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THE **FULL** STORY OF THE MAKING OF A LEGEND **LEWIS HAMILTON**



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Paddy Lowe

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POLE POSITION

A polarising figure, but undoubtedly a great

LEWIS HAMILTON HAS MORE THAN HIS FAIR SHARE OF critics, those who belittle his achievements in comparison with those who have gone before. Well here's the reality: nobody is perfect. Not Ayrton Senna, not Jackie Stewart, not Jim Clark... nobody. Hamilton has his weaknesses, but like his fellow greats they are overwhelmingly outweighed by his positives.

Hamilton has come a long way during his nine seasons as a grand prix driver. That's why, now the hullabaloo surrounding his third title has died down, we have dedicated this week's cover feature to examining his evolution as a grand prix driver.

Those first, stunningly accomplished races in F1 were a false dawn and things did get harder. At times, Hamilton came across as someone struggling to come to terms with both himself and his situation. That's hardly surprising given his age and circumstances.

He has come out of that a fully rounded driver, one capable of crushing dominance, which even in a car like the Mercedes is not as easy as many believe it is. Most worryingly for the opposition, he is getting better. As with all the greats, success breeds success. And Hamilton is showing no signs of easing up.

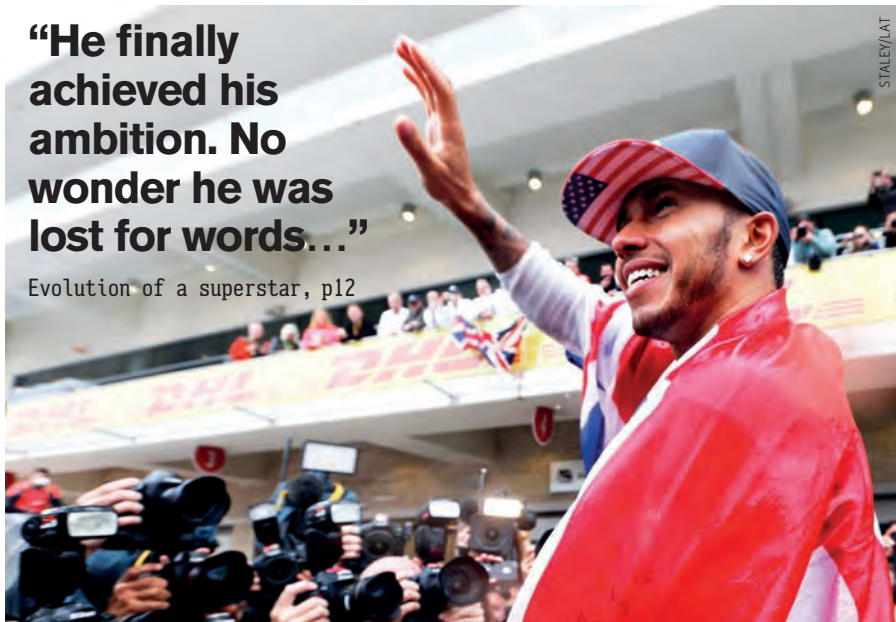


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COVER STORY

“He finally achieved his ambition. No wonder he was lost for words...”

Evolution of a superstar, p12



STALEY/LAT

FIND US ON



Cover images:
 Hans-Dieter Seufert/Mercedes

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THE BIG PICTURE

This, believe it or not, would become one of the Putrajaya ePrix's less hectic highlights. Jerome d'Ambrosio exits Turn 1 as Nick Heidfeld spins after contact with Jean-Eric Vergne

Photographer Warner/LAT





This week in F1

RENAULT ALREADY WORKING AT ENSTONE HQ

Renault staff have begun work at the Lotus team headquarters at Enstone ahead of the takeover of the team.

Renault announced its intention to take a majority shareholding in Lotus in late September, ahead of its return as a full works team.

The completion of the deal is due to be announced shortly, possibly at the Abu Dhabi race later this month.

Deputy team principal Federico Gastaldi said: "They sent people

across to help us continue the development of next season's car, and we've had marketing and administration people, to finish off bits and pieces and to keep us moving."

Bob Bell, who worked for Renault at Enstone from 2001 to 2010, primarily as technical director, is to return in a key role after recently resigning his post as a technical consultant for Manor.



XPB IMAGES

Nurburgring hopeful of '17 return

Nurburgring officials are in talks with Bernie Ecclestone about a possible return to the Formula 1 calendar in 2017.

This year's German Grand Prix, which was due to take place at the circuit, was cancelled because of ongoing financial difficulties and changes of ownership. But

new CEO Carsten Schumacher is hopeful the track can play host again as per its rotational policy with Hockenheim, which will host next season's race.

"We strive for a Formula 1 race in 2017 and are in appropriate discussions with Bernie," said Schumacher.



XPB IMAGES

Todt sorry for F1/Le Mans clash

FIA president Jean Todt has apologised to fans for the fact that next year's Le Mans 24 Hours clashes on June 18-19 with the European Grand Prix in Baku, the Azerbaijan capital making its F1 debut in 2016.

Todt said: "Organising the calendar [involving F1, WEC, WRC and Formula E] is a very tricky job," said Todt. "To make one calendar without any conflict is not possible. I am sorry to say we cannot do better."



TEE/LAT

STEVENS SET TO CONTINUE AT MANOR

Will Stevens appears to be closing in on a drive with Manor for 2016, with his financial backers close to finalising a deal with the team.

Stevens said: "Everything is moving in the right direction. If everything goes to plan, then I am confident I will be with the team for next year."

Ricciardo for NASCAR after F1?

Daniel Ricciardo has revealed he could turn to NASCAR when his career in F1 comes to an end.

The Red Bull driver has become friends with NASCAR star Dale Earnhardt Jr, who recently invited the Australian via Twitter to try out one of the stock-car category's second-tier Xfinity

Series cars. Ricciardo may try to take up the opportunity during F1's packed 21-race 2016 calendar, and he has hinted that racing in NASCAR could be an option later down the line.

"Down the track it would be cool. I like America a lot, so to live in America and race post-F1 – it could be interesting," said Ricciardo.



Lotus deputy team principal Gastaldi

XPB IMAGES

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WOLFF CALLS TIME ON F1



STALEY/LAT

Susie Wolff has given up on her hopes of becoming the first female to compete in a grand prix for more than 20 years.

During Wolff's four seasons with Williams, initially as development driver and then this season as test driver, she took part in four first-practice sessions.

But with Wolff approaching her 33rd birthday in early December, she has decided to end her career behind the wheel and focus on other ventures after competing in the Race of Champions later this month.

"I am now closing this chapter, but looking forward to new challenges in the future," said Wolff.



XPB/IMAGES

Pirelli confirms December test

Pirelli is to conduct a 12-hour tyre test at Abu Dhabi's Yas Marina circuit two days after the season's conclusion at the track.

With the test running from 9am-9pm on December 1, Pirelli is to evaluate its 2016 rubber, including the new ultrasoft compound to be introduced next year.

Following a vote on social media, the tyre will sport a purple band, collecting 85 per cent of the support ahead of silver.

Nine of the 10 teams are to take part, with Manor the only absentee.

Explaining the idea of the new tyre, Pirelli motorsport director Paul Hembery said: "We obviously want something that is not going to be doing 40 laps.

"The whole idea is we end up at a street circuit with a choice of three compounds and we are not doing one-stop races."

No limit was proposed, which was probably a mistake

FIA president Jean Todt admits the error made with the rules governing engine-supply deals when the current regulations were drawn up



DUNBAR/LAT

Massa supports two-day weekend

Williams driver Felipe Massa has given his backing to the idea of a two-day grand prix weekend format.

"I have no problem taking out Friday," said Massa. "You can do the practice sessions on Saturday morning and qualifying on Saturday afternoon, and the race on Sunday."



F1 PREVIEW

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX

November 13-15



CIRCUIT INFORMATION

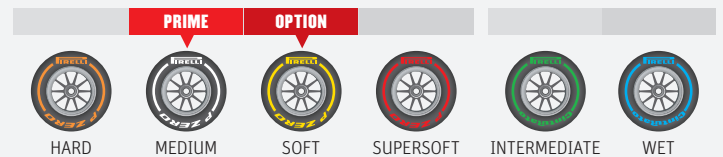
INTERLAGOS

LENGTH 2.677 miles NUMBER OF LAPS 71



2014 POLE POSITION Nico Rosberg	1m10.023s
QUALIFYING LAP RECORD Nico Rosberg	1m10.023s (2014)
RACE LAP RECORD Juan Pablo Montoya	1m11.473s (2004)

TYRE ALLOCATION



UK START TIMES

LIVE ON BBC AND SKY SPORTS F1

FRIDAY
FP1 1200 FP2 1600

SATURDAY
FP3 1300 **QUALIFYING** 1600

SUNDAY
RACE 1600

BBC 5 Live and the BBC Sport website will offer live coverage of all sessions. BBC TV will also carry highlights of the race.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

2014 Nico Rosberg	Mercedes
2013 Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2012 Jenson Button	McLaren
2011 Mark Webber	Red Bull
2010 Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2009 Mark Webber	Red Bull
2008 Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2007 Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari
2006 Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2005 Juan Pablo Montoya	McLaren

THEMES TO WATCH



RAIKKONEN v BOTTAS

Raikkonen and Bottas clashed twice in three races and are separated by just three points in the fight for fourth overall.



ROSBERG v VETTEL

Rosberg reclaimed second in the drivers' title from Vettel with victory in Mexico. Can he put it out of reach in Brazil?



WILLIAMS v RED BULL

Red Bull needs to score at least 28 points more than Williams in Brazil to secure third in the constructors' standings.



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Lawrence Barretto

From the paddock

Ferrari will have a seat available in 2017, but the number of drivers vying for it threatens to make the decision more complicated, not easier

Ferrari could set up a television talent-show-style judging panel to cope with the number of CVs that will drop on the doormat at Maranello over the course of the next 12 months.

Kimi Raikkonen may have a deal to race alongside Sebastian Vettel for next season, but from 2017 the Finn's seat is up for grabs again. There will certainly be no shortage of suitors, especially given Ferrari's current status as the closest challenger to Mercedes.

Of course, there is a chance Ferrari will keep on Raikkonen. He gets on well with team-mate Sebastian Vettel, there's a harmonious atmosphere within the team, and Raikkonen has shown in flashes that he still has the speed. But what Ferrari needs is consistency and that's something Raikkonen has yet to deliver since rejoining the team last year. A major turnaround in form would be required for him to keep his berth.

Daniel Ricciardo was linked with the seat for next year and should be high up on the list. The Australian turned up at Red Bull in 2014 and beat his more-decorated team-mate Vettel. That year he had three chances to win a race and seized all of them. He has the speed, which has been evident in F1 since his Toro Rosso days, and this season has proved he is capable of motivating and delivering when a team is struggling.

But those capabilities could count against his prospects at Ferrari. With Ricciardo the only man to have beaten Vettel as a team-mate over the course of a

18 months have stagnated. He is very quick and has made significant steps in tackling his struggles with rear-tyre management, but aside from the purple patch he enjoyed after his Le Mans win he has been much less consistent and more error-prone this year. Three crashes in four races is hardly ideal.

When considering contenders for a Ferrari seat, drivers in a new team wouldn't ordinarily come into play. But Haas pairing Romain Grosjean and Esteban Gutierrez will fancy their chances given the close association between the two squads.

Grosjean has shown himself to be a real talent from the way he excelled at the back end of 2013 to coping with a miserable '14 and then grabbing a shock podium at Spa this August with a car that was similar to the one Lotus had rolled out in Australia in March. Grosjean knows the move puts him in the shop window for Ferrari, with the Scuderia having access to all his data. He'll get to work with the team and build a closer relationship. It's like an apprenticeship – and he has the pace to make a real impression.

Gutierrez will have the same idea, of course. Joining Haas after a year as Ferrari reserve, he has a head start in getting to know the personnel at Maranello. Throughout his time at Sauber he was unspectacular and never really showed the speed and consistency required to be a contender. But he was given a second chance by Ferrari, which helped him get the seat at Haas, and although

“If Verstappen keeps coping with pressure, Ferrari could find itself with a dream team”

full season, Ferrari will be wary of the impact he could have on its star driver. And Ricciardo has not yet had chance to prove his ability to cope with the pressure of a world title fight even if, based on what we've seen so far, you'd expect him to cope.

Valtteri Bottas is also a serious contender. The Williams star has shown mental toughness, exemplified by brilliantly holding off Vettel in the closing stages of the Bahrain GP to take third. But he has also failed to kick on this year, and has too often been matched by veteran team-mate Felipe Massa. The speed he showed in qualifying last year has not been sustained this term and, while he says he no longer feels pain from the back injury he sustained in Australia, it's unclear how much it affects him, either consciously or otherwise.

Nico Hulkenberg will surely be under consideration, but like Bottas he has faced stiff competition from his team-mate – in his case in the form of Sergio Perez at Force India – and his results over the course of the past

he is an outsider the platform is there to force himself into serious contention.

Finally there's the wildcard: Max Verstappen. It's understood he has a long-term contract with Red Bull, but can a deal be done if Ferrari comes calling? The Toro Rosso star has dealt well with the pressure that comes with being the son of a former F1 driver. He has also brushed aside claims that he is too young to be racing (he'd be 19 at the start of the 2017 season), and has not been afraid to say what he thinks and stand up for himself should anyone question his approach.

Ferrari does not traditionally pick drivers with such little experience, and you could argue that a move to a big team after just two full seasons could harm rather than help his career long term. But if Verstappen keeps performing and coping with the pressure, concerns about his age will be overcome and Ferrari could find itself with a dream team.

The Italian team has much to think about. ❧

This week in motorsport

Ellinas heads test as newcomers try F3.5

Formula Renault 3.5 race winner Tio Ellinas returned to the redubbed F3.5 V8 category to top the three-day test last week at Motorland Aragon.

Ellinas drove the final day with Strakka Racing, which gave tests to Britons Jack Aitken and Jake Hughes (from Formula Renault 2.0) and Callum Iliott (from European Formula 3). Aitken also ran with Fortec and Arden, and Hughes with Carlin.

Tom Dillmann (below) topped the second day with AVF, and has been

confirmed in the team for 2016.

The first day was for rookies, with Matevos Isaakyan (Pons) and Ben Barnicoat (Carlin) topping the sessions.

FORMULA 3.5 V8 TIMES

Motorland Aragon, November 4-6

1	Tio Ellinas (Strakka)	1m40.686s
2	Tom Dillmann (AVF)	1m40.728s
3	Kevin Jorg (Lotus)	1m41.068s
4	Dean Stoneman (Carlin)	1m41.069s
5	Egor Orudzhev (Arden)	1m41.085s
6	Alfonso Celis Jr (AVF)	1m41.103s



VANDER LAAN/LAT

ALEX WURZ CALLS TIME ON RACING CAREER

Toyota driver Alex Wurz will hang up his helmet after this month's World Endurance finale in Bahrain.

The 41-year-old Austrian is calling time on a career that includes a pair of Le Mans 24 Hours victories – with Porsche and Peugeot in 1996 and 2009 respectively – and 69 grand prix starts with Benetton, McLaren and Williams.

Wurz said: "I've enjoyed half of my lifetime competing at the top of motorsport and another quarter of it working my way up there, so I feel the time is right to call it a day."

He said he was particularly proud of his two Le Mans wins and his podium finish in his third grand prix, with Benetton at Silverstone in 1997. He stressed that he would remain involved in motorsport through his circuit-design business.



RALLY GB DATE SWAP

Rally GB's calendar shift for next season has been confirmed, with the event moving to late October before the season-closing Rally Australia.

The season starts in Monte Carlo in January, while China's first WRC round since 1999 runs in Australia's September date from this year.

France remains on the calendar at the end of September, despite speculation that the Tour of Corsica could be cut. There are no other changes to the 14-round schedule.

WRC CALENDAR

DATE	LOCATION
January 22-24	Monte Carlo
February 12-14	Sweden
March 4-6	Mexico
April 22-24	Argentina
May 20-22	Portugal
June 10-12	Italy
July 1-3	Poland
July 29-31	Finland
August 19-21	Germany
September 9-11	China
September 30-October 2	France
October 14-16	Spain
October 28-30	Great Britain
November 18-20	Australia



LEVITT/LAT

Pruett leaves Ganassi team

Scott Pruett has departed Chip Ganassi Racing after 12 seasons to join the RSR Racing-run F Performance Racing Lexus squad in North America.

The 55-year-old, who won five Grand-Am titles and four Daytona 24 Hours with Ganassi, will lead development of the Lexus RC-F GT3 ahead of a projected GT Daytona entry in the IMSA SportsCar Championship in mid-2016. The deal comes as Ganassi switches to the GTLM class with Ford.

Ryan Dalziel and Marc Goossens will drive for the Spirit of Daytona squad in 2016. They will share its Coyote-Chevrolet Corvette DP in place of the departing Richard Westbrook and Michael Valiante.



KALISZ/LAT

Reynolds for Merc V8 squad

David Reynolds, who holds second place in the V8 Supercar standings, has lined up a switch to the Erebus Motorsport Mercedes team for 2016 after losing his Prodrive Ford seat. He replaces the Tekno-bound Will Davison.

Formula E eyes single-car delay

Formula E could delay the switch to single-car races until its sixth season.

The series' original roadmap targeted the removal of the mandatory mid-race car swap for the 2018-19 campaign.

It would be difficult for a car to complete the current 50-minute distance on one battery unless wireless-charging technology is implemented or significant gains are made on energy regeneration.

The batteries provide 28kWh of energy, generated by a maximum 200kg of lithium-ion cells. Formula E battery supplier Williams says that the chemistry technology does not exist to double that energy supply within the current weight limit.

VANDOORNE TRIES OUT FOR JAPAN DRIVE

Runaway GP2 champion Stoffel Vandoorne could be on his way to Japan for next season after lining up a run in the rookie test later this month for the

country's Super Formula series.

The 23-year-old Belgian will drive at Suzuka on November 25. Although there is not yet any indication about which

team Vandoorne will test with, as a junior of the McLaren Formula 1 team he would be expected to run with a squad affiliated to McLaren engine supplier Honda.

For all the breaking news, visit AUTOSPORT.COM



XPB/IMAGES



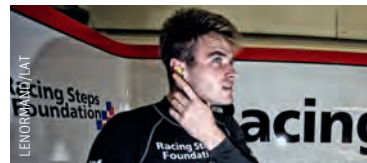
TEE/LAT

Button joins London line-up

Jenson Button tops the latest raft of entries for the Race of Champions in London's Olympic Stadium this month.

The 2009 world champion is the sixth current Formula 1 driver confirmed for the November 20-21 event, and joins his long-time friend, Blancpain Endurance Series champion Alex Buncombe, in one of two English teams.

Meanwhile, two F1 drivers of the future – Lotus signing Jolyon Palmer and Mercedes' DTM champion Pascal Wehrlein – team up as 'Team Young Stars'.



LENO/PAUL/LAT

Rowland halts Status quo

Formula Renault 3.5 champion Oliver Rowland will contest the final two GP2 Series rounds in Bahrain and Abu Dhabi with Status Grand Prix.

The Briton competed in the GP2 rounds at Silverstone and Spa earlier this season with MP Motorsport, qualifying on the front row in Belgium.

Status boss Teddy Yip Jr said: "Oliver is a world-class driver with a Formula 1 career beckoning."

It is unclear whether he will replace Richie Stanaway or Marlon Stockinger.

Abril promoted by Bentley

Andy Meyrick will be replaced in the M-Sport Bentley team's Blancpain Endurance Series line-up by Vincent Abril in 2016.

Frenchman Abril, who won this year's Blancpain Sprint Series with factory driver Maximilian Buhk in an HTP Bentley, will be teamed with Steven Kane and Guy Smith aboard the lead M-Sport Continental GT3 in the BES. Meyrick will continue with the marque's customer teams.



BEROUD/NSA

In brief

HONDA'S AERO BREAK

Honda has been given dispensation to make changes to its IndyCar aero kit for 2016, under rules to address any disparity 'detrimental' to the series, for short ovals, street and road tracks, but not superspeedways.

KING FOR A YEAR

British GP2 racer Jordan King has been selected as driver of the year by the FIA Institute's Young Driver Excellence Academy. The Briton was one of 11 academy recruits this year, under the supervision of Alex Wurz and Robert Reid.

THIRD WORKS CIVIC

Honda's works British Touring Car Championship team has been awarded a third slot in the series for next season. It is unclear at present who will join champion Gordon Shedden and Matt Neal in the Team Dynamics-run squad.

SIMPSON PLANS BTCC

Matt Simpson, a two-time champion in the Intermarque series with a silhouette Vauxhall Tigra, is planning a move to the BTCC next season. He was expected to test a Speedworks Motorsport Toyota at Brands Hatch this week.

JONES SUBS AT GIBBS

NASCAR Truck Series leader Erik Jones has replaced Joe Gibbs Racing's banned Matt Kenseth for last weekend's Sprint Cup round in Texas and this weekend's at Phoenix. Kenseth was banned for crashing Joey Logano out at Martinsville. Jones, 19, finished 12th in Texas.

IRELAND'S MOVE

The Circuit of Ireland will be a European Rally Championship round again next season. The event runs a fortnight after its traditional Easter weekend in an effort to lower travel and accommodation costs.

11

NEW LIVERY FOR EVANS

Elfyn Evans's Ford Fiesta RS WRC will run in AUTOSPORT International livery on this week's Rally GB, following confirmation of World Rally Championship team M-Sport's return to the Birmingham NEC show in January. Meanwhile, Williams development driver Susie Wolff is also getting involved on Britain's round of the WRC. She steps aboard a World Rally Car for the first time today (Thursday) when she co-drives Kris Meeke in his Citroen DS 3 WRC at the shakedown.

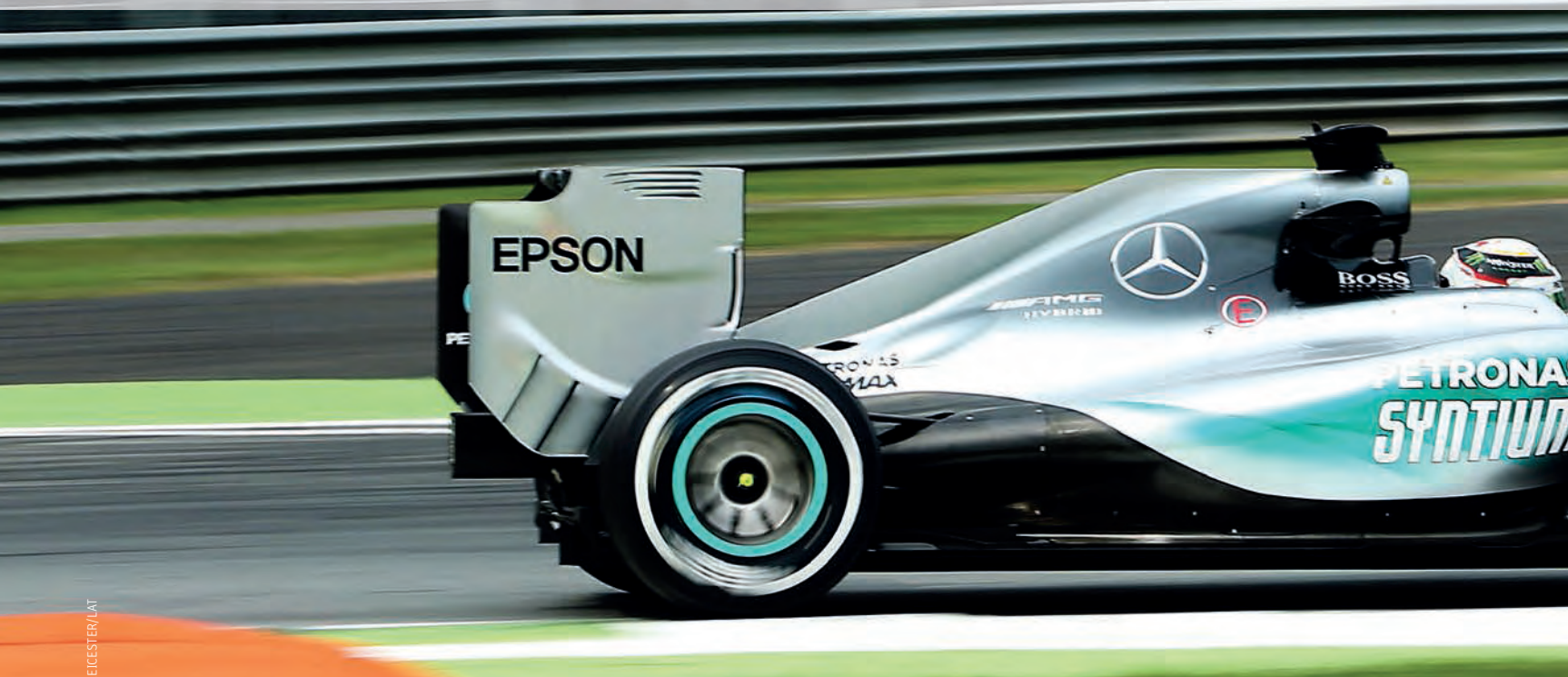


THE MAKING

Lewis Hamilton has fulfilled his destiny by becoming a triple world champion. But even for such



12



LEICESTER/LAT

OF A LEGEND

a great talent, it's been an eventful ride. **BEN ANDERSON** looks at the evolution of a superstar



W

hen Lewis Hamilton crossed the finish line to win the 2015 United States Grand Prix, he was utterly speechless. Overcome

with emotion after becoming Formula 1 world champion for the third time, Hamilton could do little more than gasp for breath, struggling to articulate his feelings as messages of congratulations fired into his ears through the Mercedes team radio.

