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F1, WEC, BTCC and MotoGP champions crowned

AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S BEST MOTORSPORT WEEKLY

19 NOVEMBER 2020

CHAMPIONS!

How rainmaster Hamilton took his seventh F1 title and matched Schumacher

'I have dreamed as high as this, but it seemed so far-fetched'

LEWIS HAMILTON

PLUS

Conway, Kobayashi and Lopez take World Enduro crown

Mir ends Suzuki's 20-year title wait in MotoGP

Sutton tops the BTCC in dramatic Brands finale







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(7.9 to 1.3). CO_2 emission (g/km) 180 to 30 g/km. For plug-in hybrid vehicles these figures were obtained using a combination of battery power and fuel, for battery
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autosport 70

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Hamilton leads group of fine 2020 champions

"I've never been that emotional at the end of a race." Lewis Hamilton has tried to play down the various records he has been approaching over the past couple of seasons but, as he has broken them, his true feelings have come out. And matching Michael Schumacher's tally of seven Formula 1 drivers' titles is a particularly special feat.

The way he clinched the 2020 crown was fitting, too. As Alex Kalinauckas shows in our Turkish Grand Prix report on page 18, on a day when Mercedes didn't have its usual advantage, Hamilton showed the perfect blend of patience, speed and guile to pull out another win. It was a 'driver's win', not a car's win.

There were several deserving champions crowned last weekend. Mike Conway has been one of Britain's unsung racers in recent years and it was great to see him secure the World Endurance crown alongside Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez (p46), while Ash Sutton was brilliant on his way to the British Touring Car title (p38).

• Our 70th birthday special, a separate publication from the normal magazine, is out today (19 November). All current print subscribers will receive a copy of the 196-page celebration for free. If you're not a subscriber or would like to order an extra copy (!), please go to: **autosport.com/autosport70th**





Kevin Turner
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NEXT WEEK
26 NOVEMBER

We talk to F1's affable Daniel Ricciardo, and you can vote for the 2020 Autosport Awards



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Etherington, Sutton/Motorsport Images

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FINISHING STRAIGHT

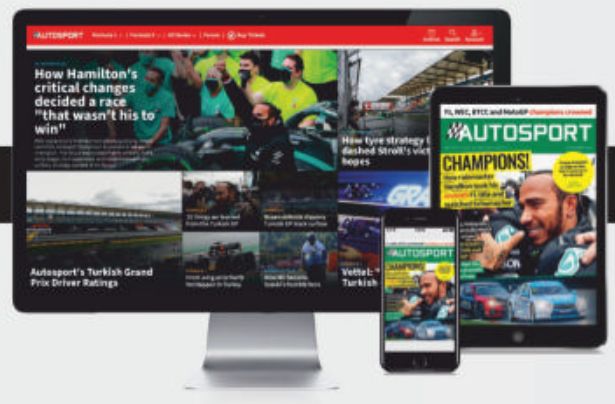
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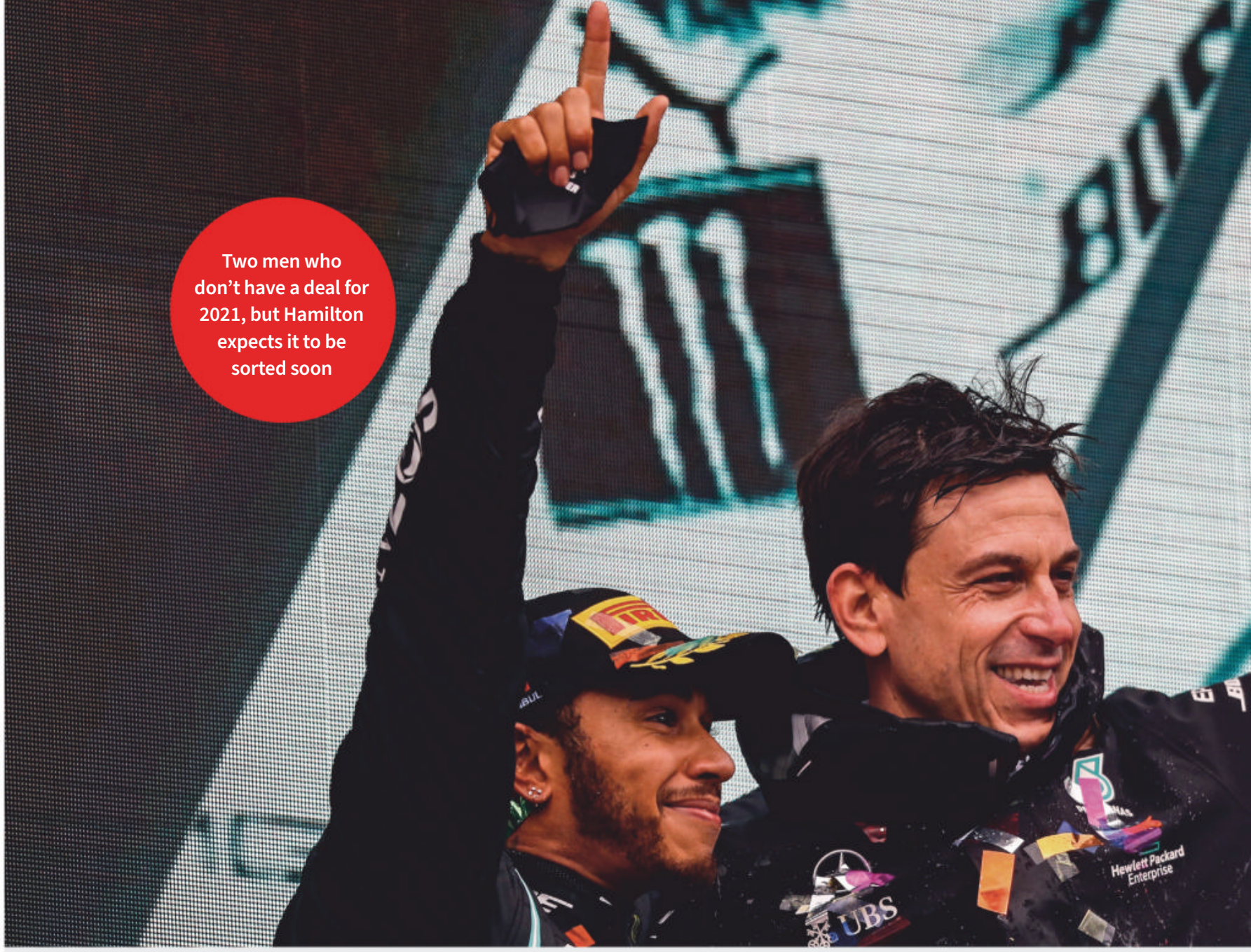
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Two men who don't have a deal for 2021, but Hamilton expects it to be sorted soon

CHAMPION HAMILTON CONFIDENT

FORMULA 1

Newly crowned seven-time Formula 1 world champion Lewis Hamilton and his Mercedes team are set to turn their attentions to high-stake contract talks in the coming weeks, as a deal is still not in place for the Briton to continue with the team in 2021.

Hamilton has less than two months to run on his existing Mercedes F1 contract, but both he and the team had agreed not to sit down and open talks over a new deal until both titles were wrapped up in 2020. With the drivers' and constructors' championships now sewn up, Hamilton said negotiations were "definitely something that we need to get onto" as he looks to extend his stay at Mercedes, which began after he switched from McLaren for 2013.

"I just always think through the year that I've got a job to do, I've got a contract in place, and I don't feel like I should add pressure," said Hamilton. "It has to be organic and not something that's forced. I wanted to put it aside and wait until the job is done."

Mercedes is one of four teams yet to formally finalise its line-up for next year. The team announced back in August that Valtteri Bottas had been retained for 2021 and, with a new deal for Hamilton appearing to be a certainty, Mercedes has not been a consideration in this year's driver-market silly season.

Hamilton said the upcoming three-week stint in the Middle East across the races in Bahrain and Abu Dhabi would provide an opportunity to begin talks, saying it will be "more chilled". The F1 paddock will remain in its own 'biosphere' for all three races, including a lockdown on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi for the season finale.

Although Hamilton said following his victory at Imola at the beginning of this month that there were "no guarantees" he would be on the grid next year, he made clear after winning the title at last weekend's Turkish Grand Prix that "we will get it done, I'm sure".

Hamilton has said throughout 2020 that he had no concerns about his future with Mercedes, and that both parties were eager to extend a partnership that has yielded six world titles and 73 race wins to date. Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent financial pressures, Hamilton said earlier in the year that he felt it was the wrong time to be entering talks over a new megabucks contract.

Any new deal is anticipated to maintain Hamilton's status as one of the highest paid drivers in F1, with reports suggesting it would be worth around £30million

"IT'S EASY TO GO AND SIGN THAT DEAL AND NOT THINK OF WHAT'S AFTERWARDS"

per year. But Hamilton has made clear that his focus in contract talks will surround the bigger picture of Mercedes as a company and a brand. He wants to find ways in which they can work together on aspects reaching beyond simply driving the car, such as further diversity within the team and aiding its environment considerations.

"I believe I have the best contract that there is, in terms of how it's structured and in terms of time management," he said. "With the team that's put around me, I think it's been great. But I'm always looking to see how we can improve. How can I be more efficient and do more for the partners? How can I position myself to do



ON 2021 DEAL

more for the team? I think it's easy just to go and sign that deal and continue not having to think of what's afterwards. And I'm very conscious of the idea that I do want to continue with Mercedes. I would love to help them on this quest in pushing for change.

"They are taking their cars green, and electrifying more, and I want to help them on that road. I would like to help them in terms of pushing for diversity, because that's also within the organisation, as with every organisation out there. There is not enough of it. So there's a lot to discuss, and a lot to go through."

Mercedes F1 team principal Toto Wolff joked after Hamilton's dominant victory in Turkey that his contract had "got really more expensive today", but had no doubts that their partnership would continue for a number of years. "He loves racing, and the competition, as does the team and myself," said Wolff. "I think if we wouldn't have the competition against the stopwatch, life would be not as fun. I see us going for more next year, maybe putting another great year on, and then we have this tremendous challenging regulation change for 2022. We'll go for a while."

Asked to put a timeframe on when a new contract would be agreed, Wolff said talks could wait until the post-season and that there was no pressure to get anything announced prior to the final triple-header of this year. "I think more than likely, we are looking towards the end of the year," he said. "It's not that we wouldn't find time for each other, but I don't want to put ourselves under pressure to say before Bahrain or before Abu Dhabi we will announce a new contract, because there isn't any pressure. When it's done, it's done."

LUKE SMITH

P18 TURKISH GP



Interlagos set for five years, and drops 'Brazil'

FORMULA 1

Interlagos is set to keep Brazil's round of the Formula 1 World Championship until at least 2025, with officials in Sao Paulo announcing last week that they are poised to sign a new deal.

Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro, who is at odds with the Sao Paulo government, has been pushing to hold a race in Rio from 2021, but a provisional calendar issued by F1 declared that the country's race next year would take place at Interlagos.

The decision to remain at Interlagos for next year came after the promoters in Rio failed to get the required approvals to build a circuit and go ahead with the grand prix in time. And it now looks as though the Rio project could be doomed in the medium term, with the likelihood that the race will stay at its current home until 2025.

From next year, the event's name will be changed from the Brazilian Grand Prix to the Sao Paulo Grand Prix.

Speaking to media at a press conference last Thursday, Sao Paulo governor Joao Doria said: "I am proud to reveal that F1 has just renewed a contract to hold the Brazilian GP until 2025. The Interlagos race track has been confirmed as the venue for the next five years. The contract will be signed by Mayor Bruno Covas and Liberty Media, the rights holder of F1."

It is understood that the decision to hold the race at Interlagos is not related to sustainability issues surrounding the Rio track, which needed environmental permissions before work could begin and faced opposition from environmental groups. Instead, the decision to keep the race at Interlagos was prompted by it having a ready track and Sao Paulo being in a position to commit to a long-term deal.

Covas said that the name change away from the Brazilian GP was prompted by the enhanced involvement of the local authorities. It is understood that the race will also have a new promoter — it has enjoyed a zero-fee contract in recent years after being handed the deal by Bernie Ecclestone in the final days of his time as CEO of F1.

"The contract is being finalised and will be signed in the next few days," said Covas. "Next year, on 14 November, we will have the Sao Paulo GP. The contract is valid for five years and can be extended for an additional five years, so can go up to 2030."

Despite the comments from the Sao Paulo officials, F1 has not confirmed the plans for the grand prix in Brazil, simply saying that it "does not comment on commercial discussions regarding any of our partners".

JONATHAN NOBLE



Toyota holds hands up to flaw in handicap system

WEC

The system of success handicaps that robbed the 2019-20 World Endurance Championship of a battle between the Toyotas incorporated a "conceptual mistake". That's the conclusion of its architect, Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director Pascal Vasselon.

He believes that the performance penalties should have been applied across the entries of a team rather than separately to each car. "Then," he said, "we would have had a fight between our two cars at every race."

"We made a conceptual mistake when putting in place the system," admitted Vasselon. "The system should have applied per team and not per car: this is probably the biggest mistake we have made."

One of the major criticisms of the system designed to give privateers the chance to win races in front of the Toyota TS050 HYBRIDs, and keep the independent teams in the hunt for the championship, was that it destroyed the competition between the Japanese cars. The intra-team fight with the Japanese marque was one of the highlights of the 2018-19 WEC superseason, the first campaign in which it was the only manufacturer in the top class of the WEC.

Vasselon also argued that the increase in the per-point, per-kilometre coefficient on which the handicaps were calculated also played a part in breaking up the battle between his cars. The coefficient was changed from 0.008s to 0.01255s ahead of the first deployment of the performance penalties at round two at Fuji in October of last year after the FIA Endurance Committee reviewed the performance of the LMP1 field at the opening round at Silverstone.

"The second issue we have had with the system is that the coefficient has been increased and we were asking too much of the system," he explained. "The gaps between the cars were just too big."

Vasselon conceded that the events of this season had queered the pitch for success handicaps being used in the future, but he still described the system as "virtuous". He argued that it "did its job" because Rebellion drivers Bruno Senna, Gustavo Menezes and Norman Nato would have had a chance of the title had the team not withdrawn from the series finale. They were only 30 points off the lead with 39 available for pole and victory in the Bahrain 8 Hours.

He also suggested that success handicaps are "better than the Balance of Performance", the means of levelling the playing field that will come into force in the new Le Mans Hypercar class that replaces LMP1 in the WEC for next season.

"Success handicaps are fully objective, there is nothing subjective about it: you score points, you get a handicap," he said. "With the BoP there is always a guess and you can win or lose on the margin of error."

GARY WATKINS

P46 WEC REPORT

Hill could race new car in 2021

BTCC

Highly rated British Touring Car Championship racer Jake Hill will remain at Mark Blundell's team for the 2021 season, but the AmD-run MB Motorsport squad could switch to a new car.

Hill's deal was announced on the eve of last weekend's 2020 finale at Brands Hatch, where he rose to seventh in the standings in MB's old-spec FK2 Honda Civic Type R and scored his sixth podium finish of the season. That came after a qualifying error, which put him lightly into the barriers at Paddock Hill Bend (below) and caused a red flag, preventing him from challenging for pole position.

It also completed a fine recovery from 20th in the points following the first two rounds, after a series of engine failures.

AmD boss Shaun Hollamby admitted to Autosport that it's "fifty-fifty" whether MB will ditch its two Civics, raced this year by Hill and Sam Osborne, for 2021. It is understood that discussions have been held regarding the newer FK8 Civic, the new-for-2020 fourth-generation Ford Focus, or the 2019-title-winning BMW 330i M Sport. "We're looking at two options, and it's a bit early to say, but it's all positive," said Hollamby. "The sensible thing is to stay with the Civics, but I think the new cars in the BTCC have jumped forward."

Meanwhile, AmD's two-year deal to run the Audi S3s for Trade Price Cars Racing as a sister team to the MB Hondas has come to an end. TPCR is now merging into the Excelr8 Motorsport squad, which will run an expanded four-car team of Hyundai i30 Ns under the Excelr8 Trade Price Cars banner. The Hyundai was new for 2020, but has shown flashes of speed with Senna Proctor and Chris Smiley.

MARCUS SIMMONS



P38 BTCC REPORT



PURE ETCR Now, this we like… The Italian Romeo Ferraris team launched this electric Alfa Romeo Giulia for the new Pure ETCR series at last weekend's World Touring Car Cup finale at Motorland Aragon. The Alfa is the third car revealed for ETCR, following the Cupra and Hyundai Veloster, and will be raced by Romeo Ferraris's WTCR star Jean-Karl Vernay. It produces 500kW, equivalent to 670bhp, from its ETCR powertrain including Williams Advanced Engineering battery, Magelec inverters and gearbox, and BrightLoop DC to DC converters. Six events, including four in Europe, are planned for Pure ETCR's inaugural season in 2021. The Hyundai made its public track debut at the WTCR event, with Norbert Michelisz putting it through its paces. **Photograph by Pure ETCR**

Crutchlow steps back to take Yamaha test role

MOTOGP

Three-time MotoGP race winner Cal Crutchlow will step down from full-time racing next season to replace Jorge Lorenzo as Yamaha's official test rider.

Crutchlow won the 2009 World Supersport title with Yamaha, and raced the marque's bikes in his first three MotoGP seasons in 2011-13 with Tech3. After a year at Ducati he joined LCR Honda in 2015, but is making way next season for Alex Marquez, who is being replaced at the works Honda team by Pol Espargaro.

The Briton cited a number of factors for his decision to become Yamaha's test rider, including injury and a desire to spend more time with family, and his move was welcomed by Yamaha riders.

"It was something I was very interested to do, a project that I believed works very well for me," Crutchlow told Autosport. "They need a test rider that is fast, that is willing to be a test rider – among other things – and be happy with being a test rider, not having a test rider who wants to commit to them for a year and then wants to race."

Crutchlow had been in talks for an Aprilia race seat, but didn't want to wait for the verdict on Andrea Iannone's doping ban appeal. When Iannone was hit with a four-year ban last week, Crutchlow's mind was already made up. Andrea Dovizioso had been linked to the Yamaha role, but will take a sabbatical in 2021.

LEWIS DUNCAN







MAUGER/W SERIES

W Series gets eight F1 support slots

W SERIES

The W Series will join the support bill at eight Formula 1 events in 2021, the all-female single-seater series has announced.

W Series played a supporting role to the DTM in its inaugural 2019 season, while the 2020 season was meant to feature two F1 events, at the Circuit of The Americas and Mexico City, before it was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Talks between F1 and W Series have been in progress for some time, and the splitting of the Formula 2 and Formula 3 schedules has opened the door for another support category at grands prix, although which races W Series will compete at is yet to be revealed. "Formula 1 is by some margin the world's premier motor racing series," said W Series CEO Catherine Bond Muir. "When we promised that W Series would be bigger and better in the future, partnering with Formula 1 was always our ultimate objective.

"We want it to become a crucial default-option stepping stone for any female racing driver who wants to carve out a professional racing career, and our proximity to Formula 1 will help and enhance that process. The fact that W Series is now eligible for FIA superlicence points will also be an important factor in that regard."

F1 sporting chief Ross Brawn added: "Their partnership with Formula 1 next season shows our determination and commitment to showcase their exciting series and the importance of building greater diversity across the sport."

It has been reported that Hitech GP, which ran the fleet of Regional F3 Tatuus-Alfa Romeos in 2019, will no longer be involved in operating the cars.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

Stoneman claims European Lambo crown

LAMBO SUPER TROFEO

Dean Stoneman has become the first Briton to win the Lamborghini Super Trofeo Europe title, thanks to a victory and a second place in last weekend's season finale at Paul Ricard.

Bonaldi Motorsport driver Stoneman came into the weekend 7.5 points behind Kevin Gilardoni, but closed to 0.5 points off the Oregon Team-run Italian after topping both qualifying sessions and dominating Saturday's opening 50-minute race. Gilardoni finished second on the road but was demoted to third with a pitstop time penalty.

Stoneman led the opening stint of the second race, but struggled with a malfunctioning pitlane speed limiter and severe tyre degradation towards the end of the event. Leipert Motorsport's Sebastian Balthasar and Noah Watt – son of ex-F3000 star Jason – claimed the win ahead of Stoneman.

"At last!" said a relieved Stoneman. "It's been a challenging season with some pretty big ups and downs. That last race there was very tough, yesterday we struggled with the tyres a bit and today was the same. But to win the championship is amazing."

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



MAGGI/LAMBORGHINI



RALLYING Australian Supercars star Shane van Gisbergen won the inaugural Battle of Jacks Ridge event in New Zealand last weekend. Former WRC driver Hayden Paddon seemed set for victory and set a best time of 1m19.930s during the early stages of the elimination-style event on a 2km stage, before crashing his 400kW Hyundai Kona-based electric rally car. Van Gisbergen put in his best run of the meeting in a Mitsubishi Mirage MP4 in the final, a 1m20.047s beating the Ford Fiesta AP4 of Phil Campbell by more than 1.5s. **Photograph by Steve Ritchie**

‘King Carlos’ set for Extreme E

EXTREME E

Carlos Sainz Sr is expected to chase yet more rough-stuff success, as Autosport understands that the 58-year-old will contest the inaugural Extreme E season.

Sainz, who won the World Rally Championship in 1990 and 1992 for Toyota, completed his hat-trick of Dakar Rally victories earlier this year aboard an X-raid Mini Buggy.

It was at this January event that Sainz had his first look around the ODYSSEY 21 E-SUV, which was present in Saudi Arabia ahead of former World Rallycross driver Ken Block contesting the final stage of the rally courtesy of an invitational entry. Here, Sainz was reunited with his fellow Spaniard, long-time friend and XE co-founder Alejandro Agag.

It has now transpired that Sainz was one of the undisclosed “major-profile drivers” who took part in last month’s official test of the 550bhp XE car at Chateau de Lastours in southern France. Among the secret line-up were Mercedes Formula 1 driver Valtteri Bottas and nine-time WRC champion Sebastien Loeb. While their presence was revealed soon after, Sainz’s shakedown had remained under wraps.

Sainz remains coy about his XE future on the record, but told Autosport: “[XE] is a new championship in my speciality: the cross-country rally raids. It’s interesting because it introduces the whole electric theme. I’m still not very clear about the racing format and so on, but I’m looking at it. We are analysing everything, but the Dakar will remain the number one priority.”

XE mandates each team must run a male-female driver pairing. That could pave the way for Dakar motorcyclist Laia Sanz to partner Sainz. Although Sanz specialises in two-wheeled competition, she has made fleeting cameos in car racing and rallycross.

MATT KEW

IN THE HEADLINES

“LIGHTS OUT AND AWAY I GO!”

Popular Channel 4 F1 commentator Ben Edwards is standing down from his role at this season. The 1987 Formula First champion has been the voice of the UK’s terrestrial TV F1 coverage since 2012 with the BBC, before switching to C4 in 2016. “It’s time for me to step back from the front line of such an intense world and take a wider perspective on motorsport and life,” said Edwards.

VIPS IN RED BULL RESERVE

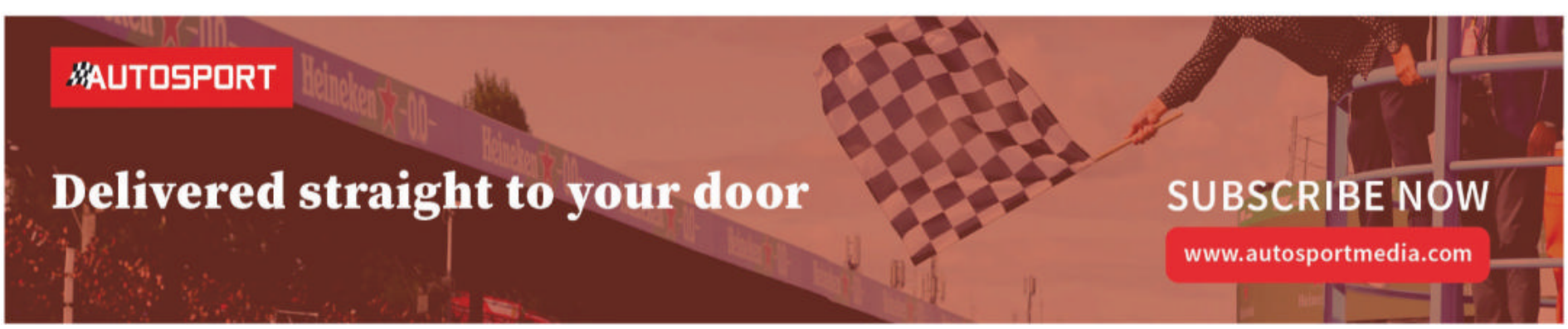
Red Bull Junior Juri Vips acted as reserve driver for Red Bull and AlphaTauri at last weekend’s Turkish Grand Prix, with Sebastien Buemi and Sergio Sette Camara sidelined by other commitments. The Estonian is tipped for a full-time Formula 2 seat with Hitech GP next season alongside Formula 3 frontrunner Liam Lawson.

MONTOYA TO RACE IN WEC

Ex-Indycar and Formula 1 superstar Juan Pablo Montoya is to contest the full World Endurance Championship next season. Montoya will join DragonSpeed, for which he raced at this year’s Le Mans 24 Hours, alongside Ben Hanley and Henrik Hedman in an ORECA. The Elton Julian-run team is dropping its IndyCar programme with Hanley, and has taken new premises at Montmelo, beside Barcelona’s Spanish GP track.

JIM PACE 1961-2020

Jim Pace, winner of the Daytona 24 Hours and Sebring 12 Hours in 1996, has died from COVID-19. He was 59. The victories at the Daytona and Sebring, driving a works-run Oldsmobile-powered Riley & Scott MkIII prototype entered under the Doyle Racing banner, were the highlights of a career that began in Barber Saab single-seaters in 1988 and encompassed 18 starts at Daytona. The Mississippi-born Pace also won the 1994 IMSA GTU title aboard a Nissan 240SX run by Leitzinger Racing.



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Self-knowledge is power

There were echoes of Shanghai 2007 when Lewis Hamilton stayed out on ageing inters in Turkey, but it was a much more complete driver who won last Sunday

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

The tyres were wearing badly as he continued to circulate on the intermediates when others had pitted — a slip here, another there, but always onwards, the wet-weather tread getting ever shallower, until soon enough the contact patches were bald. His intermediates were slicks — if it rained again, he was in trouble. Another slip, bigger this time, and disaster. Championship-clinching expectations extinguished.

That did happen to Lewis Hamilton — but of course it was the 2007 Chinese Grand Prix, the first chance he had to seal that year's world title, which he would famously go on to lose right at the end of his rookie season. But the race at Shanghai 13 years ago was on his mind as he took another set of intermediates ever further into a mixed-conditions race — this time at Istanbul Park, where he won last weekend.

"I was constantly looking at my tyres and looking out for that bald tyre that I had in 2007," Hamilton explained afterwards. "But I couldn't see, again, in my mirrors — just like 2007 — I couldn't see the tread and whether or not it had gone through to that level."

That 'level' was the point of no return for the Bridgestone inters on his McLaren in China, which wore down to the canvas and left him so far off the pace that he had to come in and seek replacements in the pitbox he never reached. But this is where the comparison to one of Hamilton's most famous defeats ends, even though

"What I'm learning as I get older is my gut feeling is right. I'm learning not to question myself"

there's one important aspect of that 2007 race to remember before considering Hamilton's performance in Turkey.

He wasn't alone in staying out on ageing inters at Shanghai. Kimi Raikkonen and Fernando Alonso were on the same strategy. They managed to keep their inters in better shape, overturning the advantage Hamilton had built up in the wetter early stages, then safely negotiating the switch to dries, after he had slid out.

Last weekend, it was Hamilton who had to upend the advantage of the early leader. And if we take Lance Stroll's second pitstop as a reference point for the pace of those who completed a one-stopper, we can see how Hamilton excelled. Only Sergio Perez, Esteban Ocon and Daniil Kvyat also stayed on one set of inters to the finish, and Hamilton's Mercedes was 1.326 seconds, 1.432s and 1.753s per lap faster than them respectively over the 20 laps after it had taken the lead. The two-stoppers got close, but even the fastest of the top five finishers — Carlos Sainz Jr's average of 1m40.755s — was 0.085s slower than Hamilton.

His tyre management skills have been critical to every one of the six titles he has now secured at Mercedes, and they were fully on display last weekend. "[It was about] learning as I went," said Hamilton. "And I was just chipping away again, getting faster and faster and more and more confident as I went on."

But he was also vocal in telling Mercedes what he wanted to do in terms of tyre strategy. Formula 1's TV producers frequently broadcast Hamilton's thoughts on his tyre performance, but often in dry races he doesn't get what he asks for, as Mercedes has more information available about the race situation or how tyres that have come off Valtteri Bottas's car have performed. In mixed conditions it's much more two-way, so Mercedes trusted Hamilton's instincts.

"We left it open for him to pit," Toto Wolff said of the Turkish Grand Prix's concluding laps, where further rain threatened.

And this is the second real difference seen last Sunday between the rookie that slid out in China and the master that triumphed in Turkey. After 93 wins and six world titles before last Sunday's chequered flag, he knew to back himself when it mattered. This was a key reason why Hamilton was able to add one more to each of those sensational tallies.

"What I'm learning as I get older is, most often, my gut feeling is right," Hamilton explained. "I'm learning not to question myself. Back in 2007, I was a rookie. I was massively skilled but didn't have the knowledge, didn't have the experience to be able to lead the team, to tell them what was needed.

"If I knew what I know now, I'd say, 'Guys, I have to come in, I'm coming in.' I didn't know at the time [in China] I could tell my team that that was the case. I was still learning what I could and could not do. Among the success there was still doubt there every now and then. That's not evident in the Lewis that you see today."

The combination of prodigious skill and supreme self-belief won Hamilton the 2020 Turkish GP. He used that mix to devastating effect. Yes, there was an element of fortune in the rain holding off at the end, but Hamilton backed himself, again, to cope if it did.

As it turned out, there was a further risk he considered as a possible late-race development: tyres giving up dramatically as they had at Silverstone three months ago. Mercedes assured him they would not, but such concern and awareness demonstrates the range of experiences on which Hamilton can now call upon.

He is reaching the cliched 'completeness', surely set to go on and become F1's most successful world champion.

P18 TURKISH GP REPORT



The big sportscar question

What means the most: winning a world title or victory at Le Mans? It depends who's answering, of course, and it's also more nuanced than it may first appear

GARY WATKINS

It's a question I've asked before: does winning the World Endurance Championship make up for not winning the Le Mans 24 Hours? A variation on the theme is to enquire about what means the most: claiming the championship or taking victory in the big race in France at its centre?

I struggled to get an answer when I put the first version to Mike Conway the day after he'd wrapped up the 2019-20 WEC crown together with Toyota team-mates Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez in Bahrain last Saturday. He procrastinated at first, but eventually said that he'd "take the world championship over Le Mans", a race he has come so close to winning in the past.

I'm not so much talking about this year, rather 2019 when he, Kobayashi and Lopez had victory ripped from their grasp with an hour to go courtesy of a bit of dodgy wiring. And then there was 2017, when an orange-suited driver looking for all the world like a marshal waved the Japanese driver through a red light at the end of the pitlane. That set in motion a sequence of events that almost certainly deprived Conway, Kobayashi and Stephane Sarrazin of the win.

Conway pointed out that a championship is fought out over multiple races, which in the case of the WEC are of different durations. The 2019-20 campaign included six and eight-hour races, as well as the 24 Hours. Next season, fingers crossed, it will again encompass the 1000-miler at Sebring. Winning any title is about performing weekend in and weekend out. You're less likely to fluke your way to a championship victory than in one of its component parts.

> **"World champion sounds good, and the FIA does not hand out that title like little sweeties"**

Harder to win maybe, but is the championship more important than Le Mans? That is perhaps the pertinent question and the more difficult one to answer.

Le Mans is a phenomenon that attracts eyes from around the world and a crowd of more than a quarter of a million. It has an atmosphere like no other race in the world — just ask the superannuated Formula 1 stars who have pitched up at the 24 Hours in recent years. Only when they got there did they understand what the fuss was all about. The rest of the WEC attracts, for the most part, little in the way of crowds, or coverage from the non-specialist media. Its races are merely rounds of a championship rather than events in themselves.

Then there's the fact that the WEC is a Johnny-come-lately in comparison with Le Mans. The current incarnation of what can loosely be called the world sportscar championship started as recently as 2012. A drivers' title was only awarded in the original version from 1981, 28 years after it began. Le Mans, on the other hand, is only a few years from celebrating its centenary.

Trot down to your local high street and ask a few random passers by — while maintaining social distancing, of course — and a good few will know about Le Mans. (While staying on the theme of our troubled times, the nurse who undertook my pre-Le Mans COVID test had a working knowledge of the race.) Throw in the three-letter acronym WEC, and you'll probably draw a blank. Spell it out, and your respondent would probably be none the wiser, though they might get the gist of what it's all about.

But for a driver to be able to call himself or herself a world champion means something.

I remember putting the second version of my question to Loic Duval after he'd sealed the 2013 WEC title with Tom Kristensen and Allan McNish in the same year that they triumphed at Le Mans. Winning the French enduro was the more important success for him that season. But I happened to ask a similar question while chatting quite recently to Kristensen, a driver who didn't have a world title to chase for the majority of his sportscar career. He wasn't willing to pick one over the other, but he expressed the opinion that the WEC crown was significant in what he called the "wider perspective". I get what he means.

The term world champion sounds good for a start, and the FIA doesn't hand out that title like sweeties. But in terms of endurance racing, the fact that there is a world championship makes success in the discipline relatable to Formula 1, the pre-eminent form of motorsport. People understand that in F1 drivers chase a world championship. No one thinks that Lewis Hamilton, Max Verstappen or whoever sets out at the start of the season with the primary objective of winning the Monaco Grand Prix.

So I understand Conway's hesitation on being asked to choose between the title and victory in the 'big one'. He's correct when he says the championship is harder to win. You don't luck into one. But you can luck out of a Le Mans victory, as Mike, Kamui and Jose Maria have found out. So I hope they get a win in the big race soon, so they can stop receiving impertinent questions from journalists like me.

P46 WEC BAHRAIN REPORT

PORSCHE

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GREAT BRITAIN

Flying into next season.

After months of intense competition, the Porsche Carrera Cup GB has reached its conclusion. Congratulations to all of the drivers and teams who competed this season – we can't wait to experience more thrills in 2021.

Pro	Pro-Am	Am	Rookie	Team
1st Harry King Team Parker Racing	**1st Esmee Hawkey** Team Parker	**1st Justin Sherwood** Team Parker Racing	**1st Matthew Graham** Redline Racing	**1st** Team Parker Racing
2nd Josh Webster Team Parker Racing	**2nd Ryan Ratcliffe** Team Parker	**2nd Lee Frost** Simon Green Motorsport	**2nd Will Martin** Richardson Racing	**2nd** Redline Racing
3rd Matthew Graham Redline Racing	**3rd Aaron Mason** Brookspeed Connect IT	**3rd Justin Armstrong** Team Parker Racing	**3rd Lorcan Hanafin** JTR	**3rd** JTR

Provisional 2021 calendar	
3/4 April	Brands Hatch (Indy)
17/18 April	Donington Park (National)
15/16 May	Oulton Park (Island)
12/13 June	Croft
31 July /1 August	Snetterton (300)
14/15 August	Knockhill
25/26 September	Silverstone (National)
9/10 October	Brands Hatch (Grand Prix)

For more information on Porsche Carrera Cup GB 2021, email: **porschemotorsportgb@porsche.co.uk**

Porsche Motorsport GB would like to thank our partners for their ongoing support.

