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THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

ALAN GOW

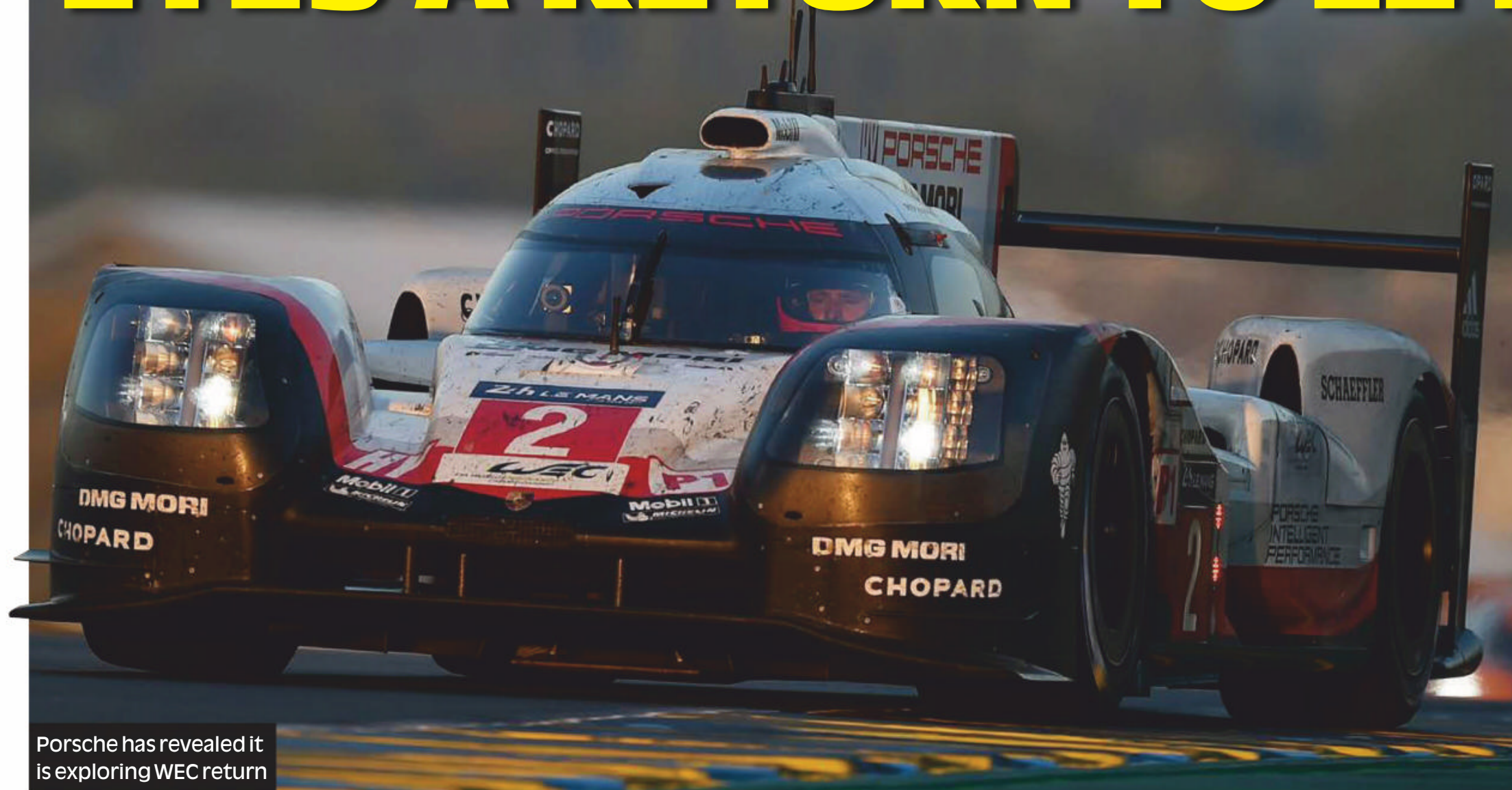


BTCC boss answers MN readers' questions **P12**



German firm considers a comeback to sportscar top flight

PORSCHE EYES A RETURN TO LE MANS



Porsche has revealed it is exploring WEC return

By Matt James

Porsche is evaluating a return to top-flight sportscar competition under the new LMDh regulations that will be introduced into the 2021-2022 World Endurance Championship, which would include an assault on Le Mans.

The German firm, which holds the record for the most outright victories at Le Mans with 19, has undertaken an initial investigation into the new rules and is waiting until sportscar racing governors, the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, and American body IMSA, have set out the format of the new category. The revamped regulations would allow cars to compete in both the WEC and in IMSA's North American championship.

Those rules are due immanently and Porsche will then make a decision about a comeback to the headline category in sportscar racing.

Porsche's motorsport boss Pascal Zurlinden revealed that orders had come from the board to assess the project.

He said: "There's important stuff to work out, but they are still working on it, and we really hope that the regulations will come in the next days so we can do a concept study."

Full story page 4

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT
MOTORSPORT NEWS

INVESTIGATION

KEEPING IT UNREAL...

How computer simulators help drivers stay sharp **P16**

REFLECTION

SCOTLAND'S GREATEST RALLY

How magical stages had an impact **P20**

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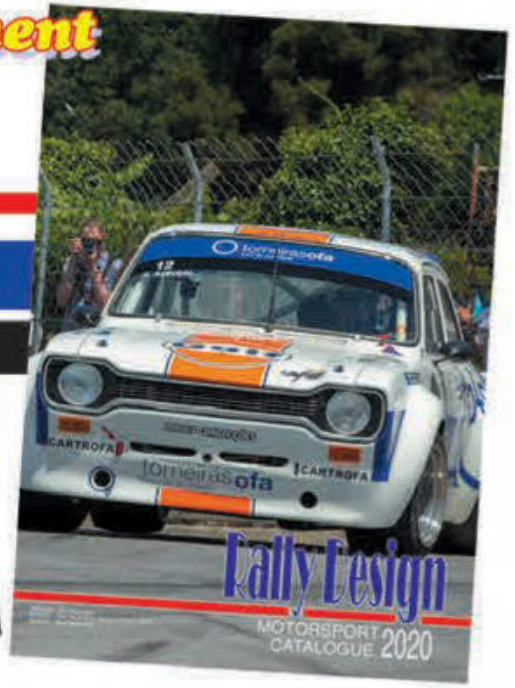
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COMMENT



Porsche has a famous legacy at the pinnacle of sportscar racing, and it could be back

AN ICON FOR AN ICONIC RACE

There is something irresistible about the words Porsche and Le Mans in the same sentence. Maybe that is just my age but when you grew up on a diet of Porsche 956 and 962s pounding around La Sarthe, it is hard not to fall in love with them.

Porsche's most recent foray into the classic twice-round-the-clock race was in 2017, which marked its third triumph in a row. It had been sparked by Nico Hulkenberg, Earl Bamber and Nick Tandy's victory in 2015. Tandy on the top step was another highlight for UK fans.

And now the firm is eyeing a return to the World Endurance Championship and, as a bi-product, that means Le Mans. It is only in the early stages of its plans at the moment, but all of us here at Motorsport News have our fingers crossed that it reaches fruition.

Elsewhere in this issue, Alan Gow answers questions from Motorsport News readers. The British Touring Car Championship's chief executive doesn't shirk in his answers either. He tackles all subjects from the likelihood of returning to a racing calendar this season to the prospects of an all-electric future for the BTCC. There is also some revealing information about the future of a computer game to enhance the profile of the category.

Along the same computer-based lines, Deputy Editor Graham Keilloh and the Motorsport News editorial team have been quizzing competitors on their use of simulators. We speak to a host of drivers from all disciplines who tell us their tricks of the trade and also catch up with the very busy boss of Base Performance, Darren Turner.

Luke Barry reflects on a highlight of the rallying season, which used to be the Rally of Scotland. Although the event only ran for a few years on stages which have now been idle, they have been brought back into sharp focus by DiRT Rally 2.0. That allows gamers to relive sections on what some competitors have called the best rally in the world.

There is plenty to enjoy in this week's Motorsport News and just wait for next week when we grill the 2003 World Rally champion Petter Solberg. If you have questions for him, follow MN at @MNmotorsport on twitter or find us on facebook. Search for 'motorsport news'.



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 @MattJMNews

MOTORSPORT NEWS

ISSUE MJ3226 APRIL 8 2020

IN THIS ISSUE



P10

STILL RARING TO GO AT 70

How Steve Hill is relishing a fresh British rallycross attack



P12

ALAN GOW ON THE BTCC'S FUTURE

Touring car boss tackles the MN readers' questions



P16 HOW DRIVERS KEEP SHARP

We investigate the world of racing and rally simulators

P20 THE GB'S BEST RALLY?

Rally of Scotland remembered



News: Racing and rallying 4
 Column: Martin O'Connell 9
 Feature: Steve Hill 10
 Feature: Alan Gow Q&A 12
 Feature: Simulators 16
 Feature: Rally of Scotland 20
 TV/readers photos 23



P9

COLUMN: Martin O'Connell

FOR MOTORSPORT NEWS STAFF CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE SEE P23

RACING NEWS

BRITISH TOURING CAR GAME MOOTED

Negotiations are underway to reintroduce a British Touring Car Championship-themed game to the console market, series chief executive Alan Gow has revealed.

The category had its own stand-alone game, TOCA Touring Cars, which was first introduced in 1997. That was followed by TOCA 2 a year later before the series of games branched out into other categories as well as the BTCC. The initial BTCC-only games were top of the gaming charts at the time of their release.

Three-time champion and factory Honda driver Matt Neal suggested on social media recently that a new computer game was in the offing and, while plans are afoot to recreate a BTCC-themed game, the final details have yet to be signed off.

Alan Gow told internet-based radio show Tin Top Tuesday:

“We are getting ever closer towards it happening, but that is not to say the deal’s done. But we are a lot closer now than we have been for the last 20 years. Matt’s enthusiasm might have got the better of him on that one. I certainly haven’t done any contracts yet.

“There are some very positive talks going on with the gaming development companies and hopefully that will turn into a proper BTCC game. It will be very cool but let’s keep it in check at the moment. What is going on in the world around us has slowed things down a bit, but we are working towards it.”

For a full exclusive interview with Alan Gow, see pages 12-15.



TOCA game was a big hit

PORSCHE EXPLORING WEC RETURN WITH LMDh RULES

New rules appeal to German operation as it eyes comeback



Porsche's last foray at Le Mans resulted in a hat-trick of wins, which began in 2015

By Graham Keillon

Porsche has confirmed it is evaluating a return to top-class endurance racing in the World Endurance Championship and North America’s IMSA championship, via the new LMDh prototype category.

LMDh machinery, which is to be based on the principles of IMSA’s LMP2-based Daytona Prototype international category and will allow the same machinery to compete both at WEC’s and at IMSA’s sharp end, will be permitted in WEC from the 2021/22 season and in IMSA from the start of 2022. Le Mans is a central plinth of the WEC season.

Porsche withdrew from WEC’s LMP1 category at the end of 2017 and hasn’t competed on IMSA’s sportscar pinnacle since the LMP2 RS Spyder project in 2005 to ‘10. And

Porsche’s motorsport boss Pascal Zurlinden has confirmed that he has been tasked with carrying out a study on the new LMDh platform.

“Porsche is looking into it, we have no decision if we will go or not. Our board member Mr Steiner [Michael, R&D boss] asked us to do a study to see what is possible,” Zurlinden said.

“The regulations are not out, but I think it is just delayed by a few days as ACO [Automobile Club de l’Ouest] and IMSA also went into home office [working]. “So there’s important stuff to sort out, but they are still working on it, and we really hope that the regulations will come in the next days so we can do a concept study.”

