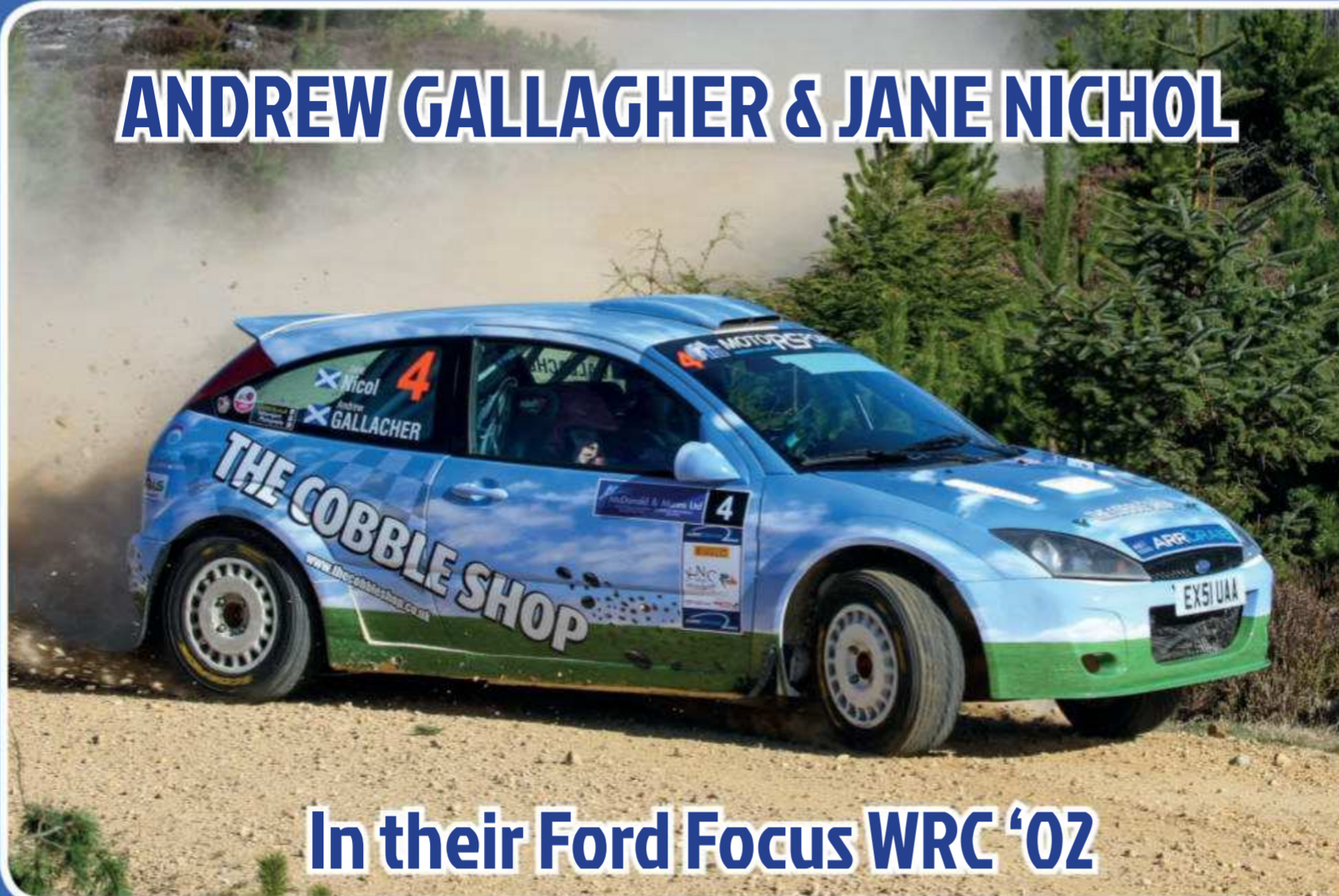


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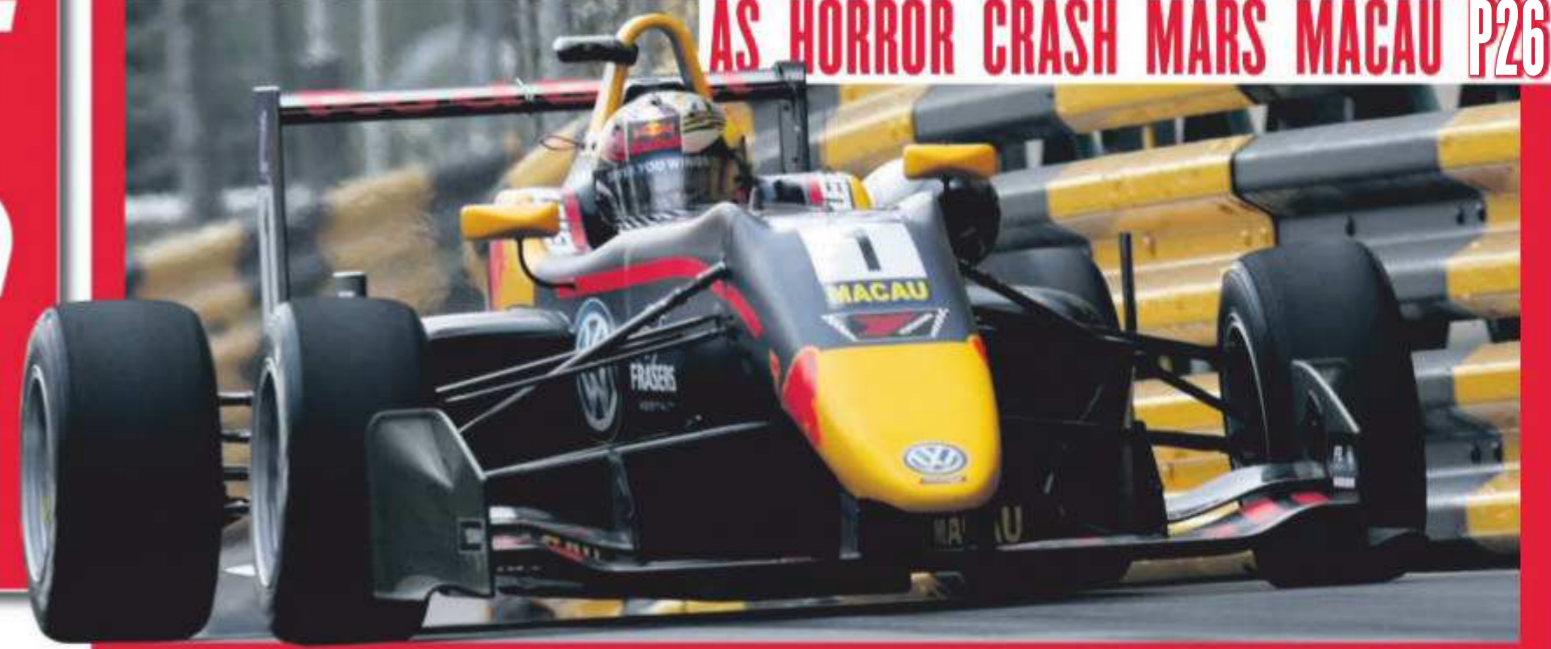
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THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

# MOTORSPORT NEWS

## TICKTUM TRIUMPHS

AS HORROR CRASH MARS MACAU P26



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WRC champion pays tribute to team as rivals crash out



# OGIER'S

# SIXTH SENSE



By David Evans

After signing off on his time with M-Sport as a world champion, Sebastien Ogier paid an emotional tribute to the British squad and assured team members he would never forget them.

Ogier's sixth consecutive world title was his second in one of the Cumbrian-built Ford Fiesta WRCs. Following his 2018 win, he will now move to Citroen for next season.

"I cannot ever forget my team," he said. "These guys, all of them, they are so special. What we achieved together, this will stay with me forever."

Full story P2-3



PLUS TOYOTA'S LATVALA TAKES RALLY AUSTRALIA WIN P20

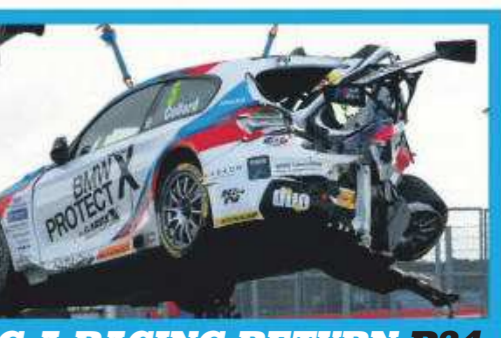
THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT  
**MOTORSPORT NEWS**

## SMITH'S HOME WIN



LOCAL LE MANS VICTOR TAKES MN CADWELL GLORY P19

## ROB COLLARD GETTING BACK ON TRACK



HOW SIDELINED BTCC DRIVER IS PLOTTING A RACING RETURN P24

**MOTORSPORT NEWS** ISSUE **MJ3156** NOVEMBER 21 2018

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**TICKTUM KING OF THE  
STREETS**

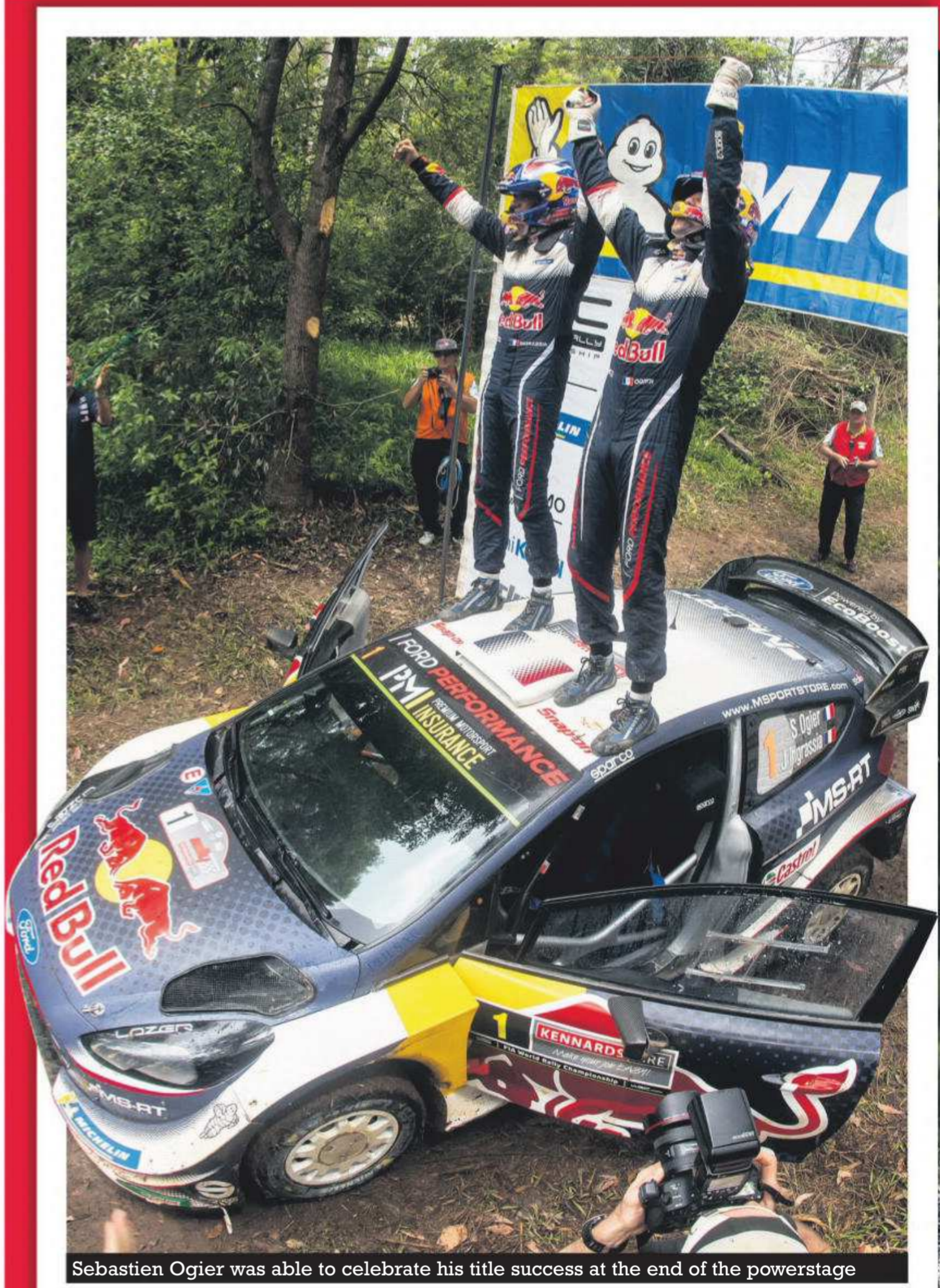


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**FOR MOTORSPORT NEWS STAFF CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE SEE P31**



Sebastien Ogier was able to celebrate his title success at the end of the powerstage

**By David Evans**

**Just hours after clinching his sixth world title, Sebastien Ogier admitted he did wonder why he'd decided to leave Malcolm Wilson's M-Sport Ford World Rally Team.**

Ogier's fifth place on Rally Australia was enough for him to take an emotional and incredible victory after the most competitive season in a decade. Ogier admitted he was unsure when he joined M-Sport for the start of last season, describing the move as a gamble – but one which paid off handsomely.