PORSCHE

YOUR SAY

I think the best compliment I can pay him is that he has been 'the voice for motorsport on TV' ever since Murray Walker retired

MARK LIBBETER

Big shoes to fill in the commentary box

Just wanted to express my sadness at the news that Ben Edwards (right) has decided to stand down from his role as Channel 4 F1's lead commentator.

I've always enjoyed listening to his commentaries over the years — whether it be on F1, BTCC, CART or A1GP — and I think the best compliment I can pay him is that he has been '*the* voice for motorsport on TV' ever since Murray Walker retired. Always admired his knowledge and enthusiasm for the sport.

I was lucky enough to meet him when he was racing his Formula Ford at Brands Hatch a few years back and thought he was a top bloke to chat to as well. Whatever the future holds for him, I certainly wish him all the very best. Whoever takes over will have big shoes to fill!

Mark Libbeter
By email

An exciting and appealing 'template'

After years of debating how to make F1 more exciting and appealing to fans and the wider public alike, may I suggest to the FIA that they adopt the following: stage the weekend at an unseasonal time of year for the relevant country in order to captilise on cooler, wetter conditions; resurface the track a week before the grand prix to ensure an 'ice'-like scenario; and engage in the services of more than one tyre supplier.

The unpredictability and mixing of the order would provide a true spectacle — like Turkey?

Hugh Wroth
Marlborough, Wiltshire

Is this the right place for F1 to race?

I've been enjoying Formula 1 since the 1960s and I'm loving every minute of F1 now. And it's good to see the effort to combat racism this year.

Next year we'll see the inclusion of W Series at eight F1 grands prix while at the same time there's the prospect of the first F1 race in Saudi Arabia. Yet one Nassima al-Sada



remains locked up there. She is one of 13 female activists prosecuted for demanding women's right to drive and carry out their daily business without the permission of a male guardian. Since her arrest in 2018 it is believed she has been locked up and endured ill-treatment and solitary confinement for her peaceful efforts to defend women's rights.

Is it not a particularly grotesque irony that we find ourselves looking to enjoy our celebration of driver skills with a Formula 1 race in Saudi Arabia?

Andrew Huggett
By email

Corrections & clarifications

In the caption for the 5 November From the Archive spread, we describe the fast downhill sweeps at Rouen-les-Essarts as being before the pits — a reader who was there points out that "the circuit before the pits was near enough flat, and those fast descending sweeps began with the drop down into Turn 1".

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A new journey begins.

Following a thrilling debut season of racing, the 2020 Cayman Islands Porsche Sprint Challenge GB concluded in spectacular fashion. Congratulations to all of the teams and drivers who joined us for the inaugural season - we can't wait to begin racing again in 2021.

Pro	Am	Team
1st – James Dorlin – IN2 Racing	**1st – Ambrogio Perfetti** – IN2 Racing	**1st – IN2 Racing**
2nd – Tom Jackson – Rob Boston Racing	**2nd – Ian Humphris** – Valluga	**2nd – Redline Racing**
3rd – Theo Edgerton – TCR	**3rd – Nigel Rice** – Redline Racing	**3rd – Rob Boston Racing**

Provisional 2021 calendar	
8/9 May	Thruxton (BTCC)
22/23 May	Brands Hatch GP (British GT)
26/27 June	Silverstone GP (British GT)
3 July	Oulton Park (Porsche Club GB)
28/29 August	Thruxton (BTCC)
11/12 September	Donington Park GP (British GT)

For more information on the Cayman Islands Porsche Sprint Challenge GB 2021, please email:
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Porsche Motorsport GB would like to thank our partners for their ongoing support.

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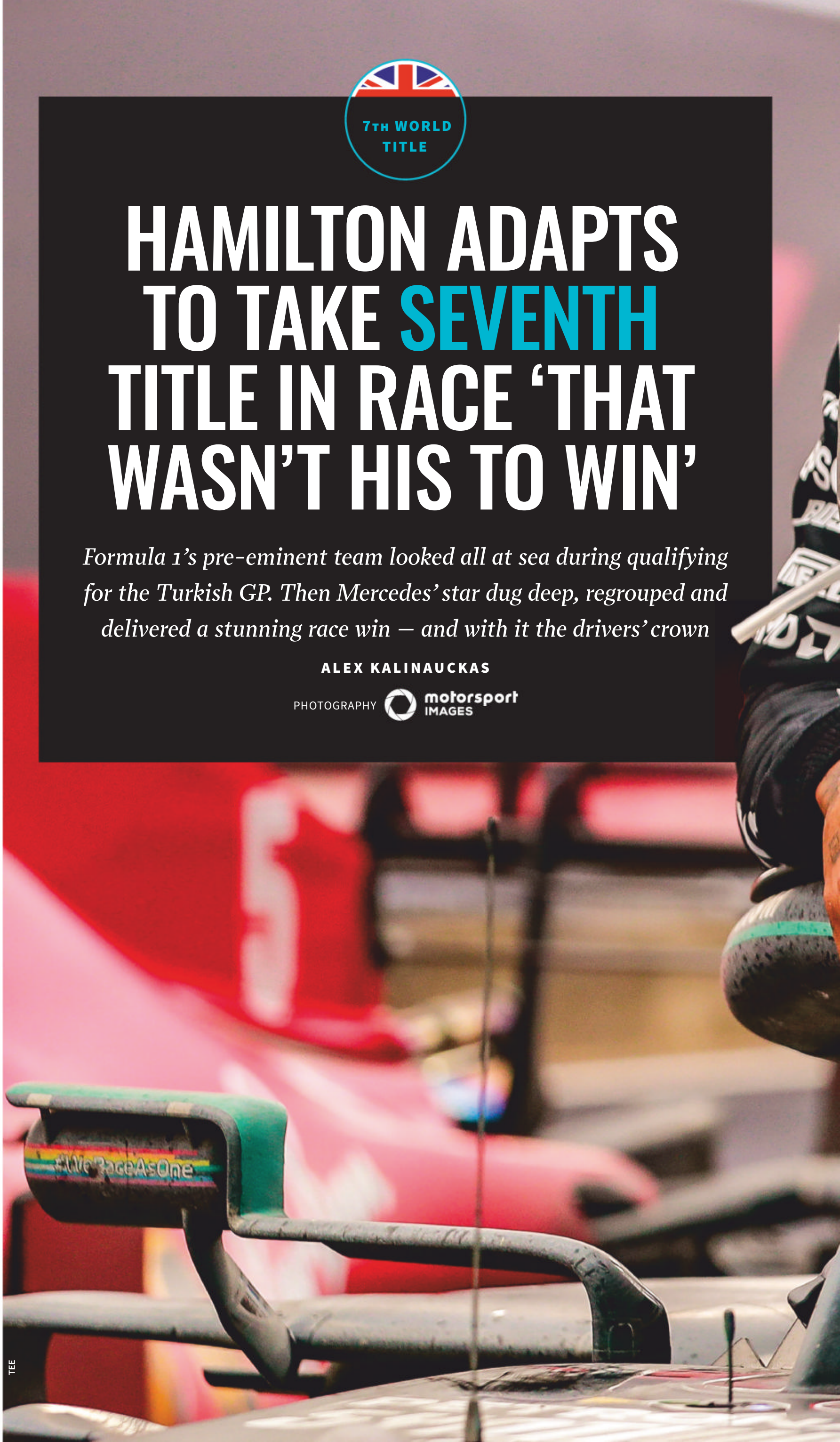
7TH WORLD TITLE

HAMILTON ADAPTS TO TAKE SEVENTH TITLE IN RACE 'THAT WASN'T HIS TO WIN'

Formula 1's pre-eminent team looked all at sea during qualifying for the Turkish GP. Then Mercedes' star dug deep, regrouped and delivered a stunning race win — and with it the drivers' crown

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES




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"IF WE'RE HONEST, IT WASN'T HIS RACE TO WIN AND HE STILL WON IT. ONCE AGAIN HE MANAGED TO PULL SOMETHING SPECIAL OUT OF THAT BAG."

From one world champion to another. Back in 2018, Sebastian Vettel and Lewis Hamilton had duked it out for the crown and the honour of becoming Formula 1's third five-time world champion. Now, following his victory in last weekend's Turkish Grand Prix, Hamilton is three clear of his long-time rival, level with Michael Schumacher as the championship's two seven-time title winners. But, as Vettel says, the Turkish GP at Istanbul Park really wasn't Hamilton's to win.

There can be no doubt that Mercedes was unusually flummoxed by the fresh, low-grip asphalt it found when it rocked up in Turkey, the resurfacing work having only been completed less than two weeks earlier. It was open about its struggles to generate the necessary tyre temperature needed to get anywhere near excelling in the dry Friday practice sessions, but, unusually, it did not kick on as it has done on so many previous occasions, finding rear-tyre temperature was a particular problem. Hamilton would therefore start the race sixth, Valtteri Bottas ninth.

It was Lance Stroll and Racing Point that had been the stars of qualifying, enraging Max Verstappen by pipping him to pole. And such was Stroll's pace, alongside that of team-mate Sergio Perez, as well as Verstappen's form in taking a clean sweep of the practice sessions, that it seemed as if a new band of protagonists would fight it out for victory. This sense only increased when rain fell heavily in the hour before the race, which would keep the track cooler throughout and test Mercedes' inevitable attempts to improve its tyre-temperature generation.

But, while Stroll and Perez were able to skate off from pole and third on the grid, Verstappen churned away very slowly from second, his Red Bull team-mate Alex Albon doing likewise in his wake from fourth. They were swamped by the Renaults, which were closely followed by Formula 1's usual front men in black.

Hamilton's 85-point advantage coming into the weekend had earned him the chance to take more risk than Bottas, and he certainly did not back away from an opportunity at Turn 1. He thrust his W11 alongside Daniel Ricciardo's Renault, and the Australian jinked right to avoid a collision. But this caused him to have one with another driver — his team-mate, Esteban Ocon, who went looping around just as Bottas



DUNBAR



Stroll leads team-mate Perez, but the Canadian's right inters are toast

TEE



Polesitter Stroll leads away at the start as Verstappen is about to be swamped

had tucked in behind on the outside line. Bottas had to take avoiding action and in doing so spun around in turn, falling to the back of the pack (minus the two Williamses that were yet to exit the pitlane; boldly, on intermediate tyres).

This was of no concern to Hamilton, who was clear in third. But he did soon have a familiar problem from earlier in the weekend, as Stroll and Perez simply romped clear, having fired up their extreme wet rubber much better. Hamilton was struggling to the extent that he slid off the first time through the Turn 9 left-hander that feeds onto Istanbul Park's main straights. This cost him time and momentum, and allowed Vettel – who had shot up the order from 11th on the grid, aided by not being "one of the ones who tried everything into Turn 1" – Verstappen and Albon through, leaving Hamilton sixth.

Despite the difficulty on the still soaking track and its gripless asphalt, the race at the front settled down in the early stages, which were all about the Racing Point cars. Hamilton was clearly not enjoying his time on the extreme wets, as he slipped back from Stroll's lead at a rate of 1.28 seconds per lap between the end of lap one of 58 (when he was already a whopping 11.931s adrift) and the start of the eighth tour, the lap he pitted for intermediates.

The first round of stops had been triggered by Charles Leclerc coming in at the end of lap six to switch to the intermediates, on which he immediately found time, keen to recover from a dire start. Stroll had a 4.715s lead over Perez the tour before he came in to take the green-walled tyres on lap 10, which ballooned to 9.951s by the time the stops had shaken out due to Perez's slower service.

The change to inters obviously introduced a new phase of the race, but it was more significant than just the rubber changing because, unlike in qualifying, switching to inters aided Red Bull. Verstappen stayed out until lap 11, unleashing his pace in free air, once Vettel had stopped on lap eight, to post a string of new fastest laps. Despite the benefit of Vettel's inters, Verstappen nevertheless was able to overcut Red Bull's former talisman to seize third, and nearly second, thanks to Perez's time lost to a slow right-front change. Verstappen flirted with danger coming around the pitlane exit, getting perilously close to the line that must not be crossed as he booted his RB16 back up to speed. But he escaped sanction as the stewards were "unable to find conclusive evidence" that he'd definitely erred.

Up front, Stroll's lead over Perez initially fluctuated as they got used to the inters, but steadily grew again and he'd established a 10.425s »



Shall we dance? Bottas and Ocon pirouette in the Turn 1 melee

advantage by the end of lap 18. But over the next 10 laps it shrank by 0.734s per lap, with the leader struggling with "so much graining" as the track finally started to dry and the inters began to wear. Stroll did appear as if he had stemmed the tide for a while, but by the end of lap 34 Perez was just 1.4s adrift.

And yet, despite the early stages of the inters phase being mostly about Red Bull's speed, it was Hamilton's unfancied Mercedes (a rare sentence for 2020!) that was following the Mexican.

The reasons why it was not a Red Bull making it a three-way fight for the lead were entirely self-inflicted. Over the two laps after Verstappen rejoined, and the virtual safety car was called for Antonio Giovinazzi's Alfa Romeo to be pushed behind the barriers on the approach to Turn 9, Verstappen and Perez had rapidly pulled clear of Vettel and Hamilton, before they were in turn passed by Albon.

The Ferrari and Mercedes had scrapped over fourth entering the final turns on lap 15 after the VSC ended, with Hamilton stealing to the inside of Turn 12 and then going off after locking his right front, which allowed the second Red Bull past. Albon then took Vettel with an opportunistic lunge at Turn 7 on the following tour and took off after Verstappen.

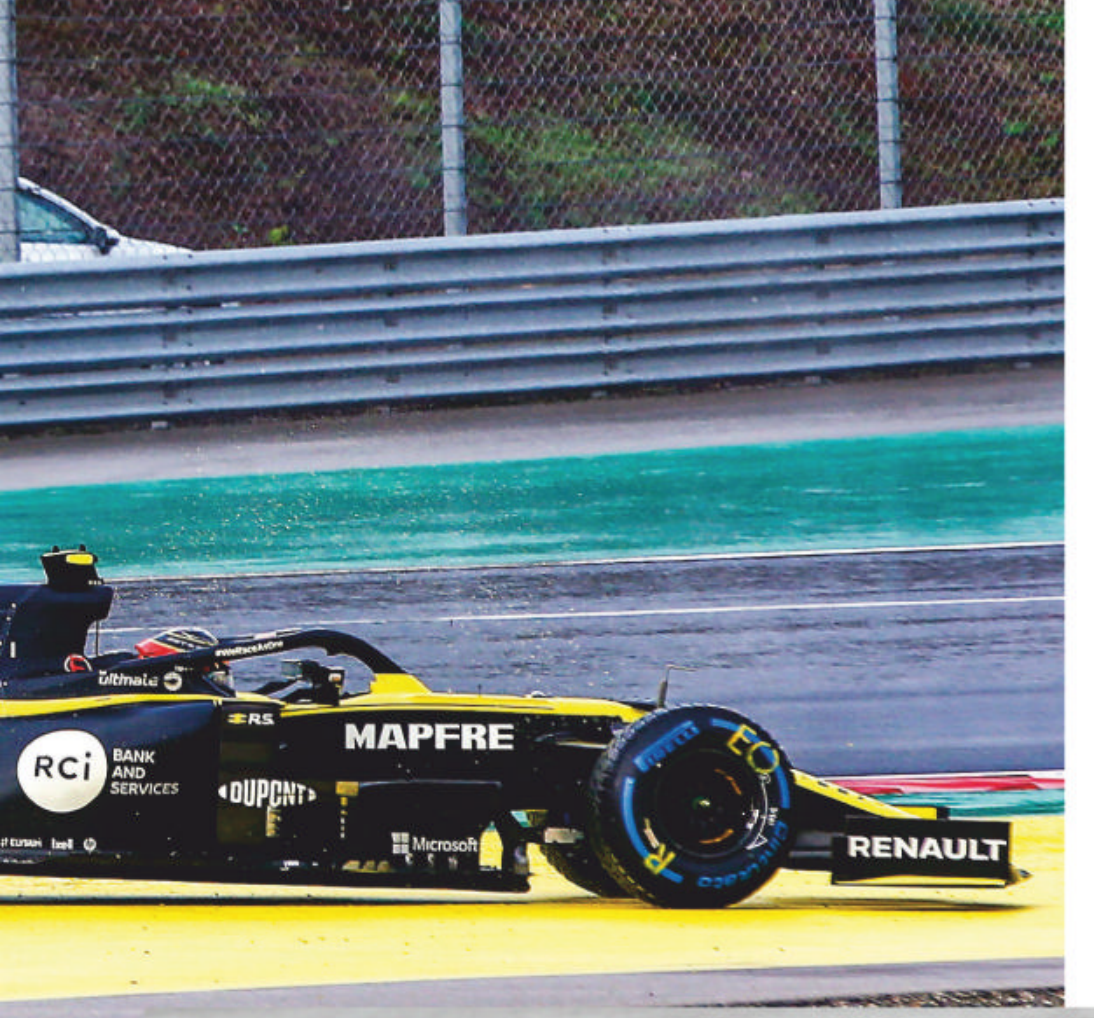
But on the lap that marked a high point for Stroll's lead on the inters, Verstappen's chances evaporated. Perez went deep at Turn 9 on lap 18, although not off the road, and was vulnerable on the long run to Turn 12, the track's main passing point. Verstappen tucked in and closed, then nipped to the inside of the Turn 11 kink, and jinked to the outside as the pair headed left on the exit — not a place with good history for Red Bull drivers... (the 2010 Turkish GP!) Verstappen lost control on the still saturated kerbs and spun around at high speed, damaging his tyres and falling to sixth, from where he immediately pitted.

It was then Albon's turn to close on Perez, but a 0.459s gap on lap 23 was as good as it got. On lap 34, having fallen back to 4.485s adrift and reported his front inters were "gone", the rear of Albon's car went too fast through the downhill right of Turn 4 and he spun out of third, pitting at the end of the lap. That gave Hamilton third, as Vettel had pitted out of his way, again mirroring Leclerc, who had sparked a second round of stops for inters on lap 30. After his trip off the road, Hamilton had initially fallen away from his old rival's Ferrari, but by the time Vettel came in on lap 33 he had been just over a second adrift.

"I was thinking, 'Seb has had the toughest year, I would say arguably



Hamilton surged clear of Perez in the final stint, extending the gap to more than 30s



HONE



Vettel, here leading Verstappen, put in a vintage performance

COATES

perhaps in his whole career', and I just thought he was driving so well," Hamilton said of his fight with Vettel, referencing his thoughts after slipping off the road following his failed attack.

"But at the same time, I was like, 'He's doing so good, but dammit, he's in the way, the guys up ahead are getting away!' And then he started pulling away from me and I think at that point I could definitely see the win seeping away."

But Hamilton found ways to reverse his destiny at Istanbul Park. Several, in fact. In the laps leading up to Vettel coming in again, he and Hamilton had been the fastest runners in the top five, regularly able to

"I WAS HAVING TO SAVE THE TYRES, TRYING NOT TO KILL THEM. THE KEY WAS KEEPING MY WITS ABOUT ME"

put in 1m42s, where the Racing Points and Albon were in the 1m44s. Just as the wearing inters were doing for Stroll's lead, they were making Hamilton's race. He adopted four critical approaches to his driving that helped him keep his tyres alive, which had the added benefit of keeping them in the critical temperature working range. Only on the inters, which were significantly better at retaining heat than the other wet compound, did Hamilton truly look in command.

"I was having to save the tyres through the high speed, trying to not kill them," he explained. "Keeping temperature up was really key. So that's brake balance, that's how you use [the tyres] on the exit of the corners. It's the lines that you have to navigate. There was a lot of wet patches still out there, and as soon as you touch that, you're off. The key today was really just keeping my wits about me."

And this is the fifth and final change Hamilton made that led to one of his most-famous victories, and his 16th rain-affected F1 triumph. »

QUALIFYING



FIA POOL

The Mercedes drivers were far from the main story in qualifying for the Turkish Grand Prix, as their undefeated record against the clock came to an unexpected end.

This was instead a tale of glory and fury for two of Formula 1's youngest drivers. Coming into the session, the momentum was with Max Verstappen, who had topped all three practice outings – the two dry Friday affairs, and the 60-minute FP3 session ahead of qualifying. If there could be such a thing as a pole favourite given the treacherous track surface (wet or dry), it was the Dutchman. And for the opening two qualifying segments he delivered, topping Q1 and Q2.

Verstappen remained ahead after the early laps in Q3, but a critical change to the intermediates – in part motivated by Sergio Perez's sudden pace on the green-walled rubber – came when Red Bull called him in just as he was about to lower the provisional pole benchmark.

"It was all going quite well on the wet tyres," said Verstappen. "In Q1 when I tried the inters it was not working at all, even compared to other people on inters [at that stage]. So in Q3 I was not very sure to go on inters because I felt really comfortable on the extreme tyres. Once we boxed and we went out, I had no grip at all compared to the laps I was doing before."

"I FELT REALLY COMFORTABLE ON THE EXTREME TYRES. ONCE WE BOXED I HAD NO GRIP AT ALL"

By now Perez held provisional pole, but Stroll was suddenly the Racing Point driver that mattered to Verstappen. He'd first gone out in Q3 on the extreme wets, but soon "myself and the team agreed it was best to come in and fit inters". He added: "They were updating me on Sergio's pace and at the same time I felt the wet tyre was quite poor compared to Q2."

And Stroll, who survived a post-qualifying investigation into his conduct passing the spun Perez on their final laps, used the inters to rocket to pole in the closing moments. Verstappen did enough to push Perez down to third, but was dejected at the end result.

"It's the first time I sit here this year upset," he said at the post-session press conference. "I think that says it all."

Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas got stronger as qualifying wore on, but finished well adrift of their customary places, in sixth and ninth respectively, with Alex Albon and Daniel Ricciardo between Hamilton and the top three.

Ferrari had a disappointing qualifying after showing promising practice pace, which Sebastian Vettel would a day later put down to it raining throughout qualifying, compared to the drying conditions the SF1000s enjoyed in the race.



Perez clung on to second place in drag race to the line with Vettel

DUNBAR

He changed the look of the best strategy by staying on tyres that had been through the graining stage and would wear down in line with the drying track. The sight of his inters' smooth circumferences in parc ferme after the race, the contact-patch rubber effectively burned down to slicks, will live forever as the image of Hamilton's 94th grand prix triumph.

Racing Point's call to pit Stroll on lap 36 was correct on paper. Leclerc and Vettel were flying on their fresh inters and Hamilton was coming at the two pink cars fast. From a gap of 24.063s on lap 18, he was just 1.334s off Stroll when the long-time leader came in for a second time, and Hamilton seized the lead he would not lose by using a blast of DRS on the approach to Turn 12 to sail past Perez on lap 37.

Stroll, however, was quickly in trouble, immediately complaining about his new inters — his second new set of the race — graining badly and costing him time. In the end, he lost so much time and confidence that he fell to ninth at the flag, losing out in battles with the Ferraris, Albon and the quietly impressive Carlos Sainz Jr, and then dropping behind Lando Norris (recovering from "probably the worst start of everyone's career ever") following a slip off the road at Turn 1 late on.

The victorious team boss put forward a theory about why Stroll struggled after his second stop, while Racing Point later claimed he had picked up damage to the underside of his front wing that caused a loss of front downforce. "The tyres went through different phases," said Toto Wolff. "You could see that most of the people who bolted on a new set of intermediates and pushed very hard had graining after a couple of laps only, and from then on the tyre didn't recover. Lance was leading the race solid, and put on the new tyre, which I think at that time was the right strategy, and just dropped back."

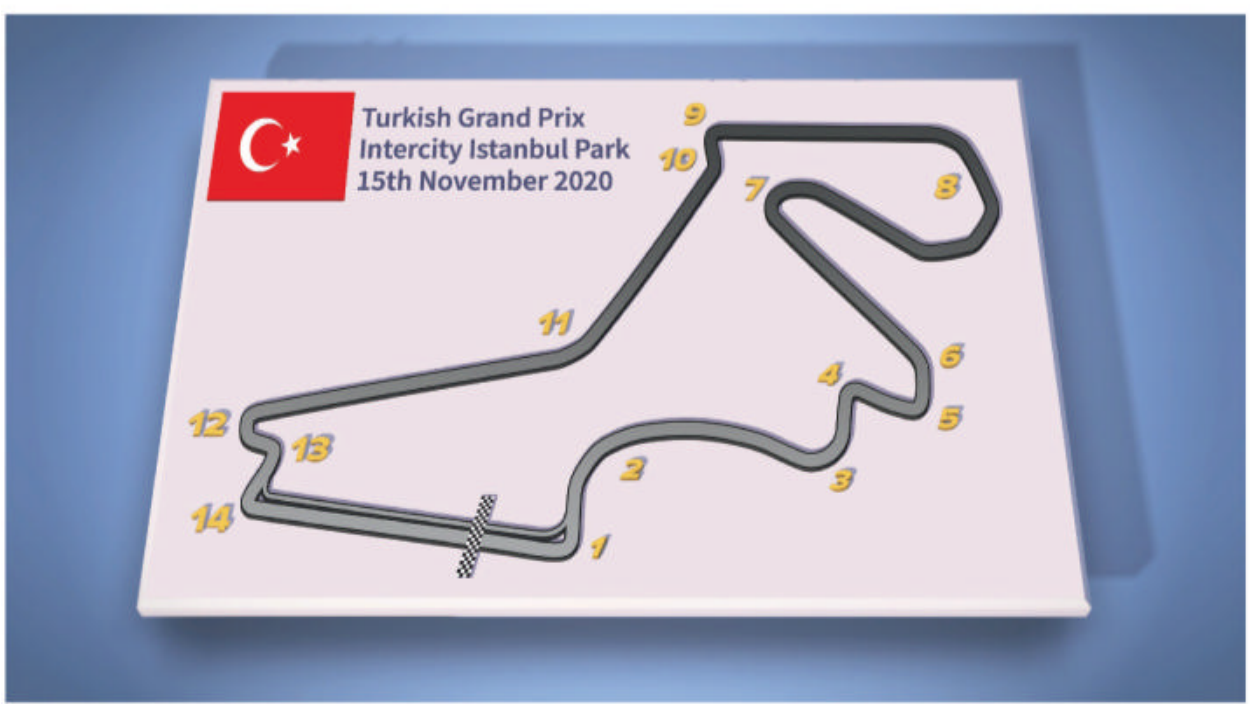
There is also another aspect of Hamilton's decision-making to consider. As he struggled on the full wet tyre in the very early laps, he had instructed race engineer Peter Bonnington, "don't give me new tyres again", adding "not the right idea". And when he switched to the inters, he was subsequently given a set that had done three laps on Saturday, suggesting he was bolting on a set that would have none or little of the graining others experienced so badly.

Hamilton had to work hard to make it last; the tyre did 50 race laps, but his pace held up. In the 20 laps to the end of the penultimate tour, Hamilton's Mercedes surged clear by 1.326s per lap over Perez, eventually winning by 31.633s.

There's no point including Perez's final lap in a pace comparison with Hamilton, because it was simply about survival. Perez had been informed of Stroll's struggles on the second inters, and so he and Racing Point opted to follow Hamilton's lead and stay out to the flag.

Perez initially looked like he had the measure of the cars behind, first Verstappen before he pitted for a third time on lap 43, then the Ferraris, of which Leclerc was the one most on the move, really in the groove after his second stop. He passed Vettel by using DRS to surge ahead on the main straight on lap 40, but didn't appear to have enough to close in on Perez once the Red Bull had been removed from contention again. It was quite the recovery drive from 14th at the end of lap

ISTANBUL PARK TRACK LAYOUT





TEE

A champagne and tickertape shower befitting such a brilliant race win

one, after Leclerc had failed to make a good getaway from "the dirty side of the track", *a la* Norris.

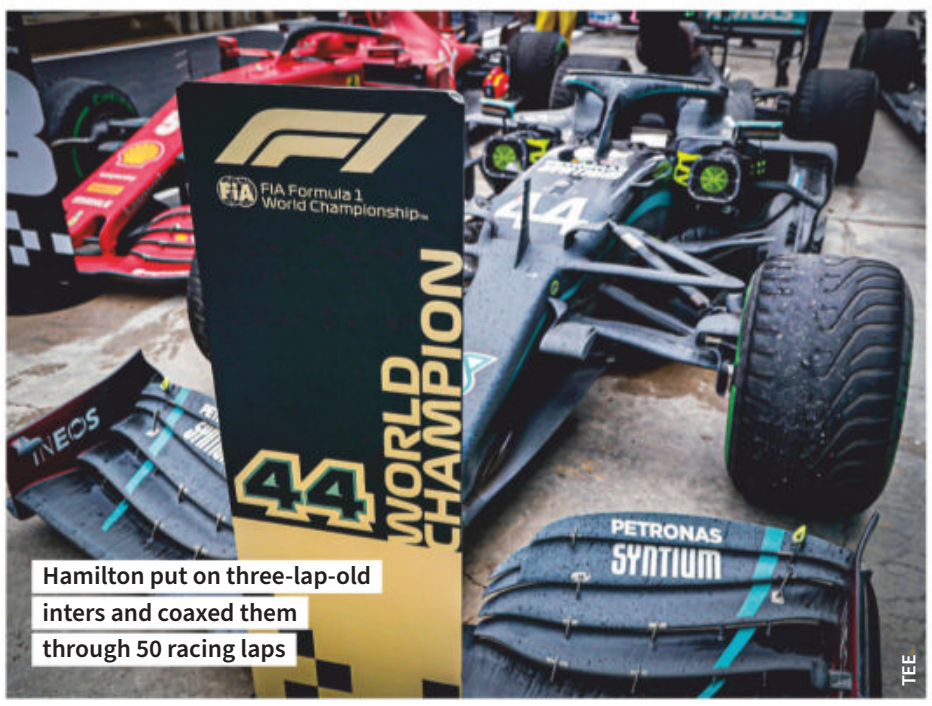
But unlike Hamilton, who Mercedes considered pitting with rain threatening to fall again in the final laps, such was his margin up front, Perez was in trouble by the end.

On the last lap, he lost three seconds compared to the previous tour, and a trip through the Turn 9 run-off gave Leclerc second. But Perez powered after the Ferrari, despite the scarlet car ahead having DRS, and retook second when Leclerc locked his right-front heavily at the final time through Turn 12 and slid deep. He also fell behind Vettel, quickly and brutally berating himself for his error. Perez hung on in a drag race to the line, as both he and Vettel collected their first podiums of 2020.

"I think one more lap on those tyres, they would have exploded," said Perez. "The vibrations were extremely bad towards the end. But I think looking after them in the beginning also made our race, [considering] towards the end when we had drying conditions."

Hamilton "burst into tears" crossing the line, understandably overwhelmed to have made history in this year of years. But even if he'd not survived another final-lap tyre failure, something he was wary of in the closing stages, he'd have been champion thanks to Bottas's shockingly bad result.

"I THINK ONE MORE LAP ON THOSE TYRES, THEY WOULD HAVE EXPLODED. THE VIBRATIONS WERE REALLY BAD"



Hamilton put on three-lap-old inters and coaxed them through 50 racing laps

After his spin behind Ocon at the first turn, he had then hit the Renault driver when he misjudged his braking point for the first time into Turn 9, where Hamilton had initially gone off. Bottas just careered into Ocon, spinning him again and giving the Frenchman a puncture, as well as damaging his W11's front wing and steering.

"The car was not right," he said of its handling after the contact. "I could feel that the steering wheel was going to the left on a straight line, and then the left, right corners, the car was behaving differently, sliding."

This may have been a considerable factor in Bottas having four further spins by himself across the rest of the race — six in total — as his title challenge was brutally snuffed out when Hamilton lapped him in the closing stages. He rose as high as 12th, but came home 14th after his travails, having taken a second stop for new inters (his initial race set of Pirelli inters was a scrubbed one).

Because of Bottas's spins, the 2020 Turkish GP evoked memories of another famous Hamilton triumph — Silverstone 2008, the day when then-title rival Felipe Massa was the one getting dizzy. But it also harked back to China the year before, where a pitlane off on worn intermediates cost Hamilton victory and a rookie title. Now he is F1's master, serene in all conditions, and the champion of the world once again.

NEXT F1 REPORT

BAHRAIN GRAND PRIX
3 DECEMBER ISSUE

Bahrain should have hosted the second race of this year – until COVID-19 had other ideas. Will the newly crowned 2020 champion extend his win tally here?

McLaren saves a good result after qualifying disaster

After a disastrous qualifying that ended with neither driver able to escape Q2, and both also later receiving grid penalties for infractions, McLaren rescued a decent result.

Carlos Sainz Jr was pegged back three places after impeding Sergio Perez, while Lando Norris took a five-place drop for failing to slow down under a series of double-waved yellows in Q1.

As soon as the race began, Sainz picked his way through the Turn 1 drama to shoot up to ninth from 15th, then picked his way past Kimi Raikkonen and ran as high as sixth before his first stop.

He cycled out in a battle between Charles Leclerc and Max Verstappen, later augmented with Sebastian Vettel and Alex Albon, and profited as Albon began to struggle and Verstappen had to stop one more time than his rivals.

Sainz was now fighting the two Ferraris, and almost had a chance to clear Leclerc on the final lap after the Monegasque's lock-up, but couldn't find a way through and had to be content with fifth.

Norris had more of a slowburner, as he basically went nowhere off the line and had to pick his way through the field more slowly. He got into the top 10, and snatched past Daniel Ricciardo and Lance Stroll in the final 10 laps for eighth. Just 24 points now cover Racing Point, McLaren, Renault and Ferrari in the constructors' table.


TEE



DUNBAR

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

Wet-weather success slips from Verstappen's grasp

Max Verstappen was left frustrated after seeing his hopes of winning the Turkish Grand Prix fade in a series of spins and tyre struggles.

A sluggish getaway from second on the grid dropped him to fourth behind Sebastian Vettel in the opening stint, but the Red Bull driver got the overcut by running longer on the full-wet tyres before switching to intermediates.

A lap 18 spin when trying to pass Sergio Perez for second left Verstappen with flat-spotted tyres, forcing him to pit again. A third stop, plus another spin when following team-mate Alexander Albon, meant Verstappen could only finish sixth, although he did beat Albon.

"It is just very frustrating to be honest," said Verstappen. "I tried to follow 'Checo' through that kink and suddenly I just massively washed out. It was a big spin. I tried to keep it out of the wall of course and then flat-spotted the tyres. After that, you can quickly catch up with the guys, but you can't pass, as it's just one line around here, and already that line is very slippery so it's super-frustrating. We had to just wait for people to pit or whatever."

Albon had been in contention for the race win soon after the switch to inters, as he caught second-placed Perez and race leader Stroll. But a spin exiting Turn 4 on lap 34 cost Albon ground and a position to eventual winner Lewis Hamilton, as well as forcing an early second stop for another set of intermediates that then grained.

"I feel a bit confused from the race," Albon said. "When we boxed for inters, we had incredible grip [after the stop], and at that point I felt we were in for a win, I thought everything was going to plan. I had a little pirouette, but still felt good. Then we put another set of tyres on, the same [type] of tyres, and we just had no grip and no pace. A lot of head scratching."

BIG NUMBER

32

The number of laps Lance Stroll spent in the lead of the Turkish GP, which was enough to put him third in the total of all racing laps led so far in 2020 (Lewis Hamilton leads on 557, ahead of Valtteri Bottas on 184).



