for them."

HOW THE BRITISH RALLYCROSS TITLE WAS WON

PAGE 27



The Strength of Experience

speedline



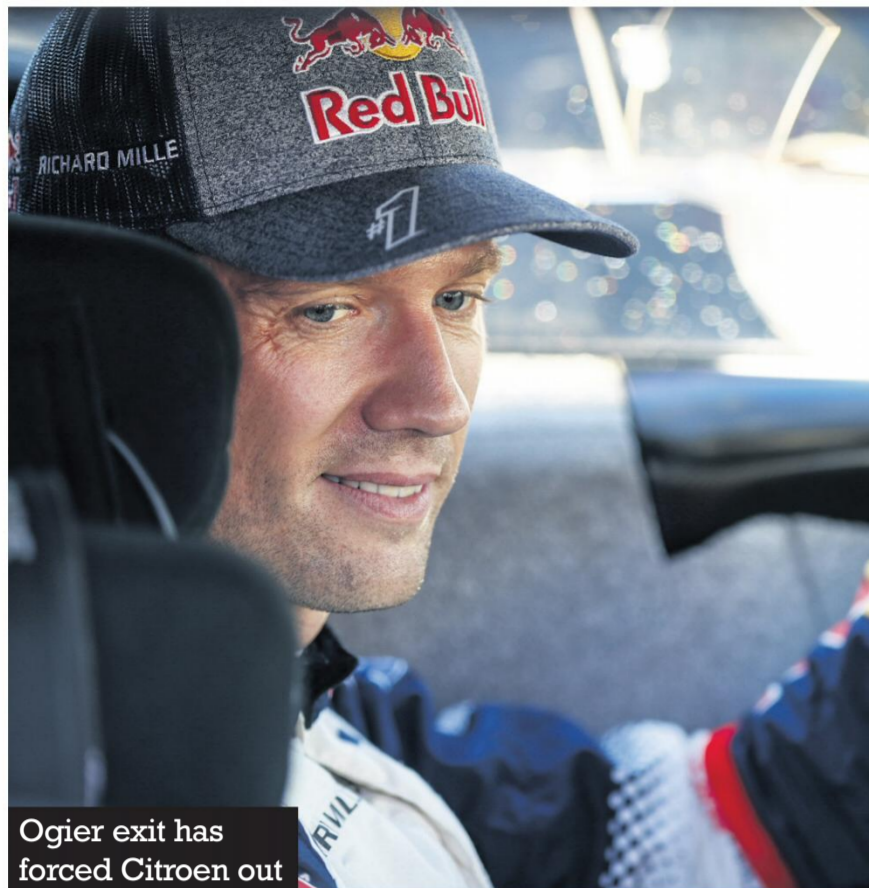
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*'Tohill claimed the title - just'*  
Fourth Irish RX crown for Dubliner, p29



Ogier exit has forced Citroen out



Ogier and Evans will drive a Yaris

## Customer Citroens might appear in the 2020 WRC line-up, says Budar

Citroen's 2020-specification C3 WRC – a car Pierre Budar is convinced is capable of lifting the world title – could still be seen next year.

Budar admitted the Versailles-based Citroen Racing operation was open to offers for the cars, which are developed and ready to go with homologated updates for next season. The C3 WRC has undergone significant testing and development over the second half of the current year with progress targeted for next season.

Budar said: "I am quite convinced we would have started the season in a much better position than this year.

"If we will see the car next season, I don't know. The situation is still quite new, but if somebody is interested to rent or buy the cars, then I am open."

Asked how confident he was the car could challenge for a title in 2020, he added: "I am quite convinced of it. The progress we could see during the latest development tests. A better understanding and experience of the team – [for the] race and data

engineers on the car; they were quite new at the beginning of this season and now they have one more season [of experience]. Altogether I am sure we would have been more in the fight next season."

Those sentiments are shared by Esapekka Lappi. The Finn, who completed some of the development work along with Eric Camilli, said: "I think we could have done quite big steps. Obviously you saw the aero update which was working very well – for sure it would have helped a lot on the fast stages and fast rallies.

The change and the difference in time was quite big from the old aero. And then we had some performance-related updates: new engine, new geometry with some steering updates and some other things for the diffs. We were working on it.

"Like we saw when I got the diffs I wanted [this season] it all clicked on gravel. There was a lot of work on Tarmac to be done, but I was positive we had a big improvement for next year. Maybe they wouldn't have answered all the challenges we face this year, but at least some of them."

## PIERRE BUDAR

### What went wrong for Citroen this season?

"We have faced the situation where we had lost a lot of development at the beginning of the year. We have been rushed. It was difficult to recover the time we had [lost] at the beginning of the year because we had new drivers, new engineers and they had to understand the car. They had to learn how to work together and make development the priority. All of this needed time at the start of the season and, of course, this time give us some late advancement compared to the other teams and we have not been able to recover this."

### But you made good progress?

"I am quite sure we have made a lot of progress during the year and we had a lot of ongoing

development that would have been ready for Monte Carlo, but this is the problem – from Seb's point of view it would have been better to have it before and we can agree with this, but it cannot be possible. You cannot contract the time when you need to do some new development, some new tooling or new moulds, you cannot get the time back – especially with the homologation system, which is strict. With the homologation system you cannot make a mistake."

### When did you first realise Ogier was thinking about leaving?

"We had some first discussion with Seb after the summer. Of course, his concern was started after Germany."

### That was a difficult

### event, especially given his statements to the press at the time...

"Yes. I confirm."

### When did you find out Citroen would not continue into the WRC's hybrid era in 2022?

"We had several scenarios pondering for a while and it has been decided to relaunch Peugeot in World Endurance Championship. We have already DS involved in Formula E and we couldn't get a third programme and have a good level of performance with three main programmes from the same organisation. So, when the decision has been made for Peugeot somewhere [in PSA], the decision has been made for Citroen not to be involved in the hybrid WRC in 2022."



Budar: happy with progress

### Was there ever a chance, in your opinion, Peugeot, for example, could run in WRC instead of WEC?

"[That] could have been a scenario also. But it has been decided to go for WEC because this programme was more online with expectation on Peugeot's side. I don't want to comment on this choice by Peugeot – I'm not in a position to do so."

## Q&A

## Lappi on the sidelines and joins the queue chasing the remaining M-Sport seats

Former Rally Finland winner Esapekka Lappi has gone from having a car he considered capable of winning next year's World Rally Championship to being one of eight chasing the last remaining seat at M-Sport Ford for next season.

Hyundai has locked down its line-up with Ott Tanak, Thierry Neuville, Dani Sordo and Sebastien Loeb. Toyota confirms Sebastien Ogier, Elfyn Evans and Kalle Rovanpera today, leaving the Cumbrian-based M-Sport squad to decide who will run a second Ford Fiesta WRC alongside the already



Ogier and Lappi (right)

contracted Teemu Suninen.

Hyundai team director Andrea Adamo has already admitted he will try to find a solution to keep Craig Breen in some capacity next season, but that is far from the full-time job the

Irishman was hoping for. Breen and Lappi are joined by Jari-Matti Latvala, Hayden Paddon, Andreas Mikkelsen, Mads Ostberg, Kris Meeke and Gus Greensmith on the sidelines, waiting for a potential call up from M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson.

Asked about his intentions, Wilson said: "I've spoken to the majority of those drivers you've mentioned, but right now there's really nothing to say.

"We're looking at all possibilities for next year."

Lappi admitted Citroen's news had left him shocked last week.

"I read the rumours," he said, "but I was expecting it to be more related to Seb, to be honest. I tried to get some info from Pierre earlier, but he didn't really give me anything. I thought something was weird. It was quite a shock.

"M-Sport is the only chance available. It's a tough call. If there's a seat available, there is many drivers trying to reach that. If you just look at the season which ended I'm not the strongest guy to get it in terms of results and overall results, but anyway we will fight and will fight hard."

## GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

# DAVID EVANS

**"Citroen no longer holds the aces without Ogier"**



**A** cowshed on a cold Sunday morning in the middle of November wasn't the best place for Sebastien Ogier to start his final day as a Citroen employee.

But there we were. The sun hadn't come up and wouldn't really be bothering for the rest of the day. I'd just been supplied with the party line from Citroen, confirming Mikko Hirvonen would be joining Sebastien Loeb at Citroen Racing in 2012.

The line: "We confirm Sebastien Ogier is free to leave the team at the end of this season."

Ogier shrugged at the news he already knew. He'd seen this coming from Germany, when it became glaringly obvious Sebastien Loeb and a now behind-the-scenes (but no less effective) Guy Frequelin had won the internal power struggle against Ogier and Freq's replacement Olivier Quesnel. Ogier would be gone. Quesnel would follow soon after.

Last week wasn't the first time Ogier has left Citroen. And it wasn't the first time Citroen has delivered a breath-taking line to trumpet that exit.

Eight years ago, Citroen was very much in the driving seat. The Parisians remained rallying's dominant force after year one of 1600cc World Rally Cars. But two Sebs was one too many for the reds.

Rally GB, 2011, would be the final outing for Ogier and Julien Ingrassia. Just three years previously they'd made that incredible World Rally Car debut, leading in Wales on their first time ever in a C4 WRC. And now this. They were out.

Typically, Ogier went on his terms.

Slashing across the Great Orme's kerbs on Thursday night damaged a wheel on the DS 3 WRC and forced them to retire from the first evening. Loeb went into that event eight points ahead of Ford man Mikko Hirvonen. At a stroke, Ogier's corner-cutting ruled him out of helping Loeb towards an eighth straight title.

Interesting...

If that was a message – and I'm not saying it was – there was another one on offer on Ogier's final stage in a Citroen in 2011: victory on the Monument powerstage which closed the event out. The irony was everywhere as the world watched him spray champagne over the bonnet to 'celebrate' a pointless bonus.

How times have changed. Citroen no longer holds the aces and Ogier's gone again.

Despite the apparent acrimony in the words, the communications, the Tweets, I know both parties well and know there will be huge regret and sadness on both sides. Citroen's not what it was in 2011.

And that's no reflection on team principal Pierre Budar – he's done his job with an arm tied behind his back (by the suits counting the pennies above him) since he arrived at the big desk early last year.

In fact, since the start of 2017 and the team's return to the big time, the project has been doomed. The car worked, then it didn't.

Then it was fast. Slow. Undriveable.

Change the driver. Change the drivers. Same deal.

Citroen Racing is better than the C3 WRC. And Sebastien Ogier's better than last week gave him credit for.

# RALLY NEWS

## WRC'S FUTURE STILL OPEN FOR A NEW PATH

### FIA head says a new strategy could be devised

By David Evans

**FIA rally director Yves Matton has told Motorsport News he will not shy away from finding a new path for the future of the World Rally Championship if the manufacturers do not commit to hybrid rules by the end of April.**

The new regulations will be revealed at next week's World Motor Sport Council meeting, with the teams then given the first quarter of 2020 to confirm their participation.

Matton said the three manufacturers – Hyundai, Toyota and M-Sport Ford – were offering 'good feedback' on hybrid, but he said the timetable would offer potential for revised regulations.

"The teams have to commit by April," he said. "This gives us an opportunity, if they do not commit in April, then we can work on a new strategy and it would give us more than 18 months to be sure to achieve what I want."

Precisely what such a strategy would look like remains to be seen, but there's an increasing number of voices in rallying calling for costs to be cut. As Matton outlined at the front of this week's MN, an R5-based car is an option, but not one the current manufacturers favour.

Next week's World Motor Sport Council will deliver regulations regarding the incorporation of a stock hybrid system – including the suppliers of batteries and motors – into a current World Rally Car. There are not

expected to be any significant changes in specification to the transmission, suspension, aerodynamics or internal combustion element of the engine post-2022.

One concern the teams have is a need to increase the number of test days available to refine the use of hybrid ahead of round one in '22. The allocation of test days was reduced from 55 to 42 days this season, but some have questioned the practicality of trying to introduce such a major change with such limited testing time – particularly with the competition taking place in such diverse locations, climates, elevations and surfaces.

MN understands the potential for an increased testing allocation is under discussion between the stakeholders.



R5 cars are not in favour with teams

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

## Decision over WRC tyre tender imminent

Next week's World Motor Sport Council will deliver the winner of the World Rally Championship's control tyre tender.