More details of the LMDh regulations were due to be unveiled around the time of last month’s scheduled ‘SuperSebring’ IMSA/WEC double-header event. However

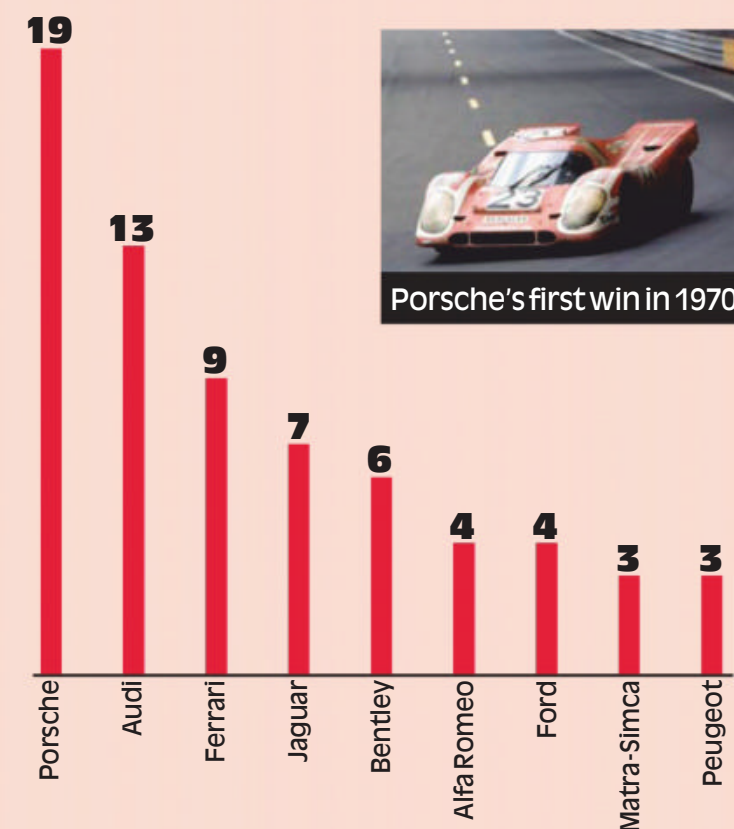
the coronavirus pandemic, and the resultant postponement of key meetings, has meant a delay.

Porsche’s last LMP1 programme, the 919 Hybrid, took three straight World Endurance Championship manufacturers titles from 2015-2017. It also helped Timo Bernhard, Mark Webber and Brendon Hartley to capture the drivers’ crown in 2015. Marc Lieb, Neel Jani and Romain Dumas lifted the drivers’ title in 2016 for Porsche. Its last drivers’ accolade was taken by Bernhard, Hartley and Earl Bamber before the German firm withdrew as it was affected by the emissions scandal which hit parent group Volkswagen. It said at the time that it wanted to concentrate on its Formula E programme, which kicked off this year with Jani and Andre Lotterer at the wheel. It scored a podium on its debut in FE in Saudi Arabia, but the team has struggled since.



The 919 Hybrid went through a number of iterations

MOST WINS AT LE MANS BY MANUFACTURER



Porsche's first win in 1970

FORMULA 1 RULE CHANGES ON HOLD AMID CURRENT CORONAVIRUS UNCERTAINTY

Formula 1 teams are considering a reduction in spending on engines for 2021 as squads aim to ride out the impending financial difficulty the cancellation of the start of the season will cause.

F1’s bosses are considering imposing a halt on power unit developments from the beginning of next term. There is

a budget cap of \$175 million due to come into force at the beginning of the 2021 year, but there are moves to reduce this by \$25 million.

Also, the implementation of wide-ranging rule changes, which were due to come into effect in 2021, will now be put on hold.

The alterations centred

around a dramatic change in aerodynamic regulations, which were designed to make cars able to run closer together and assist overtaking.

A statement read: “Following unanimous agreement between the FIA, Formula 1 and all teams, the implementation of the technical regulations due to take effect from the 2021 season

will be postponed until 2022.

“All parties further discussed the current situation of the 2020 championship and how the sport will react to the ongoing challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the currently volatile financial situation this has created, it has been agreed that teams will use their 2020 chassis for 2021.”



New-spec Formula 1 cars have been put on hold



Speedworks will conduct the initial hybrid BTCC test work

SPEEDWORKS LANDS DEAL TO DEVELOP NEW COSWORTH HYBRID BTCC SYSTEMS

British Touring Car Championship team Speedworks Motorsport has been selected as the official testing partner for the new hybrid systems which are due to be introduced into the series in 2022.

The factory-backed Toyota squad will conduct the initial mileage with the new system, which is due to kick off at Snetterton in July this season.

Hybrid technical partners Cosworth Electronics say the plans are on schedule despite the current lockdown.

The system will use a 60-volt power boost button which is available to drivers for a set period of time after the first lap of each race and can be used to either defend or attack. The extra power will be deployed through a modified Xtrac gearbox. The

exact details of how the system will be used will be refined through the testing programme.

Speedworks boss Christian Dick said: “To have been selected for this by Cosworth is a great testament to the engineering expertise that we have here at Speedworks. It is a very tough time for everyone and the global pandemic will undoubtedly throw us some curveballs and

change the way we execute this project, but ultimately it’s great news that there is still progress being made behind the scenes.”

The move means Speedworks Motorsport will build a fully new race car to adopt the system – a car which could then be used in the championship, depending on the length of the development process. No driver has yet been named to conduct the mileage.



Contest uses iRacing game



LOTTERER AND TANDY TAKE ON PORSCHE SUPERCUP VIRTUAL SERIES

Le Mans winners among host of stars facing Supercup regulars in esports contest

By Graham Keilloh

Le Mans winners Andre Lotterer and Nick Tandy are among the famous names joining Porsche Supercup regulars in its newly-unveiled esports competition, the Porsche Supercup Virtual Edition.

Drivers and teams currently competing in the real-life Formula 1-supporting Supercup championship are to compete in four double-header race events for virtual Porsche 911 GT3 Cup machines,

and are joined by selected participants to create a maximum grid of 40.

Those special guests, in addition to Tandy and current Porsche Formula E pilot Lotterer, include ex-IndyCar driver Simona de Silvestro, 2016 Supercup champion Sven Muller, Thomas Preining, Richard Lietz, Laurens Vanthoor, Matteo Cairoli, Christian Engelhart and Fabienne Wohlwend. All guests are to have a link with Porsche, its sponsors or the Supercup.

"We can put ex-Supercup drivers, also

previous champions like Sven Muller, bring them back into the Supercup and let them compete [against] their successors, these guys can compete against their heroes," said Porsche Supercup boss Oliver Schwab, who also will be running the virtual edition. "We're all very excited because in a way it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"Luckily for us, both of our current Porsche Juniors, Jaxon Evans and Ayhan Guven, they are also fast in the e-racing world." A nine-hour test day at a

virtual Barcelona circuit was held on March 29, Evans topping the times, and the opening double-header race round took place at the same venue last Saturday, Larry ten Voorde and Guven sharing the wins. There will be rounds at Silverstone and Spa with the series concluding at Monza on May 16, all streamed live on YouTube and Twitch.

The new series, like the category's existing Esports Supercup aimed at professional sim racers, uses the iRacing software platform.



The 2014 battle was a highlight

VIRTUAL BTCC RACEDAY PROVES A HIT

The British Touring Car Championship social media channels featured record-breaking numbers during its first virtual race day which took place on the same weekend that the Donington Park rounds should have taken place.

With track activity outlawed until July amid the coronavirus pandemic, the series' media team devised an idea to ask the public to vote for their three favourite Donington Park races over the course of the last 10 years.

Those events were then streamed live by ITV on its website over the course of Sunday afternoon on March 29.

The races selected for the initial weekend were the third race from Donington in 2014, race two from 2018

and the finale in 2012. Feedback has shown that there were 1.7 million impressions on social media reported over the period of the initial event, and it will be repeated on the scheduled dates for at least the next four meetings of the season.

The next virtual raceday will be this weekend, where the venue in question will be the Brands Hatch Indy circuit.

BTCC chief executive Alan Gow told internet radio show Tin Top Tuesday: "The social media impressions are bigger than those we had for Donington last year, when we actually had a race meeting. I do get the fact that everyone is closed in and they have nothing to do, but it was an enormously successful experiment."

British F3 champion Lundqvist seeks IndyCars with US switch

British Formula 3 champion Linus Lundqvist is seeking to follow in the footsteps of fellow Swedish IndyCar stars Felix Rosenqvist and Marcus Ericsson after moving Stateside to Formula Regional Americas.

Lundqvist bagged his F3 crown in 2018, an effort which helped him win that year's Sunoco Whelen Challenge and receive a drive in 2019's Daytona 24 Hours. Last year he also took part in the Euroformula Open and finished fifth in the standings with two podium finishes and a pole.

The 21-year-old is now switching to F3-spec machinery in the United States in the championship previously known as F3 Americas, racing for the Global Racing Group team that finished first and second in the championship last year. The 2020 title winner will receive a 2021 drive in IndyCar's direct feeder series Indy Lights, and Lundqvist has the crown in his sights.

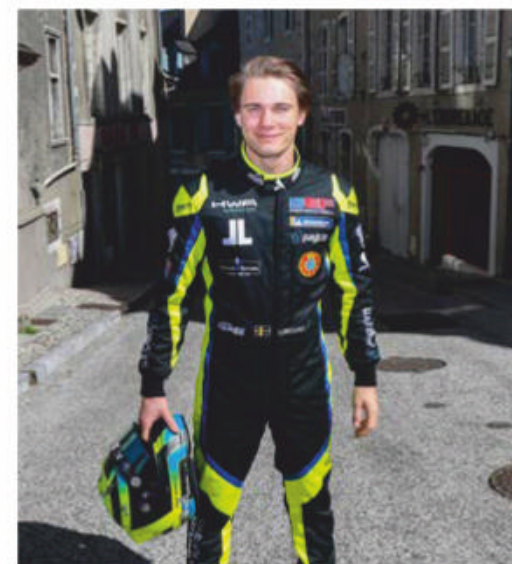
"We have taken our time to carefully explore all of my career options, I'm thrilled with where that's taken us," Lundqvist said.

"American racing is really coming along, not least in Sweden thanks to our two IndyCar drivers, and the progression path system is what every driver loves:

it's in your own hands if you win it.

"I will have plenty to learn with a new car, new continent and new tracks, but I'm confident I've got the overall background to get quickly up to speed. Although I know it won't be easy, my clear target is to battle it out up front and ultimately win the championship."

The 2020 championship season is currently scheduled to start at Circuit of the Americas in June.



Lundqvist is plotting Indy path

IN BRIEF

Reynard becomes 750MC's Honorary Vice President

Chassis legend Adrian Reynard has been named 750 Motor Club's honorary vice president. Reynard has a long association with 750MC, initially as a student racer while at Oxford Polytechnic and he still races his self-developed Radical SR3 in the club's Bikesports Championship. "The 750 Motor Club provided a great guide and inspiration when I first joined in the early '70s and I remember gleaming as much information as I could about the challenges that lay ahead of me. And they were big challenges for a 20-year-old!" Reynard said.

Jac Constable back for Radical title charge

Jac Constable is aiming for this year's Radical Challenge title after confirming his return to the category with the Hart GT team for 2020. Constable and Hart GT switched from the Ginetta GT4 Supercup to Radicals last season, and Constable won five races and took a close third in the standings. "Knowing the car much better now, we should be off to a flying start and be able keep that momentum going all season to be well within reach of the title fight," Constable said. "I've raced with Nick [Hart] since graduating from karts and you couldn't find a better team if you tried."

Champion Golding returns to Ginetta G40 Cup

The 2018 Ginetta G40 Cup champion Tom Golding will return to the British GT-supporting championship this season with category-debutant team CTS Motorsport. Golding won the '17 Ginetta Racing Drivers Club title in his maiden car-racing campaign and last year he contested three Ginetta GT5 Challenge rounds. He'll be joined at CTS by ex-Caterham racer and 2015 Porsche 924 champion Adam Croft. "It's fantastic to have Tom and Adam on board," said team boss Mark Ashman. "Tom knows the Ginetta well; he has won two championship titles to prove that."

SRO Esports GT charity contest concludes

The SRO Esports Charity Challenge online contest has reached its conclusion, with Arthur Kammerer in a Mercedes-AMG GT3 edging out Mike Nobel's Lamborghini Huracan to win a dramatic hour-long grand final at a virtual Monza. SRO Esports GT Series, Kunos Simulazioni and Ak Informatica joined forces for the event which raised money for the Covid Solidarity Response Fund. More than 80 drivers, from real-world and sim competition, took part using the Assetto Corsa Competizione software package. Lamborghini factory driver Dennis Lind finished eighth overall to be the top real-world competitor.

Title-hunting King's Porsche test pace with Team Parker Racing 'surpasses expectations'

Reigning Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion Harry King has admitted surprise at his immediate Porsche Carrera Cup GB competitiveness during last month's official test at Silverstone.

Porsche Junior King is to make his bow in the Carrera Cup this season with Team Parker Racing, and he drove the 911 GT3 Cup machine alongside his rivals for the first time at the mid-March test day. "We were quick out the box and maintained really strong and consistent form

throughout the day, not dropping below third position all day and posted the fastest times in session three and five," King told Motorsport News. "It certainly surpassed my expectations.