DUNBAR

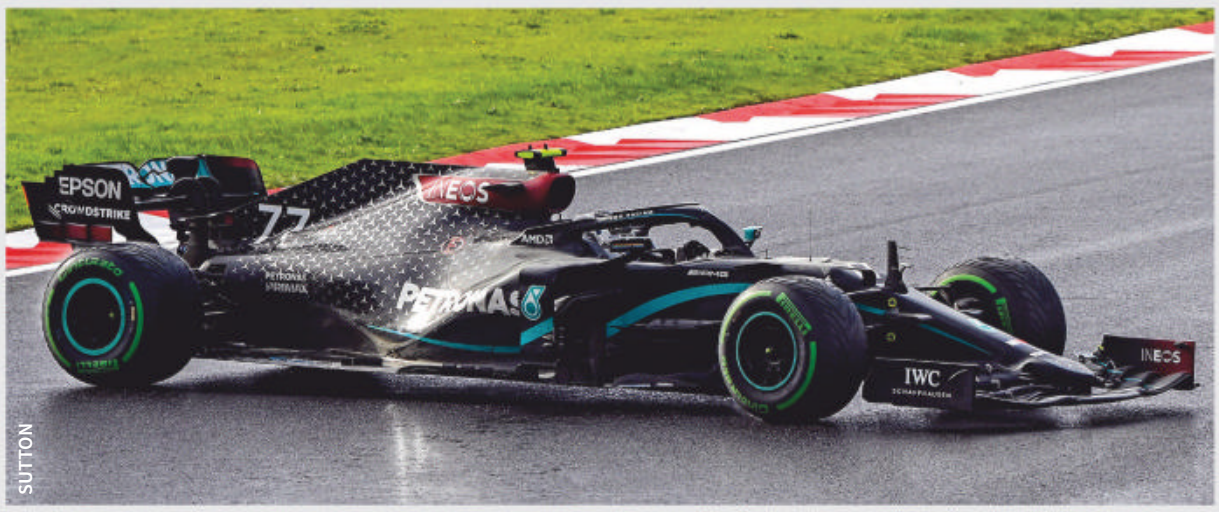
Rain adds to driver gripes over new track surface

Wet weather ahead of the Turkish Grand Prix added to drivers' gripes about the resurfaced Istanbul Park circuit.

Track resurfacing took place just two weeks before the race, resulting in a formidable lack of grip on the new asphalt in both dry and wet conditions.

Max Verstappen said drivers were "trying to survive" in the wet, while Daniel Ricciardo admitted he did not enjoy the race, and warned against artificially making tracks low-grip in the future. "It was hard to get a lot of satisfaction out of it from a driving point of view," Ricciardo said. "I don't recommend they resurface the tracks like this a month before we come here, deliberately."

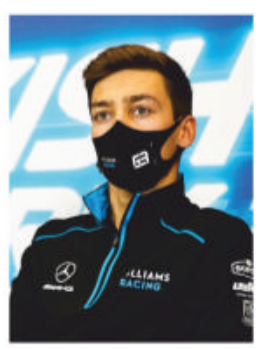
But Sebastian Vettel said that the conditions gave drivers "more ability to make a difference", adding: "You're still depending on if you get the tyres in the window, and how the car works, but there's more room to express yourself."



SUTTON

Q&A

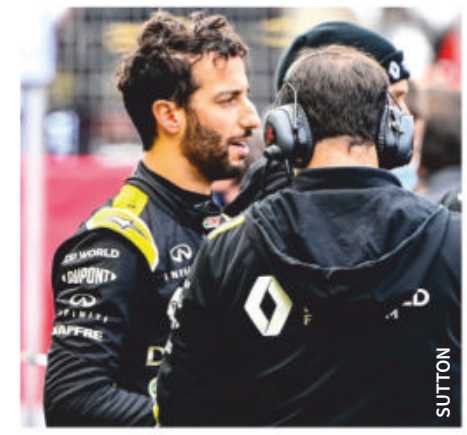
GEORGE RUSSELL
WILLIAMS DRIVER



What happened with the accident in the pitlane before the start?
I was tiptoeing around those laps to the grid. It was the least amount of grip that I've ever experienced in an F1 car, probably ever in my life. I came into the pits, I turned at slow speed, and I just went straight on. I wasn't overly concerned because I went into the wall at such a slow speed that I knew the guys would be able to recover it, and we were always planning to start from the pitlane on hot tyres, considering our engine penalty. But it just summed up the Pirelli tyres from this weekend. In F1, you work in milliseconds and tenths, not in seconds. It was just a weekend that I don't think anyone has ever experienced before.

The first stint looked difficult but went well. How did it feel on the inters early on?
We rolled the dice to start on the inters. It was very tricky on the opening three or four laps, but as the conditions started to dry out, they were coming towards me more and more, lap after lap, and I felt really, really comfortable. I got the tyres in a good window, [but then] I had Lando Norris behind me, who was a little bit quicker. He went for an overtake into the last corner and sort of pushed me off a little bit, which was fine, all part of racing, and I just got the tyres very wet. I was very slow, lost the temperature, and I just could not recover them. We came in, swapped the tyres, and once again we just couldn't get them working.

Do you think you'll ever look back fondly on this weekend given the challenging conditions?
If you want chaos and carnage, and drivers being made to look like idiots, there are other categories and sports out there you can go and watch. Formula 1 is about the best cars, the best drivers, the best teams going to the best tracks, and showing what they can do. This weekend was not that.


SUTTON

Too much drama for Renault

On a weekend when Racing Point scored a podium and McLaren managed a double points finish, Renault's meagre one-point haul from Turkey was little reward from a race that promised much.

Daniel Ricciardo and Esteban Ocon both charged off the grid and fleetingly looked to be among the cut-and-thrust of the lead action. But in the melee, Ricciardo tagged Ocon into a spin before losing two positions on the first lap himself.

Ricciardo spent a great portion of the race running in sixth, but was some way adrift of the front five, and his inability to make progress as he wore his inters left him vulnerable. Charles Leclerc, Carlos Sainz and Max Verstappen got past with a much greater turn of pace, and Ricciardo later spun while trying to defend from a Lando Norris attack into Turn 12.

Although Lance Stroll struggled with his tyres towards the end, Ricciardo could make no inroads into the Canadian's advantage and had to settle for 10th.

Ocon could not recover to the points and finished a lap down. He'd fallen to last after his Turn 1 spin, and got a puncture from Valtteri Bottas's clumsy knock later in the lap, but managed to find his way up to 11th in a "very tricky race".

Renault fell from third to fifth in the constructors' table.



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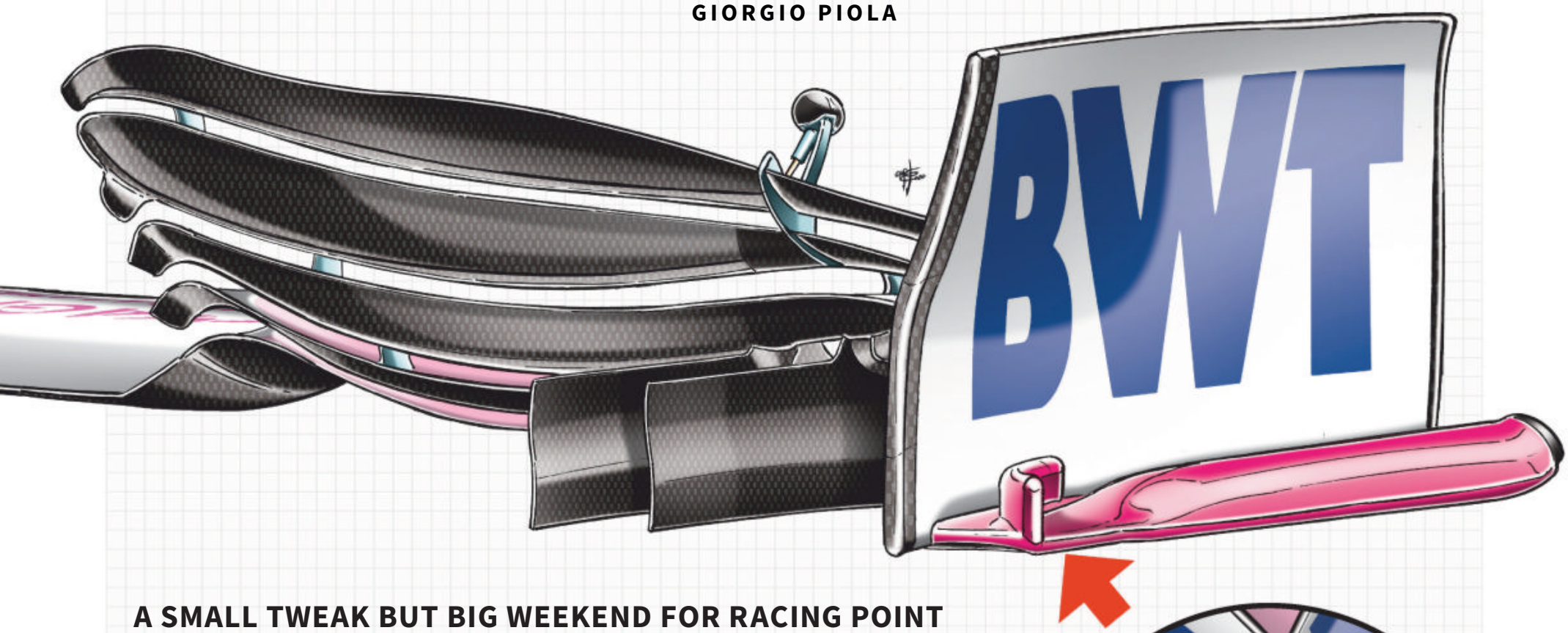
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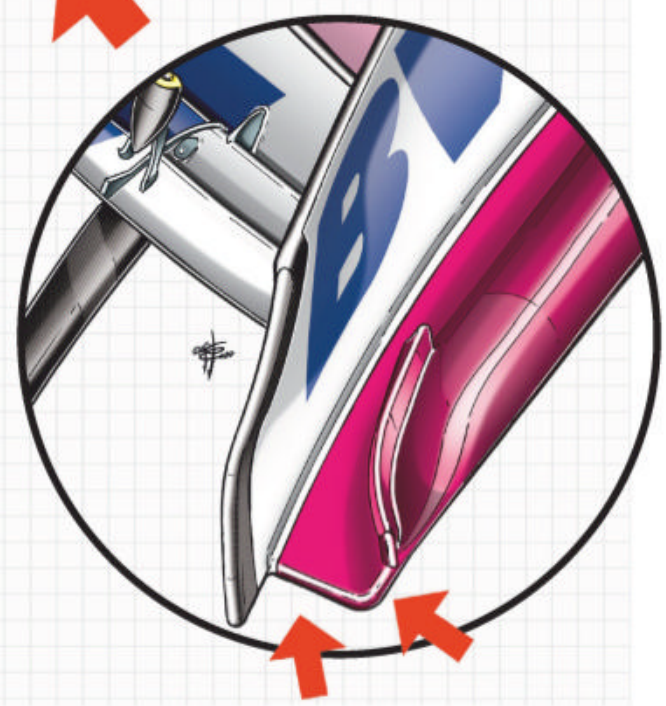
A SMALL TWEAK BUT BIG WEEKEND FOR RACING POINT

A pole position and a podium capped off an excellent weekend for Racing Point, which was largely able to deal with the greasy, damp conditions that pervaded the new Istanbul Park track surface. Ultimately, this was not a race in which a new part made the key difference, but Lance Stroll's maiden pole and Sergio Perez's return to the rostrum did coincide with a slightly redefined front-wing-endplate design on the RP20.

An idea introduced by Ferrari last year, the small fin at the trailing edge of the footplate is permissible as it fits within the regulatory bounding boxes, and teams have spent time since then attempting to enlarge the size of the fin and its effect. Racing Point has nudged this fin further forward, releasing the outwardly directed airflow out sooner to minimise the impact of the wake produced by the tyre.

One aspect that the team has persisted with throughout the year is the shortened length of the footplate in relation to the rest of the endplate. Any rotation of airflow produced underneath the wing can therefore be released earlier, which is easier to turn around the face of the front wheel. It's only a minor tweak, but it's a change that can help extract a little more from the rest of the car.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE





RED BULL'S NEW NOSE PART OF BID TO BOOST DRIVER CONFIDENCE

Red Bull's weekend started brightly, with Max Verstappen topping all three practice sessions – at least, before events proceeded to go downhill. The team spent as much of practice as it could attempting to dial in a new nose, building on the under-nose cape with a pair of new slots on the top surface. Presumably, the idea is to help send any fast-moving air underneath to add to the RB16's front-end downforce.

The cape also has two fins on the trailing edge to help divert airflow outwards to be worked by the bargeboards. Over the season, Red Bull's developments have been aimed at giving the drivers a little more feeling with the car. Although Verstappen is able to hustle it and profit from the pointy front end, Alex Albon seems to struggle more with the rear, which seems to be prone to snapping. By developing the car's overall downforce, the car can become more predictable and ensure that both drivers are getting the most from it.

Red Bull tried a different nose early in the season, but abandoned it after it appeared not to help the car progress, and since then has had to try other areas to boost the front end. These cape additions seem to be the next step in the team's development path.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



19 Gasly #10
1m58.556s



17 Grosjean #8
2m12.909s



15 Sainz #55
1m55.410s



13 Magnussen #20
2m08.007s



11 Vettel #5
1m55.169s

20 Russell #63
2m10.017s



18 Latifi #6
2m21.611s



16 Kvyat #26
2m09.070s



14 Norris #4
1m54.945s



12 Leclerc #16
1m56.696s



FREE PRACTICE 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m35.077s
2	Albon	1m35.318s
3	Leclerc	1m35.507s
4	Gasly	1m35.543s
5	Vettel	1m35.620s
6	Kvyat	1m36.738s
7	Norris	1m37.216s
8	Giovinazzi	1m37.503s
9	Bottas	1m37.629s
10	Ocon	1m38.428s
11	Latifi	1m38.508s
12	Perez	1m38.612s
13	Stroll	1m39.484s
14	Grosjean	1m40.025s
15	Hamilton	1m40.225s
16	Raikkonen	1m41.035s
17	Magnussen	1m41.854s
18	Ricciardo	1m45.156s
19	Sainz	1m46.462s
20	Russell	1m49.256s

WEATHER Dry, air 14-15C track 18-21C

FREE PRACTICE 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m28.330s
2	Leclerc	1m28.731s
3	Bottas	1m28.905s
4	Hamilton	1m29.180s
5	Albon	1m29.363s
6	Kvyat	1m29.689s
7	Gasly	1m29.944s
8	Vettel	1m30.022s
9	Stroll	1m30.297s
10	Norris	1m30.735s
11	Perez	1m31.104s
12	Ocon	1m31.380s
13	Giovinazzi	1m31.493s
14	Sainz	1m31.498s
15	Ricciardo	1m31.660s
16	Raikkonen	1m31.932s
17	Russell	1m32.302s
18	Grosjean	1m32.570s
19	Magnussen	1m32.807s
20	Latifi	1m33.488s

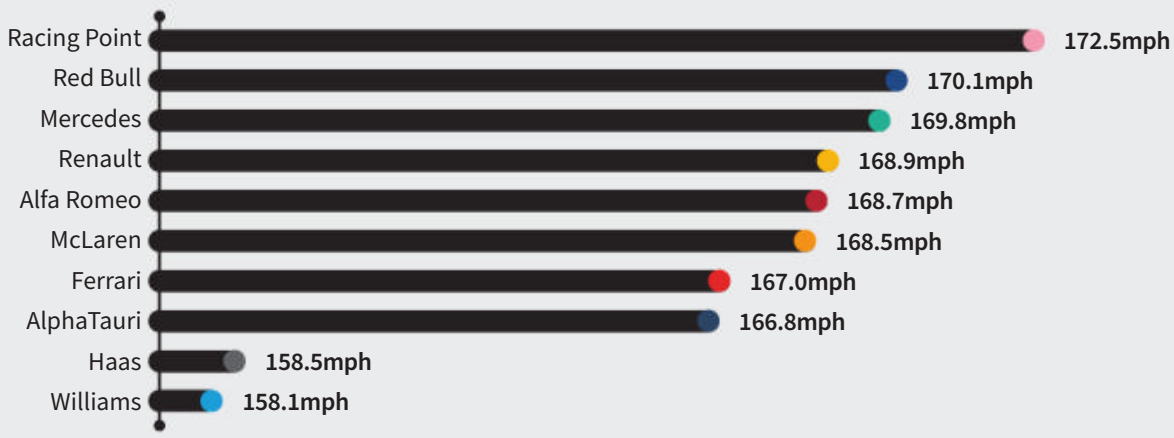
WEATHER Dry, air 15-17C track 18-22C

FREE PRACTICE 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m48.485s
2	Leclerc	1m49.430s
3	Albon	1m50.059s
4	Ocon	1m53.897s
5	Norris	1m53.995s
6	Vettel	1m54.490s
7	Perez	1m55.577s
8	Bottas	1m55.666s
9	Magnussen	1m55.878s
10	Stroll	1m56.824s
11	Ricciardo	1m58.475s
12	Sainz	1m59.548s
13	Giovinazzi	2m02.325s
14	Gasly	2m02.473s
15	Grosjean	2m04.748s
16	Raikkonen	2m06.351s
17	Kvyat	2m09.368s
18	Russell	no time
19	Latifi	no time
20	Hamilton	no time

WEATHER Wet, air 12.8C track 15C

SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)



QUALIFYING 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m57.485s
2	Albon	1m59.431s
3	Raikkonen	2m01.249s
4	Vettel	2m03.356s
5	Leclerc	2m04.464s
6	Gasly	2m05.579s
7	Ricciardo	2m05.598s
8	Ocon	2m06.115s
9	Bottas	2m07.001s
10	Norris	2m07.167s
11	Giovinazzi	2m07.341s
12	Stroll	2m07.467s
13	Sainz	2m07.489s
14	Hamilton	2m07.599s
15	Perez	2m07.614s
16	Magnussen	2m08.007s
17	Kvyat	2m09.070s
18	Russell	2m10.017s
19	Grosjean	2m12.909s
20	Latifi	2m21.611s

QUALIFYING 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m50.293s
2	Albon	1m52.282s
3	Hamilton	1m52.709s
4	Stroll	1m53.372s
5	Giovinazzi	1m53.431s
6	Ocon	1m53.657s
7	Bottas	1m53.767s
8	Raikkonen	1m53.793s
9	Perez	1m54.097s
10	Ricciardo	1m54.278s
11	Norris	1m54.945s
12	Vettel	1m55.169s
13	Sainz	1m55.410s
14	Leclerc	1m56.696s
15	Gasly	1m58.556s

QUALIFYING 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Stroll	1m47.765s
2	Verstappen	1m48.055s
3	Perez	1m49.321s
4	Albon	1m50.448s
5	Ricciardo	1m51.595s
6	Hamilton	1m52.560s
7	Ocon	1m52.622s
8	Raikkonen	1m52.745s
9	Bottas	1m53.258s
10	Giovinazzi	1m57.226s

WEATHER Wet, air 13-12C track 13-14C



SEASON STATS

	DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1	Hamilton	307	1	1
2	Bottas	197	1	1
3	Verstappen	170	1	2
4	Perez	100	2	3
5	Leclerc	97	2	4
6	Ricciardo	96	3	4
7	Sainz	75	2	3
8	Norris	74	3	4
9	Albon	70	3	4
10	Gasly	63	1	4
11	Stroll	59	3	1
12	Ocon	40	5	5
13	Vettel	33	3	5
14	Kvyat	26	4	8
15	Hulkenberg	10	7	3
16	Raikkonen	4	9	8
17	Giovinazzi	4	9	10
18	Grosjean	2	9	14
19	Magnussen	1	10	15
20	Latifi	0	11	15
21	Russell	0	11	12

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Mercedes	504
2	Red Bull	240
3	Racing Point	154
4	McLaren	149
5	Renault	136
6	Ferrari	130
7	AlphaTauri	89
8	Alfa Romeo	8
9	Haas	3
10	Williams	0

QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton	**10**	4	Bottas
Vettel	3	**11**	**Leclerc**
Albon	0	**14**	**Verstappen**
Norris	**7**	**7**	**Sainz**
Ricciardo	**13**	1	Ocon
Gasly	**12**	2	Kvyat
Perez	**8**	3	Stroll
Perez	**1**	0	Hulkenberg
Stroll	**1**	**1**	**Hulkenberg**
Raikkonen	**8**	6	Giovinazzi
Grosjean	**7**	**7**	**Magnussen**
Latifi	0	**14**	**Russell**

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

WINS

Hamilton	10
Bottas	2
Gasly	1
Verstappen	1

POLE POSITIONS

Hamilton	9
Bottas	4
Stroll	1

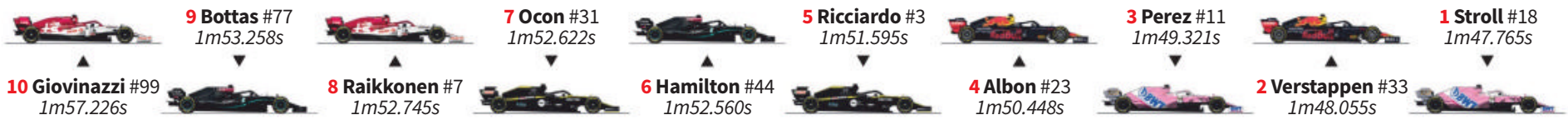
FASTEST LAPS

Hamilton	6
Bottas	2
Norris	2
Verstappen	2
Ricciardo	1
Sainz	1

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STARTING GRID



RACE RESULTS ROUND 14 (58 LAPS – 192.26 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	**Lewis Hamilton** (GBR)	Mercedes	1h42m19.313s	22	Wn, Iu
2	**Sergio Perez** (MEX)	Racing Point-Mercedes	+31.633s	2	Wu, In
3	**Sebastian Vettel** (DEU)	Ferrari	+31.960s		Wu, In, In
4	**Charles Leclerc** (MCO)	Ferrari	+33.858s		Wu, In, In
5	**Carlos Sainz Jr** (ESP)	McLaren-Renault	+34.363s		Wu, In, In
6	**Max Verstappen** (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda	+44.873s	1	Wu, In, Iu, In
7	**Alexander Albon** (THA)	Red Bull-Honda	+46.484s	1	Wn, In, In
8	**Lando Norris** (GBR)	McLaren-Renault	+1m01.259s		Wu, In, In
9	**Lance Stroll** (CAN)	Racing Point-Mercedes	+1m12.353s	32	Wu, In, In
10	**Daniel Ricciardo** (AUS)	Renault	+1m35.460s		Wu, In, In
11	**Esteban Ocon** (FRA)	Renault	-1 lap		Wu, Wu, In
12	**Daniil Kvyat** (RUS)	AlphaTauri-Honda	-1 lap		Wu, In
13	**Pierre Gasly** (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Honda	-1 lap		Wu, In, In
14	**Valtteri Bottas** (FIN)	Mercedes	-1 lap		Wn, Iu, In
15	**Kimi Raikkonen** (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	-1 lap		Wu, In, Iu, In
16	**George Russell** (GBR)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap		In, In, In
17	**Kevin Magnussen** (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	55 laps-withdrawn		Wu, In, Iu
R	**Romain Grosjean** (FRA)	Haas-Ferrari	49 laps-accident damage		Wu, In, In
R	**Nicholas Latifi** (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	39 laps-accident damage		In, In, In
R	**Antonio Giovinazzi** (ITA)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	11 laps-gearbox		Wu, In

FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	**Norris**	1m36.806s	-	58
2	**Bottas**	1m38.193s	+1.387s	57
3	**Verstappen**	1m38.431s	+1.625s	53
4	**Sainz**	1m38.754s	+1.948s	56
5	**Albon**	1m39.099s	+2.293s	54
6	**Hamilton**	1m39.413s	+2.607s	56
7	**Gasly**	1m39.586s	+2.780s	53
8	**Vettel**	1m39.662s	+2.856s	53
9	**Raikkonen**	1m39.743s	+2.937s	57
10	**Stroll**	1m39.921s	+3.115s	55
11	**Leclerc**	1m39.961s	+3.155s	47
12	**Perez**	1m40.392s	+3.586s	50
13	**Ricciardo**	1m40.677s	+3.871s	54
14	**Russell**	1m40.814s	+4.008s	51
15	**Magnussen**	1m40.948s	+4.142s	45
16	**Ocon**	1m41.006s	+4.200s	55
17	**Kvyat**	1m41.019s	+4.213s	53
18	**Grosjean**	1m43.281s	+6.475s	38
19	**Latifi**	1m43.495s	+6.689s	32
20	**Giovinazzi**	1m51.122s	+14.316s	11

WEATHER Wet to dry, overcast, air 11-14C track 14-17C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 112.74mph **FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED** 123.35mph

TYRES

KEY: H - Hard M - Medium S - Soft I - Intermediate W - Wet n - New set u - Used set



RACE BRIEFING

GRID PENALTIES

RUSSELL and **GASLY** Required to start from the back of the grid for additional power unit elements used

NORRIS and **RUSSELL** Five-place penalty and three licence points each for not respecting yellow flags

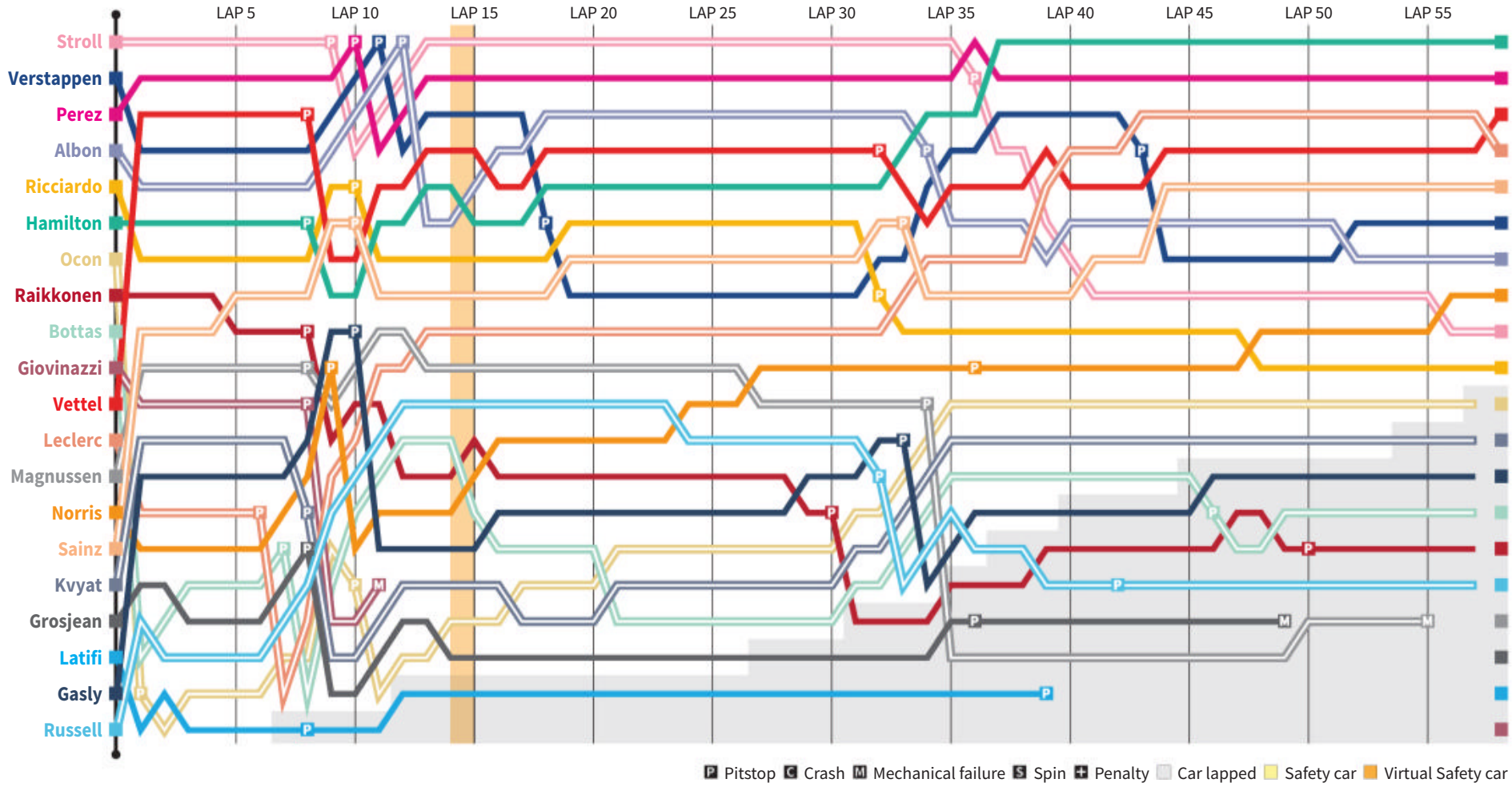
SAINZ Three-place penalty for impeding Perez in qualifying

STAT

2014

Stroll's Racing Point was the first car not from the 'big three' teams to take pole since Felipe Massa's Williams at the 2014 Austrian GP

LAP CHART What happened, when



FULL MARKS FOR THE DRIVE OF A SEVEN-TIME CHAMPION

It wasn't a perfect weekend for Lewis Hamilton, but a bit of leeway earned by a brilliant race performance grants the Mercedes star the only top score in Turkey

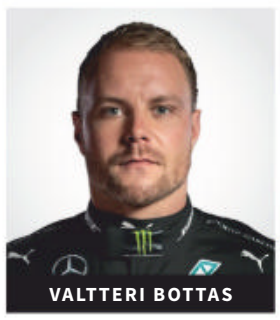
ALEX KALINAUCKAS

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

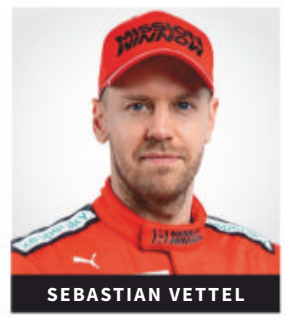
10 In different circumstances he'd score a nine after his qualifying struggles and twice sliding off in the race. But his charge on intermediates was just brilliant, up there with his best F1 wins. He displayed superb judgement and deftness, so we're awarding him a maximum score.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

3 Bottas badly underperformed as his title chance slipped away. He was three places behind Hamilton in qualifying, and his race was a disaster. He had six spins thanks to a Mercedes hobbled by front wing and steering damage, and he was the one who damaged it by clattering into Ocon.

FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

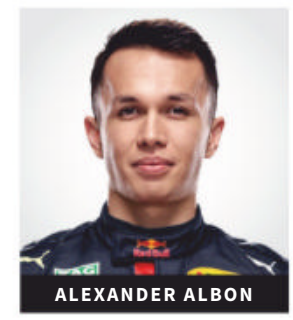
9 His score is boosted for being utterly brilliant in the race. Made a great getaway, then looked unruffled afterwards, even when Hamilton attacked. Couldn't keep Leclerc behind late on, but did enough to be in touching distance when his team-mate slid deep at Turn 12.



CHARLES LECLERC

7 This could be considered harsh, but he did make a major error – that lock-up on the final lap – so can't score higher. He'd also made a terrible start, albeit one he recovered from superbly. Typical self-critical response to his mistake was tough to hear, but he'll benefit from learning from the error.

RED BULL



ALEXANDER ALBON

6 A better performance compared to recent events, but this seemed to stem from Verstappen underperforming. Still, qualified well and raced superbly before his inters wore and he spun out of third. Was not happy on fresh inters and was powerless to resist his team-mate at the end.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

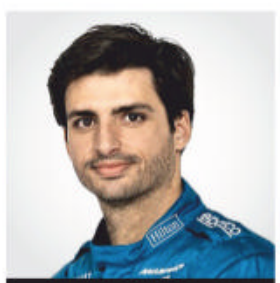
6 Looked to have enough pace to be pre-qualifying favourite, but struggled after making the change to inters in Q3. Made a shocking start before recovering well. But his botched move on Perez seemed hasty and cost him big-time. Had a second spin before overhauling Albon with DRS late on.

McLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

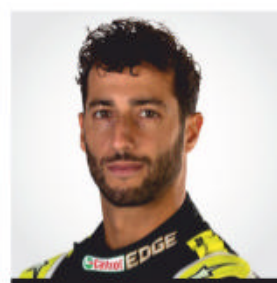
6 Was knocked out in Q2 for just the second time in 2020, which followed his Q1 double-yellow-flag infringement. He then made the worst start of all. That left him with a big job to do, but he recovered well. Enjoyed his time in free air and set the fastest lap by miles.



CARLOS SAINZ JR

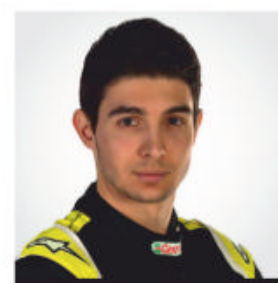
7 Another driver who would definitely would have scored higher if not for a significant mistake, which was impeding Perez in Q2. In the race he was excellent, though, picking up six places on lap one as he fired his tyres up to temperature well. Impressed in battle too.

RENAULT



DANIEL RICCIARDO

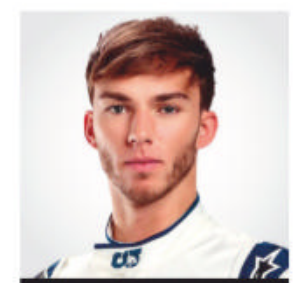
7 Produced another great performance to take fifth in qualifying and made a good start. But it all went wrong at Turn 1, where he avoided a crash with Hamilton but then tagged team-mate Ocon, which cost him ground too. Ate up his two sets of race inters and had a spin in the closing stages.



ESTEBAN OCON

7 Gets the same score as his team-mate. He qualified behind Ricciardo, but considering all that happened on lap one – hit and spun twice through no fault of his own – he produced a good race drive. Rose from last to 11th at the flag, making the inters last superbly for 47 laps.

ALPHATAURI



PIERRE GASLY

6 Rare low-key weekend was most notable for the pre-race penalty he got for AlphaTauri changing its mind about swapping his engine. In the race, he overcut Kvyat at the first stops, then took more inters when his team-mate didn't. Still closed to 1.411s behind despite the extra stop.



DANIIL KVYAT

5 Score is lower than his team-mate's due to his Q1 spin and exit. He also had an underwhelming race, after AlphaTauri's practice pace vanished in the wet as it failed to get its set-up right. Spun at Turn 4 on lap 17, gifting Ocon 16th, but got ahead of Gasly by staying on one set of inters for 49 laps.



Perez was pipped by Stroll in qualifying, but had the better race

RACING POINT



SERGIO PEREZ

9 Misses out on a perfect 10 because he lost pole to his team-mate, and also spun at a crucial moment on their final Q3 laps, which could have hurt Stroll. In the race he was excellent, trailing Stroll in the first half, but rewarded for his typical tyre-management prowess with second.



LANCE STROLL

9 We're being generous because Stroll really didn't do all that much wrong on a weekend when F1's best were tested to the maximum. Took a brilliant maiden pole, then led the majority of the race. But his pace on the inters hurt him, especially on his second set. Faded badly from there.

ALFA ROMEO



KIMI RAIKKONEN

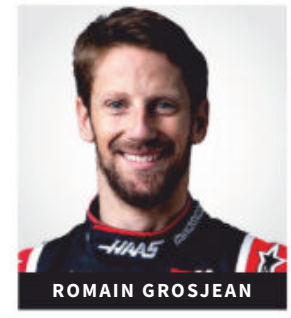
8 Boosts his score for reaching Q3 for the first time in 2020. Went into the race expecting trouble on the drying track, and so it proved to be as he fell backwards after holding eighth at the start. Got through three sets of inters and had a late spin, but was still the lead 'Class C' runner.



ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI

7 Like his team-mate, scores better for making it to Q3 in the unfancied Alfa. Didn't make lap-one progress as he often does, probably because he was in a lofty position to begin with, then retired with a gearbox problem after losing further ground following the switch to inters.

HAAS



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

5 Qualified on the back row, but gained from others' penalties. His race was nowhere near as impressive as his team-mate's as he struggled to generate tyre temperature. Was judged not to be at fault for the clash lapping Latifi, which gave him major floor damage and caused Haas to retire him.



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

8 Was boosted to 13th on the grid after a Q1 exit by penalties for others. Made his trademark strong start to run well in the points. Was in 11th when suspected cross-threaded wheelnut at his second stop meant Haas had to stop him out of caution. Lost two laps being pushed back up the pitlane.

WILLIAMS



NICHOLAS LATIFI

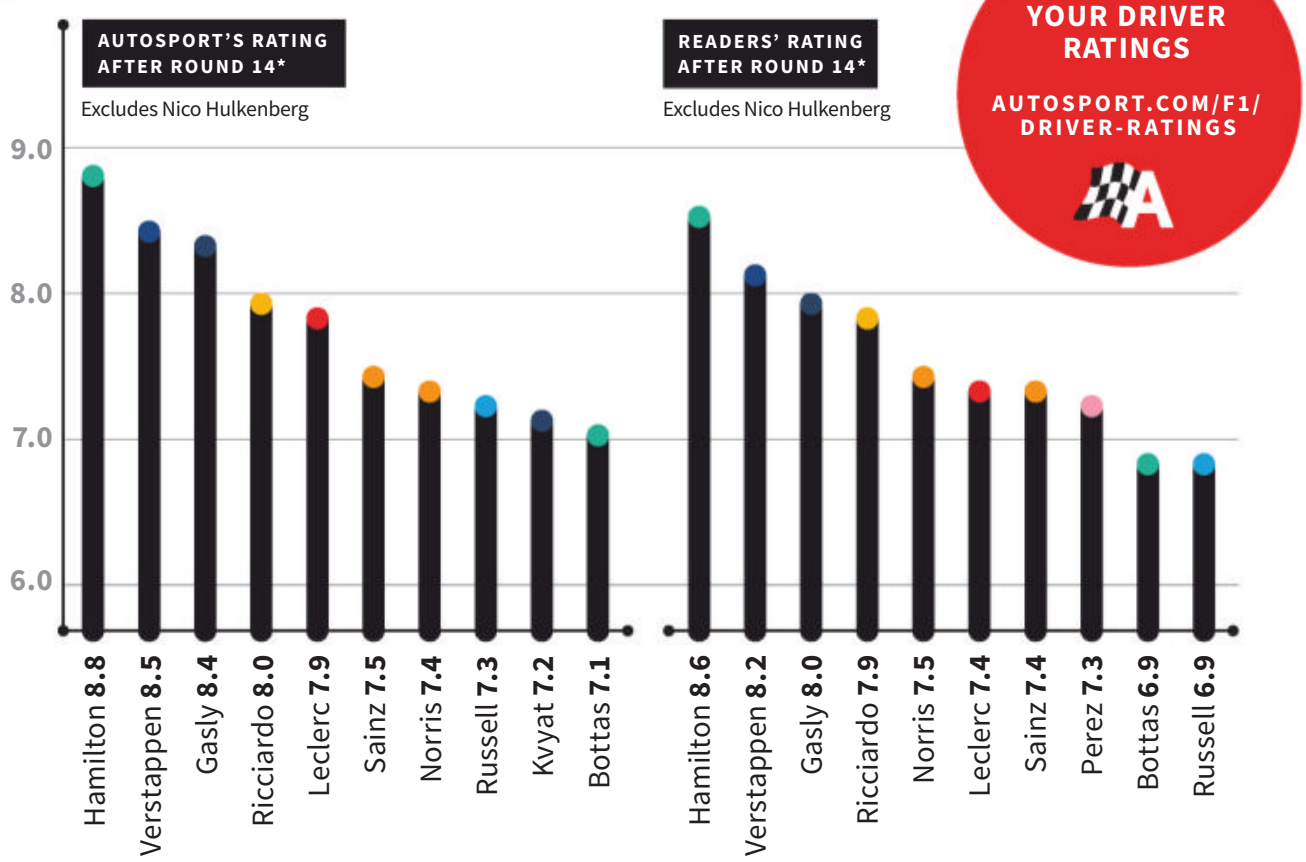
3 A tough weekend for the rookie. He is driving one of the slowest cars, but there were lots of mistakes. Spun out in Q1 and qualified last, then had several race offs, including a deep spin at Turn 12 on lap one. Was reprimanded for clattering Grosjean as the Haas followed Ricciardo under blue flags.



GEORGE RUSSELL

7 Score is unaffected by pre-race crash as it didn't impact what came afterwards – like Verstappen in Hungary. Said it was always Williams's plan to start on inters, and his driving through the wettest stage of the race was impressive. Encountered more wear as the race went on and so faded.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS



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HAMILTON'S JOURNEY TO SEVEN TITLES

Lewis Hamilton has now matched Michael Schumacher's record of seven Formula 1 world titles. Here's how he got there across 14 seasons at the pinnacle of the sport

KEVIN TURNER

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES



2007

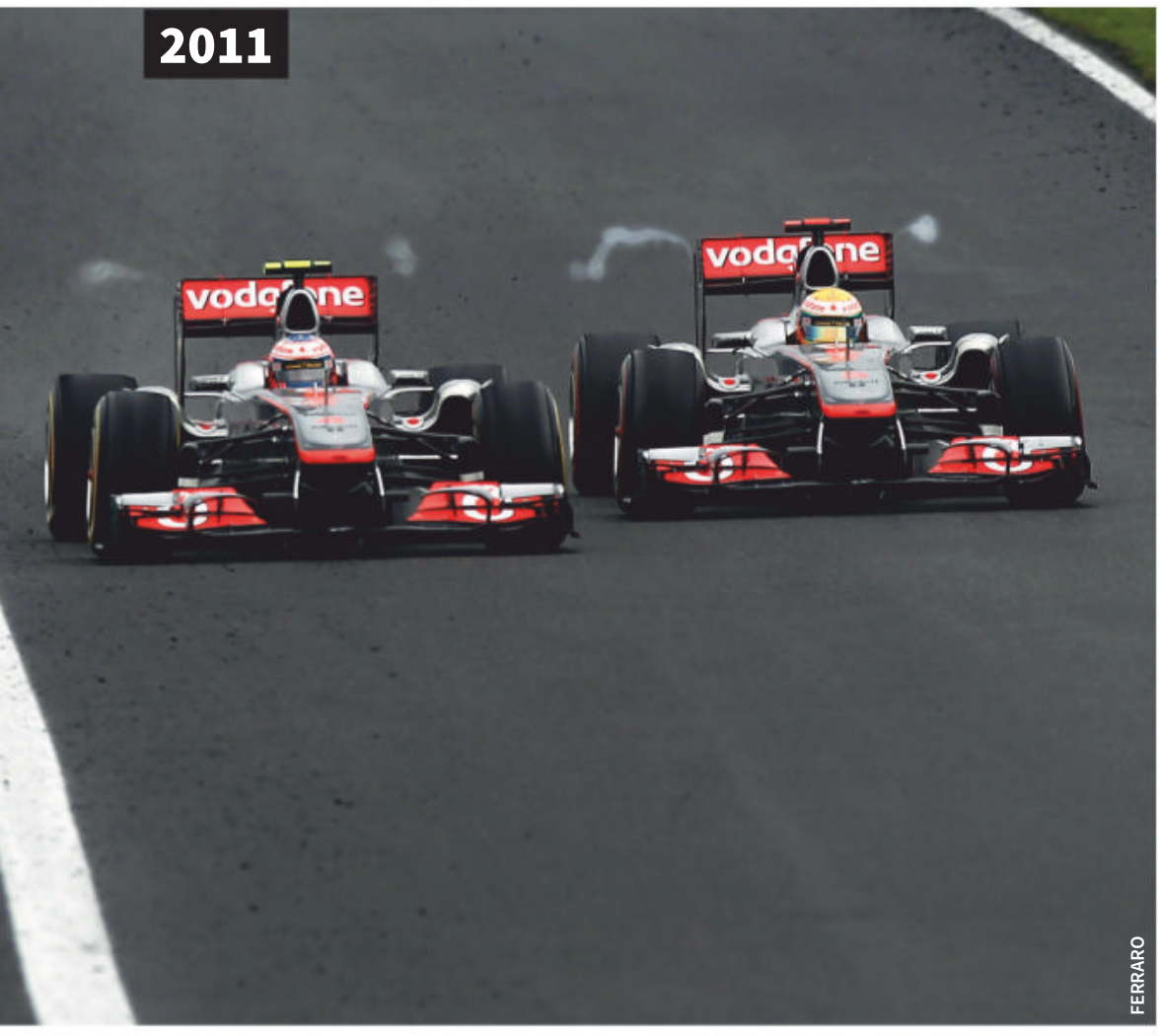


2008



2009







2007 2ND WINS 4
Hamilton lost the Formula 1 world title by just one point in his sensational rookie campaign. He ruffled the feathers of double world champion McLaren team-mate Fernando Alonso, but a combined team and driver error in China opened the door for Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen to snatch the crown from both McLaren drivers.

2008 CHAMPION WINS 5
There were some mistakes – notably the Canadian Grand Prix pitlane gaffe – in 2008, but also some incredible performances, including his British GP victory by over a minute in terrible conditions. Hamilton came through a tense and dramatic Brazilian GP finale to snatch fifth on the final lap and beat Felipe Massa by one point.

2009 5TH WINS 2
McLaren's car for the new regulations was not one of its best, but the team made progress and Hamilton became a frontrunner again in the second half of the season. Fine wins in Hungary and Singapore helped him to fifth in the points, best of the rest behind the Brawn and Red Bull duos.

2010 4TH WINS 3
Hamilton was joined by reigning champion Jenson Button and both were in the championship hunt for much of the year. Collisions in Italy and Singapore proved costly for Hamilton just as Ferrari and Red Bull hit form. Hamilton beat Button to fourth in the table, but was 16 points behind champion Vettel.

2011 5TH WINS 3
This was perhaps Hamilton's least consistent season, with too many mistakes, though he did show his pace and win three races. A happier Button put Hamilton in the shade and finished as runner-up, three spots ahead of Lewis, but the domination of Vettel and the Red Bull RB7 meant there was only ever going to be one champion.

2012 4TH WINS 4
Lewis was back on form and the McLaren MP4-27 was fast enough to take the fight to Red Bull, but five retirements – none of which were Hamilton's fault – derailed his title bid and contributed to his decision to head to Mercedes. Four wins and fourth in the points was poor reward.

2013 4TH WINS 1
Hamilton's first year with Mercedes was tricky. The W04 was fast but often ate its tyres in races, and established Mercedes driver Nico Rosberg proved a tough team-mate, winning two races. Nevertheless, Hamilton brilliantly won the Hungarian GP and finished two spots ahead of Rosberg in the drivers' standings as Vettel dominated with Red Bull.

2014 CHAMPION WINS 11
The beginning of Mercedes' domination as F1's turbo-hybrid era got under way. Such was the W05's advantage that only Hamilton and Rosberg were in title contention and Lewis won the day, despite the ridiculous double-points finale taking the fight to the wire. Hamilton took 11 wins to Rosberg's five.

2015 CHAMPION WINS 10
A more impressive Hamilton campaign meant the title was wrapped up with three races to go at the United States GP, when a Rosberg error handed him the lead. Nevertheless, Hamilton seemed slightly below par for the final three GPs, handing the momentum to Rosberg that the German continued into 2016.

2016 2ND WINS 10
A hungry Rosberg, some poor starts by Hamilton and unfortunate reliability at key moments were enough to swing the points race in Nico's favour. Hamilton finished the season superbly, winning the last four races, but it wasn't enough. Rosberg won the title by five points, with nine wins to Hamilton's 10.

2017 CHAMPION WINS 9
Ferrari stepped up to challenge Mercedes as F1 introduced faster machines. The W08 proved a bit of a 'diva', but in the second half of the season Hamilton stepped up a gear. A canny win at Spa was the first of a hat-trick and Ferrari self-destructed, leaving Hamilton to secure the title in Mexico, with two rounds to go.

2018 CHAMPION WINS 11
Was this his greatest season? Ferrari had the upper hand in the first part of the campaign, but still Hamilton got himself to the top of the table. Then Vettel started making mistakes, Mercedes got into its stride and Hamilton pulled away, again clinching the crown in Mexico.

2019 CHAMPION WINS 11
At times both Ferrari and Red Bull outpaced Mercedes, but eight straight wins for the Silver Arrows at the start of the season – six of them by Hamilton – meant they were never in title contention. Lewis again clinched the crown with two races to go, while team-mate Valtteri Bottas improved from a poor fifth in 2018 to be runner-up.

2020 CHAMPION WINS 10 (AND COUNTING...)
The W11 is probably the finest GP Mercedes so far. Bottas has been close at times, but Hamilton, still striving to improve any 'weaknesses' left in his game, just has too many weapons in his armoury, from qualifying speed to racecraft via wet-weather prowess. Despite the truncated season, Hamilton could yet break his season-wins record in 2020.








ETIHAD
ETIHAD
DUNBAR
2016


COATES
2017




GALLOWAY/SUTTON
2018
PETRONAS
México
Heineken
Heineken
Heineken


2019
UBS
ETHERINGTON


2020
44 HAMILTON
77 BOTTAS
LEWIS
INEOS
PETRONAS
IWC
ETHERINGTON

Brilliant Sutton's fireworks earn him the crown

The astonishing racecraft and wet-weather prowess of the Laser Tools Racing Infiniti star were enough to see off Turkington and the rest at Brands

MARCUS SIMMONS

PHOTOGRAPHY **JEP** motorsport IMAGES



Ash Sutton knew the 2020 British Touring Car Championship title was beginning to fall into his lap when he saw the forecast for last weekend's finale on the Brands Hatch Indy Circuit. "Weather-wise, I was always gunning for rain," he said as he stood on the grass by the starting grid, basking in the success of his second overall crown, holding that trophy he'd been shooting for.

What he – and Colin Turkington, the four-time champion whose points advantage he overturned at the last stage – won't have known was that there was another omen. As Autosport made its way to Brands on Sunday morning amid torrential rain, there was a safety car – er, sorry, restricted speed limit – in the West Surrey section of the M25, thanks to a smashed-up BMW in the central barrier. OK, Turkington didn't crash his West Surrey Racing-run BMW 330i M Sport on the day, although he would avoid a massive shunt thanks to incredible reflexes, but it was a premonitory metaphor for his broken dreams.

As it is, Sutton pulled off what few could have predicted before the belated start to the 2020 season. His old crew from his Subaru days at BMR Racing had merged with BTCC minnow Laser Tools Racing, working together on the Infiniti Q50 project that only started in the summer of 2019 as a replacement for LTR's old Mercedes. "I knew the Infiniti would be a better race car than the Mercedes," said Laser Tools chief Bob Moffat, his team also celebrating both Independent crowns. "But to get to where we've got in such a short time is incredible. Ash, you'd argue, is the best driver in the championship and that's why we got him."

The youth of that project is perhaps one reason why Sutton has not always been at the sharp end in qualifying this season, and he has been particularly affected by the high levels of success ballast he has had to lug »

around on the Infiniti. But the Q50's soft set-up, and Sutton's flamboyant driving style, have been very effective at the more acrobatic venues such as Knockhill. Brands is relatively low grip and smooth, and it's probably fair to say that Sutton would have had a tough job on a dry weekend. But what transpired played perfectly into this rainmaster's hands.

Turkington and WSR, meanwhile, have developed a 330i that they are satisfied works well in dry and wet conditions, but this time the nature of the coronavirus-affected BTCC schedule for 2020 played against them. It was both wet *and* cold on this mid-November weekend and, on a relatively low-grip surface, they struggled to switch on the tyres, and Turkington's title hopes disappeared as Sutton cruised past him in the final race to rub salt into the wounds. But yes, there were celebrations at WSR, as their efforts with Turkington and Tom Oliphant won BMW the manufacturers' title and Team BMW the teams' crown.

There were three more contenders for the overall crown beyond rear-wheel-drive pair Sutton and Turkington: Dan Cammish in his Team Dynamics-run Honda Civic Type R; Tom Ingram with the Speedworks Motorsport-prepped Toyota Corolla; and rank outsider Rory Butcher at the wheel of the new-for-2020 fourth-generation Ford Focus built by Motorbase Performance. While Butcher predictably dropped out of the running in the first race, and Ingram in the second, they all played a significant part in how the weekend played out.

To his glee, Sutton found that the greasy conditions — traditionally feared by rear-wheel-drive teams — of free practice were no bother for the Infiniti. He was second quickest, behind only the traditional free-practice-topping MB Motorsport Honda of Jake Hill, and team-mate Aiden Moffat was fourth. "So far, so good — mustn't grumble," Sutton grinned as he began to realise things were playing into his hands. "We've always had a very good car in the wet regardless — that's something we've carried over from what we did with the Subaru."

Turkington languished in 14th with understeer. Come qualifying, the changes made to Turkington's car, laden with 60kg of success ballast, meant that had changed to oversteer as he ended up eighth, and he reported that he was "having to wring its neck. We've just been lacking a bit of pace all day. It's very low grip, and we're just trying to get the front axle switched on. It's not just the weight making it difficult, but it could have been a lot worse."

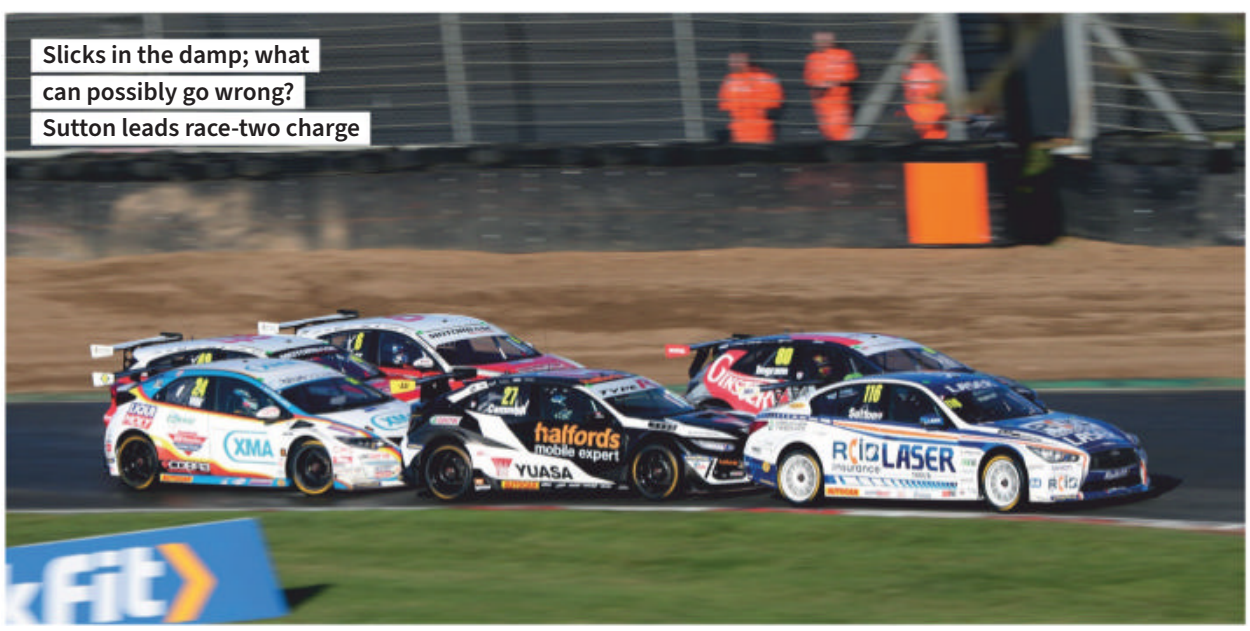
Turkington made a late pitstop to put on a set of scrubbed wet-weather tyres, which he felt should have propelled him into the top five, but that plan was foiled when a third red flag caused a termination of qualifying with two minutes remaining — ironically it was caused by Carl Boardley's ex-WSR BMW 125i M Sport in the gravel.

That incident also scuppered Sutton, who was nevertheless happy with third, with 54kg of ballast aboard the Infiniti. "I'm in my element — I absolutely love it," he said of the conditions, "and now a little bit of pressure can be taken off." Interestingly, Sutton's best sector time for the second half of the lap was set on a very early run when he was just warming up, and his engineer Antonio Carrozza was convinced that the Boardley incident had hampered his man. "Those final two laps were critical for us," he said. "We would have taken pole without doubt."

As it was, the permanently jolly Ingram planted the Toyota, running 42kg of ballast, on pole, from Butcher's Ford (36kg). Cammish, meanwhile, was fourth, his Honda on 48kg. He was just 0.083 seconds off pole, but that was a time set early on before he spun twice at Clearways, the first time damaging the left-front of the Civic against the tyre barrier: "Maybe we should have stuck with our first set of tyres for longer. We went to a different set and wow, it went wild — it was just oversteering. I don't think I've ever crashed a touring car other than when I've had help from no brakes..."

Cammish certainly showed the underlying speed of that Honda in the opening race, which took place on a puddle-strewn track, albeit considerably better than the aforementioned M25. Butcher was dispatched quickly, Sutton was passed when the Infiniti ran wide at Paddock Hill Bend, and now only Ingram, who appeared to be in trouble on the wet surface, was in front.





Slicks in the damp; what can possibly go wrong? Sutton leads race-two charge



Sutton passes Turkington in the final race to put the title beyond doubt

“I’m in my element – I absolutely love it. And now a little bit of pressure can be taken off”

“I just felt I was struggling with the front end all the way through,” said the Toyota man. “Every lap was changing, and under the safety car we had a bit of a downpour.”

At the restart, Cammish spent one lap getting himself into position, found a chink of light up the hill to Druids, and squirmed furiously under braking as Ingram’s positioning of his car left the Honda with the right-front on the grass. He was through, and Sutton too would get past Ingram with five laps remaining. Once into second place, Sutton set fastest lap as the Infiniti came alive. “Just before the safety car I thought, ‘Hang on a minute, I’ve got a car underneath me’,” he explained. “The tyres seemed to come in and I had a very good car at the end of the race.”

Turkington was still struggling with oversteer, and WSR instructed Oliphant to sit behind his team leader as they floundered to ninth and 10th. “Tom’s car was good, but we kept him behind Colin,” said team supremo Dick Bennetts of one case of »



KEEPING UP THE STANDARDS



Allam meets up with old pal Cleland at Knockhill in 2017

The British Touring Car Championship waved goodbye to some of its old warhorses at Brands Hatch last weekend. Team Hard is replacing its venerable Volkswagen CC weaponry with new Cupras; the Audi S3 is being pensioned off as Trade Price Cars gets into bed with Excelr8 Motorsport in an expanded four-car line-up of Hyundai i30 Ns; and Ciceley Motorsport is replacing its Mercedes A-Class. Word in the paddock is that this team will buy some BMW 330i M Sports from West Surrey Racing, but WSR boss Dick Bennetts said at Brands that the deal isn’t done yet.

Another old warhorse for the BTCC to say goodbye to was 65-year-old Driving Standards Advisor Jeff Allam. A close friend of series chief Alan Gow, Allam held the role in the late-1990s Super Touring days, then returned in 2011 for a 10-year stint. He’s not exactly the most demonstrative character, especially compared to his 1991-94 Vauxhall team-mate John Cleland, so it’s easy to overlook a terrific driving career – he was the champion in the BTCC’s top class in 1982 with the 3.5-litre Rover and, with Denny Hulme, won the prestigious Tourist Trophy at Silverstone in a TWR-prepared Vitesse in 1986.

“Over all the years he’s been in touring cars he’s seen and heard everything,” said Gow. “There’s nothing any driver can come to the TOCA bus with which is something he hasn’t heard before, and he combines that with a healthy degree of scepticism.”

Allam’s unflappable character has served BTCC organiser TOCA well, and Gow added: “There’s that, and also the fact that he doesn’t have a beef with any of the drivers or teams, and he was just enough out of it [as a driver] not to have any issues, while having an understanding of what the BTCC’s all about. I’m sorry to see him go.”

The last penalties handed out under Allam’s watch were to Colin Turkington for passing Dan Cammish under yellow flags, and a reprimand and licence penalty points for Jack Sears Trophy champion Michael Crees for a collision with Jack Goff. But Allam himself identified Matt Neal as the most ‘crafty character’ in the BTCC: “He uses all the rules and all the bits of track to his advantage when he can!”

MARCUS SIMMONS



Morgan gives the Merc farewell outing

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Cammish begins move on Ingram to take victory in race one

teams playing the championship game. The other was at Dynamics, where Matt Neal contentedly sat in seventh place behind Ollie Jackson's Ford and Hill, knowing that the BMWs were behind him. "I didn't want to do anything to cost anyone any places," revealed the three-time champion. "The more people between Dan and Colin, the better."

There was nothing between Cammish and Turkington in the second race, but they were left trailing by the astounding Sutton and Ingram. By now the sun was out, and all but five drivers took the start on slicks. The wet-shod Tom Chilton led eight laps in his BTC Racing Honda before Sutton steamed past. And by the time Ingram passed Chilton at half-distance, the Infiniti had a lead of almost nine seconds.

Ingram had dropped the ball with a trip into the Paddock Hill Bend gravel at the start, dropping to 12th, before a spectacular recovery straight out of the Sutton Manual. "I love those conditions," he enthused. "It takes me back to when I was seven years old and my dad was too tight to buy wet tyres for my kart. The car was very helpful – it was performing magnificently."

"I had the team in my ear giving me target times, and then I was shocked by the car performance when it dried"

Sutton, meanwhile, harvested another fastest lap bonus point in the race that *really* proved things were falling into place, the Infiniti absolutely spot-on despite its 54kg of ballast. "The track was drying lap by lap, and I had the team in my ear giving me target times – I was just saving the tyres," he recounted. "And then I was shocked by the car performance when it dried. Slicks in the damp is normally one of the worst combinations for a rear-wheel-drive car."

But Turkington, too, had a rear-wheel-drive machine that was working, despite damage sustained in a mid-race bundle up the hill from Paddock to Druids. As the charging Ingram shouldered his way past Cammish and Josh Cook's BTC Racing Honda, Hill then ran into Cook at the hairpin, and Turkington unavoidably bumped into Cook's machine, meaning smoke was pluming from the right-front of the BMW for the rest of the race. At the next corner, Cook hit the unfortunate Oliphant, who'd let Turkington through earlier and was riding shotgun, onto the grass.

Turkington was now fourth and catching Cammish. "In a funny way, you do all that work on set-up and 'smack' – the car's better!" joked Turkington in a quip that will give Bennetts nightmares. "The car took a while to get going but when it did it just switched on." The pass on Cammish came on the penultimate lap, as Turkington miraculously avoided what could have been a very nasty shunt. Paul Rivett, who'd done a great job to take ninth in qualifying on his second BTCC outing, had spun at Paddock and was broadside across the track. As Rivett's Audi trickled backwards towards the outside, Sutton just managed to jink to the left in avoidance. Ingram went through too, but then came Cammish and Turkington, both coming up to lap Jack Goff and BTCC debutant Brad Philpot...

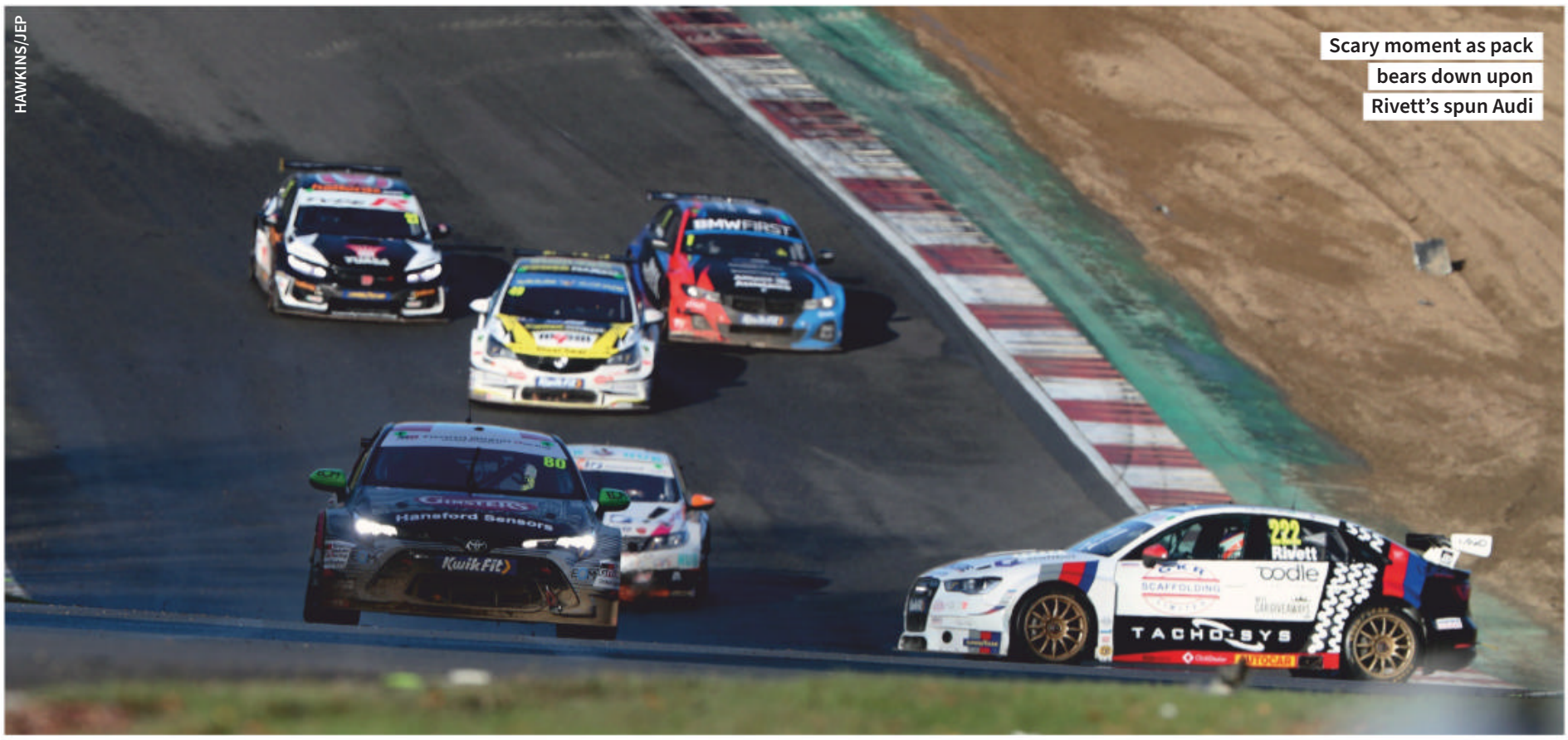
Cammish tucked in behind Philpot on the inside, but Turkington hadn't seen the yellow flags and took a wide line, was suddenly faced with the stricken Rivett, and darted right to fill a BMW-sized gap between Cammish and Philpot. "That's the biggest shock you can have as a driver," sighed Turkington. "Paddock is blind, and I thought Dan was on my inside. I'm just thankful that I [avoided Rivett]." Turkington was penalised one spot after the race, dropping him back behind Cammish, but that did promote him one place on the reversed grid.

It was the full top 12 reversed, meaning »



Hill, Cook and Turkington got together at Druids in the second race

HAWKINS/JEP



Moffat would start on pole, with title contenders Turkington, Cammish and Sutton ninth, 10th and 12th respectively – and heavily ballasted too, of course. A downpour during the preceding British F4 finale meant everyone took the start on wets, and was bad news for Turkington, especially as Sutton only had to keep him in sight to claim the title.

Predictably, Butcher cruised to victory after starting third, with 6kg of ballast aboard his Motorbase Ford, legacy of a bump with Hill and Jackson at the start of race two that had sent the Scot and Hill into the Paddock gravel. Meanwhile, front-row starters Moffat and Chris Smiley removed themselves from the equation by running wide at Paddock at the start of the second lap. Moffat reinserted himself into that equation by passing Cammish, but then, when the Honda got back ahead, he moved over to let team-mate Sutton past.

Behind the leading quartet, Turkington had made good progress to fifth in the early laps, but he was struggling for pace and just hanging on from Ingram, Cammish, Jackson and Sutton – and all Sutton had to do was sit at the back of this train. Gradually, Turkington began to slide. Ingram was through, then Cammish, and then TV footage of his onboard showed Turkington nervously flicking eyes left to monitor Sutton. With six laps to go, the camera swivelled to show the Infiniti cruising up the inside on the approach to Paddock. At this point, Turkington might as well have picked up the BTCC trophy from the passenger seat footwell of the BMW and handed it through the window to Sutton.

"I had my fingers crossed race three would be dry, but when it rained I knew it'd be tough"

"I had my fingers crossed race three would be dry, because then we had a proper shot at it," said a forlorn Turkington after coming home ninth. "But when it rained I knew we'd find it tough. We didn't have the pace in the wet. We are quick in the wet and we've won races in the wet when the grip is good, but this weekend whenever the grip was low we struggled a bit with the rear axle. It was very sensitive to the throttle."

Sutton also passed Cook on his way to sixth. It was a race where he'd shown restraint early on, but was then able to prove his racer's instinct. "I learned the hard way – race two at Croft [where Sutton collided with Hill] bit me hard, so I learned to bite the bullet and know when I'm not on a winning weekend," he said. "But we were able to win the championship with a racer's showing rather than a conservative one."

Up front, Ingram slashed the gap to Butcher once he'd got the Toyota into second place, while Cammish lost out in a fight with Hill for third, the works Honda driver discovering after the race that he'd been carrying a left-rear puncture. Ingram and Cammish lost the title last weekend, but they've been superb, especially over the second half of the season. And, as Cammish pointed out, each of this season's top four have scored more points than Turkington harvested on his way to the 2019 title, despite one round fewer.

"The car felt great," bubbled Ingram following a triple podium on the day. "It felt like I could win a battle, drive to the next person, win a battle, drive to the next person. Rory was a little too far away unfortunately."

"Last year I went home so disappointed," harked back Cammish to his end-of-2019 heartbreak, "but this year I'm content and happy with everything we've achieved. I've driven the wheels of it at every opportunity."

As have his fellow title contenders. But none more so than the brilliant Sutton, come rain or shine.