The decision, which results in a three-year agreement starting from 2021, is between four tyre manufacturers: Michelin, Pirelli, MRF and Hankook.

Michelin has dominated the WRC since the end of the last control tyre period in 2011, with the French firm only losing one rally – Elfyn Evans' DMACK-shod victory at the 2017 Rally GB – since the start of 2012.

The French giant's commitment to rallying is unclear, however, with

speculation that it will step back from sponsoring the WRC next season. It will, however, continue to supply tyres to the factory teams.

Pirelli was rumoured to favour a control tyre for the support series only (it already supplies the JWRC teams), but it looks to be MRF which is ticking most boxes according to sources.

The Indian firm is understood to have employed renowned WRC tyre expert Fiore Brivio and is reckoned to have the financial wherewithal to outbid the rest.

Brivio would be a crucial player in the development of tyres, with MRF already having completed thousands of miles



WRC tyre expert Fiore Brivio

of testing with potential rubber for 2021.

MRF declined to comment on the FIA's ongoing tender process.

## Ford to become official partner of Junior World Rally Championship

Ford is stepping up its commitment to next year's Junior WRC and will become an official partner to the five-round series.

Ford Performance has worked closely in the development of the Fiesta R2T and the one-litre EcoBoost engine used in the car. But Blue Oval's senior manager in European motorsport Gerard Quinn says Ford is more committed than ever to finding the rally stars of the future.

Quinn would not go into details of the support, but said: "We're strengthening our support for the Juniors and looking to make it even more attractive to the young drivers out there. Obviously, we're not going to interfere with

M-Sport and the FIA and the running of the championship, but put it this way: the winner will notice our increased support."

JWRC manager Maciek Woda said: "To have Ford join FIA Junior WRC as an official partner underlines the importance of supporting and growing the potential future World Rally champions to manufacturers such as Ford."

"Elfyn Evans is a great example of a driver that Ford has been involved with since he started his WRC career in the championship – when it was known as WRC Academy – in 2012, which he won in a Ford Fiesta R2. Elfyn graduated to

WRC 2 in 2013 with a Ford Fiesta R5 and joined the M-Sport World Rally Team full-time for 2014."

Next year's JWRC starts with Rally Sweden and includes further rounds in Chile, Italy, Finland and Germany.



JWRC starts at Rally Sweden



Wet weather forced the cancellation of seven stages

## RALLYE DU VAR CUT SHORT AS LOEB DOMINATES EVENT

Sebastien Loeb's hopes of some sort of meaningful Monte Carlo running at last week's Rallye du Var were ruined when the event lost a day of competition due to flooding.

The Var region in the south of France was hit by rain storms through the end of last week and the rain continued into the competition, forcing the organisers to cancel seven of the planned 14 stages. Six were canned on Saturday with one lost on the final day.

Driving a Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC, Loeb won the event comfortably from Nikolay Gryazin's Skoda Fabia R5 evo. The Russian made the most of the tricky conditions to lead

the nine-time world champion by 2.6s after Friday night's opening loop of three stages.

Loeb said: "Rallye du Var is an event I always enjoy. The roads are very nice and it's run in an area where – usually – we get some good weather. But last weekend it was really complicated."

"It was raining a lot. Shakedown was not so bad, but already on the first stage [on Friday] the conditions were a bit tricky, but it was getting more and more and then the last stage on Friday was completely in the night with the big fog and a lot of watersplashes. This was complicated."

"The first stage on Saturday was just like a river, it was nearly undrivable and there was no other choice [but] to cancel the day. The water was just flowing across the road on the road sections and then it was undrivable in the stages. It's a shame for the organiser and for us to be in this position, but it's like this and they had no other choice."

Loeb, co-driven by girlfriend Laurene Godey, won by more than a minute from Gryazin.

Hyundai's next outing comes at next weekend's Monza Rally, where Dani Sordo and Andreas Mikkelsen will drive a brace of i20 R5s.



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# RALLY NEWS

## DRIVERS IN FAVOUR OF 2020 CALENDAR

### Circuit of Ireland return and Galway one-day format get approval

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Martin Walsh



Two rounds will make up both the Irish and British Rally Championships

By Jason Craig

**Leading Irish Tarmac Rally Championship drivers have welcomed the return of the Circuit of Ireland Rally to next season's calendar, with seven closed-road rounds taking place over the year.**

As reported in last week's Motorsport News, the iconic event will return for the first time since 2016 and will once again be a round of the ITRC, replacing the Easter Stages on the calendar.

The championship begins in Galway at the beginning of February and retains a one-day format following the success of this year's meeting which has also pleased drivers.

"This year's Galway worked well and the short format resulted in an exciting sprint for the result," said this year's ITRC runner-up, Alastair Fisher.

"I don't have an issue with the one-day format; it's the first event of the season and it will attract spectators and competitors. Hopefully, in the long run, the event can get back to two days.

"Certainly it's a welcome sight to see the Circuit of Ireland title officially return. It's steeped in history and is an event that revives everyone's memories."

Desi Henry – a stalwart of the ITRC – mirrored Fisher's comments.

"It looks a great calendar once again. I have always loved the Circuit of Ireland and I am pleased to see it make a return. I think keeping Galway to one day is the correct decision given the time of the year and the fact it is the first round," he added. "It may entice more crews to sign up."

The second round of the championship takes place in West Cork which will be held over St Patrick's weekend. It will also be the first of two occasions when competitors from the ITRC share the roads with their counterparts from the British Rally Championship. The other is August's Ulster International Rally.

Also retaining their places for next season are the Rally of the Lakes in Killarney, the Donegal International – which is a three day meeting – and the series-ending Cork '20' International.

All of the dates except Donegal have been rubber stamped by the Tarmac Rally Organisers' Association, although MN understands the weekend of June 19-21 is most plausible for Donegal.

On top of the established Historic and Modified elements of the ITRC, a new Junior Championship incorporating all seven rounds is also set to be introduced in 2020.

#### CALENDAR

##### Irish Tarmac Rally Championship 2020

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Feb 2	Galway International	Galway
Mar 14-15	West Cork Rally	Clonakilty
Apr 10-11	Circuit of Ireland	Dundrod
May 1-3	International Rally of the Lakes	Killarney
TBA	Donegal International Rally	Letterkenny
Aug 21-22	Ulster International Rally	Newry
Sep 26-27	Cork '20' International	Macroom

#### U-turn for National backer

The Irish National Rally Championship will consist of seven rounds for the 2020 season as long-time sponsor Triton Showers will remain with the series after performing a U-turn.

The season will begin with the Mayo Rally on March 8, followed by the Circuit of Kerry (April 5), Carlow Rally (May 10), Cavan Rally (May 24), Tipperary Stonethrowers Rally (August 9), Clare Rally (September 13) and Donegal Harvest Rally (October 10), with the best six scores to count.

In a surprise at the championship awards ceremony earlier this month, sponsor Triton Showers, which initially ended a five-year tenure as title sponsor, agreed to underpin the 2020 series.

Making the announcement,

managing director Kevin Barrett outlined the reason behind the decision to remain for a sixth consecutive season.

"It was something that happened at the last minute really, we felt that we just couldn't walk away and leave the championship without a sponsor," he said.

"When Declan [Tumilty, chairperson of the National championship committee] informed me that there was no sponsor on board for 2020, things took on a new dimension and it all happened very quickly and Triton UK went for it straight away.

"I know that Declan and the committee have some exciting ideas for 2020 and it would be a shame [if] these ideas wouldn't be fulfilled."

#### MN'S ROAD RALLYING EXPERT

# IAN MILLS

"All road events have one instance of crews being delayed"



**S**tage rallying has a set of rules that deals with instances where competitors are delayed by an incident, namely, notional times can be given to those affected. Perhaps more importantly, any crew who was responsible for causing the delay cannot be awarded such a time and must take their punishment for the delay caused.

It strikes me that such a mechanism would be useful in road rallying as well, where currently most road events have cases where competitors are delayed through no fault of their own. At present there are just two rather blunt tools that organisers have to deal with such matters. Force majeure, where any time loss resulting from the incident will stand, or penalties from the controls involved can be scrubbed.

The former option is annoying for the competitors who are penalised when the fault was beyond their control. The latter option is annoying for the organisers, who have put a lot of work into formulating the route, and for the marshals who have stood out, sometimes in horrendous conditions, to man the controls.

Crucially, the latter option means that the crew that caused the delay can get away with whatever error they have made.

Road rallying is a combination of driving skill, navigational excellence and vehicle reliability. A crew making a mistake or experiencing mechanical problems should receive a penalty for failing to keep to the time schedule. The current situation allows them to get away with it and even, on occasions, still end up securing a highly placed finish. This can't be right.

It would be fairer if crews affected by a route blockage could be given a notional time but it's not that simple and could raise many problems as notional times frequently cause unhappiness on stage events. Not only would a 'fair' time be much harder to determine on road events, when should such a rule be applied? Every road event has at least one instance of crews being delayed, but awarding notional times each occasion someone was held up by another competitor would create a massive workload for organisers. It would also slow the results process to such an extent that final positions might not be settled within the two hour framework at the end of the rally, as laid down in Motorsport UK rules.

Clearly such a rule could only be utilised in exceptional circumstances, where, for instance, a significant number of competitors were involved and the penalties created by the hold up would have a significant affect on the final results. It wouldn't be an easy rule to manage, but it would assist in providing a fairer result for crews who are delayed, but blameless, and would ensure that those guilty of causing a delay receive their just desserts.

#### Thousands of pounds raised through Targa rally in memory of John Mulholland

A Targa event held in memory of Irish driver and sponsor John Mulholland last weekend has raised thousands of pounds for charity.

More than 100 cars started Saturday's Friends of the Cancer Centre Power Targa Rally in memory of Mulholland, who passed away over the summer after being diagnosed with kidney cancer 14 months earlier.

Before the 55-year-old father-of-four died he launched an initiative to raise £40,000 for the Friends of the Cancer Centre in Belfast.

The latest fundraiser – which was promoted with help from North Ulster Car Club – was the idea of an employee based at the family's car showroom in Randalstown where the event started from.

Crews tackled 12 stages spread across counties

Antrim and Londonderry and covered a distance totalling 130 miles.

One of Mulholland's sons, Johnnie, told Motorsport News: "Our ties with motorsport go as far back as I can remember, so we thought this was a prime opportunity to support such a fantastic charity and one that's obviously very close to our hearts as a family.

"The entry fee was set at a

minimum of £100 per car. With the various motor clubs trying to keep costs to a minimum we aim to donate as much of this entry fee as possible.

"The support we have received from competitors, sponsors, venues, suppliers and so on has been fantastic.

"To them we say a huge thank you as it means more can be donated to such a worthy cause."

#### GUEST SWITCHES TO FORD FIESTA R5 AHEAD OF 2020 CAMPAIGN

Former Irish Tarmac Group N champion David Guest is the latest Irish driver to switch to an R5 car ahead of next season.

He has acquired a 2018-spec M-Sport Ford Fiesta R5 from KG Motorsport and plans to contest the 2020 Irish Tarmac Rally Championship with the car alongside co-driver Jonathan McGrath.

"I have been planning to

move up from the Skoda Fabia S2000 for some time and was looking at some Ford Fiesta R5s," said Guest, who won this year's Southern 4 Rally Championship.

"I missed out on one recently but the one I got is actually a later specification car. It's in gravel spec but it also comes with the Tarmac kit.

"I wouldn't mind doing some

gravel rallies but I will start with the Galway International Rally in February and then, of course, the West Cork."

In the last two years, Guest's best results in the Skoda Fabia S2000 were fourth overall on last year's Cork '20' International Rally and being the top non-R5 car in this year's West Cork event.



Guest will use car in the ITRC



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# RALLY NEWS

## FOUR ON THE BOUNCE THE AIM FOR MELLORS WITH PROTON

### Confidence is high ahead of next Iriz R5 outing on Grizedale Stages in December

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, 4seasoncollective



Mellors Elliot Motorsport has developed the car

By Luke Barry

**Ollie Mellors has admitted that a hat-trick of wins with his Proton Iriz R5 means he has never felt more confident during his rallying career as he looks to take a fourth win on the bounce next month.**

Mellors has won the Woodpecker and Trackrod rallies in the BTRDA as well as the Malton Forest Rally over the last two-and-a-half months and has a chance to make it four wins from four on next month's Grizedale Stages.