Not for Hamilton the conventional whoops and cheers of delirium, or even an impromptu rendition of *We Are The Champions*. This occasion was far too big for that, for it was the moment he finally achieved his life's ambition as a racing driver. No wonder he was lost for words.

Like all kids when they begin racing, Hamilton dreamed of becoming an F1 driver, and winning the world championship. Most young racing drivers also find a hero as they discover their chosen sport, a totemic figure that inspires their adulation and drives their ambition – a role model to follow, to cheer, to one day emulate.

For Hamilton it's no secret that figure was Ayrton Senna, the iconic Brazilian triple world champion who was tragically killed at Imola in 1994, when Hamilton was just nine years old. "I can't remember the first time I watched him, I was only four or five," says Hamilton, now 30 years old. "And I'm sorry but I can't remember the exact race – I barely remember what happened last week! After that I began to follow him. That was when I started to watch his videos, and that was what really inspired me, seeing his story, his background, where he came from.

"That's what caught me – it wasn't watching him in grands prix, because most people who start watching a grand prix don't know what they're watching. For me it was studying him and finding out what he was about that stood out for me."

Hamilton declares that he was impressed by Senna's "aggressive driving style, and that he stood for certain things that elevated him beyond all the others. I admired that, because I felt like that when I was growing up at school – I was out of place all the time..."

Senna was a driver who transcended F1, a world-renowned figurehead for the sport he conquered three times. Driven by deep, almost mystical religious faith and a desire to break beyond the perceived physical and mental boundaries that limited what was possible to achieve in an F1 car, he believed he was the best, was driven to be the best, for many was the best, and will remain so for all time.

Ayrton Senna inspired the dreams of many people around the world during his short career, including a young Lewis Hamilton from Stevenage, England. As Hamilton became immersed in motorsport and his career progressed, from champion of Britain, Europe and the world in karting, to becoming a junior driver for McLaren and winning single-seater titles in Formula Renault, Formula 3 and GP2, the chances of transforming his dreams into a reality grew exponentially.

Now, after nine seasons in Formula 1, featuring highs, lows, moments of genius (and madness), extraordinary success and bitter failure, Hamilton has joined Senna as a three-time champion and surpassed his hero's haul of race victories.

His third world title places him into a rarefied category of drivers, one occupied by just nine others in the entire 66-year history of the Formula 1 championship. Michael Schumacher, Juan Manuel Fangio, Alain Prost, Sebastian Vettel, Jack Brabham, Jackie Stewart, Niki Lauda, Nelson Piquet, Ayrton Senna, and now *Lewis Hamilton*.

It's been a long road, and not one travelled easily, but Hamilton has now become a legend. But his status is merely reflected in the statistics, not made by them. There's far more to becoming a legend than that...





ETHERINGTON/LAT



DUNBAR/LAT



TEE/LAT



BELLANCA/LAT



COATES/LAT

CHAPTER ONE AN EXPLOSIVE START

Few have entered Formula 1 as a rookie with as much fanfare and expectation as Lewis Hamilton. Even his first serious F1 test for McLaren, shortly after clinching the GP2 title in September 2006 (he did have a brief run in December 2004), was keenly anticipated and commented on by the watching world.

Perhaps this was no surprise. After all, here was a young driver selected and groomed by McLaren to become a future champion. The manner of his triumph in GP2 — overtaking two rivals in one move at Maggotts/Becketts at Silverstone, or storming back from last to second in Turkey after a spin — already marked him out as a driver with special potential.

Many drivers have “potential,” but Hamilton’s three days driving the Adrian Newey-designed MP4-21 made a serious impact on McLaren.

“At Silverstone for the first test he was immediately impressive to the whole team in terms of his car control,” recalls Mercedes technical chief Paddy Lowe, then director of engineering at McLaren, who has worked closely with Hamilton throughout almost all of Lewis’s F1 career. “The guys were amazed, actually. He had a car that ran with a lot of oversteer in the set-up, not on purpose, and they could see that in the corner entry.

“There was a huge amount of correction going on, and any normal driver would’ve been complaining. He made no comment. He thought, ‘That’s just part of the day’s work.’ He’s got incredible car control...”

Having been signed up to partner reigning double world champion Fernando Alonso in McLaren’s 2007 race team, Hamilton put that incredible car control to immediate good use. His extraordinary run of nine consecutive podium finishes in his first races in F1 (including two wins) is an unrivalled feat.

The way he pushed Alonso, a driver who had just ended Michael Schumacher’s era of dominance, so hard and so soon in his career remains extraordinary. Some will (rightly) suggest he had the best car that year, so the results should have been good, even for a rookie. But Ferrari was also highly competitive that season, with eventual champion Kimi Raikkonen and Felipe Massa, while Alonso was considered the best driver of the moment in arguably the best team on the grid. By rights a rookie — even a promising one — should have been expected to

finish fourth at best. Hamilton got within a point of beating them all, and becoming champion in his first season.

History recalls Jacques Villeneuve’s first year in F1 in 1996: also second in the championship in the best car, but to a driver in the same team who was not considered the best on the grid. Schumacher, who was regarded as the best, was driving for a Ferrari team that was only just starting to work its way out of the doldrums.

Hamilton went up against the best immediately, in the same team, with Ferrari a strong external rival as well. He remains the only driver to have beaten Alonso as a teammate across the balance of a season, tying on points but finishing one place higher in the standings on countback to number of runner-up finishes. Has any driver made such impression in their first season racing at the highest level?

“We took a risk there, bringing in a rookie straight into a championship-contending team,” says Lowe. “And what was unique about him... normally those seats go to established drivers, and they come with all the normal baggage of superstardom, but here we had a guy who knew he had a lot to learn, and he wanted to learn it, so we trained him up.

“He had an intensive period of instruction on how to race, how to work with the car, and he was well up for it. He knew he had a great challenge, but he took it all on board, and we saw that in the results: nine podiums in his first nine races is a record I don’t think will ever get touched again.

“In his 10th race at the Nurburgring, where he got craned out of the gravel, he only came ninth in the race, and he came on the radio on the in-lap saying, ‘Guys, what do I do? I don’t know what to do in terms of procedure when I’m not going on the podium...’

“It had never happened to him before! That was unique, and don’t underestimate that. It’s not just about being quick, but even just to finish your first nine races as a rookie without having any sort of incident is an incredible achievement, and that’s why I think Lewis is well on his way to being one of the all-time greats in F1 in terms of records.

“These guys don’t come along very often. They’re a once-per-decade event, and they’re quite easy to spot. There was no question about his greatness from day one.” ▶

Hamilton won four grands prix during his debut season



CHAPTER TWO BECOMING A CHAMPION

In the fallout from Hamilton's sensational rookie campaign came Fernando Alonso's heated departure from the team just one season into his contract, McLaren's exclusion from second place in the constructors' championship for its part in a spying scandal involving sensitive data belonging to Ferrari, and a \$100 million fine to boot.

Once the dust settled, out Alonso went (back to his former home at Renault) and in came promising Finn Heikki Kovalainen from the other direction. Suddenly, in only his second season as a Formula 1 driver, Hamilton found himself bearing the weight of responsibility of a mighty team such as McLaren on his shoulders...

After the metronomic consistency of his first campaign, this one was erratic to say the least. Hamilton won five races, including a sublime home victory in the British Grand Prix at Silverstone (where he crushed the opposition on a soaking wet track), but also made several errors, most notably when he crashed into the back of reigning champion Kimi Raikkonen's Ferrari thanks to missing a red light at the pitlane exit during the Canadian Grand Prix.

The title battle went to the final race again, of course, but this time Hamilton *just* came out on top, passing Timo Glock's gripless fifth-placed

Toyota on the run to the finish during a chaotic finale in Brazil, in which Felipe Massa had momentarily done enough to be champion by winning, only for Hamilton to snatch it away by a point just as Massa's team began to celebrate.

The young superstar had become champion in only his second season in Formula 1. Apart from the first two years of the world championship in 1950/51, only that man Jacques Villeneuve can claim to have achieved the same feat, thanks to his sole title win in 1997.

"In that first year, as a rookie, you've got so little to lose and not such great pressure, so in that sense that was an easier season for Lewis," explains Lowe. "The second season, he became the sort of de facto number one for a championship-leading team, and a team of such great standing, and I think that was a great pressure and a big burden, because Lewis takes his responsibilities very, very seriously.

"He really feels the duty of what he has to deliver, representing the work of so many people and the reputation of the team, so that was a big pressure for year two, needing to deliver for this team. But he handled that very well. To come through that and win the championship under that pressure, I've got huge respect for him for that." ▶



Passing Glock on the last lap in Brazil proved crucial...



...since it gave Hamilton the 2008 championship



JACKIE STEWART

BRITAIN'S LAST TRIPLE FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPION ON ITS LATEST



LEICESTER/LAT

As Britain's only other triple world champion, what have you made of Lewis Hamilton over the years, and where do you think he stacks up as a driver?

First of all I think he justifies winning the three world championships. I think he made a very, very good decision by going to Mercedes. Their budget's enormous, they've created the best group of engineers to do the job, and he has had unquestionably the finest car, and therefore he is a very good world champion. I'll celebrate his joining me as a three-time world champion in full, and I'm not upset about that at all. When Alain Prost beat my world record [for F1 race wins in Portugal 1987], I was with him when he came in, and we celebrated together with a glass of champagne. Lewis has done a great job this year and he justly deserves it.

Have you admired him throughout his career as a driver?

Yeah, I think he's a tough driver. I've had the opportunity of watching some of the greatest drivers of all time because of my age, from Fangio to Ascari to Moss to Clark, and thereafter, because Niki [Lauda] was racing with me for a short time, and obviously Senna. I've seen them all really. I must be one of the few drivers to have seen them all. I think we should be proud that we've got another British world champion, and a multi-world championship winner.

When he came into Formula 1 he was so prodigious, he could've been champion in his first season, he was the champion in his second season, and then it almost seemed like things were getting away from him...

He's been a very lucky boy for Ron Dennis to have picked him up

and taken him through all the categories, he's been very, very privileged. Without Ron Dennis, he may not be here today, so he should be forever grateful to Ron for that, as of course he is for his father. At the end of the day, you've got to steer and drive the car – and I think he's done that very well, so therefore I think, justifiably, he's a true world champion.

So he deserves to be in the triple-champion club ultimately?

Yes, absolutely. There have been times when there have been a larger number of the top-line drivers all shooting for the world championship. That's not happening at the moment. But it didn't happen for Schumacher, and it didn't happen for Vettel either at that time, but you still have to drive the car, you still have to get a good finish, and Lewis drives extremely well.

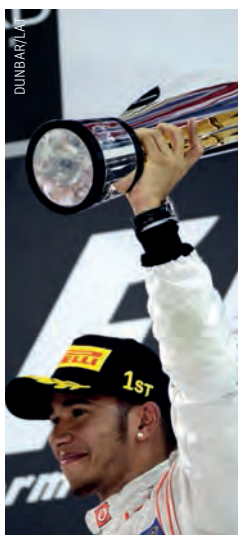
ETHERINGTON/LAT



TEE/LAT



COATES/LAT



DUNBAR/LAT



FERRARO/LAT

CHAPTER THREE THE WILDERNESS YEARS

The start of the 2009 season almost encapsulates the rest of Hamilton's spell as a McLaren driver: disjointed, frustrating, confusing, misleading.

That year's MP4-24 was not a great car; the design team was undone a little as major rule changes brought back slick tyres, introduced

KERS, and 'permitted' double diffusers (despite protests from many teams).

Reigning champion Hamilton qualified only 15th fastest of 20 cars in Australia and was sent to the back of the grid after a gearbox change. After a crazy race of ups and downs he was handed third place when Toyota's Jarno Trulli

was penalised for passing the McLaren behind the safety car, but Hamilton was later excluded for not being entirely candid about the circumstances of that change of position.

Hamilton admitted later that he considered quitting F1 altogether in the fallout from the lying scandal, in which McLaren was handed a three-race suspended ban and team manager Dave Ryan left the squad. It was the first of several strange happenings during the 'wilderness' years of Hamilton's career.

In the face of Ross Brawn's Lazarus-like propulsion of the shelved Honda works project to the front of the grid, and the beginnings of the rise of Sebastian Vettel's Red Bull Empire, Hamilton proved unable to successfully defend his title in 2009. In fact he proved unable to win another title at all for Ron Dennis, as the fountains of glory that almost seemed destined to shower upon Hamilton when he first arrived in F1 began to flow elsewhere.

The years 2009-12 were undoubtedly Hamilton's most trying as a Formula 1 driver. There was some bad luck, most notably during the 2012 run-in, where McLaren finished the season with arguably the strongest car on the grid, but it let Hamilton down too often for him to prevent Vettel charging to a third straight world championship. But there were also some bizarre moments of self-destruction, particularly in 2011.



Off at Spa after Kobayashi clash was Hamilton's nadir in 2011

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Driving into Felipe Massa and Pastor Maldonado in Monaco, then jokingly asking whether the stewards had penalised him “because I is black” (in off-hand reference to the catchphrase of Sacha Baron Cohen’s comic character Ali G); driving into team-mate Jenson Button in Canada; crashing with Kamui Kobayashi’s Sauber at Spa; and multiple collisions with Massa in the second half of the year. It was as if he could not avoid trouble. The following season Hamilton tweeted McLaren’s data readout to the world after being outqualified by team-mate Button at Spa.

There were also personal difficulties during this spell, as Hamilton wrestled with familial tension and an on-off relationship with Pussycat Dolls singer Nicole Scherzinger. “Alongside all this is the fame-and-celebrity aspect,” says Lowe. “He hasn’t gone out to find it, but he has attracted from his early years an incredible celebrity status. His following actually goes beyond the stretch of Formula 1 itself in a way that no other driver’s does.

“Sebastian has won four championships and doesn’t have the same resonance, and I don’t know why exactly that is. There are some qualities about Lewis that make him a global icon; it’s very noticeable.

“People love the way he races, because he’s a great entertainer, and so I think when you put these things together it has made him a huge

celebrity, and that brings its own pressures. I’ve been around with Lewis in public spaces and if you observe that, it’s a big burden for a person to bear. You can’t live a normal life, and that’s brought huge pressure, and I think some of those [early] years were quite tough.”

Hamilton seemed unable to block out the noise, to truly focus, and properly harness his gifts. It was a tough period, but these times are often the making of a man and that’s arguably what Hamilton became in this time.

McLaren had been like a second family to Hamilton, nurturing him since the age of 13, but in the summer of 2012, aged 27, he finally decided to fly the nest, choosing to join Lowe at the Mercedes works team headed by Brawn and triple world champion Niki Lauda. This was Hamilton morphing from ‘child’ prodigy into adult star. The end of an era.

“He went through some difficult periods where things didn’t go always how he wanted, and he hadn’t really sorted out a life-work balance,” reckons Lowe. “There were some times when he was struggling, when he wasn’t in a good place mentally, for reasons that are complex and I don’t understand.

“McLaren brings its own pressures and, having done the same myself, I recognise some of those features that are easier to observe from outside once you leave. I could see when he left McLaren that it was absolutely the right thing to

do, although he found it difficult I’m sure. It was almost like leaving home. You get to an age where it’s time to leave home and you can become yourself more, and I think that’s very much the case. When I found Lewis here [at Mercedes], he was much more at ease with himself, more ready.”

Even though these final four seasons at McLaren were challenging, Hamilton still showcased some early marks of greatness, principally the ability to win races every year even though he wasn’t driving the best car on the grid for much of that spell.

Twelve grand prix victories and 13 pole positions over four seasons (after scoring nine and 13 across his first two) doesn’t look like a great return for all that effort, but these performances certainly caught the eye of former team-mate Alonso, who many would rank alongside Hamilton and Vettel as one of the best of the current crop of F1 drivers.

“The best thing about Lewis is that when he did not have the best car he still won some races,” says Alonso. “Maybe not the championship, but still some races in that season. That is something that not everyone did.”

Even when Hamilton was toiling, against McLaren’s inadequacies, his own personal demons, and the wider world, he was still producing some great performances. ▶

By 2014 Hamilton was
a much stronger racer

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STATISTICS HAMILTON AND THE GREATS

	TITLES	STARTS	WINS	POLES	FASTEST LAPS
MICHAEL SCHUMACHER	7	306	91	68	77
JUAN MANUEL FANGIO	5	51	24	29	23
ALAIN PROST	4	199	51	33	41
SEBASTIAN VETTEL	4	156	42	46	25
JACK BRABHAM	3	126	14	13	12
JACKIE STEWART	3	99	27	17	15
NIKI LAUDA	3	171	25	24	24
NELSON PIQUET	3	204	23	24	23
AYRTON SENNA	3	161	41	65	19
LEWIS HAMILTON	3	165	43	49	26



CHAPTER FOUR CHAMPION AGAIN!

After making his monumental decision to switch teams, Hamilton took a little time to hit his stride with Mercedes. His first season with the squad in 2013 was again a winning one, but Hamilton did not feel fully comfortable inside the car, particularly with the brakes, something to which he has always been quite sensitive.

But this move wasn't about 2013; it was all about the bigger picture, principally the major rule changes of 2014, and the introduction of a brand new V6-hybrid-turbo-engine formula. This was Mercedes' moment to strike, and it did, overturning Red Bull's hegemony and utterly dominating the category.

This was a tough season for Hamilton too in many ways, thanks to some unreliability in the car (in Australia, Canada, Germany and Hungary), and some tensions with team-mate and title rival Nico Rosberg. The pair fell out over the course of the first half of the campaign, and collided on lap one of August's Belgian GP, after which Hamilton trailed Rosberg by 29 points in the championship.

"Lewis is misunderstood, and sometimes you see him doing things and people will criticise him, but actually he's got a great heart and there's not a bad bone in his body," reveals Lowe. "He has no malicious thoughts, no pre-planned game agenda or devious plan.

He doesn't work like that.

"It's just straightforward. He wants to go out there and drive the quickest car and win races in a straightforward way, and he wants to do it honestly, and I think that's a great feature."

The Hamilton of 2011 might have cracked under the pressure of some of the perceived bad luck and injustice that had come his way again, but not this time. Hamilton stayed composed and raced his way to the title, beating Rosberg fair and square in Italy, Japan, Russia and the US on the way to finally capturing a second world title – six years after his first.

Hamilton's racecraft really stood out in 2014, as he often had to overturn a qualifying deficit to Rosberg in order to win races. The wet Japanese GP was arguably the standout example of this, overtaking Rosberg round the outside at Turn 1 and then driving away from his rival. Rosberg drove superbly in 2014, but there were times where he simply had no answer to Hamilton's brilliance on a Sunday afternoon.

"What's most impressive about him is his qualities as a racer and that's what the public enjoy as well," says Lowe. "When the lights go out, he's going to go and get the job done if it's possible, and it's fantastic racecraft. That is his most impressive aspect, and that's where you score the points, that's what matters." ▶

Hamilton waited six years for his second title in 2014



ETHERINGTON/LAT

STALEY/LAT

HOW HARD DID ROSBERG PUSH HAMILTON?

For the second season in a row Nico Rosberg finds himself vanquished by Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton, this time far earlier and far more convincingly than in 2014.

Rosberg suffered a bit of bad luck this year, particularly with that engine failure in Monza, and the sticking throttle he suffered in Russia, but in truth he has been 'blown off' by Hamilton, as Niki Lauda puts it.

A qualifying swing in favour of Hamilton is the major factor here. Hamilton was able to turn a narrow deficit last year – he was very close to Rosberg's average qualifying pace despite only scoring seven poles to Nico's 11 – into a significant advantage this season.

Rosberg threw away several winning positions in last year's title battle, but without retaining the advantage of starting ahead more often than not he has not been able to put Hamilton under any sustained pressure in 2015. Only on four circuits – Barcelona, Red Bull Ring, Sochi and Mexico City – has Rosberg been convincingly better than Hamilton this season. Rosberg won on three of those, and was denied victory on the other by a reliability problem.

The manner of his success in Austria, where he overtook Hamilton at the start and beat him fair and square for pace, highlighted the fact that he is capable of defeating Hamilton without the aid of some misfortune or incident striking his team-mate, which happened regularly in 2014. And his recent triumph in Mexico was arguably his most complete display over a full weekend in a straight fight against Hamilton.

Rosberg also seems to have a small edge in changeable conditions, like those seen in the closing stages at Silverstone and early on in the recent United States Grand Prix. On both occasions Rosberg was faster than Hamilton during the phase of those races where track conditions were changing fast.

But these occasions when Rosberg has been in the ascendant have been few, and Hamilton has twice been able to 'bully' his team-mate out of the way to put himself in a winning position, highlighting a crucial edge he seems to hold in wheel-to-wheel combat.

Hamilton has ultimately outdriven Rosberg this season, so it's no real surprise that the championship was settled with three races to spare. After a valiant effort in 2014, Rosberg hasn't really had a look-in this year.



Hamilton and Rosberg: strained relationship



Hamilton has had the better of Rosberg this year



Hamilton clinched the 2015 crown in Austin

CHAPTER FIVE HIS TIME IS NOW

Finally winning that second world title seemed to lift a weight from Hamilton's shoulders, a burden of expectation he'd been carrying since those extraordinary first two seasons in F1.

Mercedes has improved technically this year, Hamilton is more comfortable in the team, and he has driven with a verve, freedom and inner calm reserved only for those who are truly comfortable with their place in the world. His run to a third crown has been far smoother, his manner of victory over team-mate Rosberg much more convincing.

"I think what's emerged now is he's grown up," says Paddy Lowe. "He's at peace with himself and how he lives his life, and that's come at the same time as an incredible combination of talent and experience, so these past two years – and this year more than last year – he's been at the top of his game.

"We had this emerging celebrity pressure that was part of that mix as well, and I think he's found the right way to deal with this aspect; how to live his life and get the right balance, and the right peace where he needs it.

"He's found the roots to give himself the space when he needs it as well, and I don't know the details of that to be honest. He disappears between races and gets back his energy, his state of mind and his focus, and he turns up on a Thursday ready for the next one.

"I don't know the formula precisely but it's working very well. He's going to be a very difficult driver to beat because all of those things have come together: the talent, the experience, the ability, having his mind in the

right place, and his emotion in the right place, his confidence – everything's in great shape."

Hamilton is now more settled at Mercedes (negotiating a contract extension until 2018 by himself), more comfortable in his own skin, more dominant on the track. At this rate, many more titles, falling like dominoes, surely beckon. But does Hamilton consider his place in the record books in this way?

"I don't believe he thinks about it beforehand, but I think he realises the magnitude of it afterwards," reckons Lowe. "I reckon at the moment he's in an execution mode. It's one race at a time, and while it's going well he just wants to keep on doing that and not keep adding it up.

"I think he will, when he eventually retires, be very proud of what he's achieved, whatever those statistics turn out to be."

Questions will always be raised about the quality of Hamilton's opposition given Mercedes' dominant technical position. But that was also the case for Schumacher at Ferrari and Vettel at Red Bull. You can debate the relative strengths of cars all you like, but the great drivers always seize their opportunities, however they come about.

And with a rejuvenated Vettel coming up fast on the horizon, backed by a revitalised and determined Ferrari team, there is potential for an epic struggle for supremacy between these two great champions in the years ahead.

But that's for the future. For now, Hamilton can allow himself a period of grace, to reflect on all that he has achieved, all that he has become: a legend in his own lifetime. ❧



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Racing dads: Jos Vers

Interview by BEN ANDERSON



Jos Verstappen made
106 grand prix starts
from 1994-2003

'KING' CARLOS SAINZ AND JOS 'The Boss' Verstappen have both been around the block themselves in professional motorsport. Now they're proudly watching their sons make their own marks at the pinnacle of single-seater racing with Toro Rosso.

BA: Both of you have had successful careers in motorsport in your own right, so what's it like now, being 'racing dads' and seeing your sons living out their dreams?

JV: Well of course very proud. We worked very hard, and when you see them doing well it's a pleasure. I'm more than happy.

CS: I'm very happy, especially for them, because behind all this is a lot of work, a lot of dedication, a lot of effort, and I think it's well deserved.

BA: How much guidance do you offer? Obviously you have experience that other parents don't. How much do you get involved and how much do you stand back?

CS: This is not my world, so I cannot help Carlos as much as Jos helps Max in certain areas, because he has much more experience in F1. I try to advise in general things, in attitude, how I would approach certain situations.

BA: You're more the regular parent?

CS: It's probably a little bit different to Jos, but I try my best!

JS: I advise Max in all areas. First of all you are a father for your child, and secondly we did everything together. In go-karts I organised everything. I was his mechanic, his engine builder, sponsor... I gave Max everything I knew. I have done formula sport, all categories. I know my mistakes and I try to help Max not make the same mistakes. In driving, I tried to teach him as much as I could, but that's more in the lower categories. Here in F1, everybody has his own style. You watch other drivers on track and because you have raced yourself, you have a feeling for it, and that's what you try to help your son with. In all areas we try to help.



The next generation:
Max and Carlos Jr

tappen & Carlos Sainz

BA: How do you balance that desire to use your experience with trying not to interfere too much?

CS: As you go higher and higher I think they need more space; they need to be able to be themselves. But you cannot forget that they are very young people, they are still developing as a person, so I think it's good to maintain a certain reference. I cannot come to all the races due to my own career, but I try to be in contact.

JV: It's the same in Max's case, but because he went from go-karting to Formula 1 in such a short time, even last year in F3 I was very much involved. I don't say I was running the car, but I was very close to the engineer... Then suddenly he is in Formula 1. I absolutely don't want to get involved with the team and Max. I have a good relationship with the engineer, that's for sure, but I don't know if they change anything on the car. I don't want to know, because it's Max's job and that's what he has to understand and learn, because that's his future. I think in the coming years I will be there, but when he grows up I don't think he wants his father there all the time. I understand, and also I am already trying to step back as much as I can, because he has to develop his own thing, his own life.