"My aims for the season will be to contend for the title, but knowing I've got two years as a Porsche Junior I don't have to prove everything in year 1. But of course, it'll be an achievement to become the first Junior to win [titles] back to back. I've settled into Team Parker

Racing really well; having spent five years with the previous team I raced with it was strange to be the 'new kid' again. I was immediately impressed with the outfit and the team's professionalism."

King also outlined what he's doing to prepare for the season amid the ongoing coronavirus delay. "Being the Junior I have access to the Human Performance Centre at Silverstone to help prepare physically for the season. In the evenings I'll jump on the sim for a bit of fun."



Ginetta champion King is optimistic

RALLY NEWS



NI's hopes are now on hold



Royal approval: Princess Anne



WRC visited in 2007 and 2009

NORTHERN IRELAND'S WRC HOPES QUASHED AS FUNDING DISMISSED

Rally GB move off the agenda as government pulls up the shutters amid financial questions

By Jason Craig

Tourism Northern Ireland has thrown out a funding request that would have paved the way for the country to host the UK round of the World Rally Championship as early as next year.

In its response, which Motorsport News has seen, the non-departmental body of the Department for the Economy said the closed-roads counter "would not represent best value for money", adding: "This decision was not taken lightly and was based upon a rigorous assessment of the return on investment which the event could expect to deliver in

comparison to other activity that the board believes it will have to undertake in the wake of the [coronavirus] crisis facing the Northern Ireland tourism industry."

Investment: "peanuts"

Those working on the bid suggest it would cost as little as £2 million of public funding to relocate Rally GB from its current base in Deeside, Wales to Belfast next year – a sum North Antrim MP Ian Paisley says is "peanuts".

As the head of Northern Ireland's Motorsport Taskforce, and an avid backer of both two- and four-wheel competition, Paisley believes the decision needs to be reviewed as a

matter of urgency. He has since penned a letter to the Economy Minister, Diane Dodds MLA, asking for her intervention.

"There is definitely a misunderstanding around the World Rally Championship and its global reach," he told MN. "The World Rally Championship is the blue shirt, blue collar equivalent of Formula 1. It is motorsport racing for the working man and the potential benefits are enormous."

A timely boost

Northern Ireland will celebrate its centenary in 2021 and, in light of the country's on-going fight against the coronavirus pandemic

that has decimated the economy, Paisley feels the WRC would be the perfect kickstart.

"This is an event that would help all of Northern Ireland, north, south, east and west," he said. "Unlike [last July's] Open Championship in Portrush, the rally is held across several different locations."

Fans' disappointment

A spokesperson for the Department for the Economy confirmed Minister Dodds MLA has been made aware of Tourism Northern Ireland's decision, adding: "The Minister understands that the WRC organisers have also been advised of this decision

and that this will come as a disappointment to them and many others that have been advocating that this event returns to Northern Ireland."

Past investment

Tourism NI backed the Circuit of Ireland hosting a round of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge in 2012 prior to supporting its three-year stint on the European championship roster between 2014-2016.

ERC boss, Jean-Baptiste Ley, has previously told Motorsport News that he would be happy to return to the Emerald Isle. "The UK is one of the strongest countries in western Europe," admitted the Frenchman.



MP Ian Paisley sees the value



The forests of Wales will come alive to the sound of the World Rally Championship again in 2020

What does it mean for Rally GB?

While there's no hope of Northern Ireland hosting the British WRC round in the near future, Rally GB has a home in Wales until at least 2021.

That's when the current Welsh Government support agreement ends, although there's no confirmed slot on the WRC calendar beyond this season, the 18th with Welsh Government as principal backer and the 21st in Wales.

However, WRC Promoter remains in favour of a British round of the championship. Boss Oliver Ciesla told MN: "Traditional European events

form an integral part of the WRC and Rally GB is one of our longest-standing and most popular rounds. The UK has a strong car market and excellent organisation. We enjoy a strong working relationship with Motorsport UK and continue to work closely together regarding Britain's WRC round."

Hugh Chambers, Motorsport UK CEO, said: "The discussions with Tourism Northern Ireland have come to an end. Against the backdrop of the wider public healthcare emergency and significant economic shockwaves, the affordability of

a major new world event was inevitably going to be measured against the prioritisation of public investment.

"We were heartened by the cross-community support the event galvanised up to this point, and hope that the goodwill generated can be brought to bear at an appropriate time in the future. Our immediate focus is delivering a first-class event in the north of Wales this October."

Australia, Chile and Spain are all set to return to the WRC calendar in 2021, which is due to feature 14 rounds.



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RALLY NEWS



Edwards wants BTRDA

EDWARDS EAGER TO DRIVE R2 IN BTRDA

British Rally champion Matt Edwards feels he is more at home in the BTRDA Rally Series than the BRC and is desperate to use his Ford Fiesta R2 in the national series.

Edwards won the BTRDA Gold Star title in 2018 but hasn't competed in the competition since. However, he does provide a support van to Fiesta R2 crews and Scottish driver Fraser Anderson uses his car.

Edwards told a Facebook live broadcast: "I'm probably more comfortable at that level [BTRDA] where I've spent more than three quarters of my time rallying. That's where I'm at home."

"I've always said that when the bubble bursts or I stop competing at that level [BRC], I've still got an R2 Fiesta [and] I'll still go and use that. I'm still itching to go and have a go [and] I'd really love to do a BTRDA rally in it but the money to go and do it is not there."

Like a lot of his competitors, Edwards has sunk a few hours into DiRT Rally 2.0 recently and revealed it helps him maintain mentally sharp.

He said: "There is a reset button so it is quite easy to fall into the trap of using it. I just try and drive it with the same mental approach that I would drive a real car so that keeps me out of the trees a bit."

RALLYING FIRMS HELPING IN CORONAVIRUS BATTLE

The rallying community has continued to support those who need it during the coronavirus pandemic with help to manufacture machines and light reprieve for those stuck in self-isolation.

Crossen Engineering, run by former Northern Irish competitor Paul Crossen, has dedicated resources to manufacturing a face mask visor for nurses and doctors.

Crossen told Northern Irish TV channel UTV: "I was having my breakfast and watching the news and seeing the pleas. They're being sent in to do a very difficult task without the correct equipment so I couldn't not get involved. We have the equipment, we have the facilities."

Mellors Elliot Motorsport has run a colouring competition on social media inviting people of all ages to design a livery for one of its Proton Iriz R5s. Two winners were announced; including nine-year-old Oliver for his simple blue and red hand-coloured design and Maurizio 'Stivi' Tiveron who computer-designed his own interpretation of Ollie Mellors' yellow, grey and black Cambrian Rally design. Both will receive some team merchandise.

STRONG INTEREST IN FIESTA RALLY4

Upgrade kit gets the thumbs up from British competitors

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Roy Dempster

By Luke Barry

Junior British Rally Championship contenders have expressed an interest in the new Rally4 kit for their Ford Fiesta R2s which was homologated on April 1.

This year's JBRC is a one-make series for the Fiesta, but the new Rally4 upgrade will give those with the new car an inherent advantage with an increase in horsepower and better gear ratios among key improvements.

Hampshire firm EDSL Sport has already confirmed to Motorsport News that it will be upgrading its two cars for Rupert Flynn and Eamonn Kelly with others keen to follow suit.

Competitor Eddie Lewis said: "We are trying to get hold of the Rally4 kit to upgrade our current car ready for whenever the next BRC event may be. I've heard some good things about the kit so sounds like M-Sport have done a great job."

JBRC points leader William Creighton confessed he'll assess the upgrade but rival Finlay Retson is keen to try it out first.

"Yeah [I'm] definitely interested in it but for sure I'd like to jump in and see for myself," Retson said. "It's easy enough to set up a test with M-Sport Poland but if there is one going to be in the UK then that will make it easier for us British guys."

Maciej Woda, board member at M-Sport Poland, admitted a test is something the operation will be able to look into.

"We have received few orders for upgrade kits from UK customers," he added. "Hopefully you will see those cars on the stages as soon as normality comes back."



British runners are keen on R4



The Donegal event has been pencilled in for 2020

DONEGAL HEADING FOR AN AUGUST DATE

Organisers of the Donegal International Rally are making plans to hold the event later in the season with an August date mooted instead of the original June 19-21 slot.

Irish motorsport has been suspended until the start of June but Motorsport Ireland has said that curfew "may be revised" based on government policy and guidelines.

Clerk of the course Eamon Magee, has told Motorsport

News that the original date does not look good and added that even if the temporary ban was lifted, the rally's early summer slot would come too soon given the pressures that are currently being faced by medical staff working in Ireland's hospitals.

Last month Irish Tarmac Rally Championship manager, Paddy Flanagan, said it was his hope that those rallies postponed due to the ongoing

coronavirus pandemic can be rescheduled, and that all counting rounds, including West Cork which was the first to be affected, will run.

Flanagan said: "If there is a window of opportunity there, and we can make it work, we will."

Alistair Fisher leads the championship after sealing his first Tarmac victory on the Galway International Rally in February.

LAFFEY'S PLANS ON HOLD AS HE SEEKS A NEW CHALLENGE

Former British Rally Championship frontrunner Alex Laffey had planned to alter his programme this season but is reassessing his options due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Laffey has contested all four BRC seasons in a Ford Fiesta R5 since the championship switched back to four-wheel drive in 2016 but didn't compete on this year's opener, the Cambrian Rally.

"We had a couple of bits we were working on and then it all fell aside until we can get an idea of what's going to happen now," Laffey told Motorsport News. "We were looking at using a different car and events in different places, not just British Championship events but getting out a bit and changing up what we were doing."

Ypres however was a BRC

round that was on Laffey's list as was Rally Barbados, but the Scot admitted his plans are irrelevant and that he was looking at the bigger picture.

"We've just got to wait and see," he added. "Nobody can start planning anything until we get some kind of answer with what's going to go on in the world at the minute. It's not just here, it's everywhere."



Laffey has been forced to wait before sealing plans

NEWS

Dutch venue woe on UK rallycross clash

European Rallycross Championship venue Eurocircuit at Valkenswaard, the Dutch circuit that was due to host the third round of the 5 Nations British Rallycross Championship, faces an uncertain future.

No official decision has been as to whether the British RX round at the circuit on June 20-21 will run, but bosses at the venue have voiced concern about its ability to host events this year, with the country in lockdown until April 28 amid the coronavirus outbreak.

A statement from Eurocircuit bosses said: "Events for which a permit must be applied for may not even be organised until June 1. What happens next is extremely uncertain."

"Given all the uncertainties, we have decided to keep the gates of the Eurocircuit closed at least until June 1. In the meantime, we are of course considering the period after the coronavirus measures. Can we still organise a Dutch Championship in the months that remain? Is there a possibility to accommodate our foreign sister clubs this season? Can we offer the teams and our members an alternative rallycross programme, so that everyone can still enjoy their sport for a few months? Nobody knows if we can pick up the thread again in June. Before driving can happen, the circuit must first be brought back into good condition.

"There is now also a lot of overdue maintenance."

The circuit has been granted a licence under the provision that certain safety work is undertaken. That work can not start until at least next month.

SCOTTISH COMPETITORS STILL PLANNING 2020 OUTINGS

Rally men to scour the calendar to find events to kickstart their campaigns

Photos: West Coast Photos, Paul Lawrence



Armstrong has already rallied further afield

By Luke Barry

Top Scottish Rally Championship contenders have told Motorsport News they still intend on rallying this year despite the SRC's cancellation.

Snowman Rally winner Michael Binnie said: "If I see a rally that's available I'll be entering it. We wouldn't be parking the car up and saving the money. It's a nice thought but at the end of the day you buy the car to go rallying, you don't buy it to sit in the shed."

"I was looking at events later on in the season like Grizedale, Malton Forest and Carlisle Stages," he added. "They're actually quite local to me so they're three events that would suit us quite well. But I don't know, you just don't know when this thing will blow over."

Double champion Jock Armstrong has deviated from the SRC this year when he finished fourth on last month's Malcolm Wilson Rally. He said: "Luckily I don't rely on too many people [to afford to go rallying] so of course we'll go back out because your car just sitting there doing nothing is probably going to give you more ballache the year after. You've got to keep your hand in."

TESTING PACKAGE OFFERED TO COMPETITORS ON RALLYING RETURN

The Forest Experience Rally School in Mid Wales has launched its Gold Test Package designed to bed competitors back into action after the effects of the coronavirus pandemic begin to ease.