"I didn't know what to expect," Ogier told *Motorsport News*. "How could I? But when I signed, I would have signed for less than this. It's been incredible, just an incredible journey."

"I have to say, it's very hard to say I am leaving, but it's like... leaving a girl you love; why are we doing that? Why now when we achieve everything in the last two years. But now we have an exciting

adventure waiting for us now and I am also looking forward to this one now. At least we say goodbye in the best way."

Ogier singled Wilson out for special praise and talked of the special bond the pair have forged since they began working together last year.

"He's a special man," said Ogier. "He's a great businessman, a great human and the best boss. He's somebody who has been in rallying for a very long time. I remember when I said a long time ago that I would like to work with Malcolm some day and now I have done that and you can believe me when I say that this time didn't disappoint me."

"He has such passion for rallying and for everything he does. He does everything at 120 per cent all of the time. When there is a problem or something that needs to be improved or changed, he would do everything he could to fix it. Sometimes the budget blocked things, but he was always so determined to give me the best;

I can't remember one time when Malcolm said to me: 'No, that's not possible, we can't.' Whenever we mention something to make the car better, he said we could do it and we would do it."

"Honestly, I am going to miss him and miss this whole team. I'm going to miss my team – I just hope I'm not going to miss this car too much!"

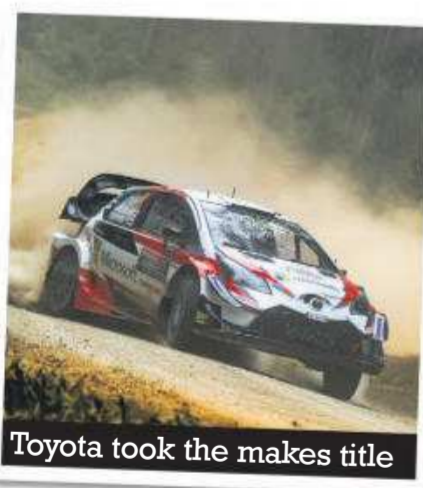
An emotional Wilson admitted M-Sport would miss Ogier and co-driver Julien Ingrassia enormously in the future – a future which remains uncertain for the Coker-mouth-based team.

"We have to rebuild now," said Wilson. "My efforts will now be directed at making the commercial side of this thing stack up. But what a story we've written together, eh? Hasn't it been fantastic. You know me, I'm quite emotional about these things and I have to say today has been the most stressful event I've ever been involved with."

"The stress was coming from so many different places. The

Frenchman on top of the world with sixth WRC title

# OGIER LAUDS 'SPECIAL BOND' WITH M-SPORT



Toyota took the makes title



Julien Ingrassia, boss Malcolm Wilson and Sebastien Ogier

conditions, the fight, the battle and, of course, everything that was at stake – there was so much going on. But above all of that, there was so much stress and emotion because I didn't want to let them down and I wanted to end this unbelievable adventure on the highest of highs. We've done that – and what a way to do it: winning the last powerstage of the season! But I must admit, now I've got such mixed emotions. We're going to miss Seb and Julien as human

beings, but as a team we're also going to miss the results. Like I said, we've been through this before – now we will build again."

Wilson wasn't the only driver turned team principal celebrating, Toyota's Tommi Makinen added his first world title in charge of a team to the four he won as a driver:

"This is a special moment," he said. "To think that three and a half years ago, this project didn't even exist. We have worked, we have built together as a team and

I am so proud of what we have achieved and this title we have won for Toyota. It's incredible, but now we have to look to build more and move forward into the future."

Toyota driver Ott Tanak missed out on the drivers' championship, crashing out of the rally on the penultimate stage – just one test after Ogier's main rival Hyundai's Thierry Neuville ended his own bid for a maiden drivers' crown against a tree.

## NO REST FOR THE SIX-TIME CHAMPION

Sebastien Ogier will begin testing his Citroen C3 WRC for next season in Portugal next week.

The Frenchman confirmed he will drive the C3 for four days before the end of the year, with the first two coming as development running in the Algarve.

"I have two days on gravel and two days on Tarmac," Ogier told *MN*. "I will try to make the best of it – but don't forget that before 2017, when I joined M-Sport, I had only one and a half days."

Ogier admitted his sixth title defence would be as big a challenge as anything else he'd faced. He added: "Next year is going to be a big challenge because the others are really ready – they had some time with their car



Ogier will get to sample a Citroen C3 for the first time

and their team. For us we probably need some time to change, to adapt and to make [the car] suit better for us. It's a big challenge, but this is what makes it exciting for me."

Citroen team principal Pierre Budar is equally excited – especially as Ogier will put the number ones on the doors of a Citroen for the first time since 2013.

"We are very happy for

Sebastien's result in Australia," Budar said. "It's nice that he comes back to us with the number one, but we know we have work to do with the car and to get everything ready for next year. We have some test on gravel in Portugal next week, this is for the development of the car and then before Christmas he will begin his Monte Carlo testing."

# RACING NEWS

Photos: LAT

## F1 ROUND-UP

### Seidl to F1?

Porsche's former World Endurance Championship LMP1 team boss Andreas Seidl is set to move into Formula 1 in a senior role at an as yet unknown team. Seidl made his name working for the BMW Sauber F1 squad until 2009, then led BMW's return to the DTM as head of operations. It had been suggested Seidl could have a future at Ferrari, and he knows Sebastian Vettel well from their time together at BMW Sauber, but a Ferrari spokesperson denied any team management changes are in the pipeline. Williams and McLaren are both in the process of rebuilding, but neither has an opening at the top level.

### Hamilton hopeful

Lewis Hamilton predicts Mercedes will enjoy "a great knock-on effect" for 2019 from clinching its fifth consecutive title double in the face of increased competition from Ferrari. "We win races, and we've been very fortunate to have a lot of success, but when we win everyone is quite quiet – happy, but quite controlled," said Hamilton, after his unexpected Brazilian Grand Prix victory. "This time it was just great to see everyone [celebrate]. Everyone was just biting their nails through the year, so it was such an incredible effort from everyone. We kept hopes high and kept our targets very, very high. This should have a great knock-on effect for next year."

### Williams changes

Williams needs to make changes in all areas of its organisation if it is to recover from its disappointing 2018 campaign, says departing engineering chief Rob Smedley. Having taken third in the constructors' standings in 2014 and '15, Williams slipped to fifth in '16, a position it maintained last year, but this season has slumped to last. "There's never one magic bullet is there," said Smedley. "In all areas really, you can never stop learning and improving. It's a long road, they're a talented bunch, there are some really good technical people, some really good engineers and a good management group and the trick now is they have to pull together and start to go in one direction."

### New Renault chief

Thierry Koskas will replace Jerome Stoll as president of Renault's sporting arm next year. Koskas will take over the Renault Sport Racing presidency, reporting to Renault's group chairman and chief executive officer Carlos Ghosn, on January 1 2019. Koskas was named Renault's executive vice-president of sales and marketing at the start of 2016 and became a member of the manufacturer's executive committee in the process. He has worked for Renault since 1997. Stoll, a Renault employee since 1980 who became president of Renault Sport Racing in early 2016, will turn 65 next year.

# RICHARDS: BRITISH GP STREET RACE WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE

## Governing body chief fully supports new GP deal for Silverstone



F1 has visited London's streets for demo events

By Jack Benyon

**A British Grand Prix on a street circuit would be "inappropriate", according to Motorsport UK chairman David Richards, and he has instead backed Silverstone to maintain the Formula 1 event.**

The Prodrive boss and 1981 World Rally champion co-driver has been the chairman of the UK motorsport governing body since January of this year, and says that it is "critical" that Britain maintains an F1 race amid speculation that it could miss out on a calendar slot in 2020.

In July 2017 the British Racing Drivers Club, which owns and operates Silverstone, exercised a break clause

with F1 promoter Liberty Media, meaning a new deal – as yet unsigned – will be needed for the 2020 race. Next year's event is safe and is the last before the break clause takes effect.

A London street race has been rumoured for over 10 years, but any prospective event would face extensive red-tape and logistical issues such as closing busy London streets, and the streets themselves would need work to be suitable for F1 cars to drive on them in competition.

"Silverstone is the only place in my view that can host the race," Richards (right) told MN. "Putting anything on in a different

place like a street circuit is inappropriate, because it doesn't leave a legacy and use the infrastructure we have built over the years [at Silverstone].

"It's critical, in my view, to motorsport's good health in this country that we have a Formula 1 race."

Motorsport UK provides the infrastructure for the British Grand Prix, but Richards says there are other things that can be done to support the race from the organisation's perspective.

"Obviously we are a little bit on the sidelines because the commercial relationship is between F1 and the BRDC,"

added Richards. "We can help enable that as best as we can."

"I attend a number of meetings with politicians at the moment and it's ongoing. We are hopeful and feel positively that it will come to a strong conclusion."

"We certainly don't take it for granted and we [Motorsport UK] have to play our part. We have to provide the infrastructure for the race, we provide the officials, the marshals."

Last week, a landmark event in Richards' role as Motorsport UK chairman occurred when the organisation changed its name from the Motor Sports Association or MSA, with the promise of promoting the sport in the UK more as well as regulating it.

## F1 boss Carey plans to drop races with "unattractive" agreements, threatening historic venues

Formula 1 boss Chase Carey says he will drop races that have "unattractive" agreements with the championship, and replace them with deals negotiated by the new management.

The only new race confirmed on Carey's watch is Vietnam, which is scheduled for 2020. However, he has regularly stated there's extensive interest from potential hosts, and that the calendar could extend to up to 25 races in the future.

Meanwhile the futures of

several classic events, including the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, remain in doubt once deals negotiated by Bernie Ecclestone run out.

Speaking during a conference call for Liberty investors, Carey stressed the new owners are working more closely with race promoters to put on a good show, suggesting that in the past events were "stale".

"The promotion end of our business has been viewed as more mature than other revenue streams in F1," he

said. "This perception was fuelled by a lack of investment or freshness by the prior regime in our events."

"Quite simply our events became stale, which led promoters to focus on costs as opposed to growth."

"We believe there is still potential growth, significant growth, in the promotion segment, during the next few years. The growth will be driven by three factors."

"First, we expect to expand our calendar beyond our current 21-race schedule."

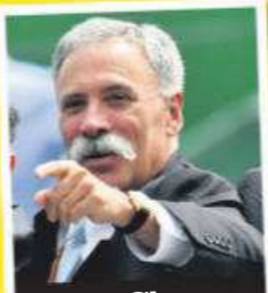
"The expansion will be modest,

but we have been excited by the number, quality and diversity of new locations interested in hosting a race."

"Second, we expect to replace a few existing races where we inherited unattractive agreements, with new events or agreements, that are better for racing and provide more value."

"Third, there is significant long-term value in our higher-end hospitality experience."

"Major events today increasingly rely on those customers willing and able to pay for unique and tailored experiences, both in the corporate and retail end."



Carey: Changes

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Photos: LAT

# FLORSCH RECOVERING AFTER SURGERY



German suffered fractured spine



Underwent seven-hour op

Sophia Florschütz has undergone a successful seven-hour surgery on the spinal fracture she suffered in her horrific Formula 3 crash in the Macau Grand Prix.

The operation was conducted on Monday, with doctors saying in a press conference afterwards that her vital signs are stable and limbs are active as *MN* went to press. She will remain in hospital for up to two weeks but there isn't thought to be any fears of paralysis.

The 17-year-old German suffered the injury after she hit the back of 15th-placed Jehan

Daruvala on the flat-out run to Lisboa early in Sunday's race.

Unable to slow her damaged Van Amersfoort Racing Dallara-Mercedes, which registered 171.6mph through the speedtrap, she was launched over the inside kerb at Lisboa into the TOM'S Dallara-Toyota of Sho Tsuboi.

The impact fired her over the barrier and through the catch fencing and into an area occupied by marshals and photographers.

"We have to thank the angels she had with her today, and for the fantastic strength

of the Dallara car," said Florschütz's team boss Frits van Amersfoort after the accident.

Tsuboi was discharged from hospital on Sunday night, while photographer Hiroyuki Minami was also released after suffering concussion.

Chinese photographer Chan Weng Wang, who has a lacerated liver, is expected to remain in hospital for another 10 days.

Race marshal Chan Cha suffered cuts and a broken jaw but should be released in three to four days.

Ferrari junior Guan Yu Zhou, who was following Florschütz at

the time of the accident, explained that it was due to yellow caution lights flashing on the straight.

The incident happened just after a restart following an early safety car.

"Coming after Mandarin [the preceding right-hand kink], I saw the yellow, but I think it was just a mistake by the organisers' station," said the Prema Powerteam driver.