BA: Has it been more difficult for you to do that, Jos, because of the relationship you've had before?

JV: I thought it would be harder but it's fine. But also, honestly, you see the career is going well, you have some good results and he's doing well, and if that's the case it's easier to step back.

BA: Is it the same for you, Carlos?

CS: "There is a difference between us, as I say, because I am very limited in knowledge about Formula 1, people in F1, also engineering in F1.

If you ask me about rallying, I can talk a long time! I have been also developing the Polo [Sainz assisted with initial development of the VW WRC car in 2012-13] and working so I know technically everything, but technically I know nothing in F1. So for me it's more looking and learning and trusting the team, trusting the engineers, trusting Carlos, and just hoping everything is coming together properly. ▶



COATES/LAT

Carlos Sainz won two world rally titles, and the Dakar Rally



Jos's last season in F1 was with Minardi, now Toro Rosso, in 2003



Sainz claimed 26 WRC event victories from 1987-2005

► **BA:** Do you talk about what's going on?

JV: We talk about things, but not about the car or set-ups, because I don't know!

CS: More general things than technical things; I am not so expert.

BA: So you might talk more about what's going on in the paddock?

JV: What's going to happen, what engine we will have...

BA: I bet that's a big conversation!

JV: At the moment!

CS: At the moment it's an important topic.

BA: Have you bonded a little bit over that?

JV: In the same boat, exactly.

BA: Did you know each other before F1?

JV: No, we met for the first time this year somewhere.

CS: Jerez.

BA: The first test?

JV: Yes. I must say it works really well.

BA: Do you ever feel the need to be cautious speaking publicly about your sons?

JV: We all have to be careful but there's nothing really to say because both are doing a fantastic job. Everybody can see how fast they are.

CS: One thing we discussed after a few races is with the pressure they have, they are doing a good job, both. Not having crashes together, not having big discussions together, I think they have a good relationship and they are doing a good job. I try not to talk a lot but about Max, but I can say both are doing a very good job. What we say also after a few races is, you know, let's try to help each other. There's space for...

JV: ...for both drivers to stay in Formula 1.

CS: For both drivers. Not necessarily one is strong and the other goes out of F1. I think they are both showing good...

JV: ...potential to have a long F1 career. A lot of people are surprised about that, so that's good.

BA: Probably the only really tense moment came at Singapore [when Verstappen refused a team order to let Sainz past]. Did you two talk about that?

JV: We haven't talked about it.

CS: We haven't talked about it, but this is something I am always against – team orders. It can only generate friction. I have my own opinion, I don't think I will express my opinion, but it did not generate any friction, and the only thing I can say is in general; I am not saying on that occasion Max should do that or Carlos should do that... I didn't like team orders in Monaco, I didn't like team orders in Malaysia, or other places, and I'm sure we are all agreed.

THE SONS OF THE FATHERS

JV: Of course there was a little bit of tension in the team, let's say, but they discussed it themselves, and I think there's also a learning school for all of them – a new situation. They have to go through that to be better drivers for the future. Still, when you see them at the hotel, they speak a lot together; I must say they get along really well.

BA: Did either of them come to you after that to ask advice?

JV: Not to me.

BA: That shows good maturity.

CS: We spoke, he [Carlos] asked me. I said: "When you have a problem with somebody, what I have done is I talk with that person."

JV: Exactly.

CS: If I have a problem with my engineer, I talk with my engineer, if I had a problem with Colin McRae at that time, I spoke directly with Colin, or if I had a problem with Malcolm Wilson or with David Richards I spoke directly with whoever I had the problem with. That is my advice: if you have a problem, speak frankly.

BA: Is it difficult to balance being a parent and wanting the best for them, and just letting them get on with their own thing? Formula 1 is certainly a very adult world, and it can be quite vicious, quite difficult.

CS: They are sitting there with the engineer and you know nothing what is going on – what they are deciding, what they will do. They are coming out, you may ask what they are testing, or how does it look, but they don't even talk too much – at least Carlos to me.

JV: I speak to Max maybe 15, 20 minutes a day, during the day. I stand in the garage, to see what tyres he is on, and the rest I don't know – and this is also how it should be; I think a father shouldn't go anywhere that creates a problem with the team, and that's absolutely what I don't want. I do everything for my son, but I do everything until the moment it might harm him.

BA: So you're basically both on a jolly!

JV: It's a sort of... yes, we don't have a lot to do, but I must say it's very tense. When they are in their car, and especially on race day, qualifying, it's really sometimes very nervous.

BA: Do you feel the nerves, Carlos?

CS: The tension – it's not only in Toro Rosso. You walk around when the F1 teams are preparing for the race, that is why F1 is so intense. This is a very nice sport, which generates a lot of tension, a lot of adrenaline.

JV: Adrenaline, yes.

CS: It's good. We are motorsport people. I like F1, rallying, MotoGP, rallycross, I turn on the television, I see a Formula Ford race and I watch!

JV: I'm exactly the same! We can't stay at home.

BA: It's a family business!

JV: It looks like it! ❌

Youngsters are usually a bit embarrassed by their parents, hoping to find any opportunity to escape the parental clutches. After all, would you want your dad hanging around while you tried to look cool in front of your mates?

But things are very different indeed for Carlos Sainz Jr and Max Verstappen. The F1 rookies and Toro Rosso team-mates see their respective fathers as iconic figures within their chosen profession, and valuable allies who can help them progress.

For Verstappen, the relationship is quite involved, because Jos has been immersed in Max's career from the start as a hands-on mechanic and engineer.

"I don't see him as a typical racing dad because I think there is not one father-and-son relationship like we have," says Max. "You get more and more experienced all the time, but I always like him to be around. To me it's a very normal feeling because we never did anything else in the past.

"It's definitely not something that's disturbing me. He still has some tips for me sometimes: 'keep focused' or 'it's only Friday'. It's a good help, still."

For Sainz, the relationship is different. His father is less 'involved' and more of an interested spectator, who has tried to instil professional values from an early age.

Sainz Jr says that he is grateful for this education now that he's in Formula 1, but as a child it was frustrating to feel the need to live up to the expectation of a name made



Carlos Sr and Jr seek some advice from JYS



Max absorbs the wisdom of Jos

famous by his father's two World Rally Championship victories.

"Now I feel it's an advantage, but if you asked me when I was 12, 13 years old I was saying not, because I didn't have a name [of my own]," he says. "I was 'the son of', 'the son of', 'the son of' and people wanted to beat me, to say, 'I beat the son of Carlos Sainz'."

"I felt everyone was against me, and it was frustrating, but at the end it made me stronger, made me better."



Verstappen and Sainz battle hard on track...



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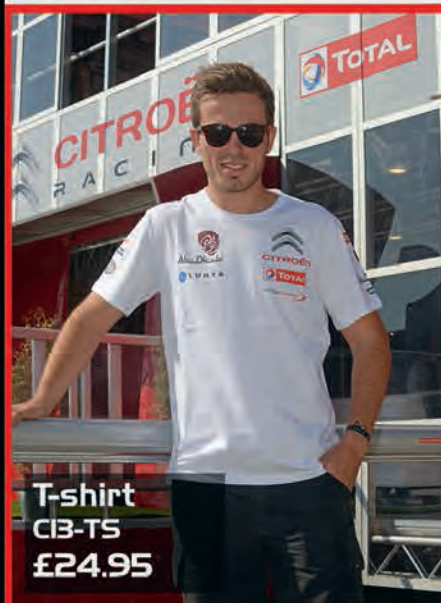


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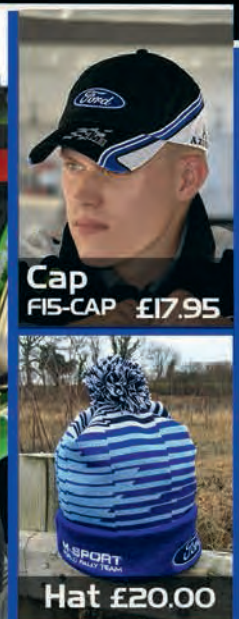
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Can the Brits

Two decades on from Colin McRae's title win, and 15 years since Rally GB's last home winner,

Elfyn
Evans



When Colin McRae won the 1994 RAC, a nation of rally fans breathed a sigh of relief. Finally, an 18-year wait since Roger Clark's 1976 win was done. Those 18 years felt like a lifetime. This week marks 15 seasons since Richard Burns was the last British driver to win their home round of the World Rally Championship. While

Burns wove his magic into a minute-plus win over Marcus Gronholm in 2000, a 21-year-old from Dungannon was embarking on his own rally career. And a 12-year-old Welshman was skipping school to watch his dad at the wheel of a works SEAT Cordoba WRC.

It's those two who now find themselves at the forefront of Britain's challenge to avoid 15 becoming 18, or worse.

Step forward Kris Meeke and Elfyn Evans. And welcome home.

HOME ADVANTAGE – IS THERE SUCH A THING?

So, Stuart Lancaster, the home advantage... what are your thoughts? The England team's earliest-

possible departure from the Rugby World Cup offered a graphic demonstration that playing in your own back yard means nothing in terms of scientific sporting performance.

Will it be the same in the woods of Wales this week, when Meeke and Evans take on the might of Sebastien Ogier and Volkswagen? Yes.

The concept of a home advantage on Rally GB is as outmoded in Britain as it is on any round of the championship. In terms of changeable weather conditions, local knowledge still counts for something in Monte Carlo, but it was Finland's 1000 Lakes where experience counted for everything. Then Thierry Neuville rocked up



win at home?

DAVID EVANS says Britain's current WRC stars have what it takes to stop the rot this weekend

Kris Meeke



and led on only his second start in Jyväskylä. The Belgian went on to finish second. Another myth, apparently, busted.

Two things changed to strip British drivers of their home advantage: the expansion of the World Rally Championship means drivers such as Meeke and Evans have little chance to combine a British Rally Championship programme with competition at the highest level. When McRae led the RAC for the first time in 1992, it came at the end of his first BRC title-winning season. When he won it for the first time in '94, he was only two years out of regular British competition.

It's now four years since Evans completed a full BRC season, and considerably longer for Meeke.

The other change came in 1990, when the RAC was brought into line with all other WRC rounds in allowing crews a full recce of the route. Much to the vexation of Carlos Sainz and Luis Moya, Pentti Airikkala was the last man to win an RAC off the maps, the Finn's November 1989 effort undoubtedly helped by the fact that he and Ronan McNamee had contested that year's British series.

Prior to 1989, British navigators were the secret weapon to which many foreign drivers turned when it came to the RAC – which is partly why British and Irish co-drivers have won the event 18 times since the world championship began in 1973. Home-grown drivers have managed just seven wins in the same period. ▶

► Ogier's about right when he says: "There used to be a home advantage when there was no recce for Rally GB, but it's not the case anymore – the rules are the same for everyone and we all go once a year. For the knowledge, you are not allowed to look at the road, but the public will cheer a bit more for them; that's one thing which might help the home drivers perform better."

READING THE ROAD

Can we quantify those cheers?

Meeke tries. "It's not worth 10 brake horsepower," he says, "but it gives you that extra bit of focus and determination. Some would say I don't necessarily need that, but any sportsman will tell you driving or playing in front of your home crowd creates a very special atmosphere that you can feed off. There's an electricity on this event that's just not there on other rallies."

"The huge home support definitely helps. Loads of folk come over from Ireland and I'm lucky enough to have a few people out cheering me on in Wales from the mainland UK. Seeing those flags waving and hearing the crowds on the road section make it special."

Evans has been born and bred a stone's throw from the Dyfi and Gartheiniog stages, but he's only done Rally GB four times; twice in a four-wheel-drive car and once in a World Rally Car. Compare that to Jari-Matti Latvala,



Meeke and Nagle won in Argentina

who hasn't missed GB since 2001 and every one of those 13 entries have been in a four-wheel-drive car.

The Finn is comfortably the most experienced factory driver in the field, and he says that Wales's unpredictable grip levels are the best bet for a home advantage. "Some stages look like they have good grip," he says, "when they have none. You need confidence, good grip and an ability to read the grip level."

Reading the road is where Meeke and Evans might have an edge. "If we do have something, I suppose it's like a sixth sense," says Evans. "It's more of a feel for what's going on."

It's an idea of what heavy rain will do to Hafren or how quickly Dyfnant will or won't dry after a downpour the previous evening. ►



McKlein/LAT

SOLBERG HOW TO WIN RALLY GB



GRIFFITHS/LAT

Nobody has dominated Rally GB in the way Petter Solberg has. Hannu Mikkola has won Britain's round of the World Rally Championship four times, but only the Norwegian has done four on the bounce. Now he's going to tell you how he did it.

EXPERIENCE IS EVERYTHING

One of the things that made it easier for me to be so successful in Wales is the experience Prodrive had with Subaru on that rally. Before I started with the team, they had been winning for a long time with Colin McRae and Richard Burns. It's important for the driver to have experience of the rally and the conditions, but the team needs to know what the car should be doing when the weather changes.

I was a nightmare to start with, always asking questions. Colin used to get so pissed off with me. "Petter," he would say, "would you please shut up!" I would be quiet for five minutes, then I couldn't help myself – the questions would start again! But I needed to know everything.

THE ROAD'S WIDER THAN YOU THINK

When you drive down a typical stage on Rally GB, you would look at it and think, "Hmm, that's quite narrow." It isn't. On this event, more than anywhere else in the world, you use all of the road and the ditches at both sides of the road. This would start on the recce – people following us might have wondered why we suddenly drove off the road, but you had to put the recce car in the ditch to find out what's there. When you are coming on the rally, the speed is twice as high and you have to be instinctive: there's the line, that's the note, into the ditch, out of the ditch on to the next corner. When you got it right, it was

fantastic and you could carry so much more speed than you ever really thought possible.

FOG ON THE LINE

One of the hardest things to get used to is the fog and this is one of the areas that can win and lose you Rally GB. Carlos Sainz gave me some really good advice about looking at the line of the road and not directly into the fog – you see nothing there. But the real key to going quickly in the fog is perfect pacenotes and a great co-driver – I had both!

When Phil [Mills, co-driver] and I made the notes – even if it was really bright and sunny – we would make them like we were in the middle of really thick fog. The distances between the corners, the entry speed and exit line from the corner, everything had to be absolutely perfect. Richard Burns was always really good in the fog and he had good notes and a very good co-driver with Robert Reid. Britain does good co-drivers and I was lucky, I had one of the best.

The best moments were when we were flat out and you couldn't see anything; Phil would count



Fog is a dead cert on Rally GB



Evans has had an up-and-down campaign in 2015

the distance down on the trip meter, then we'd just turn in and go. You would get a real feeling from the stomach that this was working and we were going quickly.

GOING SOFT

I think it's quite common knowledge now that I like my cars to be quite soft in their set-up. I drive the car quite aggressively and running softer is the best way to get traction. Suspension has come a long way in the past few years; when I was with Subaru, it was always a kind of trade between traction from a soft car and precision and high-speed turn-in from a stiff car. Nowadays you can get both from the right suspension set-up, crazy as it sounds.

Getting the car feeling right is so, so important though – this is where a driver takes his confidence from. If the car feels right from the first corner then, no problem, you can fight and push like hell for three days. If not, you can spend three days looking for the perfect car.

It's not just the suspension, either. You had to get the brakes set up correctly. There was never too much adjustment from the brake bias or in pad material and compound. Again, it was just the feeling. In typical wet conditions, so much of the braking is done laterally, you need it to be right.

TYRES AND TESTS

One of the things people don't really understand about Wales is how much the conditions can change and how much grip you can find if you know where to look. The mud isn't the same in every corner; all the time it's changing. You go from the really wet mud in the rain which is very slippery to the gravelly mud where there's good grip and then in the middle you have the slimy



Solberg never undercelebrates

sort of mud, usually found on stages where there might be a little bit of green down the middle of the road – this can be incredibly slippery. Ideally, you want to test in all of these conditions, so you know what to expect on the event.

We were very fortunate to have fantastic tyres from Pirelli as well. We used the K or KM tyre in the soft TJ compound. It was unbelievable how much grip you could get from that tyre.

ONLY THE BRAVE

When you've got everything working with the car and the confidence is high, then you are ready for Wales. The thing you need then is complete commitment. For a few years the rally ended

on the Margam Park stage. I have very special memories of this place – this is where Phil and I celebrated our first-ever world rally win in 2002 and then our first title a year later. It was a good stage to celebrate on – the last four kilometres of that road was just incredible. Coming down that hill to beat Sebastien Loeb on the 2004 event was one of the drives of my career.

Of course, the final year we won was 2005 and we don't forget the tragedy from that year when 'Beef' [Michael Park], another one of Britain's best co-drivers, was lost. That's not a win we like to remember.

Wales is an incredible place with some unbelievable roads – that's why I was so happy to accept the chance to be a Rally Legend this year.

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Meeke is the only driver who has been able to look down on VW

► One thing is sure: the road condition is not as straightforward as it might look and the weather affects it dramatically. “It turned out quite dry last year,” Evans says, “and when that happened the road polished up a little bit, especially on the second loop, and the grip just wasn’t there. Road position will play a part. If you’re down in 10th, you’ve not a hope in hell of setting a fastest time. It’s quite strange to talk about the running order in Wales, but if it does stay dry then it will be a factor.”

“There was quite a crisp surface on the first run through last year and the boys at the front were getting quite good grip from this, but once that top edge had gone it got a bit more difficult. When the cars cut through that, it got muddier and dirtier and then, when the whole field passed through, it polished.”

“For me, it seems to be better when it’s pouring – that polished effect isn’t quite so pronounced.”

Meeke buys into that sensory boost and adds: “These roads are some of the best in the world. But

it’s not just the roads, it’s everything that goes with them: the smell of the mud on the exhaust, the sight of the mist hanging over the hills in the morning – it’s a beautiful place to be, and the only place to be for a rally fan in November.”

COULD THIS BE THEIR MOMENT?

When Meeke and co-driver Paul Nagle arrived in Argentina earlier this year, they were under the microscope again. Minor mistakes in Monte, Sweden and Mexico had backed them into a corner. They were, apparently, fighting for their very existence at Citroën. A win in South America? Not a hope. It was points, good points they were after. A podium would look frivolous; that could wait too.

First stage, they were second. Second stage they were first. Then they stayed there. Winning made easy by the Emerald Isle pair.

Yes, this could be Meeke’s moment. He has the speed to hassle the Volkswagens and he has the nose, or what Evans describes as the feel, for this event. What could clip his wings is Citroën’s desire to land second in the manufacturers’ championship. That and the undoubtedly quicker Polo R WRC.

Don’t forget, this is only Meeke’s eighth start on Rally GB. That said, McRae and Burns both won on their eighth start. Meeke’s a genuine contender; much more so if Ogier and Latvala hit trouble or get in a tangle.

Interestingly, the VW drivers talk of Evans as the bigger threat of the two. Don’t be fooled into thinking this is a ploy to put Meeke off his game; they’re carrying the gun to this week’s knife fight.

A couple of rallies ago, Evans was down and pretty much out. Rally Australia was woeful – he was miles off the pace. Then came Corsica, where

he was utterly brilliant and standing toe to toe with the Polos. What he needs from the car this week is confidence. When he turns into that first corner, he needs to know what he’s going to get – we’ll know immediately whether it’s going to work or not. The M-Sport team has worked tirelessly to dial the Fiesta’s front diff into Evans’s comfort zone and if it works, who knows? Speed isn’t an issue to Evans and co-driver Dan Barritt – they were bang on it and ahead of Andreas Mikkelsen and Thierry Neuville in Finland this year (shortly before banging into a big Finnish rock).

Ogier says: “Elfyn will go to Wales with some extra motivation – he will be trying and he has done a good performance in Corsica. We will all start from zero.”

WHAT’S AT STAKE?

Both Brits start their home round of the championship without a deal done for next season. Of the two, Meeke is looking the safer. Ironically, however, there’s probably more pressure on him to get it to the finish and well up the order. A podium from Meeke, together with Citroën finishing second in the makes’ race, would likely be enough to garner him a third season with the Parisians.

Evans needs to come out firing on every cylinder he can find. He needs to be fast, professional, proud and happy. These are the days he’s dreamed of. He’s got a rocking World Rally Car under him and a super-supportive team around him. Now he needs to make the most of it. If he’s in the ballpark in Hafren tomorrow (Friday) morning, who knows what could happen?

Fifteen years isn’t quite 18, but it’s more than long enough. ❧



Richard Burns, in 2000, was the last home winner

ALL PICS: MCKLEIN/LAT

WHERE TO WATCH



The WRC allows fans to get up close and personal

Friday November 13

HAFREN SS1/4 0927/1329

The easy Friday option is Sweet Lamb. Alternatively, get up earlier and get into Hafren. Get in there and let's see if Evans is on it. For Hafren, it's the A470 to Llanidloes, then the B4518 towards Staylittie – quite a tricky little bit of navigating in the town so give

yourself lots of time. Car parks B and C are signed to the left off the 4518. At the split, go right to B (viewing point 2) for a long, quick right and C (viewing point 1) for a quick approach to a hairpin right.



Saturday November 14

CHIRK CASTLE SS13 1153

Saturday's got to be Chirk Castle, a classic stately home stage. Granted, it's not in the woods, but it does offer a great day of entertainment. The World Rally Cars will be through at 1430, but there's a whole load of Group B, supercar and Red Bull Matadors airshow excitement beforehand. The Rally GB National Rally starts the action (including Jimmy McRae's loud-and-proud V8 Firenza) at 0943. You'll find Chirk signposted off the A5 – the road the Romans built out of London – and just over the border into Wales.



Sunday November 15

BRENIG SS16/19 0826/1208

Turn off the A5 at Cerrigydrudion and onto the B4501. As you approach the Llyn Brenig centre, you're into the car park (which is the B4501). Don't approach from the north (Sportsman junction) – it's one-way. Walk across the dam and watch the cars come up through a tricky section before they sweep around the lake. If you're quick, watch your favourite car through SS16, then run across the dam, over the B4501 and into Alwen. It'll be tight though. After that grab a sandwich, then go back to Brenig for the powerstage.





ITINERARY

Thursday November 12

Ceremonial start Llandudno 1830

Friday November 13

SS1 Hafren 1	19.97 miles	0927
SS2 Sweet Lamb 1	2.06 miles	1010
SS3 Myherin	18.78 miles	1027
Tyre-fitting zone Newtown		1156
SS4 Hafren 2	19.97 miles	1329
SS5 Sweet Lamb 2	2.06 miles	1412
SS6 Myherin 2	18.78 miles	1429
Service Deeside		1748

Saturday November 14

SS7 Gartheiniog 1	7.04 miles	0729
SS8 Dyfi 1	16.06 miles	0756
Regroup Corris		0841
SS9 Gartheiniog 2	7.04 miles	0938
SS10 Dyfi 2	16.06 miles	1005
SS11 Dyfnant 1	11.81 miles	1153
SS12 Aberhrrnant 1	8.64 miles	1251
SS13 Chirk	1.28 miles	1431
Service Deeside		1532
SS14 Dyfnant 2	11.81 miles	1825
SS15 Aberhrrnant 2	8.64 miles	1923
Service Deeside		2107

Sunday November 15

SS16 Brenig 1	6.61 miles	0826
SS17 Alwen	6.46 miles	0852
SS18 Great Orme	2.94 miles	1020
Regroup Llandudno		1031
SS19 Brenig 2	6.61 miles	1208
Finish Deeside		1351

Ishiura beat Kobayashi in race one, and celebrated title (inset) later on



SUPER FORMULA SUZUKA (J), NOVEMBER 8 RD 7/7

Ishiura holds on for Japanese crown

HIROAKI ISHIURA DID ENOUGH TO claim the title as it went down to the wire at Suzuka.

Andre Lotterer had only an outside chance of the crown, but the Audi WEC star planted his TOM'S Dallara-Toyota on pole for the first race and then led all the way as heavy rain came for race day.

But his final hopes of the title were scuppered when Ishiura finished second in his Cerumo-Ingong Dallara-Toyota, fending off a late challenge from Kamui Kobayashi. The ex-Formula 1 driver had moved up when James Rossiter crashed out

of third place at Degner, an incident that promoted Kazuki Nakajima to fourth, thereby keeping the TOM'S driver in with a mathematical chance of the title in the final race. Joao Paulo de Oliveira dropped out of championship contention when he tangled with Naoki Yamamoto and was forced out of the race.

The rain had eased off for the second race, although everyone was on wet-weather tyres, allowing a conventional grid start – after a delay caused by a grid fire for Kobayashi. Yamamoto had taken pole in his Team Mugen machine

and he led all the way to provide Honda power with its first win of the season. Nakajima made his trademark lightning start to bolt from fourth to second, but his title hopes were forlorn.

Ishiura, needing only a sixth place to become champion, ran in this position early on but moved up to fourth to claim his first major title. De Oliveira ran fourth early on but made up a place to grab the final podium of the season while Lotterer, after a bad start from the front row, retired with electrical failure.

● Jiro Takahashi

RESULTS

RACE 1 1 Andre Lotterer (Dallara-Toyota), 20 laps in 42m03.785s; 2 Hiroaki Ishiura (D-T); +5.895s; 3 Kamui Kobayashi (D-T); 4 Kazuki Nakajima (D-T); 5 Tomoki Nojiri (D-Honda); 6 Takashi Kogure (D-H); 7 Yuji Kunimoto (D-T); 8 Takuya Izawa (D-H); 9 Koudai Tsukakoshi (D-H); 10 Ryo Hirakawa (D-T).

RACE 2 1 Naoki Yamamoto (D-H), 27 laps in 52m32.553s; 2 Nakajima, +5.712s; 3 Joao Paulo de Oliveira (D-T); 4 Ishiura; 5 Hirakawa; 6 Yuichi Nakayama (D-T); 7 Kogure; 8 Kunimoto; 9 Kobayashi; 10 Daisuke Nakajima (D-H).