"We've been doing a lot of work on the car, [so] it's nice to see that we are going in the right direction," Mellors told MN. "I've not been doing so much [myself]

over the last couple of years. I have been doing quite a lot of testing, but testing is completely different to competition so it's nice to be able to go out there and actually compete against people and brush up on some of my rusty skills.

"I feel as relaxed and as confident as I've ever been but at the same time the car's working so well. I don't feel like I'm having to push the limits whereas in the Super 2000 car I was always trying to push that extra little bit and that's why I was having some mistakes and pushing the car beyond what it was maybe capable of doing.

"This car, we're coming back from an event, we're cleaning it off, doing a spanner check and going to the

next event. We're not doing anything on it at all."

The R5 car has been developed by Mellors Elliot Motorsport with a number of drivers already buying examples of the machine, including Eugene Donnelly and Theo Bengry, with more interested ahead of next season as Mellors continues to showcase its capabilities.

"Performance-wise the car is pretty much where it is and we're happy with it. We're fairly confident it's as quick if not quicker than any other R5 car," Mellors added. "We've got a few things in the pipeline and we're working with Proton to try and put those ideas into motion but nothing that we can stand up and say 'this is what we're doing next year.'"



Mellors (r) with co-driver Windress

## IN BRIEF

### Ride of a lifetime

Fresh from his recent finish on Wales Rally GB, former Junior Formula 1000 champion Eddie Lewis gave one lucky fan the ride of a lifetime on the Hall Trophy Stages last weekend. Clowne and District Motor Club had a stand at the Chesterfield Motorfest where they raffled the co-driver's seat in aid of the local air ambulance, which was won by Graham White. The pair finished 31st overall and fifth in class at Blyton in Lewis' Vauxhall Adam.

### Mitsubishi debuts

Two drivers debuted their new Mitsubishi Colts on the Hall Trophy Stages with mixed results. Dave Hornbrook suffered a first-stage retirement but Kenny Brown finished seventh overall. "I had just finished building it, but the front and rear diffs were synchronised so I retired it," said Hornbrook. "I should have done a trackday to test." Brown added: "It's been great, not a problem and I reckon the whole car cost less than the gearboxes of the cars that beat us."

### Promise fulfilled

Mechanic Ross Hammond made his rally debut last weekend on the Hall Trophy Stages after reminding Ford Escort driver Stuart Tomlinson of an offer he made. Hammond was allowed to use Tomlinson's Escort Mk2 on the proviso that his long-time navigator Nick Taylor was also part of the deal. The pair finished 17th overall and fourth in class.

### Racing to rallying

The 2018 2CV 24 Hour winner Peter Rundle made his stage rally debut on the Hall Trophy Stages last weekend as navigator in Ian Bass's Toyota Yaris. The duo managed to finish the event 44th overall and third in class. "I have done a Targa rally with Louis Tyson from 2CVs but this was my first stage event," said Rundle. Rundle isn't the first 2CV driver to take to the rally navigator's seat however, as Ainslie Bousfield did an event with AVO boss Nigel Killerby at MIRA and Paul Rowland was Ian Woodhouse's partner when they won the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship in 2016-17.

## No rest for Pritchard as Roger Albert Clark runner-up travels to Killarney Historic Rally to compete in Scott Williams's Ford Escort Mk2

Two-time Motorsport UK Asphalt Rally champion Jason Pritchard will head over to Ireland this weekend and contest the Killarney Historic Rally in the Scott Williams Motorsport Ford Escort Mk2.

Pritchard contested the Roger Albert Clark Rally last weekend in his own historic-spec Escort Mk2

and challenged for the lead early on before a puncture on the penultimate day ultimately dropped him to second at the finish.

He flew out to Ireland on Tuesday to take part in PR work ahead of the historic event in the modified Escort Mk2 alongside Phil Clarke.

"It was a bit of a shock," he said.

"I got a message from Scott [Williams] and they wanted us out there," Pritchard told MN.

"They asked me to go last year but I couldn't get a co-driver, then they asked us again this year and we said yes. I think Scott had planned to park the car up for winter but the organisers had contacted him as they

want the cars out there. They're [the Escorts] are two total opposites of the spectrum but at least I'll be match fit!"

Despite finishing third on his debut in the car on Rali Bae Ceredigion, Pritchard's expectations are modest.

"[The purpose is] to go out and show the car and enjoy every mile like we did in Aberystwyth," he added.

"[In] Aberystwyth I didn't think we'd get a podium, I just enjoyed every mile and that worked so we'll go with the same attitude. I think realistically in Killarney there's a lot of specialist boys there, it's like them coming over here to compete on Epynt or somewhere like that. They know it like the back of their hand."

## Breen attempts to make history and win trophy named after co-driver Nagle's father

Craig Breen and Paul Nagle could make history this weekend with victory on the Killarney Historic Rally by becoming the first crew to win the Killarney International Rally and its historic namesake in the same season.

The Irish Tarmac champions will take on the event in a Viking Motorsport-prepared Ford Escort Mk2.

Seeded number two, they will run behind last year's winners Owen Murphy and Anthony Nestor for the event, which comprises eight stages.

Breen told Motorsport News: "Of

course I would like to try and win the rally if I can but it is going to be difficult. I've never driven this car before.

"I have done bits and pieces in modified Escorts a good few years ago now, but it is going to be a whole new ball game getting used to an historic car and learning how it works on Irish roads.

"It would be great to do the double. I'm not sure if it has been done before but we'll be giving it our best shot."

New for 2019 is the Maurice Nagle Perpetual Cup, named after the brainchild of the Killarney Historic Rally and father of Paul, who passed

away last December after a battle with illness.

"This was the second reason [why we put the deal together]," said Breen. "This is the first year of the Maurice Nagle Cup for Paul's father and we want to do our best to try and win it.

"The Killarney Historic Rally is getting bigger and bigger every year. I think it's the end-of-season sign off.

"The stages here are obviously second to none. They are absolutely incredible roads and getting the chance to drive up Moll's Gap come hail, rain or shine you take it with two hands."



Nagle (r) will try to win trophy named after his father, Maurice, with Breen

# PETTER SOLBERG

# SOLBERG PICKS OUT

As the curtain comes down on his top-flight career, **David Evans** asks Petter Solberg to select his highlights

**A**s a four-time winner of Rally GB, it was fitting that 2003 World Rally champion Petter Solberg should bring an illustrious spell in rallying and rallycross to a close on the event at which he had enjoyed more success than at any other.

It's little surprise either, then, that two of those GB successes rank among the most memorable of Solberg's results, though there was far more to his career than supremacy in the Welsh forests.

From the outing that helped him catch the eye of a WRC team boss, to the pace that justified an 11th-hour privateer programme, Solberg picks his personal highlights from a career that also yielded two World Rallycross titles.



## 10 World RX, Argentina 2014

The final World Rallycross Championship round of 2014 in Argentina is one that sticks with Solberg, who had already added this crown to his 2003 World Rally title.

"We won everything that weekend in San Luis," he says. "OMP sent me a pair of gold race boots to wear – I remember the same thing happening for Tommi Makinen when I was his team-mate. That was special."

"We got some rain over the weekend, but the team, the car, everything just clicked and we could drive at our own speed and dominate a little bit. As a team we had worked really hard with the car to make everything right, and Argentina in 2014 was the result."



Solberg: breakthrough result

## 9 Rally Lebanon 1998

Short on asphalt experience and determined to demonstrate that he was more than a gravel racer, Solberg took his Toyota Celica GT-Four to the Middle East for Rally Lebanon.

"That was a real adventure," he says. "It was a difficult rally. Mohammed bin Sulayem was a big help. I appreciated that – and the fight we had, it was good. I got the puncture on the last stage and finished second, but that was a good event."

Finishing second in Lebanon doesn't sound like it should make the top 10 of a world champion's career, but there are reasons beyond the result: "The rally was good, but it was what happened after that made it really important. I made a video tape after that event and I sent it to Malcolm [Wilson, boss of M-Sport]."

Nothing special in that; lots of drivers do the same. But one evening, after hearing the name 'Petter Solberg' again, Wilson was drawn to play the tape. The call was made soon after. "That rally got me my chance," says Solberg, who was offered a three-year deal by Wilson soon after.



## 8 Rally Finland 2003

Finland commands 100% commitment. Anything less and you're going to be nowhere – or in the trees. Starting with a temperature of 41C wasn't ideal for a fever-struck Solberg in 2003.

As the event progressed, he started to feel better and was able to pick up the pace in his Subaru. "In Finland, you try to drive at 98%," says Solberg. "If you go to 100%, then the risks are big. And if you

go over the limit, then the risks are big."

By Saturday night, Solberg was up to fourth, but just half a second separated himself, Carlos Sainz (third) and Richard Burns (second). "I wanted second," he says. "We pushed harder and harder. We lost the rear spoiler on one stage, which had a massive effect on the car, but we kept going."

Going to the last stage, Solberg was 1.8s down on Burns. "When we left service, I

looked at 'Lappy' [Subaru tech director David Lapworth] and I could see the stress on the faces of him and the whole team," he continues. "It was so tense. On the way to the final stage we stopped on the road section and I tried to talk to him [Burns], but he didn't want to talk."

Solberg left nothing behind on the 8.7-mile Mokkipera finale and beat Burns by three seconds. The runner-up spot was his.

## 7 Safari Rally 1999

Solberg couldn't have joined Malcolm Wilson's Ford squad at a more exciting time. The 1999 season would be the first for the team's all-new Ford Focus WRC.

Being very much the team junior, Solberg didn't start the season opener in Monte Carlo and was given a Ford Escort WRC for the second round in Sweden, where he drove sensibly to 11th place. No heroics on his first official outing. Sitting at home preparing for a Norwegian national event, the call came to say he was needed in Kenya for the Safari Rally. Thomas Radstrom had broken his leg, and Solberg was being promoted to drive a factory Focus alongside Colin McRae.

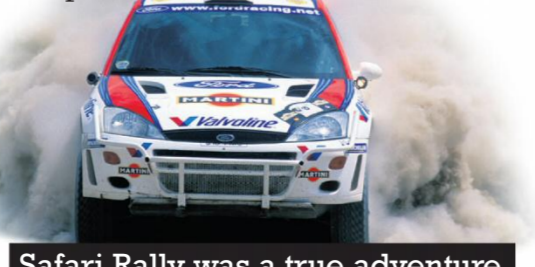
"That 1999 season was unbelievable," says Solberg. "This was what I had wanted for so long. I remember when things like the team clothing arrived at the start of the year. I opened it and just stared at it. I couldn't believe it. I knew Safari would be tough, I hadn't done anything like that before."

It would be tougher still without

regular co-driver Phil Mills. The team was only permitted to change one element of the entry; the car and co-driver Fred Gallagher remained. And preparations in Kenya weren't exactly ideal for Solberg, who went off the road at the pre-event test. But, once the rally was under way, he followed Wilson's word to the letter and delivered an outstanding fifth place.

"That was a good rally," he says. "Colin won in the Focus for the first time and we were in the top five. It was a tough event though. It took a lot to get your head around the fact that you had to drive in first gear sometimes. Then there was the rhino..."

The rhino? "Yes, we kissed him at 220kph!"



Safari Rally was a true adventure

## 6 Rally Norway 2009

Being told that Subaru would be pulling out of the World Rally Championship at the end of 2008 floored Solberg. Like the rest of the world, he didn't see it coming. Now what?

"There were not so many seats around at that time," he says. "Only Ford and Citroen were really there and, so late in the year, they both had drivers all sorted for the following year."

Other drivers would have tried to piece together a couple of events for the following season in an effort to put themselves in the frame for a 2010 seat. Not Solberg. "I had to continue," he says. "I just had to. The WRC was my life and I couldn't not be there. I had some offers to go to do things like endurance racing – I tested for Le Mans – but rallying was everything for me."

So Solberg picked up the phone in November and put it down just before the start of Rally Norway the following February: "Honestly, Christmas didn't exist at the end of that year. Me and Pernilla [Solberg's wife] were calling



A privately-run car was a special feeling for the home-town boy in 2009

everybody to make this happen."