The package affords competitors exclusive use of the facility for the day which boasts seven miles of stages in a 900-acre forest. Venue owner and competitor Ross Leach has put a lot of effort in grading the stages over the last 12 months to

ensure the quality of the road.

Leach told Motorsport News: "As soon as government advice allows us to test we'll be straight back on it. The real reason [our venue is] good for competitors is it's a proper stage, it's in the forests, it's representative of UK rallying as opposed to being a man-made stage or a man-made venue, it's actually an accurate stage through the woods."

Mellors Elliot Motorsport used

the facility last year to develop its Proton Iriz R5. Test driver and current British Rally Championship competitor Ollie Mellors said: "As a test facility it gave us everything we needed throughout the development of the Proton Iriz R5 with a variety of well-maintained roads to use."

"It helped us to keep a base when making changes to know if we were moving in the right direction."



Mellors is a fan of the mid-Wales venue for testing

OCTOBER DATE FOR RALLY FESTIVAL

The inaugural Historic Rally Festival has a new date in October after being postponed from June due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The event will now be held over the weekend of October 24-25, based at Telford and Weston Park in Shropshire. Telford town centre will be free to spectators on Saturday October 24 featuring scrutineering, autograph sessions and a ceremonial start. On Sunday, 80 cars will tackle demonstration rally stages with the focus on Weston Park.

Promoter Warner Lewis said:



Icons will be on show at the first Historic Rally Festival

"It's been a very challenging situation and the well-being of competitors and spectators has been of the utmost importance. We have so much enthusiasm from the competitors and a

superb entry list already, that we were very keen to work for a revised date in the autumn." Spectator tickets already purchased will be automatically transferred to the new date.

Rallycross aces join online competition to get the season going

The World Rallycross Championship is the latest series to launch an official esports initiative, called the RX Esports Invitational.

Events will be run on the weekends of those World RX rounds currently postponed by the ongoing Covid-19



World RX will go virtual

pandemic, starting with the planned season-opener in Spain later this month.

The events will be played out on the Codemasters-developed Dirt 2.0 game, with World RX drivers joined on the grid by drivers from other disciplines and online esports racers, who will be selected from the fastest to complete a qualifying event.

As Motorsport News went to press, the first event had already attracted double World RX Champion Johan Kristofferson, reigning titleholder Timmy Hansen and his brother Kevin Hansen, Kevin Abbring, RX2 champion

Oliver Eriksson, Super 1600 racer Marius Bermingrud and others. The line-up will be announced this week.

World RX boss Paul Bellamy said: "We hope that by offering fans around the world the chance to engage with World RX via an alternative esports series, we are providing a small level of enjoyment in these difficult times."

The first two rounds of World RX in Spain and Portugal have been postponed, while the Belgian round at Spa, set to be held in mid-May, is also expected to be shelved.



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COLUMN

MARTIN O'CONNELL



Fiercely competitive historic racer and boss of preparations firm OC Racing

Photos: Paul Lawrence, Jakob Ebrey



O'Connell in his Formula 2 car

I've got a team of eight full-time people in the business and we'll be alright through the current lockdown due to coronavirus. In my mind, that's my responsibility to make sure they are alright. When we can go racing again, I want these people back so I want to make sure they are still there and can carry on.

The government support for firms should make a big difference to companies like us. They've done a lot of stuff to make it easier for companies and that's making it a lot better than it might have been. They have also stopped the business rates, which is a help as well.

It's a really difficult time because no-one knows how long it is going to be. If we knew how long it was going to last, we could figure something out. The trauma and the stress comes from it being open-ended.

We typically look after between 25 and 30 racing cars for a number of customers. We do all the race preparation, take the cars to race meetings all over Europe through the season and run them for our customers. So, if the cars are not racing, that means we have far less to do. We have got some work to do, but I took the decision on March 23 to send everybody home. Before that date there was a bit of testing going on but most of the racing had been cancelled. You've got to consider the health of your team and they have all got kids.

We've got some work we could be doing such as rebuilds and so on. But we are primarily a race team and we go racing. When they open up the roads and we can move around, we're going to need that work to fill the gap between the end of the lockdown and the start of racing.

You've just got to look at the bigger picture and when it does all start up, we will all be ready to go again. But the impact across the historic racing industry is massively varied. I feel that we are in a

relatively fortunate situation in that we can afford not to be working for a bit, but there are so many people who can't.

Historic racing is all about the small people and the people with 30 cars generally aren't hit as hard as those with two cars in their garage or a small shed. They are working just as hard as we are but because of the way they make it work, they could be in trouble. I think the smaller you are in our game, the greater effect it will have. If you are a one-man band running two cars for one customer, it is going to be very hard and I think, as industry, we should all do what we can to help those guys. Most of the smaller people are self-employed

as well, which is much more difficult for them.

Right now, there are potentially races for us in mainland Europe at the end of May and in June.

It is unlikely they will run as planned, but possible. But even if they are clear to race in France or Belgium, for instance, we may not be able to travel out of the UK. We're not expecting to have any racing until early July.

If the government sticks to what it is doing and we get through this in three or four months, I hope that my staff won't suffer at all. They will all get paid and we will get the money from the government. This time next year, hopefully, everything will be back to normal.



Going Group C crazy: O'Connell at Silverstone



Jaguar attraction: racing Sandy Watson's E-type



An historic icon: the Chevron B8

"I think we should all do what we can right now to help the smaller guys"

FEATURE

Photos: RallycrossWorld, Hal Ridge, Matt Bristow



Mitsubishi man might look to Europe too



Hill thinks that strong 2020 entry will provide a test

WHY STEVE HILL'S RALLYCROSS PASSION IS AS STRONG AS EVER

Hal Ridge talks to a seasoned British battler who is raring to go



Fresh gearing means Hill's 2019-spec machine is now even faster



Hill's first win in the Mitsubishi Lancer E9 came at Mondello

It is hard to believe without being told, but British rallycross contender Steve Hill turned 70 last week. That makes him the elder statesman of rallycross's UK top level. But, despite having 50 years of competitive driving under his belt, the former National Rally Sprint champion is far from done with competing and is still pushing for success.

Thanks to a number of winter upgrades to his Mitsubishi Lancer E10 SuperCar, Hill pushed friend and British Rallycross Championship title-contender Ollie O'Donovan hard for victory at the final round of the Lydden Hill Winter Series last month. He used the event as a pre-season test and laid down the threat of a competitive campaign in the revised 5 Nations British RX series for 2020.

Hill says: "I'm still motivated, I think rallycross is a great discipline and it gives me a good buzz, and as long as I can be competitive I don't see why I should stop. I'm making good starts, so my reaction time is good, but the minute I'm not competitive, I'll be hanging up my helmet."

"Maybe I'll go and do something different, but if I'm not competitive in rallycross, the enjoyment won't be

there. I don't have to win, I just want to be on the pace, and as long as I'm on the pace, or there or thereabouts, then I'm happy."

Hill's team operates as a modest effort compared to his nearest rivals in the domestic series, with the car run by 038 Engineering, based from a workshop at Hill's farm in Buckinghamshire. But any shortfall in budget is, in part at least, made up for by enthusiasm and resourcefulness.

"We were competitive and reliable last year, and there's more improvement for this year," says Hill. "We've changed the gearing and some other things, which should be a good step forward. We haven't got £10,000 for a turbo, we need to use a slightly less developed turbo to the others, but by being sensible with where we spend the money, I think we're doing OK."

The 2020 5 Nations British RX series has attracted a number of new and returning SuperCar drivers and cars, on paper at least making it the most competitive field for some time. Hill, who is still yet to win an event with the E10 which he has used since 2010, is relishing the challenge. "In some ways the stronger field often opens up more opportunities. I'm not fearful of the competition, I welcome

it with open arms. The more the better. It's about being smart, staying out of trouble and getting into the finals."

The series will return to Knockhill this year. It is a venue Hill likes as he came within inches of breaking the victory duck in the E10 back in 2014 but was just pipped in a dash to the finish line by Julian Godfrey.

The car has been a podium visitor though and its predecessor, Hill's E9 SuperCar, claimed victories at Mondello, Pembrey and twice at Lydden between 2007 and 2009.

"That first win at Mondello, from winning the B final, was quite nice. That was a highlight," says Hill, who switched from a career in rallying to rallycross halfway into the millennium's first decade.

An event he might rather forget, though, was at Pembrey in September 2008. In contention for the British RX title, Hill ran second to Kevin Procter in the final and was ahead of his title rivals. With Procter debuting a new car and running as a guest entry, had Hill finished behind Procter on the road in South Wales, the British crown would have been his come the final round at Mondello Park. But, in a move to pass Procter's Ford Focus around the outside on a loose section of the circuit, Hill went off and suffered a substantial

accident. Lawrence Gibson snatched the coveted crown.

"I let enthusiasm get the better of me that day," Hill recalls. "Kevin gave me a little touch going down the back straight, I skimmed the pitwall and I was just determined to get past him. He was holding me up, I tried to pass him, it got onto the grass and the rest is history. Had I just settled for second, it probably would have been the championship in the bag. That's part and parcel of competing though, I was thinking about the event at the time and not necessarily the championship, I probably should have been. I don't regret it, it's just one of those things. I regret the stiff neck and the broken ribs more."

Along with driving himself, Hill has also recently held the team manager roll for O'Donovan's Team RX Racing effort in Euro and World Championship events. While 1986 Motoring News Road Rally champion Hill has raced in his home round of Euro RX at Lydden Hill before, he still harbours ambition to make some overseas Euro RX outings.

He says: "We've been concentrating on getting the car reliable, and we've got to that point now. We struggle for tracks over here and there's so many amazing tracks over there, it would be amazing to do some." ■

A BIG STEP: TAKING THE TECHNICALS IN HOUSE

When a specific element of a racing car continuously gives the same problems, the normal solution to resolve the situation is to change supplier. But, choosing not to take the easy option, Hill's solution to improve the reliability of the Mitsubishi Lancer E10 was rather more drastic.

While the car has been on a par with any of its counterparts from a reliability standpoint in the last few years, early in its inception the E10 was dogged by mechanical problems, largely surrounding the transmission. Now, together with two business partners, Hill runs the company building the transmission system in his car and has worked hard on the development.

"We built the car around that transmission, we had a deal with the manufacturer to help develop it and it went nowhere for a few years, we had a load of problems," explains Hill.

"Then the owner passed away, and the opportunity came up for us to do something, and that's really what we've done. We formed SGS Racing Transmissions, took on a lot of the projects and clients, and with that problems, and put in a lot of effort to make it work. We have a lot of satisfied customers now and the proof of the reliability is in my car."

Hill says a rallycross SuperCar is the perfect test bed for transmission durability: "If you can get it to work in that environment, you can pretty well get it to work in any other discipline. That's what we set out to do, and that's what we've done. It's not been easy, it's been a lot of work and I know a lot more now about metals and gear cutting and all sorts of things, but it's been very satisfying to be involved with."