POINTS 1 Ishiura, 51.5; 2 K Nakajima, 45.5; 3 Lotterer, 40; 4 de Oliveira, 34; 5 Yamamoto, 26; 6 Kobayashi, 20.

V8 STOCK CARS TARUMA (BR), NOVEMBER 8 RD 11/12

Bueno gets glimmer of Stock title

CACA BUENO TOOK HIS DISTANT title hopes to the Interlagos finale thanks to a win in the sprint race following a ninth earlier on.

Series leader Marcos Gomes qualified second on this fast track in his Voxx Motorsport Peugeot to the 11th of Bueno's Red Bull Chevrolet, on which the set-up sweet spot proved elusive.

Polesitter Allam Khodair led the first race until Gomes's charging team-mate Felipe Fraga moved in front. They pitted together for fuel and tyres, but the Full Time crew of Khodair was three seconds quicker and got him out back in front.

Bueno's ninth place put him on the reversed-grid front row and



he passed poleman Vitor Genz to win, with Rubens Barrichello and Daniel Serra also on the podium.

From eighth, Gomes fell to 16th in the midfield doorbanging, but survived to come home 12th.

● Lito Cavalcanti

RESULTS

RACE 1 1 Allam Khodair (Chevrolet Cobalt), 39 laps in 50m23.203s; 2 Felipe Fraga (Peugeot 407), +1.313s; 3 Marcos Gomes (Peugeot); 4 Valdeno Brito (Chevy); 5 Ricardo Zonta (Chevy); 6 Rubens Barrichello (Chevy).

RACE 2 1 Caca Bueno (Chevy), 21 laps in 29m51.921s; 2 Barrichello, +0.463s; 3 Daniel Serra (Chevy); 4 Brito; 5 Atila Abreu (Chevy); 6 Popo Bueno (Peugeot). **POINTS 1 Gomes, 242**; 2 C Bueno, 210; 3 Barrichello, 188; 4 Khodair, 184; 5 Serra, 181; 6 Mauricio, 173.

SUPERTC2000 SAN MARTIN (RA), NOVEMBER 8 RD 10/12

Joker ruins Fontana's hand

RENAULT'S EMILIANO SPATARO CAME home a surprised winner after on-the-road victor Norberto Fontana was handed two time penalties for twice crossing the joker-lap entry line as the series tried a rallycross-style experiment.

The introduction of the joker laps ensured a plethora of leaders, with reigning champion Nestor Girolami the first to make use of it, after a five-car pile-up during the first lap led to a two-lap safety-car period, wresting the lead from Fontana on lap three. Fontana's Chevrolet most

of the time circulated in sixth, making use of his ill-fated joker laps towards the end of the race.

A totally surprised Spataro thought he had finished second and was on the pit-to-car radio during the cooling-down lap, asking his crew to make sure he was the winner before beginning on-board celebrations. Fiat's star rookie Jose Manuel Urcera finished fourth, but was promoted to second when third-on-road Agustin Canapino was penalised for a robust move on Facundo Chapur. This also promoted Leonel Pernia to third and series leader Girolami's Peugeot to fourth.

● Tony Watson



RESULTS

1 Emiliano Spataro (Renault Fluence), 23 laps in 36m14.325s; 2 Jose Manuel Urcera (Fiat Linea), +4.257s; 3 Leonel Pernia (Renault); 4 Nestor Girolami (Peugeot 408); 5 Facundo Chapur (Fiat); 6 Agustin Canapino (Peugeot). **POINTS 1 Girolami, 149**; 2 Pernia, 139.5; 3 Matias Rossi, 139; 4 Urcera, 139; 5 Chapur, 136.5; 6 Canapino, 130.



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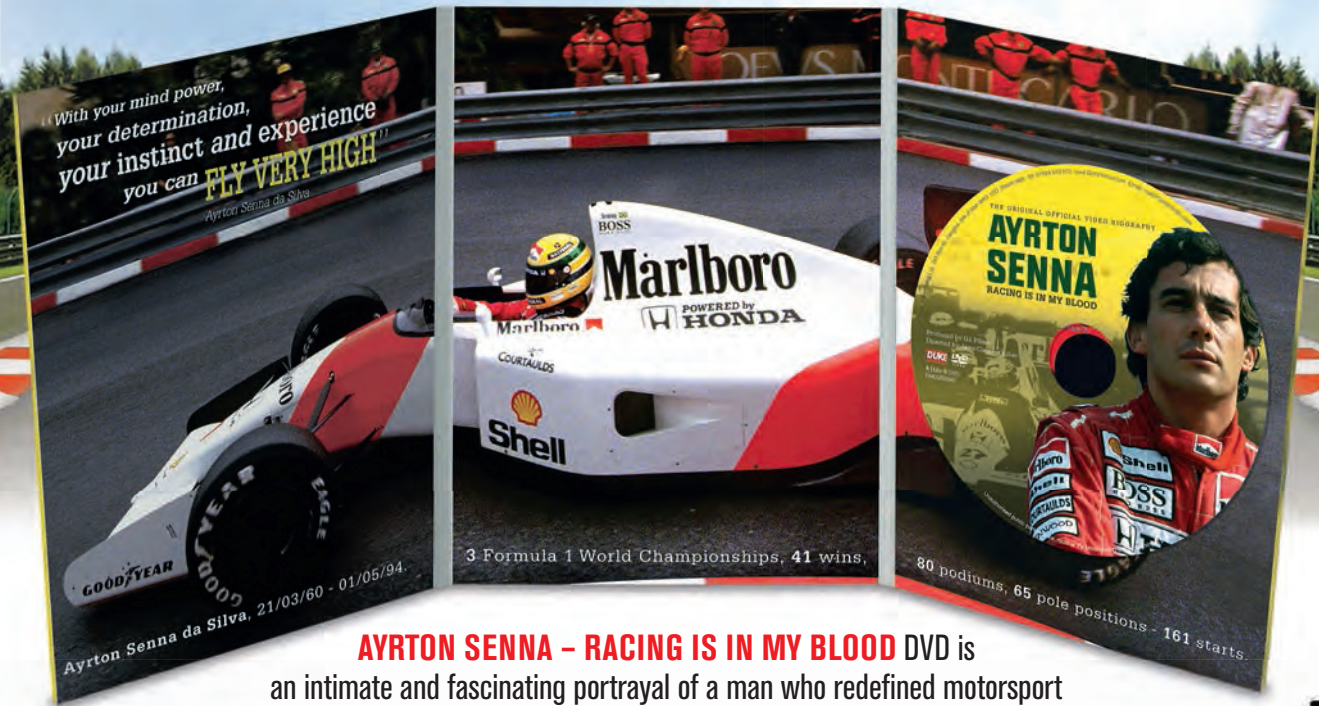
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NASCAR SPRINT CUP TEXAS MOTOR SPEEDWAY (USA), NOVEMBER 8 RD 34/36

Johnson grabs late victory



Motorhome-roof joy as Johnson passes Keselowski

JIMMIE JOHNSON PULLED OFF A LATE pass in his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet to snatch the honours from Brad Keselowski.

Johnson, already eliminated from the Chase, caught and passed the dominant Penske Ford of Keselowski with four laps to run to claim his fifth win of 2015, and sixth overall at the Texas Motor Speedway.

Keselowski, seeking a win to guarantee a spot in the decider at Homestead, led 312 of the 334 laps from pole, only to lose out to Johnson on the final green run to the chequered flag after contact with Martin Truex Jr off the restart.

Kevin Harvick (Stewart Haas Chevy) twice fought his way back through the order after separate tyre failures to claim third from the Joe Gibbs Racing Toyotas of Kyle Busch and Carl Edwards.

Dale Earnhardt Jr was sixth at the flag, despite losing time to an early cut tyre and a spin following a brush with the wall.

Kurt Busch led home a fading Truex in seventh, with Jeff Gordon – already through to the title decider after victory at Martinsville – ninth from Jamie McMurray.

Joey Logano must win next time out at Phoenix if he is to qualify for

the decider after a violent tyre failure just 10 laps into the race dropped him out of contention. He came home 40th, 66 laps down.

RESULTS

1 Jimmie Johnson (Chevrolet SS), 334 laps in 3h38m38s; 2 Brad Keselowski (Ford Fusion), +1.082s; 3 Kevin Harvick (Chevy); 4 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry); 5 Carl Edwards (Toyota); 6 Dale Earnhardt Jr (Chevy); 7 Kurt Busch (Chevy); 8 Martin Truex Jr (Chevy); 9 Jeff Gordon (Chevy); 10 Jamie McMurray (Chevy).

ELIMINATOR 8 1 Gordon, 4082; 2 Kyle Busch, 4080; 3 Harvick, 4079; 4 Truex, 4076; 5 Edwards, 4069; 6 Keselowski, 4057; 7 Kurt Busch, 4048; 8 Joey Logano, 4013.

V8 SUPERCARS PUKEKOHE (NZ), NOVEMBER 7-8 RD 12/14

Whincup back on form for double

RED BULL RACING REGAINED ITS winning ways in New Zealand, with Jamie Whincup taking two wins from three races for the Triple Eight Australia-run team.

Whincup won the first and third races at the Auckland circuit, and team-mate Craig Lowndes looked set to win the other one until a tyre blowout at 150mph sent him spinning out of the lead. Lowndes's Holden was repaired after an all-night rebuild, allowing him to take second in the longer, Sunday race and close the points gap to Mark Winterbottom.

'Frosty' was not even the fastest Ford in NZ, taking seventh, fourth and 11th in the races, the last result coming after being tapped into a first-lap spin. His Prodrive team-mate David Reynolds shone, winning the second race after Lowndes's crash and taking third and fourth in the others. As a result he moved to second in the points and looks a genuine challenger



Whincup leads Reynolds and rest

to Winterbottom for the title – ironically, in the week Prodrive announced Reynolds would move on for 2016.

The other news on the Ford side was the speed of Scott Pye, who will have impressed team boss Roger Penske with the DJR Penske squad's best showing of the season, peaking with third in the finale.

Best of the NZ drivers on home ground were Scott McLaughlin (Volvo, third in race two) and Shane van Gisbergen (second in race one in his Holden).

● Phil Branagan

RESULTS

RACE 1 1 Jamie Whincup (Holden Commodore VF), 21 laps in 24m48.8376s; 2 Shane van Gisbergen (Holden), +4.3846s; 3 David Reynolds (Ford Falcon); 4 Craig Lowndes (Holden); 5 Scott Pye (Ford); 6 Michael Caruso (Nissan Altima).

RACE 2 1 Reynolds, 21 laps in 26m37.9563s; 2 Whincup, +0.5031s; 3 Scott McLaughlin (Volvo S60); 4 Mark Winterbottom (Ford); 5 van Gisbergen; 6 James Courtney (Holden).

RACE 3 1 Whincup, 69 laps in 1h18m57.1974s; 2 Lowndes, +4.0638s; 3 Pye; 4 Reynolds; 5 Caruso; 6 McLaughlin. **POINTS 1 Winterbottom, 2779;** 2 Reynolds, 2540; 3 Lowndes, 2539; 4 Garth Tander, 2297; 5 van Gisbergen, 2269; 6 Fabian Coulthard, 2252.



GLOBAL RALLYCROSS

Ex-Toro Rosso Formula 1 driver Scott Speed clinched the championship with third place in the Las Vegas finale in his Andretti Autosport VW Beetle (looking very sandy, above). Speed was muscled out of an early lead, with the Olsbergs MSE Fords of Joni Wiman and Sebastian Eriksson taking the win and second respectively. Speed's main title rival, team-mate Tanner Foust, trailed home in ninth place.

NASCAR XFINITY

Brad Keselowski took his Penske Ford to Victory Lane at Texas Motor Speedway after passing Austin Dillon with 11 laps remaining. Dillon was also demoted by Kevin Harvick, who finished second, with Erik Jones fourth. Series leader Chris Buescher came home 11th.

NASCAR TRUCKS

Erik Jones warmed up for his Sprint Cup role as understudy to Matt Kenseth with a dominant win in Texas, extending his series lead. He headed home the sister Kyle Busch Toyota of Daniel Suarez.

ASIAN LE MANS SERIES

Shinji Nakano and Niki Leutwiler made it two wins out of two for the Race Performance ORECA-Judd at Sepang. James Winslow qualified the Algarve Pro Racing Ligier on pole and the car – shared with Dean Koutsomidis and Michael Munemann – led before finishing second ahead of the Eurasia ORECA of Richard Bradley, William Lok and Tacksung Kim. GT honours went to the Clearwater McLaren of Rob Bell, Keita Sawa and Mok Weng Sun from the Team AAI BMW of Dirk Muller, Ollie Millroy and Jun San Chen.

NZ TOURING CARS

New Zealand's domestic tin-top series supported the V8 Supercar invaders from Australia at Pukekohe, with Simon Evans emerging atop the 22-car field to take the round win thanks to two race victories. Evans, the brother of GP2 star Mitch, battled it out with Mitch Cunningham in both races before prevailing, while Tim Edgell was third in the round. The reversed-grid finale went to veteran Craig Baird.

OMAN RALLY

Nasser Al-Attiyah equalled Mohammed Ben Sulayem's 13-year-old record of 60 Middle East Rally Championship wins. Driving a Ford Fiesta RRC, the Qatari recorded victory over Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari by 48.5s. Sheikh Khalid Al-Qassimi finished third and Kuwait's Salah Bin Eidan confirmed himself the Group N series title with fifth place.

Di Grassi wins war of attrition

Any fears of another Renault e.dams cakewalk were dispelled during a breathless Putrajaya ePrix. **SCOTT MITCHELL** reports



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LUCAS DI GRASSI LABELLED THE FRENZIED RACE “a mind game”. The Putrajaya ePrix was certainly a game of sorts, although at times it was one more like skittles than a race.

One by one the frontrunners fell, until only Abt Audi Sport’s di Grassi remained to take a clear, and deserved, victory and head a podium completed by two unlikely visitors. Runner-up Sam Bird needed to watch the race highlights that were being broadcast in the media centre when the post-race press conference took place “to find out how”. Robin Frijns brought his crabbing car, the legacy of sustaining right-rear suspension damage three laps from the end, home in third place. As for the best of the previously all-conquering Renault e.dams cars... 10th.

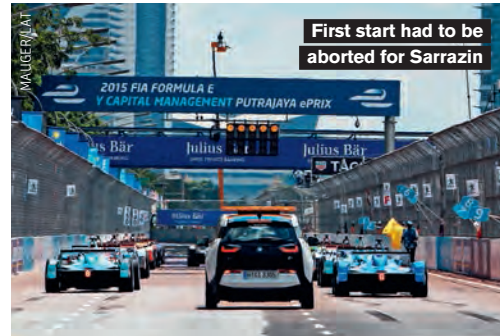
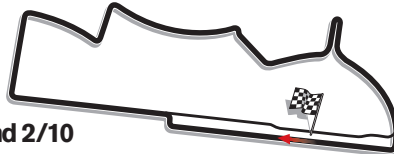
The first skittle to fall wore Venturi colours. Stephane Sarrazin, the surprise star of qualifying in second, was out of contention before the race had even started. He took up his place for the original formation phase, but a systems shutdown meant his Venturi VM200-FE-01 wouldn’t move



Dragon’s pace went unrewarded

Formula E Putrajaya (MAL) November 7

Round 2/10



to the front row. He started from the pitlane and was a minute behind after the opening lap.

That he would wind up fourth hints at the sort of race that was about to develop.

RENAULT E.DAMS WILTS

Qualifying hinted at a closer second round of the all-electric championship than in China, even though Sebastien Buemi clinched a second straight pole. And if nothing else, 39-degree ambient temperature and high humidity ensured this was a very different test to Beijing.

The status quo was preserved until Buemi, leading relatively comfortably from Loic Duval, suddenly slowed exiting the hairpin and ground to a halt on the run to the final corner.

A reset got the Z.E.15 moving again reasonably quickly, but he headed straight for the pitlane to swap cars, as did team-mate Nicolas Prost. There were three more laps until the car-swap phase of

the race would begin in earnest, so while a repeat victory looked a tall order both remained on course to bank decent points. But the problems resurfaced, with Buemi suffering a repeat of his car-one issue on the second machine.

“I’ve done more than we were supposed to do to stop it getting hot and it still didn’t work,” he lamented having climbed to fifth, with fastest lap, only to stop again and drop to P12.

Prost cut an equally frustrated figure. Having pitted so early because of an overheating battery, he maintained good pace to move to the head of the field when the remaining car swaps took place. Unfortunately, he was quickly into energy-saving mode on a severe scale.

He’d already been passed by di Grassi, Duval and Jerome d’Ambrosio in the second Dragon Racing car when “everything shut down. I’m not so happy because it’s two races in a row I’ve retired with reliability issues and the problem



Di Grassi was calm
as mayhem unfolded

SBL0XHAU/LAT



Di Grassi celebrates
after chaotic race

MAUGER/LAT

“You know you can go much quicker and can overtake others but you’re going to pay much later”

LUCAS DI GRASSI

45



Buemi led at
first, but not for long

SBL0XHAU/LAT

is not from the Renault side,” claimed Prost. “We need an explanation from Williams.”

ABT AND DI GRASSI STRIKE GOLD

For the battery supplier, an investigation yielded no fault. Renault, with a tighter packaging solution at the rear of the car, appeared to be simply the highest-profile victim of the sweltering heat. It was hardly alone in that regard as teams fought a sometimes-losing battle with the thermal management of the battery.

“Today was a stretch for every aspect of the car,” said Williams Advanced Engineering programme leader Gary Ekerold. “That places the entire car under immense pressure and stress.

“Racing is about being on the limit and sometimes teams trip over the limit. Lucas went out there, and had no problems. As engineers and a driver they managed the entire car in a way that delivered results perfectly.”

Easier said than done, reckoned di Grassi. “We’re not limited by the [amount of] energy

anymore,” he explained. “You just have to use less energy [so it doesn’t get too hot]. It’s very weird, you have to lift much earlier than you need to – not use full power.

“It’s a mind game, you know you can go much quicker and can overtake others but you know you’re going to pay much later. It’s not what we’re here for. It was good for us but not in general.”

Di Grassi and Abt drew the perfect line in the sand, taking the technology to the limit and being rewarded for their judgement with a fine victory that puts the Brazilian top of the points after Buemi’s troubles.

DRAGON’S FIRE DAMPENED

Really, Duval should have gone into the closing stages of the race in the lead, having lost out to di Grassi in the car swaps when he was held six seconds too long in the pitlane. As it is, that error probably only helped reduce (very slightly) the late-race heartache that would befall him.

The Dragon Racing team was in appropriately fine fettle in the glaring heat, and Duval and d’Ambrosio are two of the most efficient drivers on the grid, so it was no surprise that in the final third of the race they had more energy than di Grassi and facing a gap that did not look insurmountable.

While it will forever be impossible to claim they would have caught the Brazilian, let alone passed him, what is certain is that both drivers were robbed of podium places. What is even more bizarre is they both appear to have been afflicted by exactly the same problem. ▶

Frijns ended frenetic race on the podium



S. BLOXHAM/LAT

► Duval was the first to go, with di Grassi's lead down to around three seconds. The left-rear corner broke, and his attempts to crawl back to the pitlane proved futile. The car ground to a halt exiting the hairpin, and Duval managed to get to the outside of the penultimate corner before parking up. "It's probably the damper", he said.

That promoted d'Ambrosio to third in a car the Belgian described as "amazing" until, on the very last lap, "exactly the same" happened to him as did Duval. The Venturi VM200-FE-01 hit the wall at Turn 7 as a result, then ended up in the run-off area at Turn 8. Head in hands, another excellent race was undone.

A TALE OF TWO UNDERDOGS

When Prost had his brief sojourn in the lead, for a short time his nearest rival was Antonio Felix da Costa. With the season-one technology that powers the Aguri and Andretti Autosport Sparks struggling in China, this campaign looked a long one. Now it might just be that the likes of da Costa and Frijns, the leading lights of those two teams respectively, can showcase their obvious talents more often than we thought.

They did exactly that here. Da Costa was fourth in qualifying and ran third, ahead of di Grassi, for the opening part of the race, then leapfrogged Duval in the pits.

Prost was up the road at this point but da Costa had been on thermal-management alert almost from the beginning, so when di Grassi attacked the Portuguese offered no resistance.

FORMULA E

ROUND 2/10 PUTRAJAYA (MAL), NOVEMBER 7 (33 LAPS – 52.493 MILES)

1 Lucas di Grassi (BR) Abt Audi Sport Abt Schaeffler FE01	50m17.449s
2 Sam Bird (GB) DS Virgin Racing Virgin DSV-01	+13.884s
3 Robin Frijns (NL) Andretti Autosport Spark SRT_01E	+29.776s
4 Stephane Sarrazin (F) Venturi VM200-FE-01	+32.628s
5 Bruno Senna (BR) Mahindra Racing Mahindra M2 ELECTRO	+34.404s
6 Antonio Felix da Costa (P) Team Aguri Spark SRT_01E	+36.925s
7 Daniel Abt (D) Abt Audi Sport Abt Schaeffler FE01	+37.283s
8 Nelson Piquet Jr (BR) NEXTEV TCR NEXTEV TCR 001	+40.623s
9 Nick Heidfeld (D) Mahindra Racing Mahindra M2 ELECTRO	+52.904s
10 Nicolas Prost (F) Renault e.dams Renault Z.E.15	+53.695s
11 Jacques Villeneuve (CDN) Venturi VM200-FE-01	+58.698s
12 Sebastien Buemi (CH) Renault e.dams Renault Z.E.15	+1m07.728s
13 Simona de Silvestro (CH) Andretti Autosport Spark SRT_01E	+1m24.464s
14 Jerome d'Ambrosio (B) Dragon Racing Venturi VM200-FE-01	32 laps-suspension
15 Nathanael Berthon (F) Team Aguri Spark SRT_01E	-1 lap
16 Loic Duval (F) Dragon Racing Venturi VM200-FE-01	29 laps-suspension
R Oliver Turvey (GB) NEXTEV TCR NEXTEV TCR 001	4 laps-stuck throttle
R Jean-Eric Vergne (F) DS Virgin Racing Virgin DSV-01	0 laps-accident damage

Winner's average speed 62.627mph.

Fastest lap Buemi, 1m22.748s, 69.205mph.

SUPERPOLE

1 Buemi, 1m20.196s; 2 Sarrazin, 1m20.639s; 3 Duval, 1m20.886s; 4 da Costa, 1m20.975s; 5 Prost, 1m21.786s.

QUALIFYING

1 Buemi, 1m19.821s; 2 Sarrazin, 1m20.213s; 3 Duval, 1m20.251s; 4 da Costa, 1m20.414s; 5 Prost, 1m20.401s; 6 di Grassi, 1m20.449s; 7 d'Ambrosio, 1m20.496s; 8 Frijns, 1m20.546s; 9 Senna, 1m20.616s; 10 Abt, 1m20.679s; 11 Heidfeld, 1m20.727s; 12 Villeneuve, 1m20.754s; 13 Vergne, 1m20.820s; 14 Bird, 1m20.905s; 15 Berthon, 1m21.270s; 16 Piquet, 1m21.559s; 17 Turvey, 1m21.611s; 18 de Silvestro, 1m21.958s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 di Grassi, 43; 2 Buemi, 35; 3 Bird, 24; 4 Heidfeld, 17; 5 Frijns, 16; 6 Sarrazin, 14; 7 Duval, 12; 8 Senna, 10; 9 d'Ambrosio, 10; 10 da Costa & Turvey, 8.

Shortly after di Grassi took the lead from the slowing Prost, da Costa claimed second too. But almost as swiftly as his race peaked, it troughed. An identical problem to Buemi caused da Costa to stop exiting Turn 1. He got going again, stopped again, got going again. By then the podium was long gone from his grasp, although through the attrition he wound up sixth.

Such were the fluctuating fortunes of the drivers in this bizarre race that as one challenge faded, others gained traction. Frijns was one to benefit from da Costa's misfortune, having run

seventh in the early stages while engaging in excellent energy saving. Andretti asked for a bit more emphasis on cooling, and the rookie delivered. You'd be hard pushed to tell that this was only the Dutchman's second Formula E start.

His efforts had him well placed as events unfolded before him. Having passed Prost, Frijns caught the ailing Duval at Turn 8 and got ahead, but was offline through Turn 9, where the track had been breaking away since early on. Several drivers had minor moments through there as grip deteriorated to the point where the slippery-surface flag was required, and Frijns was lucky his race didn't end in the wall.

Slapping the concrete with the right-rear of the car broke something on the suspension, and allowed Bird through to fourth, then third as Duval parked exiting the hairpin.

Andretti radioed Frijns to "see what you can do", and somehow – with the car crabbing – he managed to coax it through three slightly sideways laps to the flag. That perseverance was rewarded with a podium when d'Ambrosio crashed on the final lap, giving Frijns a result that should go down as one of the most remarkable in Formula E's short history. ❏



First-corner clash delayed Nick Heidfeld

S. BLOXHAM/LAT

IN THE PADDOCK

SCOTT MITCHELL
FEATURES EDITOR

@ScottMitchell189



THANKS TO 39-DEGREE AMBIENT temperature and ridiculous humidity in Malaysia, the Putrajaya ePrix had the silver bullet for an entertaining race: unreliability.

That's of little consolation to the heat-struck Renault e.dams drivers or the Dragon duo who were afflicted by apparently identical suspension failures. But for anyone watching trackside or even on television, it made for one hell of a spectacle.

It's very possible that without repeat temperature problems Sebastien Buemi would have eased to a second consecutive victory. Loic Duval and eventual winner Lucas di Grassi both had race-winning pace, that was evident in the second half of the race, but while we were



robbed of the chance to see a great race in terms of quality the compensation came in the form of a *lot* of stuff happening.