A Citroën Xsara WRC was sourced and a team created. "We couldn't make it in time for the first round in Monte," he says. "And it hurt to see the first round starting without us. But it was nice, the second round was Norway."

And Solberg made the perfect start, fastest at the Thursday night superspecial in Oslo. The locals went mad. "The emotion at the end of that stage was incredible," he recalls. "I never forget the relief to get to that moment."

Unfortunately, engine problems slowed him through the event, and first became sixth at the finish.

"But that was the start of a new adventure," he says. "I always wanted to run my own team and maybe it came a little earlier than I thought, but Norway was the start of a journey that would lead me to some great results in the WRC and six World RX titles for my team [two drivers' championships apiece for Solberg and Johan Kristoffersson, and a pair of teams' titles]."

# HIS PERFECT 10



Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Solberg bounced back from German crash in Japan

## 5 Rally Japan 2004

Going into 2004 as reigning champion was a good feeling for Solberg. The Subaru was a great evolution, and he was confident of more success in the year ahead. Two wins and two further podiums early on demonstrated that potential. "I felt I had the chance to win a lot of rallies in 2004," he says. "Everything was working well and looking good."

Then came Rally Germany, where he landed the Impreza WRC 04 on its roof on top of a hinkelstein. "That was a big one," says Solberg, wincing visibly at the memory. "And Japan was the next rally after that. It was the first time it was in the championship and, for a Japanese manufacturer, it was a really big thing for Subaru. We

had great support from everybody in Subaru, but there was a big responsibility for me to lead the team on the home rally.

"It was a little bit difficult after Germany. Back in the car again, we had to try to forget about it. I think it was a bit more difficult for Phil [Mills, co-driver], because it was his side of the car that really took the big impact. But Phil was fantastic, he laughed about it because that was the mentality, that was the way to deal with these things. We got in the car and we got on with the job."

Solberg led from start to finish and dominated the rally, beating Sebastien Loeb by more than a minute. "That was a good win," he says. "And it stayed good. We won the next two rallies after that."

## 4 Tour de Corse 2003

Talk to Solberg about this one and there's still a wry smile and slight shake of the head. He arrived on the island knowing a good result was vital to a sustained challenge for the championship, but there was a nagging concern that, if it stayed dry, his Pirelli-shod Subaru Impreza WRC 03 would struggle against the French force that was Michelin, Sebastien Loeb and a Citroen Xsara WRC.

All this paled into insignificance when Solberg caught some gravel on the outside of a fast right-hander on the shakedown. The car slid off the road and hit a telegraph pole. The damage to the side of the Subaru was huge, but Solberg and co-driver Phil Mills knew how lucky they'd been; either side of the telegraph pole there was a very steep drop down a Corsican mountain.

"The car came back to the service park and it was so badly damaged," says Solberg. "I was so low. Paul Howarth [Subaru operations director] said, 'No, no, no, we can fix this'. I wasn't sure. I was feeling so sh\*t."

Through the night the Prodrive mechanics worked to pull the Subaru as straight as possible. It was scrutineered



A brutal shakedown crash led to an incredible Subaru repair job and a Solberg win

again on Friday morning. It passed.

"I was up really early and went to see the car," remembers Solberg. "I couldn't believe it. The paint was still wet, but it looked amazing. What a team! It was a crazy job, but it showed those guys had the same passion for the championship that I did."

Understandably, Solberg started slowly but built his speed and forced himself into the lead battle. He moved to the front of the

field on the final Saturday stage and stayed there through Sunday.

Solberg remembers that Sunday fondly: "When we celebrated the win, I jumped on the roof and was just jumping up and down! I put some more dents in it, but I didn't care. I just couldn't believe what this incredible team had done. Thursday, we were lucky not to be dead, and four days later we are winning the rally."

## 3 Rally GB 2002

The breakthrough first win. "You don't forget those first moments," says Solberg. "I remember the first fastest time, the first time I led a WRC round, and the first podium. But the first win is really something."

Solberg was locked in an intense battle with his former Subaru team-mate Markko Martin for the duration of what was a very challenging event.

"GB is always such a difficult race," he says. "It's a difficult place to push in the fight because you don't know what the grip's going to be like. When you have more experience then you can play the game a little bit more, but I was so nervous for the whole event."

"Markko and me both really wanted that one so bad, we were both chasing for our first win. It was a big deal. All the time I was trying so hard not to think too much about what I was doing and



A breakthrough win on Rally GB

just drive. I kept telling myself this, 'Just drive. Just Drive.'

"When we won, what was really incredible for me was the way Malcolm [Wilson] was the first to come to me to say congratulations. That meant so much to me."

Solberg had left Wilson's team midway through the 2000 season, bound for Subaru.

## 2 Rally New Zealand 2001

All WRC drivers love New Zealand's fast, cambered roads, but Solberg's mind was elsewhere during the final day of the 2001 event. He finished seventh and won some stages. But his life had changed forever.

Dozing in his hotel room after the event's second leg, Solberg got a call from home to say his wife Pernilla had been taken ill. She was six months pregnant at the time. "I didn't know what to do," he says. "It was so difficult, I was shaking, I just wanted to know how is Pernilla. What is happening?"

Solberg got up and drove the next day's eight stages, winning four of them in his

Subaru. "It was like I was in a trance," he says. "I came from the stage and went straight to the phone. I was shaking."

He finished the event and drove straight to the airport. And, on the way, he got news that he'd become a father to Oliver. Wife and son were both doing as well as could be expected for such a premature birth. "I will never forget that flight home," says Solberg. "Tommi [Makinen] and I celebrated."

"You know rallying is everything for me but, as time goes on, you realise some things - like my family - are more important. Getting home and seeing Pernilla and Oliver was everything."



Mills and Solberg celebrate WRC title

## 1 Rally GB 2003

After celebrating his maiden World Rally Championship win in Wales 12 months earlier, Solberg made a promise to Subaru Tecnica International boss Masaru Katsurada. And Solberg delivered in Cardiff, 2003.

He smiles at the memory of a conversation with the Japanese: "At the end of the 2002 GB, Katsurada-san said to me, 'Petter, more champagne. We need more champagne at the end of the rally'. I told him we would have a lot to celebrate when we came back to Wales."

Quickest out of the blocks around Cardiff's superspecial on Thursday night, Solberg relinquished the lead briefly on Friday morning, but fastest time in Rheola (SS4) was enough to nudge the Subaru to the top of the timesheets, where it remained until the finish. Potent a force as Loeb was at that time, he never

looked like beating Solberg on an event where he and his Welsh co-driver Phil Mills looked utterly at home.

"I remember we hit a rock on the second to last stage," says Solberg. "As I drove, I was waiting, waiting, thinking, 'Please no...' but we didn't get a puncture."

And then came Margam. If Solberg made Rally GB his own, winning for four straight years, then he really made the Margam Park stage his own. Nobody could touch his committed and insanely quick approach down the hill.

"I won that rally and the championship with Tommi [Makinen]," says Solberg. "It was a proper one. I learned so much from these incredible guys like him, Colin [McRae], Carlos [Sainz] and Richard [Burns]. They were the proper hard sportsmen, but they weren't afraid to help. I never forget them and I never forget that rally. It was proper." ■



Photos: Chicane Media



Easson's Datsun 240Z took class C4 top spot

# HAT-TRICK

## Historic rally setting. By Paul Lawrence

Pritchard... a single... of flat-out... 10 minutes... Saturday... a bang to... the quietly

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went out. Egglestone had a good day to edge ahead of Sisson for fourth while McKenna moved up to sixth at the expense of Lancaster who dropped a lot of time.

A misfire stopped brothers Leigh and Chris Armstrong in Twiglees and dropped them out of the top 10, while Grehan fought his way back up to ninth to split Christophe Jacob and Stefaan Stouf. Their fight was for the honour of Belgium and Jacob took a 14s lead into the final day.

### Monday

Monday was no walk in the park as another 60 stage miles awaited in the central block of Kielder to deliver a proper sting in the tail, climaxing with a second run through the daunting 17-miler in Bewshaugh.

For McCormack and Pritchard, the day started as one of stalemate. "We're not going to catch Marty on pace alone," said the chaser, knowing that his Greskine puncture had cost him too much. McCormack, meanwhile, was not about to throttle back. "We'll just keep doing what we're doing," said the leader.

However, McCormack did rather misjudge the pace on the opener in Whitrope and dropped 20s. That was his alarm call and over the next three stages he dropped

only a handful more to take a margin of 1m22s into the final stage.

There was a poignant moment for the leading duo when they suffered their only puncture of the rally when a rear tyre deflated in the regroup control after Falstone 2. Crucially, it had not impacted McCormack's pace through the stage. "The luck of the Irish," said Pritchard.

And so it all came down to the final 17-miles in Bewshaugh as the rain settled in to make sure the stage was a fittingly tough climax to a truly challenging rally. Pritchard did all he could and clawed back 30s to bring the margin back to less than a minute, but McCormack was the victor.

Chilman remained third as Sisson pipped Egglestone for fourth by just one second. McKenna was a last stage casualty, so Grehan took sixth from Geoff Bell. Further down the top 10 there was disaster for Jacob when he slid off right at the end of the first Falstone stage and dropped around 10 minutes.

Lancaster, too, was in trouble and lost a lot of time with ongoing fuel problems that dropped him to eighth as Dave Bennett and Paul Street took mighty top 10 finishes.

## OPEN RALLY



Leading crews fell by the wayside during event

# JORDAN COMES THROUGH IT ALL

The concurrent Open Rally ran for any two-wheel-drive cars and, after several different leaders, there was a well-deserved win for Baz Jordan and Arwel Jenkins.

By the end of the Welsh leg, Yorkshiremen Nick Cook and Dave Raw had a slender lead over the hard-charging Peugeot 205GTi of James Nicholls/David Allman and the Toyota GT86 of 2017 Open winners David Hutchinson and Jeff Garnett.

The Kershope stage was not kind to the leading contenders and both Nicholls and Hutchinson suffered punctures and limped out, with Hutchinson dropping a massive six minutes. Nicholls was unlucky enough to

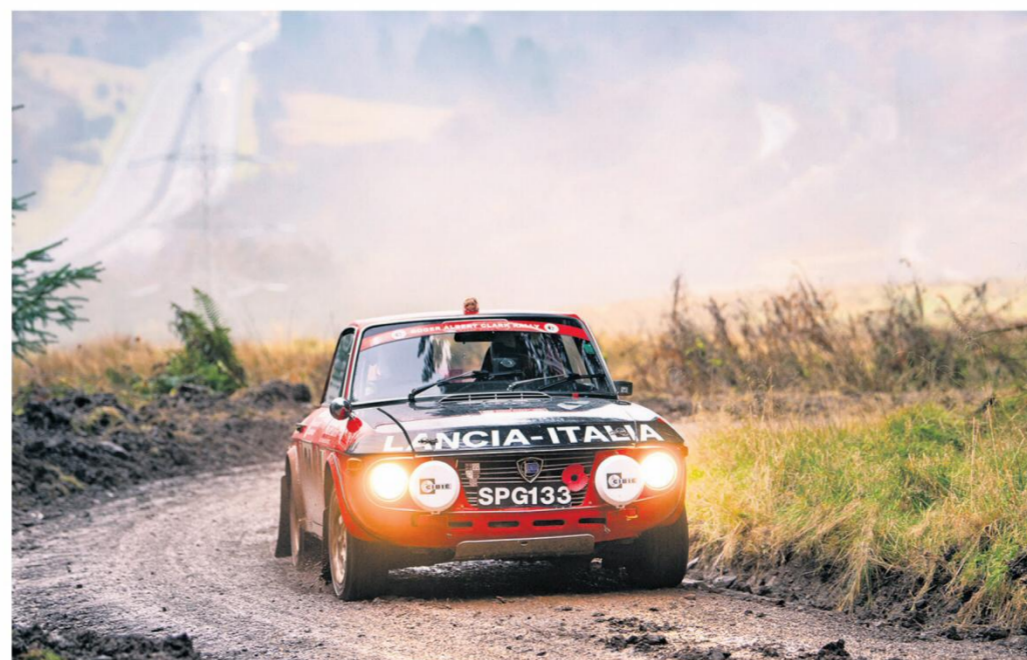
puncture his front-left tyre on both runs through the stage.