"Sophia was really close to Jehan, so when Jehan braked early she had no time to react. She hit Jehan's right-rear, and that spun her around."

## Ticktum could drive in Formula 2 in 2019

Double Macau Grand Prix winner Dan Ticktum has confirmed his interest in competing in Formula 2 next season, while it remains likely he will be with Team Mugen for Super Formula in Japan.

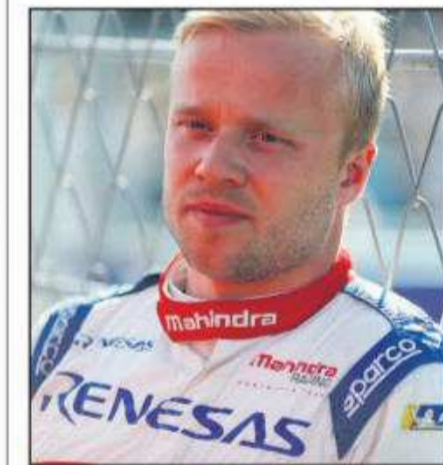
After taking his second successive Macau GP victory, the European F3 runner-up and Red Bull Formula 1 junior told *MN*: "Super Formula is looking almost 100 per cent. As far as F2 is concerned, it's not the teams' fault that it's so expensive, but if we can come to a reasonable deal I'd like to do that as well."

A host of F2 drivers will graduate from the championship next year, as George Russell and Lando Norris go to Formula 1, Maxi Gunther and Antonio Fuoco head to Formula E and Tadasuke Makino and Nirei Fukuzumi switch to Super Formula.

Russell and British-born Thai driver Alex Albon will fight for the F2 title this weekend in Abu Dhabi.

ART Grand Prix's Russell leads by 37 points, with 48 available across the weekend, making DAMS ace Albon an outsider.

The GP3 Series also comes to a close in Abu Dhabi. Force India junior Nikita Mazepin trails Anthoine Hubert by 32 points with 48 on offer.



Swede has won three FE races

## Mahindra FE return for Rosenqvist in opener

Felix Rosenqvist will return to the Mahindra Racing Formula E team for the 2018/19 season-opening Ad Diriyah ePrix in Saudi Arabia.

Rosenqvist left the Mahindra team at the end of the 2017/18 season after signing a deal to compete in the IndyCar series with Chip Ganassi Racing in '19 alongside Scott Dixon.

Mahindra then announced former Sauber Formula 1 driver Pascal Wehrlein as his replacement, pairing him with Jerome D'Ambrosio in an all-new line-up after Nick Heidfeld stepped back from competing.

But with Wehrlein unable to race for the team until January 2019, at which point he will have left the Mercedes junior programme, Rosenqvist has been drafted into the Mahindra outfit once again for the event on December 15.

● The BBC will screen every race of the 2018/19 Formula E season via its website and TV red button platforms for viewers in the UK. The deal to screen FE events means live motorsport returns to the BBC for the first time since it stopped broadcasting Formula 1 grands prix at the end of the 2015 season.

## Rain fails to dampen Toyota's spirits after Shanghai 6 Hours 1-2

Toyota recorded a fourth victory of the 2018/19 World Endurance Championship superseason with a one-two finish in a stop-start wet Shanghai 6 Hours race last weekend.

Mike Conway, Jose Maria Lopez and Kamui Kobayashi scored their second consecutive win in the #7 TS050 Hybrid, ahead of the sister #8 car shared by Fernando Alonso, Kazuki Nakajima and Sebastien Buemi.

Heavy rain caused two lengthy stoppages in the opening half of

the race, and it was not until hour four that conditions improved sufficiently to allow serious green-flag action to commence.

Jenson Button secured his first WEC podium in the surviving SMP BR1 he shared with Russian duo Mikhail Aleshin and Vitaly Petrov, a lap down on the winning Toyota.

LMP2 honours went to Jackie Chan DC Racing for the third time in a row, with Ho-Pin Tung, Gabriel Aubry and Stephane Richelmi picking

up their second victory of 2018.

Aston Martin secured its first victory in the GTE Pro class with its new Vantage GTE driven by Danish duo Nicki Thiim and Marco Sorensen, finishing seventh overall and ahead of the LMP2-winning #38 ORECA.

The Dempsey-Proton squad of Matt Campbell, Julien Andlauer and Christian Ried recovered from the blow of losing all the points it has scored so far in the 2018/19 season by taking victory in GTE Am.



Race in Shanghai was stopped twice due to the torrential rain

## Logano takes first NASCAR title with late pass

Joey Logano won the 2018 NASCAR Cup series title in a dramatic 15-lap shootout following a late caution at Homestead that pitched the final four contenders into a head-to-head battle.

The Penske driver led more laps than any of his other final four rivals – Martin Truex Jr, Kyle Busch and Kevin Harvick – but each contender had looked

set for victory at various points. The finale's decisive moment came courtesy of a late caution, with the title contenders at the front.

A poor restart from leader Busch allowed defending champion Truex and then Logano past, before Truex wrongly took the high line twice allowing Logano through for the win and his first Cup title.

On top of the world: Logano



## Alonso's team heads entry for Renault Eurocup

Fernando Alonso's FA Racing team will step up to the Formula Renault Eurocup in the 2019 season.

The Eurocup championship has confirmed the other nine teams (right) that will take part next season when the series introduces a new car, with FA Racing one of the three new outfits.

"This series has provided some of my toughest competitors in F1 and this highlights its very high competitive

level," said Alonso, whose squad already competes in F4 and karting.

"The arrival of the new car was the opportunity to start on the same level as all the teams and we are now eager to be on the starting grid to show what we are made of."

One team not returning next season is Fortec Motorsports. The British squad had competed in the series every year since 2011.

### TEAMS

Arden Motorsport  
AVF  
BhaiTech Racing  
FA Racing  
JD Motorsport  
Josef Kaufmann Racing  
MP Motorsport  
M2 Competition  
R-ace GP  
Tech 1 Racing

## New Lamborghini SUV series to launch in 2020 using mixed surfaces

Lamborghini will break new ground in 2020 when the Italian brand launches motorsport's first SUV category.

Announced at the Super Trofeo event at Vallelunga last weekend, Lamborghini Squadra Corse will run an arrive and drive series for the twin-turbo, V8 650 horsepower Urus ST-X models,

with the intention to run the series on mixed surfaces.

It is understood Lamborghini

is in talks with SRO to run the series at existing Blancpain GT events alongside Super Trofeo for the Huracan Evo model, but a calendar won't be released until next autumn when the first car is due to be debuted at the 2019 Lamborghini World Final at Jerez.

Lambo Urus ST-X will be used



# RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Gary Hawkins

Car of choice:  
Mercedes A-Class



Race winner in Clios: Rowbottom

## ROWBOTTOM SWITCHES CLIOS FOR BTCC IN 2019

*Ciceley Motorsport recruit Rowbottom to join Morgan*

By Matt James

**Renault UK Clio Cup battler Daniel Rowbottom will step up to the British Touring Car Championship with Ciceley Motorsport in 2019 in one of its Mercedes-Benz A-Class cars.**

Rowbottom, who was a three-time race winner in the one-make series in 2018 and finished fourth in the standings, will line-up alongside the team's regular driver Adam Morgan at the start of next season.

Rowbottom has had a background in karting and several other national

one-make series, including the Lotus Elise Trophy and the SEAT Cupra Championship.

"Money has always been tight and so to join the BTCC grid is a dream come true," said Rowbottom. "With Ciceley Motorsport we have found a team that is a perfect fit and one

that I am really happy to be with. We have been talking to the guys at Ciceley for a while and I have a really good feeling about the team and it will be great to be able to learn from Adam Morgan who has proved that the Mercedes-Benz A-Class is a winning car. I can't wait to get started."

## Mini star Smith to race Excelr8's MG6 BTCC car

The new Excelr8 British Touring Car Championship team has signed Mini Challenge race winner Rob Smith as its first driver for its MG6 machines in 2019.

The 26-year-old has been a frontrunner in the one-make series for the last four seasons and will now graduate to the top flight.

"It's an absolute dream come true to be stepping-up to the British Touring Car Championship for 2019, and especially to be doing it with Excelr8 Motorsport," said Smith. "As soon as I joined the team in 2014 it was clear that we both saw our future in the BTCC, so it's fantastic to finally make it a reality."

Excelr8 team manager Oliver Shepherd said: "Rob has been with us for a number of years now so we're well aware of his ability and the effort he puts in to be successful, so we were very keen for him to make the step up with us. Working with a driver we know means we have one less variable to think about while we get to grips with the demands of the BTCC."



Smith has been a Mini frontrunner



Two wins were enough for the title

## Winter champion Hedley eyes more Ginetta success

Ginetta Junior Winter Series champion James Hedley is set to again compete in the main championship next season.

The Elite Motorsport driver took two wins and the Winter Series crown at Brands Hatch last weekend and finished eighth in the main standings this season, claiming two podiums and three poles.

He said: "I'm hoping to be racing next season in the Ginetta Junior Championship and it's very likely it will be with Elite again."

"We should have done a lot better [this season], we didn't get the results."

Elite Motorsport team manager Eddie Ives confirmed Hedley was "90 per cent signed up" for next season but stated that Tom Emson would definitely be returning with the team.

"I think that with Tom and James, we have a frontrunning pair for next year," said Ives.

● Total Control Racing driver Ruben Del Sarte has confirmed he will not be racing in the Ginetta Junior series again. Having already competed in two full seasons, the 17-year-old would be too old.

## BTCC dream becomes reality for GT4 graduate Crees

Ginetta GT4 Supercup graduate Michael Crees will move to the British Touring Car Championship next season after securing a deal to race with Team Hard in one of its VW CCs.

Crees won the amateur division of the Ginetta competition this season with 11 wins in his Century Motorsport-run machine. Crees completes the Team Hard line-up alongside returnees Bobby Thompson and Mike Bushell and fellow Ginetta graduate Carl Boardley.

The 35-year-old competed with the

team for the first time last weekend at Brands Hatch. He finished second in class and third overall in the Britcar Endurance Championship alongside Sam Randon in an ex-BTCC Toyota Avensis.

Crees said: "My dream has become a reality. It has been a very difficult decision with what to do next year as I have so little experience in racing, but after winning two titles in two years of racing, we wanted to challenge ourselves in the hardest championship in the UK."



Crees had his first competitive taste of BTCC machinery in Britcar race



Bilinski impressed on Ginetta debut and will return in 2019 for full season

## GPRM to enter Ginetta Junior series with two cars

Motorsport engineering specialist GPRM will enter the Ginetta Junior Championship next season for the first time.

The team, which used to supply standard parts to the British Touring Car Championship and previously ran cars in British GT, competed in the Ginetta Winter Series last weekend with karter Roman Bilinski. The 14-year-old, who impressed in this season's Ginetta Junior Scholarship, claimed second in

the rookie class and sixth overall ahead of a full campaign in 2019.

"For us it's a first in terms of running in this championship," said GPRM team manager Richard Williams.

"He's [Roman] done very well and we plan to do the full championship next year, we plan to run two cars."

"It's mainly been driven by Roman, we've got a good relationship and it's something that he wanted to do from karting."



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Lewis Smith took the title at Brands

### Smiths to move to G40 Cup from Intermarque

New Intermarque champion Lewis Smith will switch to the Ginetta G40 Cup with his father Richard and brother Daniel next year.

Richard Smith says the decision to switch series was reached before the announcement that Intermarque would be reborn as Super Silhouettes under Pickups chief Sonny Howard next year.

"It's time for Lewis to move on, and one of the directors of our sponsor Acclaim Contracts is already in Ginettas," said Richard. "It's a shame not to support the new regime, but we've been talking to Ginetta for a couple of years.

"The plan is to start at the bottom and work up, with the ultimate aim of joining the BTCC package. We're buying three new cars and will be running them ourselves."



Veteran racer took a sixth place

### Arif makes his turbo racing debut in a Saab

Formula Ford stalwart and historic racer Wil Arif got his first taste of racing a turbo car last weekend, when he drove a Saab 9000 at Brands Hatch in the Modified Saloon races.

Having raced since the 1970s and competed in nearly 800 races, Arif has acted as a driving coach for Classic Touring Car Racing Club Pre '93 Touring Car driver Stephen Field this season.

As thanks for his work, SBG Racing which runs the Saab 9000 gave Arif the chance to get behind the wheel.

"It's the first time I have actually raced a turbo, the best thing to do is not to play with the throttle but feed it and just find the grip," said Arif after qualifying.

"I thought I would be at the back but the power is going to come by us [in the races]. We only qualified so high because it was slippery but I will drive it as fast as I can in the dry."

After qualifying third for the first race, Arif slipped back against more powerful opposition to sixth before failing to finish the second contest.

# CARRERA CUP TO VISIT BARCELONA IN 2019

## Series will return to Thruxton after five years in revised calendar



Thruxton was last visited in 2014

The Porsche Carrera Cup GB will head to Barcelona for the first time next year after making a number of tweaks to its provisional 2019 calendar.