P74 SUPPORTS REPORT

POWERED BY motorsport STATS

RESULTS ROUND 9/9, BRANDS HATCH INDY (GBR), 15 NOVEMBER, RACE 1 (27 LAPS – 32.613 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	**Dan Cammish** (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R (48kg)	26m45.259s
2	**Ash Sutton** (GBR)	Laser Tools Racing / Infiniti Q50 (54kg)	+0.813s
3	**Tom Ingram** (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla (42kg)	+3.160s
4	**Rory Butcher** (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST (36kg)	+6.538s
5	**Ollie Jackson** (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+7.952s
6	**Jake Hill** (GBR)	MB Motorsport (AmD) / Honda Civic Type R (18kg)	+9.273s
7	**Matt Neal** (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R	+10.164s
8	**Josh Cook** (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R (6kg)	+13.519s
9	**Colin Turkington** (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330i M Sport (60kg)	+18.283s
10	**Tom Oliphant** (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330i M Sport (30kg)	+19.339s
11	**Adam Morgan** (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes A-Class (24kg)	+21.167s
12	**Tom Chilton** (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R (12kg)	+21.621s
13	**Chris Smiley** (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+23.221s
14	**Aiden Moffat** (GBR)	Laser Tools Racing / Infiniti Q50	+23.649s
15	**Paul Rivett** (GBR)	Trade Price Cars Racing (AmD) / Audi S3	+31.348s
16	**Stephen Jelley** (GBR)	Team Parker Racing / BMW 125i M Sport	+31.760s
17	**Jack Goff** (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	+32.939s
18	**Andy Neate** (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+36.294s
19	**Senna Proctor** (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+38.121s
20	**Michael Crees** (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R	+39.758s
21	**Brad Philpot** (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra (45kg)	+42.563s
22	**Ethan Hammerton** (GBR)	Trade Price Cars Racing (AmD) / Audi S3	+45.018s
23	**Jack Butel** (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes A-Class	+45.798s
24	**Carl Boardley** (GBR)	Team Hard / BMW 125i M Sport	+59.266s
R	**Nicolas Hamilton** (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	18 laps-accident damage
R	**Sam Osborne** (GBR)	MB Motorsport (AmD) / Honda Civic Type R	6 laps-accident damage
R	**Glynn Geddie** (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	6 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 73.14mph. **Fastest lap** **Sutton** 55.069s, 78.96mph.



Osborne (left) and Geddie triggered day's only safety car



Emotion for champ Sutton

QUALIFYING

1 Ingram 54.950s; 2 **Butcher** 54.974s; 3 **Sutton** 54.984s; 4 **Cammish** 55.033s; 5 **Jackson** 55.139s; 6 **Hill** 55.256s; 7 **Neal** 55.279s; 8 **Turkington** 55.381s; 9 **Rivett** 55.404s; 10 **Cook** 55.449s; 11 **Jelley** 55.481s; 12 **Oliphant** 55.484s; 13 **Moffat** 55.527s; 14 **Goff** 55.722s; 15 **Smiley** 55.769s; 16 **Chilton** 55.799s; 17 **Morgan** 55.866s; 18 **Boardley** 55.867s; 19 **Hamilton** 55.985s; 20 **Neate** 56.075s; 21 **Osborne** 56.154s; 22 **Crees** 56.313s; 23 **Hammerton** 56.328s; 24 **Geddie** 56.490s; 25 **Philpot** 56.516s; 26 **Butel** 57.395s; 27 **Proctor** 57.446s.

GRID RACE 2 Decided by result of Race 1.

RACE 2 (24 LAPS – 28.989 MILES)

1 Sutton (54kg) 21m14.892s; 2 **Ingram** (48kg) +4.762s; 3 **Cammish** (60kg) +9.370s; 4 **Turkington** (12kg) +9.688s; 5 **Jackson** (36kg) +10.832s; 6 **Morgan** +13.422s; 7 **Hill** (30kg) +14.088s; 8 **Proctor** +14.418s; 9 **Cook** (18kg) +14.919s; 10 **Butcher** (42kg) +17.900s; 11 **Smiley** +22.605s; 12 **Moffat** +28.823s; 13 **Crees** +33.011s; 14 **Osborne** +37.119s; 15 **Oliphant** (6kg) +37.712s; 16 **Neal** (24kg) +42.984s; 17 **Jelley** +43.415s; 18 **Chilton** -1 lap; 19 **Butel** -1 lap; 20 **Goff** -1 lap; 21 **Neate** -1 lap; 22 **Philpot** -1 lap; 23 **Rivett** -1 lap; 24 **Hammerton** -1 lap; 25 **Hamilton** -3 laps; R **Geddie** 2 laps-driveshaft; R **Boardley** 1 lap-suspension.
Winner's average speed 81.86mph. **Fastest lap** **Sutton** 49.421s, 87.99mph.

GRID RACE 3 Decided by result of Race 2, with top 12 reversed.

RACE 3 (24 LAPS – 28.989 MILES)

1 Butcher (6kg) 22m15.138s; 2 **Ingram** (54kg) +1.522s; 3 **Hill** (24kg) +7.679s; 4 **Cammish** (48kg) +9.984s; 5 **Morgan** (30kg) +10.521s; 6 **Sutton** (60kg) +12.038s; 7 **Cook** (12kg) +14.094s; 8 **Moffat** +16.133s; 9 **Turkington** (42kg) +17.320s; 10 **Jackson** (36kg) +18.431s; 11 **Chilton** +18.764s; 12 **Smiley** +19.008s; 13 **Oliphant** +19.217s; 14 **Neal** +20.935s; 15 **Crees** +31.358s; 16 **Goff** +35.780s; 17 **Rivett** +36.679s; 18 **Geddie** +38.623s; 19 **Proctor** (18kg) +39.743s; 20 **Hamilton** +45.302s; 21 **Butel** +46.119s; 22 **Philpot** +47.175s; 23 **Boardley** +54.671s; 24 **Hammerton** -3 laps; R **Osborne** 12 laps-accident damage; R **Jelley** 3 laps-accident; R **Neate** 3 laps-accident damage.
Winner's average speed 78.16mph. **Fastest lap** **Cammish** 54.127s, 80.34mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP

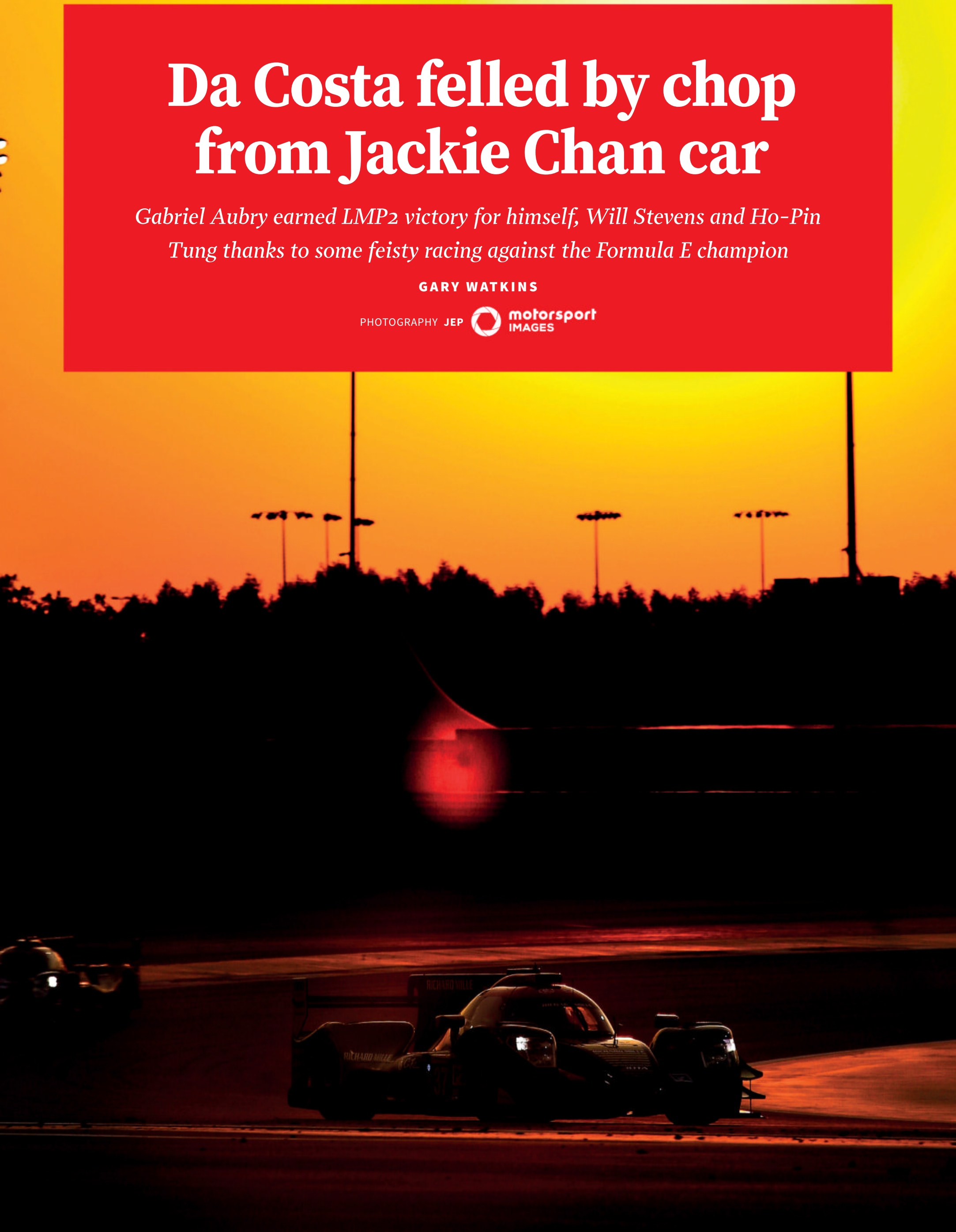
1 Sutton 350; 2 **Turkington** 336; 3 **Cammish** 334; 4 **Ingram** 326; 5 **Butcher** 286; 6 **Oliphant** 228; 7 **Hill** 212; 8 **Morgan** 206; 9 **Cook** 196; 10 **Chilton** 184.

Da Costa felled by chop from Jackie Chan car

Gabriel Aubry earned LMP2 victory for himself, Will Stevens and Ho-Pin Tung thanks to some feisty racing against the Formula E champion

GARY WATKINS

PHOTOGRAPHY **JEP** motorsport IMAGES



The Jota Sport squad hadn't taken a World Endurance Championship victory since Shanghai last November. A year later, but still in the same season, it finally claimed another LMP2 win in what team boss Sam Hignett described as a "bit of a nervewracker". Last weekend's Bahrain 8 Hours ended with its two ORECAs slugging it out at the front of the field for the honour of a spot on the overall podium behind the two Toyotas.

The ORECA-Gibson 07 run under the Jackie Chan DC Racing banner and the car fielded in Goodyear colours under the Jota name were more or less nose to tail over the final hour. The battle was resolved with a shade under 10 minutes left on the clock when Gabriel Aubry chucked the Chan/DC car down the inside of Antonio Felix da Costa at the downhill Turn 10 left-hander.

Contact was made and the two cars ran down the back straight side by side before the Frenchman sealed the position through Turns 11 and 12 to claim the victory for himself, Will Stevens and Ho-Pin Tung in what seems certain to be the Chinese entrant's last WEC appearance. It was the first overall top-three for a P2 car since Jota got both its entries on the podium at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 2017.

It was a forceful move by Aubry: da Costa reckoned his in-house rival "used me to make the corner". But the 2019-20 Formula E champion, who co-drove as usual with Anthony Davidson and Roberto Gonzalez, wasn't complaining. "In the same situation I would probably have done the same, so hats off to him for making the move," he said. "I wouldn't be a winning racing driver if I was happy to finish second, but I have no complaints with Gabby's move."

Da Costa suggested that he didn't shut the door forcefully enough on Aubry. The Frenchman, meanwhile, reckoned he caught the class leader by surprise after nipping past a GTE Am Ferrari that had already baulked the Goodyear car. "I could see he was struggling with his tyres, but I knew that at this track it was always going to be hard to get past him," he explained. "When you see an opportunity, you have to go for it because you don't know if you are going to get a second one."

There was no way back for da Costa after he'd lost the lead. He'd used the best of his Goodyear tyres catching Aubry over the first half of the double stint after they'd both taken over their respective ORECAs.

Da Costa was given four new tyres when he jumped back in the Jota entry, while Aubry got fresh Goodyears only on the left and used rubber on the right. The Portuguese knew he had to make use of his advantage as soon as possible and started to close down the leader.

He reduced the lead from nine seconds to nothing by the time the two cars stopped for the final time a lap apart. A faster in-lap allowed da Costa to get the undercut in the pits. "I knew I was going to be in trouble over the second stint on the tyres," he said. "But I don't think he would have got past me without traffic."

The two Jota-run cars raced on the new Goodyear B-compound tyre, introduced at Le Mans in September, throughout the eight hours. Da Costa believed it had allowed the team to finally go "toe to toe" with the Michelin-equipped cars.

United Autosports had won every round of the WEC so far this calendar year on Michelins, as well as four of the five 2020 European Le Mans Series races. Its ORECA shared by Paul di Resta, Filipe Albuquerque and Phil Hanson battled with the Jota cars for the opening hours, despite a spin from Hanson just after taking the lead from Tung.

Albuquerque was subsequently penalised for tapping Aubry up the rear as they entered the pits shortly after half-distance. United's chances of maintaining its 100% record in the WEC this year disappeared when di Resta slowed on his in-lap during the sixth hour with a fuel pick-up problem. Di Resta and his team-mates

"I could see he was struggling with his tyres. When you see an opportunity, you go for it"

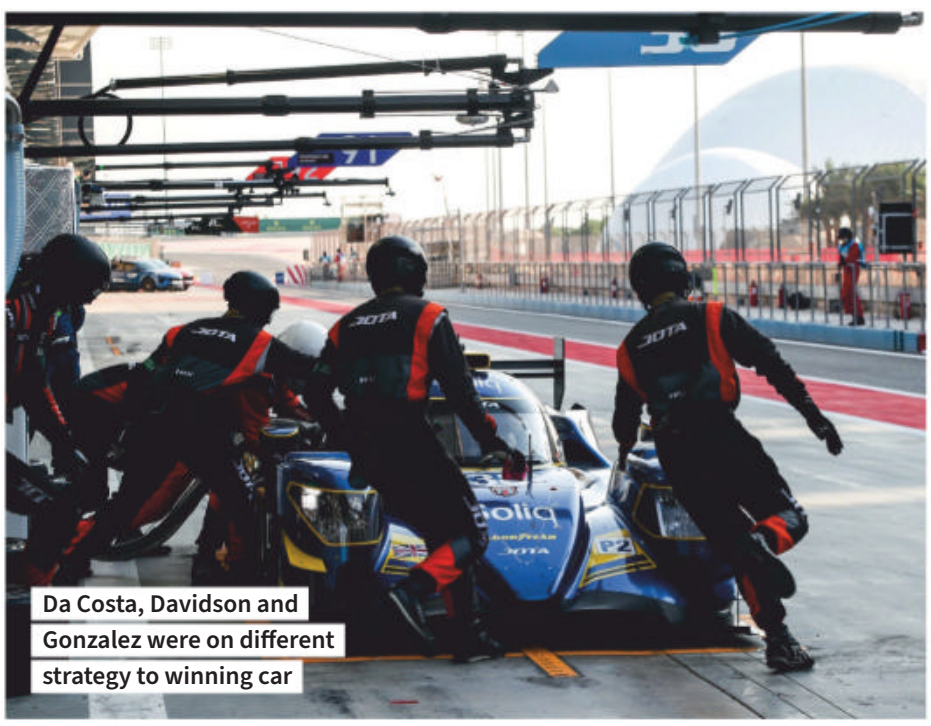
ended fourth in class at the chequered flag, but team boss Richard Dean was in no doubts that another win was there for the taking.

"We finished 28s off the lead and we had a spin, a five-second penalty and lost 57s with the fuel issue," he said. "We can't be disappointed at the end of a season in which we won four WEC races, including Le Mans, finished 1-2 in the ELMS as well as winning the LMP3 title, but the truth is that we dropped the ball this weekend."

The Racing Team Nederland ORECA ended up third with Nyck de Vries, Giedo van der Garde and Frits van Eerd, though a repeat of its Fuji victory 13 months ago never looked on the cards. The team reckoned that a fourth podium of the campaign was still a good result for a line-up that includes a bronze-rated amateur in van Eerd.

The Signatech Alpine squad, winner of the P2 WEC title in 2018-19, ended up fifth to complete a season without a victory for the first time since it joined the WEC in 2015. The Alpine-badged ORECA appeared to be out of the game after Andre Negrao struggled over his second stint with the set of Michelins on which he started the race, and silver driver Pierre Ragues had completed two stints either side of Thomas Laurent.

The French team rolled the dice just after the halfway mark, bringing Negrao in early as the race went green after the lone safety car of the race. It got the car back in contention, but it needed another caution of some kind if the team was to avoid the need for an extra stop. It never came, and Signatech ended up fifth. »



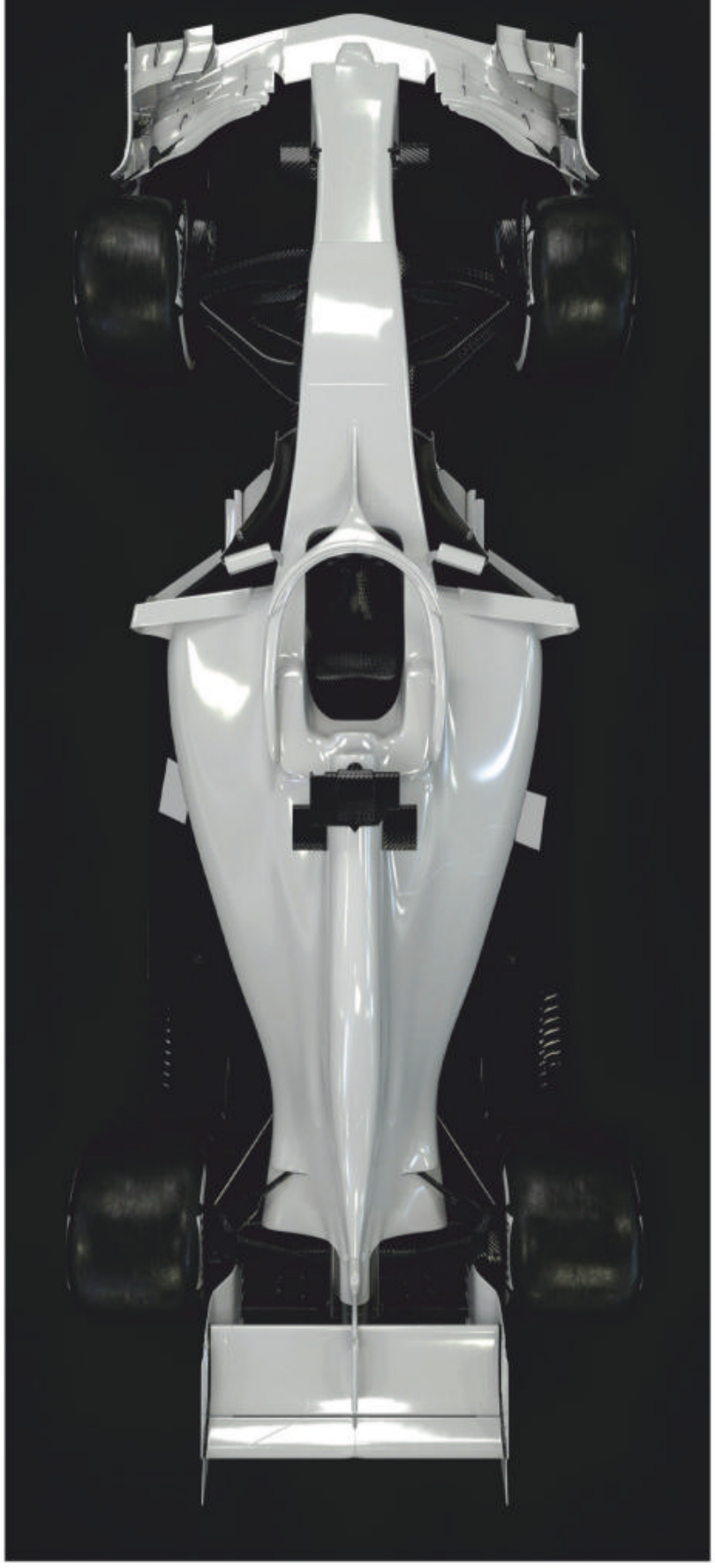
Da Costa, Davidson and Gonzalez were on different strategy to winning car



Aubry gets a hug from Tung after late move for victory

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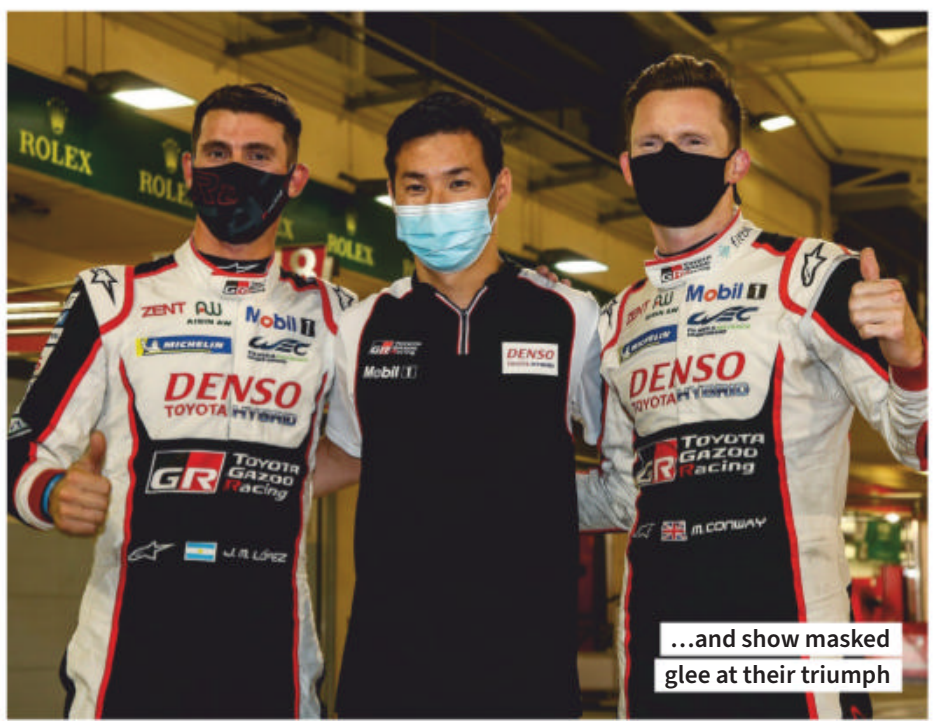
LMP1

Toyota tried to talk up the chances of a race between its two cars in the absence of any opposition in LMP1. They would be free of any tactical constraints designed to ensure one of its cars won, it insisted. Difficult track conditions, caused by the heat and sand of the desert, might result in one of the cars going astray on set-up, it hinted. And then there was the opportunity for one or both of the cars to swap from the medium Michelin to the so-called soft hot that was never tried in practice. But in the end the half-second performance differential between the Toyotas under the success handicap system took its toll over the eight hours in Bahrain.

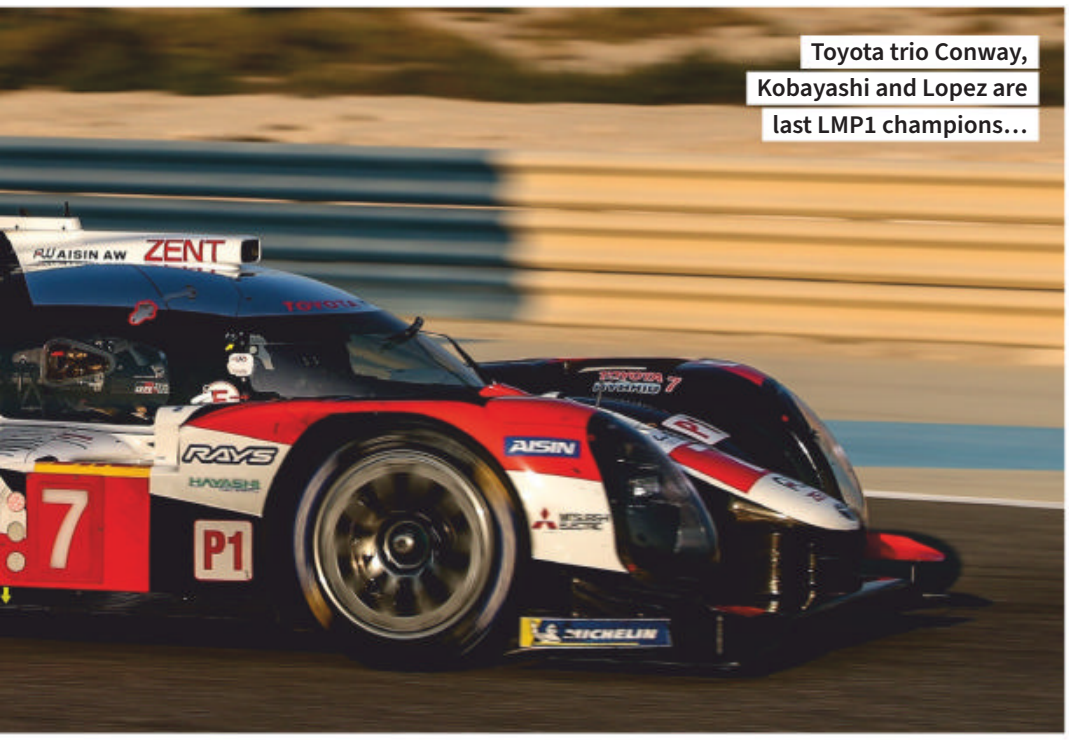
Kamui Kobayashi, Mike Conway and Jose Maria Lopez ended up winning by over a minute in the #7 car, and would have been more than a full lap ahead of the #8 Toyota TS050 HYBRID shared by Sebastien Buemi, Kazuki Nakajima and Brendon Hartley but for a safety car early in the fifth hour that wiped out a similar advantage. That meant Kobayashi, Conway and Lopez were crowned the final world champions of the LMP1 era without much in the way of drama.

Buemi and his co-drivers tried to mix it up on strategy to compensate for the 0.54s per lap of handicaps carried by their TS050. The Swiss started with a lighter fuel load than Conway, and took two new rear Michelins whereas the leader didn't take tyres when he stopped.

Buemi gained a couple of seconds in the pits and was quicker on his in-lap too, but he was too far back for the off-kilter



…and show masked glee at their triumph



Toyota trio Conway, Kobayashi and Lopez are last LMP1 champions…

“You couldn’t relax – we were racing all the way to the last stop, trying to stretch the lead”

strategy to have any effect. A gap that had been 16s before the stops steadily started to increase. By the time the two Toyotas stopped again for Kobayashi and Hartley to take over, the lead was out to over a half a minute.

Hopes of Buemi and co doing what their team-mates had done at Spa on the resumption of the 2019-20 WEC campaign in August by overcoming the success handicaps to win looked forlorn. But perhaps not.

A safety car early in the fifth hour brought the two cars together, and Buemi was able to keep Conway honest for the better part of a stint. The gap stayed constant at five or so seconds for a few laps and then at around 11 or 12s. But on the second stint on the tyres, Buemi fell away from his team-mate.

There was no gamble on the soft hot by either car, and the #7 shadowed the strategy of the chasing Toyota over the final stages of the race. And that was that for the final race of one of the great periods of sportscar racing, a final margin of victory of a minute and five seconds providing a low-key send-off for both P1 and the TS050.

Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director Pascal Vasselon insisted that “#8 was always putting pressure on #7 but from a distance”. But the truth was that as the tyres degraded on the high-energy Bahrain International Circuit, the chasing car couldn’t keep pace with the leader.

“In free air in the first stint, Seb was only three tenths slower than Mike on average, even with a heavier car,” Vasselon explained. “But Seb was hurt much more when they were faced by traffic and then #8 was struggling much more on used tyres.”

Conway never thought he, Kobayashi and Lopez were home and dry, memories of this year’s Le Mans 24 Hours and the heartbreak of the big race in 2019 still fresh in his mind. “You couldn’t relax — we were racing all the way to the last stop,” he said in reference to Toyota’s rules of engagement that freeze the positions at the final pitstops. “Even when we had the minute lead again, you could see how quickly that can evaporate with the safety car. We were trying to stretch the lead because things like that can happen.”

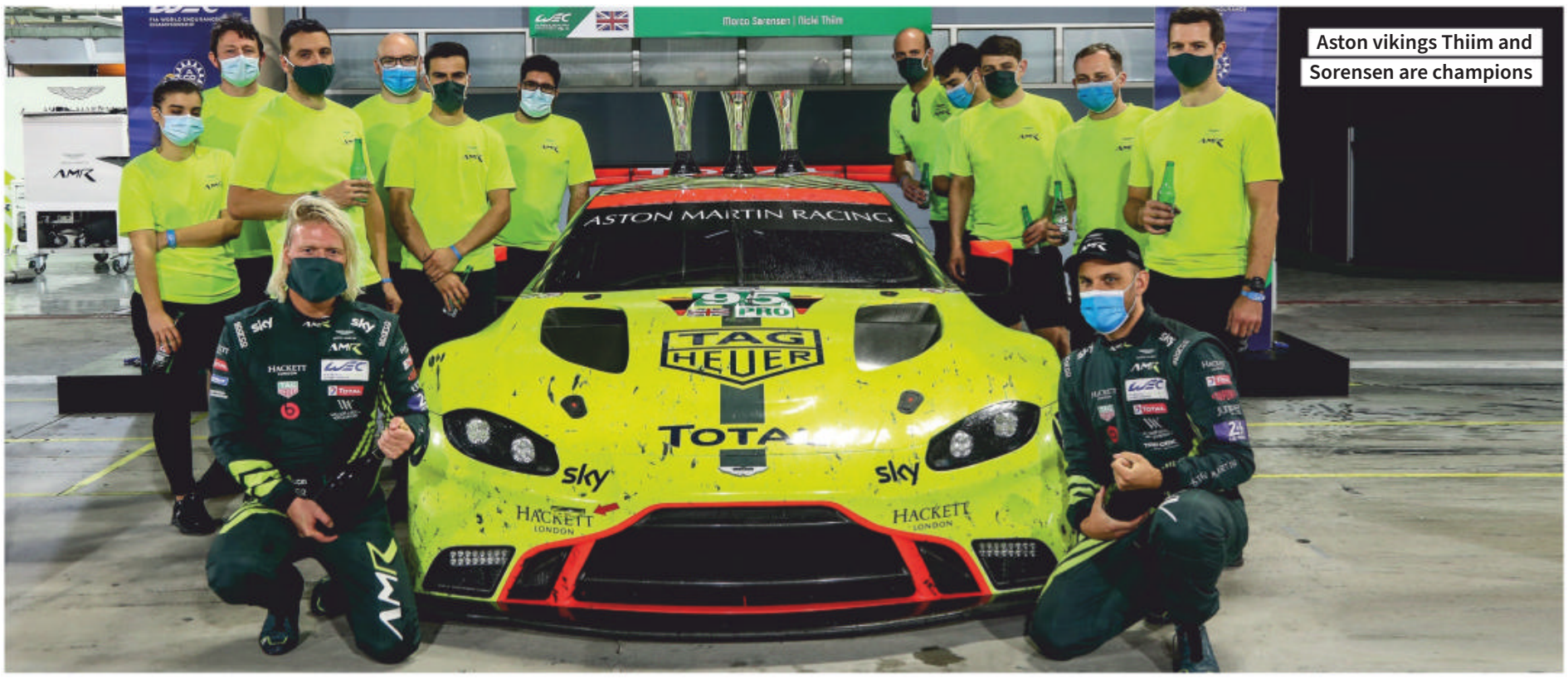
The #7 car did lose two or three seconds when one of the latches on the front bodywork had to be reattached and its drivers had to deal with an errant windscreen wiper blade pushed out of position in the airflow at speed. But the reality was that Conway and co weren’t troubled on the way to the title. »

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Aston vikings Thiim and Sorensen are champions

GTE

Aston Martin drivers Nicki Thiim and Marco Sorensen had vowed to try to win the GTE title in style, and were in the mix for the first couple of hours. But a braking issue robbed them of the chance to fight with the Porsches at the front of the GTE Pro pack over the full distance, and in the end they nursed their Vantage GTE home in fifth position to repeat their 2016 crown.

They reckoned it would have been a big ask to beat the Porsche 911 RSRs that finished 1-2 in class, Kevin Estre and Michael Christensen leading home Gianmaria Bruni and Richard Lietz by a shade under three seconds. But they gave it a go.

Aston's Danes appeared to have claimed the pole, only to lose it when Christensen had a lap initially deleted for a track-limits violation reinstated. Sorensen came back at leader Estre over the second half of the opening stint, and Thiim was third behind the two factory Porsche 911 RSRs and less than 10s off the lead when he lost time during a full course yellow virtual safety car.

That was only the beginning of Aston's woes. Higher-than-anticipated brake wear forced the team into changing the front pads and discs soon after the halfway mark. Down in fifth, the Danes eventually opted for a cautious approach over the final couple of hours that left them two laps off the lead at the finish.

"I felt I had the upper hand in the first stint and I thought we could go for the win," said Sorensen. "Everything was looking fine at that point, but then everything changed. We don't know what the problem was because the brakes went all the way through the 24 hours at Le Mans on the winning Aston."

"I thought we could go for the win. Everything was looking fine, then everything changed"

Thiim and Sorensen's only realistic rival for the title was team-mate Maxime Martin, who was paired in Bahrain with Richard Westbrook after Alex Lynn was ruled out of the event following a positive COVID-19 test. They never looked like challenging the Porsches, but appeared good for third until their Vantage also needed a brake change late in the race. That dropped them to fourth behind the AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE Evo of Davide Rigon and Miguel Molina.

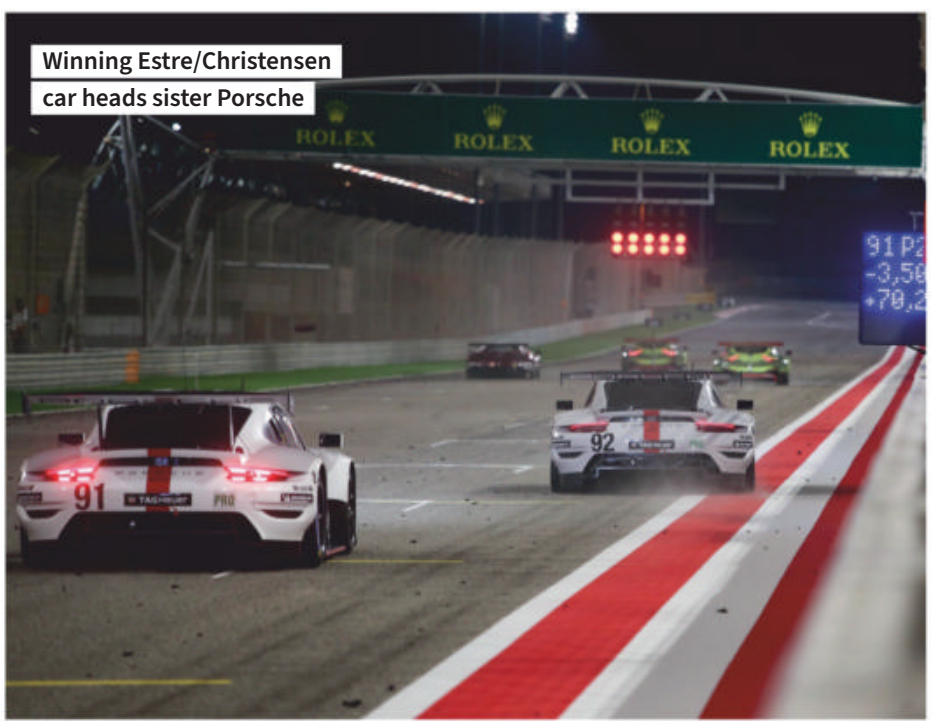
James Calado's remote hopes of the title disappeared when team-mate Daniel Serra, standing in for Alessandro Pier Guidi in the AF Corse Ferrari team, tagged a GTE Am Porsche. He broke the left-rear wheel in the impact, and the time lost repairing damage caused by a disintegrating tyre left them a distant sixth and last at the chequered flag.

The British TF Sport Aston squad effectively lost the GTE Am crown with the same braking issue that afflicted the factory cars. Jonny Adam, Charlie Eastwood and Salih Yoluc were looking good for the title in fourth position with a shade under an hour to go when their Vantage needed its front brakes changing.