By the end of the long Saturday, Cook's lead was out to 2m40s as Dale Glover moved into second with an awesome drive in his Vauxhall Nova, while Jordan was up to third in his Vauxhall-engined Hillman Avenger. Then, a failed CV joint cost Glover a lot of time but Cook continued to control the division through Sunday until fuel pressure dramas struck over the last five stages and he dropped chunks of time.

That put Jordan into a useful three-minute lead over Nicholls going into the final day, which he retained with a nicely measured drive.



R.A.C. winner from 2010 Stefaan Stouf was back out and took 12th overall



Steve and Tony Graham were at the wheel of a gorgeous Lancia Fulvia

## IN BRIEF

### Rally of attrition

For the Category 1 (pre '68) historics, the R.A.C. is a very tough event and every finisher had climbed a mountain to keep their car running. Sadly, class B1 went unclaimed when the two-stroke Saab 96 of Stephen Higgins/Sam Spencer cried enough on SS23. Somehow, father-and-son pairing Andy and Thomas Pidgen dragged their ailing Ford Cortina Mk1 home for B3 victory.

### Bean cruises to win

Missing a class B2 finish for sole starters Bob Seager and Geraldine McBride (MG Midget) were a massive disappointment after they were badly hobbled by a batch of dirty fuel on Saturday night. They worked until 0400hrs to drain and clean the system but clutch issues finally prevented them restarting on Monday. The legend that is Bob Bean dominated class B4 with a fabulous run in his Ford Lotus Cortina with the redoubtable Captain Thompson alongside. A last-day off in Bewshaugh 1 failed to dampen Bean's enthusiasm.

### Drive of the rally?

Class C1 was taken by Steve and Tony Graham in their magnificent Lancia Fulvia while a consummate victory in class C2 fell to Dave Bennett/Alistair McNeil (Ford Escort Mk1). Dominating the class was one thing, but pushing the little Escort into the top 10 overall was the real measure of one of the drives of the rally.

### Datsun delights

Despite having to rejoin under Super Rally rules, Josh Carr/Richard Wardle (Ford Escort Mk1) still won class C3 and in C4 the irrepressible Jeremy Easson and Mike Reynolds came out on top in Reynolds's Datsun 240Z.

### Former winner returns

On their return to the UK forests, 2010 overall winners Stefaan Stouf and Joris Erard (Ford Escort Mk1, opposite) triumphed in class C5 after spending some time dialling themselves back into the challenge of gravel rallying.

### Runaway victors

Class D2, for the 1600cc category 3 cars, went to John Mennell and Adrian Wilford (Ford Escort Mk2) after an excellent run in the ex-Kim Gray car. Stuart Egglestone/Brian Hodgson were runaway winners in class D3. Despite a visit to a Greskine ditch, David Kynaston and Val Thompson did a fine job to win class D4 in their Triumph TR7 V8.

### Top four-wheel-drive

The F2 class, for the latest generation of historics from up to 1990, was always the domain of Wayne Sisson and Neil Shanks in their 4x4 Mitsubishi Galant. They got quicker and quicker after some time-consuming issues in Wales and delivered by far and away the best result on the rally for a four-wheel-drive historic car.

### Battling Beetle

From the FIA classes, another class winner was the amazing VW Beetle of Bob Beales/Mike Leflay. They had all sorts of excitement and nearly ended their rally in a Kershope culvert while passing an MG Midget. Later, they went off after the flying finish of Falstone, but the Beetle just kept on going.



VW Beetle kept going to the end

## RESULTS

Roger Albert Clark Rally When: November 21-25 Where: Wales, Scotland, England Starters: 126 Stages: 31

POS	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Marty McCormack/Barney Mitchell	Ford Escort Mk2	5h03m12s
2	Jason Pritchard/Phil Clarke	Ford Escort Mk2	+52s
3	Roger Chilman/Patrick Walsh	Ford Escort Mk2	+11m11s
4	Wayne Sisson/Neil Shanks	Mitsubishi Galant VR-4	+15m18s
5	Stuart Egglestone/Brian Hodgson	Ford Escort Mk2	+15m19s
6	Henri Grehan/Jack Bowen	Ford Escort Mk2	+34m47s
7	Geoff Bell/Timothy Challen	Ford Escort Mk2	+37m20s
8	Rudi Lancaster/Dave Price	Ford Escort Mk2	+38m27s
9	Paul Street/Ian Jones	Ford Escort Mk2	+39.39s
10	David Bennett/Alastair McNeil	Ford Escort Mexico Mk1	+40m04s

Class winners: Robert Seager/ Geraldine McBride (MG Midget); Andrew/Thomas Pidgen (Ford Cortina Mk1); Bob Bean/Captain Thomas (Ford Lotus Cortina); Steve/Tony Graham (Lancia Fulvia); Bennett/ McNeil; Joshua Carr/ Richard Wardle (Escort Mk1); Jeremy Easson/ Mike Reynolds (Datsun 240Z); Stefaan Stouf/ Joris Erard (Escort Mk1); John Mennell/ Adrian Wilford (Escort Mk2); Egglestone/ Hodgson; David Kynaston/ Val Thompson (Triumph TR7); McCormack/ Mitchell; Ernie Lee/ Steven Brown (BMW 325i E30); Alex Waterman/ Glyn Thomas (Skoda 130L); Sisson/ Shanks; Bob Beales/ Mike Leflay (VW Beetle); Pritchard/ Clarke; Robert/ Michael Evett (Vauxhall Nova); Andy Madge/ Mike Smith (Toyota Corolla GT Coupe); Barry Jordan/ Arwel Jenkins (Chrysler Avenger); Steve Magson/ Kevin Bardon (Mercedes-Benz 190E).

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DCC Logistics and David Campling/James Ducker stormed to an amazing victory at The Hall Trophy stages over the weekend. We would like to thank Mel Hudson Motors, Lincolnshire Lipo Clinic and all the service team for their support. We would also like to thank Subaru WRC Spares, Graham at GT Motorsports for the amazing engine and ATM Engineering for all the advice.



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# RALLY REPORTS

Photos: Kevin Money, Neil Lambert



Winning gap was just three seconds

## CAMPLING TAKES WIN FROM SPENCER...JUST

### Subaru Impreza crews engaged in thrilling battle for victory that went down to the wire

#### Hall Trophy Stages

By Peter Scherer

**Organiser:** Clitheroe & DMC **When:** November 23 **Where:** Blyton Airfield, Linc. **Championships:** EMAMC; ANWCC; ANEMMEC; SD34 **Stages:** 10 **Starters:** 61

**David Campling and James Ducker made a rare appearance on UK soil but left a soggy Blyton Airfield with victory in their Subaru Impreza S10 WRC after a final stage shootout.**

It was Adrian Spencer/Lauren Hewitt's Impreza that led for most of the day, initially holding a two-second lead over Stephen/Catherine Booth's Ford Escort Mk1 before the roles were reversed on stage two as it

continued to get wetter.

"I am trying my best but had a lot of near misses," said Spencer as he regained the lead on the following test, before extending his advantage to 11s over Booth by stage four and 16s by stage five.

Campling, meanwhile, had spun and stalled on stage one, but was into third by the end of SS3. Another spin on the next run dropped him back behind Darren Meadows/James Squires' Mitsubishi Lancer E4 and Martin Pavier/Pete Kettle's Impreza.

Meadows had run on slicks despite the damp weather but had a front tyre delaminate on stage five, and with Pavier struggling for grip

too, Campling was back into third and only 4s down on Booth by the end of SS5.

Meadows had dropped to sixth as Steve Simpson/Jonathon Kennedy started to recover after their Impreza broke an oil pipe on the opening stage.

Campling finally moved ahead of Booth on stage six and began closing in on Spencer's lead, which now stood at 15s. The gap came down to 2s with only two tests remaining, both in the dark.

After stalling at the start and then damaging his light pod after hitting a chicane, Campling was still behind by 4s as they started the last stage. But he took 7s out of the leader and clinched victory by just 3s.

Simpson's fightback netted him third place, which he held from stage seven, with Meadows, Pavier and Booth completing the top six.

No one got close to Mark Annison/Ian Humphrey's Ford Puma in Class 1, as they led all day to take the win by more than three-and-a-half minutes over Stephen Johnson/Steven Butler's Nissan Micra with Ian Bass/Peter Rundle's Toyota Yaris third.

It was a three-way fight in Class 2 but, after early leaders John Deegan/George Merrills had a fuel problem in their Subaru Justy, David Duff/Richard Hill's Escort Mk2 battled with Ben Short/Hannah Chislett's Mazda MX-5. Short prevailed in

the end by 28s.

Mick Pickles/Beverley Warren's Peugeot 205 GTi led Class 3 all day and were third overall early on despite blowing a spark plug. John Stevens/Don Bramfoot's Escort Mk2 took second, while the Booths dominated Class 4.

#### Results

1 David Campling/James Ducker (Subaru Impreza S10 WRC) 44m44s; 2 Adrian Spencer/Lauren Hewitt (Impreza) +3s; 3 Steve Simpson/Jonathon Kennedy (Impreza); 4 Darren Meadows/James Squires (Mitsubishi Lancer E4); 5 Martin Pavier/Peter Kettle (Impreza); 6 Stephen/Catherine Booth (Ford Escort Mk1); 7 Kenny/Alan Brown (Mitsubishi Colt); 8 Julian Hope/Nick Thornton (Lancer E7); 9 Mick Pickles/Beverley Warren (Peugeot 205 GTi); 10 Scott Renshaw/Chris Bullock (Impreza). **Class winners:** Mark Annison/Ian Humphrey (Ford Puma); Ben Short/Hannah Chislett (Mazda MX-5); Pickles/Warren; Booth/Booth; Campling/Ducker.

### Kelly/Colman come out on top after mechanical woe for Hughes/Cunniff

#### Glyn Memorial Stages

By Dave Thomas

**Organiser:** Caernarvonshire & Anglesey MC **When:** November 23-24 **Where:** Anglesey Circuit, Anglesey **Championships:** WAMC, ANWCC, Formula 1000 Club, Junior 1000 Rally Championship, Junior 1000 Ecosse Challenge **Stages:** 15 **Starters:** 44

Top seeds Mark Kelly and Neil Colman took a clear victory in their 2.5-litre Ford Escort Mk2 as they cruised to a convincing win by nearly four minutes.

But initially it wasn't as simple as the final result suggested as, by the end of the first day, they only held an 18-second gap to the Ford Fiesta R5 of Rob Hughes and Sion Cunniff.

The Fiesta R5 crew even took the overall lead on Sunday's second stage but, as the weather got worse, the Escort crew started to reel them in.

With the gap down to just three seconds with two stages remaining the chance for a scintillating climax was denied when the Fiesta's driveshaft snapped, handing a comfortable victory to the northern crew.

The fight for the runner-up spot was a close family contest as Scott Moran and Christopher Ridge

brought their Escort Mk2 home just 3s ahead of the elder Moran - Roger - and Jamie Vaughan in a Darrian T90 GTR. A further 23s behind were Lee Jones and Lewis Griffiths, gaining their best ever result in their Mitsubishi Lancer E5.

Brandon Smith and Merfyn Williams (T90 GTR) took a steady fifth spot, just two seconds up on the Fiesta R5 of Hughes/Cunniff who, despite the stage maximum penalty, pulled back to sixth overall.

Seventh were Andrew Morris and Chloe Thomas (Escort Mk2) in the first of the two-litre cars, who required just a reasonable finish to take the ANWCC Stage Rally Championship and the North Wales Stage Challenge, having won both in 2018.

The top 1600cc car was the Citroen Saxo of Sion Jones and former event winner Will Owen, this time in the left-hand seat, in eighth, while the top 10 was completed by the orange Escort Mk2 of Chris Berry and Daniel Petrie and Greg Williams and Richard Edwards' Impreza.

In the 1400cc class, Jonathan Davies and Jamie Wallis (Vauxhall Corsa)

ended the first day in the lead from Martyn Quant and Chris Evans (Corsa) but the battle faded on first stage of the second day when the latter crew ran out of fuel midway through the stage! Davies/Wallis held the lead until the end with Chris Row and Jayne Auden-Row in their MG ZR and Stephen and David Terry's Nissan Micra next.