The series had originally pencilled in a round at Spa or Monza as its overseas event next season when its draft schedule was unveiled in September. But since then, an opportunity to race at the Circuit de Catalunya in support of the European Le Mans Series has arisen and organisers have elected to go to Spain in July instead.

This in turn has had a knock-on effect with the rest of the calendar. The series will still feature at seven of the 10 British Touring Car Championship events, but instead of skipping Donington Park and Thruxton – as originally planned – it will now not compete at Knockhill and Snetterton. That means a first visit to Thruxton since 2014, but the series will continue to miss the first of the two

BTCC visits to the Hampshire venue.

"We've effectively got three new circuits for next year [the series will also make a first Croft trip since '16]," said Porsche GB motorsport manager James MacNaughton. "It's a shame we're missing Knockhill and Snetterton as they're great circuits and everyone enjoys going there. But we have to see what's offered to us outside of TOCA and we try to get a calendar that doesn't have too many massive gaps in it.

"We're really looking forward to going to Barcelona – that was a very welcome offer we received. We thought we were going back to Monza but when we were offered that opportunity at Barcelona it helped a lot [with rest of calendar, as Monza would've been earlier in the season]. It gives the teams a bit of variety and it's important for us because we spread ourselves around the country."

JTR team boss and factory Porsche

driver Nick Tandy is cautious about a British championship including rounds abroad, but believes the Carrera Cup has chosen its non-UK rounds carefully.

"We have such a good array of circuits in Britain, but when we get the chance to race at, for example, Le Mans, this is clearly a no-brainer," Tandy said.

"Barcelona is another mega circuit and very well suited to these cars. Of course, it puts an added strain on teams and budgets due to the time away and logistic costs involved, but it's always good for drivers to experience new tracks and this is one of the best in Europe."

Tandy also welcomed the return of Thruxton: "It's the fastest track in the UK and I wish I was racing the Porsche there myself! We know from Monza that the high-speed, heavy left-side-loaded tracks are a potential problem for the tyres but it'll be up to the teams

### CALENDAR

#### Porsche Carrera Cup GB 2019

RND	DATE	CIRCUIT
1&2	April 6/7	Brands Hatch Indy
3&4	April 27/28	Donington Park
5&6	June 15/16	Croft
7&8	June 29/30	Oulton Park
9&10	July 20/21	Barcelona
11&12	Aug 17/18	Thruxton
13&14	Sept 28/29	Silverstone
15&16	Oct 12/13	Brands Hatch GP

to manage that."

MacNaughton added he's encouraged by the amount of interest in the series for next year, with a record number of drivers taking part in a taster day at the end of last month. Twenty-five drivers tested with Porsche and that doesn't include extra drivers that ran with specific teams.



Rothery took two podiums a day after returning from Belgium with Peugeot TCR car

### Modified Saloons racer gets Belgian Peugeot

Steve Rothery arrived at Brands Hatch last weekend with a Peugeot 308 TCR car fresh off the ferry for the last round of this year's Modified Saloons championship.

He collected the car in Belgium on the day before the meeting, taking to the track for the first time in Sunday qualifying.

Dartford resident Rothery has replaced a Renault Clio with the Peugeot, and also

has another car under construction for use in the local Tin Tops championship for less modified cars.

"The TCR is set up for its previous drivers and frankly scared me, so it's a case of adjusting it to how I like it, but there's clearly a good turn of speed for a Class D car," he said.

Rothery took two podiums at Brands Hatch in the car, with a best result of second in race two.

### TCR UK unveils calendar for its second season, including a trip overseas to Spa

TCR UK will have an overseas round for the first time next year as Spa joins the calendar for the category's second season.

An exact date for the Spa round in June has yet to be confirmed and more details about the Belgian event are due to be announced soon.

The series will also visit Snetterton in 2019, with both Castle Combe and Knockhill missing out. Oulton Park, Croft,

Brands Hatch and Donington Park retain their places in the seven-event schedule, while the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit will be used next season as the championship will appear at the International GT Open meeting in September.

Again, there are no date clashes with the British Touring Car Championship, allowing teams and drivers to compete in both series.

Both Castle Combe and Knockhill were popular rounds this season but the series insists it is open to returning to both venues in the future.

A TCR UK spokesperson said: "We are trying to keep things fresh and take TCR UK to areas it's not been to before – we don't have any issues with either Castle Combe or Knockhill. The fact we are able to go to Spa is a huge opportunity to

go to a classic circuit like that. We're also going to be on the Silverstone GP circuit and it's a circuit that doesn't often see touring cars.

"The feedback we have had from teams and drivers [on the calendar] has been really positive."

TCR UK struggled for entries during its inaugural season this year, featuring a high of 14 cars at Brands but just eight at Croft.



### CALENDAR

#### 2019 TCR UK Series

RND	DATE	CIRCUIT
1&2	April 20/21	Snetterton
3&4	May 11	Oulton Park
5&6	June TBC	Spa
7&8	July 6/7	Croft
9&10	July 27/28	Brands Hatch
11&12	Sept 7/8	Silverstone
13&14	Oct 19/20	Donington Park

No return visit to Castle Combe on 2019 schedule

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# RACING NEWS

Photos: Gary Hawkins, Richard Styles

## VNUK RESOLUTION IN SIGHT FOR UK RACING

European motorsport could be exempt from new insurance law



All UK racing will benefit

By Jack Benyon

**A resolution to the Vnuk motorsport insurance crisis has taken a step in the right direction, after an European Union government committee recommended motorsport be exempt from new insurance law wording.**

The 2014 Vnuk court case set a precedent that all vehicles should have insurance, even if they are being used on private land.

That would mean that all cars competing in motorsport events in Europe would need to be insured, and any crash between cars would be

treated as a road traffic collision. Most insurance firms have confirmed this would make motorsport uninsurable.

But in a draft report from the European Parliament's Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO) issued last week, it has recommended that the phrase 'in traffic' to be inserted with the intention of making the sport exempt from the Vnuk precedent.

While this still needs to be successful in a vote by Parliament, Commission and Presidency of the EU, it marks the first time the EU has outwardly recommended motorsport be exempt.

Motorsport UK chief executive officer Hugh Chambers said: "We

welcome this latest development, which appears to be heading in the right direction, and will be working with the FIA to ensure a positive outcome.

"Motorsport UK has been making the case for excluding motorsport from the Motor Insurance Directive since 2014.

"The Vnuk threat has not gone away but the direction of travel is looking more favourable and we will continue to lobby on behalf of all our members."

Last month the Motorsport Industry Association launched a campaign to make it easier for people to contact their relevant Member of the European Parliament in the EU to raise Vnuk as a threat to motorsport.

It has created draft letters in multiple languages to make contacting the relevant person easier. More information can be found here: [the-mia.com/MIA-Social-Media-Campaign-launched-to-save-Motorsport-from-VNUK-2](http://the-mia.com/MIA-Social-Media-Campaign-launched-to-save-Motorsport-from-VNUK-2).

If Britain successfully leaves the EU in March next year through Brexit, a transition period has been agreed where Britain would follow EU law until the end of 2020. An unsuccessful campaign to have motorsport made exempt from the Vnuk interpretation would lead to a period where motorsport is uninsurable and unable to go ahead in the UK until the end of 2020, despite Brexit.

## New series for JHR as British F3 season planned

JHR Developments will become the newest team to participate in the BRDC British Formula 3 Championship in 2019.

It's understood two cars will be entered for British F3 next season but no drivers have yet been confirmed.

The team currently operates in British F4 and has previously run cars in the Ginetta Junior Championship.

"We're very happy to be joining the BRDC F3 Championship," said team principal Steven Hunter.

"It is a strong championship which runs on an impressive package and is exceptionally well organised.

"We've travelled to a few meetings this year and have been very impressed with not only the championship itself but also the way that it has been put together.

"We are currently utilising our bespoke, in-house simulator which mirrors the on-track performance of the cars, so drivers will be able to gain knowledge and develop their skills in conjunction with a comprehensive on track test programme."

JHR is set to become the first new team to enter the series since the category adopted its current regulations in 2016, as a Stratton Motorsport entry failed to materialise this season.

British F3 recently announced its calendar and will race at eight rounds, seven of which will support British GT.

## Foster takes debut car win, plans Eurocup bid

Young Racing Driver Academy member Tommy Foster has moved another step closer to competing in the Formula Renault Eurocup next season after taking his first win in cars.

The teenager is trying to obtain enough signatures to move into the international category next season and has already tested with Arden.

Driving an Oldfield Motorsport-prepared Van Diemen at Anglesey last weekend, Foster took pole and won in just his third appearance aboard a Formula Ford.

Third place and fastest lap in race two was also enough to secure the Brian Linley Memorial Trophy.

"He's really calm and really mature, he behaves as though he's 19 or 20 instead of 16-years-old," said James Oldfield, who ran Foster.

"He's got his National A licence now but he needs a few more signatures to upgrade it to an International C and they're looking at other avenues."

● British Formula 4 driver Jamie Sharp finished second in race two driving Niall Murray's Team Dolan-run Van Diemen RF99, which won this season's British Racing and Sports Car Club's National Formula Ford 1600 title. Neil Harrison won both Tiedeman Trophy races aboard a Dallara F302, as Conor Farrell, Peter Drennan and Mark Braden each won an Irish Global GT Lights race. Radical drivers Nicolaj Lindberg and Doug Carter took a Sports, Saloon and Caterham race victory apiece.

## New club for F1000 as it swaps BRSCC for 750MC

F1000 has decided to leave the British Racing and Sports Car Club after 21 years and will be administered by the 750 Motor Club next season.

The bike-engined single-seater category has been a BRSCC series ever since it was founded but has now decided to switch to the 750MC for 2019 with the club's focus on affordable motorsport.

"I'd like to thank the BRSCC for hosting us through 21 years of various iterations of championships," said championship manager Frazer Corbyn. "Now is the right time, for the F1000 Championship to move to the 750 Motor Club which has been known as the 'Home of Affordable Motorsport' since 1939.

"This will enable drivers, teams and the championship to build on the current

growth of our grids and also ensure its long-term sustainability.

"We are grateful for the support the BRSCC has given our championships over the years and wish the BRSCC and all its competitors and championships a successful future."

Giles Groombridge, 750MC competitions manager, added: "It's great to have a single-seater slicks and wings race category back in our portfolio after a five or six year's absence. We look forward to getting them up and running as soon as possible."

F1000 is the second long-standing BRSCC series to move away from the club in recent years, following Mighty Minis moving to the British Automobile Racing Club for the 2016 season.



End of an era: F1000, formerly Formula Jedi, was with BRSCC for 21 years

## Eastwell savours 'chance of a lifetime' after winning Mazda Road to Indy Shootout ticket

Formula Ford racer Michael Eastwell is the latest driver from the UK in with a chance of winning a \$200,000 (£155,560) scholarship in America courtesy of the Mazda Road to Indy Shootout.

With four Champion of Brands victories this year the Kevin Mills Racing driver confirmed his place in James Beckett's Super Series Shootout earlier this month.

And with Ollie White—who won the other two Champion of Brands races—too old to compete in the MRTI Shootout Eastwell was guaranteed the coveted ticket.

"It was one of my main aims for the year," said Eastwell, who finished second in this year's British Racing and Sports Car Club's National FF1600 series.

"The ticket was huge to

me this year and I really do intend to race in America next year, this could be a life-changing opportunity."

He will join Josh Smith (Festival winner), Matt Round-Garrido (Northern Ireland FF1600 champion) and Ross Martin (Scottish champion) in December at Bondurant Racing School along with drivers from other regions.

National FF1600 champion Niall Murray has declined

his ticket having contested the Shootout for the last two years, but Matt Cowley and James Roe Jr are in contention for one of five 'at-large' entries at Mazda's discretion.

Irishman Keith Donegan won last season's MRTI Shootout after securing his spot with runner-up in the Formula Ford Festival, and this year will be the final time Mazda supports the scheme.