Hill is a transmission expert

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FEATURE



ALAN GOW



KEEPING BRITISH TOURING CARS AT THE TOP OF THE UK MOTORSPORT LADDER

The Australian import tells Motorsport News readers how the BTCC is in the rudest of health

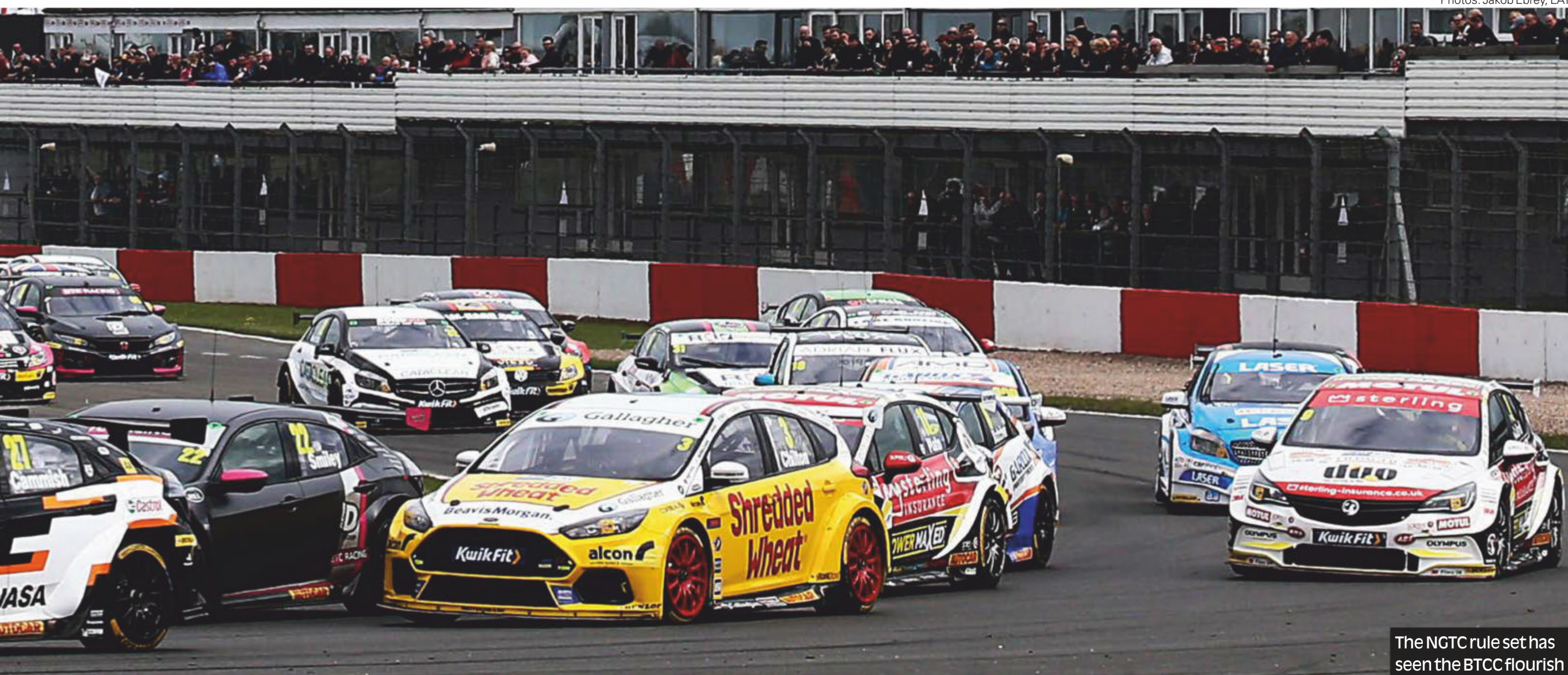
Steering the ship of the British Touring Car Championship is not an easy job, with the demands of drivers, teams, circuits, television and the fans to balance. Creating a format and a race day which keeps everyone happy is a treacherous path to follow, but one which chief executive Alan Gow has trodden since the early 1990s.

There was a brief break between 2000 and 2003 when he sold the series, but since his return, the foundations have been laid and helped keep the BTCC at the very forefront of motorsport in this country.

The series is, like everything else at the moment, on hiatus as the world holds its breath to see when motorsport can continue, but don't think that has given Gow any time off.

We were lucky enough to catch a few spare moments when we could and posed some Motorsport News readers' questions to the Australian.

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, LAT



The NGTC rule set has seen the BTCC flourish



ABTCC night race takes huge funding



There is a short-term hybrid future, but full electric is a long way off

Alan Gordon
Via Facebook

What do you consider to be the most successful rule change you have implemented in the British Touring Car Championship throughout your tenure?

Alan Gow: "Gosh. It has to be the [current] NGTC regulations and I will tell you why. First of all, I didn't implement the rule change for the two-litre regulations in the 1990s [which went on to become the basis of Super Touring]. They were already there when I took over running the championship. Then after we sold TOCA in 2000, the BTC-spec regulations were introduced but they weren't anything to do with me and they weren't successful. Then when I came back [in late 2003] I introduced the Super 2000 regulations to increase the grid and that was a success. However the NGTC specifications have been by far the most successful regulations I have introduced."
MN: Have you exceeded what you

thought NGTC would achieve within the BTCC?

AG: "Yes, certainly. They did everything that we intended them to do. I never expected the explosive growth and the sustainment in grid numbers that I got from them. But that tells you how successful they are, on grid count alone."

MN: It is also remarkable that a set of regulations has remained largely unchanged since they were first fed into the BTCC [from NTGC powerplants in 2010] until now...

AG: "That is a testimony to the strength of the regulations in that they have only gone through one upgrade since they were introduced – and that was because there was a change in suppliers of some of the kit from GPRM to RML. That really was the only significant upgrade. The basic rule set has remained constant and there is just no point in changing them going forward. They are a great set of rules that merely need tweaking as we go along."

Ady T
Via Facebook

What is the cut-off date for the 2020 British Touring Car Championship season [when it would be axed]?

Tam Hardie

Via Facebook

At what point in time is the season binned completely?

Dave Quinn

Via Facebook

Is there any chance the series could run behind closed doors if this coronavirus pandemic lasts longer than feared?

AG: "The cut-off point is probably October for a limited number of races. The reason I say October is because I would rather run a few rounds of the season than none at all. If you can't race until October and you can only do, I don't know, two or three meetings, would I rather do that than nothing? Probably...but that will also be up to the teams, who may decide they don't want to do just a few rounds. But I honestly don't see that happening. I'm confident

that we will be racing well before October and that we will get all our rounds in this year.

"Being run behind closed doors depends entirely on the government. I very much doubt that when the government lifts restrictions on crowds that they will go from 'zero' to 'fill your boots' in one step. So I would imagine they would stage the reintroduction of crowds – but this is just my thinking. I have no inside information on this. They might say 500 to start with, then the next month 1000, or whatever the figures are, and so on. There will be phasing in of how many people can be mass gathered, I reckon."

"So yes, if we have to run behind closed doors to have it shown on TV, then that is absolutely what we will do until such time as we can get a number of spectators in. But that is not our decision, that is the government's decision."
MN: Behind closed doors is all well and good, but you probably still need at least a 1000 people on site with

teams and volunteers, etc. . .

AG: "We reckon we probably need about 1400 on site. That is even taking out hospitality staff and suchlike, that is just talking about teams and support teams, TV crews, medics, marshals, track personnel, officials etc. "But, by the same token, if the government said you could only have (say) 1000, then we would have to just tell all of our teams – including support races – that they were going to have to work with very limited numbers. We would have to enforce a limited number of only those amount of necessary people that you need to run the car safely. We will all just have to get on with it and do whatever needs to be done to make it happen."

Gordon 'Fro' McVean
Via Facebook

Sitting as president of the FIA Touring Car Commission, how much input do you have in the evolution of touring car rules around the world and how many

continued on page 14

FEATURE



The 2020 season will take place...



Two-driver races are still on the BTCC radar



The one-hour race at Donington Park in 1989 was a hit with the fans

different sets of regulations does the commission oversee?

AG: "The only set of rules that we have direct oversight on is the FIA's own rules, so those are currently the ones under WTCR guise. The rules that are in place in the UK or in Australia or Brazil or wherever are nothing directly to do with the FIA. The oversight we have is to ensure any touring car racing in any international series complies with the FIA International Sporting Code, the overarching code that governs all of motorsport. But we don't have any input into domestic regulations on a country-by-country basis. Each country's rules are up to the individual national sporting authorities, obviously as long as they comply with the International Sporting Code."

**Steve Cheeseman
Via Facebook**

Is the introduction of hybrid power trains [scheduled for 2022] into the British Touring Car Championship a step towards a fully electric future at some point?

AG: "Maybe, but it won't be while I am still in the chair. I don't see that full-electric touring car racing, as we know it, will be doable for quite some time on both a cost and performance basis. Yes, some companies abroad are now developing a fully-electric touring car. But the reality is that it's something that will only go for three or four laps on full power and it costs many millions to develop and race. So that is just not a viable option for domestic touring car

racing at the moment. But one day, when the motor and battery technology is good enough and they have dealt with all the other issues of cost, weight, heat, charging, safety and suchlike so that you can have proper touring car racing of at least 20-minute races or more, then I have no doubt the BTCC would probably go that direction. But that is something that is a very long way down the track and is not even on our horizon...and I very much doubt I will still be in the chair when that happens."

MN: You have said before that introducing hybrid power is not something the BTCC is necessarily doing to be green. It is to keep it relevant to road car manufacturers...

AG: "Of course – have a look at the world around you. Everything is going hybrid or full electrification on the road. So we are not doing it because we necessarily want to be seen to be green, although there is an element of that which helps. But the simple fact is that the automotive world around us is moving to hybrid or full electrification and we have to be reflective of that. But the plus side to me is also the extra performance we will get from our hybrid."

**Paul Bunch
Via Twitter**

Would you ever consider a night race again as part of the championship?

AG: "Well, there are two answers to that. Yes I would, if someone was prepared to put up the money to make it happen. There is a very significant

cost involved in putting on a night race when you have a large crowd, with all the lighting and everything else. I have always said I would do it again if someone was prepared to fund it. But the second answer to that is that if we end up extending our season in order to get as many rounds in as possible and we go beyond the end of British Summer Time at the end of October, then we are probably going to see some form of 'night racing' – in as much as the races towards the end of the day will inevitably be run in dusk and the drivers will need to put their headlights on."

MN: Is there a consideration that it is probably not great for ITV4 to run the races in the dark? Is that in the thought process...?

AG: "No, it is not about ITV4, but it is not great for a lot of people. It is not great for sponsors because they don't get the amount of visibility that they would during the daytime and it is also to do with scheduling. Our contract with ITV4 is for live broadcasts during the day, not at night time. At night time you go into a whole different programming ethos, although I am sure if we went to them and told them we were doing a special night event they would accommodate it as a special event, so it is not new to them. But the bottom line is always the cost. As every year goes past, it is more expensive to put a night race on. Given the huge number of spectators we have, the amount of lighting we would need – not just around the track, but in the paddock and in the pits and the public car parks etc – is greatly ramped up

because of health and safety requirements, which become more and more onerous."

**Elliot Webber
Via Twitter**

Will there ever be a British Touring Car Championship video game? With no BTCC until July, surely the time is right?

Matt 'Muiry' Muirhead**Via Twitter**

A lot of fans, and some drivers, have been calling for a new BTCC computer game. With the current halt in international motorsport and the subsequent rise in simulator racing to the point where it is on Sky Sports F1, does that make you reconsider your standpoint on the possibility of making a new BTCC game?

AG: "Huh? What is my standpoint on making a game!? Matt's question is making it sound like I don't want a computer game, which is certainly not the case. I think people forget that I was the first person on this planet to introduce a true touring car video game!"

"But I have always said I don't want BTCC cars to just appear in another form of a racing game. To have a couple of BTCC cars within Forza or Gran Turismo doesn't float my boat at all and is not reflective of this great championship. That would not be a true BTCC game. I have always had the desire to reintroduce a proper 'full fat' BTCC computer game (on all gaming platforms) where you have all the cars and all the drivers racing on all the tracks, just as we know it and just like the TOCA Touring Car games did. That

has always been my stance and we are currently a long way down the road to having a proper new BTCC game introduced. So yes, there are plans that we are working towards in having that desire fulfilled."

MN: So, if it is going to be fulfilled, are we talking in the next couple of years? **AG:** "Yes. If you were to start developing a computer game from today, it would take at least 18 months. You can't just all of a sudden decide to do a game and put it out next month, that just doesn't happen. A good game takes a while to develop fully."

**Chris Phillips
Via Twitter**

Please would you reconsider staging two-driver, one- or two-hour races – like the Australian version. [You could] invite some high-profile drivers and spice up the series. Imagine a Toyota World Endurance Championship driver joining Tom Ingram [in a Corolla] or [Red Bull-Honda Formula 1 driver] Max Verstappen linking up with Matt Neal [in a Honda Civic Type R]...

AG: "We have had this same discussion every year in our annual teams' meeting and last year we had it again. We talked about it at length at the end of 2019 and, in fact, the answer came back from the teams that they didn't want to do it at this stage. That may change in the future." **MN:** So it is not an idea that closed? **AG:** "It has never been an idea that has been closed. Before NGTC, we couldn't do it because the [fuel] tank size was too small but with NGTC we can. That enables us to do a race that is close to one

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, LAT



Gow says nobody would read his book

hour, so we have the capability of doing it. It is a question of whether the teams want to do it or not and the majority said no.”

Paul Bunch
Via Twitter

With the previous experiment [at Snetterton in 2019] of using three Dunlop tyre compounds in one day, and the idea to roll that out into Croft this year too, are there any plans to expand this to other circuits – excluding Thruxton [where the hard compound is mandated]?

AG: “We need to see how it works first and what we are doing this year is a trial. Clearly, we can only run one compound around Thruxton anyway and then the first event of the year, say, at Donington, you wouldn’t want to run the hard compound because the temperature is likely to be very low and all the cars would be flying off at Redgate. There are some practical reasons why you can’t run all three compounds at all of the rounds.”

Chris Phillips
Via Twitter

Alan: would you ever write a book? Now, maybe, you have time to put pen to paper.