Rob Wilson (Citroen C1) only had to start the event in order to be unassailable in the 2019 Junior 1000 Championship and, seeded first, held the lead until the second day when a route error cost himself and co-driver Martin Haggert a big penalty, dropping them down to ninth place at the finish.

This allowed Archie Swinscoe, alongside Neil Bye, to claim victory and also take the championship runner-up spot in his Skoda Citigo.

#### Results

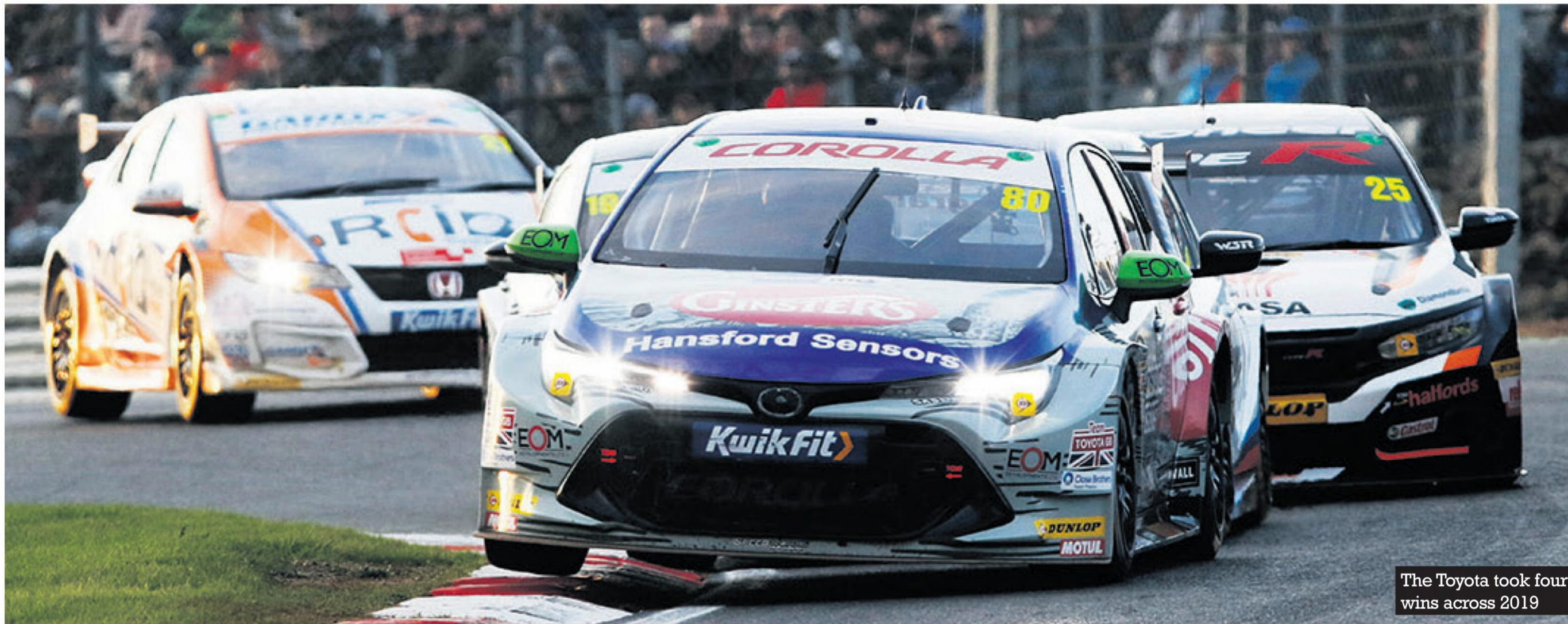
1 Mark Kelly/Neil Colman (Ford Escort Mk2) 1h13m05s; 2 Scott Moran/Christopher Ridge (Escort Mk2) +3m53s; 3 Roger Moran/Jamie Vaughan (Darrian T90 GTR); 4 Lee Jones/Lewis Griffiths (Mitsubishi Lancer E5); 5 Brandon Smith/Merfyn Williams (T90 GT); 6 Rob Hughes/Sion Cunniff (Ford Fiesta R5); 7 Andrew Morris/Chloe Thomas (Escort Mk2); 8 Sion Jones/Will Owen (Citroen Saxo); 9 Chris Berry/Daniel Petrie (Escort Mk2); 10 Greg Williams/Richard Edwards (Subaru Impreza). **Class winners:** Jonathan Davies/Jamie Wallis (Vauxhall Corsa); Jones/Owen; Morris/Thomas; Kelly/Colman.



Flying high: Ford Escort Mk2 crew eventually won by nearly four minutes



# INSIGHT



The Toyota took four wins across 2019

## HOW INGRAM BROKE NEW GROUND IN THE BTCC WITH TOYOTA

**Matt James** talks to the man at the controls of the new tin-top Corolla contender, a four-time winner in 2019

**T**his was a watershed year for British Touring Car Championship star Tom Ingram. From finishing runner-up in 2018

and claiming the Independents Trophy, the then-25-year-old reached the promised land.

Not necessarily in terms of landing the overall crown, though, but Ingram and his Speedworks team had done enough to convince Toyota GB to put its full weight behind the programme for 2019.

The older-spec Toyota Avensis was parked and the Cheshire-based team set to work on its first new-car build in its history. It was a mammoth undertaking, and it was also a voyage for Ingram himself.

He had to lead the line in terms of development and he was doing it single-handedly. He was one of only three entries in the 30-car line-up that didn't have a team-mate to bounce ideas off – and there was the weight of expectation.

Ingram and Speedworks can now reflect on a season that brought four victories – including a dominant brace at Silverstone – and he was in the hunt for the crown right up until the final meeting of the season at Brands Hatch.

The campaign had begun with a shakedown at Oulton Park before the hatchback was loaded into the transporter and headed for Circuit Calafat in Spain. There was further mileage in the UK, but Ingram was still unsure about how the new combination would gel when the series kicked off at Brands on the Indy track on April 6-7.

Ingram says that he felt under-prepared but didn't think he would ever be satisfied with the pre-season programme.

He says: "I don't think it matters if you have done one day or 100 days of testing, you always want more. There was a shift in our expectations going into this season too. Instead of expecting to go out and win the first race of the year again [as Ingram had done in both 2016 and '17], much as you would love to, our aim



Ingram had to alter his expectations

was to get through that first meeting and try to understand the car as much as possible. It was a mentality shift. We needed information on the car."

Ingram lined up in eighth spot for the opening round of the season, and he was just under 0.4 seconds away from Ash Sutton's pole-winning BMR Racing Subaru Levorg.

Even so, he knew that there was a different battle to play out through the 30 races in 2019. It required a shift in tactics from the man behind the wheel.

"Changing my mindset was a little difficult to do," explains Ingram. "With the Avensis, when it had no weight in it, it was always a question of 'right, when are we going to get to the front and how much are we going to win by'. That might sound blasé, but that is the way it was with that car. Then, when we went to Brands Hatch with a new car and without any weight, naturally, as a driver, you are targeting pole and you don't get it, that is where you realise that the perception has to change."

"After qualifying at Brands, it was a nice place to be – close towards the sharp end. You also have to take into account that the Indy circuit is a bit of a unique circuit in the sense that it is short and it is tricky to get a lap time in. But then naturally, as a driver, I was disappointed

not to get pole but that was the difficulty of managing our expectations – and there were positives because the car didn't feel fantastic. It didn't feel on point – there were still areas that we needed to improve. So those first few weekends, as frustrating as they may have seemed, were exciting. It was good because we knew that we hadn't quite unlocked everything from it yet."

He landed points in all three races, but the pressure was on when 3000 Toyota employees from the nearby plant rocked up to the second event at Donington Park to cheer on the Corolla. Under the spotlight, Ingram performed, even though he admits that the reversed-grid race three win was probably a false dawn.

"That did flatter to deceive a little bit – 100%," explains the racer. "There was a confidence boost there and we knew that we had taken a jump forwards. But it was actually the worst thing that could have happened at that point, because to get a win at the second race weekend of the year lifted the expectations and people were talking about a championship challenge. We had to rein people in a bit after that. We had to pull everyone back because we knew the task ahead."

While that win helped the team leave Donington with a spring in its step, there was a crashing reality when the series



The team was on a learning mission

reformed at Thruxton a few weeks later. Ingram did score points in all three races in Hampshire, but he wasn't in the ballpark in the same way he had been at Donington.

"If you look over the last however many years, the Honda has always been the dominant car [at Thruxton] so there was a part of me feeling that we could be good around there," explains Ingram. "The Civic is strong and we are similar in wheelbase, although we aren't quite as good a shape. I was quite hopeful of a strong weekend, but the reality wasn't the same as I thought it might be, and it was an eye opener and, coming straight off the back of a win, showed us that there was still a considerable amount of learning to be done."

"It did knock the wind out of our sails a little bit, but we knew that it was a unique circuit and the car maybe wasn't ready for that yet. But, what it did do was point us in a direction of where we needed to go and where we needed to improve. For every negative, a positive comes out of it. It gave us a development focus."

That development focus showed some results at Croft, but the mid-part of the year, including Oulton, left the team scratching its head a little bit.

"We used the lessons from Thruxton

and Croft was an improvement, but we almost went too far," says the 2013 Ginetta Supercup champion. "So we changed direction again going in to Oulton Park, but that is where we really felt the downside of being a one-car team. We went in a direction at Croft, and despite it feeling better, the driveability wasn't so good. If we had another car there, we would have put that set-up on the sister car too and we would have quickly realised that maybe it wasn't the right way to go and we would have found that information out more quickly. We could have boxed that off and changed our set-up."

The epiphany came in the second half of the season. The two-day tyre test at Snetterton in the middle of July unearthed some secrets that pushed the car right into the mix at the sharp end. There was a win from pole at the Norfolk venue, which opened the floodgates and there were two further victories over the second part of the year.

Ingram had claimed before the start of the season that the opening 15 races would be about learning, and he would be on the hunt for wins in the second part of the challenge. He was bang on the money, and the tyre test was the turning point.

"We probably changed 10 very small

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Ingram was in the hunt for the title right up until the final rounds at Brands



The Ginsters-backed car was popular

things in terms of the balance of the car and how we were setting it up," he explains. "We looked at how we used certain parts of the set-up changed. It wasn't just one magic bullet, it was a combination of lots of little things changing together and we worked through it and got to the right place for the car. That was then our baseline for the rest of the season."

The car excelled at circuits where the surface was smooth, but other tracks where it was necessary to crash over the kerbs were an uphill task for the Corolla. Knockhill was a prime example of a tough life, and he was hanging on to the coat tails of the top six.

In the end, sixth in the standings was a positive reward for the season of work, but Ingram is more excited about the prospects of what is to come given the understanding that he and the team now have about the front-wheel-drive weapon.

"Thruxton is a great example of the work we have to do," says Ingram. "If you go and look through [the official timing service of the BTCC] TSL, we pretty much matched purple sector one and we pretty much matched purple sector two when we were there. We were losing all of our time in sector three, where the big bumps are through the

middle of Church and at the chicane too. As much as that was frustrating, it was also an indication of where we needed to work, but it also gave us the feeling that we were pretty much in the right place with the car. That is something we now work on to improve and to sort because that is naturally the next step forward for us.

"We have not got a bad car, we have got a very good car, we just need to find a tenth and a half or two tenths. Once we have got that, we will be in a super strong position. Or I could just drive it a bit faster, I suppose."

Jokes aside, there is a clear strategy for 2020, which will include eradicating the weak points and building on the strong base which the Corolla already has.

"We have opened up the areas we need to improve on and what we need to sort," says Ingram.

"We were still mathematically in with a shout going in to the final round at Brands Hatch. It put us in a strong place for 2020 and if we start the season well, then I think that is going to be the year we look to win it.

"I want the title: we have got to aim for that. This is my seventh season, and we need to put a bid together now. I have had enough chances at it now, so it is my turn to go out and claim it." ■

## TOM INGRAM'S SEASON

### Meeting 1

#### Brands Hatch

April 6-7

Qualifying inside the top 10 was a strong start for the brand new machine. Survived the mixed-conditions opener, and then took an encouraging fifth in race two. Rounded out the event with 10th spot.