Eastwell took four Champion of Brands wins this season for KMR

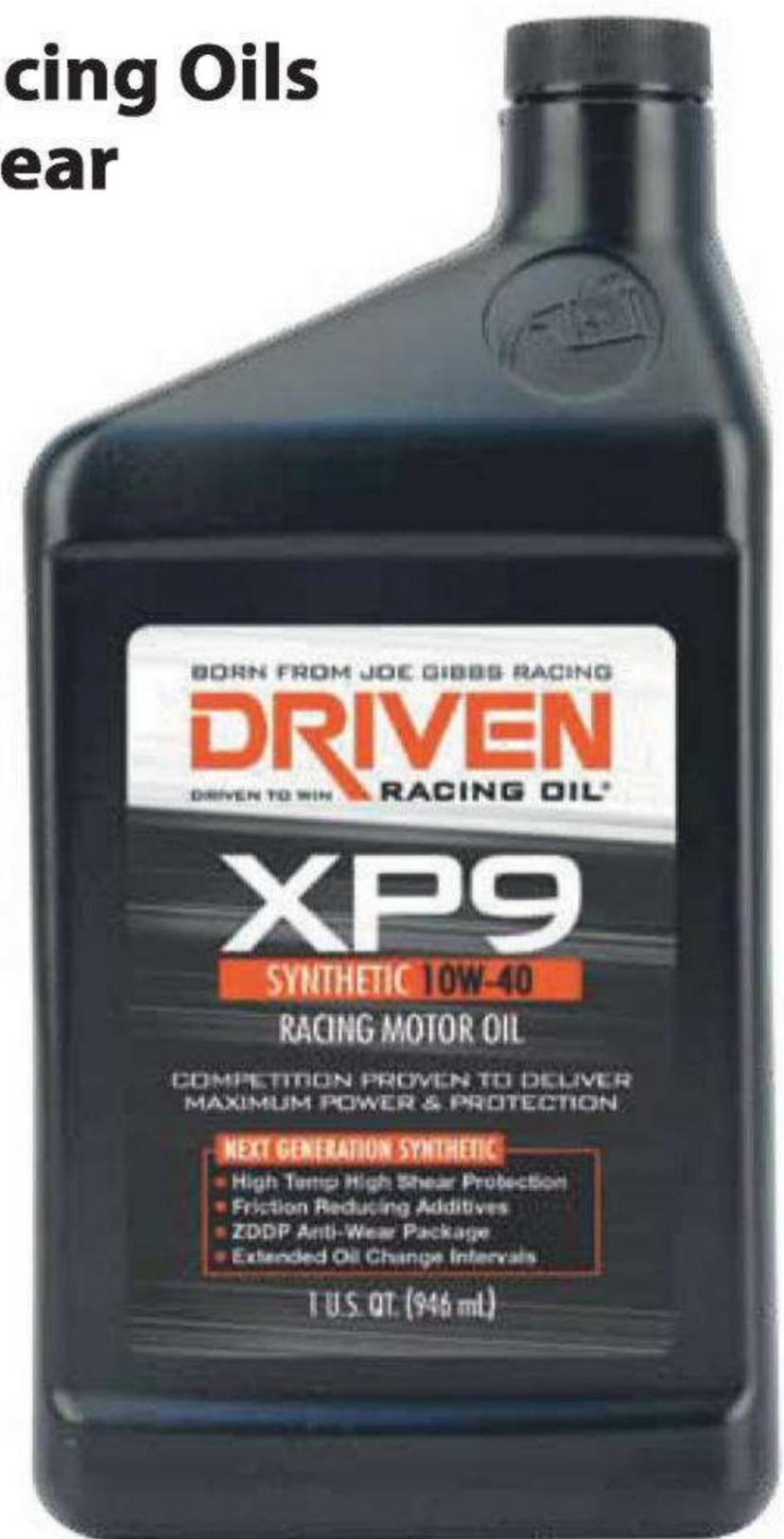
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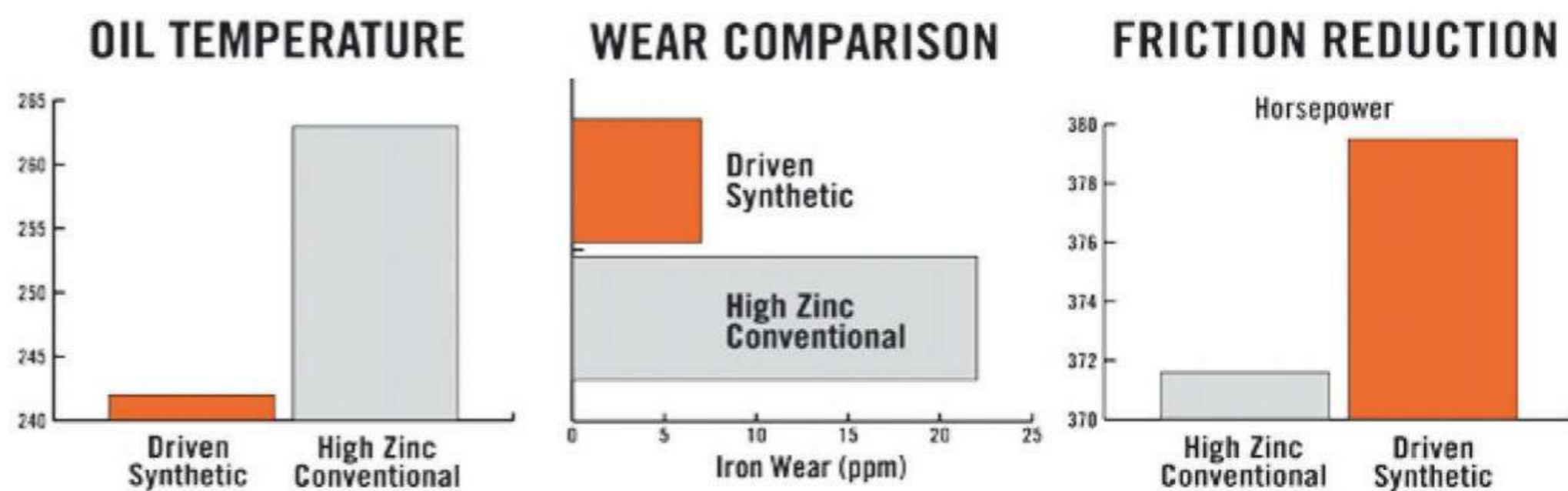
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# HISTORICS

'Diffey father and son  
in capacity entry'  
VSCC Cotswold Trial, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence

## DOWN THE PUB WITH

**NICK FENNEL**

Lotus racer  
Age: not given! Lives: Cambridge

### He started on two wheels

"I started racing motorbikes in Asia and then raced bikes in Australia while I was working overseas. I did some marathon rallying in Australia and did the London-Sydney in 2000. Then I did some racing in Asia before moving back to the UK and I've been racing since then."

### He's a Lotus man

"I've raced on and off for about 15 years and always as an amateur. This year I've mainly been racing the Formula Junior Lotus 27 and the Lotus 23B in the Guards Trophy. Other years I've raced with the HGPCA in a Lotus 25. I'm a big Lotus enthusiast. Colin Chapman was a great innovator and Jim Clark is my hero, so I race Lotuses pretty much."

### The 27 has a good history

"The Formula Junior is the Ecurie Ford France car that Jo Schlesser raced in period and Jean Vinatier raced it as well. It is a lovely car to drive and it is still very original. Classic Team Lotus restored it for me many years ago now and we made a big effort to get things period correct."

### He has an ex-Clark car

"A Lotus 27 won the Formula Junior championship in 1963 with Peter Arundel but they are quite hard to set up and it has taken us a lot of time to get to grips with it. But it is running well now, though we could always do a bit better. The Lotus 25 is a Jim Clark car and Classic Team Lotus is the natural team to use to run the car. It fits well there."

### There is also a sports-racer

"I've had the Lotus 23B sports-racing car for a long time but we've only really started campaigning it this year. That's an important car as it won the Autosport championship in 1965 with Robin Widdows with a one-litre BRM Formula 2 engine. Now I run it with a Lotus twin-cam, as a lot were in period. I've still got the original engine, but there is nowhere to race it. It was raced in the 1970s by David Dawson and won the Classic Sports Car Championship in 1977, so it has a long history. It's nice to have a two-driver race in the Guards Trophy and I've been sharing it with Jon Milicevic this season."



Fennell is a Lotus fanatic



New event for the  
Historic F2 calendar

# HISTORIC F2 TO RACE AT SILVERSTONE CLASSIC

Classic F3 will also feature as 1970s single-seaters are showcased

By Paul Lawrence

Single-seaters of the 1970s will play a central part in the 2019 Silverstone Classic as Historic F1, Historic F2 and Classic F3 will provide a celebration of international-level single-seater racing.

Alongside the regular races for the FIA Masters Historic Formula One Championship, the Historic Formula 2 and Classic Formula 3 categories

from the Historic Sports Car Club will feature, with Historic F2 making its debut at the biggest historic racing festival of the season.

The addition of the Silverstone Classic date is another major boost for the Historic Formula 2 FIA International Series, which is enjoying unprecedented levels of support for the 1600cc and two-litre cars from 1967 to '78. The short-lived rival series run

by Peter Auto has been dropped for 2019 due to lack of support.

Formula 2 grids during 2018 were regularly between 25 and 30 cars and, with more cars being prepared for next season, a grid of up to 40 cars is possible. If so, it could be the biggest-ever Formula 2 grid.

Meanwhile, Classic F3 is for 1600cc and two-litre F3 cars originally built and raced between 1971 and '84. Competitors in the French

series will join the Silverstone grid to produce an expected field of more than 40 cars.

Grahame White, CEO of the HSCC said: "The chance to race at the Silverstone Classic is very special and I'm delighted that our Formula 2 and Formula 3 grids will get this opportunity. I think we will be able to deliver bumper grids and showcase these categories to a very big audience."



Anglesey circuit has not featured on HSCC schedule before

## HSCC to make first visit to Anglesey track

The Historic Sports Car Club's first race meeting at Anglesey is the key change for the club's 2019 race programme.

The July 13/14 meeting at Anglesey features in an expanded 10-event championship that takes in three flagship race weekends: the Silverstone GP International Trophy (May 18/19), the Legends of Brands Hatch Superprix on the GP circuit (June 29/30) and the Oulton Park Gold Cup (August 24-26).

The club's 53rd season starts at the end of March at Donington Park and concludes with the two-day Finals Meeting at Silverstone in October.

HSCC CEO Grahame White said: "I'm pleased to confirm the club's first race meeting at Anglesey. We've been trying to make it happen for several years. It is a tremendous venue for a mid-summer event and we will take most of our classes and give them good track time with double-header races."

## Mini celebration at Members' Meeting

Sixty years of the Mini will be marked by an all-Mini race at the 77th Goodwood Members' Meeting in April.

A decade after a similar race at the Goodwood Revival, the Betty Richmond Trophy will be run for Pre '66 Mini saloons and variants. Mini aces like Nick Swift, Nick Padmore and Jonathan Lewis are likely contenders.

In 2009 the pairing of Swift and Oliver Gavin took victory when the St Mary's Trophy was run as a two-part race for Pre '66 Minis.

The race is named after the current Duke's grandmother, Elizabeth 'Betty' Richmond, who was an early Mini owner.

## Stokes's Escort to undergo a rebuild

One of the best-known Ford Escorts in historic rallying is currently undergoing a bare-shell rebuild after contesting at least 100 rallies in the last decade.

The white Escort Mk1 'AFW 66K' was made famous by the late David Stokes and has been rallied by his younger brother Andrew over the last two seasons. David took all four of his British Historic Rally Championship titles in the car and Andrew decided that it was time for a major rebuild.

"The last rebuild was when David hit an electricity pylon in Flanders in about 2006, so we think it has done at least 100 rallies since then," said Andrew.

It is due to be ready for Rally North Wales in late March.



The Escort powered David Stokes to four BHRC crowns



Rally of the Tests announced

## IN BRIEF

### MG birthday

The 95th birthday of the MG marque will be celebrated at the MG Car Club's annual Silverstone Grand Prix circuit race meeting next summer (June 15/16). As well as a full weekend of MG racing, the MGLive event will also mark the 60th birthday of the California Cup Autotest, which is awarded to the fastest three-car MG team representing their local club centre.

### Entries filling

The first 100 entries for the Legends Boucles Bastogne arrived in just two weeks after entries opened on November 1 for the biggest historic rally of the year in Belgium. "It really has taken off, seeing as last year it took one month to reach a similar result," said organiser Pierre Delettre. The first entry taken was the Citroën 2CV of Patrick Marechal in the Classic section.

### Grant honoured

Historic Formula Ford racer Callum Grant was honoured at the HSCC's annual awards night on Saturday with the 'Clubman of the Year' award. Grant was central to the rescue of fellow racer Nelson Rowe from his upside down and on fire Crossle at Cadwell Park in May and was recognised for his selfless bravery immediately following the dramatic accident.

### Diffey's on trial

Father and son Simon and George Diffey, both Formula Junior racers, were among a capacity field for the VSCC Cotswold Trial on Saturday. As well as three hills at the event's Prescott base, the 110 starters tackled a further nine hills nearby. Diffey senior campaigned his 1928 Humbug Dog Cart while George was in a 1930 Austin 7.

### Colman's engine

Hugh Colman is currently having a fresh BMW engine built by Lester Owen for his Chevron B8 ahead of a full return to racing next season. The car was badly damaged at Brands Hatch in July 2017 but was finally rebuilt in time for the B8 anniversary race at Oulton Park in August. Unfortunately, in qualifying the engine let go following a detached pipe the previous day.

### Silver Fern bid

Welsh crew Meirion Evans and Iestyn Williams will start their bid to win the Silver Fern Rally for a second time on Saturday. The Ford Escort Mk2 crew will lead nine UK entries on the eight-day, 800 stage mile rally on New Zealand's North Island. The rally starts in Hamilton and finishes a week later in Rotorua after the final stage on the famous Motu Road WRC test.