AG: “I think that would probably be the most boring book ever written, actually. And also, I don’t have time to write a book. I don’t know what people think I do without racing until July, but I still have all my work to do and I simply don’t have time to sit down and put pen to paper. But I would question just how many people would really be interested in reading it anyway.....” ■



Tyre experiment at Snetterton last year

FEATURE

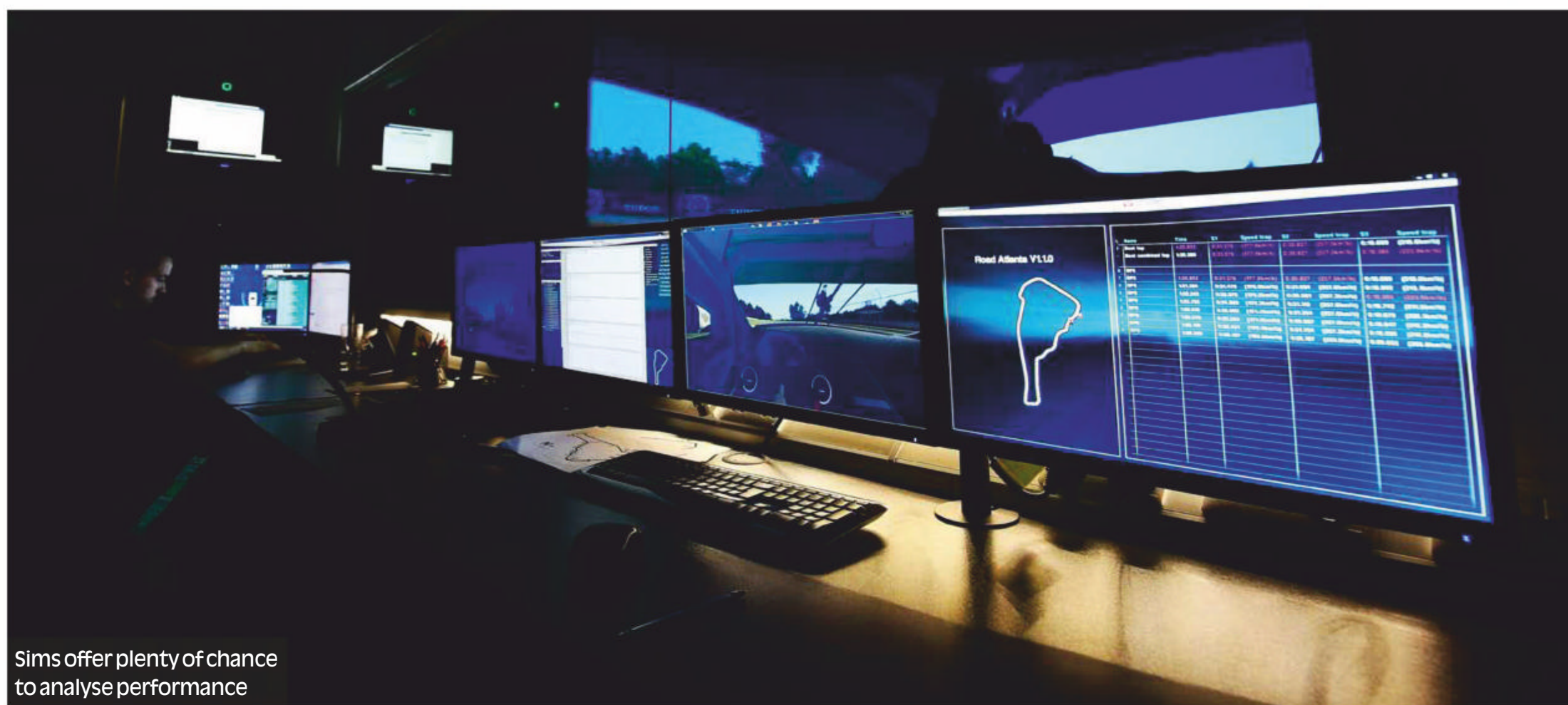
HOW SIMS ARE HELPING DRIVERS GET THROUGH THE DOWNTIME

With motor racing off for now, simulator work increasingly is filling the gap.

Motorsport News finds out more



BTCC star Tom Ingram on his Speedworks simulator



Sims offer plenty of chance to analyse performance

During this enforced motorsport downtime due to the coronavirus pandemic, onlookers can hardly fail to notice that, for the drivers, simulators have stepped into the breach. This has been for recreation, preparation, competition or a combination of the three. Yet within a variety of motorsport disciplines, sim work and online racing was already a big deal, and a rapidly growing one.

To find out what's going on, Darren Turner seems a good place to start. The GT legend has a simulator business called Base Performance. It started 10 years ago, via Turner's friend who was a driver coach. "He had a client who wanted something at home which would mean he could actually then go to a race weekend and do a reasonable job from the start, rather than his best lap being his last lap on a Sunday," Turner tells Motorsport News. "He didn't have the time to go testing either. That is

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Darren Turner has a sim firm



Zak O'Sullivan says 90% of his F4 colleagues use sims



Formula Ford rising star Bryce Aron is another frequent sim user



Jon Armstrong has transferred sim rallying skills to the real thing



Sims can be tailored - here are two Speedworks steering wheels

exactly how my little company Base Performance started.”

And the technology’s progress since has been sharp. “The software and different platforms that are available, every year they are getting better so the level of improvement has been stunning,” Turner continues. “The immersion is so much better now. The natural driving element of the sims is getting so much closer to the real thing.”

Sim racing competition – which ranges from impromptu races to organised championships – has also got more advanced. Turner adds: “What I have enjoyed as I have got into this [sim racing] is how realistic the level of competition is and what you go through as a driver in terms of the focus, the level of attention, concentration and how competitive it is. I did a [sim] Legends race recently and we all did free practice on Friday and Saturday. Everyone was out there getting the laps in. To eke away at finding a tenth of a second, it takes the same preparation.”

Turner also has enticed Dario Franchitti into sim racing. “I tried his demo sim,” Franchitti tells Motorsport News. “Once I had been on it, he turned

to me and said ‘you want this now, don’t you?’ He was right, I did! The other day, I took the 1995 Jean Alesi Ferrari Formula 1 car around Oulton Park for a laugh. I took a Porsche 917/30 around the Nordschleife too. I have been doing anything you can think of, just to keep the juices flowing.”

British Touring Car Championship race winner Tom Ingram also is in on the act, with a sim set-up at his Speedworks team. “I use it before every race,” he says to MN. “What I find it useful for is to get you out of those panic moments. It reminds you how to drive and how to find the time. We are all professional drivers and we can all drive fast – it is the last two to three tenths. You know you have done all your homework on the sim and you know you don’t have to brake late for Cope, for example.”

There is plenty of sim driving and racing done by those in national racing, indeed with up-and-coming talent it is now the norm. “It’s very common,” British Formula 4 driver Zak O’ Sullivan confirms to MN. “I’d say 90% of the British F4 grid are on the sim at the moment. Even now in karting most of the drivers have got simulators,

not even for karts, but for cars.”

And the current enforced downtime is making it even bigger. “Drivers who before the coronavirus didn’t have a sim have now bought one because they need to get online, they want to be racing,” O’ Sullivan continues. “It’s [due to] a bit of boredom, but [also] trying to stay sharp. Also [it helps] racecraft, in real life you don’t always have the opportunity to be racing, you’re always testing not necessarily racing.”

Formula Ford racer Bryce Aron takes a similar view. “Sim racing it’s going to be more and more relevant because I’ve got a lot more time to do it now and it’s really the only thing I’m going to be driving for a while,” he tells MN. “I use my sim basically every day. It is a very good tool, especially when you’re going to new track or if you want to practice your consistency [or] your focus over a long period of time.”

Sims also have drawbacks however. “[To] put it bluntly you get a bit of online courage,” O’ Sullivan explains, “because if you want to take Turn 1 at Snetterton flat you can, if you go off it doesn’t really matter. There’s also no sense of weight transfer, no sense of

Continued on page 22

FEATURE



O'Sullivan says sims have benefits and drawbacks



Even historic racers use sims: Ben Stiles does advance preparation



Irish Tarmac ace Meirion Evans had 'his world changed' by his sim

g-force, even the best motion simulators can never quite portray that. That's why sometimes you see people who have just done sim racing and they go into real life in cars they do struggle quite a bit."

Aron adds: "When I drive a real car I go off the feeling that's transferred through my body from the car through the tyres and the track, whereas with the sim most of that feeling comes through the steering wheel."

Sim driving isn't only a circuit racing phenomenon, it's important for rally drivers too. Junior World Rally Championship competitor Jon Armstrong used his home simulator to counter the fact he didn't have the cash to test before a dream prize drive.

Armstrong used his simulator though to do more than train for a rally. In 2018 he won the virtual WRC title, finished runner-up in 2019 and now works full time on making the DiRT Rally video game as realistic as possible.

"I got Colin McRae Rally when I was five, got my first steering wheel when I was 11 before I started doing real-life motorsport when I was 13," remembers Armstrong. "In 2017 I had two prize drives in a Ford Fiesta R5 through the Drive Dmack Cup. I didn't have the budget to do lots of testing so I set up my first proper simulator, with a seat, steering wheel and pedals."

"I got a Fiesta R5 on a highly-modified

Richard Burns Rally game and spent hours and hours on a wide variety of roads to simulate what Rally Germany was going to be like.

"It was my first time in an R5 but I ended up winning a stage in WRC2 and I couldn't put it down to anything else other than driving a realistic simulator."

While Armstrong is the ultimate sim ambassador, Craig Breen has just got his hands on a simulator to keep sharp during the coronavirus lockdown, and admits he currently is "finding my feet". Breen says: "As a youngster I spent all of my time using a very basic simulator with Richard Burns Rally. Digital-motorsports.com in Ireland have given me some kit to keep fresh while I've got nothing else to do and it's pretty incredible what simulators can do now. Sure, it's a bit of fun but I'm entering some online championships. After all, I can't spend all day in my temporary gym at home."

There also is plenty of sim competition on the virtual crests and jumps for those on the national rallying scene. Think of any British or Irish rally driver you like and it's probable they've migrated onto DiRT Rally 2.0 to resume battle during this enforced leave.

Various private lobbies and championships have been created between real-life drivers to keep their eye in, with some even livestreaming

their performances on social media.

Some players use controllers, but the overwhelming majority of drivers prefer a steering wheel as it's as close as they can get to the real thing. "I've always played PlayStation since I was about six but I only bought a steering wheel at Christmas time and that sort of changed my world completely," says Irish Tarmac ace Meirion Evans.

"There's actually a lot of co-drivers including JJ [Jonathan Jackson], my co-driver, who are really fast but they crash a lot more whereas the drivers are a bit more measured as they understand how to drive a bit more. You can sort of put a bit of your real-life knowledge into it and it can help you. I think there are relevant things which you can help you with real-life driving [too] or at least fill a gap until this pandemic ends."

Alex Laffey is new to this kind of driving but given he hasn't entered a rally since last September, he's finding the element of competition very useful. "[I'm doing it] to keep the competitive edge going," he says. "It's obviously good that everyone [else is] getting involved in it but it's mainly just to keep us fresh, keep us competitive. Even though it's not real racing you're still competing against people."

"[The skills are] transferrable but it is a bit harder to get used to going into the sim side from real racing," Laffey adds.



World RX's Kevin Abbring is another with sim business



The DiRT Rally 2.0 game is popular among rally stars

"[But] once you actually get going and you're in a stage and you're focused on it feels like you are actually just racing."

The sim is important in developing rallycross drivers too, and few know this better than former works Hyundai WRC driver Kevin Abbring, who returned to rallycross last year in World RX. He will complete an expanded programme this year, but in the meantime he spends time perfecting his skills and those of his clients with his Motorsport In Motion concern, and with this he even develops his own software and hardware.

Abbring though, even for rallycross development, largely uses circuit racing on the sim. "The fastest way on Tarmac – or any circumstance where you have plenty of grip – is the circuit style," he tells MN. "Racing brings a lot of technique and smoothness to a driver. Look at Timmy Hansen, coming from formula racing and is now the current World RX champion."

"I only drive on the machine with a purpose; plans and targets are set prior to a session," Abbring continues. "One of the secrets behind my finishes at my World RX races last year came from spending two full days on the machine, together with my engineer and spotter."

"Within a very short time I got to understand a sport I wasn't familiar with at the time, a sport where tactics

and strategy is of great importance.

We simulated literally every scenario. Coming to a new sport on World level and being able to get most things right from the start doesn't come from standard race software and hardware.