### Meeting 2

#### Donington Park

April 27-28

Fifth in race one was followed by 10th in race two. Sure, there was a slice of luck as Ingram was drawn on pole position for the reversed-grid race, but he drove superbly to win comfortably.



### Meeting 3

#### Thruxton

May 18-19

Thruxton is always a unique challenge. He was 15th in qualifying and again took his best finish of the weekend in the reversed-grid third race after an under-the-radar weekend. He crossed the line in yet another fifth place.



### Meeting 4

#### Croft

June 15-16

Started 15th after a disjointed qualifying session. Struggled on the resurfaced circuit. Although he scored points in all three events, his best was a seventh in race two. Slicks on a wet track in race three left him 16th from third on the grid, but with the fastest lap.



### Meeting 5

#### Oulton Park

June 29-30

Made progress throughout the meeting with a seventh and eighth, but the car looked unstable and it was a struggle. Could have scored a podium in the finale, but was caught up in a multi-car shunt early on.



### Meeting 6

#### Snetterton

August 3-4

Following a superb win from a convincing pole position in the opener, things went south for Ingram when a loss of power restricted him to last place. Fought back into the top 10 in the finale to rescue some points.



### Meeting 7

#### Thruxton

August 17-18

A second crack at the cauldron of speed and it was another struggle for the hatchback-shaped Corolla. Ingram lined up eighth. A lost side window affected the car in race one, which sapped his speed. Two eighth places were his best.



### Meeting 8

#### Knockhill

September 14-15

A more competitive showing but was struggling to get the car to handle the big jumps and kerbs at the Scottish track. The team chipped away at the set-up to make progress, although he was only able to record a best finish of – you guessed it – fifth in race three.



### Meeting 9

#### Silverstone

September 28-29

The Corolla absolutely flew – a shock given the hatchback nature of the car, which would not usually be suited to the long straights. From fourth on the grid, Ingram flew to back-to-back victories in races one and two before being ruled out by damage in race three.



### Meeting 10

#### Brands Hatch

October 12-13

Set-up struggles in qualifying left him starting the weekend badly in 17th position but recovered superbly in race one to be within touching distance before a puncture. The wrong choice of tyre ruined race two and he finished seventh in the finale.





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# REVIEW



Godfrey (centre) took a sixth crown



Tohill did all he could at a sodden final meeting but came up just short



Steve Hill battled to stay at the front

# GODFREY CLAWS HIS WAY BACK TO THE TOP

Ace engineer made to work hard to restore himself to the top of the championship. By Hal Ridge

It is a mark of both Julian Godfrey's consistency and speed that, while he hadn't claimed a British RX title since 2015 heading into his ninth Supercar campaign this year, he had been in the title hunt until the end of the three most recent contests.

The East Sussex engineer and racer had taken the biggest prize in the first five years of his top-class tenure, but was beaten by young gun Dan Rooke in 2016. He then took another young charger, Nathan Heathcote, into a final-round decider the following campaign, before losing out to triple British Rally champion Mark Higgins in the final round 12 months later.

This time around, it was double European champion Derek Tohill who took up the fight for the British RX crown and, while he and Godfrey took four wins apiece across the campaign with little to choose between the pair, it was Godfrey that came out on top of a final round decider at Croft to take the title.

Godfrey claimed victory in the opening round of the campaign at Silverstone, driving the Spencer Sport-run Mitsubishi Mirage he'd raced in 2018. There, he beat an on-form Tohill for the win, with the Irish driver dipping his toe in the water for the opening events of the year and unsure about his commitment to a full campaign. It wasn't until after the first visit of the year to Pembrey in June, by which time Tohill had a brace of wins under his belt, that he committed to fighting for the title.

The traditional August Bank Holiday Monday event at Lydden Hill would prove decisive in the title fight. Godfrey, who

reverted to his own Ford Fiesta after the season-opener to save costs, set some career-best laps around the Kent circuit in qualifying, then fended off the attentions of a returning and quick Jack Thorne to win the final despite carrying steering damage. Tohill, on the other hand, dropped down the order on the opening lap of the final and only a hard-fought recovery got him back to the podium to remain in the title hunt.

The Irishman then won the next round at Pembrey, but Godfrey was second, meaning that while both drivers had appeared on the podium at every event, Tohill had a pair of thirds to Godfrey's one.

In torrentially wet conditions on the opening day of the final round of the season at Croft, Godfrey scored victory despite losing anything above third gear from the middle of the final and breaking a camshaft in his engine on the closing laps.

His success was, in part, thanks to the horrendous conditions that made it difficult to get close to the car ahead, especially for Tohill in third, whose windscreen washer pipe had departed the washer jet on the opening tour. Having been passed by Tony Bardy, the now four-time Irish rallycross champion was left to just manage the gap and survive to the end, frustrated by the outcome.

In the final round, Tohill, racing his OlsbergsMSE-built Ford Fiesta, knew what he needed to do: victory was his only hope of claiming the title. And, with a dominant performance and a brilliant start in the final, he delivered. But a controlled second for Godfrey was enough

to secure the Fiesta racer a sixth crown.

Steve Hill finished on the podium in the final round of the season with his Mitsubishi Evo to conclude a strong year. Third in the standings, he was a little way off the leading duo but a single podium from the campaign didn't reward his step up in performance this year.

Bardy's home podium, meanwhile, was well deserved after some time out of a Supercar.

At Croft he raced Ollie O'Donovan's Fiesta, the Irish driver having withdrawn from the series after round four, stating an inconsistency in stewarding decisions as the reason.

Roger Thomas missed the opening two rounds of the campaign while his M-Sport built Ford Fiesta was given a full rebuild in Bardy's workshops. He debuted the car at his home circuit, Pembrey, and improved his performances throughout the campaign while learning the new machine, resulting in a podium finish in the second visit to Pembrey.

Rallycross stalwart Andy Grant finished fourth in the points in his ex-Will Gollop and Andrew Jordan Ford Focus and previous champion Steve Mundy contested a selected campaign.

As the rate of development in technology at the front of the order increases, Simon Horton struggled to match the ultimate pace with his self-built Subaru Impreza on his return to the top-level in 2019. The Lancastrian continued to improve the car and at his favourite circuit, Croft, in performance-equalising conditions, he delivered his strongest showing of the season and twice finished fifth, matching his position in the overall standings. ■

## TOP 5 STAND-OUT PERFORMANCES

### Derek Tohill

Tohill embarked on his first British RX campaign with an impressive CV but, up against multiple champ and series expert Julian Godfrey, winning the title was always going to be tough. A lack of circuit knowledge didn't help Tohill's cause, but he took the fight down to the wire and, while disappointed to miss out on the crown by two points, should be proud of his performance.



### James Osborne

One of several drivers contesting a first full rallycross campaign in 2019, BMW Mini racer James Osborne gleaned knowledge and experience from Bell Rallycross Team owner Tony Bell and team-mate David Bell to improve with every outing. A pair of podiums were the highlights in a season where fast starts were Osborne's trump card.



### Tristan Ovenden

To be frank, racing such a well sorted car as his Renault Clio V6, and being totally at one with his machine, Tristan Ovenden was expected to retain his Supernational category title this year. Despite numbers not being what they once were in the class, Ovenden still faced some tough and experienced opposition and it was a remarkable performance that meant he went unbeaten en route to a third crown.



### Patrick O'Donovan

The Motorsport UK Junior RX category enjoyed a strong year in 2019, with any one of a handful of drivers capable of winning any event. Consistency was key to O'Donovan's campaign in his first full term. He claimed a maiden win at Lydden Hill and even had one hand on the champion's trophy in the last final of the year at Croft, before just being piped to the title by Luke Constantine.



### Sam Clennell

As number one mechanic on Ollie O'Donovan's Supercars in the British and European championships, Clennell is no stranger to the rallycross paddock. But, when he entered the final double-header of the season at Croft in the RX150 division, he'd never competed in motorsport. The Yorkshireman subsequently delivered a stunning debut performance, battling with multiple class champion and Formula Ford Festival winner Chrissy Palmer on Saturday, before taking a dream home win on Sunday.



## Thrid title in a row in Supernational as Ovenden tops the class warriors

Tristan Ovenden romped to a third straight Supernational title with his Renault Clio V6 in 2019 as Paige Bellerby had a challenging year hampered by technical problems with her Lotus Exige that dented her title challenge.

Super1600 racer Craig Lomax not only sealed the front-wheel-drive class title for a second time but also battled hard with Bellerby for runner-up spot in Supernational until the bitter end before just losing out.

Guy Corner debuted a new Lotus in the latter

stages of the year and impressed with his pace.

Luke Constantine started the Junior RX season as favourite and duly won the title after being piped to the crown at the season finale 12 months earlier by his brother Tom. This time, it was Patrick O'Donovan who took the title fight to the wire, but Constantine came out on top. Ben Sayer and Latvian driver Roberts Vitols also starred.

It was Tom Constantine who claimed the Swift Sport title in a dramatic final weekend

for the single-make series, where four drivers fought for the crown. Constantine, who had ruled himself out of the title fight, won both rounds in the Croft finale while Dominic Flitney, Max Weatherley and Will Layton tripped up, gifting Constantine an unlikely triumph.

Drew Bellerby won the BMW Mini crown when rival David Bell was slowed by his second engine failure of the season, as Chrissy Palmer scooped his fourth RX150 title. Gary Simpson took top honours in Retro Rallycross.

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## SPORTING SCENE



Photos: fiaworldrallycross.com

The first STARD-built car has been purchased

# FIRST ENTRY LODGED FOR NEW ELECTRIC PROJEKT E SERIES

## Norwegian team Holten Motorsport set to run in new World RX support category

By Hal Ridge

The first entry for the new five-round Projekt E electric World Rallycross support series has been confirmed as Norwegian team Holten Motorsport.

The outfit first entered top-level international events with a European Championship Super1600 (then Div1A) entry for

Daniel Holten in 2010, and has subsequently competed in almost every category, including European and World Championship Supercar with various machinery.

The team will take delivery of a Projekt E car based on a Ford Fiesta before the end of the year.

Team manager Svein Bjarte Holten said: "Projekt E is a ground-breaking undertaking

and enables private teams to enter the world of electric motorsport with an unmatched level of road car electric powertrain relevance thanks to STARD's technical concept, which is as simple as it is innovative and affordable."

Developed by Austrian firm STARD, the Projekt E kit is designed to be retro-fitted or built new into steel-bodied

World RX-style rallycross Supercars.

STARD chief executive officer Michael Sakowicz said: "We are delighted that Holten Motorsport are the first team to officially announce their participation. Projekt E is here. We were not talking two years in advance, but you can buy the kit and race in 2020. It's as simple as that.

"At a recent meeting in Vienna we were able to provide the Holten team with the chance to drive the car and this totally sold the concept. We are now looking forward to working with Holten as our customer on their path to a new era of racing."

World RX confirmed last week that the Projekt E series will begin at the Belgian round at Spa in the middle of May 2020.



The Latvian meeting of the World Rallycross Championship has been a popular round

## Council puts up funding to save Latvian RX

The Latvian round of the World Rallycross Championship has been saved thanks to funding from Riga City Council, and will go ahead in September next year.

The event had been in doubt due to uncertainty over government funding for the RA Events-run World RX round, but now fills one of two TBC's in the originally announced World RX calendar.

Having requested more time from World RX promoter IMG to secure enough support, the RA event will take up its now-traditional slot on the calendar as the ninth round, on September 19-20.

The event name will switch from being the World RX of Latvia to the World RX of Riga,

referencing increased support from Riga City Council to run the round at the Bikernieki Circuit on the outskirts of Latvia's capital city.

"Even at the darkest hour, we did not lose hope," said Riga World RX event's promoters. "We kept our eyes focused and continued looking."

Regarded by many as one of the best events on the schedule, the Latvian round raised the bar in new-circuit preparation and event promotion when it joined the calendar in 2016.

One TBC round remains on the published 11-round 2020 World RX calendar, which is expected to be confirmed by the FIA World Motor Sport Council next month.

## IRISH RALLYCROSS

# TOHILL SURVIVES A LATE DRAMA TO SEAL A FOURTH IRISH RX CROWN

Irish RX: Mondello Park

By Paul Phelan

Organiser: Mondello Park Sports Club When: November 24 Where: Mondello Park, Co Kildare. Starters: 53.