### Testing route

The preliminary route for the 2019 edition of the Rally of the Tests has been announced, with crews heading from Torquay to Chester. The three-and-a-half day event will start on the evening of Thursday November 7 and finish on Sunday afternoon after a series of special tests and regularity sections.

## RALLY NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Ogier is against drivers doing one-off rallies

Loeb came, saw and conquered in Spain

# OGIER: GUEST DRIVERS NOT WELCOME IN WRC

## The new champion says one-off appearances must be rethought

By David Evans

**World Rally Championship stars Sebastien Ogier and Thierry Neuville have called for changes to the rules to avoid 'guest' drivers taking points and potentially interfering with the direction of the title.**

In recent years Kris Meeke and Sebastien Loeb have taken wins while not competing in the full year and Ogier feels that has to end.

Ogier told *Motorsport News*: "I have said this before, but I say it again: we are the most guest-friendly motorsport in the world. The guests enjoy to come with us and, most of the time, they select the rallies they come to [to win]."

"Thierry said the same and I think all of the top drivers who are doing a full championship are in agreement about this.

"It is frustrating to see guys come to a few selected rallies where they know they have a huge advantage and put us in

the shadow. That's frustrating, for sure. I would just mention that I don't want to be in this situation."

There is, of course, an irony in that Ogier's desire to put a stop to part-programmes would inhibit Citroën's ability to bring Loeb back for a repeat of his three-round effort this year.

Ogier was quick to point out this is nothing personal against his countryman.

"Believe me," said Ogier, "I would be very happy to have him with us full time in the championship again."

Asked if he had discussed the matter of a Loeb programme with his future employer at Citroën, Ogier replied: "I haven't said anything against Seb, but I told them I don't think it's normal that we have drivers doing only a few rallies. This is not especially against him [Loeb], it's just that he is the best of the guest drivers. For sure, I mention I don't think it's normal to give such a

position to the guest [driver]."

While Citroën team principal Pierre Budar is not in a position to confirm whether his team will run a third C3 WRC or not next season, he would not rule out a possible part-time programme for Loeb or another driver in 2019.

"I don't think we should say they shouldn't be allowed," Budar told *MN*. "We can see how positive it is for the championship to have some guest stars coming in. On our position, we will have clear target next year and we have to make all the decision not to interfere with this target. If we have some drivers coming in one time during the championship, we have to make sure it will not interfere with our top drivers doing the full season. Next year, we have to fight for a championship, it will be difficult and I don't want to make it more difficult for ourselves.

"If we bring drivers, we have to properly select a rally where

they come in, maybe it's on Tarmac. There are several ways to do this properly and this is something we have to manage."

Budar categorically denied there was any kind of contractual issue with Loeb returning to drive a Citroën next season.

Neuville sympathised with Ogier, but put forward a more straightforward solution.

The Belgian said: "They should drive in the front, [on] Tarmac and gravel. If you come and you are not the driver doing all of the rounds of the championship then you should go first on the first day of the rally. For me in Spain, it would have been much easier for me to have been fighting with Ogier if we would have him [Loeb] and also [Ken] Block at the front. It's ridiculous: we are fighting for the championship, but we are looking stupid when you are driving so fast, but just cleaning all of the time. Let them go to the front and do this job."

### Why Ogier's win does him no favours

**MOTORSPORT NEWS**  
says...

Three years ago Sebastien Ogier and I stood in the Coff's Harbour service park and discussed the potential implications of a World Rally Championship fight going down to the wire in Australia.

The then Volkswagen driver shuddered at the prospect. "It would not be fair," he said. "How could it? The championship leader would be penalised so much for being at the front of the road – they could not win." Admittedly, at that time, the championship leader was running first on the road for Friday and Saturday, but it was easy to see where he was going with his argument.

Last week, Ogier did little to strengthen his argument by winning the title from the front of the field on Friday. But he remained



Ogier: road penalties

resolute that change needs to be considered.

"How," he asked *MN*, "do you explain to our fans that the three fastest WRC drivers were at the bottom of the top 10 after the first day of Rally Australia? It makes no sense and it's another example of how stupid the rules are that we are running right now.

"I don't think this is to do with finishing the championship in Australia – actually it's more about the rules. It's a shame, but it's nothing new."

**GUY SMITH TASTES SUCCESS IN MN CIRCUIT SERIES AT CADWELL**
**PAGE 19**

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'Lepley was a hero  
in the Silver Star'

BTRDA Series reviewed, p28



Mikkelsen:  
Strong in Oz

## MIKKELSEN'S FUTURE IN DOUBT

Hyundai's 2019 driver line-up came under intense speculation last week, with another disastrous rally for Andreas Mikkelsen prompting debate about his position in the team.

Distracted by passing a tractor on a stage (see story below), the Norwegian rolled his i20 Coupe WRC out of contention on the first morning of his favourite rally. That accident ended Mikkelsen's hopes of concluding his worst WRC season on a high.

Mikkelsen has a contract with Hyundai for next year, but the team's hierarchy have avoided detailing precisely what the 29-year-old's deal means.

*Motorsport News* asked team manager Alain Penasse if there was potential it could rotate two drivers, running only Thierry Neuville in a full-time car.

"I don't know," said Penasse, before joking: "Maybe we'll rotate all three cars. This rally is not going to change his

[Mikkelsen's] future. It would have been good if they could have done a good event here to put his head straight again."

Mikkelsen admitted his departure from a rally he led last year and won in 2016 was tough to take. He said: "I don't know what's happened. I didn't forget how to drive a car – it must be something else."

Asked if he feared being benched next season, Mikkelsen added: "I am working with this

team next year, I want the best for all of us, so it's really important that I get out of this bad spiral. I guess I need just one good result and then I can relax and drive like normal."

Mikkelsen highlighted suspension set-up issues which he feels had further complicated his season. He said: "I have been missing the consistency in the feeling from the car. What I need is to find one damper I like and stick with it."

## GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

# DAVID EVANS

"Rally Australia needs a new base to thrive"



**I**'ve got a few words I'd like to put to you. Let's see if they mean anything to you. Ready? Here goes: "Car number one did not go around the elements of the chicane as shown in the Road Book at Box 18 on SS22, and, as such, a 10-second penalty was added to the stage time on SS22 for car number one."

Stewards' decision number seven issued during the third round of this year's World Rally Championship, Rally Mexico.

That 10-second penalty cost Ogier four points. Going into last week's season finale at Rally Australia, he was three points ahead of Thierry Neuville. It's not much of a stretch to imagine that stewards' decision could have cost Ogier his season and a world title.

Am I missing something? More pertinently, aren't Jari-Matti Latvala, Neuville and, no doubt, a whole host of other drivers missing something. Something like a 10-second penalty?

Surely I wasn't the only person to watch car after car canon off the Sherwood chicane and then wait for the stewards to sit in judgement. But they didn't. Not a sausage, let alone a second, was added to any totals. Now, that's probably because nobody protested the fact that they went around the chicane in a way other than that directed in the road book. I'm sure there's an entirely worthwhile judicial process to be followed here, but at the same time rules are rules. Consistency is all we're asking for.

Anyway, apologies for a slightly negative start to the column in a week where we celebrate the culmination of one of the best season's rallying in the history of the sport. And it really was an absolute classic.

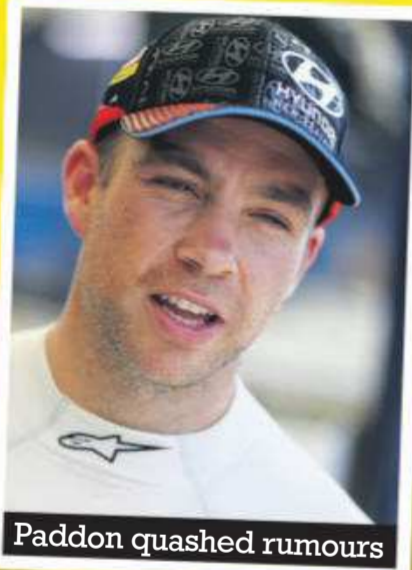
Question is (and I might be about to get a bit moany again...) was Coffs Harbour worthy of such a sporting contest? When we first came here in 2011, I didn't really get the place.

It's a small seaside town with a miniscule population by comparison with Sydney to the south and Brisbane to the north. Eight years on and I've grown to really quite like the place. But that perennial question of a lack of spectators remains. Such is the strength of feeling among the manufacturers that I suspect hands could be forced on this one and the fact that Australia has no workable alternative for the home of its round of the world championship won't wash with a promoter which regularly reports countries queuing around the block to join the fun.

All that said, I still love Australia. I love the seriousness with which the locals approach a long black coffee and the green cross code. Paradoxically I love the laid back approach to public service announcements. Triple M, the Coffs coast's finest radio station regularly reported the arrival of the World Rally Championship in town. There was then a description of how and where to watch the action, with the advice: "If you lean into the road, you're a bloody idiot."

Clearly, the bloke the New South Wales police are currently chatting to wasn't listening when he arrived in the Welshs Creek test on Saturday and decided a safe distance from the cars equated to the thick edge of a cigarette paper.

A genuine, nine-carrot bloody idiot if ever we saw one.



Paddon quashed rumours

## Paddon: My focus is fully on the World Rally Championship

Hayden Paddon has slammed speculation that his priority has switched to his New Zealand programme and away from the World Rally Championship.

Paddon has spent the last two years developing his own rally car and team for the NZ series, but the Kiwi has told *Motorsport News* his focus remains 100 per cent on the world championship.

"I don't understand where this stuff comes from," said Paddon. "So many of the drivers have projects going on at home, it's the same for Jari-Matti [Latvala]

or Thierry [Neuville], the only difference is that my home is New Zealand."

Paddon has even been criticised for travelling home instead of staying in Europe.

"I don't get that travel thing," he said, "I get on a plane, go to sleep and get off at the other end – living in New Zealand, you get used to long plane rides! I'm more relaxed at home than living out of a suitcase. I'm committed to Hyundai and want to stay here."

Team principal Michel Nandan told *MN* he expected to firm-up

his team early next month.

Nandan said: "Our aim is to share the third car again, it worked not too bad this year. We will keep like that."

Nandan added there was no hurry to make any decisions and would explore every avenue before putting pen to paper.

*MN* understands one of those options could be bringing Citroen driver Craig Breen to the team. Sources within the German squad confirmed talks between Hyundai management and the Irishman.

## Virtual chicanes an alternative for WRC

The FIA has come under pressure to introduce virtual chicanes into the World Rally Championship in an effort to avoid situations like last week's Rally Australia when a tractor was driven down a live stage.

The governing body is investigating the intrusion into the Sherwood test, when Andreas Mikkelsen was forced to overtake a tractor travelling down the stage. He crashed shortly afterwards.

*MN* sources explained the situation, saying: "[Jari-Matti] Latvala hit the straw bale in the chicane and blocked the road. The marshals on the scene decided to take the tractor and move the bale out of the road and back into position. They thought they had three minutes to do the job. Andreas arrived while they were driving the tractor back."

The technology exists to run a virtual chicane in the cars, with Hyundai team manager Alain Penasse keen to see it employed.

"It's like a pitlane restrictor," Penasse said. "We are told that, at a precise position, the car must not exceed, for example, 30mph. The car travels for a set distance at that speed and then speeds up again. For me, this is a much better idea."

The drivers were angry at the tractor incident, with Esapekka Lappi saying: "There is no excuse for this. Somebody could have been killed."

The FIA's Yves Matton said: "The organiser conducted an investigation into the circumstances of this incident. It is important to understand why this happened as it did. We continue to study alternative speed reduction solutions, one of which is virtual chicanes."



Aussie fans were in big danger

## Dangerous fans cause worry Down Under

For the second year in succession the police are investigating a case of dangerous spectating at Rally Australia.

Fans lying on the ground on the inside of a fast left-hander on Saturday's Welshs Creek Reverse stage have been identified and contacted by the Coffs Harbour police. They were identified from an onboard camera from Thierry

Neuville's Hyundai, which passed within inches of the pair at close to 80mph.

With the matter now in the hands of the police, the event organisers were not in a position to make a formal comment, but one driver told *MN*: "What's wrong with these people? If anybody had cut that corner just a little bit, they'd have driven straight over their head. Unbelievable."

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# RALLY NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

# RALLY AUSTRALIA BOSSES URGED TO SWITCH BASE

## Lack of spectators angers leading WRC players

By David Evans

**The World Rally Championship departed Coffs Harbour with the teams once again calling for Rally Australia to find a new home.**

The New South Wales host town is one of the most controversial of the season, with the teams angered at the lack of fans for what was a thrilling finale to this year.

Toyota team principal Tommi Mäkinen said: "What are we doing here? This is not the right place. We come here to the middle of nowhere and there is nobody watching. We have incredible, incredible end to the year, but no atmosphere.

"I don't understand this. When I was competing we were in Australia in Perth and almost every year we had the rally voted as the best. But not this rally.