The minute and a bit it lost in the pits dropped the car down the class order, and the eighth position in which they finished wasn't enough to prevent AF Corse Ferrari drivers Emmanuel Collard, Nicklas Nielsen and Francois Perrodo from overhauling TF's eight-point advantage heading into Bahrain.

The Ferrari ended up second courtesy of some clever team tactics and a stirring final two and a half hours from Nielsen. Perrodo, by his own admission, struggled last weekend, and the car went a lap down before the halfway mark, but AF opted to short-fuel the London-based Frenchman for his final, short stint. That got the Ferrari back on the lead lap, which played into AF's hands when the safety car came out.

The class was won in Bahrain by the Project 1 Porsche of Larry ten Voorde, Egidio Perfetti and the semi-retired Jorg Bergmeister, who was drafted in for only his third race of the year to replace Matteo Cairoli. They prevailed by 35s after running at or near the front of the leaderboard for much of the race.



Winning Estre/Christensen car heads sister Porsche

POWERED BY motorsport STATS

RESULTS ROUND 8/8, BAHRAIN INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT (BHR), 14 NOVEMBER (263 LAPS – 884.432 MILES)

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM	CAR	CLASS	TIME
1	Mike **Conway** (GBR) Kamui **Kobayashi** (JPN) Jose Maria **Lopez** (ARG)	Toyota Gazoo Racing	Toyota TS050 HYBRID	LMP1	8h00m13.867s
2	Sebastien **Buemi** (CHE) Kazuki **Nakajima** (JPN) Brendon **Hartley** (NZL)	Toyota Gazoo Racing	Toyota TS050 HYBRID	LMP1	+1m04.594s
3	Will **Stevens** (GBR) Ho-Pin **Tung** (NLD) Gabriel **Aubry** (FRA)	Jackie Chan DC Racing (Jota)	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-16 laps
4	Anthony **Davidson** (GBR) Roberto **Gonzalez** (MEX) Antonio Felix **da Costa** (PRT)	Jota Sport	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-16 laps
5	Giedo **van der Garde** (NLD) Frits **van Eerd** (NLD) Nyck **de Vries** (NLD)	Racing Team Nederland (TDS)	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-16 laps
6	Paul **di Resta** (GBR) Phil **Hanson** (GBR) Filipe **Albuquerque** (PRT)	United Autosports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-16 laps
7	Andre **Negrao** (BRA) Thomas **Laurent** (FRA) Pierre **Ragues** (FRA)	Signatech Alpine Elf	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-17 laps
8	Kevin **Estre** (FRA) Michael **Christensen** (DNK)	Porsche GT Team (Manthey)	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Pro	-28 laps
9	Gianmaria **Bruni** (ITA) Richard **Lietz** (AUT)	Porsche GT Team (Manthey)	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Pro	-28 laps
10	Davide **Rigon** (ITA) Miguel **Molina** (ESP)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Pro	-28 laps
11	Maxime **Martin** (BEL) Richard **Westbrook** (GBR)	Aston Martin Racing (Prodrive)	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Pro	-29 laps
12	Marco **Sorensen** (DNK) Nicki **Thiim** (DNK)	Aston Martin Racing (Prodrive)	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Pro	-30 laps
13	Egidio **Perfetti** (NOR) Larry **ten Voorde** (NLD) Jorg **Bergmeister** (DEU)	Team Project 1	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-31 laps
14	Francois **Perrodo** (FRA) Emmanuel **Collard** (FRA) Nicklas **Nielsen** (DNK)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-31 laps
15	Khaled **Al Qubaisi** (ARE) Jaxon **Evans** (NZL) Marco **Holzer** (DEU)	Dempsey-Proton Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-31 laps
16	Thomas **Flohr** (CHE) Francesco **Castellacci** (ITA) Giancarlo **Fisichella** (ITA)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-31 laps
17	Michael **Wainwright** (GBR) Alessio **Picariello** (BEL) Ben **Barker** (GBR)	Gulf Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-31 laps
18	Ben **Keating** (USA) Dylan **Pereira** (LUX) Jeroen **Bleekemolen** (NLD)	Team Project 1	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-32 laps
19	James **Calado** (GBR) Daniel **Serra** (BRA)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Pro	-32 laps
20	Christian **Ried** (DEU) Riccardo **Pera** (ITA) Dennis **Olsen** (NOR)	Dempsey-Proton Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-32 laps
21	Salih **Yoluc** (TUR) Charlie **Eastwood** (GBR) Jonny **Adam** (GBR)	TF Sport	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-32 laps
22	Paul **Dalla Lana** (CAN) Pedro **Lamy** (PRT) Ross **Gunn** (GBR)	Aston Martin Racing (Prodrive)	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-32 laps
23	Bonamy **Grimes** (GBR) Kei **Cozzolino** (JPN) Colin **Noble** (GBR)	Red River Sport (AF Corse)	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-32 laps
24	Roberto **Lacorte** (ITA) Andrea **Belicchi** (ITA) Giorgio **Sernagiotto** (ITA)	Cetilar Racing (AF Corse)	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-32 laps

Winner's average speed 110.500mph. **Fastest lap** **Kobayashi** 1m42.637s, 117.952mph.
LMP2 **da Costa** 1m48.801s, 111.270mph. **GTE Pro** **Lietz** 1m57.169s, 103.323mph. **GTE Am** **Evans** 1m57.430s, 103.093mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Conway/Lopez 1m40.747s; 2 **Hartley/Nakajima** 1m41.498s; 3 **di Resta/Hanson** 1m47.060s; 4 **Stevens/Aubry** 1m48.238s; 5 **Laurent/Ragues** 1m48.470s; 6 **da Costa/Gonzalez** 1m48.901s; 7 **de Vries/van Eerd** 1m50.339s; 8 **Belicchi/Sernagiotto** 1m51.079s; 9 **Christensen/Estre** 1m56.505s; 10 **Sorensen/Thiim** 1m56.521s; 11 **Serra/Calado** 1m56.706s; 12 **Bruni/Lietz** 1m57.124s; 13 **Rigon/Molina** 1m57.217s; 14 **Westbrook/Martin** 1m57.376s; 15 **Gunn/Dalla Lana** 1m58.356s; 16 **Adam/Yoluc** 1m58.799s; 17 **Cozzolino/Grimes** 1m58.868s; 18 **Bergmeister/Perfetti** 1m58.896s; 19 **Castellacci/Flohr** 1m58.960s; 20 **Bleekemolen/Keating** 1m59.039s; 21 **Nielsen/Perrodo** 1m59.349s; 22 **Evans/Al Qubaisi** 1m59.424s; 23 **Barker/Wainwright** 1m59.553s; 24 **Olsen/Ried** 1m59.665s.

Fastest in each class

LMP1 **Conway** 1m40.114s
LMP2 **di Resta** 1m46.768s
GTE Pro **Christensen** 1m56.236s
GTE Am **Gunn** 1m57.121s

CHAMPIONSHIP

LMP drivers

1 Lopez/Kobayashi/Conway 207; 2 **Hartley/Nakajima/Buemi** 202; 3 **Bruno Senna/Gustavo Menezes/Norman Nato** 145; 4 **Albuquerque/Hanson** 90; 5 **di Resta** 82; 6 **da Costa/Gonzalez** 79.

LMP1 manufacturers

1 Toyota Gazoo Racing 241; 2 **Rebellion Racing** 145; 3 **Team LNT** 29.

LMP2 drivers

1 Albuquerque/Hanson 190; 2 **di Resta** 175; 3 **da Costa/Gonzalez** 152; 4 **Davidson** 142.

GTE drivers

1 Sorensen/Thiim 172; 2 **Martin** 160; 3 **Estre/Christensen** 148; 4 **Alex Lynn** 142; 5 **Calado** 132; 6 **Alessandro Pier Guidi** 131.

GTE manufacturers

1 Aston Martin 332; 2 **Porsche** 289; 3 **Ferrari** 250.

GTE Am drivers

1 Collard/Perrodo/Nielsen 167; 2 **Eastwood/Adam/Yoluc** 154; 3 **ten Voorde** 119; 4 **Perfetti** 118.

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Project 1 Porsche took final GTE Am honours of 2020

Mazda wins at Sebring, but Castroneves is finally a champion

It was a topsy-turvy race before Harry Tincknell took victory with Ryan Hunter-Reay and Jonathan Bomarito

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

PHOTOGRAPHY **LEVITT** motorsport IMAGES

Just over a decade since his career in car racing began, British sportscar ace Harry Tincknell has become an overall winner of one of the major endurance blue-ribands for the first time. Tincknell triumphed in the Sebring 12 Hours, a race his manager Allan McNish won four times, as part of Mazda's winning line-up alongside Jonathan Bomarito and IndyCar star Ryan Hunter-Reay.

While Mazda won the race, three-time Indy 500 winner Helio Castroneves and Ricky Taylor claimed the IMSA SportsCar Championship crown with their Team Penske Acura ARX-05. It brought down the curtain on Castroneves's Penske career, and remarkably is the first time he has won a championship since he scooped a Brazilian national karting title in 1989. That ended Acura's three-year tie-up with Penske on the ultimate high note, but it was achieved in slightly bizarre fashion with a subdued eighth-place finish for Castroneves and Taylor, who were joined in the car by Alexander Rossi.

Taylor took pole position ahead of the Cadillac DPi-V.R run by his father's Wayne Taylor Racing team and piloted by Renger van der Zande and Ryan Briscoe — his and Castroneves's title rivals — and six-time IndyCar champion Scott Dixon. Taylor and Castroneves arrived at Sebring just two points ahead of the WTR pair, with Action Express Racing's Pipo Derani able to beat both to the crown if he were to win in the Cadillac he shares with Felipe Nasr and, on this occasion, Gabby Chaves.



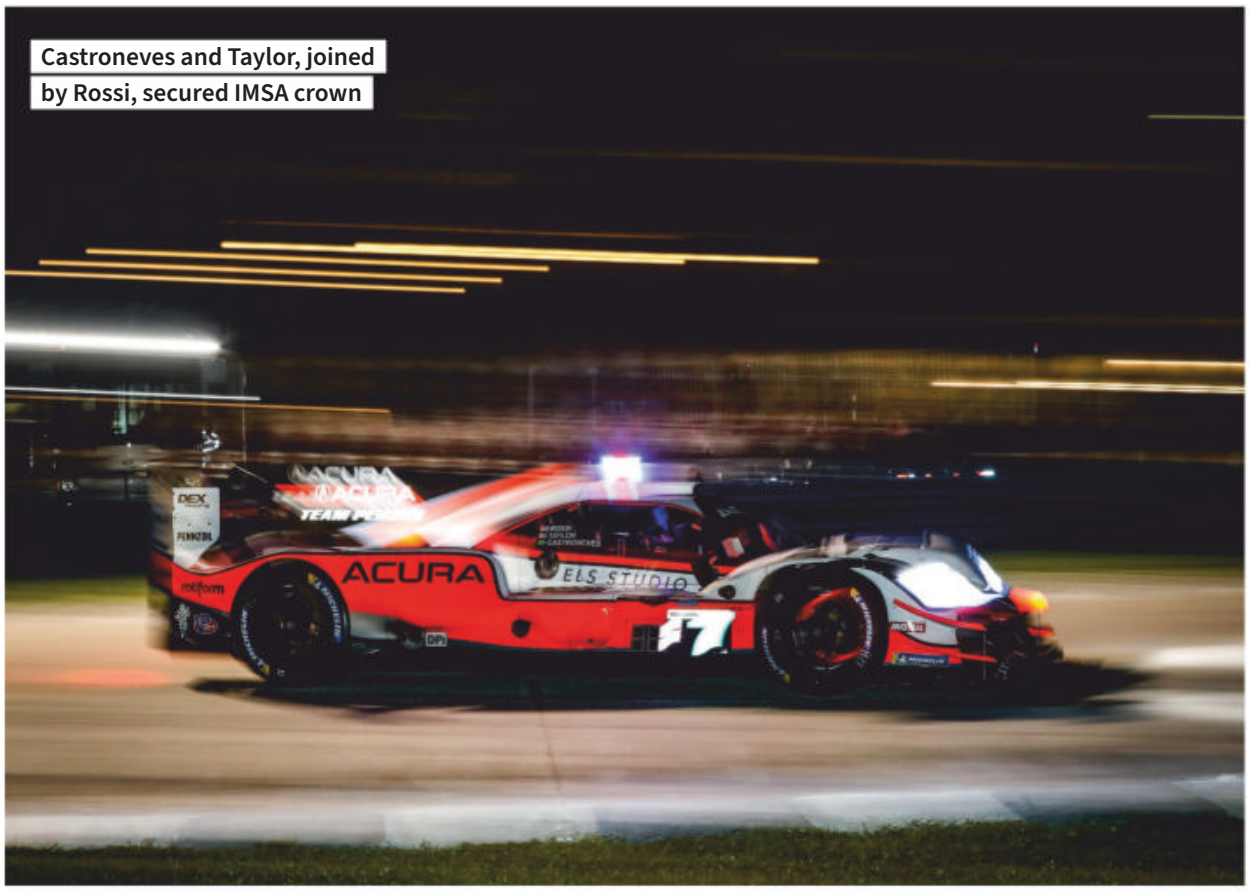
Taylor leads at the start from van der Zande

Penske's hopes of the title hit a massive setback after the first round of scheduled stops, when the Castroneves/Taylor/Rossi Acura pitted with a broken intercooler. The car went behind the pitwall, and the installation of a replacement put the car 11 laps down.

Two hours into the race, the Daytona 24 Hours-winning Cadillac had moved into the position of title favourite. Van der Zande had given the car to Briscoe, who had been running in second place, 7s behind the other Penske Acura of Juan Pablo Montoya, who was sharing with his 2019 IMSA co-champion Dane Cameron and Simon Pagenaud. Then the race's second caution flew for debris, vaulting Briscoe into the lead when everyone else took advantage of the yellow by pitting. Briscoe was at his best on this occasion, able to resist anything the opposition threw at him, but all was to go wrong for the squad.

Soon after a restart, Dixon was running third when Oliver Jarvis, sharing his Mazda with Tristan Nunez and Olivier Pla, tried to dive down the inside at Turn 10. The Mazda got almost fully alongside the Cadillac, braked extra hard to avoid its prey, but still knocked it onto the grass. Dixon limped the car back to the pits with its shredding tyre,





Castroneves and Taylor, joined by Rossi, secured IMSA crown

"The tyre let go, sending rubber debris and bodywork spraying down the straight"

but it had to be taken behind the wall for repairs, rejoining six laps down... but still a couple of laps ahead of its Penske rival.

The race resumed with six hours and 45 minutes remaining, with Derani sprinting away from Cameron, while Hunter-Reay lay fifth in the winning Mazda. Were the AXR Cadillac to win, Derani would snatch the title from WTR and Penske.

A strong stint from Sebastien Bourdais brought his JDC-Miller Motorsports Cadillac to the front, and Tristan Vautier would continue his compatriot's good work. But there was a seventh full-course caution with three and a half hours remaining, and now Pagenaud jumped to the front of the pack from Derani, Jarvis, Vautier and Hunter-Reay. After another hour, the undelayed Acura was still leading in the hands of Montoya, but soon Derani was on the Colombian's tail. He attempted to pass at Turn 10, but ran wide, and was nudged onto the grass by Montoya on corner exit. Derani tried to retaliate at Turn 5, but his foolhardy move spun the Acura off and down to fourth, while Derani's AXR Cadillac incurred a drivethrough penalty and damage that took three laps to repair.



Bourdais starred, but hit trouble

That left the Mazdas running 1-2, Pla gradually pulling away from Bomarito, who with 90 minutes to go was coming under intense pressure from Loic Duval in the French-crewed JDC-Miller Cadillac. Then Pla and Bomarito handed over to Jarvis and Tincknell respectively for the run to the flag.

Unfortunately, the podium hopes of Bourdais, Vautier and Duval were scuppered when their Cadillac was struck up the rear by a GTLM Porsche. The impact required fitment of a new tail section, so Bourdais fell to fifth behind the Mazdas, the Montoya Acura, and the other JDC-Miller Cadillac of Scott Andrews, who was sharing with Matheus Leist and Stephen Simpson.

Jarvis seemed to be cruising to victory, 25s ahead of the other Mazda, but then he suffered a left-rear puncture and ran off the road at Turn 10. Then, as he drove the Mazda back to the pits, the tyre let go properly, sending rubber debris and bodywork spraying down the back straight and prompting the first full-course caution for almost three hours.

That left Tincknell in the lead ahead of Cameron, Jarvis, Simpson and Bourdais. Following the final restart with 17 minutes to go, Tincknell pulled away, leaving Cameron and Jarvis to indulge in a fantastic duel for second place, ultimately resolved in the outgoing champions' favour.

The bigger celebration for Penske was that Taylor and Castroneves — with Rossi's assistance — drove a composed race after their early mechanical strife to finish eighth, just one spot behind the unlucky WTR crew, and thereby clinched the title by a single point from van der Zande and Briscoe.

I was starting to think a 1-2 would be great and then I heard the news that the #77 had a puncture," said Tincknell. "I feel for those guys; it's tough and JB [Bomarito] and I have been on the other side of that equation before. For a brief second I thought I was going to have a Saturday evening cruise to the win as we were 28 seconds ahead but then the yellows came out and bunched everyone back together. I sat behind the safety car thinking, 'This is what you dream of: 20 minutes to go, leading one of the biggest races in the world', so I told myself to just give it everything, no regrets! At the end, when we really needed it, we had great pace."

In LMP2, the PR1 Mathiasen Motorsports ORECA led all but 16 of its 340 laps, thanks to the quality combo of Patrick Kelly, Simon Trummer and Scott Huffaker. They eventually won their class by two laps but, without caution periods, that margin might have been three or four laps.

That said, David Heinemeier Hansson, who hadn't raced at this level since January's Daytona 24 Hours, made a strong impression on his return with Tower Motorsports by Starworks, finishing second alongside Mikkel Jensen and gentleman driver John Farano. »

PORSCHE TAKES LAST-GASP WINS IN GTLM AND GTD

Porsche took a 1-2 in a dramatic GT Le Mans class battle at Sebring, with Nick Tandy adding another sportscar blue-riband to his tally by combining with Earl Bamber and Frederic Makowiecki for victory in their 911 RSR.

That couldn't have been predicted in the early stages, which boiled down to a BMW-versus-Corvette battle. Championship winner Antonio Garcia took pole in his title-winning Corvette C8.R, but it was Connor De Phillippi who led early on in his BMW M8. These two disappeared into a race of their own, although after a couple of pitstops Garcia moved in front. Meanwhile, the two Porsches became more prominent as they went off strategy, particularly the Tandy/Makowiecki/Bamber car.

Into the second quarter of the race, the fight appeared to be between the winning Porsche, both BMWs and the Corvette Garcia shared with Jordan Taylor and Nicky Catsburg, who survived a collision with an LMP2 car. Then the BMWs seemed to come alive as evening fell, Jesse Krohn taking the lead and De Phillippi moving into second after a couple of brilliant back-and-forth battles with Tandy.

A bad restart for both Porsches — Makowiecki fell back and Laurens Vanthoor damaged a front fender in a rub with the leading Corvette — allowed the De Phillippi/Bruno Spengler/Colton Herta BMW to escape into a commanding lead, apparently able to answer any speed from the Porsches behind, and with no challenge from the Garcia/Taylor/Catsburg, which suffered a collapsed left-rear suspension. The BMW of Krohn, Augusto Farfus and John Edwards also hit a setback when it dropped a lap with brake issues.

Following the final pitstop with 40 minutes to go, De Phillippi had a 9s lead, but the final yellow caused by debris from Oliver Jarvis's Mazda brought Tandy within striking distance for the restart, with 17 minutes remaining. Tandy then watched bemused as a GTD car punted De Phillippi off course and gave the M8 a puncture, allowing Tandy to duck through and finish Porsche's current IMSA GTLM

"Tandy watched bemused as a GTD car punted De Phillippi's BMW off course"



Tandy and Bamber joined Makowiecki in winning 911

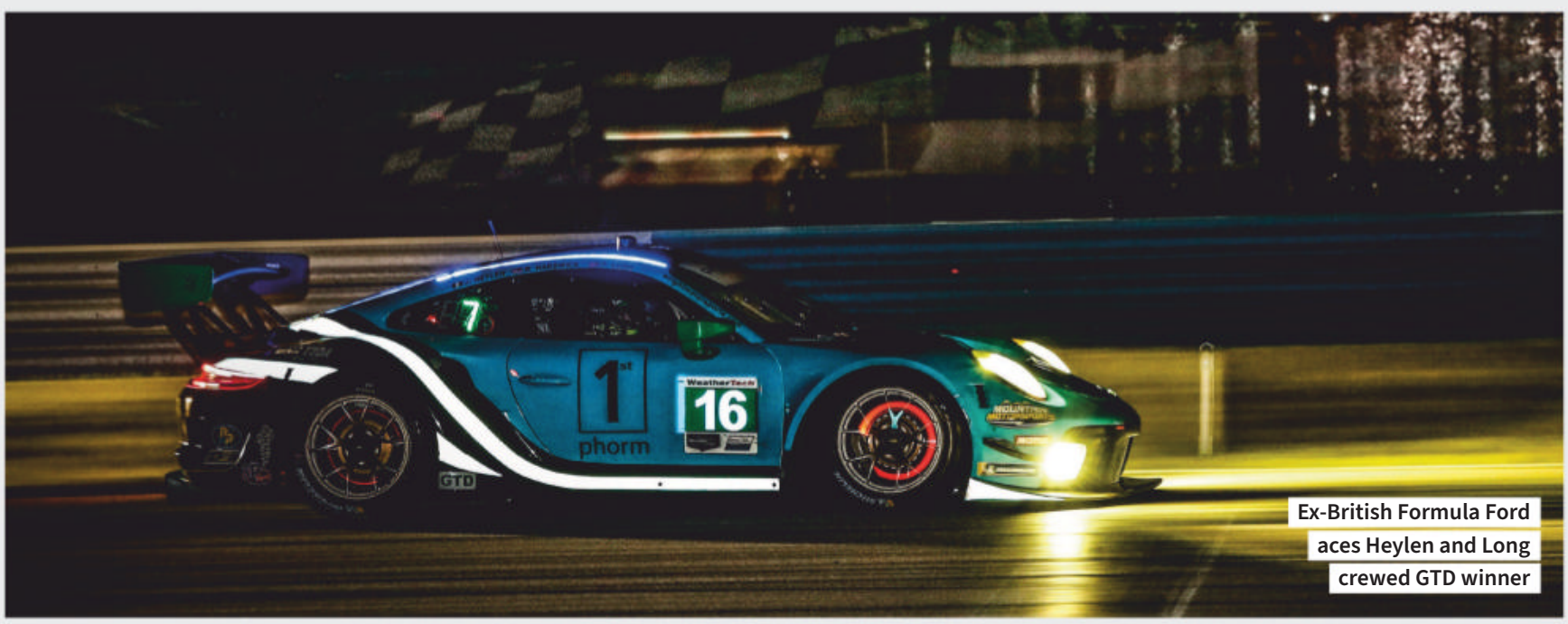
era with a 1-2. The BMW of Krohn, Edwards and Farfus came home third, with the disconsolate drivers of its sister car fourth — far less than they deserved.

The other Corvette of Oliver Gavin (who will step down from full-time driving duties in 2021), Tommy Milner and Marcel Fassler suffered a water leak, and would eventually be further delayed by a left-rear suspension failure, like the sister car.

The Wright Motorsports Porsche led early on in GTD courtesy of Jan Heylen, before a collapsing left-rear shock absorber restricted the car's pace.

The race distilled down to a battle between the Scuderia Corsa Ferrari 488, the Riley Motorsports Mercedes-AMG GT3 and the Wright Porsche. The Meyer Shank Racing Acura was also in the lead mix, but Mario Farnbacher, Matt McMurry and Shinya Michimi were driving extra-carefully, aware that their main target in this race was the championship, which Farnbacher and McMurry won with third place.

After passing Farnbacher, Patrick Long was running third at the final restart when Lawson Aschenbach in the Riley Mercedes made a rare mistake and ran into De Phillippi, sending the BMW onto the grass before it collected Jeff Westphal in the Ferrari. With the impact damaging the Mercedes' front end, Long ducked through to win with Heylen and Ryan Hardwick, after a brief challenge from Roman De Angelis in the Heart of Racing Aston Martin Vantage he shared with Darren Turner and Ian James.



Ex-British Formula Ford aces Heylen and Long crewed GTD winner

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RESULTS SEBRING 12 HOURS, IMSA SPORTSCAR ROUND 11/11, SEBRING (USA), 14 NOVEMBER, 348 LAPS – 1301.52 MILES

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM	CAR	CLASS	TIME	GRID
1	Jonathan **Bomarito**/Harry **Tincknell**/Ryan **Hunter-Reay**	Mazda Motorsports	Mazda RT24-P	DPi	12h00m36.538s	5
2	Juan Pablo **Montoya**/Dane **Cameron**/Simon **Pagenaud**	Acura Team Penske	Acura ARX-05	DPi	+10.154s	3
3	Oliver **Jarvis**/Tristan **Nunez**/Olivier **Pla**	Mazda Motorsports	Mazda RT24-P	DPi	+11.704s	7
4	Matheus **Leist**/Stephen **Simpson**/Scott **Andrews**	JDC-Miller Motorsports	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	-1 lap	8
5	Sebastien **Bourdais**/Tristan **Vautier**/Loic **Duval**	JDC-Miller Motorsports	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	-2 laps	4
6	Felipe **Nasr**/Pipo **Derani**/Gabby **Chaves**	Action Express Racing	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	-2 laps	6
7	Renger **van der Zande**/Ryan **Briscoe**/Scott **Dixon**	Wayne Taylor Racing	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	-7 laps	2
8	Helio **Castroneves**/Ricky **Taylor**/Alexander **Rossi**	Acura Team Penske	Acura ARX-05	DPi	-7 laps	1
9	Patrick **Kelly**/Simon **Trummer**/Scott **Huffaker**	PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps	9
10	John **Farano**/Mikkel **Jensen**/David **Heinemeier Hansson**	Tower Motorsport by Starworks	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-10 laps	12
11	Don **Yount**/Patrick **Byrne**/Guy **Cosmo**	Performance Tech Motorsports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-16 laps	11
12	Nick **Tandy**/Frederic **Makowiecki**/Earl **Bamber**	Porsche GT Team (CORE)	Porsche 911 RSR-19	GTLM	-16 laps	17
13	Earl **Bamber**/Laurens **Vanthoor**/Neel **Jani**	Porsche GT Team (CORE)	Porsche 911 RSR-19	GTLM	-16 laps	18
14	Jesse **Krohn**/John **Edwards**/Augusto **Farfus**	BMW Team RLL	BMW M8 GTE	GTLM	-17 laps	15
15	Bruno **Spengler**/Connor **De Phillippi**/Colton **Herta**	BMW Team RLL	BMW M8 GTE	GTLM	-18 laps	14
16	Antonio **Garcia**/Jordan **Taylor**/Nicky **Catsburg**	Corvette Racing (Pratt & Miller)	Chevrolet Corvette C8.R	GTLM	-25 laps	13
17	Jakub **Smiechowski**/Naveen **Rao**/Matthew **Bell**	Inter Europol Competition	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-28 laps	10
18	Ryan **Hardwick**/Patrick **Long**/Jan **Heylen**	Wright Motorsports	Porsche 911 GT3-R	GTD	-29 laps	19
19	Ian **James**/Roman **De Angelis**/Darren **Turner**	Heart of Racing Team	Aston Martin Vantage GT3	GTD	-29 laps	29
20	Mario **Farnbacher**/Matt **McMurry**/Shinya **Michimi**	Meyer Shank Racing with Curb-Agajanian	Acura NSX GT3 Evo	GTD	-29 laps	26
21	Cooper **MacNeil**/Alessandro **Balzan**/Jeff **Westphal**	Scuderia Corsa	Ferrari 488 GT3	GTD	-29 laps	23
22	Rob **Ferriol**/Andrew **Davis**/Pierre **Kaffer**	Team Hardpoint	Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo	GTD	-29 laps	20
23	Trent **Hindman**/Misha **Goikhberg**/Joey **Hand**	Heinricher Racing with Meyer Shank Racing	Acura NSX GT3 Evo	GTD	-29 laps	30
24	Andy **Lally**/John **Potter**/Spencer **Pumpelly**	GRT Magnus Racing Team	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	GTD	-29 laps	31
25	Gar **Robinson**/Lawson **Aschenbach**/Marc **Miller**	Riley Motorsports	Mercedes AMG GT3 Evo	GTD	312 laps - acc damage	28
26	Oliver **Gavin**/Tommy **Milner**/Marcel **Fassler**	Corvette Racing (Pratt & Miller)	Chevrolet Corvette C8.R	GTLM	-56 laps	16
27	Frankie **Montecalvo**/Townsend **Bell**/Michael **de Quesada**	AIM Vasser Sullivan	Lexus RC F GT3	GTD	266 laps - acc damage	24
28	Richard **Heistand**/Steijn **Schothorst**/Franck **Perera**	GRT Grasser Racing Team	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	GTD	263 laps - halfshaft	22
29	Robby **Foley**/Dillon **Machavern**/Nick **Yelloly**	Turner Motorsport	BMW M6 GT3	GTD	235 laps - brakes	25
30	Jack **Hawksworth**/Aaron **Telitz**/Kyle **Kirkwood**	AIM Vasser Sullivan	Lexus RC F GT3	GTD	70 laps - acc damage	21
31	Bryan **Sellers**/Madison **Snow**/Corey **Lewis**	Paul Miller Racing	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	GTD	-30 laps	27

Winners' average speed 108.368mph. **Fastest lap** **R Taylor** 1m47.740s, 124.967mph.
LMP2 **Jensen** 1m50.068s, 122.324mph. **GTLM** **Catsburg** 1m57.038s, 115.039mph. **GTD** **Perera** 2m02.057s, 110.308mph.

POINTS
DPi **1 Castroneves/R Taylor 265**;
2 **van der Zande/Briscoe** 264;
3 **Tincknell/Bomarito** 260;
4 **Derani** 258; 5 **Bourdais** 249;
6 **Cameron/Montoya** 247.
LMP2 **1 Kelly 196**; 2 **Trummer** 161;
3 **Huffaker** 98; 4 **Farano** 95;
5 **Dwight Merriman/Kyle Tilley** 92;
6 **Jensen** 67.
GTLM **1 Garcia/J Taylor 351**;
2 **Krohn/Edwards** 319;
3 **Gavin/Milner** 315;
4 **Spengler/De Phillippi** 313;
5 **Makowiecki/Tandy** 297; 6 **Bamber** 289.
GTD **1 Farnbacher/McMurry 286**;
2 **Long/Hardwick** 284; 3 **Telitz** 267;
4 **Hawksworth** 265;
5 **Foley** 256; 6 **Bell** 251.



Action Express Cadillac was in title hunt before Derani gaffe



Ehrlacher's big success earned a big trophy

WTCR

Ehrlacher makes FIA history

WTCR
MOTORLAND ARAGON (ESP)
15 NOVEMBER
ROUND 6/6

Esteban Guerrieri gave him a fright, but Yann Ehrlacher delivered what he'd promised from the first round at Zolder by clinching the 2020 World Touring Car Cup title to become the youngest ever champion of a global FIA tin-top series.

To cap a special day for Cyan Racing and its team of Chinese Lynk & Co cars, the 24-year-old's uncle Yvan Muller racked up the points he needed to make it a family 1-2 in the standings as Guerrieri's challenge blossomed, then quickly wilted.

For the second successive round at Motorland Aragon, Guerrieri endured a horrible Saturday in his Munnich Motorsport Honda Civic Type R, failing to progress from Q1 in qualifying as Ehrlacher stretched his points advantage from 26 to 31. But in the first race early on Sunday morning, Guerrieri and team-mate Nestor Girolami delivered a 1-2 Lazarus would have been proud of, thanks to an inspired choice of Goodyear tyres.

Back in March, the team tested at Motorland and noticed the track takes ages to dry in the mornings thanks to high humidity. Eight months later, that was still the case despite a strong November sun: the track was lethally slippery. The team chose Goodyear wets for the rear and slicks on the front, allowing Girolami and Guerrieri to carve from 11th and 16th on the grid respectively to dominate. Girolami left it late, but on the last lap he slowed to allow his team-mate through to win and close the gap to Ehrlacher to just 16 points.

"We went to the grid, huddled together and said, 'Look, there is nothing to lose here, we better gamble,'" said Guerrieri. "We know this track is extreme on drying slowly, even though the sun was scorching. We chose the right strategy and obviously I'm very thankful to Nestor."

Guerrieri knew later in the day, on a fully dry track, "the others have a gun and we have a knife". But he never really got a chance to prolong Ehrlacher's title nerves in race two, slamming into the back of Bence Boldizs's Zengo Motorsport Cupra Leon and into a first-lap retirement. Up ahead, Muller comfortably won the reversed-grid encounter from pole position, as Ehrlacher made sure of the crown with his second sixth place of the day.

"It means a lot," said Ehrlacher, son of 1980s Formula 3000 racer Cathy Muller, Yvan's sister. "I was emotional because I was remembering when I was a little child coming to see Yvan race with my mum and dad in the WTCC. And now I am here, fighting and winning the title. My whole life is about this. It's just a big reward that motorsport gives me today."

Cyan's double pole-winning Uruguayan, Santiago Urrutia, claimed his first WTCR win in race three, ahead of Ehrlacher, with Jean-Karl Vernay third in his Alfa Romeo. The French racer and Team Mulsanne claimed the WTCR Trophy for Independents, along with third place in the overall standings, after Guerrieri's misery was topped off by a 30-second penalty for track-limits violations.

DAMIEN SMITH



Race-one triumph wasn't enough for Guerrieri to contain Ehrlacher

WTCR

WEEKEND WINNERS

WORLD TOURING CAR CUP
MOTORLAND ARAGON (ESP)
Race 1 Esteban Guerrieri
Munnich Motorsport
(Honda Civic Type R TCR)
Race 2 Yvan Muller
Cyan Racing (Lynk & Co 03 TCR)
Race 3 Santiago Urrutia
Cyan Performance (Lynk & Co 03 TCR)

GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE ENDURANCE CUP
PAUL RICARD (FRA)
Alessandro Pier Guidi/Come Ledogar/
Tom Blomqvist
SMP Racing (Ferrari 488 GT3)

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Inspired tyre choice helps Pier Guidi clinch title

GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE ENDURANCE CUP
PAUL RICARD (FRA)
15 NOVEMBER
ROUND 4/4


Blomqvist leads Pilet as Ferrari battles Porsche
SRO

A strategic masterstroke during the final round of pitstops enabled Alessandro Pier Guidi to clinch the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup title as the season drew to a close with the Paul Ricard 1000Km.

Pier Guidi, alongside SMP Racing team-mates Come Ledogar and Tom Blomqvist, left it late to return to the victory battle last weekend, after struggling with pace in the opening hours. But the team's decision to fit new tyres on the loaded left-hand side only, versus fresh rubber all-round for the long-time-leading GPX Racing Porsche of Mathieu Jaminet, Matt Campbell and Patrick Pilet, paid off spectacularly in the last of the six hours.

The quicker pitstop left Pier Guidi with a two-second advantage over Jaminet, which the Italian was able to maintain impressively throughout the remaining 45 minutes, sending the title Ferrari's way and stealing it from under the noses of Porsche.