The level of technical competition in the championship means some teams have taken risks in the pursuit of performance. That's great for Formula E and great for the ideal of electric-vehicle development. It's not so great for the cooling capabilities

of Renault e.dams, for example, which appeared to pay the price for a tighter gearbox package. But the team will have to learn from it for the warm climates of Uruguay and Argentina.

"Racing is about managing limiting factors, and some teams are better at this than others," Gary Ekerold from Williams told me. "It's up to every team

to understand where they are going to have to focus. Some teams have an advantage because they understand the system better – that's what makes them different."

Even in Formula E's second season there is a massive amount of learning going on. Based on the entertainment offered in Malaysia, long may that continue.

Bird: podiums due on merit

SAM BIRD CALLED HIS PODIUM

"very, very lucky" but believes DS Virgin Racing is closer to achieving results on merit than the first two races suggest.

The Briton struggled with the ride and braking of his car in Beijing, but was much more competitive in Putrajaya.

He had to join team-mate Jean-Eric Vergne on row seven for the start of the race after tagging the wall in qualifying, but a feisty opening two laps and attrition elsewhere scored him a shock second.

"We've been quick," he said. "[Second] was very, very lucky but hopefully we can get more podiums this season on outright pace and by improving our car."



P2 was a shock to Bird

WARNER/LAT

BIG NUMBER

1.6s

How much faster the best time of the weekend was this year compared to last thanks to more open regulations



MAUGER/LAT

Battery competition postponed

FORMULA E WILL POSTPONE the move to open-battery competition until season five.

The original roadmap wanted to introduce open battery competition for the 2016-17 campaign but this has proven to be too ambitious.

It is unknown whether the plan to increase the battery's capabilities to

32kWh of energy and 250kW of peak power will also be amended.

Series CEO Alejandro Agag said: "For years three and four it's going to be a new battery, but the same for everyone. It will be a new design from Williams, in principle. It's not signed but it's really looking like we're going in that direction."

Discussions on Trulli future

DISCUSSIONS ARE BEING

held over the Trulli Formula E team's future in the championship, which is in doubt after it failed to take part for the second consecutive race.

Trulli's Motomatica JT-01s did not pass the required additional safety checks new cars have to undergo after homologation.

It is understood that the championship has a variety of penalty options for teams that miss two rounds, with expulsion the most severe.

Formula E CEO Alejandro Agag said: "I think the situation will change but we have to see exactly how. The end of this sequence of events will be a strong boost for the championship."



MAUGER/LAT

Trulli missed a second race

Autosport understands there is genuine hope around the future of the team because Trulli is believed to be in advanced negotiations with an Original Equipment Manufacturer.

It is unknown if it will be as a partner or as a complete takeover of the entry.

Trulli's driver line-up for the rest of the season is in doubt after Salvador Duran was dropped for a "breach of contract". Team owner Jarno Trulli would have stepped in if the team had been given permission to race.

TRULLI BATTERY RACES

While the beleaguered Trulli team awaits its first running of the second season, one of its batteries did take part in the Putrajaya ePrix. A battery failure on Antonio Felix da Costa's car shortly before qualifying meant Team Aguri had to borrow one from Trulli, because Williams had run out of spares.

PIQUET SCORES

Reigning champion Nelson Piquet Jr scored his first points of the season with eighth place on Saturday. The NEXTEV TCR driver qualified only 16th as the team's troubled start to the season continued, although he went significantly longer than anyone else on energy to briefly lead the race before pitting. The late-race retirements elevated him to eighth.

TURVEY CRASHES

Piquet's team-mate, Oliver Turvey, had hopes of a similar rise, but these were ended early when a stuck throttle put him into the barriers. The Briton identified the problem on the opening lap and said the engine cut out at the hairpin twice, but hoped to nurse it to the mid-race car swap. He ended up nosing the tyres on the exit of Turn 5 when the throttle stuck mid-corner, and suffered a minor wrist injury that he expects will be cleared up before his midweek LMP1 test with Porsche.



S BLOWHAM/LAT



Rowland comes of age

Renault's withdrawal of support for its flagship series made headlines in the summer, but Oliver Rowland delivered on track to become the last FR3.5 champion. **PETER MILLS** reviews the season

Oliver Rowland emerged from a series of epic battles with Matthieu Vaxiviere to take a dominant Formula Renault 3.5 Series title. There was a paradox in that while he exhibited commanding superiority, breaking records for the number of wins in a season, he was often made to extend himself to the utmost.

The refreshingly straightforward Sheffield racer explains: "Last year I think I had a lot of speed, but was only at my best in about 40 per cent of the races. This year was all about my approach and just giving 110 per cent every time I drove the car. I think that's what I did, and that's what I needed to do to beat Matthieu."

Both men came of age. Rowland has long been nurtured by the Racing Steps Foundation and generously mentored by BRDC president Derek Warwick. The Vaxiviere camp included agent Gwen Lagrue, the Lotus Formula 1 junior programme manager, and WRC champion Sebastien Ogier's fitness guru Xavier Feuillee. The latter's business, 321:Perform, enjoyed the resources to bring a transporter of gym equipment to every race.

Furious wheel-to-wheel racing was engaged in by the title protagonists at the Hungaroring (where they finished 20s clear of the opposition),

Red Bull Ring, Silverstone, Le Mans and Jerez. Refreshingly, it was conducted with respect rather than animosity.

"Matthieu pushed me hard all season," says Rowland modestly. "Sometimes things didn't go right for him that were outside of his hands. For example, I think my team was better in pitstops."

The Fortec crew's disciplined tyre changes proved decisive on occasion. In Hungary a 29s stop for Vaxiviere compared to a 27.4s turnaround for Rowland, who won by 1.5s. At Silverstone a troubled Lotus stop handed Rowland track position and the victory.

A post-Spa rule change to scrap Low Aero Configuration races on Saturdays upset Lotus in two ways. It was against in-season rule changes on principle, and it had conducted an intense winter-test programme working on that area. Nonetheless, Vaxiviere remained as efficacious as ever, and he was under no illusion that the title went to the right man.

"Silverstone, yeah, we lost it a bit on the pitstop," reflects Vaxiviere. "But at the end you look at the points gap and it's big, so he really deserved the championship. I want to say that Oliver is a great fighter. It was quite a nice battle between us. I really respect him because he is a really good friend. I am happy it was him."

Rowland was involved in several moments of virtuoso driving. After limping back to the pits

with a puncture in Monaco, a mesmeric charge produced sixth. Last on lap one at the Nurburgring, Rowland shot up to fifth in four laps. And a two-in-one pass on team-mate Jazeman Jaafar (admittedly in a battle-scarred car) and Tom Dillmann at Silverstone's The Loop could be described as downright flash.

If Rowland was a serious handful last year for outgoing champion Carlos Sainz Jr, then his assertions about having improved his game helped dispel any disparaging questions over the quality of the FR3.5 field. "I think it is probably as strong as ever," says Rowland. "I think in a couple of years there will be a lot of people in this year's FR3.5 paddock who will be doing well in motorsport."

FR3.5 driver advisor and former SG Formula team boss Stephane Guerin, who ran F1 pilots Jules Bianchi, Romain Grosjean and Daniel Ricciardo in their formative years, concurs.

"The level in World Series has been really excellent," asserts Guerin. "Le Mans and Hungaroring are not really circuits to race on, which is a bit of a shame, but the racing there was absolutely incredible. It was so close, so fast, and there were no crashes. It has been amazing. I don't see any of the problems that there have been in F3. Rowland is a real racer – a thoroughbred. Matthieu, [Tio] Ellinas, [Egor] Orudzhev, many others – the level at the front is extremely high."



VANDERLAAN/LAT



Vaxiviere (l) could not match Rowland's pace

Rowland didn't just win, he dominated



ROZENDAAAL/LAT

Vaxiviere did defeat Rowland in Austria

“This year was all about my approach, just 110 per cent every time” OLIVER ROWLAND

With two classy second-year drivers vacuuming up most of the results, opportunities were scarce for the remainder of the field.

Third in the points fell to Nyck de Vries, installed in outgoing champion Sainz's DAMS berth alongside Red Bull-backed Dean Stoneman, although it would take de Vries until the Jerez finale to break DAMS's 2015 win duck.

Events in round one at Motorland may have caused a degree of anguish for the McLaren protege. Leading until the final hairpin on the last lap, Vaxiviere pulled off an audacious pass around de Vries's outside. Both on wet tyres on a drying track, de Vries swerved into the Lotus-liveried machine on the exit, but the race was lost.

The FR2.0 Eurocup champion got his post-Aragon revenge on Vaxiviere in the second race at Spa. He maintained total composure to hold on to second when running on low downforce against an opponent who had the advantage

of high downforce and – because of a Renault Sport software glitch – unlimited DRS pulses.

Stoneman held third in the standings entering the final round. While the Red Bull junior was to suffer a catalogue of misfortune, de Vries strung everything together to take advantage when poleman Rowland slid off on the opening lap.

“To lose at the last corner at Motorland was probably my worst moment of the season,” said the Dutchman. “Unquestionably Jerez was the best. The win doesn't change the world but on a personal level it was satisfying and a relief.”

Ellinas and Orudzhev contrived to score two victories apiece. If Orudzhev was the surprise of the year, many expected Ellinas to find his groove earlier. It took until round six at Silverstone for Ellinas to score a breakthrough win, and the result was emphatic. The Cypriot extended a 14.5s lead before half-distance on his way to a first victory since the Abu Dhabi GP3

finale in 2013. Ellinas later emerged from a chaotic wet race at the Nurburgring to score a second victory.

Orudzhev exceeded expectations. At a heat-soaked Hungaroring the 19-year-old passed poleman Rowland away from the lights, kept a four-car-train at bay and triumphed.

Arden had around six personnel leave during the summer, and so had to bring in fresh blood. These changes, along with Orudzhev addressing fitness issues, may have contributed to the amiable Russian featuring strongly late season and adding a fine second win at Le Mans.

Manor Formula 1 driver Roberto Merhi's ambitious plans to contest a parallel season in FR3.5 failed to work out as planned, and the Spaniard had a truncated season at Pons. Merhi spent much of the opening weekend complaining of handling issues and engineer Humphrey Corbett's services were engaged for Spa, in ▶

► the hope of rekindling his successful partnership with Merhi from Zeta Corse last season. The ailments and grumbles continued in the Ardennes.

Patience waning, Merhi quit Pons after Friday practice in Hungary. A heroic effort was made to keep Merhi on board, Pons completed a total rebuild overnight and installed an ex-Fortec engine and gearbox. Merhi was persuaded to return from Budapest Ferenc Liszt airport, escaped the penalty for missing the drivers' briefing, and rewarded the team with its first podium since 2011.

Events in Austria would lead to the end of the relationship. Fifth on the road in race one was lost due to a track-limits penalty. Worse was to come. In a major error of judgment, Merhi slowed suddenly after taking the chequered flag and was violently rammed by the following Nicholas Latifi. Exclusion from the meeting followed, and subsequently a decision was made to concentrate on his Formula 1 commitments. ❌



RACE BY RACE



1 ARAGON

- 1 Rowland
- 2 Jaafar
- 3 Stoneman

Poleman Vaxiviere was squeezed off at the first corner after team-mate van Buuren jumped the start from third and cut between the front row. Van Buuren took the chequered flag first, but was relegated to fifth after receiving a 20s penalty. So Rowland headed a Fortec one-two with rookie Stoneman fighting off Vaxiviere for third.



2 ARAGON

- 1 Vaxiviere
- 2 de Vries
- 3 Rowland

Torrential rain caused the race to be suspended, and then reduced to a 20-minute sprint. An enthralling duel developed between de Vries and Vaxiviere, with both pitting for fresh wets five laps from home. Vaxiviere drove around the outside of de Vries at the hairpin on the last lap to take a stunning win.



3 MONACO

- 1 Jaafar
- 2 Stoneman
- 3 Dillmann

Jaafar produced a flawless win from pole, while at Ste Devote Vaxiviere outbraked himself, punctured Rowland's right-rear and swiped the wall. The race was stopped after shunts for Celis at Swimming Pool, and Bonifacio and van Buuren at Ste Devote. Rowland was scintillating in recovering to sixth.



4 SPA

- 1 Vaxiviere
- 2 Jaafar
- 3 Stoneman

In a repeat of the first-corner antics from Aragon, Merhi was knocked off on the first lap. Poleman Vaxiviere passed early leader Latifi around outside into Pouhon on lap six for the win. Jaafar then barged past the stubborn Latifi before completing the move at Blanchimont. Stoneman also passed the Canadian for third.



5 SPA

- 1 Rowland
- 2 de Vries
- 3 Vaxiviere

Rowland's title assault gathered momentum with victory as he and de Vries opted for low-downforce set-ups. Software malfunction allowed unlimited DRS, handing the advantage to high-downforce runner Vaxiviere. Light rain enlivened the closing laps. Jaafar, relegated to last on the grid, produced a great charge to sixth.



6 HUNGARORING

- 1 Orudzhev
- 2 Merhi
- 3 Rowland

Surprise of qualifying Orudzhev made the perfect start from second position, and passed snaking poleman Rowland. He then romped clear until suffering fatigue and allowing four cars to queue up behind him. Latifi ran third until hitting Vaxiviere and suffering a puncture. Merhi aggressively passed Vaxiviere before grabbing second when Rowland ran wide at final corner.



7 HUNGARORING

- 1 Rowland
- 2 Vaxiviere
- 3 Malja

Rowland executed the start of the season to leap from fifth into the lead. In their first of many scraps, a duel unfolded between Rowland and poleman Vaxiviere. Rowland eked out a 1.5s margin of victory after being assisted by a quicker pitstop. Malja also made a fast getaway to claim a maiden podium.



8 RED BULL RING

- 1 Rowland
- 2 Stoneman
- 3 de Vries

Rowland was on pole from GP2 racer Marlon Stockinger, who replaced van Buuren at Lotus. Rowland cruised to the win. Merhi 'shoulder-barged' Stockinger off Turn 1, before finishing fourth. The F1 driver was penalised for track-limit breaches and then caused an accident with Latifi after finish.



9 RED BULL RING

- 1 Vaxiviere
- 2 Rowland
- 3 Nissany

Merhi was excluded from both races after his race-one finish-line shunt. Vaxiviere opted for a high-downforce set-up. He battled Rowland on the opening lap, rode out the attack and went on to win by four seconds. Nissany took his best result of the season, while Fantin battled from 10th to fourth.



10 SILVERSTONE

- 1 Ellinas
- 2 Rowland
- 3 Vaxiviere

Ellinas was hit by fast-starting fourth-qualifier Jaafar into Maggotts on the opening lap, then pulled clear. While Vaxiviere and Dillmann were bottled up behind Jaafar, Rowland eventually passed both Jaafar and Dillmann in one move at The Loop. Jaafar slipped to 10th in a damaged car.



11 SILVERSTONE

- 1 Rowland
- 2 Vaxiviere
- 3 Fantin

Vaxiviere led Rowland from pole until making his mandatory stop on lap six. Three laps later, Rowland enjoyed the fastest pitstop of the day and ended up with a slender lead that he kept to the finish after an epic scrap. Fantin held off Stoneman for first podium of year. Ellinas was competitive but punted off twice.



12 NURBURGRING

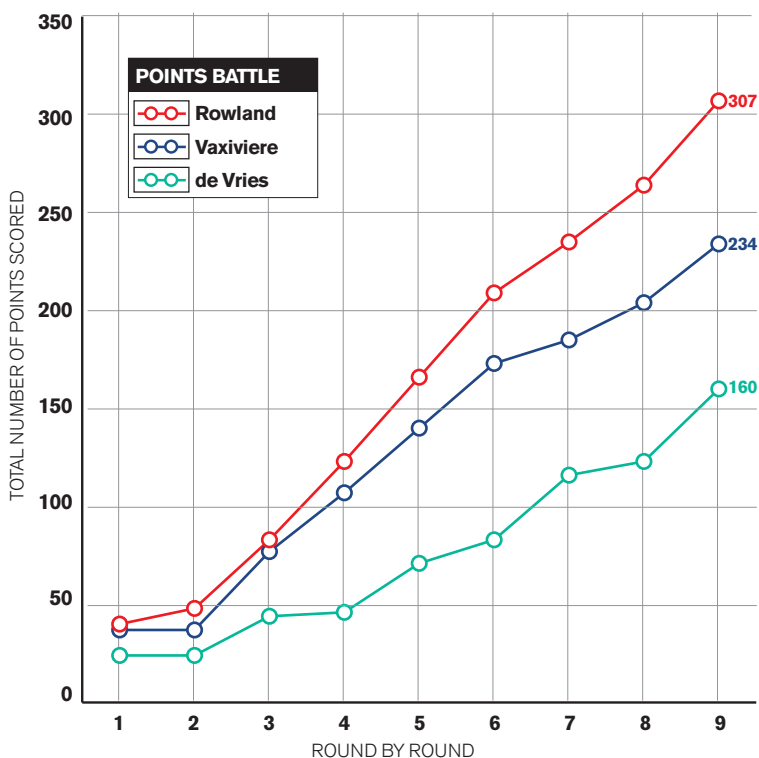
- 1 Rowland
- 2 de Vries
- 3 Jaafar

Rowland scored a trouble-free sixth victory of season and eighth consecutive podium. The Sheffield driver led every lap from pole and stretched title lead to 49 points over Vaxiviere. De Vries was a comfortable second, but DAMS team-mate Stoneman picked-up his second opening-lap puncture in consecutive meetings. Jaafar held off Vaxiviere for third.

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	TEAM & CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	PTS
1	Oliver Rowland (GB)	Fortec Motorsports	1st	3rd	6th	5th	1st	3rd	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	10th	1st	8th	1st	2nd	307
2	Matthieu Vaxiviere (F)	Lotus (Charouz)	4th	1st	DNF	1st	3rd	4th	2nd	6th	1st	3rd	2nd	4th	11th	10th	2nd	3rd	3rd	234
3	Nyck de Vries (NL)	DAMS	7th	2nd	11th	9th	2nd	11th	9th	3rd	5th	4th	DNF	2nd	3rd	7th	10th	4th	1st	160
4	Tio Ellinas (CY)	Strakka Racing	DNF	4th	DNF	7th	5th	17th	6th	9th	13th	1st	11th	6th	1st	9th	3rd	5th	4th	135
5	Egor Orudzhev (RUS)	Arden Motorsport	DNF	18th	4th	10th	9th	1st	11th	11th	DNF	7th	6th	9th	5th	2nd	1st	2nd	7th	133
6	Dean Stoneman (GB)	DAMS	3rd	12th	2nd	3rd	4th	6th	12th	2nd	DNF	DNF	4th	DNF	6th	4th	4th	13th	DNF	130
7	Tom Dillmann (F)	Carlin	9th	5th	3rd	6th	16th	5th	5th	5th	8th	5th	DNF	5th	14th	3rd	5th	DNF	6th	122
8	Jazeman Jaafar (MAL)	Fortec Motorsports	2nd	7th	1st	2nd	6th	18th	4th	10th	9th	10th	DNF	3rd	17th	13th	14th	6th	8th	118
9	Gustav Malja (S)	Strakka Racing	10th	20th	DNF	8th	14th	10th	3rd	7th	7th	6th	8th	8th	2nd	11th	9th	11th	5th	79
10	Pietro Fantin (BR)	International Draco Racing	6th	11th	5th	DNF	8th	DNF	8th	13th	4th	11th	3rd	7th	9th	-	-	-	-	61
11	Nicholas Latifi (CDN)	Arden Motorsport	8th	14th	DNF	4th	13th	DNF	17th	4th	DNF	8th	5th	DNF	DNF	DNF	7th	7th	10th	55
12	Aurelien Panis (F)	Tech 1 Racing	12th	13th	7th	DNF	7th	7th	13th	8th	DNF	DNF	9th	14th	DNF	5th	6th	DNF	13th	42
13	Roy Nissany (IL)	Tech 1 Racing	14th	16th	12th	14th	DNF	8th	14th	DNF	3rd	9th	14th	DNF	18th	8th	12th	9th	DNF	27
14	Roberto Merhi (E)	Pons Racing	DNF	9th	-	DNF	DNF	2nd	7th	EXC	EXC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
15	Meindert van Buuren (NL)	Lotus (Charouz)/Pons Racing	5th	6th	DNF	11th	10th	16th	10th	DNF	DNF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20

16 Alfonso Celis Jr (AVF), 17; 17 Marlon Stockinger (Lotus-Charouz), 14; 18 Yu Kanamaru (Pons Racing), 9; 19 Sean Gelael (Carlin), 7; 20 Nick Yelloly (Lotus-Charouz), 6; 21 Andre Negrao (International Draco Racing), 4; 22 Rene Binder (Pons Racing), 4; 23 Beitske Visser (AVF), 3; 24 Alex Fontana (Pons Racing), 2; 25 Bruno Bonifacio (International Draco Racing), 1; 26 Philo Paz Armand (Pons Racing), 1.



WINS	
ROWLAND	8
VAXIVIERE	3
ELLINAS (pictured)	2
ORUDZHEV	2
JAAFAR	1
DE VRIES	1

POLES	
ROWLAND	7
VAXIVIERE	5
ELLINAS	2
DE VRIES	1
JAAFAR (pictured)	1
DILLMANN	1

SUPERGRID	
2.8	Vaxiviere
2.9	Rowland
6.7	Ellinas
7.0	de Vries
7.0	Dillmann
7.5	Jaafar
7.8	Stoneman
8.7	Fantin
8.8	Latifi
9.3	Merhi
9.9	Orudzhev
10.6	Malja
12	van Buuren
12.6	Stockinger
12.9	Panis
13.4	Nissany
13.8	Visser
13.9	Celis
15.7	Gelael
15.9	Bonifacio
17.9	Armand



13 NURBURGRING

- 1 Ellinas
- 2 Malja
- 3 de Vries

Ellinas mastered the fluctuating conditions to score his second win in seven days. The Strakka driver and team-mate Malja required new nosecones, but crucially pitted before a safety car. The intervention ruined the chances of early leader Fantin, who later suffered a pit blunder, and Rowland, who recovered after being knocked off at Turn 1 by Ellinas.



14 LE MANS

- 1 Rowland
- 2 Orudzhev
- 3 Dillmann

Rowland stood on the brink of the title after this win. Vaxiviere hit Rowland on approach to the Dunlop Chicane, damaging his front wing. The home favourite succeeded in maintaining second from Orudzhev, but picked up a 10s penalty for cuts of the first chicane. Dillmann was promoted to third.



15 LE MANS

- 1 Orudzhev
- 2 Vaxiviere
- 3 Ellinas

Orudzhev vs Vaxiviere: the rematch. After their scrap on Saturday, the pair again took centre stage. Vaxiviere started poorly but recovered using a late pit strategy. Made a last-corner attack on Orudzhev, and skated through the gravel. A poorly Rowland qualified 14th but took the title with eighth place.



16 JEREZ

- 1 Rowland
- 2 Orudzhev
- 3 Vaxiviere

Rowland achieved a record-breaking eighth victory. Poleman Dillmann initially led in wet but drying conditions. Orudzhev was third in close attendance. Rowland took the lead on lap 10, but Dillmann was suffering a cut tyre. Vaxiviere finished third after a furious battle with Jaafar.



17 JEREZ

- 1 de Vries
- 2 Rowland
- 3 Vaxiviere

De Vries claimed his maiden FR3.5 victory as team-mate Stoneman retired in a grid collision. From third, de Vries nicked second from Vaxiviere, then took the lead when Rowland ran off track on the opening lap. Vaxiviere made light contact with Orudzhev, puncturing his tyre, before chasing Rowland home.

AUTOSPORT'S TOP 10 DRIVERS



SILVERSTONE
5th 6th SEPTEMBER 2015



1 Oliver Rowland

The class of the field, as his record-breaking numbers of both wins and points prove. If his final tally of eight victories was dazzling, it's worth considering that Rowland's haul could so easily have been in double figures. At Monaco he topped his qualifying group, only to pick up a puncture at Ste Devote. A similar fate awaited him at the Nurburging, where he started on pole in race two but was sent spinning off at the first corner.

The one positive side-effect of these incidents was to provide a platform for Rowland to showcase his fabulous passing prowess. The verdict on his year? 10 out of 10.

2 Matthieu Vaxiviere

A breakout year for Vaxiviere, who was a close match for champion Rowland on pace in many races and proved himself to be a formidable fighter. An injury-induced layoff in 2014 proved effective in focusing the Lotus F1 junior driver's mind and Vaxiviere came out of the blocks explosively.

Highlights from the season include: a stunning last-lap pass around the outside of Nyck de Vries to win at Motorland; overtaking Nicholas Latifi around the outside into Pouhon at Spa for his second win; and emerging from a wheel-to-wheel first-lap battle with Rowland to take victory at Red Bull Ring. Five pole positions and five fastest laps were indicative of Vaxiviere's impact.



3 Nyck de Vries

Losing a debut win on the last corner of the last lap could be regarded as an ignominious beginning for Nyck de Vries's introduction to FR3.5. But the Dutchman's overall performance from pole at the Motorland Aragon opener leant weight to his status as a potential title threat. That his first victory did not come until the final round at Jerez was no disgrace.

De Vries, whose karting pedigree is arguably a match for that of Formula 1 favourite Max Verstappen, was under pressure from being in his fifth year on McLaren's books. To end the season as top rookie and third in the standings against quality opposition was laudable.

4 Tio Ellinas

The King of Friday testing, Ellinas initially struggled to deliver in races. But everything came together at Strakka's home track of Silverstone, where pole position led to a resoundingly dominant win. The result validated the paddock view that Ellinas was the closest competitor to Rowland and Vaxiviere on pure speed.