"I met some fans who had come from Brisbane, that is four-hour drive up the road and they say there's nothing, no promotion all the way from there. The championship has been decided with nobody watching – this is maybe the reason we have to have the final round in Europe."

Year on year, there are demands for the event to head south to Sydney, but Rally Australia clerk of the course

Wayne Kenny told *Motorsport News* he could put that one to bed.

Kenny said: "I've been down there for four days driving around trying to get enough distance. From a possible base in western Sydney, and we're talking 20 miles out of the city centre [for the base] and there's just not enough mileage.

"In the end I couldn't even get 200 miles [of stages] out of a possible route. I had a look at it, tried to make it work

and it's just not viable at the moment.

"You might get away with a superspecial, but we've already tried that three times and failed each time for environmental reasons."

WRC Promoter is keen to move away from Coffs Harbour, but it remains understanding of the event's plight in trying to find a new home – and is willing to accept a Coffs-based Rally Australia rather than no event down under.

Where were the fans?

## Junior season to finish on Wales Rally GB

Next season's Junior World Rally Championship will reach its conclusion at Wales Rally GB for the first time in three years.

Britain's WRC round returns to the Junior calendar to replace this season's controversial finale in Turkey – a rally many felt too tough for the single-make Ford Fiesta R2 series.

The remainder of the calendar remains unchanged, starting in the snow in Sweden, before moving

to Corsica for the ultimate Tarmac test. Sardinia ensures the crews' ability to deal with rough gravel will be tested in the heat of the Italian island's summer and the next event in Finland will discover who's the fastest of the fast. Wales provides a third and final gravel counter of the season.

The prize for the winner of next year's Junior WRC remains the same as this one: a factory-fresh Ford Fiesta R5 and support package to tackle WRC2 in 2020.



The one-make series will end with a round in the UK

## WRC cars on show in the centre of Milan

The World Rally Championship will return to mainland Italy for the first time in 15 years next month, when the four manufacturers take part in a WRC roadshow in Milan.

All four cars will be on show in the city's Piazza del Duomo before moving over to take part in the Monza Rally Show.

The WRC hasn't been back in northern Italy since its WRC counter departed Sanremo bound for Sardinia in 2003.

A second WRC roadshow will run in Estonia next year, where all four works teams will run a car at Rally Estonia.

WRC Promoter managing director Oliver Ciesla told *Motorsport News* the roadshows were part of a new initiative to increase awareness of the series.

"We started this kind of thing when we began with the [WRC] Gala evening in Sydney a few years ago," he said, "and then we have the launch at Autosport International which is such an important step in waking up the

community to the start of the new season. But now we have two more, one in Italy and one in Estonia.

"Having the four cars in the Piazza del Duomo on December 6 will be very, very special. We will put the cars in the middle of the big crowd of Christmas shoppers – through this we will get in touch with tens of thousands of people. After this, the cars will go on to Monza to take part in that event."

Estonia's inclusion is no surprise given WRC demand in Ott Tänak's home country.

"We saw some of the teams go to Estonia for the rally last year and the interest was very strong," said Ciesla. "As you can imagine, Estonia is tremendous with Ott's success. Having the rally just a couple of weeks before Finland is a perfect chance to show off the cars and the championship."

M-Sport was the only team not running a car on the Otepää-based event last year. Tänak won in a Toyota with Hayden Paddon (Hyundai) and Craig Breen (Citroën) second and third.

## Rossi chases win on the Monza Rally

Valentino Rossi will make his debut in a latest-specification Ford Fiesta WRC at the Monza Rally (December 7-9).

The MotoGP star is chasing a record-breaking seventh win at the Italian circuit, but is just one of four cars coming out of M-Sport's Cockerham stable.

M-Sport Ford World Rally Team driver Teemu Suninen will drive a factory Fiesta on his debut at the popular circuit-based event. "It's always popular for us," said M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson, "and to have a driver like Valentino is great news for all of his fans."

Hyundai competed at Monza last year, with Andreas Mikkelsen and Sebastien Ogier sharing the driving in an i20 WRC. This year the South Korean firm – along with Citroën and Toyota – will only supply show cars.

● British Rally Championship



Rossi wants another win

front-runner Rhys Yates will compete at Monza for the second time in less than a month when he joins the likes of Rossi and Suninen. Yates finished second on the Vedovati Corse event last weekend – a warm-up event for the Monza Rally at the same circuit – making his debut in a 2016-spec Ford Fiesta RS WRC. He will use the HK Racing car again on the December 7-9 event. "We'll go to the full Monza event, and I hope we can fight for a podium or a top five, I want to be competitive," said Yates.

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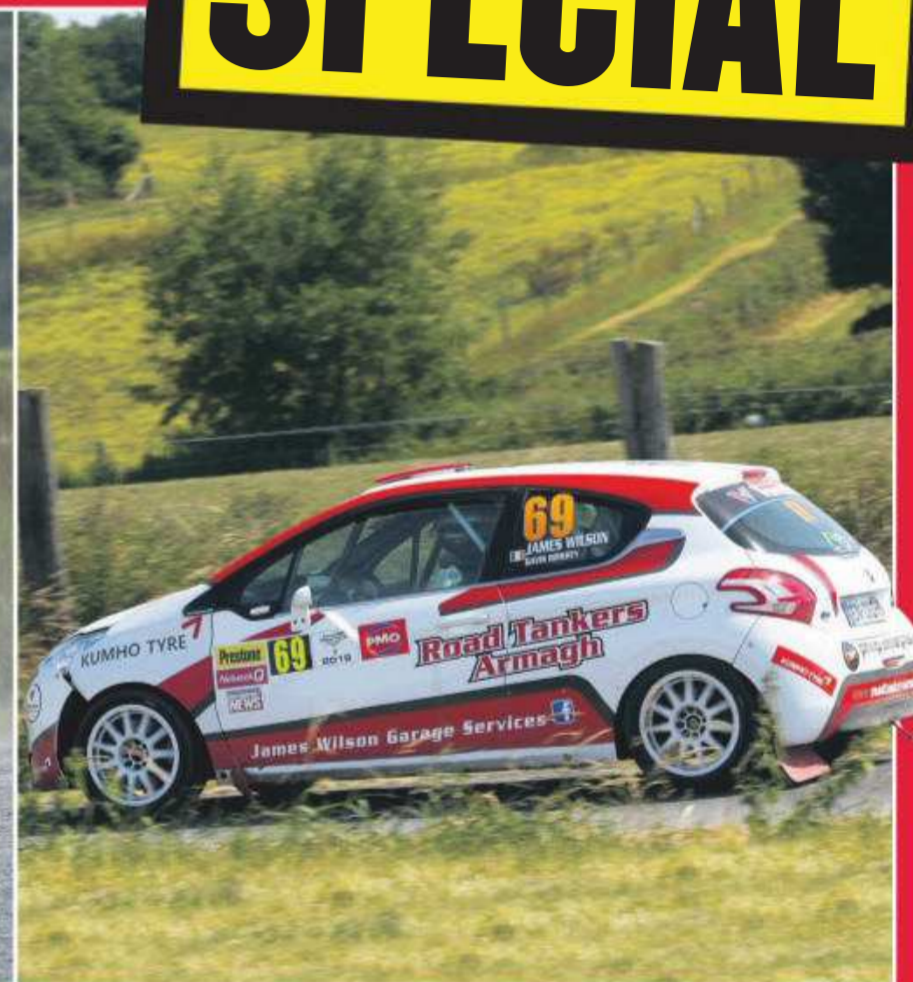


# RALLY NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Roy Dempster, Kenneth Routledge, SMJ Photography, pro-rally.co.uk

## BILLY COLEMAN AWARD

## AWARDS SPECIAL



Jason Black (l), Jordan Hone (c) and James Wilson (r) have made it to the final of the Billy Coleman Award, which hands the eventual winner a prize worth €50,000. Toyota Starlet man Black won the Irish National Rally Junior Championship this year, Hone won his class on multiple events in an Opel Adam R2 and Wilson (Peugeot 208 R2) claimed the Irish Forest Rally Junior Championship. All three are first-time nominees, and the winner will be announced on December 4.

### R.A.C. joins Rally2 Championship

The Roger Albert Clark Rally will form part of a fresh attempt to attract two-wheel-drive cars onto gravel rallies in 2019, as it will be included in the Rally2 Championship next season.

The Rally2WD campaign was a rally format launched at the beginning of the year, incorporating events which split into two and run as separate events for two and four-wheel-drive cars with the intention of giving historic and two-wheel drives better road position at the front of the field.

It was incredibly successful, and as part of it the Rally2 Championship launched to cater to the interest.

But in June, Motorsport UK chairman David Richards helped to alleviate the issue by allowing events to seed in two separate fields, meaning most gravel events since have run low-powered and historic cars at the front.

That left the Rally2 series

#### CALENDAR

Rally2	
DATE	EVENT
March 30	Rally North Wales
April 27	Pirelli International Rally
June 8	Carlisle Stages
Aug 31	Woodpecker Rally
Nov 24	Roger Albert Clark Rally

Two-wheel-drive crews can compete with each other

seemingly lacking appeal, but championship co-ordinator Matt Cotton is confident this year's calendar, which also adds the Woodpecker Rally, is of value to relevant crews.

"You could say that Rally2 lost its USP in the middle of last season but one thing is clear from the feedback we have had over the past few months, and that is there is still a big appetite for the Rally2 series in 2019," said Cotton.

"We have listened to our competitors and brought in some changes for next



year while keeping the championship fresh and interesting for all crews, no matter what they are driving or how experienced they are."

For the R.A.C., Rally2 drivers will be eligible for points on the Sunday leg taking in parts of southern Scotland. Those competing in the full R.A.C. can also register.

The events missing from this year's calendar are the Trackrod Rally and the Red Kite Stages.

A reserve entry list has been opened for the R.A.C. after the

capacity of 130 deposits from UK crews was passed.

The five-day, 300-stage mile event will start one year today, on November 21, 2019.

Six of the 20 places reserved for overseas crews have also been taken.

Rally manager Colin Heppenstall said: "We know from experience that some of those deposits will be withdrawn over the coming months for a whole host of reasons. So if anyone is considering entering, please do not be put off."

### Parry back on the stages for recces

Recently retired co-driver Craig Parry will return to the rally stages of Wales next year, working to provide pacenotes to the Welsh Rally Championship.

Parry will link up with fellow co-driver Killian Duffy and his OnthepacenoteUK company, which provides organisers notes to various events across the UK and Ireland.

The 2016 British Rally champion – alongside Elfyn Evans – suffered career-ending injuries from a testing crash for Rally Germany earlier this year while sat beside Gus Greensmith.

Between Parry and Duffy they have almost 100 WRC starts, and the pair will recce stages to provide feedback to crews on the conditions of the roads in a special briefing at the signing on of each event.

"Killian and I are delighted to be linking up with such a popular series which has grown spectacularly in recent seasons," said Parry. "I am also excited by the



Parry: back on the stages

prospect of working with the next generation of co-drivers and helping them develop their careers."

As preferred note supplier to the Welsh series, Onthepacenote UK will offer registered contenders notes for each round in a variety of formats at a fixed price of £50 per event including postage and packaging. A two-camera angle DVD of every stage will also be available for £20 per event.

This year, Dylan Davies and Llion Williams won the Welsh title in their B13-spec Subaru Impreza.

### Bogie: test for Killarney debut



### Bogie completes first test in developmental new Ford Escort Mk2

David Bogie tested his brand new Tarmac Ford Escort Mk2 last weekend ahead of the Killarney Stages next month.

The Escort, built by Mk2 expert Hamish Kinloch, is lighter and more powerful than Bogie's previous car he won the 2016 Donegal National in, with a prototype Millington engine fitted that revs up to 9,500rpm and has a fly-by-wire throttle.

"The car feels a lot more responsive and quicker [than the old one]. There's more torque from the engine too which now produces around 360-380 horsepower, which you can really feel with less weight.

"We started with a hard set-up which is great for a race track but no use for Irish roads, so we've softened it up," Bogie explained.

"We'll do another test before

Killarney, either here or in Ireland, as we lost time today due to a throttle issue which is to be expected with a new car.

"Killarney will be tough, the stages are like Mull where they're so specialist. We will have our work cut out to keep up with Rob Duggan. I can make the best possible pacenotes but these guys know where all the little bumps are which can really add up."

'Rally ace takes  
on truck racing'

Anderson's unusual switch, p27



# JOHN EASSON AWARD



The 2300 Club John Easson Award finalists have been revealed, with Silver Star and R2 Rallye Cup champion George Lepley (l) the only returning driver. The award is named after regular rally competitor Easson who died in an air accident in 1999, and the award has been run since 2004. Ewan Tindall (c) – who was rapid in his first season in the forests in the ST Rally Trophy – and British Rally Championship Cadet class frontrunner Finlay Retson (r) make up the final three, all of whom have competed in the ST Trophy and Junior 1000 series. The winner will receive £5000 towards entry fees in 2019, and £1000 if that person wins their class next season.