Coming into the weekend, three other crews were in the mix for the Endurance crown. AKKA ASP Mercedes' Timur Boguslavskiy was one of them, tied with Dinamic Motorsport Porsche 911 GT3-R trio Christian Engelhart, Sven Muller and Matteo Cairoli, while WRT Audi duo Mirko Bortolotti and Kelvin van der Linde also had a shot.

Boguslavskiy and co-drivers Raffaele Marciello and Maximilian Buhk would be denied by a miserable race that featured a broken splitter in the third hour, but the Russian's disappointment was somewhat alleviated as he won the combined overall GTWCE title after a stellar Sprint Cup season with Marciello.

Ferrari had been the dominant force in qualifying in France, locking out the front row of the grid with SMP trio Sergey Sirotkin, Antonio Fuoco and Toni Vilander on pole.

Vilander led the way off the line but was passed by Blomqvist exiting Turn 3, while chaos ensued behind, due in part to contact between the FFF Racing Lamborghini of Marco Mapelli and Christopher Mies's WRT Audi. Mies was sent spinning but produced a superb comeback through the next hour to lie second at the end of a pulsating first 120 minutes of racing.

The pair of Ferrari 488s struggled to find pace early on, so it was the Emil Frey Racing Lamborghini of Giacomo Altoe and Kim-Luis Schramm's Attempto Racing Audi that valiantly disputed the lead. Altoe held a healthy advantage after divebombing Blomqvist at Virage du Pont, but fell behind Schramm ahead of the first pitstops.

Altoe emerged back in front, but came under increasing pressure from Schramm's co-driver Mattia Drudi, who stormed around the outside of Signes to seize back the lead. Unfortunately for Drudi, Schramm was deemed to have jumped the start, so the R8 LMS GT3 Evo was handed a drivethrough penalty.

The Lambo also faded, handing the lead to Campbell, who opened up a gap of 17 seconds shortly after half-distance. The race seemed to be in the bag for GPX, until Ferrari's risky tyre strategy inside the final hour unexpectedly moved Pier Guidi back to the top.

Taking over from Pilet, Jaminet looked best placed to profit from the inevitable tyre drop-off from the Ferrari, but Pier Guidi kept him at arm's length to come home 1.7s clear at the finish.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON


Merc driver Boguslavskiy sewed up the overall World Challenge title
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Polesitter Nojiri scored a third victory of his six seasons in Super Formula

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Nojiri survives Yamamoto's Autopolis advances

SUPER FORMULA
AUTOPOLIS (JPN)
15 NOVEMBER
ROUND 4/7

Tomoki Nojiri came out on top against Naoki Yamamoto in a tense battle of the Honda drivers at Autopolis.

After scoring a first pole position for two years, Team Mugen driver Nojiri led the opening stint until pitting just before the second of two safety car periods that changed the complexion of the 41-lap race.

While the majority of those yet to come in immediately dived for the pitlane, Yamamoto, Nick Cassidy and Ukyo Sasahara all stayed out and left their tyre changes until the concluding laps, temporarily leaving Nojiri in fourth.

Such was the blistering pace of Yamamoto's Dandelion Racing car in clean air, and Nojiri's struggles, that the two-time champion was able to build a 25-second gap over Nojiri before pitting with two laps remaining. Yamamoto resumed a few seconds behind Nojiri and flew on fresh tyres to close to within 0.7 seconds by the chequered flag.

Nakajima Racing's Tadasuke Makino had been attacking Nojiri for the net lead just before the second safety car and came away with his first Super Formula podium in third, ahead of Toyota's two top finishers, Yuji Kunimoto (KCMG) and Kenta Yamashita (Kondo Racing).

Nobuharu Matsushita was sixth on his return to the series as Sergio Sette Camara's substitute at B-Max, while Cassidy's unorthodox strategy put him seventh.

Ryo Hirakawa started on the back row after crashing in qualifying and could only recover to 12th after a slow stop, but still leads the drivers' standings by 11 points over Cassidy with three races to go.

JAMIE KLEIN

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WEEKEND WINNERS

SUPER FORMULA
AUTOPOLIS (JPN)
Tomoki Nojiri
Team Mugen (Dallara-Honda)

FORMULA RENAULT EUROCUP
PAUL RICARD (FRA)
Races 1 & 2 Lorenzo Colombo (below)
Bhaitech



FORMULA RENAULT EUROCUP

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Colombo uncovers secret to success as Martins is crowned



Fourth in opener assured
Martins of title spoils

FORMULA RENAULT EUROCUP

FORMULA RENAULT EUROCUP
PAUL RICARD (FRA)
14-15 NOVEMBER
ROUND 10/10

Such is Lorenzo Colombo's Formula Renault Eurocup strike rate at Paul Ricard that last weekend he probably could have bagged the spoils at the wheel of a tatty old Renault 11.

It wasn't until the fourth round of his second season in the series that the Italian scored a maiden Eurocup win. And when he did, it came as part of a perfect weekend — in the 2019 races at the French venue, he scored two poles, two victories and two fastest laps. To conclude the 2020 campaign, he was just one fastest lap away from repeating that feat.

Fresh from his first win of the season, which came in race two at Hockenheim earlier this month, Colombo continued his form in Le Castellet by topping qualifying ahead of ART Grand Prix's runaway points leader Victor Martins.

As Colombo ran on to a 1.3-second victory, albeit conceding fastest lap, Martins slipped behind distant title rival Caio Collet (R-ace GP) and then Franco Colapinto (MP Motorsport) to an eventual fourth. But with seven wins under his belt, that was still sufficient for Martins to claim the crown with a race to spare.

From there, Colombo only consolidated his Paul Ricard stronghold as he led Martins home by 0.8s in the second encounter. It ended the campaign on a high, even if Colombo's move from MP Motorsport back to the Bhaitech team that ran him to third in the 2017 Italian F4 standings returned fifth place in the Eurocup — one position down on 2019.



Seventh was sufficient for Mir to be crowned champion

Morbidelli wins on Mir's coronation day

MOTOGP
VALENCIA (ESP)
15 NOVEMBER
ROUND 13/14

The Ricardo Tormo Circuit provided Suzuki with an unsettling start to its MotoGP comeback when it made a wildcard outing in the 2014 Valencia Grand Prix with its GSX-RR. Test rider Randy de Puniet managed just 12 laps before his engine gave up the ghost.

Six years later at the venue and amid MotoGP's maddest season, Joan Mir ended a 20-year wait for Suzuki when he won the championship following a steady ride to seventh from 12th on the grid.

The 23-year-old Spaniard's day was a far cry from his maiden race-winning form of the European GP the week prior. In fact, Mir branded Sunday's 27-lap contest "a nightmare" as he struggled on his GSX-RR. But with a 37-point advantage in his back pocket ahead of the race, it hardly mattered and a top-seven result was all he needed.

To say his title triumph is the product of 2020's strangeness or was made easier by the absence of Marc Marquez would disrespect the fact that Mir has been the strongest rider on the grid since his first podium appearance in the Austrian GP. Since then, he scored five more podiums and a win to go from dark horse title bet to overwhelming favourite as his rivals failed to show anything like the same consistency.

Mir is fast, intelligent and well-suited to the bike, so it's no wonder Suzuki had been desperate to sign the 2017 Moto3 champion for 2019.

Mir's nearest title rivals, Petronas SRT's Fabio Quartararo and his Suzuki team-mate Alex Rins, were close at hand for the race start last weekend. Quartararo lined up alongside in 11th, while Rins was a row behind in 14th. If they were going to make any forward progress, chances are they wouldn't have totally escaped Mir's sights.



Morbidelli leads Miller to score third win of campaign

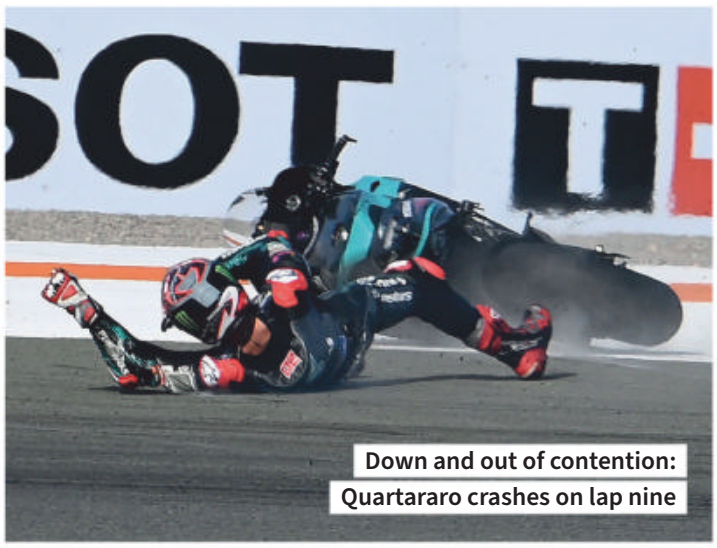
Indeed, Quartararo's fading charge totally evaporated on lap one when he ran off track at Turn 2 to avoid instigating a massive shunt with future factory Yamaha team-mate Maverick Vinales. Quartararo would crash at Turn 6 on lap nine, marking a meek surrender of a championship he was nailed on to win after his Jerez double in July.

Rins would make a bit more progress, getting up to fourth by the chequered flag. But he had nothing for the podium battle. The same was true of Vinales, whose 10th was the "maximum" the 2020 M1 would permit him in the race, the Spaniard never in any danger of reducing his 41-point deficit to Mir.

If anyone was going to cause Mir a problem, it was Franco Morbidelli. The SRT rider was 45 points adrift ahead of Sunday's race and was in dominant form all weekend. Starting from pole, Morbidelli reeled off a stunning mid-1m31s pace in the first half of to clear off by over a second at one stage.

Victory for Morbidelli and a non-score for Mir would have kept the championship rolling to the Portugal finale. Morbidelli could do nothing more than what he already was, but Mir never put a foot wrong.

POWERED BY motorsport STATS



Down and out of contention: Quartararo crashes on lap nine



Rins rose to fourth, ahead of Binder, but couldn't challenge for a podium

Pramac's Jack Miller didn't relent in his chase of Morbidelli, and by the end of lap 16 had pulled the 2019-spec Yamaha back to within a second. Miller continued to wipe his advantage away before launching his Ducati up the inside of Morbidelli at Turn 1 on the final lap.

Just as he did on the opening lap, Miller missed the apex and allowed Morbidelli to line him up for Turn 2. Miller came through again at Turn 4, but Morbidelli pulled off a daring raid on the inside of the following corner. Some canny defending around the final bends and a good exit from the last corner got him to the chequered flag ahead by 0.093s for his third victory of 2020.

Pol Espargaro grabbed another podium in third, narrowly avoiding a crashing Takaaki Nakagami at Turn 14 on the 19th lap. Between Rins and Mir were the KTMs of Brad Binder and Miguel Oliveira (Tech3), while Ducati's Andrea Dovizioso, Aleix Espargaro on the Aprilia and Vinales completed the top 10.

Mir was just three years old when Kenny Roberts Jr guided his Suzuki to the 2000 title. Now he's the marque's newest hero and only the sixth rider in the premier class to win for the manufacturer. Although it was a result few, including Mir, expected at the start of the season, as time wound on it became little in the way of a surprise that the crown ultimately fell to him. And he's just getting started.

LEWIS DUNCAN

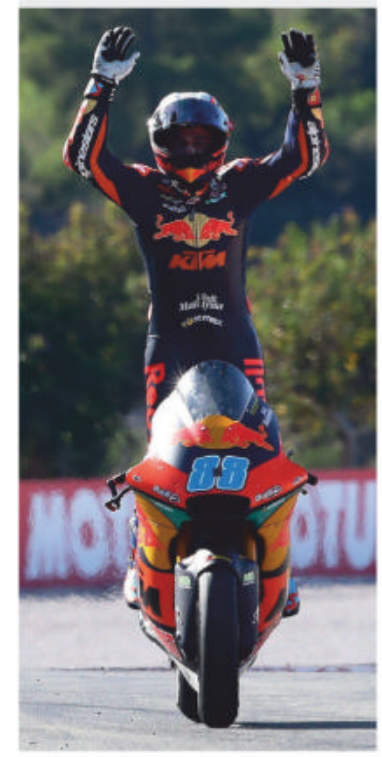
RESULTS ROUND 13/14, VALENCIA (ESP), 15 NOVEMBER 27 LAPS – 67.192 MILES

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	**Franco Morbidelli** (ITA)	Petronas Yamaha	41m22.478s
2	**Jack Miller** (AUS)	Pramac Ducati	+0.093s
3	**Pol Espargaro** (ESP)	KTM	+3.006s
4	**Alex Rins** (ESP)	Suzuki	+3.697s
5	**Brad Binder** (ZAF)	KTM	+4.127s
6	**Miguel Oliveira** (PRT)	Tech3 KTM	+7.272s
7	**Joan Mir** (ESP)	Suzuki	+8.703s
8	**Andrea Dovizioso** (ITA)	Ducati	+8.729s
9	**Aleix Espargaro** (ESP)	Aprilia	+15.512s
10	**Maverick Vinales** (ESP)	Yamaha	+19.043s
11	**Francesco Bagnaia** (ITA)	Pramac Ducati	+19.456s
12	**Valentino Rossi** (ITA)	Yamaha	+19.717s
13	**Cal Crutchlow** (GBR)	LCR Honda	+23.802s
14	**Stefan Bradl** (DEU)	Honda	+27.430s
15	**Danilo Petrucci** (ITA)	Ducati	+30.570s
16	**Alex Marquez** (ESP)	Honda	+30.619s
17	**Tito Rabat** (ESP)	Avintia Ducati	+42.365s
18	**Lorenzo Savadori** (ITA)	Aprilia	+46.472s
R	**Takaaki Nakagami** (JPN)	LCR Honda	18 laps-accident
R	**Fabio Quartararo** (FRA)	Petronas Yamaha	8 laps-accident
R	**Johann Zarco** (FRA)	Avintia Ducati	5 laps-accident

WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2
VALENCIA (ESP)
Jorge Martin (below)
Ajo Motorsport
(Kalex)

MOTO 3
VALENCIA (ESP)
Tony Arbolino
Snipers Team
(Honda)



Winner's average speed 97.439mph. **Fastest lap** **Miller 1m31.378s**, 98.042mph.

QUALIFYING 2 **1 Morbidelli 1m30.191s**; 2 **Miller** 1m30.287s; 3 **Nakagami** 1m30.413s; 4 **Zarco** 1m30.520s; 5 **P Espargaro** 1m30.553s; 6 **Vinales** 1m30.645s; 7 **A Espargaro** 1m30.657s; 8 **Bagnaia** 1m30.671s; 9 **Binder** 1m30.737s; 10 **Oliveira** 1m30.781s; 11 **Quartararo** 1m30.864s; 12 **Mir** 1m30.988s.

QUALIFYING 1 **1 Binder 1m30.810s**; 2 **Quartararo** 1m30.959s; 3 **Crutchlow** 1m31.159s; 4 **Rins** 1m31.594s; 5 **Petrucci** 1m31.601s; 6 **Rossi** 1m31.604s; 7 **Dovizioso** 1m31.606s; 8 **Bradl** 1m31.831s; 9 **Rabat** 1m32.063s; 10 **Marquez** 1m32.205s; 11 **Savadori** 1m32.237s.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Mir 171**; 2 **Morbidelli** 142; 3 **Rins** 138; 4 **Vinales** 127; 5 **Quartararo** 125; 6 **Dovizioso** 125; 7 **P Espargaro** 122; 8 **Miller** 112; 9 **Nakagami** 105; 10 **Oliveira** 100; 11 **Binder** 87; 12 **Petrucci** 78; 13 **Zarco** 71; 14 **Marquez** 67; 15 **Rossi** 62; 16 **Bagnaia** 47; 17 **A Espargaro** 34; 18 **Crutchlow** 29; 19 **Iker Lecuona** 27; 20 **Bradl** 18; 21 **Bradley Smith** 12; 22 **Rabat** 10; 23 **Michele Pirro** 4; 24 **Savadori** 0.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Suzuki 201**; 2 **Ducati** 201; 3 **Yamaha** 188; 4 **KTM** 175; 5 **Honda** 133; 6 **Aprilia** 43.



High five: Pol Espargaro clinched his fifth podium of the season

NEXT REPORT

PORTUGUESE GP
26 NOVEMBER ISSUE

The 2020 MotoGP season concludes in the Algarve. Can Suzuki star Mir score a second win to add further success to his title-winning campaign?

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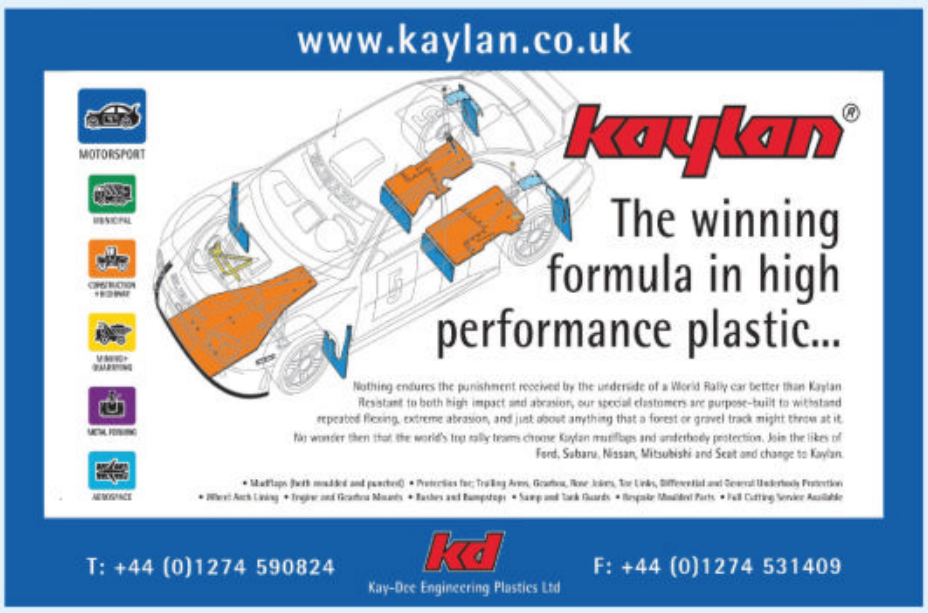
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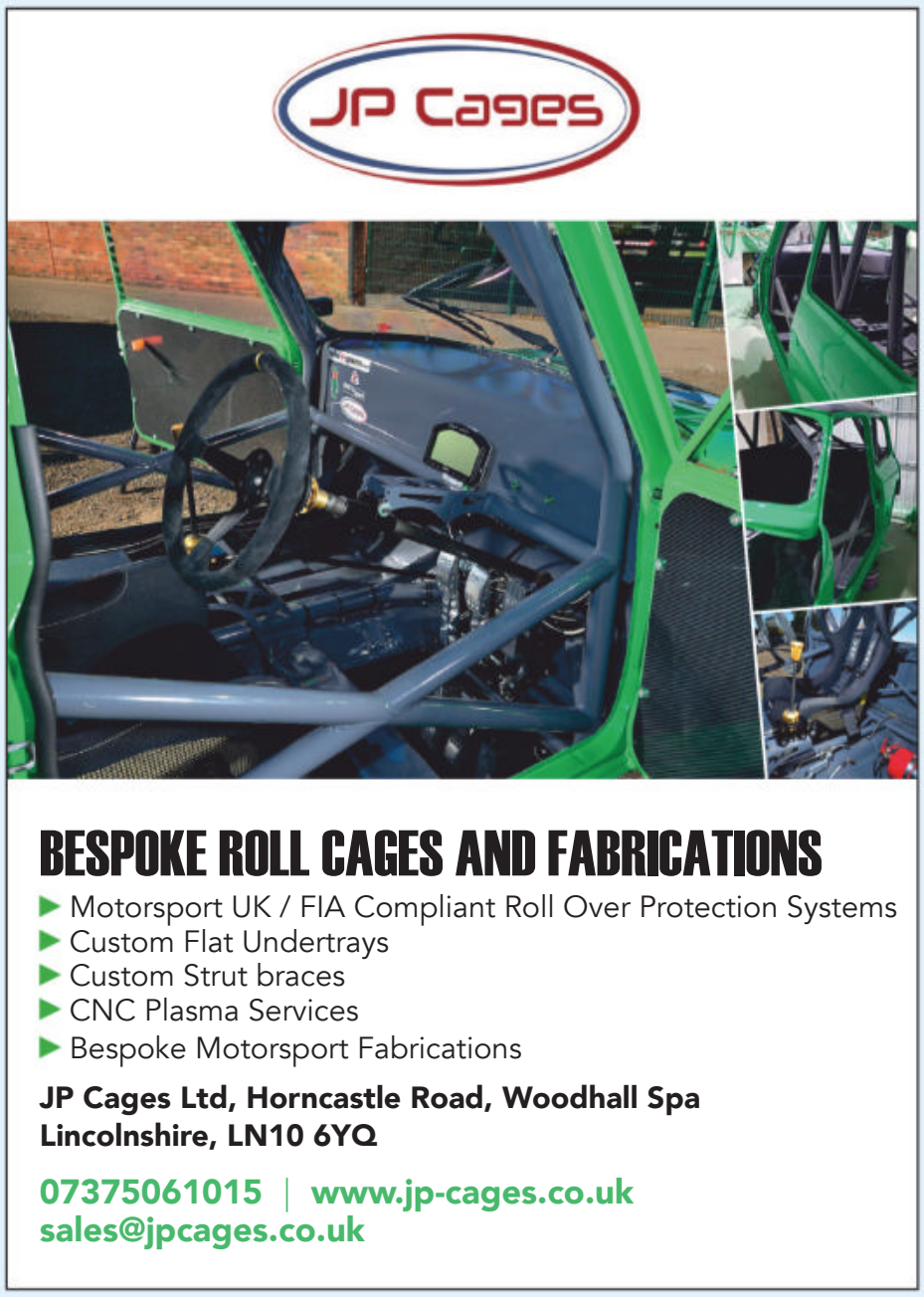


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New G55 GTA was safety car last weekend but will be on GT4 Supercup grid next year

JEP

motorsport IMAGES

BRITISH GT PRIZE AND NEW CLASS FOR GT4 SUPERCUP

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Next year's Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion will receive a fully funded drive in British GT4, while the British Touring Car support series will also feature an additional class for the manufacturer's new GTA car.

The British GT4 seat, which will be with a Ginetta-affiliated team, is part of a total prize fund across the company's range of championships that is worth around £400,000. It is hoped that the combination of the enhanced prizes and the extra GTA class will lead to a large GT4 Supercup grid next season.

"It highlights our commitment to British motorsport and helping progress the careers of drivers," said Ginetta motorsport manager Ash Gallagher. "The market is going to be struggling a bit more just because of COVID, so we wanted to do as much as we can to put a bit more back in and continue to have big grids.

"If you look at some of the previous competitors in GT4 Supercup, a lot do go into British GT and have a lot of success, but it's a case of trying to reinstill that in people. It reaffirms it as a good route into multi-marque GT racing."

As well as continuing to have the Pro, Pro-Am and Am classes for drivers using the GT4 Supercup-spec G55, a GT Pro division will also be introduced featuring an uprated version of the new entry-level GTA G55 for drivers aged between 16 and 21. The two cars will race on the same grid in a similar way to how older G50s used to have a class alongside the G55s until 2014.

"The idea was there used to be a big jump between Ginetta Junior and the GT4 Supercup," Gallagher explained. "The GT Pro class will allow drivers to transition into it in a car that's a bit cheaper and more cost-effective. It also allows them to remain on this [TOCA] package. It's the same car as the GT Academy, just with 300bhp instead of 270bhp."

As well as the British GT4 prize drive, the Ginetta Junior champion will get a funded GT Pro car, while other category champions will receive free entries to the next step on the Ginetta ladder.

Gallagher also revealed that the annual Junior scholarship is now full for this year. The event was delayed because of the later end to the season, before being pushed back to mid-December after the introduction of the second English national lockdown. Despite this, interest in places has still been high.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Two Thruxton visits for Sprint Challenge in ’21


Carrera Cup will skip both 2021 Thruxton events

PORSCHE

PORSCHE GB

Porsche Sprint Challenge GB drivers will have the rare opportunity to race twice on the high-speed Thruxton circuit in 2021, as part of a calendar that also includes the Silverstone and Brands Hatch Grand Prix layouts, although the Carrera Cup will not visit Hampshire.

The Cayman-based Sprint Challenge will continue to feature at a mixture of British GT, British Touring Car and Porsche Club meetings for its second season. It will race at both Thruxton BTCC weekends after the Carrera Cup suffered a number of punctures at the circuit this year. The Carrera Cup will instead be a part of the other eight BTCC events.

“The Caymans will be fantastic round Thruxton and they’ve proven very popular with drivers at the faster tracks this year,” said Porsche GB motorsport manager James MacNaughton. “It’s a great calendar for next year — Brands Hatch GP, Silverstone GP, Donington Park GP, Oulton Park and Thruxton. There’s four new circuits compared to this year so, for those returning, it will be fun for them as they’re not going to the same places.”

MacNaughton says a number of measures were put in place to prevent Carrera Cup tyre problems at Thruxton, but these still did not prove to be enough.

“We reduced the camber and gave strict instructions on tyre pressures, which were adhered to, and we still had some issues,” he said, adding there has been strong interest in both categories for next year.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

RICHARDSON BACK TO F4 WITH DIMITROV

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Richardson Racing will return to British Formula 4 next season with its 2020 Ginetta Junior race winner Georgi Dimitrov.

The squad, which powered Josh Malin to the Ginetta GT5 Challenge title this year, has been a regular in the single-seater series, in both its F4 guise and its previous British Formula Ford incarnation.

The team did not run any drivers in the series this year, for only the second time since first entering in 2013. Its most successful season in F4 came last year when it ran 2020 champion Luke Browning, who finished sixth in the points.

“We’re absolutely delighted to be able to confirm we will return to British F4 next season, and that Georgi is the first driver to sign up for the programme,” said team boss Gwyn Richardson.

“We’re talking to a number of other drivers about joining Georgi in British F4 next season, with our goal being to put together a three-car programme for our return to single-seaters.”

Dimitrov (below) finished fourth in the Ginetta Junior standings in his rookie campaign this year with Richardson, taking four wins, but lacked the consistency to launch a title bid.

“My goal has always been to race in single-seaters so I’m excited by this opportunity, and it’s great to be able to stay with the team after a strong first season together,” said Dimitrov. “I feel I’ve been able to prove myself this year in the Ginetta and it has been a good place to start my car racing career, and British F4 is the next step.”




Former Ginetta GT4 champion raced in Silverstone finale

PORSCHE

Ladell plots Porsche Cayman bid

PORSCHE SPRINT CHALLENGE GB

Charlie Ladell is targeting a full-time drive in the Porsche Sprint Challenge GB next season after making his debut in the category at Silverstone earlier this month.

The 2018 Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion drove for Rob Boston Racing in the Porsche championship’s final round, and in wet conditions took second place in the opening race, but could only manage eighth in race two after struggling to launch off the line.

“I’ve got a good relationship with Rob through Ginetta,” said Ladell. “He said the car’s free, and it’s something I’m looking at doing next year. It’s so different to what I’ve done before. A big part of wanting to do it is Porsche runs a championship really well and it’s a bit more affordable than Carrera Cup. I want to get a full-time drive and do a full campaign.”

Also making his debut in the category at Silverstone was three-time Porsche Carrera Cup runner-up Dino Zamparelli, who was racing in place of the injured Archie Hamilton. He finished fourth in race one after starting on pole, before taking the runner-up spot in race two.

Further down the grid, the Duke of Richmond’s son, Charles March, was in action and finished 15th in each race.

STEFAN MACKLEY



Young Ones allows children over 130cm tall to get behind the wheel

Successful first Young Ones event to prepare JSCC drivers

JUNIOR SALOONS

Junior Saloon Car Championship organisers are planning to expand their new Young Ones initiative, aimed at preparing nine to 12-year-olds to race in the series, after a successful first event last month.

The inaugural event took place at Stafford Driving Centre and was run alongside a taster day for slightly older children on the brink of reaching the age of 14, when they can begin competing in the series.

As well as a number of off-track activities, the initial Young Ones members had the chance to get to grips with a road-going Citroen Saxo around the test track at the Stafford facility before sampling the race car.

"Young Ones is for kids who are big enough physically to drive – they need to be 130cm or taller – and we'll be doing driver experience days and they'll learn about the championship," explained Junior Saloons coordinator Dave Beecroft.

"It will be a JSCC school and they will learn how to race. There used to be the Jim Russell School but there's nothing like that now. I think it will make a big difference – they'll already understand what's expected [when they make their debuts]."

Five drivers took part in the initial event and Beecroft says it was a success, with similar days now planned for 2021.

"We didn't know what to expect but it was brilliant!" he added. "We're picking them at that age so, when they're 13 or 14, the only place they want to be is racing in the JSCC. We used some of our recent drivers as instructors – we had Lewis Saunders, Ashley Gregory and Steve Chandler. The kids relate to them as they're a similar age and it's the kids they're watching on track."

- A nine-weekend provisional 2021 Junior Saloons schedule has also been released, and is due to begin on 24-25 April at Cadwell Park. Beecroft revealed that the British Automobile Racing Club category had the option of beginning the season in March but opted to delay the first round in a bid to reduce the chances of the schedule being affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Bentley T-type special impresses after restoration

HISTORICS

Forty-three years after it was damaged in a multi-car pile-up while leading a race at the 1977 Bentley Drivers' Club Silverstone meeting, Barry Eastick's supercharged Bentley T-type Special proved reliable, and fast, on its first post-restoration test there earlier this month.

Based on the second 1965 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow prototype chassis, Eastick's brainchild is powered by a supercharged 6.25-litre V8 engine and debuted in 1976.

After serving the family as a road-burner, the car was sold to a museum in Wales in 1981. Adam Stacy-Marks raced it unblown for P&A Wood at Silverstone in 1986, finishing third. But Eastick's son Ben kept track of it through later American ownership and fulfilled his ambition to buy it back in December 2016.

Eastick Jr finished fourth first time out in 2017 at the Silverstone BDC event, running unsupercharged.

"Elite Transmissions sorted the gearbox while we started a nut and bolt rebuild with Martin Greaves of Classic Performance Engineering in February 2018," he said.

"Now with a Roots supercharger, it feels great. It weighs about the same as my Jaguar D-type but lapped quicker. While it wasn't built to meet specific regulations, I'd love to find somewhere to race it occasionally next year."

MARCUS PYE



Long-wheelbase car proved reliable when Eastick tested it

JEP

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Thruxton again features on CSCC's calendar

JONES

CSCC to race on both Knockhill layouts and Silverstone GP in '21

CLASSIC SPORTS CAR CLUB

A first-ever meeting at Knockhill, featuring both the conventional and reversed layouts, and the Silverstone Grand Prix Circuit headline the Classic Sports Car Club's 2021 calendar.

As per recent CSCC tradition, the first of 10 events is due to take place on the Snetterton 300 circuit (27-28 March). The major addition is a double-header meeting at Knockhill (1-2 May), which marks a first visit to the Scottish venue since the club was founded in 2003. On the Saturday of the Bank Holiday weekend, the normal configuration will be used before all series will have a second race on the reversed anti-clockwise set-up for the Sunday.

The CSCC will also hold a one-day meeting at Cadwell Park, as it features on the calendar for the first time since 2016. Another club trope, night races, will be held as part of the Anglesey International event over 25-26 September. Competitors will be offered a Saturday daytime, an optional late evening and then a second daytime race on the Sunday.

The season concludes with a further first for the CSCC, as all series will run on the full Silverstone Grand Prix Circuit in a one-day meeting on 24 October.

MATT KEW

Jaguar Saloon & GTs join CTCRC

JAGUAR SALOON & GT

The XJS-led Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club Saloon & GT Championship has switched organiser to the British Automobile Racing Club for 2021 to race in partnership with the Classic Touring Car Racing Club.

The category (right) featured regularly at Classic Sports Car Club meetings with standalone sprint contests. But reduced entries, and the addition of the new CSCC Slicks Series, meant it was combined with the Open Series grid for this year.

It has now moved under the wing of the BARC and will run as part of the CTCRC package to "continue moving forward and flourishing".

JEC Racing competition secretary Chris Robinson said: "After 18 successful years with the CSCC, we felt to grow our numbers it was important for us to have our own grid for our Saloons & GTs. We felt with Jaguar's great history in touring car racing, and with what CTCRC and BARC have achieved, that this was the perfect platform for us to race with."



MATT KEW

IN THE HEADLINES

FREDERICK'S STEP UP

BRDC British F3 champion Kaylen Frederick is eyeing a move into either FIA Formula 3 or Euroformula Open next season. The American claimed the title with Carlin and is keen to continue that partnership, with a Euroformula test planned "pretty soon". "It will either be the FIA F3 series or the Euroformula series, whatever we think is more attractive for us," he said. "I would love to stay with Carlin – they're an amazing team and have done a lot for me."

ORTON PLANS GT5 MOVE

Fiesta Junior runner-up Will Orton is planning to move into the Ginetta GT5 Challenge next year, after recently buying a G40. After securing six podiums in his maiden season of car racing, Orton is targeting a move into the one-make series to continue his development. "I'm looking forward to moving into the GT5s," he said. "The right car came up a few weeks ago and we bought it."

NEW DATE FOR MSVR EVENT

MotorSport Vision Racing has revealed a new date for its Donington Park meeting, which was postponed due to non-elite motorsport being suspended following the introduction of a second national lockdown in England. The event is now due to be a single-day meeting on 5 December, provided restrictions are lifted. The Elise Trophy, Heritage Formula Ford and the Focus Cup are among the categories set to be in action.

FIVE FERRARI WEEKENDS

The Ferrari Challenge UK category has revealed an expanded five-weekend calendar for 2021. As well as the championship's traditional visits to Brands Hatch, Donington Park, Snetterton and Silverstone, a fifth event has been added for next year at Oulton Park. The Ferrari 488 Challenge cars in the series will also now use the Evo kit (below), which has a significantly altered nose section that improves front-end grip.



Bradshaw eyes GTs after taking world karting crown

KARTING



Bradshaw won the final by more than eight seconds in wet conditions

FOTOCAR13

Newly crowned world karting champion Callum Bradshaw is eyeing a move into GT racing next season, but admits he could remain in karting.

The 19-year-old became only the seventh Briton to win the FIA's top karting title — the OK world finals at the Algarve Circuit in Portugal earlier this month. It is a feat also achieved by McLaren Formula 1 driver Lando Norris in 2014.

Bradshaw started second for the final and took the lead on the second tour of the 20-lap contest, eventually winning by more than eight seconds over ex-British F4 racer Joe Turney on a wet track, and leading home a Tony Kart 1-2-3.

"It's starting to sink in but it's still an unreal feeling when I think about it and I think it will still take a long time to fully settle," said Bradshaw, who began karting in 2012.

Bradshaw has already tested a number of cars over the past year, including a McLaren GT4, Lamborghini Huracan Super Trofeo and Porsche Carrera Cup car, as well as an F4 single-seater with Carlin. He also reached the final of the French Volant Winfield Shootout last year. Bradshaw also contested a round of the GT4 South European Series at the Algarve Circuit with a Tockwith Motorsport Ginetta G50 last season.

"GT4s and Super Trofeo, that would be something that we are looking for, but the budget for cars is crazy, not only for the first year but the second and third year as well," said Bradshaw.

"At the same time I would be happy staying with Tony Kart. I don't think the single-seater route is the way forward for me but I definitely think GTs is the aim for the long-term future."

STEFAN MACKLEY

Champion Clark vows to bid for second title

LEGENDS

Legends champion Daniel Clark says he will remain in the series next season.