The victory ended a run of tough races. Ellinas was an early retirement at Motorland, got caught up in the Vaxiviere shunt at Monaco, squandered a front-row start at Spa and had to retire with grass in his sidepods at the Red Bull Ring. Lady Misfortune was absent long enough for Ellinas to score a second success in foul conditions at the Nurburging.



5 Dean Stoneman

Stoneman had a big break in 2015 by landing Red Bull backing.

The Croydon-born DAMS racer entered the final round at Jerez third in the standings, a position he had held for much of the year. But a radio miscommunication led to an erroneous pitstop for slicks on an unsuitably damp track. This, coupled with a fourth opening-lap incident of his season in race two, undid much of the talented Stoneman's preceding hard work.

Strong second places were secured at Monaco and the Red Bull Ring in Austria, but qualifying was occasionally a source of frustration, and starting among the midfield contributed to many of the costly first-lap incidents.



ROZENDAAU/LAT



ROZENDAAU/LAT

6 Egor Orudzhev

Orudzhev burst to prominence at the Hungaroring, recording a shock front-row qualifying effort. Far from being fazed by his presence at the sharp end, the SMP-backed driver made a perfect start and built a healthy lead. A physical collapse threatened to cost the youngster victory, but Orudzhev displayed fortitude by hanging on. Afterwards he quipped: "It's a bit difficult when you can't feel your hands."

Following a relatively lean spell, Orudzhev emerged as a contender for victories during the final two rounds. In race two at Le Mans, intense harassment from home favourite Vaxiviere was expertly rebuffed for a well-taken second win.

7 Jazeman Jaafar

A third team in three years finally gave the Malaysian potential title-winning equipment. Finishing second in a Fortec one-two at Motorland augured well, and Jaafar blossomed to score a win from pole at Monaco.

He led the championship, and the position was maintained following a strong run to second at Spa. In race two at Spa, a scorching effort from last on the grid, after scrutineering issues in qualifying, was arguably Jaafar's best drive of the season.

But his form dropped thereafter. He suffered a puncture in Hungary, nose damage at Silverstone and a general loss of punch, all of which left him eighth in the final standings.



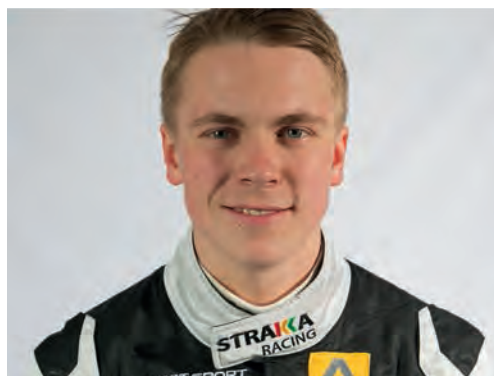
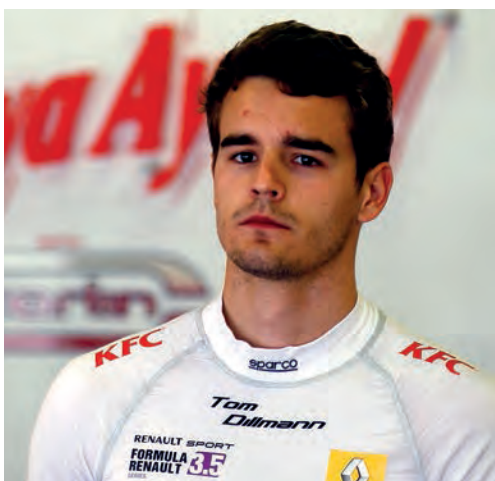
8 Tom Dillmann

Single-seater veteran Tom Dillmann was recruited, in part, to assist less-experienced Carlin team-mate Sean Gelael.

Much of the Frenchman's maiden year in the category was spent in the lower reaches of the top six, before a change of set-up philosophy at the Nurburgring in September produced a car more to Dillmann's liking.

The coveted win so nearly materialised at the Jerez finale. Dillmann took pole and led the early laps. But a cut rear tyre, the legacy of contact with eventual winner Rowland's front wing, sabotaged his chances.

The Mulhouse driver ended his year as an LMP2 winner for Signatech-Alpine in the WEC race at Shanghai.



9 Gustav Malja

The Swede should be satisfied with the clear progression displayed during his maiden season in FR3.5.

A failure in Saturday qualifying at the Hungaroring set the stage for a gutsy comeback from last. Just 24 hours later, the former ADAC Formel Masters runner-up had made a superb start from sixth and picked up his maiden podium. It was a fine drive, albeit 20s behind Rowland and Vaxiviere.

The Malmo driver never quite achieved really frontrunning pace. Only in the wet race at the Nurburgring did he appear in contention for victory. Malja fleetingly took the lead on the penultimate lap, but would lose out to Strakka team-mate Ellinas by just 2.5s.

10 Pietro Fantin

Third-year FR3.5 racer Pietro Fantin departed the championship abruptly two races prior to the end of the season without a win to his credit. But the Curitiba native impressed with a sequence of strong performances after a terrible weekend at Spa, where Fantin was almost castrated in a Friday practice crash at Blanchimont.

At the Red Bull Ring he produced a virtuoso charge, then at Silverstone he produced a podium by stolidly holding off Dean Stoneman. At the Nurburgring Fantin was an early leader but a number of issues conspired against him.

Firstly, an early safety car ended his chances. Problems were compounded by a pitstop mistake, leading to the despondent Fantin parting company with the Draco team.



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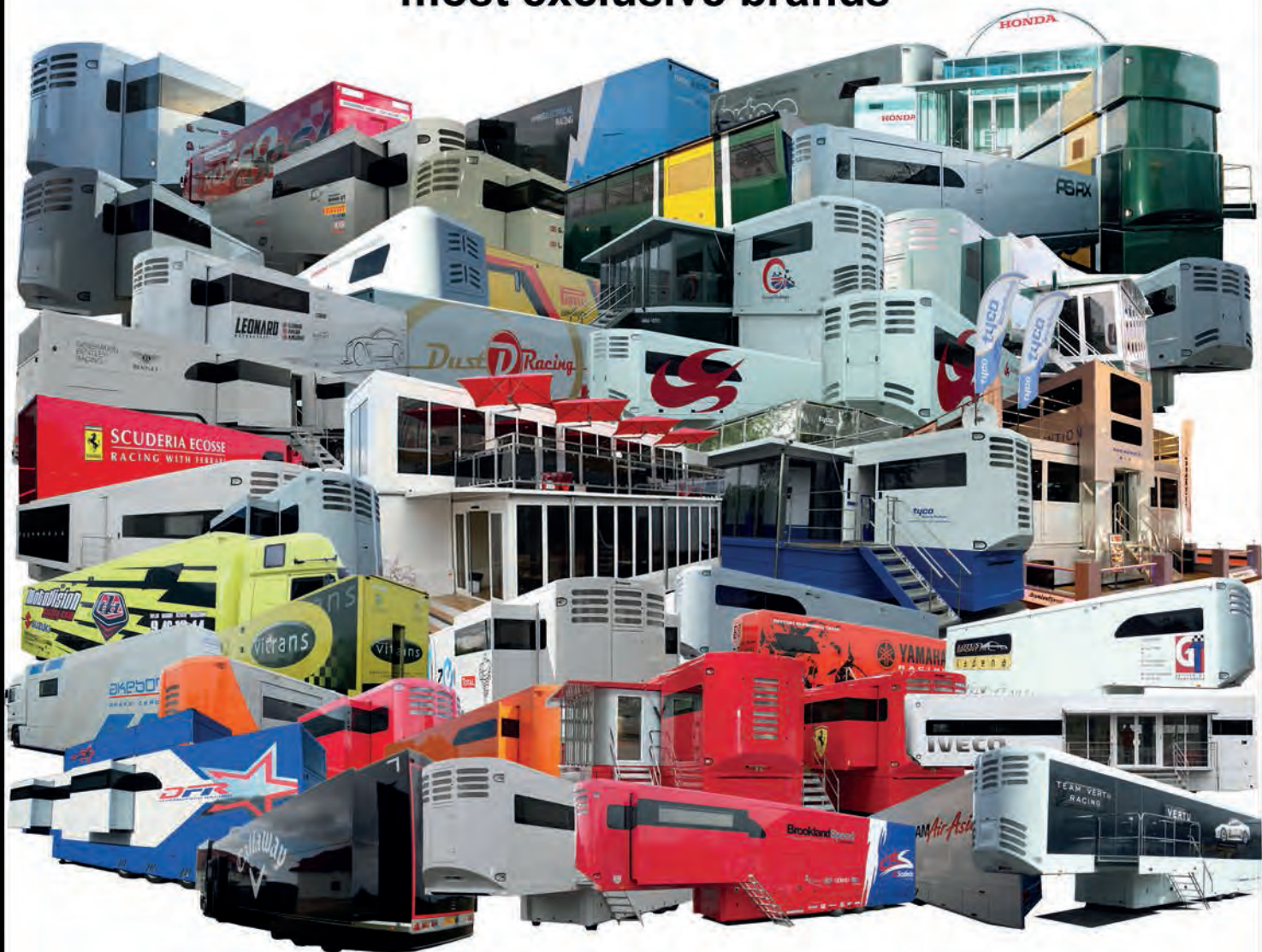


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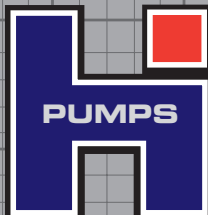
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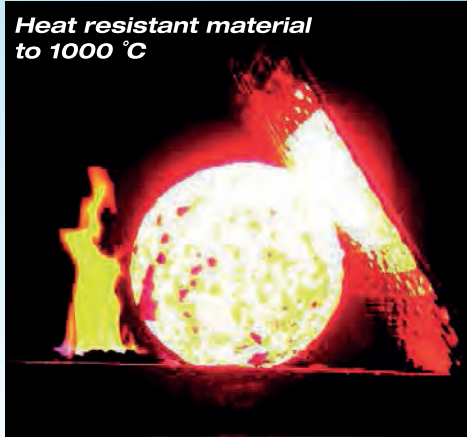
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Barnicoat raced at Snetterton



STYLES

Norris set for BRDC F4 debut

MSA Formula champion to follow Barnicoat in racing new machine

LANDO NORRIS WILL COMPETE in the second BRDC Formula 4 Autumn Trophy round at Brands Hatch this weekend after agreeing a deal to race with HHC Motorsport.

Norris, who sealed the inaugural MSA Formula title last month, will get his hands on the new-for-2016 Tatuus-Cosworth F4-016 for the first time in a Friday test when he celebrates his 16th birthday.

Rejoining the team with which he finished third in Ginetta Juniors in 2014, Norris will form part of a three-car attack alongside Sisa Ngebulana and Sennan Fielding, who both contested the opening round at Snetterton last weekend.

HHC commercial director Charlie Kemp said: "It's great to have Lando in. We have run him before and kept abreast of his development and have been impressed with him.

Norris's addition bolsters an already competitive grid, with Harrison Scott, Struan Moore, Fielding and Ben Barnicoat having all competed in last weekend's opening round at Snetterton.

BARNICOAT RETURN IN DOUBT Racing Steps Foundation's Formula Renault Eurocup race winner Barnicoat's continued participation is uncertain after admitting his disappointment with the Snetterton stewards who did not classify him in the third race.

The McLaren Autosport BRDC Award finalist had started from pole but lost his front wing after hitting a fast-starting Scott. Despite rejoining the race two laps down, Barnicoat was lapped once again when he allowed Fielding and Scott through, with the third lost lap

crucially classing him as a non-finisher and without any points from the race.

Barnicoat's Fortec Motorsport team protested the decision but was unsuccessful, leaving Barnicoat 45 points down on leader Scott.

"I did come out of the pits in front but I let them past because I saw that they were fairly close to me," said Barnicoat. "I 100 per cent did the right thing.

"It wasn't like I was three laps down because I was slow. I finished right behind Sennan so it was a great shame really that they didn't give me the points.

"That's probably one of the deciding factors why I won't go to Brands Hatch, if I don't. There isn't a great deal of point because I'm over 40 points behind."

BOSSSES PRAISE NEW CAR

Fortec team principal Richard Dutton was delighted with the performance of the new car.

"I don't think we had any intention of doing it originally until we looked at the car," he said. "We looked at this car and thought it is a Formula 3 car without spending a fortune on budgets.

"The car is fantastic," added Kemp. "It's a significant improvement from the previous car and it's finished brilliantly; I cannot fault it."

Norris will 'switch' F4 categories



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There was plenty of expectation for the new BRDC F4 car to live up to – both from onlookers and organisers – ahead of its racing debut at Snetterton this weekend, but it more than fulfilled those reckonings on its inaugural race run.

That might seem a rather bold claim to make immediately, given the relatively small size of sample it was tested against (just six cars started the final race), but this was without doubt a successful weekend for both car and championship.

It's no secret that the Tatuus-Cosworth F4-016 has undergone a rigorous testing programme since it was launched at the tail end of May, so the odd eyebrow may have been raised had there been any major problems with any of the cars.

Thankfully, that was not the case. But while that may not have been a surprise, it was encouraging for organisers that the weekend went without a hitch. The universal praise that the machines garnered from those racing and running them won't have done any harm to spirits, either.

But what's most encouraging about the weekend was the pace of the cars – and how much more there's left to come. Conditions were far from ideal at Snetterton, yet the fastest lap of the weekend – a 1m45.795s from Ben Barnicoat – was still more than three seconds quicker than anything the previous car had been able to manage.

For those competing, then, this was anything but a pointless experiment. If the opening weekend of the Autumn Trophy sets a precedent for the full season, then things are looking rosy for the BRDC F4 championship in 2016.

New BRDC F4's race debut was success



STYLES



Rollcentre won
2003 British GT title

British GT

Rollcentre back in Brit GT with BMW Z4

ROLLCENTRE RACING WILL return to the British GT Championship next year with a BMW Z4 GT3.

The Cambridgeshire squad has bought the Barwell Team Russia chassis, which will be raced by boss Martin Short and Thundersaloon regular Richard Neary, who have competed together in endurance racing this year in a BMW M3 V8 and

took the Z4 to victory in a British Endurance round at Donington Park last weekend. The entry will be lodged under Team Abba with Rollcentre Racing.

Neary said: "After many years of dabbling in motorsport I took the plunge at more serious racing with Rollcentre this year. The aim was to discover my driving level and improve it. Martin has brought me up to a good standard and

I've really enjoyed racing the BMW.

Short said: "Richard is very hard-working. He's always had a good driving ability, it just needed some fine-tuning. The Z4 is a very accomplished car, but at only 4.4 litres [engine capacity] it's not the quickest out of the blocks. But the braking distances and cornering speeds are very impressive."

Short, 57, will be classed as a bronze

driver next season, as will Neary, 48.

British GT organiser SRO is looking into a new contest dedicated to Bronze-graded pairings for 2016.

Rollcentre has an established history of racing in British GT and lifted the title in 2003 with Tom Herridge handling a Mosler MT900R.

It also finished fourth in the 2007 Le Mans 24 Hours with a Pescarolo.

British GT

Porsche squad In2 to make step into GT4 next season

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP SQUAD In2 Racing is plotting a two-car attack on the British GT Championship next year.

The team, which has strong links with the Porsche brand, plans to enter two GT4 cars, although team head Nick Dudfield is considering GT3 as well.

"The focus for next season for us is to be on the British GT grid with two GT4 cars, and there is the possibility of running a GT3 programme too," Dudfield said. "We already have a driver pairing committed so the plans are gathering momentum."

Dudfield said the choice in machinery would be between the Aston Martin Vantage GT4 and the new Porsche Cayman GT4. The Porsche, developed by the manufacturer as opposed to the

independent ProSport GT4 Cayman that appeared at the 2015 season finale, is due to be launched at this month's Los Angeles Autoshow.

"The Cayman is the car of choice as we have great experience of racing with Porsches since 2004," he continued. "However, the Vantage is the form car in GT4 at the moment so we have to consider it."



In2 is growing
its UK efforts

MSA Formula

Karter Quinn wins RSF backing for step to cars

LEADING BRITISH KARTER

Alex Quinn will progress to car racing in 2016 after winning backing from the Racing Steps Foundation to compete in MSA Formula.

Quinn, 15 next month, was chosen as the recipient of the fully funded drive after an assessment and will race for Fortec Motorsport with RSF backing. His winter testing programme is due to begin later this month.

RSF coordinator Derek Walters said: "Alex impressed the entire team



Fortec will run
new RSF rookie

of assessors with his all-round capabilities. His times on the simulator and in the MSA Formula car at Rockingham were competitive from the word go and not so far off one of our more senior drivers.

"Considering it was his first time in a single-seater, his feedback and set-up understanding were impressive too. It will be a tough championship for Alex to cut his teeth on but we'll give him all the support he needs to hit the ground running."

MSA steps in over fears of mandatory racing insurance

THE MSA IS WORKING TO minimise the impact of a European ruling on motor insurance.

A European Court of Justice decision last year has set the precedent that accidents on private land should be covered by compulsory

vehicle insurance, prompting fears people could be priced out of racing.

MSA general secretary Simon Blunt said: "Regulated motorsports are well insured from a public-liability perspective. However, at the moment the consequence of the Vnuk [ruling] for

regulated motorsports could be that all competition vehicles may need to have compulsory third-party motor insurance, despite taking part in events on private land, away from the public highway.

"Currently we are not aware of any available product in the insurance market

that would provide this cover for competitors.

"Therefore, the MSA is in discussions with the Department for Transport, insurers, the FIA and other relevant stakeholders in the UK and Europe to find a practical solution."

Porsche Carrera Cup GB

Eastwood scoops Carrera Cup scholarship for 2016/17

FORMER BRDC FORMULA 4

racer Charlie Eastwood has won the Porsche Carrera Cup GB's two-year scholarship prize.

The 20-year-old Northern Irishman, who contested a handful of Formula Renault races in Europe this year, beat Sam Brabham, Ashley Crossey and Hannah Pym to the prize after various on and off-track assessments.



Eastwood celebrates with MacNaughton

As well as the scholarship, which provides him with £80,000 towards a two-year budget for 2016 and '17, Eastwood will also receive fitness and media guidance from Porsche.

Porsche UK motorsport manager James MacNaughton said: "We are very much looking forward to working with Charlie as our 2016/2017 Porsche Carrera Cup GB Scholar.

"It is a fantastic opportunity for him, and one that I am sure he will grab with both hands. It will be fantastic to watch him grow and develop over the course of his two-year scholarship."

Eastwood succeeds previous prize winner Josh Webster, who became the first scholar to win the championship when he triumphed in his rookie campaign in 2014, before finishing third this season.

MotorSport Vision

MSV expands into France

MOTORSPORT VISION HAS

bought an airbase in France to create its first overseas circuit, with a five-mile layout planned for the Laon Autodrome.

Jonathan Palmer's firm already owns five British venues: Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton and Cadwell Park, plus its test

and corporate facility at Bedford.

The primary use of the 1263-acre Laon-Couvron site will be track days, testing and corporate events.

It will also host four race meetings each season, focusing on sportscars, historic, club and motorcycle racing. Its main five-mile configuration will include a 1.5-mile straight.



North-east France is MSV's new location

Ginetta Junior

HHC reveals Junior line-up

TOP GINETTA JUNIOR TEAM HHC

Motorsport will field its Winter Series line-up in next year's full championship.

Lewis Brown, who was third in the 2015 standings, and Will Tregurtha will have their first full seasons at HHC while Charlie Fagg returns. All three scored podium finishes with the team in last weekend's Snetterton Winter Series.

Brown will be contesting his third season in the category in 2016, with HHC boss Charlie Kemp hoping he will develop into the championship favourite. "Lewis did a really good job effectively as a privateer," he said. "He has a very sensible head on young shoulders."

HHC ran Jamie Caroline to the 2015 drivers' championship, making it three titles in the past four seasons, having secured the 2013 crown with Harry Woodhead and the 2012 title with Charlie Robertson.



Fagg returns to HHC line-up

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club racing



Pye was keen to experience F4 debut

"BRDC FORMULA 4'S NEW DIRECTION HAS ANOTHER BACKER"

Not wishing to miss out as I did on the debut of Jonathan Palmer's BRDC F4 initiative in 2013, with its Firman Cars-built fleet, I made the pilgrimage to Snetterton on Saturday for the opening of its second chapter. Six weeks after I watched runaway champion Will Palmer win the 2015 championship finale at Brands Hatch, the Duo Autumn Trophy marked the first official appearance of new cars.

As 2008 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner Alexander Sims assessed in his excellent Track Test (see last week's issue), the Tatuus-built MSV F4-016 is pitched perfectly at filling the gap between the MSA Formula and European F3. With its monocoque chassis, 230bhp Cosworth-developed Ford Duratec engine and high-downforce aero package, it's a huge step forward, yet costs have been kept in check.

While it was disappointing that only seven cars contested the first four-race half of the end-of-season competition – two each from HHC Motorsport, Hillspeed and class newcomer Fortec and a singleton from Douglas Motorsport – as a top-up for drivers who contested the main championship in the old 180bhp cars and sampler for 2016 aspirants, Snetterton fulfilled a useful function.

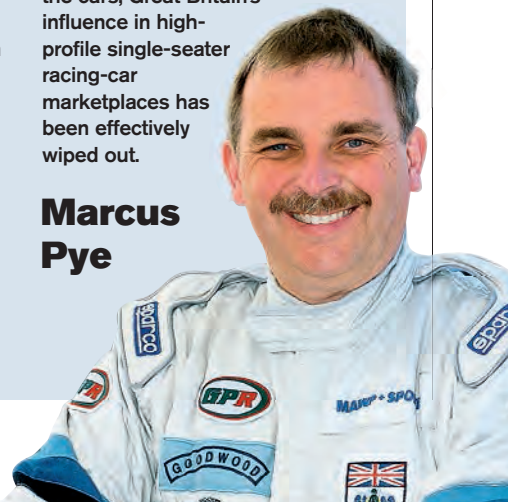
Fortec's Richard Dutton and HHC's Charlie Kemp were full of praise for the Tatuus cars

("I couldn't resist having a few laps myself," grinned the latter), but with equipes only taking delivery of the chassis in mid-October – and the unpredictability of Britain's weather in November – it was little surprise that F4 regulars such as previous champion team Lanar Racing preferred a testing programme.

What Snett proves was that the cars and teams will be closely matched, 0.7s blanketing the top four in wet qualification on the 300 circuit. While Harrison Scott and Douglas Motorsport made history as BRDC F4 Evo's first winners – their car beautifully presented in, as Wayne Douglas described, a "Paul Tracy" Indycar livery – Ben Barnicoat and Sennan Fielding also tasted victory for Fortec and HHC respectively.

My only tinge of sadness as I followed the first day's action was that, in going to Italy for the cars, Great Britain's influence in high-profile single-seater racing-car marketplaces has been effectively wiped out.

Marcus Pye





BRDC FORMULA 4 SNETTERTON NOVEMBER 7-8 MSVR

Rampant Scott nabs early trophy lead

HARRISON SCOTT SHONE BRIGHTEST during a damp-and-gloomy weekend at Snetterton as a new chapter started for **BRDC Formula 4** with the competitive debut of the Tatuus-Cosworth F4-016 chassis that will be used next year.

Scott, twice British Formula Ford runner-up, snatched a late pole position for the first race and duly converted it into an unassailable lead in soaking conditions to take the new car's maiden win with the Douglas Motorsport team.

Behind him, Ben Barnicoat led the chasing pack early on, only to aquaplane at Palmer and drop back to fourth. That slip allowed South African Sisa Ngebulana to inherit second, which he held to the finish.

There was drama behind him, though, as the recovering Barnicoat chased Sennan Fielding for the final

podium spot. The rivalry came to a head on the final lap when Barnicoat lunged into Montreal and the pair collided. Although Barnicoat took the place on the track, he was later demoted to fifth.

Despite the post-race penalty, there was a silver lining to the cloud for Barnicoat, who set the fastest lap on the final tour. That earned the Fortec Motorsport man pole for race two, an advantage he exploited fully to claim a lights-to-flag victory, although he had to survive a lack of grip in the final minutes after his rear-wing gurney flap fell off, which allowed second-placed Scott to harry him home. A distant Struan Moore took third.

It was in Sunday's first race that things really kicked off. The morning's qualifying session had been held in damp conditions, with

too much water to warrant a switch to slicks. Two hours later, though, and the choice was unanimous: dry tyres for all seven runners.

Barnicoat, who had earlier secured pole, was bettered by Scott off the line who then swept around the outside at Riches to snatch the lead. The pair soon came to blows, however, as Barnicoat tagged Scott's rear under braking into Montreal on the still-slippery surface, ripping off his own front wing and spinning Scott down to fifth.

Fielding thus took up the lead ahead of a charging Moore but, after challenging at Riches, Moore went off heavily into the tyre barrier and out of the race. Despite his rival's exit, Fielding's lead was far from comfortable as Scott quickly closed in, only for Scott to suffer another setback when he made contact with



Fielding fends off Scott early in R3

Fielding at Nelson.

HHC driver Fielding then settled down to become the third different winner in as many races, while Scott was able to reclaim second after another recovery run saw him pass Ngebulana late on. Faisal Al Zubair was the only other classified finisher in fourth – much to the bemusement of Barnicoat, who returned to the track after repairs but allowed rivals Fielding and Scott to put him three laps down to avoid interfering with their battle, meaning he was unclassified.

The final race was a far more settled affair. Scott converted pole, earned through the fastest lap in race three, into a first-corner lead of the now six-car field (with Moore ruled out after his earlier crash) ahead of Fielding, who made a blistering start to jump Barnicoat. Those two were soon reversed



Moore was OK after weekend-ending shunt



Scott took two wins and two seconds

when Barnicoat forced his way back past at the end of the lap, but their squabble put paid to any hopes of a contest for first, with Scott managing a comfortable lead, just as he had in the opening race, to clinch a second win of the weekend.