"It is like in real life, it's coming from the details."

A more recent convert is his brother Kevin Hansen, who claimed his maiden World RX win last year. He recently invested in a sim to continue driving in the downtime. "At the moment I'm driving on the games quite a lot more, because normally I don't do so much," he says. "We're working on set plans and I've been doing just driving and not so much competition. I don't think there are any disadvantages, as long as you take it seriously. If you're driving, you're driving and activating your brain in that way. It's the closest we can get at this moment."

It seems likely that the historic racing scene is the least likely place to find sim work. But even therein, there are drivers who use it. As one of the rising stars in historic single-seater racing, Ben Stiles uses a simulator to make his meagre budget stretch a little bit further.

He put together a PS4-based rig for under £300 by scouring eBay for second-hand kit and reckons it paid for itself in four race meetings. Stiles uses the simulator to learn tracks

instead of using expensive testing time to find his way around.

With no karting background, every track he went to last year with his Classic FF2000 Van Diemen RF82 was a new challenge.

"You get a certain amount from videos but your brain gets more from a simulator," Stiles says. "It saved me the first 10 minutes of testing and allowed me to jump into the detail of a circuit straight away. Now I use it as a refresher before every track and currently I'm using it to keep involved!"

There is also Edward Cottam. Learning the 14-mile Nordschleife can take years and there is no substitute for laps, but historic racer Cottam says that using an Xbox has been a major benefit.

"I've raced there before but using the simulator to gain experience before going back definitely helps. The Xbox is quite adequate for me and I've used it to improve my lap times. It's a screen, a wheel and an H-pattern gearbox, which is more relevant for historic."

"It's a good value way of learning classic tracks like the Nurburgring and Spa and I'm spending up to an hour a day on it at the moment while business is shut down." While his son Oliver is heading from karting into Junior Saloons in a Citroen Saxo, Edward races cars ranging from a Lotus 25 to an AC Cobra and a BMW 2002. ■

GRAHAM KEILLOH



MOTORSPORT NEWS DEPUTY EDITOR

Dennis Lind: "A perfect mix would be all of them put in a bag and then shaken well!"

Virtually all aspects of competition driving simulation have developed exponentially in recent times. And this includes the software. So, from the range available, which is the best software package for a circuit racer to use?

"It depends," Dennis Lind tells MN. And Lind is a good person to ask. He is a factory Lamborghini GT driver in real-life racing, and a Formula Ford Festival winner. He also is team manager of an esports team, Singularity Racing, and has been driving on sims since the mid noughties. He admits to doing at least 20 hours' sim work preparing for a real-life race.

The software considerations, he says, hinge on what the particular racer is looking for. "Assetto Corsa Competizione is great for us who race in the SRO championships because they already have all the tracks; rFactor 2 is great because they have a very very realistic physics engine; iRacing is great because there's a lot of on-track battles going on all the time. So a perfect mix would be all of them put in a bag and then shaken well and then being released as a program!"

"It depends a lot on the person," Lind continues. "For iRacing for sure they nailed the whole pick-up racing aspect of it because basically you can jump on any car, any track that you prefer and there will be someone racing it with you because their user base is so huge. And in rFactor 2 you go in for the more planned championships where you have Saturdays where you have competitions and throughout the weeks you have more minded championships where people have been practising for weeks for one event. Whereas in iRacing they just jump in the race and they keep racing until they get better."

"And then there's Assetto Corsa which is quite new, people are still trying to figure out what exactly to do there but for example there's this ISRO GTI charity event with loads of racing drivers in and also a few esports talents as well."

"So it comes down a lot to the person [and] what you prefer to do in terms of simulators. It's hard to say what exactly is the most realistic one because all of them have nailed an aspect of racing and it all depends on what car you drive and what suits you, what you think is realistic."

"It's very much for interpretation because you're still missing some feelings when you're in the car."

FEATURE



Guy Wilks said the Rally of Scotland was a favourite

REMEMBERING 'THE BEST RALLY IN THE WORLD'

Rally of Scotland was the UK's IRC round for three years and is still remembered with much fondness. By **Luke Barry**



The mixed surface was a challenge for all runners

Anyone who owns DiRT Rally 2.0 will have enjoyed testing their mettle by hurtling between the trees on the recently-released Perth and Kinross stages. But this is a pleasure that doesn't mirror reality, as no real-life rally has used these locations since the one-off McRae Gravel Challenge did back in 2017.

Perth and Kinross had been a staple of the Scottish Rally when it was a tour of the country and in 1991 became the sole venue to formulate the Perth Scottish Rally. This lasted until 1997 when the rally moved to its current home in Dumfries.

After a dormant five-year period for the area, the McRae Stages moved north from Lanark in 2002 until 2014 when it ceased to run, utilising the forests as a National B event in the Scottish Rally Championship. Matthew Wilson won the 2008 event in a Ford Focus WRC, but this might just be the most overlooked victory in

Photos: Eurosport Events



Mikkelsen won the last in 2011



Bogie absolutely loved the stages

rallying history. As a tribute to Colin McRae, a star-studded entry including three World Rally champions – Bjorn Waldegard, Ari Vatanen and Hannu Mikkola – descended on Perth for a 60-mile event behind the wheel of historic cars. Fittingly, of them it was Colin's brother Alister who was quickest.

The area was, therefore, used to attracting international stars but not international championships. That all changed in 2009 when the Rally of Scotland was born to be a fully-fledged round of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), forming the final round of that year's series. To this day, it is regarded by many as one of the UK's – and indeed the world's – best events.

Clerk of the course Iain Campbell remembers: "We had 13 months to organise the event for November 2009 and we had to be in Perthshire and Stirling because they were additional funding partners. Apart from that, we had a blank sheet of paper so we could create our own organising team [and] we could more or less create our own route. None of us had ever run anything more than a National B event before and here we were to run an international rally with

four hours of live TV in a series that took in Argentina, Monte-Carlo, Sanremo and a bit of Scotland. It was mental."

Iconic forest stages such as Craighveinan, Drummond Hill, Errochty and Loch Ard formed the backbone of what would be a three-year spectacular in the middle of autumn. As an IRC round, what the entry lacked in quantity it more than made up for in quality with world stars Thierry Neuville, Kris Meeke, Andreas Mikkelsen, Juho Hanninen, Alister McRae, Craig Breen, Guy Wilks, Jan Kopecky, Bryan Bouffier and Toni Gardemeister all taking part at least once.

Meeke once called the event the best rally in the world while David Bogie told Campbell at the time it was the best gravel rally he has ever done.

"I would stand by that," Bogie confirms. "The first year I did it I didn't really know what to expect, I didn't know a huge amount about the IRC [but] I was just blown away. It was just a hell of a challenge. At that time it was a lot longer than [any rally] I had done previously, and obviously [brought] a lot of media attention. I was quite overwhelmed by it all to begin with."

Wilks adds: "Looking back, that was

one of my favourite rallies I've ever done and that speaks volumes. That is including Rally Finland. I've got to say for those guys at that time to basically get that off the ground to make it an international event and take it to an international championship must have been a huge effort and I would love to see those stages run with top drivers now. It deserved to go to WRC."

Friday's action was held near Perth and was more familiar to UK-based competitors, while Saturday's tests around Stirling were new to everybody. Bogie admits there was a big difference between the two legs but that all the stages were fantastic. Loch Ard, renamed High Corrie in 2011, was a particular highlight as a gruelling 20-mile challenge.

Hanninen says: "The stages were fast but it was not like a big, long straight, there were still corners and it was quite flowing. It was high speed but still it was nice to drive and it was not like stupid fast. I liked the character of the stages.

"It's more sandy and gravelly [than Wales Rally GB] as in GB it's more like polished stone or rocky surface underneath so it's a bit more like gravel and I really liked those stages," he

Continued on page 22

LUKE BARRY



MOTORSPORT NEWS REPORTER

A Rally of SWcotland return is unlikely

As a proud Scotsman my nostalgic senses are amplified to 11 when talking about Rally of Scotland, but everything about the event screams 'throwback': from the stages themselves to the sound of the S2000 cars and the IRC which was becoming a genuine threat to the WRC.

A throwback is likely all it will remain however as any thoughts of a comeback appear thwarted.

So much of what made the event work was the support from Event Scotland and local councils as ultimately the rally was as much a commercial enterprise as it was a sporting event. Iain Campbell's words, not mine.

"The event didn't stack up financially," he explains, "so there wasn't the appetite from IMS [MUK's commercial arm] to continue after year three because it wasn't breaking even let alone making money. Event Scotland had got the media value and visitor numbers that they were looking for [too] so it naturally came to its end."

The existence of the McRae Stages meant a national-spec Rally of Scotland was never on the table.

The crying shame though is that neither rally still stands today.

It's fair to say the two events weren't exactly a marriage made in heaven, running as little as a week apart in 2011 for example, which perhaps contributed to the downfall of the McRae Stages with the stages chewed down to bedrock in places.

While it's theoretically possible for a rally to return to these forests, it would take a brave organising team to establish a forest event in this day and age.

If you want to experience them, DiRT Rally 2.0 looks to be the only answer.

More's the pity.

FEATURE



Hanninen said he enjoyed the nature of the stages

continues. "It was really nice and for sure it was a great atmosphere."

That aforementioned atmosphere was another major part of Rally of Scotland's appeal. The organising team were keen to make the event distinctly Scottish, so utilised historic landmarks in Stirling Castle, Scone Palace and Blair Castle for ceremonial starts and finishes, service areas and even special stages. Scone Palace got the honour of hosting the start and first even stages of Rally of Scotland with the then Scotland First Minister Alex Salmond in attendance.

"From the drop of the flag [at Scone Palace], the first stage was only a mile long, but we used to go hammer and tongs it was bloody brilliant," Wilks remembers. "What a place to start a rally, especially the Rally of Scotland where they used to crown the Scottish kings."

Wilks and newly-crowned IRC champion Meeke were the stars of the inaugural event sharing each of the stage wins between them, but it was Meeke who prevailed in his Peugeot by 20.7 seconds over Wilks who had switched from a Proton to a Skoda UK-backed Fabia S2000. However the history books show Wilks as the winner as Meeke was soon excluded for an underweight subframe, elevating Alister McRae into second and Jonny Greer onto the podium.

"It wasn't necessarily a hollow victory but I knew myself [because] Kris and I had fought over many years, [that] Kris beat me on the stages, I knew his car couldn't have been that far away from spec," Wilks explains.

"I'd be stupid if I said Kris and I sandbagged because the stage times showed we went hard but Kris had already won the championship and controlled it knock for knock and at the back of my mind it was 'don't toss this off' [as I] was told before the start in no uncertain terms, make sure you get it to the finish because there could be a full season next year if we get it to the finish and do a half-decent result."

There would be no half-decent result in 2010 though as the Scandinavians eased themselves into contention. It was business as usual to begin with as Meeke



Meeke had won the IRC in 2009

led from Wilks, but Wilks retired on the second pass of Drummond Hill and Meeke punctured before a brake pipe burst aboard his 207 S2000.

Claiming the 2010 IRC title by merely starting the event in the absence of teammate Kopecky, Hanninen was on a lap of honour and after a string of fastest times, hit the front and stayed there to edge Mikkelsen's Ford Fiesta S2000.

"We had a really good fight," Hanninen recalls. "Kris Meeke and Guy Wilks were both really strong on the start and I was losing a bit to them but then I started to understand a bit more those roads and driving over there and then the times were getting better and better. It was a nice feeling when I started to win stages and ended up leading the rally and winning the title. After a difficult start to 2010 winning the rally and the title, it was a really good memory."

Mikkelsen returned the favour in 2011, this time in a Skoda, beating Hanninen by 26.4s having lost by 25.5s 12 months earlier. With championship points multiplied by 1.5, the victory teed Mikkelsen up beautifully for the double-points final in Cyprus which he duly won.

"I'd done a lot of rallying on these types of roads so for me it was like doing my home rally," Mikkelsen says. "It was nice to see some of the people I'd been rallying with before so yeah it was a good rally, very nice scenery. Always tricky conditions like it always is, quite slippery, but I enjoyed it very, very much."

"We had quite a troublesome season in IRC 2011 until the midway point around Azores where things started to turn and we were close to winning some rallies but we didn't get it," he adds. "So coming to Scotland I remember that I was confident that this was the rally that we could win. And to take my first win for Skoda UK in Scotland was really, really cool."