The 36-year-old was crowned champion after the category's final round at Brands Hatch earlier this month was cancelled amid the nationwide lockdown.

Clark, a former Superkart driver who was contesting his first full season in the championship since 2006, therefore took the title by 20 points.

"I didn't actually know we were champions, my dad rang me and said 'well done' as soon as he saw Brands had been cancelled," said Clark, who believes he spent less than £3000 on the season.

"We'd got everything packed up and ready to go down there, then all of a sudden we'd won the championship! I really wanted the weekend to go ahead, I was looking forward to it, but it is what it is and I'm delighted we've won.

"It's a shame the championship has been shorter than planned this year, but we've still all battled it out over 18 races. We said at the start of the year we'd be happy with a top 10 finish, but after taking the joint lead of the championship at Donington we moved into the actual lead at Snetterton.

"When I first bought my car a lot of people said it wouldn't be competitive but here we are. We'll definitely be back next year."





Keen to progress

It was a familiar story for Phil Keen as he again missed out on the British GT title. But there were lots of positives for Keen and team-mate Adam Balon from this season

GRAHAM JOHNSON

Pre-season, many folk — including me — tipped Phil Keen and his co-driver Adam Balon to break the 'Barwell curse' that had led to the Surrey-based team losing the British GT title at the last round of the season for the preceding five years. Sure enough, come the opening event at Oulton Park in August, Keen and Balon burst out of the starting blocks with a win. That initial success was followed up by two podiums before another triumph at Snetterton, and yet the duo could only muster third in the overall 2020 championship. So, what happened to Keen's and Balon's title assault?

Keen was certainly quick. With the super-fast and newly crowned 2020 champion Sandy Mitchell in the second Barwell Lamborghini pushing him, Keen arguably raised his game to a whole new level this year. Indeed, he topped his qualifying session three times in this COVID-hit season, more than any other driver on the grid. Even a one-off McLaren entry with superstar Jenson Button behind the wheel couldn't threaten Keen's dominance in qualifying. He was always ultra-rapid in races too, setting seven fastest laps from the nine contests.

The 37-year-old's racecraft was also better than ever. Two of Keen's 2020 drives particularly caught my attention, one being at Donington Park in September and the other at Silverstone. In both three-hour races, Barwell took advantage of a first-lap safety-car deployment, putting Keen back in the pack — and at Donington at the very back of the field, even behind the GT4 cars! His battling drives to the front in both cases were a joy to watch. Such stints were a masterclass in consistency and overtaking. Some of the British GT4 Silver whippersnappers, who misunderstand the expression 'push-to-pass', should study Keen's drives (spare part managers at GT4 manufacturers have quite literally had a bumper year, despite the small grid).

"While Keen didn't put a foot wrong, I hope Balon understands that he also did a fine job"

The aforementioned Balon, a 48-year-old Am driver, could at first glance be seen as the weak link in the Keen-Barwell alliance — and, yes, he made mistakes. However, Balon was fighting with half the grid being dominated by more experienced, fitter and younger Silver-Silver pairings, who are every weekend pitching for a professional career in racing. There have never been so many rapid Silver-Silver pairings in BGT as there were in 2020, and Balon should take comfort from the fact that such combinations have rightly been outlawed for next season. BGT has always been, and will always be, an Am-led series, the Ams being the financial backbone of the championship.

A key reason why Keen and Balon failed to take the title was the legacy of a practice crash in the Oulton opener. Balon damaged a gearbox in the shunt at Island, and this was still hampering the pair by the third event at Brands Hatch before a complete rebuild rectified the problem.

There were other incidences of bad luck, like in the Silverstone finale when Balon was hit at Stowe Corner by Sam De Haan, who might have mistaken his team name (RAM Racing) as an instruction. Post-contact, Balon then immediately went on to drop it again as he tried to recover his Huracan on the damp grass. The slip-up was an illustration of the fact that he is still perfecting his craft, and he needs to relax when behind the wheel, no matter what the circumstances. Indeed, if Balon has a weakness, it's arguably in this latter, mental-strength department.

Keen clearly works well with his team-mates, as he remains one of the most sought-after partners on the grid after 15 seasons in BGT. Runner-up three times, I don't doubt that Keen is a great, selfless team-mate. But knowing how to get the absolute best out of someone — understanding the psyche of your team-mate — that's also a very important aspect of enduro racing and something four-time BGT champ Jonny Adam specialises in.

I know through my own experience that the priority — yes, *the* priority — is optimising a driver's mental performance before anything else, even before perfecting vehicle set-up and driving technique. Get both drivers in the right head space, and the rest will take care of itself. I've always said racing is about the 10% of talent in your hands and feet, and the 90% of your mental strength. I suspect that Balon's mental strength didn't always operate at full capacity this year, and thus it's an area that he can work on with Keen if they go for a third crack at the title together next year.

And, while Keen didn't put a foot wrong in 2020, I hope Balon understands that he also did a fine job. Check out the facts. Keen and Balon were the only Pro-Am pairing on the grid to take two outright victories this year, an impressive tally that was not beaten by any of the Silver-Silver combos. And they were the first Pro-Am team in the overall standings this year.

While it may not have been enough for them to win the Pro-Am title (that honour went to Yelmur Buurman and Ian Loggie), Balon will surely come back next year without the Silver crews and be an even more formidable competitor.

TOCA SUPPORTS BRANDS HATCH 14-15 NOVEMBER

Browning grabs F4 title in unbelievable circumstances

BRITISH FORMULA 4



Browning took a vital victory in the opener

You could not make it up – it sounds too far-fetched. Two title rivals battling before both going off on oil, the outside bet then recovering to a position where they could win the championship, only for rain to end the race early, leaving half points awarded and the leading contender triumphant after all. Incredible as it seems, that is exactly what happened in British Formula 4's title showdown.

Although rivals Zak O'Sullivan and Luke Browning shared the front row for the final race of 2020 at Brands Hatch, there was no hint of what drama would be in store. Browning entered the race 16 points clear and his title prospects looked good.

But O'Sullivan laid down a marker of intent on the first lap by blasting around the outside of Paddock Hill Bend to pass polesitter Browning – who also lost out to James Hedley at Graham Hill Bend. Then, suddenly, all three were off. Each had encountered oil at Clark Curve and, while O'Sullivan continued in fourth, Browning spun and dropped to last.

O'Sullivan quickly barged past Browning's Fortec team-mate Roberto Faria, before also demoting Abbi Pulling and Christian Mansell to return to the lead. With Browning languishing in 10th, it was enough for the title to go O'Sullivan's way. Then the threatening dark clouds began depositing a significant amount of rain and the race was soon red-flagged. There was no time to restart, because of the condensed timetable, and cue jubilation for O'Sullivan. But a key regulation had been forgotten: only half points are awarded when less than 75% of the race is completed. The nine-and-a-half minutes of racing was less than 50% so Browning took the glory by four points.

"I can't believe it!" said Browning. "I was at the bottom of the world on the first lap. There was a big oil spill that we never could've predicted. But then the rain saved me!"

O'Sullivan was angry the race had not continued for longer. "There was no immediate safety reason," he said. "There was no need to red flag it – you have a safety car for a reason."

The pair had arrived in Kent tied on points but Browning landed the first blow as he held off O'Sullivan throughout race one. "It couldn't be more important [winning the first race]," said Browning. "If I was in his shoes, it would be pretty gutting – it makes it difficult in the reversed-grid race."

But O'Sullivan made life even harder for himself in that second race, which began behind the safety car despite track conditions being better than most of the weekend. O'Sullivan passed Carlin team-mate Mansell when the safety car boards had already gone back out at the end of the first racing lap. Despite rising to second, he was demoted behind Mansell to fourth post-race – had he waited and overtaken Mansell later, he would be the champion.

"It seems like I had a bit of a target on my back all weekend," said O'Sullivan, who branded the penalty as "harsh". It was yet another example of what an eventful weekend of racing it had been.

STEPHEN LICKORISH


Browning's initial third place in the finale would have been enough, but trouble – literally – lurked around the corner

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JEP
motorsport IMAGES



Fourth in the opener was enough for Burns



Burton missed out on title but ended year with a win

No twists in the tale for Burns

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Unlike some of the twists and turns in other championships being decided at Brands Hatch, there was no sting in the tail for Will Burns as he finally landed the Ginetta GT4 Supercup crown.

Burns essentially just needed to finish the first race to be sure of the title – and he did just that, cautiously taking fourth place on the wet track and not putting up too much resistance to Pro-Am runner Tom Emson, who sealed a maiden series podium.

Up front, the race was all about Adam Smalley as he blasted clear to lead by seven seconds before a safety car period. That did not halt his charge as he secured a fourth win of the season, beating championship runner-up Gus Burton.

The Century Motorsport driver moved into second place with a forceful pass on Tom Hibbert through Clearways, the resulting lack of momentum dropping Hibbert behind Burns and Emson.

Burns was racier in the second contest, first diving down the inside of Hibbert at Paddock Hill Bend, before demoting Smalley through Clark Curve near the end. But he had no answer to Burton, who stormed into the lead off the line and ended an impressive season with another victory.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Yet another double for King

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

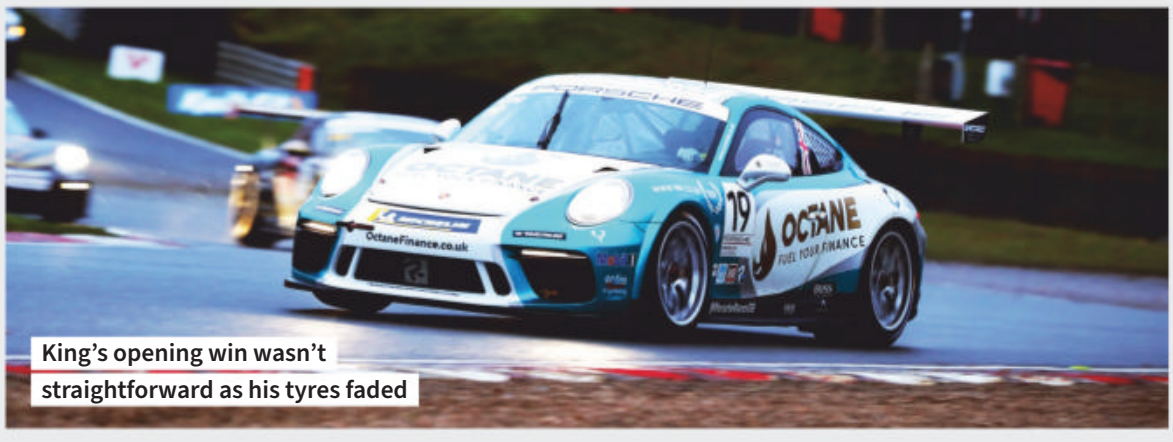
Harry King completed his emphatic Porsche Carrera Cup GB season with a double win at Brands Hatch, but paradoxically it was the opening race, and not the reversed-grid sequel, that proved most difficult.

King got ahead of poleman Scott McKenna on the opening lap, via side-to-side contact off the line, and the Team Parker Racing star built up a lead. Matthew Graham passed Redline Racing team-mate McKenna at one-third distance, before Lorcan Hanafin crashed out of fourth and triggered a safety car.

King, his wet-weather tyres fading fast, looked vulnerable over the five-lap dash to the flag. Graham probed for an opening, but in turn left himself open to attack from McKenna, and they clashed at Druids on the penultimate lap. That left Mark Kimber second from Will Martin and Josh Webster, but Kimber was penalised down to fourth for a feisty move on Webster.

Kimber held on in front of the reversed-grid race for 11 laps, before King – from fifth on the grid – got him at Paddock, just before a safety car appeared due to early second man Sam MacLeod being in the Druids gravel. Rookie Martin completed an excellent weekend with another second place after passing Kimber, with Webster fourth.

MARCUS SIMMONS



King's opening win wasn't straightforward as his tyres faded

WEEKEND WINNERS

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Race 1 (22 laps) 1 Luke Browning; 2 Zak O'Sullivan +0.582s; 3 Christian Mansell; 4 Abbi Pulling; 5 Alex Connor; 6 Frederick Lubin. **Fastest lap** James Hedley 54.585s (79.66mph). **Pole** Browning. **Starters** 12.
Race 2 (17 laps) 1 Connor; 2 Browning +0.954s; 3 Mansell; 4 O'Sullivan; 5 Hedley; 6 Lubin. **FL** Hedley 55.818s (77.90mph). **P** Lubin. **S** 12.
Race 3 (10 laps) 1 O'Sullivan; 2 Mansell +0.859s; 3 Pulling; 4 Roberto Faria; 5 Lubin; 6 Roman Bilinski. **FL** O'Sullivan 47.232s (92.06mph). **P** Browning. **S** 12.
Points 1 Browning 412.5; 2 O'Sullivan 408.5; 3 Casper Stevenson 328; 4 Connor 265; 5 Hedley 249; 6 Pulling 191.5.

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Race 1 (23 laps) 1 Adam Smalley; 2 Gus Burton +1.834s; 3 Tom Emson; 4 Will Burns; 5 Tom Hibbert; 6 Joe Marshall-Birks. **FL** Smalley 54.413s (79.91mph). **P** Smalley. **S** 15.
Race 2 (22 laps) 1 Burton; 2 Burns +5.353s; 3 Smalley; 4 Hibbert; 5 Emson; 6 Luke Reade. **FL** Burton 48.602s (89.47mph). **P** Smalley. **S** 15.
Points 1 Burns 534; 2 Burton 495; 3 Hibbert 466; 4 Smalley 462; 5 Jamie Falvey 382; 6 Marshall-Birks 332.

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Race 1 (32 laps) 1 Harry King; 2 Will Martin +1.760s; 3 Josh Webster; 4 Mark Kimber; 5 Sam MacLeod; 6 Ross Wylie. **FL** King 53.568s (81.17mph). **P** Scott McKenna. **S** 18.
Race 2 (34 laps) 1 King; 2 Martin +6.271s; 3 Kimber; 4 Webster; 5 Wylie; 6 Matthew Graham. **FL** Lorcan Hanafin 47.056s (92.41mph). **P** MacLeod. **S** 18.
Points 1 King 167; 2 Webster 121; 3 Graham 80; 4 Hanafin 70; 5 Martin 69; 6 McKenna 60.

GINETTA JUNIOR

Race 1 (7 laps) 1 Josh Rattican; 2 Tom Lebbon +1.252s; 3 Seb Hopkins; 4 Josh Miller; 5 Tom Edgar; 6 Aston Millar. **FL** Edgar 1m06.048s (65.84mph). **P** Miller. **S** 21.
Race 2 (8 laps) 1 Miller; 2 Lebbon +0.674s; 3 Rattican; 4 Bailey Voisin; 5 Hopkins; 6 Georgi Dimitrov. **FL** Voisin 1m06.443s (65.44mph). **P** Miller. **S** 21.
Points 1 Lebbon 528; 2 Rattican 519; 3 Voisin 516; 4 Dimitrov 386; 5 Hopkins 320; 6 Edgar 304.

MINI CHALLENGE

Race 1 (26 laps) 1 Max Bird; 2 Nathan Harrison +0.155s; 3 Dan Zelos; 4 Ant Whorton-Eales; 5 Max Coates; 6 Callum Newsham. **FL** Bird 58.895s (73.83mph). **P** Coates. **S** 23.
Race 2 (15 laps) 1 Lewis Brown; 2 Zelos +0.965s; 3 Newsham; 4 Coates; 5 James MacIntyre; 6 Bird. **FL** Harrison 58.685s (74.10mph). **P** Liam Lambert. **S** 23.
Points 1 Harrison 465; 2 Zelos 433; 3 Whorton-Eales 427; 4 Bird 399; 5 Brown 384; 6 Coates 374.

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

TOCA SUPPORTS BRANDS HATCH 14-15 NOVEMBER



Lebbon held off Rattican and Voisin in race two – and they finished in that order in the points too

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JEP motorsport IMAGES

Lebbon triumphs after scrappy end to Ginetta Junior season

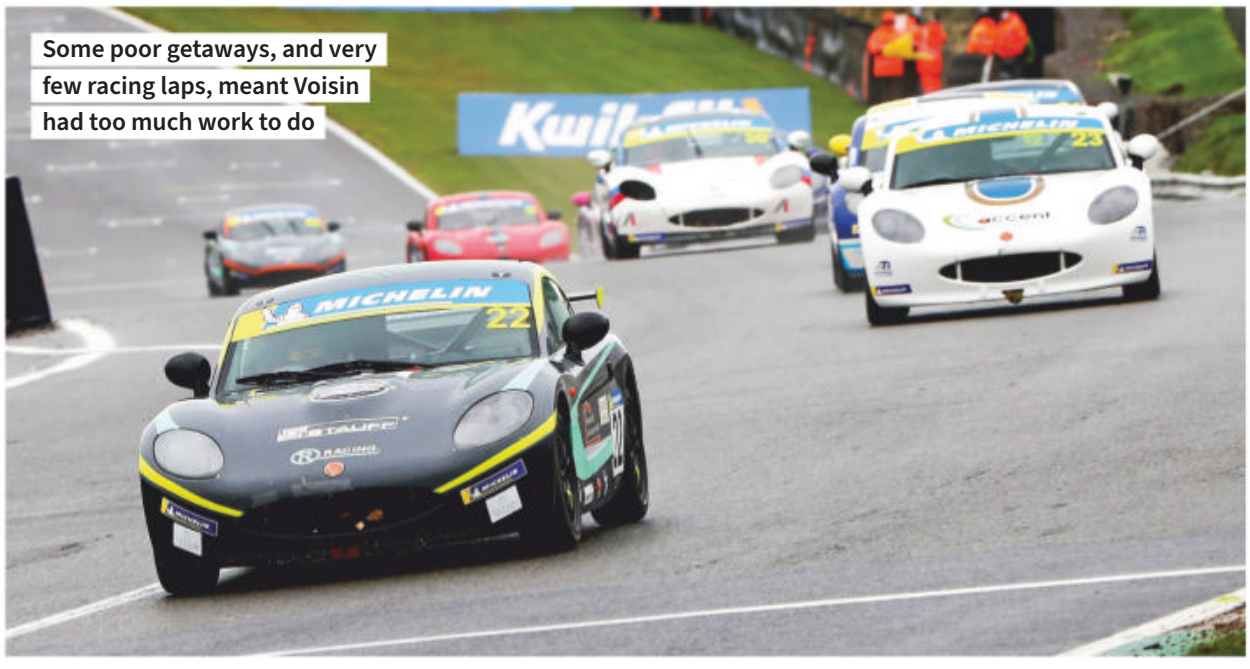
GINETTA JUNIOR

Three drivers separated by just 15 points in the battle for the Ginetta Junior title, combined with wet weather, suggested that a memorable Brands Hatch finale was in store. But instead, incident after incident led to a cluster of safety car periods and red flags, leaving just 10 racing laps across the two contests and a disappointing climax to the season. Not that Tom Lebbon minded, as it was he who emerged with the title.

Elite Motorsport racer Lebbon had a blistering first lap in the opener as he profited from a slow start from main rival Bailey Voisin, passed Josh Rattican straight away and then grabbed the lead from Josh Miller on the run up to Druids. But the race was soon red-flagged with Tommy Pintos and Will Aspin off at Paddock Hill Bend.

The restarted race was due to last 10 minutes and Lebbon did not have quite such a good first lap this time, losing the lead to outside title bet Rattican at Graham Hill Bend, before the safety car was called with Trennon Bettany in the Paddock gravel. Rattican continued to lead Lebbon on the restart but, after three more laps, the race was red-flagged again as Liam McNeilly became another Paddock victim.

Crucially, on the safety car restart, Voisin overlapped Georgi Dimitrov and, with Dimitrov subsequently dropping down the field, Voisin was relegated from fifth to eighth in the final result.



Some poor getaways, and very few racing laps, meant Voisin had too much work to do

Not even one lap was completed before race two was halted. Freddie Tomlinson struggled to get away and was collected by William Vincent, who in turn was hit from behind by cousin Rowan. After a lengthy clean-up operation, and William Vincent being taken to the medical centre, it left another 10-minute race. But the recurring theme of the weekend continued, with Bettany stranded at Paddock again and the safety car required.

After this, finally, there was a glimpse of what might have been as the three title contenders had a thrilling battle.

While Miller led away to take his maiden victory, Rattican was pressurising Lebbon for second. But a failed attempt instead allowed Voisin to pounce at Druids and challenge Lebbon into Graham Hill Bend. There, a slight wobble for Voisin cost him momentum and allowed Rattican back ahead, the trio finishing in the same order. And that was enough for Lebbon to become the first rookie to win the title.

"It means a lot, especially for the team to come 1-2 [as Rattican pipped Voisin to runner-up in the points]," said Lebbon. "It was tough, we didn't have the pace in the greasy and wet conditions, so I had to use my head."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Bird and Brown win but Harrison lands the crown

MINI CHALLENGE

Max Bird and Lewis Brown may have taken the final Mini Challenge victories of the season at Brands Hatch, but it was Nathan Harrison who left the happiest after finally sealing the title.

The Excelr8 Motorsport driver entered the weekend with a 14-point advantage over Dan Zelos and 27 over Ant Whorton-Eales but, with another five drivers still in mathematical contention – including Bird and Brown – Harrison was far from assured of the crown.

Harrison had at least one hand on the trophy after a strong drive to second in the opener. Polesitter Max Coates made a slow start and the pack squabbled to get ahead of him, Harrison emerging in second. By mid-distance all three of the main contenders were in the top four, Whorton-Eales aggressively passing Coates at Clearways to chase after Zelos.

But in front of them all was Bird, who surged into a 3.5-second lead as the others battled behind. He did not enjoy such comfort for long. Harrison and Zelos began taking chunks of time out of him as rain returned, and Bird was delayed by Snetterton race winner Isaac Smith battling to unlap himself.

Harrison got closer and closer, and a wide moment for Bird out of Paddock Hill Bend put Harrison right on his tail, but Bird clung on to win by 0.155s.

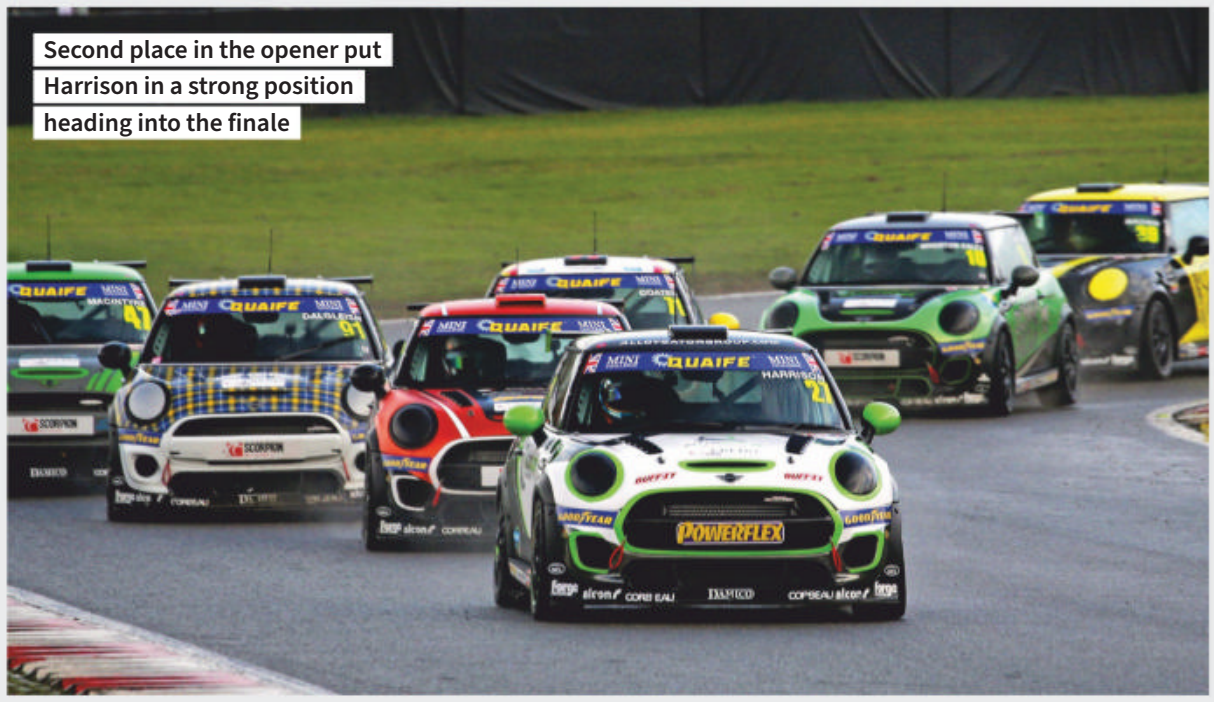
Rookie Liam Lambert – in just his second event – was the reversed-grid polesitter and led away at the start, but was soon under pressure from Brown, who dived ahead at Graham Hill Bend on lap four. Meanwhile, Zelos was on a charge to do everything he could to win the title. He was up from eighth to fourth by the end of the second tour, before also passing Callum Newsham. But his momentum was halted due to a lengthy safety car period to recover three cars.

This left time for only two minutes of racing and Zelos instantly pounced on a slight mistake from Lambert at Graham Hill Bend, but could do nothing about Brown ahead. Eighth place for Harrison was therefore more than enough for him to become champion.

"I did my best, but Nathan had the advantage coming into the weekend," said Zelos. "I really enjoy the wet conditions and I was able to jump on other people's mistakes."

But the driver he really needed to make a mistake did not put a foot wrong, as Harrison made up for several near-misses (below) to finally land the crown.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Second place in the opener put Harrison in a strong position heading into the finale

HOW TWO DRIVERS FINALLY ENDED YEARS OF DISAPPOINTMENT AND WON THEIR TITLES

Of the five champions crowned over the Brands Hatch season finale weekend, two had a very similar path to claiming the title. Both new Mini Challenge champion Nathan Harrison and Ginetta GT4 Supercup title winner Will Burns enjoyed success in their respective categories, finishing runner-up, before briefly moving to race elsewhere and then returning. They again finished a close second before finally landing the crown this season.

Harrison first began competing in the top JCW class of the Mini Challenge in 2016, having won the Cooper title the year before. He was runner-up in his first season and then spent a year in the Renault UK Clio Cup. He was back to Minis in 2018 and was second twice more, including a particularly hard-fought battle with James Gornall last year, before finally winning that elusive title.

"Over the years I've been so close and unfortunate not to win the championship, but it's amazing to finally win it," said the Excelr8 Motorsport driver. "All credit to the team. It's a great feeling – it's why we are all here."

Harrison admitted he was a little disappointed to finish eighth in the finale, a lengthy safety car period hampering his progress.

"Every driver wants to race and I wanted to get back racing [despite the risk of losing places]," Harrison said. "I had the speed to be at the front but didn't want to do anything stupid."

Burns was in a slightly different position heading into the Brands weekend as he had all but won the title already. It was unfamiliar territory for the Rob Boston Racing driver as, during his two previous title bids (in 2016 and 2019), he entered the finale as the chaser and fell a handful of points short each time.

"I can't believe it," said a delighted Burns, who raced in British Touring Cars and British GT between his two Ginetta stints in the GT4 Supercup. "It was third time lucky and I'm over the moon – I did start to think maybe I'm not good enough, but I can't believe I've won."



Harrison celebrates with giant Mini trophy

Burns even admitted feeling sorry for Adam Smalley, as his late move on the Elite driver in the finale denied the series rookie third in the standings. Burns and Harrison know all about those last-round disappointments, but there were no such feelings this year as both finally finished as number one.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



HOW TO CELEBRATE AUTOSPORT'S

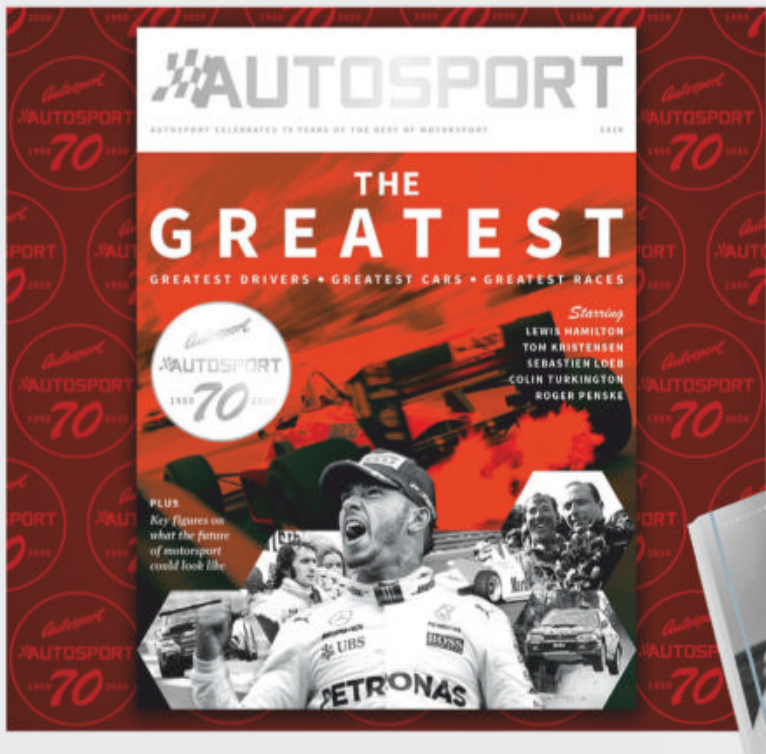
AUTOSPORT 70TH ANNIVERSARY
THE GREATEST
196-PAGE SPECIAL ISSUE

Well, we did think about a cake and some candles. But, as we're working from home, there was a risk the slices might have been squashed in the post. So, as a happy alternative, and as well as the normal weekly Autosport magazine, you can buy our 196-page 70th anniversary special issue that's on sale now.

For readers who possess copies of our previous birthday editions, this one's a bit different. Instead of a year-by-year or decade-by-decade review, we've chosen simply 'The Greatest' as our theme. As such, we take a look at the very best motorsport machines and races from the past 70 years and have spoken to the leading lights from Formula 1, sportscars, rallying, touring cars, IndyCar, UK national racing and many more besides.

Conducted ahead of Lewis Hamilton's seventh coronation, there's an interview with the Mercedes star. Tom Kristensen reflects on his glittering endurance career, and the two most successful drivers in British Touring Car Championship history – four-time champions Andy Rouse and Colin Turkington – sit down together to reflect on their tin-top achievements. We have also spoken to the most decorated team boss in American motorsport, one Roger Penske.

Special cars to be featured include current F1 pacesetter the Mercedes W11, which might just lay claim to being the best grand prix machine of all time at the expense of the Lotus 72. There are also in-depth pieces on all of the winners from our recent anniversary podcast series debating the greatest cars from each







70TH BIRTHDAY

discipline, so expect to read about the Porsche 956/962, Audi's Quattro, the famous BMW E30 M3 and the Ralt RT3, which launched the career of Ayrton Senna among many others.

Enclosed within are also reproductions of two of Autosport's most ambitious track tests. The F1 piece features four Lotus designs (Types 25, 49, 72 and 79) that irreversibly moved the game on, and our BTCC test recognises five of the most successful cars in the category's 62-year life (Jaguar Mk1, Ford Lotus Cortina, Chevrolet Camaro, Rover Vitesse and Ford RS500).

And although it's predominantly a celebration of the past, we've also gathered the thoughts of some of motorsport's pre-eminent designers and engineers to discuss what the future of motorsport might look like and to also explain how the composition of the most successful F1 teams has changed in recent decades.

Due to the unforeseen events of 2020, this special edition arrives a little later than Autosport's true birthday (the first issue arrived on 25 August 1950). But it's been a passion project for all those involved, and one we very much hope you'll enjoy reading.

HOW TO GET YOUR COPY

If you're already subscribed to the print magazine, readers will receive their copy of the 70th anniversary issue for free. Alternatively, head to **autosport.com/autosport70th** to order your issue for the one-off price of £14.50 (including postage and packing). It's also on sale in WHSmith.

autosport.com/podcast



Also listen to our celebratory birthday podcast. The editorial team discussed how creating the magazine each week has changed over the decades, they throw in some of their personal anecdotes and preview the array of features in 'The Greatest' issue.

YouTube youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom



It stands to reason that the lighter a car, the faster it goes, right? Autosport remembers the numerous times Formula 1 teams have sought to manipulate the FIA's minimum weight rule in an effort to gain an advantage. **Go to bit.ly/F1weight**

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

MotoGP
Round 14/14
Algarve Circuit, Portugal
22 November
TV **Live**
BT Sport 2, Sun 1330
TV **Highlights**
BT Sport 3, Sun 1900

Formula Regional European
Round 7/8
Imola, Italy
21-22 November
Livestream
on Motorsport.tv, Sat 1305, Sun 0755, 1315

Macau Grand Prix for F4
Macau, China
21-22 November

Macau Guia for TCR
Macau, China
21-22 November

Macau GT Cup
Macau, China
21-22 November

Brazilian Stock Cars
Round 7/8
Goiania, Brazil
21-22 November

FROM THE ARCHIVE

The Ecurie Ecosse Jaguar D-type shared by Ninian Sanderson and John Lawrence leads the Porsche 550A of Claude Storez/ Ed Crawford during the 1957 Le Mans 24 Hours. The D-type finished second, part of the famous 1-2-3-4-6 result for Jaguar. The S1.5-class Porsche ran as high as fifth overall, but ran out of fuel in the final hour. The doughty Storez pushed the car as far as the pitlane entrance, but could not refuel because it was fewer than 30 laps since the last stop, and he wouldn't have been able to complete his final lap within 30 minutes to be classified as a finisher.

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Senna stars on first Formula 3 outing

18 November 1982

Autosport heralded the impressive Formula 3 debut of Ayrton Senna da Silva, as he was then known, this week in 1982.

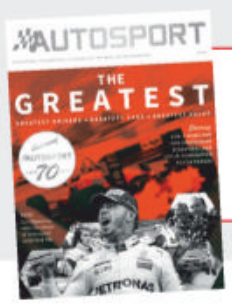
The British and European Formula Ford 2000 champion joined the "best F3 cars seen for many a month", according to our reporter Jeremy Shaw. Driving a Dick Bennetts-run West Surrey Racing Ralt RT3 for the televised non-championship Thruxton event, Senna scorched to pole by more than 0.75 seconds.

"He is a very intelligent driver and he can tell me exactly what the car is doing, which makes my job a lot easier," said Bennetts.

Senna duly made a fine start to keep his advantage and then left everyone behind. He won the "typically processional" 15-lap race by more than 13s, from Bengt Tragardh. Calvin Fish, the only driver other than Senna and Martin Brundle who would win a race during the 1983 British F3 campaign, was third, ahead of rally ace Henri Toivonen.

"The day belonged to 22-year-old da Silva and if, as seems most likely, he remains to contest the 1983 British F3 Championship with Bennetts, then it will be his brilliance that the other contenders will have to combat," concluded Autosport.

Elsewhere in the 18 November issue, we reported on Senna's future Formula 1 rival Alain Prost's domination of the Australian Grand Prix for Formula Pacific cars at Calder Park Raceway in a Ralt RT4. We also reviewed the 1982 European and British F3 seasons, and looked ahead to the RAC Rally.



Autosport recently voted the Ralt RT3 the greatest junior single-seater, and an in-depth piece on the car features in our Autosport 70th Anniversary special. Print subscribers will receive a copy for free. To pre-order your copy of the 196-page celebration, please go to **autosport.com/autosport70th**

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

Ricciardo interview

WE TALK TO ONE OF F1'S BEST-LIKED STARS



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