"It was a really good race," he said. "I managed to get away really well, built up a nice gap and just controlled things from there."

Barnicoat gave chase gallantly, but ultimately the Racing Steps driver had no answer to his rival's pace. There was a late change for third, though, as Al Zubair claimed the final podium spot when Fielding was forced to pit to secure a loose engine cover.

● Jack Cozens



Middleton was a cut above Ginetta rivals

SUPPORTS SNETTERTON NOVEMBER 7-8

Middleton blitzes rivals for Winter win

STUART MIDDLETON KICKED OFF his bid for the **Ginetta Junior Winter Series** title with a runaway win in the first of four races in damp-and-difficult conditions. His escape was aided by polesitter Lewis Brown and second-row starter Billy Monger both dropping places in the early moments. While Middleton surged into a lead that he never looked like relinquishing, Charlie Fagg claimed second in the opening corners. He secured the place when closest rivals Brown and William Tregurtha collided into Palmer and spun off. Their incident also promoted Connor Grady to the final podium spot.

Middleton looked to be on the back foot in race two, dropping from pole to third behind Fagg and Alex Day in the opening corners. But it didn't take long for him to fight back, reclaiming second when a moment dropped Day to the back, before battling past Fagg through Brundle and Nelson to secure top spot.

Once released, Middleton pulled clear. Further back, Tregurtha and Monger both leapfrogged Fagg on the final lap to complete the podium.

Middleton had work to do again in race three, having qualified only fifth. David Wooder passed fellow front-row starter Brown to lead early on, but it wasn't long before Middleton surged past both en route to completing a hat-trick of wins.

It was enough to give him the points he needed to clinch the Winter Series title with a race to spare. Meanwhile, a late charge from Sebastian Perez was rewarded with a popular and well-deserved third.

Despite taking the lead early on in the final race, the new champion's winning run finally foundered when Monger surged past him. While Middleton dropped back further to finish fourth, Monger held off Brown and Wooder to secure the win. Meanwhile, Harry King's unbeaten run in the rookie class came to an end courtesy of Max Bird, but King had done enough to secure the title.

By far the biggest grids of the weekend came courtesy of the four **Allcomers** races, in which Tim Gray's rapid Spire GT3 came within five laps of a clean sweep.

Having sped clear of the field to win the first three races, lapping most of his rivals along the way, Gray looked like completing the set.

But a broken exhaust manifold late in the final race ended his run. Instead, Barry Liversidge scooped the laurels in his Radical SR1, ahead of Gary Bate's Caterham R400.

There were impressive drives aplenty throughout the races, not least from Jordan Sanders in the Juno, who surged through from a pitlane start to finish fourth in race one. He followed that up with runner-up spot in race two.

Kane Astin and Shayne Deegan set the pace in the trio of **Mini Challenge** races. Astin overhauled early leader Niven Burge to win the opener, while Deegan recovered from a poor start to surge back up the order at the wheel of Mini legend Peter Baldwin's old car to finish second.

Deegan went one better in race two, passing Astin early on and staying ahead for a convincing win. Meanwhile, Burge recovered from an early spin to secure third. Another win for Deegan in race three ensured he ended up as the top driver, winning the right to use the '50' numberplate when the Mini Challenge celebrates its 50th anniversary next year.

● Oliver Timson

RESULTS

RACE 1 (10 LAPS) 1 Harrison Scott 21m53.794s (81.35mph); 2 Sisa Ngebulana +16.116s; 3 Sennan Fielding; 4 Struan Moore; 5 Ben Barnicoat; 6 Faisal Al Zubair. **Fastest lap** Barnicoat 2m08.450s (83.20mph). **Pole** Scott. **Starters** 7.
RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Barnicoat 20m57.442s (84.99mph); 2 Scott +0.361s; 3 Moore; 4 Ameya Vaidyanathan; 5 Ngebulana; 6 Al Zubair. **FL** Barnicoat 2m03.958s (84.99mph). **P** Barnicoat. **S** 7.
RACE 3 (10 LAPS) 1 Fielding 19m27.775s (91.52mph); 2 Scott +12.405s; 3 Ngebulana; 4 Al Zubair; no other finishers. **FL** Scott 1m49.768s (97.36mph). **P** Barnicoat. **S** 7.
RACE 4 (10 LAPS) 1 Scott 17m54.863s (99.43mph); 2 Barnicoat +2.342s; 3 Al Zubair; 4 Fielding; 5 Vaidyanathan; no other finishers. **FL** Barnicoat 1m45.795s (101.02mph). **P** Scott. **S** 6.
POINTS 1 Scott 128; 2 Fielding 95; 3 Barnicoat 83; 4 Al Zubair 79; 5 Ngebulana 72; 6 Moore 45.

RESULTS

GINETTA JUNIOR WINTER SERIES (6 LAPS)
1 Stuart Middleton 15m56.706s (67.03mph); 2 Charlie Fagg +17.596s; 3 Connor Grady; 4 Harry King; 5 Dave Wooder; 6 Max Bird. **Fastest Lap** Middleton 2m37.963s (67.66mph). **P** Middleton. **S** 19.
RACE 2 (6 LAPS) 1 Middleton 16m10.881s (66.05mph); 2 William Tregurtha +8.823s; 3 Billy Monger; 4 Fagg; 5 Grady; 6 King. **FL** Wooder 2m38.385s (67.48mph). **P** Middleton. **S** 19.
RACE 3 (6 LAPS) 1 Middleton 15m11.324s (70.36mph); 2 Brown +8.503s; 3 Sebastian Perez; 4 Tregurtha; 5 Monger; 6 Geri Nicosia. **FL** Alex Day 2m27.908s (72.26mph). **P** Brown. **S** 19.
RACE 4 (6 LAPS) 1 Monger 14m31.815s (73.55mph); 2 Brown +0.140s; 3 Wooder; 4 Middleton; 5 Perez; 6 Nicosia. **FL** Brown

2m22.449s (75.03mph). **P** Middleton. **S** 19.
MSVR ALLCOMERS (9 LAPS) 1 Tim Gray (Spire GT3) 21m03.215s (76.14mph); 2 Tom Eden (Caterham CSR) +43.795s; 3 Fabio Randaccio (Lotus Europa); 4 Jordan Sanders (Juno CN2012); 5 Simon Smith (Caterham CSR); 6 Gary Bate (Caterham R400). **FL** Sanders 2m13.997s (79.76mph). **P** Gray. **S** 35.
RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Gray 17m59.459s (79.21mph); 2 Sanders +49.660s; 3 Randaccio; 4 Bate; 5 Smith; 6 Barry Liversidge (Radical SR1). **FL** Sanders 2m11.629s (81.19mph). **P** Gray. **S** 37.
RACE 3 (10 LAPS) 1 Gray 20m11.055s (88.25mph); 2 Eden +1m23.752s; 3 Smith; 4 Liversidge; 5 Bate; 6 Peter Tyler (Radical SR1). **FL** Gray 1m58.372s (90.29mph). **P** Bate. **S** 35.
RACE 4 (10 LAPS) 1 Liversidge 21m21.191s (83.42mph); 2 Bate +15.668s; 3 Tyler; 4 Paul Browes (Caterham R300); 5 Luke Browes (Caterham R300);

6 Lee Spencer (BMW M3 E36). **FL** Gray 1m52.734s (94.80mph). **P** Gray. **S** 33.
MINI SE7EN CHALLENGE (8 LAPS) 1 Kane Astin (Miglia) 21m10.536s (67.29mph); 2 Shayne Deegan (Miglia) +3.232s; 3 Niven Burge (Miglia); 4 Tristan Knight (Miglia); 5 Ashley Davies (Se7en); 6 Jabez Dyer (Se7en). **FL** Deegan 2m35.601s (68.68mph). **P** Astin. **S** 9.
RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Deegan 17m20.294s (71.91mph); 2 Astin +9.711s; 3 Burge; 4 Rupert Deeth (Miglia); 5 Davies; 6 Leon Wightman (Se7en). **FL** Astin 2m25.782s (73.31mph). **P** Astin. **S** 9.
RACE 3 (9 LAPS) 1 Deegan 20m40.271s (77.55mph); 2 Deeth +14.220s; 3 Knight; 4 Burge; 5 Davies; 6 Dyer. **FL** Deegan 2m15.255s (79.02mph). **P** Deegan. **S** 9.

Champion Michael Smith
heads R2 winner
Freddie Lee



BRANDS HATCH NOVEMBER 7-8 BARC

Lee wins as steady Smith wraps up title

FREDDIE LEE SCORED HIS FIRST Pickup Truck race win last Sunday to the huge delight of his illustrious showman dad Barry.

While Michael Smith scored well in both races to secure the Pickup championship for a second year, the spotlight was on the joy displayed by the Lee camp during a busy weekend programme, which was disrupted by monsoon conditions on Saturday and a truck-diesel spillage on Sunday.

Carl Boardley recorded his fifth win of a limited season in race one, with Scott Bourne second and Mark Willis third. Boardley then came within inches of spoiling the Lee party when he nearly trapped Freddie behind a lapped backmarker on the last lap of a shortened second event. Willis was third again after passing David O'Regan near the end.

John Mickel, another title favourite before the weekend, was crowned **Legends** champion in the fourth of six scheduled races despite fielding a car whose set-up was far from suited to the persistently difficult track conditions.

Matthew Pape and Ben Power won Saturday's heats in simply appalling weather. The first race required two safety-car interventions and was red-flagged after just three laps. Pape won the rerun by an untypical Legends margin – over 7s – from Jack Parker and Euan McKay. Parker was third behind Power and Daniel McKay in heat two, and Ben Mason won that day's finale after passing Belgian Guy Fastres near the end. Mickel, recent World Masters winner in the USA, stayed out of trouble to keep his points ticking over in 15th, 10th and 11th places.



Mickel sealed
Legends title

Power won Sunday's first heat by a tiny margin from Daniel McKay, but in 11th place Mickel's points score guaranteed him the title, lifting a heavy weight from his shoulders. Heat two was cancelled during an 80-minute delay to mop up spilled diesel around a large part of the circuit, and the finale was halted early after a car overturned at Paddock, handing Tom Grainger his first race victory.

Malcolm Blackman celebrated his **Intermarque** title-winning season with two more wins in his Tigra in Saturday's wild conditions. Steve Burrows (Peugeot 206) tried to stay with Blackman around the first corner in race one, but slipped back to hold a fairly lonely second place. Third was the subject of a keen tussle involving five cars until wet-weather incidents thinned them out. Lewis Smith, a visitor to the gravel trap in qualifying, brought out the safety car when another incident left him stranded at Druids. Further

adventures later in the race dropped Simon Smith and David Brooks back in the pack, enabling Mark Fuller to claim third after a strong and well-judged performance.

Richard Smith led for a couple of seconds heading into Druids on lap one of race two, but couldn't make the corner cleanly. He later retired, beached at Paddock. Blackman won from Ricky Hunn, who rose from 18th on the grid after his VW Corrado failed even to reach the first corner in race one, and Phillip Young was third. Burrows tangled with Chris Ayling and retired.

BARC South Eastern's **Tin Tops** also faced the worst of the weather for two excellent races, both won by the Toyota Starlet of Barnaby Davies. Chris Bassett was in front at the last corner in race one, aiming for a first race win until Davies outpowered him to the line. Bassett then suffered an almost unheard-of exclusion for lacking a working transponder, and his disappointment was compounded by a back-row start in race two. He charged his Peugeot 205 from 23rd to third, second in class to runner-up Rod Birley, as a slight consolation. After a trip through the grass in race one, Saxo driver Ryan Steel crowned his first race season with the championship. He pipped Cliff Pellin, whose double class win was not quite enough to close the points gap.

Birley wrapped up another **Motorsport News Saloons** title

Large crowd watched
on at Paddock Hill





Summerfield clings on as showdown is cancelled

Reigning truck champion Matt Summerfield defended his title by just two points on a weekend when the fireworks weren't confined to the pyrotechnic display on Sunday evening. A race-one clash with Stuart Oliver helped Summerfield extend the advantage he brought to Brands so that he could finish behind Oliver in later races and still claim the crown.

Luke Garrett kept the Division 2 pressure on Steven Powell by winning outright both of Saturday's saturated outings. But most eyes were on the Summerfield/Oliver battle, which came to a head at the final corner where Oliver thought he saw a gap. Contact sent him spinning down to fourth in class while Summerfield headed Ryan Smith and David Jenkins.

Race two was stopped to recover a beached rig, and Summerfield shadowed Oliver throughout the shortened rerun and lost only one point.

Race three, the first on Sunday, confirmed Powell as D2 champion after a struggle for



Summerfield took title by small margin

victory with Garrett. Oliver finished second in class to Steve Thomas despite an earlier tangle with Jenkins and Smith. Summerfield was fourth in class.

Oliver and Summerfield plunged off together at the start of race four but joined the rerun. Garrett won overall from Oliver, while Summerfield only achieved fourth in class. The title was still up for grabs, but the hotly anticipated showdown had to be abandoned without a single lap completed. In gathering dusk Shane Brereton came to grief at Druids on lap one, forcing the race to be abandoned with Summerfield still ahead in the points.

some time ago, but the final meeting in an otherwise triumphant season ended in disappointment with a first-lap retirement in race one when his Escort lost all drive after a gearbox input shaft failed.

Malcolm Wise took full advantage to take his only win of the championship campaign, although his Escort's transmission was also ailing by the end. Fiesta champion James Ross had his first outing in the family Escort WRC and impressed on a greasy track, even though he was overhauled for second by Luke Reade's BMW Mini.

Race two was always planned as a dusk event, which was just as well after the delays. Ross looked even stronger, gaining confidence in the much more powerful car, and was a threat for victory over Reade in the absence of both Birley and Wise. Sadly the enjoyable spectacle was ended when a hefty shunt at the foot of Paddock made it impossible to continue, and the result was declared after only two laps. Olly Allen, Gavin Thomson and Pantelis Christoforou were third, fourth and fifth, each driver winning a class.

● Brian Phillips



Oliver (right fore) was caught up in clashes

RESULTS

BRITISH TRUCK RACING CHAMPIONSHIP (14 LAPS)
1 Luke Garrett (ERF) 17m08.048s (59.21mph);
 2 Matt Summerfield (MAN TGS) +5.271s; 3 Ryan Smith (MAN TGA); 4 David Jenkins (MAN TGX); 5 Steven Powell (Foden Alfa); 6 Ray Coleman (Renault). **Class winner** Summerfield. **Fastest lap** Stuart Oliver (Volvo RH13) 1m09.557s (62.51mph). **Pole** Powell. **Starters** 20. **RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Garrett 12m08.903s**



Bassett and Davies did battle in Tin Tops

(59.65mph); 2 Oliver +10.346s; 3 Summerfield; 4 Adam Bint (Volvo White); 5 Ryan Colson (Iveco Atkinson); 6 Jenkins. **CW** Oliver. **FL** Oliver 1m09.571s (62.50mph). **P** Trevor Martin (Scania). **S** 17. **RACE 3 (14 LAPS) 1 Powell 16m55.330s (59.96mph);**
 2 Garrett +0.366s; 3 Steve Thomas (MAN TGX); 4 Oliver; 5 Jenkins; 6 Summerfield. **CW** Thomas. **FL** Jenkins 1m07.256s (64.65mph). **P** Jim Bennett (Seddon Atkinson). **S** 20. **RACE 4 (8 LAPS) 1 Garrett 9m41.781s (59.79mph);**
 2 Oliver +1.964s; 3 Tony Smith (Sisu); 4 R Smith; 5 Richard Collett (MAN TGX); 6 Summerfield. **CW** Oliver. **FL** Oliver 1m07.464s (64.45mph). **P** Brian Burt (Volvo White). **S** 17. **PICKUP TRUCK RACING CHAMPIONSHIP (18 LAPS)**
1 Carl Boardley 18m06.826s (72.02mph); 2 Scott Bourne +0.188s; 3 Mark Willis; 4 David Longhurst; 5 Gavin Murray; 6 Paul Tompkins. **FL** Boardley 59.018s (73.68mph). **P** Bourne. **S** 18. **RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Freddie Lee 12m30.218s (69.55mph);** 2 Boardley +0.120s; 3 Willis; 4 David O'Regan; 5 Longhurst; 6 Michael Smith. **FL** Boardley 1m00.490s (71.88mph). **P** Charlie Weaver. **S** 19. **LEGEND CARS CHAMPIONSHIP SATURDAY HEAT 1 (8 LAPS) 1 Matthew Pape 9m23.416s (61.74mph);**
 2 Jack Parker +7.334s; 3 Euan McKay; 4 Will Gibson; 5 James Holman; 6 Ben Power. **FL** Pape 1m08.889s

(63.12mph). **P** E McKay. **S** 28. **HEAT 2 (10 LAPS)**
1 Power 11m47.953s (61.42mph); 2 Daniel McKay +2.671s; 3 Parker; 4 Connor Mills; 5 E McKay; 6 Holman. **FL** D McKay 1m09.078s (62.95mph). **P** Mills. **S** 28. **FINAL (11 LAPS) 1 Ben Mason 15m27.180s (51.59mph);**
 2 Guy Fastres +0.252s; 3 E McKay; 4 Mills; 5 Parker; 6 Power. **FL** Mason 1m09.596s (62.48mph). **P** Steve Whitelegg. **S** 28. **SUNDAY HEAT 1 (10 LAPS) 1 Power 11m11.743s (64.73mph);** 2 D McKay +0.034s; 3 John Paterson; 4 Mills; 5 Parker; 6 E McKay. **FL** Pape 1m04.292s (67.63mph). **P** Rickie Leggatt. **S** 27. **FINAL (6 LAPS)**
1 Tom Grainger 6m43.863s (64.60mph); 2 Gibson +1.096s; 3 Holman; 4 Mills; 5 Fastres; 6 Nathan Anthony. **FL** Mills 1m05.420s (66.47mph). **P** Fastres. **S** 27. **INTERMARQUE CHAMPIONSHIP (13 LAPS) 1 Malcolm Blackman (Vauxhall Tigra) 15m00.664s (62.76mph);**
 2 Steve Burrows (Peugeot 206) +3.835s; 3 Mark Fuller (Mercedes SLK); 4 Malcolm Harding (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Richard Smith (Mercedes SLK); 6 Philip Young (Mitsubishi Colt). **FL** Blackman 1m01.834s (70.32mph). **P** Blackman. **S** 18. **RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Blackman 15m13.524s (57.12mph);** 2 Ricky Hunn (VW Corrado) +4.163s; 3 Young; 4 Fuller; 5 David Brooks (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 Harding. **FL** Blackman 1m00.266s (72.15mph). **TIN TOPS CHAMPIONSHIP (14 LAPS) 1 Barnaby Davies**

(Toyota Starlet GT Turbo) 15m20.749s (66.12mph); 2 Rod Birley (Honda Integra) +1.700s; 3 Cliff Pellin (Ford Fiesta ST150); 4 Chris Whiteman (Honda Civic Type R); 5 Daniel Adams (Proton Satria); 6 Carey Lewis (Honda Civic Type R). **CW** Birley; Pellin; Mikey Day (Citroen Saxo). **FL** Davies 1m04.768s (67.14mph). **P** Chris Bassett (Peugeot 205 GTI). **S** 23. **RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Davies 15m09.786s (66.91mph);**
 2 Birley +4.757s; 3 Bassett; 4 Andy Baker (Peugeot 205 GTI); 5 Pellin; 6 Whiteman. **CW** Birley; Pellin; Ryan Steel (Citroen Saxo). **FL** Davies 1m04.070s (67.87mph). **P** Davies. **S** 24. **MOTORSPORT NEWS SALOON CAR CHAMPIONSHIP (16 LAPS) 1 Malcolm Wise (Ford Escort Cosworth) 15m33.997s (74.49mph);** 2 Luke Reade (Mini Cooper S) +2.590s; 3 James Ross (Ford Escort WRC); 4 Olly Allen (Ford Fiesta); 5 Gavin Thomson (Peugeot 205); 6 Ian Butler (Ford Focus RS). **CW** Allen; Thomson; Butler; Andy Pipe (Ford Escort Mk1). **FL** Wise 56.289s (77.25mph). **P** Wise. **S** 28. **RACE 2 (2 LAPS) 1 Reade 2m03.756s (70.27mph);** 2 Ross +0.405s; 3 Allen; 4 Thomson; 5 Pantelis Christoforou (Ford Escort); 6 David Charlton (SEAT Leon). **CW** Allen; Thomson; Christoforou; Pipe. **FL** Tom Knight (BMW E36 M3) 59.024s (73.67mph). **P** Wise (absent). **S** 23.



ANGLESEY NOVEMBER 7-8 RACE OF REMEMBRANCE

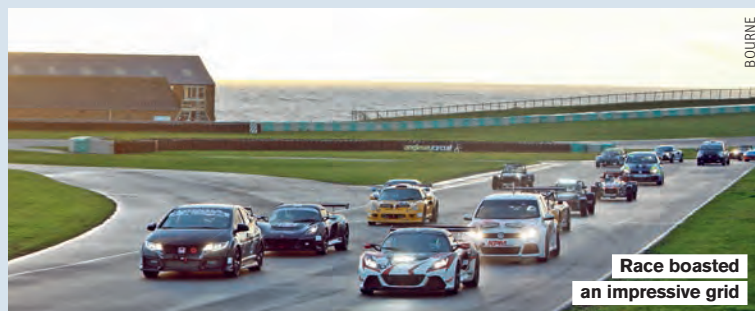
Lotus trio triumphs in frantic RoR race

A LOTUS ON FIRE, MULTIPLE safety cars, two circuit layouts, torrential rain, gale-force winds and a tight battle for the lead made the prematurely ended 1000km 2015 Race of Remembrance much more of an epic struggle than its charity status might suggest.

The weather deterioration led to the race being abandoned with under an hour to go, but it failed to undo event organiser Mission Motorsport's work, as 45 teams and over 100 drivers helped firmly establish the event's place in the British motorsport calendar.

At the finish it was the Lotus Track Club North team of Bob Drummond, Adam MacKay and Rob Myers who prevailed, bringing their Lotus Exige home four laps clear of a capacity grid featuring a number of national-racing luminaries.

Those numbers conclusively answered Mission Motorsport founder Jim Cameron and Race of Remembrance organiser John Earp's question of: "Who would want to come to Anglesey in



Race boasted an impressive grid

November, when budgets are spent and drivers are tired?" But a full grid is not the sole measure of the event's success, for this race was chiefly concerned with reintegrating injured soldiers and helping open doors to a potential second career within the sport.

More than 800 people have passed through Mission Motorsport's programme and the race's success in only its second year vindicates the work. Over 50 of Mission Motorsport's men competed, with 10 driving, and others supporting the teams.

One of the highest-profile entrants was returning 2014 champion team KPM Racing,

with a Volkswagen Golf driven by Lucas Orrock, Jade Edwards and Tom Onslow-Cole.

"It's nice to end the season with a more laid-back race," said Onslow-Cole. "I'm seriously impressed with the growth and momentum, and the quality is certainly higher than last year."

That quality was amply demonstrated by KPM's talented crew having to fight just to gain the final place on the podium. Edwards's astonishing stint in the pouring rain and gale winds hauled the Golf back into the duel for victory after Onslow-Cole had an early off on the opening tour, but then their hopes were dashed when Edwards handed over to Orrock, and fading brakes had to be checked before the car returned to the track.

For much of the race, three Lotuses contested the lead as the two Track Club entries, North and South, diced with the Track Club & Perry's 2-Eleven. The South Exige V6 held sway in the opening segment into the night, before a supercharger component failure set in motion an engine fire that illuminated the Welsh countryside.

The 2-Eleven headed the remaining Track Club North Exige of Drummond/MacKay/Myers for

Conditions were just one obstacle for drivers



BOURNE

Sunday morning's penultimate segment, but it almost seemed that the position of race leader was cursed, for a series of self-inflicted accidents ended their hopes of snatching victory.

A tangle and a spin with a Mazda MX-5 was followed by another unplanned rotation, which gifted the Exige a large lead as the one-time Lotus 1-2-3 was reduced to one. Those incidents opened up a thrilling battle for second, as Synchro Motorsport's road-going Honda Civic Type R climbed the order.

Having benefited from the calamities that had befallen the race leaders, the Honda eventually became embroiled in a pitlane battle with the Track Club & Perry's 2-Eleven. As the pit-exit light went green, the Civic attempted to jump the Lotus and collided with it. Both cars continued on-track as their team managers argued over cause and consequence.

The Civic regained second and held onto it, but it was a rather closer call for KPM. Orrock dived past the 2-Eleven five laps from the end to snatch third place.