Mikkelsen would be the final winner of Rally of Scotland as for 2012 the UK's IRC round moved across the Irish Sea for the Circuit of Ireland Rally. But even in those three years, the event firmly cemented itself as a modern classic and boasts a number of milestones including Skoda UK's first win, Proton's first podium with its Satria Neo and the UK debut of the Fiesta S2000 in 2009 with Matthew Wilson as course car.

"The competitors loved the stages, they loved the atmosphere, they loved the historic venues that we went to. I don't speak to anybody that's got a bad word for Rally of Scotland," Campbell concludes.

"I'm proud of it. The screenshot on my phone is still Meeke's car from 2009 going through Achray so that shows where Rally of Scotland ranks." ■



Alister McRae wowing the fans at Stirling Castle



Hanninen won the rally and the IRC title in 2010



Wilks was promoted to the victory after 2009 battle

WHAT'S ON

TV GUIDE

Any fan of the 2019 Formula 1 season will find Sky Sports F1 is the place to be this week. Every single race of the year is shown in one form or another, starting with the US Grand Prix on Wednesday (1800hrs-2015hrs). The proceeding two evenings, the chaotic Brazilian Grand Prix (Thursday 1935hrs-2200hrs) and the season finale in Abu Dhabi (Friday 1820hrs-2130hrs) are both shown in full too.

Across the weekend, a one-hour highlights replay of every race is broadcast back-to-back from 1100hrs-2200hrs on Saturday and 1100hrs-2100hrs on Sunday. The German Grand Prix, arguably the most action-packed race of the year, concludes Saturday's viewing with the

Hungarian Grand Prix kicking off on Sunday. This is split late on Saturday by **F1 Classic Races**, highlighting the 2011 Monaco Grand Prix (2200hrs-0100hrs) which was Sebastian Vettel's first triumph in the principality.

If a more succinct and analytical programme appeals, **F1 2019 Season Review** airs on Sunday (2100hrs-2200hrs).

As next weekend was meant to be the **Chinese Grand Prix**, Sky Sports F1 is showing plenty of Chinese races too.

Between 1600hrs-2100hrs on Monday, there is a one-hour highlights replay of the 2014-2018 grands prix with perhaps the most memorable Chinese event of all, the 2007 Chinese Grand Prix, famous for Lewis

Hamilton's woes, airing afterwards (2100hrs-2315hrs). The 2010 running of the Chinese Grand Prix will also be shown on Tuesday (2100hrs-2330hrs).

The opening rounds of this year's **World Rally Championship** can be relived this week over on BT Sport 1. Thierry Neuville's Monte-Carlo victory can be remembered on Wednesday (1800hrs-1900hrs) before Toyota's resurgence in Sweden and Mexico is screened on Friday morning (1000hrs-1100hrs; 1100hrs-1200hrs).

Esports fans will also be entertained on Wednesday with the highlights from the **Supercars' All Stars** series shown on FreeSports (Wednesday, 2000hrs-2200hrs).



Lewis Hamilton got burnt in China in 2007

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Chris Skill shows his, well, ability on the Malton Forest Rally. Photo from Graham Clark



John Wink pressing on, from Alan Scott



Sarah Reynolds enjoyed Le Mans in 2019



Wales Rally GB fun, photo by Phil Davies



Seb Ogier's night fever! From Nick Murphy



Andy Manston's shot of Matt Endean

NEXT WEEK

OUT WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

*Details correct at time of going to press; it's getting dull this staying indoors, isn't it?

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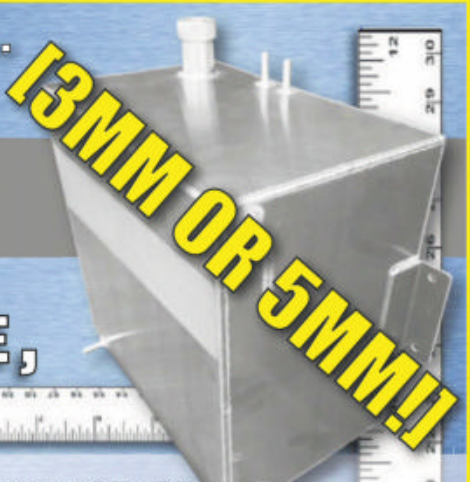
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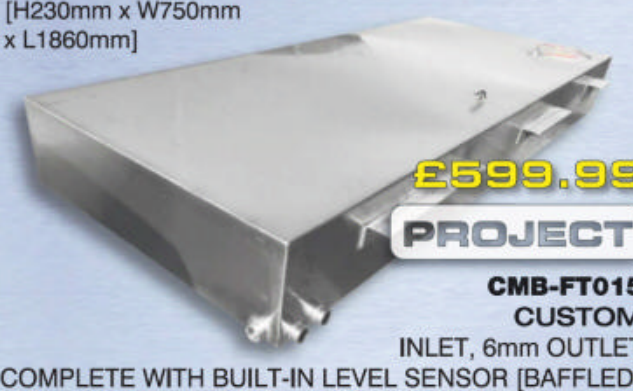


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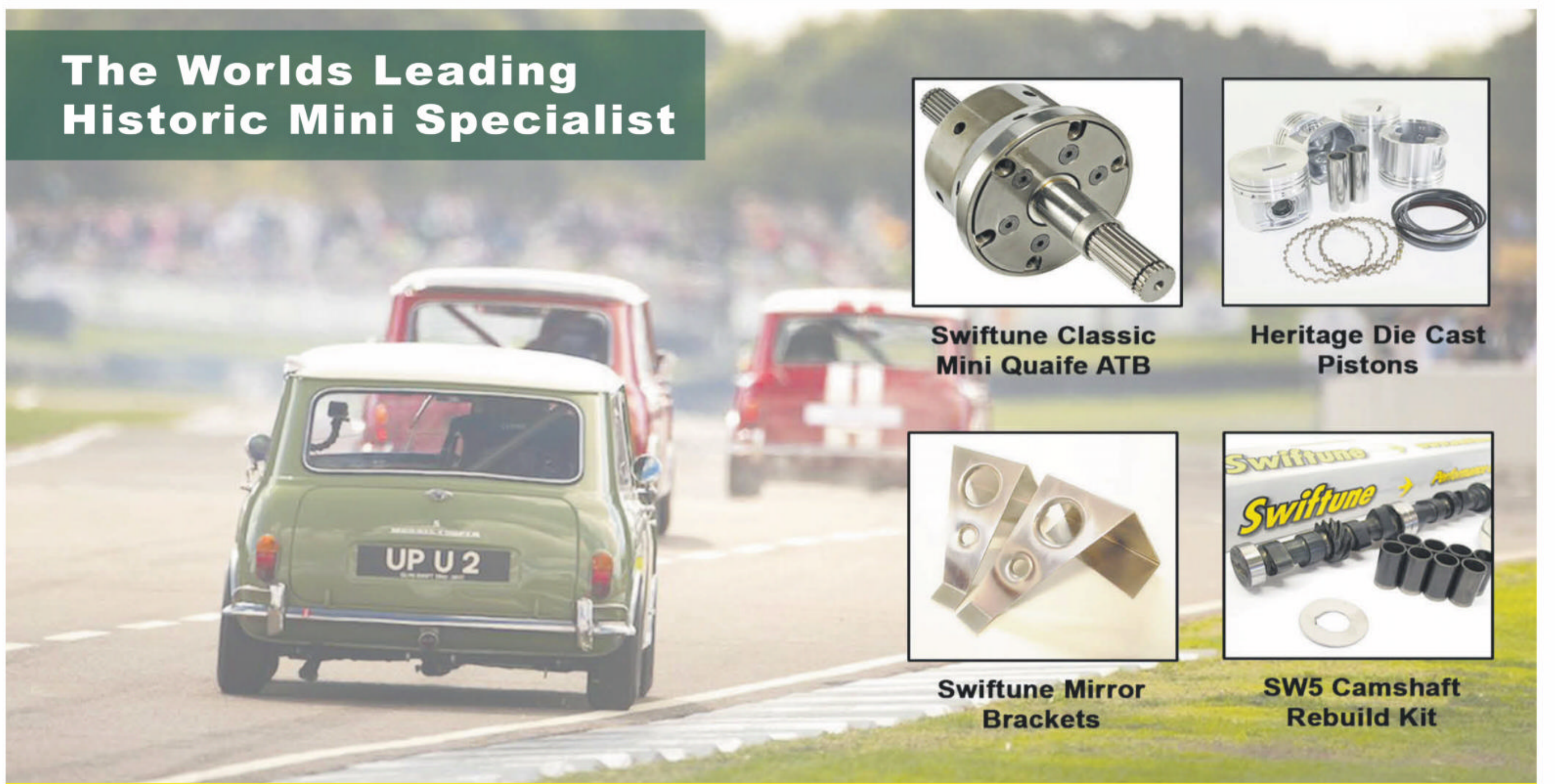
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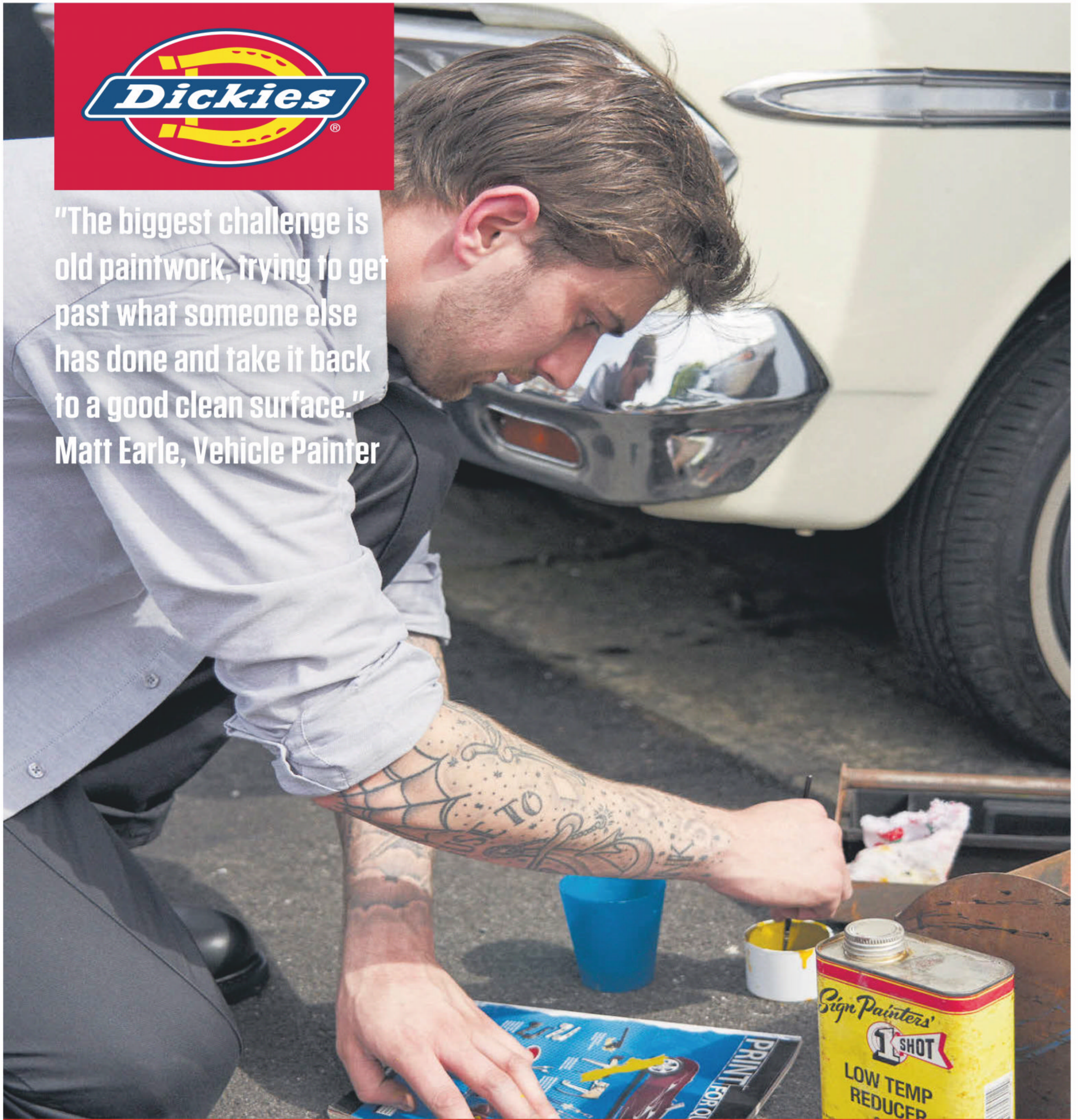
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