In a dramatic finish, Derek Tohill clinched his fourth Irish Rallycross Championship in a row, by winning two Finals and two Super Finals in one day at Mondello Park. He claimed the spoils despite having to limp to the final victory with a broken propshaft on his Ford Fiesta.

Tohill once again dominated the day, which included semi-finals and finals held over from the opening round of the series back in March when a snowstorm forced the curtailment of the usual programme.

Earlier efforts to clear this backlog didn't work out, so they were run immediately before

Sunday's final round.

Dubliner Tohill's regular challenger Noel Greene, in his Mitsubishi Mirage, still had a chance to take his first title if Tohill hit problems and, with just two laps left in the last race of the day, the Super Final, the Fiesta slowed and narrowly held Greene at bay by a mere 0.6 seconds at the chequered flag.

Earlier in the day, Tohill had decided to sit out the second heat to avoid overstressing any already tired components and it certainly paid off, as he had missed the Tynagh round in April and needed to score well in every race on Sunday.

Behind the two Supercars, Gavin O'Connell had an impressive drive to bring his two-wheel-drive Ford Fiesta home in third position in the round seven Super Final, just 2.3s behind Greene. He had also earlier beaten former National

title holder Willie Coyne to take the Modified Final.

Michael Ryan led Brendan McCaughan and Christopher Grimes home in the Junior Final, all in Ford Fiestas, with Mark Meenehan beating Oisín Keane and Denis McCrudden in the Zetec race.

Because of the need to run the two sets of semi-finals and finals, and the shortage of daylight hours in late November, Mondello had its first ever floodlit rallycross at the weekend.

Results (all races six laps)

Round 1 (delayed from March 3)  
 Super Final: 1 Derek Tohill (Ford Fiesta); 2 Noel Greene (Mitsubishi Mirage) +7.270; 3 Pearce Browne (BMW Compact); 4 Philip Kelly (Toyota MR2); 5 Michael Coyne (Vauxhall Nova); 6 Chris Grimes (Vauxhall Nova).  
 Supercar Final: 1 Tohill; 2 Darragh Morris (Subaru Impreza) +13.184s; 3 Greene; 4 Derrick Jobb (Ford Focus); no other finishers.  
 Modified Final: 1 Coyne; 2 Browne +3.224s; 3 Kieran Curran (Vauxhall Corsa); 4 Grimes; 5 Damien Cruise (Renault Clio); 6 Kelly.  
 Rally Cars Final: 1 Thomas O'Rafferty (Vauxhall Nova); 2 Coly Loughlin (BMW Mini) +1.807s;

3 P J Doyle (Peugeot 205); 4 Gary Hade (Peugeot 206); no other finishers.

Ford Fiesta Zetec Final: 1 Denis McCrudden; 2 Willie Peacham +14.719s; no other finishers.  
 Junior Final: 1 Jack Byrne (Ford Fiesta); 2 Christopher Grimes (Fiesta) +2.451s; 3 Brendan McCaughan (Fiesta); 4 Loughlin Farrell (Fiesta); 5 Seanie Bellew (Fiesta); 6 Michael Ryan (Fiesta).  
 Buggy Final: 1 Padraic McHale (Casmat); 2 Paul Nolan (Yacar) +2.277s; 3 Pat Bellew (Semog); 4 Robbie Allen (Semog); no other finishers.

Round 7  
 Super Final: 1 Tohill; 2 Greene +0.612s; 3 Gavin O'Connell (Ford Fiesta); 4 Shane Stanley (Honda Civic); 5 Peter McGarry (Vauxhall VX220); 6 Browne.  
 Supercar Final: 1 Tohill; 2 Greene +12.822s; no other finishers.

Modified Final: 1 O'Connell; 2 Willie Coyne (Opel Corsa) +0.486s; 3 McGarry; 4 Andrew Twomey (Citroen C2); 5 Browne; 6 Curran.  
 Rally Cars Final: 1 Stanley; 2 Hade +11.516s; 3 O'Rafferty; 4 Loughlin; 5 Doyle; no other finishers.  
 Ford Fiesta Zetec Final: 1 Mark Meenehan; 2 Oisín Keane +3.829s; 3 McCrudden; 4 Peacham; 5 Ruth Nugent; 6 Eoin Dooley.  
 Junior Final: 1 Ryan; 2 McCaughan +3.186s; 3 Grimes; 4 Farrell; 5 Bellew; 6 Byrne.  
 Buggy Final: 1 Bellew; 2 Allen +1.742s; 3 Nolan; 4 David Parks (Semog); 5 McHale; 6 Owen Skelly (Semog).  
 Retro Final: 1 David Crockett (Vauxhall Chevette); 2 Paul Swords (Ford Escort) +1.851s; 3 Brian Keegan (Vauxhall Nova); no other finishers.



Photos: Paul Phelan

Tohill missed some heats to save his Ford Fiesta. Just as well...



Panis shares a car with Rousset

## Bakkerud joins the Andros Trophy field

World Rallycross Championship runner-up Andreas Bakkerud will contest a full Andros Trophy ice racing programme this winter with the Sainteloc Racing team.

Bakkerud has made selected Andros appearances in recent years, first racing with DA Racing before sampling the electric Elite Pro car, which he also raced in the season finale at the Stade de France in February.

As the Alps-based ice racing series switches to being fully electric this winter, Bakkerud will race full time in the Elite Pro category, sharing one of three Sainteloc cars with Stephane Ventaja, who will race the same machine in the Elite class. Aurelien Panis and Olivier Pernaut will join Bakkerud in the team in the Elite Pro division.

Meanwhile, Olivier Panis has signed for Sebastien Loeb Racing, and will share a car with Louis Rousset, while team boss Loeb will make selected appearances in the sister machine, starting with the season-opener at Val Thorens next month.

"I am sincerely happy to commit myself to this new edition of the Andros Trophy," said Panis. "To share this Andros Sport car with Louis Rousset delights me because I love, through my different sporting activities, to help pass over my experience to younger drivers. Louis has already shown his ability on track and I'm convinced that Sebastien Loeb Racing will have a good package to enable us to win races and be ranked well in the points."

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*MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters*

## MN SAYS...

# Is it time for an overhaul of the WRC?

The cars might be spectacular, but world rallying appears a step too far for some

It seems odd that Citroen would reverse its way out of the World Rally Championship purely because it has lost its star driver in six-time champion Sebastien Ogier. But, in truth, there are other elements behind its decision, which sound some more serious alarm bells for the WRC and for interest in the category.

The future for the WRC is definitely hybrid technology and that is something it desperately needs to put itself in the shop window for manufacturers. Alternative and sustainable powerplants are demanded by lawmakers and by the public. After a period of prevarication, the WRC has bitten the bullet for 2022, but there is a cost associated to that. The fact that it is going to ramp up budgets is a speed bump for a lot of potentially interested parties. The new generation of WRC cars, introduced in '17, took performance levels to a new stratosphere. But they too came with a cost, and it is a barrier to many manufacturers. Maybe it is time for a root-and-branch rethink to bring the WRC back to an attainable level and open it up to those who might want to join the party.

**Matt James, Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)**



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



David Harbey braved the late-season temperatures to snap this shot of the Brabham BT62 on its way to victory at Brands Hatch



Russell Brookes tribute: 1983 Scottish, from Alastair McFarlane



Brian Gower's photo of Dario Franchitti's car from Anglesey



Richard Salisbury's photograph from the Neil Howard Stages



Steve Entwistle and Mark Appleton's Mini, from Chris Noble



Two very different rallying Vauxhalls, photo from James Lomax



Night time Britcar action, photograph taken by Rhys Lucas



A Citroen C1 attempting a new line at Paddock Hill, by Gary Hill



Nigel M Cole's pic of the ex-Hopkirk Mini on the Rally of the Tests

GOT AN OPINION?

LET US KNOW: LETTERS@MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK

TV GUIDE



Vettel became the youngest winner of the Formula 1 drivers' title at the 2010 Abu Dhabi GP

It may be coming up to Christmas but that doesn't mean there won't be any motorsport over the festive period.

Tune in to catch the first two races of the **2019-20 Formula E Championship** taking place in Saudi Arabia (Thursday, 1900-2000hrs, Eurosport 1), as Mercedes and Porsche joined the grid.

If it's some off-road action you want, look no further than a recap of this season's **World Rally Championship** (Thursday, 2030-2130hrs, BT Sport 1).

Despite the cancellation of Rally Australia, there were still plenty of thrills and spills throughout the 13 rounds as Ott Tanak became the first

Estonian to win the title.

And finally, relive the climax to the 2010 Formula 1 World Championship with **F1 Classic Races** (Friday, 2100-2330hrs, Sky Sports F1) as four drivers went to the season finale in Abu Dhabi with a chance of the crown, and Sebastian Vettel ultimately prevailed to take his and Red Bull's first championship.

LIVE TV

**Formula 2: Yas Marina** 1545hrs, Sky Sports F1  
**Race 2:** Sunday, 0920-1020hrs, Sky Sports F1  
**Race 1:** Saturday, 1440-



Nyck de Vries has already clinched the F2 title

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LIVE F1 TV



Max Verstappen took a brilliant victory last time out in Brazil

**Abu Dhabi Grand Prix**  
**Sky Sports F1 HD**  
**Drivers' press conference:** Thursday, 1300-1330hrs  
**Welcome to the weekend:** Thursday, 1500-1530hrs  
**FP1:** Friday, 0845-1045hrs  
**FP2:** Friday, 1245-1455hrs  
**FP3:** Saturday, 0945-1130hrs  
**Qualifying:** Saturday, 1200-1440hrs  
**Race:** Sunday, 1130-1600hrs  
**Highlights:** Sunday, 1700-1800hrs  
**Channel 4 HD highlights**  
**Qualifying:** Saturday, 1700-1830hrs  
**Race:** Sunday, 1805-2000hrs

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OUT WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4



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**HOW CONSTANTINE GRABBED THE TITLE**

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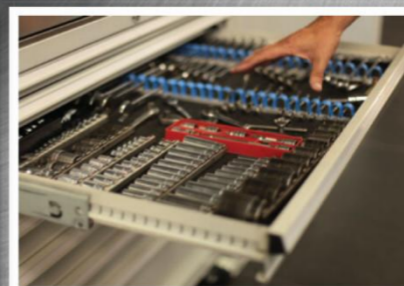


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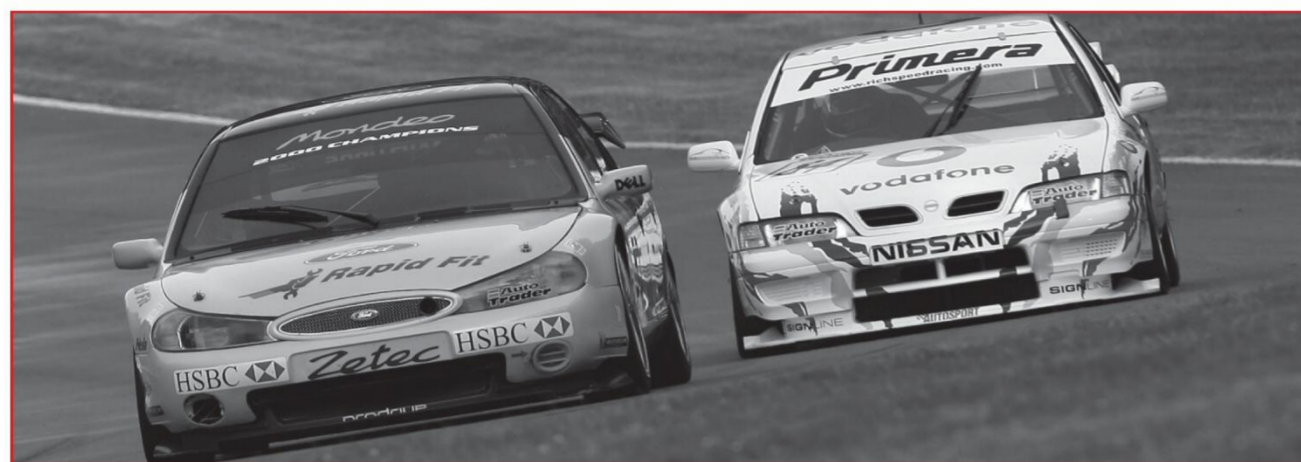


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