● Tom Errington

RESULTS

RACE OF REMEMBRANCE (200 LAPS) 1 Bob Drummond/Adam MacKay/Rob Myers (Lotus Exige V6) 8h12m57.86s (51.12mph); 2 Alyn James/Dan Wheeler/Martin Byford (Honda Civic Type R) -4 laps; 3 Jade Edwards/Tom Onslow-Cole/Lucas Orrock (VW Golf); 4 Ken Savage/Ryan Savage (Lotus 2-Eleven); 5 Ben Brooks/Lee Brooks/Colm Flanigan (Lotus Elise); 6 Peter Mansfield/Tom Wrigley/Rob Boston (Mazda MX-5 Mk1); 7 Barnaby Geib/Simon Sharrock/Andy Perry/Rob Watts (Caterham 7); 8 Steve McCulley/Barry Moore/Paul Akram (Caterham 7); 9 Dan Ludlow/Brian Anderson/Alyn James (Honda Jazz); 10 Douglas Thain/Russ Olivant/Lee Collins/Matthew Welch (Caterham 7); 11 Simon Sleet/Mike Comber/Tom Collins (Mazda

MX-5 Mk3); 12 Anthony Coxon/Lloyd Allard/Tom Reid/Tony Cheetham (VW Golf TDI); 13 Anthony Nield/Paul O'Neill/Paul Sheard/Bryony Snowdon/Chris Snowdon (Mazda MX-5 Mk3); 14 Russell Tamplin/Geoff Gourriet/Nick Dougall/Steve Dolman (Mazda MX-5 Mk3); 15 Paul Abrahams/Richard Bernard/Jonathan Davis/Simon Hutchings/Tom Mills/Calum Lockie (VW Fun Cup). **Class winners B Brooks/L Brooks/Flanigan; Geib/Sharrock/Perry/Watts; Nick Dunn/Ian Loversidge/Chris Bexon/Jeremy Shipley (Mazda MX-5 Mk3); Mark Willetts/Graham McMurchie/Adam Bessell/Stuart Brittle (Mazda MX-5 Mk1); Will Earp/Peter McNicol/Andy Muirhead-Smith (Mazda MX-5 Mk1). **Fastest lap** Drummond/MacKay/Myers 1m42.12s (74.03mph). **Pole** Alex Reed/Craig Denman (Lotus Exige V6). **Starters** 45.**

DONINGTON PARK NOVEMBER 7 BRSCC

Donington double for Neary and Short

RICHARD NEARY AND MARTIN SHORT claimed a double victory in the **MSA British Endurance Championship** during last Saturday's BRSCC Winter Race Day event at Donington.

The championship winners, FF Corse Ferrari duo David Mason and Calum Lockie, were unable to match the pace of the BMW Z4 of Neary and Short, despite taking the lead midway through the first race after Neary went off at the Craner Curves in the slippery track conditions.

Lockie made use of a good start to get from sixth to second during the opening laps, which put him and Neary nose to tail until the BMW went off. But when Mason took over his pace was slower, which handed the initiative back to Neary and Short, who went on to continue their dominant form in the second race in the afternoon.

The non-championship-entered Audi R8 GT3 driven by Phil Hansen and Nigel Moore qualified on the front row alongside Ivor Dunbar and Johnny Mowlem in the second FF Corse Ferrari, but both entries suffered bad starts that put them down the order.

A good recovery drive from Mowlem enabled the FF Corse pair to get up to second, as Mason went



Neary/Short Z4 leads the pack into Redgate

WALKER

a lap down in the closing stages. Mowlem repeated this in the second race of the day, where he took over in the final stint and raced the 458 until it ran out of fuel and nearly left him open to attack from Moore's R8.

The E46 M3 driven by Mike Moss, Robert Gilham and Tom Howard led the Class 4 cars, while Neary also won Class 3 with Mark Lemmer in a BMW M3 GTR. In the final race of the day, however, it was the Nissan GT Academy duo of Romain Sarazin and Matthew Simmons who won Class 3 after Neary found the gravel early on the chicane.

In the **Touring** class, ex-Mini Challenge ace Jono Brown took the win in his Chevron GR8 from Peter

Challis (Porsche 997). The Chevrolet CR8 of Giles Dawson and Louise Richardson and Holden V8 Supercar of Alex Sidwell completed the top four at the 45-minute mark.

The results were virtually identical in the final race, in which Dawson lost two laps after serving a drive-through penalty midway through. This allowed Sidwell to cross the line in third place.

Will Corry won the first **HRDC Allstar Series** race in his Austin Healey Sebring Sprite, on what was his Donington debut. Corry diced for position with Jon Milicevic's Mini in the opening laps up front, while Phil Anning was also making moves in the Swiftune Cooper, getting up to second before a mechanical problem forced him out.

There was a last-minute battle between Ben Shuckburgh (Mini Cooper S) and Julian Crossley (Morris Mini) in the closing stages for fifth. Shuckburgh just maintained the place by 1.1 seconds at the chequered flag.

Jeremy Timms and his Dallara dominated the **Monoposto Tiedeman Trophy** races, the first of which took place in sodden conditions. Championship contender Geoff Fern spun off into the gravel at the Old Hairpin in the opening race, while a three-car pile-up between Kevin Couling, Simon Davey and Peter Lague at Coppice was the big story of the second encounter, which was shortened to six laps owing to a red flag.

● Rory Mitchell



Corry splashed his way to Allstar victory

WALKER

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RESULTS

MSA BRITISH DUNLOP ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (64 LAPS)

1 Richard Neary/Martin Short (BMW Z4 GT3) 1h29m58.584s (84.43mph); 2 Ivor Dunbar/Johnny Mowlem (Ferrari 458 Challenge) +37.759s; 3 Phil Hansen/Nigel Moore (Audi R8); 4 David Mason/Calum Lockie (Ferrari 458 Challenge); 5 Mark Radcliffe (Porsche GT3 Cup); 6 Richard Neary/Mark Lemmer (BMW M3 V8 GTR). **Class winners** Hanson/Moore; Neary/Lemmer; Mike Moss/Robert Gilham/Tom Howard (BMW E46 M3). **Fastest lap** Moore 1m09.811s (102.05mph). **Pole** Hanson/Moore. **Starters** 14.

RACE 2 (72 LAPS) 1 Neary/Short 1h28m19.320s (96.77mph); 2 Dunbar/Mowlem -1 lap; 3 Hanson/Moore; 4 Mason/Lockie; 5 Moss/Gilham/Howard; 6 Romain Sarazin/Matthew Simmons (Nissan 350Z GT4). **CW** Hanson/Moore; Sarazin/Simmons; Moss/Gilham/Howard. **FL** Moore 1m07.775s (105.12mph). **P** Neary/Short. **S** 15.

DUNLOP ENDURANCE TOURING CHAMPIONSHIP (30 LAPS) 1 Jono Brown (Chevron GR8) 45m05.176s (78.96mph); 2 Peter Challis (Porsche 997) +1m15.793s; 3 Giles Dawson/Louise Richardson (Chevrolet CR8); 4 Alex Sidwell (Holden V8 Supercar); no other starters. **CW** Challis; Dawson/Richardson. **FL** Brown 1m22.175s (86.70mph). **P** Brown. **S** 4.

RACE 2 (32 LAPS) 1 Brown 43m27.696s (87.37mph); 2 Challis -1 lap; 3 Sidwell; 4 Dawson/Richardson; no

other starters. **CW** Challis; Dawson/Richardson. **FL** Brown 1m11.213s (100.04mph). **P** Brown. **S** 4.

HRDC ALLSTAR SERIES CHALLENGE (16 LAPS)

1 Will Corry (Austin Healey Sebring Sprite) 31m00.628s (61.19mph); 2 Jon Milicevic (Mini Cooper S) +1.118s; 3 Neil Stark (Slark Mini Cooper S); 4 Adrian Barwick (Mini Cooper S); 5 Ben Shuckburgh (Mini Cooper S); 6 Julian Crossley (Morris Mini). **CW** Milicevic; Charles Rainford (Lenham Le Mans Sprite); Bruce Chapman (Austin A35 'Academy'); Jack Czabaniuk (Austin A40); Alan Wheelwright (Austin A35 'Academy'). **FL** Corry 1m53.895s (62.55mph). **P** Barwick. **S** 22.

MONOPOSTO TIEDEMAN TROPHY (10 LAPS)

1 Jeremy Timms (Dallara F399) 14m49.061s (79.98mph); 2 Shane Kelly (Van Diemen Renault) +2.605s; 3 Jason Timms (Dallara Suzuki); 4 Ian Hughes (Van Diemen RF88); 5 Neil Harrison (Dallara F302); 6 Terry Clark (Vauxhall Lotus). **CW** Kelly; Harrison; Simon Davey (Reynard 83FF); Ewen Sergison (Swift SC99Z); Neil Tomlinson (Dallara F398); Tony Cotton (Van Diemen FVJ). **FL** Kelly 1m26.010s (82.83mph). **P** Jeremy Timms. **S** 21.

RACE 2 (6 LAPS) 1 Jeremy Timms 6m58.256s (101.87mph); 2 Harrison +35.204s; 3 Nigel Davers (Mygale Ford); 4 Kelly; 5 Christopher Lord (Vauxhall Lotus Mk2); 6 Tomlinson. **CW** Harrison; Davers; Sergison; Geoff Fern (Van Diemen RF89). **FL** Jeremy Timms 1m07.748s (105.16mph). **P** Jeremy Timms. **S** 21.



This was as close as rivals got to Timms

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THIS WEEK

LETTERS • ON TRACK • TV PICKS • FROM THE WEB • AUTOSPORT.COM

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



Hamilton tells it like it is to 'Our Nige'

Listen to the world champion

While I am not always the greatest Lewis Hamilton supporter, he spoke an awful lot of sense in his conversation with Nigel Mansell in Mexico, talking about the proposed F1 chassis and aero regulations for 2017. He seemed puzzled that more aero downforce was being proposed as inevitably that would generate more turbulence and make overtaking even harder.

He was advocating wider rear tyres and smaller fronts, with a smaller front wing. Quite right Lewis. For easier overtaking, downforce from the front wing needs to be greatly reduced as it's that component that's most degraded by turbulence from car ahead.

So the aero centre of pressure needs to be moved rearwards, to suit the larger rear tyres he wants. To do this, the weight distribution rule (45.9 per cent minimum on the front) should be scrapped. Weight, aero load and tyre capacity need to move in tandem.

Keep the aero downforce much the same with more from the underbody and less from the front wing. Provide much more mechanical grip from the rear tyres, which will make the cars more driveable, more spectacular and provide better racing.

Well spoken Lewis, spread the word. World champions should be listened to.

Nigel Bennett, by email

I can't be the only one
disappointed at how Susie Wolff's racing career has seemingly fizzled out. We all saw her potential in Formula Renault and briefly F3. But, career wise, I think the DTM was a huge mistake. It is just the most overrated pile of tosh – not a patch on the BTCC, let alone V8 Supercars.

If only Susie had been bold and gone across to America instead. Look at what Katherine Legge and Pippa Mann have achieved. Both have become respected IndyCar/Indy 500 competitors. Who in F1 respects women drivers?

Susie could have been a huge IndyCar star by now, rather than another what-might-have-been. It's still not too late Susie, forget that F1 rubbish and start

kicking down some Formula E and LMP team doors and just go racing again!

Peter Kerr Hamilton, South Lanarkshire

Yippee – at last the voice of reason
in Derek Leslie's letter last week (possibly the only negative comment AUTOSPORT has printed all season about Lewis).

Perhaps now the unofficial 'Lewis Hamilton Fan Magazine' (AUTOSPORT) will stop the hysteria over Lewis. Yes, he's British; yes, he's a brilliant driver; and, yes, he is in the best car, but enough now.

I've been considering cancelling my subscription as this year has been a total biased Lewis-fest. There are other talented drivers that get a fraction of the coverage

the over-hyped Lewis receives.

Sheila Barton By email

A few weeks ago Ron Dennis
was interviewed during the F1 coverage. He was a changed man, fired up with passion, talking freely about the McLaren situation, and looking at the future with pure positivity.

With the new Ron – or should I say the real Ron – at the helm, together with his star champions, and with Honda wishing to succeed by winning and nothing less, they'll find their 2.5 seconds per lap, and be at the front again where they belong.

Mike Vickers By email

BIG NUMBER

26 This weekend's Brazilian GP will be the 26th consecutive at Interlagos since it returned in 1990 after a stint staged in Rio

DID YOU KNOW...

Joao Paulo de Oliveira, who heads into the Super GT finale leading the championship, tested a Williams F1 car at Valencia in April 2006



DUNBAR/LAT

WHAT'S ON TRACK IN THE UK

EVENT OF THE WEEK



Rally GB always attracts big crowds

MCKLEIN

RALLY GB

November 13-15
The final round of the World Rally Championship has always been one of the highlights of

the British motorsport calendar, and for three days in Wales the likes of Sebastien Ogier, Kris Meeke and Jari-Matti Latvala will thrill the crowds. Perhaps

even those who yearn for the 'The Lombard' should get back stage-side and remind themselves how they are still in love with rallying.

BRANDS HATCH MSVR

November 14-15
Formula 4's short, sharp Autumn Trophy comes to an end on the Brands Hatch Indy

circuit. This is the perfect chance to take a close look at the new, faster F4 machine in action. There will also be races from Formula Vee, Monopostos and saloons.



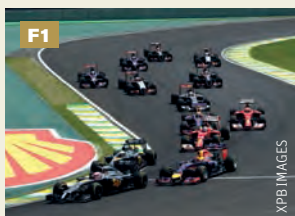
Out with the old: F4 has been updated

EBREY/LAT

WHAT'S ON TRACK AROUND THE WORLD

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX

Formula 1 World Championship
Rd 18/19
Interlagos, Brazil
November 15
f1.com



XPB/IMAGES

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 35/36
Phoenix, Arizona, USA
November 15
nascar.com



NASCAR

KINRADE/LAT

SUPER GT

Rd 8/8
Motegi, Japan
November 15
supergt.net



SUPER GT

KAMIO/LAT

FROM THE SOFA

WHAT'S ON TELEVISION

Swales works on both sides of the camera



STALEY/LAT

The odd life of an F1 producer

IT'S SEPTEMBER 2008 DURING practice for the Italian Grand Prix. BBC Radio 5 live is on air, with David Croft on the microphone and producer Jason Swales alongside. It starts to rain, lightly at first, before intensifying. Then the roof caves in.

"There was water running down the walls," says Swales. "The electrics were getting soaked and we had sparks, so I had to say to Crofty, 'Get us off air – we're leaving.'"

"The year before, we had a wasps' nest in that same commentary booth. A chap came over with a can of aerosol and a lighter. The wasps woke up and went nuts. We got out quick then too."

That's a glimpse into the life of a producer, a role in which Swales goes beyond simply planning a broadcast and ensuring it goes off without a hitch. He extends his role to firefighting in all sorts of random situations.

Now at American TV network NBC, Swales works with Will Buxton as part of a two-man team on the ground at every Formula 1 race. They record and send interviews and feature content

back to base in Stamford to be dropped into the network's studio-based show.

Having firstly discussed talking points with the office in the run-up to the grand prix, Swales sets up the interviews for the weekend.

When on site, he'll coordinate those interviews and even pick up a camera

"A chap came over with an aerosol and a lighter. The wasps went nuts"

himself to shoot material before transmitting it back to the studio.

After practice, he'll base himself in the media centre and cut together a 20-minute edit called *Paddock Pass*. "It's a collection of the interviews and stories of the day, and it'll normally take me a couple of hours to put together and upload," he says.

While the majority of races are on NBC's cable channel, four races are on terrestrial and, for those, Swales is aware that the style of the broadcast needs to be adapted accordingly.

"The emphasis is switched as we're appealing to a much broader audience who won't normally watch F1," he says. "So we have to avoid alienating them with phrases like DRS zones and stuff like that. But we can't dumb it down because we don't want to alienate the guys who do know what we're talking about – it's a difficult balancing act."

On the grid, Swales lines up guests to be interviewed by Buxton while directing the cameraman. Though the US commentators then take the lead for the race, Swales's work isn't over.

"Then it's over to the interview pen where we're based for the race," says Swales. "We'll watch timing, keep an eye on social media, text teams for updates and interview drivers if their races end early before sending back the footage."

Ahead of NBC's four mainstream races each year, Swales also turns presenter alongside Buxton, fronting an extra behind-the-scenes show for the bigger audience called *Off The Grid*.

"I'm doing my day job, which is a producer, and then I'm presenting for four days on top," says Swales.

"Those races are busy, but then I get to do some cool stuff, such as going go-karting with Daniel Ricciardo at Monza or riding into the Circuit of the Americas on horseback. It gets intense – but I love it."

Lawrence Barretto

TV pick of

Edited by Matt Beer



COATES/LAT

BRAZILIAN GP - LIVE
BBC1 Sun 1520-1800

Sky Sports F1 1530-1830

The quirky layout and quirkier weather tend to make Interlagos one of the more eventful legs of the Formula 1 run-in. Even if Mercedes is untouchable again, Nico Rosberg revitalised the intra-team battle by actually beating Lewis Hamilton in Mexico, just as he did in Brazil a year ago. The Interlagos crowd is also one of the most passionately patriotic of the season, and its spotlight will be on Felipe Massa, who certainly has a podium shot with the Mercedes-powered Williams. It's live on both the BBC and Sky this time.



VANDERLAAN/LAT

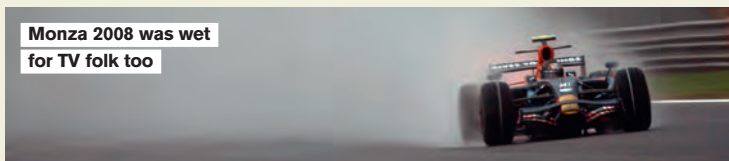
BT MOTORSPORT WEEKENDER

Sat BT Sport 1 1515-2000

Sun BT Sport 1 1430-1830

BT takes advantage of a window in its football schedule as the Premier League pauses for the international matches, the World Rally Championship coming to Britain and the huge array of motorsport series it covers wrapping up their title fights, to devote a huge chunk of its lead channel's schedule to reviewing the 2015 racing season. As well as analysing events in MotoGP, Formula Renault 3.5, the DTM, IndyCar and more with a host of studio guests, the shows will also feature additional live Rally GB coverage from the stages and service park.

Monza 2008 was wet for TV folk too



FERRARO/LAT

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Top stories on AUTOSPORT.com in the past week

HOW McLAREN IS 'COPYING' RIVALS

After Fernando Alonso's suggestion that McLaren needed to fall into line with its F1 rivals' design trends, Craig Scarborough explained how that process has already begun.

ROSSI: MARQUEZ WAS EMBARRASSING

...but by Sunday night hostilities had ramped up once again, as Rossi furiously accused Marquez of protecting Lorenzo in the deciding race and denying him the world title.

RED BULL ON BRINK OF NEW RENAULT DEAL

The Red Bull/Renault marriage looks like it will continue after all, with Ian Parkes revealing details of a new contract now ready to be signed – if it receives Dietrich Mateschitz's approval.

LAUDA ADMITS HE FELT SORRY FOR ROSBERG

Mercedes' legendary co-chief says he had a lot of sympathy for Nico Rosberg this season in the face of Lewis Hamilton's relentless form.

LORENZO APOLOGISES FOR ROSSI GESTURE

MotoGP's fraught finale began on a conciliatory note as the protagonists tried to put Sepang controversies behind them at Valencia...

AUTOSPORT+ FORMULA 1 POISED TO REPEAT 1980S WAR

Dieter Rencken believes another showdown is brewing in F1 and that it will rival the FOCA/FISA clashes.

the week



MCKLEIN/LAT

RALLY GB - LIVE

BT Sport 2 Fri 1000-1100
BT Sport 1 Fri 1400-1500
BT Sport Europe Sat 0930-1030
BT Sport 1 Sun 1130-1430

Too often, live WRC TV stages undersell the action, although organisers and broadcasters lucked in when Sebastien Ogier crashed out of the lead in front of the cameras with just miles to go in Spain last month. In Wales, BT Sport is not only substantially increasing its live offering (beyond the WRC's own streaming service), they're all proper forest tests too. On the short side, perhaps, but between the trees rather than around a car park at least.



KINRADE/LAT

NASCAR PHOENIX - LIVE

Premier Sports
Sunday 2000-0000

The showdown is nigh, and only retiring legend Jeff Gordon is certain to be in it, so there's a lot to play for at classic short oval Phoenix on Sunday. But the problem for everyone who isn't Kevin Harvick is that the reigning champion has won the past four races at the Arizona track. That's particularly troubling for Joey Logano, whose utter dominance of leg two of the Chase has been followed by back-to-back disasters to kick off part three. It's win or bust for him now.



EBREV/LAT

BTCC SEASON REVIEW

ITV4
Saturday 1010-1210
 When a season involves 30 races, hundreds of overtaking moves and an abundance of on and off-track flashpoints, it can be hard to remember exactly how its narrative unfolded. Some season reviews don't help this much, simply splicing together disconnected action clips with minimal effort to tell the story, but an extremely proper job has been done with ITV4's British Touring Car Championship review show – as you'd expect. First shown last weekend, here's another chance to catch the complete tale of how Gordon Shedden defeated Jason Plato to become a double champion.



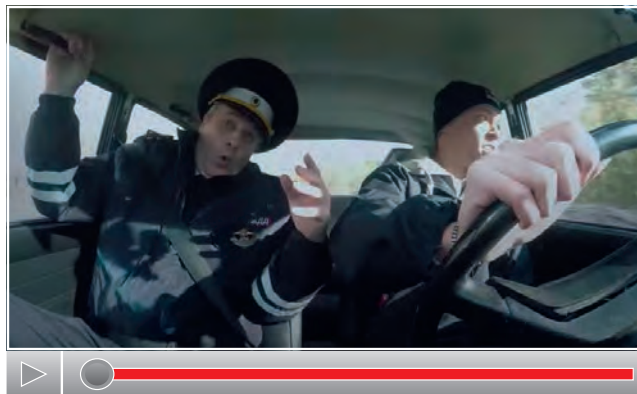
FERRARO/LAT

CLASSIC F1 - BRAZIL 09

Sky Sports F1
Wednesday 2100-2300
 Six years on, it's still hard to believe the 2009 Formula 1 season really happened. The previous pacesetters turned into also-rans overnight, a team that had struggled woefully for two years was rescued from closure with weeks to spare and then dominated for much of the year, before its runaway points leader's form went into a downward spiral and put the fairytale in jeopardy. But there was a happy ending for Jenson Button and Brawn GP, and it all happened at Interlagos, which Sky Sports F1 is replaying in full next week.

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube RED BULL RACER GOES BACK TO (DRIVING) SCHOOL



SEARCH FOR: Daniil Kvyat takes his Russian Driving Test
 It's a precondition of Daniil Kvyat's day job that he's in possession of a superlicence, but he'd never got around to qualifying for a regular driving licence back home in Russia. Until now. Maybe he should lay off the fizzy energy drinks before taking the wheel.

AUTOSPORT TWEETERS

- | | | |
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INTRODUCING

Ralf Aron

Estonian F4 star who's set to make a splash in European Formula 3



You can never seem to keep Marko Asmer away from a Formula 3 paddock for long. Since winning the 2007 British F3 title, the Estonian, an ex-Formula 1 test driver for Williams and BMW Sauber, has resurfaced from time to time in a coaching role. And now he's back, in the F3 European Championship, as advisor to his country's hottest new talent: Ralf Aron.

Aron, 17, swept to the Italian Formula 4 title this year with Prema Powerteam and, after a hugely impressive first F3 test at Vallelunga, is now looking set to stay with the squad for his graduation. So much so that he attended last month's Euro F3 finale at Hockenheim with Prema, and also plans to take a fact-finding trip to the Macau Grand Prix later this month.

Like Asmer, Aron comes from a family steeped in motorsport tradition. Unlike Asmer, whose father was a hero of Soviet single-seater contests, Aron's dad Ando was a leading rider in the scary world of motorcycle road racing, notably on the notorious Pirita track. And even Ralf's grandmother Tiia had a promising two-wheeled career before concentrating on her studies and becoming a champion of the Estonian equestrian world. "When I was a kid I really liked motorcycles," says Aron, "but I was always banned because they were too dangerous!"

Instead, he was put into karts. Most of his career was spent in the domestic ranks "because I was more focused on school, and when I then went racing in

Europe I didn't test the weekend before each race, like all the other guys did".

A very late decision was made to move into cars for 2014 in the Formula Renault 1.6 category, with Aron competing in the Swedish and NEC Junior championships with the Estonian Scuderia Nordica. "I only did four to six test days before the first race, not a lot, and the year was just learning," he says. "From the middle of the season I started going forward."

Aron then tested with Prema in F4, before contesting the one-event winter series at Adria, which he won. This time, unlike in 2014, there was plenty of preparation for '15, and Aron was also pleased to be paired with Chinese Ferrari protege Guan Yu Zhou, with whom he'd enjoyed big battles in his limited time in international karting.

"I was improving the whole season and it was really good that I had him as my team-mate [Zhou finished as runner-up]," says Aron. "In testing we were pushing each other to get better and better." The duo also contested some German F4 rounds, but Prema was playing catch-up here due to regulation differences on car set-up and not having tested on the German circuits.

So does Aron believe he can fight for the 2016 F3 title should the Prema deal come off, or will it be a two-year programme in the series? "It's hard to say. So far I've always taken it year by year, just doing the best I can. There will be some really strong drivers with experience,

but the goal would be to win the rookie championship at least."

And Asmer, who describes himself as a 'mentor' to Aron, will be in his corner. "I'm trying to help him avoid the mistakes I made," says Asmer, who is still active in GT racing.

"They are all young, you think you have time and everything, but it goes fast. You don't get many chances, and when you do you have to use them. It's probably getting past the point where you tell him how to drive; now there are many things more important than 'brake like this'. We'll see: with good preparation let's see how he gets on." *Marcus Simmons*

CV

Age 17
Hometown Tallinn, Estonia



2015

1st in Italian Formula 4 (Prema Powerteam)
9 wins, 13 podiums
12 races in German Formula 4 (Prema Powerteam)
1 win, 4 podiums

2014

2nd in Formula Renault 1.6 NEC Junior (Scuderia Nordica)
2 wins, 7 podiums
6th in Swedish Formula Renault 1.6 (Scuderia Nordica) 5 wins, 5 podiums
1st in Adria Winter Trophy Formula 4 (Prema Powerteam)

2010-13

Karting, including Estonian titles as well as competition at international level



Aron has won 10 F4 races in Prema Tatuus

NEXT WEEK BRAZILIAN GP ACTION

Rally GB report, Macau F3 preview, DTM review

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