## Crash delays Kelly's season but a return is imminent

Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship frontrunner Mark Kelly is looking to return to the series at Brands Hatch in January, and plans to contest this weekend's Glyn Memorial Stages as his first since a crash in Jersey in October.

Kelly took two wins in the 2017/18 MN series – at Brands Hatch and the Alan Healy Memorial at Cadwell – in just his second full season of rallying and with no competition experience before that.

But a crash in his first closed-road pacenote event in Jersey set back his preparations.

"Put it down to experience," he said. "It was a mistake in the notes, we went through

a quick section and it was a square right. There was no chance, we weren't making the corner. I didn't even attempt it.

"There was a bit of engine damage. From the bulkhead back the car was fine."

Kelly will also look to contest the Lee Holland Memorial Rally at Anglesey next March, the penultimate round of the MN Championship, as his Tilemaster concern sponsors the event. He wants to return to the championship full-time in 2019-'20.

Last year's winner Wil Owen will provide tough opposition for Kelly at the Glyn Memorial at Anglesey Circuit, with 65 stage miles on offer across the two-day event.



Kelly won Cadwell event last year



Lewis won at Roskirk for his only max score in '18

## Lewis favourite for Junior Formula 1000 title

Despite lying fourth in the standings, Citroën C1 driver Eddie Lewis is in the driving seat to take a first Junior 1000 Rally Championship title this weekend in Anglesey.

The Glyn Memorial is the concluding round of the series which has produced the likes of Elfyn Evans and Chris Ingram.

The top two drivers in the series, Rob Cotton (C1) and Ioan Lloyd (C1), can both improve to 161 and 162 points respectively if they win.

But Lewis has two low scores to drop, and a finish of ninth will take him past into the lead.

Elliot Payne – son of 2016 BTRDA Gold Star champion Charlie – has been the standout driver of the year with four wins, but needs Lewis to finish 17th or lower to win the title. That would also require Wilson finishing fifth or lower and Lloyd sixth or lower.

At Cadwell last Saturday, Payne took victory by six seconds from Rob Wilson. Steven Jones jumped Lewis on the last stage to take a podium, albeit 37s adrift.

All four of the title protagonists competed on the Anglesey event last year, Payne being the highest finisher in second.

## O'Neill increases rallying involvement with MN series TV

British Touring Car Championship race winner Paul O'Neill will increase his involvement with the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship, narrating the series TV coverage in 2018/19.

O'Neill – who commentates for ITV4 on the BTCC and its

support championships – has competed in four MN events, all in a Paul Sheard-prepared Mazda MX-5.

The series is available to view on motorsport.tv, Frontrunner and Amazon Prime, with O'Neill narrating last weekend's round at

Cadwell Park onwards.

"For me to be involved having driven in the championship myself and seen how exciting it is, it's great," he said.

"I'm honoured to have been asked. I'm looking forward to it and I love my rallying. I can't wait to get started."



O'Neill has caught the rally bug

## REVELLING IN HISTORIC RALLYING

# PAUL LAWRENCE

"UK historic rallying faces a tough call"



**I**n my view, we are at a tipping point for historic stage rallying in the UK. Most signs for 2019 are positive: the running order debacle has been put to bed and the early support for the Roger Albert Clark Rally is a massive thumbs' up for this branch of the sport. But now the people steering UK historic rallying have a key decision to make. What to do about four-wheel-drive turbo cars?

FIA Category 4B opens historic rallying up to cars built before the end of 1990 and that means four-wheel-drive turbo cars like the Prodrive-developed Group A Subaru Legacy, Lancia Delta Integrale and Toyota Celica GT4 can compete in historic classes.

Already, the BTRDA has opened its Historic Cup to these cars but other historic series, notably the British Historic Rally Championship, are sticking with a two-wheel-drive rule, for now, at least.

In MN last month, Andrew Fenwick talked about plans to field as many as four Legacies in the BTRDA Historic Cup and his comments should have sent a chill through the two-wheel-drive ranks. The FIA-permitted 38mm restrictor will allow Legacies to turn out 350bhp (some pundits reckon that could be nearer to 400bhp) and Fenwick claims an advantage of up to 50 seconds per stage based on experience in Belgium. He admits that he can't see a Ford Escort touching a Legacy.

Even at 350bhp, the Legacy has a similar power advantage over a top-spec Escort Mk2 as that same Escort has over a Lotus Cortina: up to 100bhp. Add in four-wheel drive, and even an averagely-driven Legacy will blow the best Mk2 Escorts into the weeds. I reckon a well-driven Legacy will worry the R5s at the front of the BTRDA field.

I am not against these cars, but I am against them competing directly against the current historic. At a stroke, the historic fraternity risks alienating 70 per cent of its customers for the sake of perhaps four or five rocketships. Let them run in their own division and give it a suitable name, but don't add them to the historic field. Recent history in Belgium shows the damage that can be done to historic entries by one quick 4WD.

The competitor pool in historic rallying is getting older and some will stop rallying in the foreseeable future. We need to encourage younger drivers into historic and surely, now that the running order is sorted, we should be pushing more affordable and accessible cars: Peugeot 205s and 309s, Vauxhall Novas and Astras and Toyota Corollas for instance.

In historic racing terms, allowing 4WD turbo cars to join the historic field is akin to allowing 1600cc Formula 2 cars to race with Formula Juniors. Such a move would be considered utter folly and would do untold harm to the world's biggest historic racing category. So why do it in rallying?

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# MN RALLY REPORT

Photos: SMJ Photography

**West takes another strong score for MN title defence. By Dan Mason**

First Cadwell visit for Smith was fruitful



West took maximum MN points in 306 Maxi

## MORE RALLY SUCCESS FOR LE MANS WINNER SMITH

**G**uy Smith grabbed a last-gasp Cadwell Stages victory to deny reigning champion Chris West his first win of the season, aided by an inspired spectacle of family tactics.

A tale of two tyre choices proved the decisive factor in the afternoon's stages, as 2003 Le Mans 24 Hours winner Smith entered the final two stages of eight playing catch-up. Father Peter Smith then handed over a fresh set of Pirelli tyres to help his son's pursuit of West, a choice that would spur him to victory on his first visit to Cadwell Park.

A two-horse battle was set from the outset, the lead gap never surpassing 10 seconds across the eight special stages.

West's title defence had begun with uncertainty at Oulton Park, bedding in a new engine – which eventually ran poorly – in his Peugeot 306 Maxi. The champion vowed to “come back 110 per cent ready” at Cadwell, and his aggressive attacking style early on in slippery conditions hinted at a return to form.

He started best of all, Guy Smith

leading the Ford Fiesta charge in a learning state of mind. “This is the first time I’ve ever driven at Cadwell Park,” he said, enjoying more rally outings after previous success at Donington and Croft. “It’s seat-of-the-pants stuff!”

West's tail-happy style caught him out on the opening stage with a small mistake, but a more costly error would put pay to one of his main championship rivals, John Stone. The first car on the road, Stone's Ford Fiesta RS WRC got out of shape and collected the barriers, rear-wheel hub damage putting a potential favourite out before stage two with no spares available.

Stone's demise made West consider a conservative approach with championship points on his mind, and it told as two stage victories elevated Smith into the rally lead. “My confidence has grown,” said Smith. “I spent time watching onboard clips on YouTube to get an idea of it, but it's totally different when you go out there for the first time.”

Tentative thoughts soon became a distant memory for West when he bolted on fresh Michelin rubber for stages five and six. The switch paid dividends; the Peugeot went seven seconds quicker to move ahead, extending his lead cushion

to six seconds with another fastest time on the sixth stage.

A retort was needed, and the Smiths fought fire with fire.

Father Peter – running in a solid third place throughout the day – sacrificed his set of new Pirellis to allow for Smith Jr to try and undo the damage with two stages in darkness to go.

No stranger to racing through the night, Smith Jr and co-driver Patrick Walsh – who sat alongside Steve Simpson at Oulton Park – put the pressure on and were aided by a West stall at the top of the Mountain to move within two seconds with one stage remaining.

A turnaround loomed, and was completed when Smith went 11 seconds quicker to seal victory over a gallant West and co-driver Keith Hounslow, who returned after back pains forced him out at Oulton. “The car was about 75 per cent today,” West admitted. “He drove well. To be battling those Fords in this little car, and with teething troubles – I can be happy with that.”

On a weekend when Ott Tanak missed out on victory in Rally Australia, the Fiesta he once steered into a Mexican lake rounded out the podium at Cadwell thanks to Smith Sr, albeit 1m35s adrift.

“I donated Guy my tyres to

### RESULTS

#### MN Circuit Rally Championship, round 2/7, Cadwell Park, Nov 17

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Guy Smith/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta WRC	42m08s
2	Chris West/Keith Hounslow	Peugeot 306 Maxi	+9s
3	Peter Smith/Sion Cunniff	Fiesta WRC	+1m35s
4	Stephen Tilburn/Jack Tilburn	Ford Escort RS2500	+2m07s
5	John Griffiths/Nigel Wetton	Subaru Impreza	+2m10s
6	Colin Gemmell/Derek Keir	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m13s
7	Mike Taylor/Martin Hagggett	Talbot Sunbeam Lotus	+2m46s
8	Tom Blackwood/Gordon Winning	Escort Mk2	+2m59s
9	Ciro Carannante/Simon Coates	Porsche Cayman	+3m06s
10	Nick Whale/Paula Swinscoe	BMW M3	+3m06s

Event class winners: Smith/Walsh; West/Hounslow; Mike English/Andy Robinson (Escort Mk2); Chris Woodhouse/Alan Gilbert (Citroen C2); Patrick Homan/Thomas Homan (Ford Puma); Ian Barnes/Adam Read (Ford Ka). MN class winner: Dale/Andrew Lawson (MG ZR); Paul Sheard/Bruce Lindsay (Mazda MX-5); English/Robinson; West/Hounslow; P Smith/Cunniff.

give him a shot,” he added. “It’s been steady after I had no left-front shock.”

His podium place was briefly under threat from the Proton Satria S2500 Millington pairing of Wesley Simpson and Joe Ford. Simpson moved to within striking distance with a rapid stage four time, but would be penalised three minutes for receiving outside interference in parc ferme.

Colin Gemmell's Ford Escort Mk2 moved into a lofty fourth place, but a sluggish penultimate stage dropped him to sixth. The Escort RS2500 of Stephen Tilburn took advantage to finish fourth overall, pipping John

Griffiths' Subaru Impreza.

Behind sixth-placed Gemmell was the rapid Talbot Sunbeam Lotus of Mike Taylor, which consistently sat inside the top 10 all afternoon. Tom Blackwood and Gordon Winning climbed the order to eighth by the day's conclusion, Ciro Carannante bringing his Porsche Cayman home ninth on a day where brother Toni Carannante crashed his Subaru Impreza.

BRDC and Motorsport UK board director Nick Whale enjoyed a strong showing in his eye-catching BMW M3 with its mid-'90s Williams Formula 1-themed livery, rounding out the top 10 finishers.

### CLASS ROUND-UP

Just like the Oulton Park season opener, **Class B** went down to the wire between a trio of cars.

This time, Chris Woodhouse would come out on top to deny Paul Sheard with a late dash when darkness fell, although the latter benefitted in the MN series as Woodhouse isn't registered.

Sheard returned to the wheel of his Mazda MX-5 at Cadwell Park but was instantly hampered by gearbox dramas from the very first stage. Issues with fifth gear in particular left Sheard “having to abuse the car” to make it through the day, using just three gears and keeping tabs on engine temperatures as revs soared higher.

The reigning Class B champion still managed to grab the lead from Chris Platt's Vauxhall Tigra, which was benefiting itself from a repaired gasket head which had put him out of the opening rally of the season.

Woodhouse and co-driver Alan Gilbert had earlier arrived through the finishing post backwards at the conclusion of stage two, but the Citroen C2 pairing fought back in style to overpower Sheard and avenge their Oulton Park defeat.

The event and MN **Class C** was won by Mike English, but threatened a surprise in the morning as the foggy and slippery track conditions played into the hands of less powerful machinery.

Among those was the SEAT Ibiza of Stuart Popplewell and Nigel Barber, a car lacking in grunt compared to those of a chasing English and Rob Cox in their respective Ford Escort Mk2s.

“You get more satisfaction in these cars in those sort of conditions,” said Popplewell. “I did all the hard work and dangled the carrot in front of the Escorts for them to come and catch me.”

Cox would again be left “gutted” by gearbox gremlins that put him out of the

rally as it almost did at Oulton Park, but English would indeed reel in and overpower the Ibiza as the Tarmac rubbered in during the afternoon.

**Class A** was split for the event, **A1** honours going the way of Ian Barnes in the consistent Ford Ka while **A2** spoils were sealed by the rampant Ford Puma of Patrick and Thomas Homan. They started as car 94, but turned that into 36th overall in a brilliant run to the finish. Dale and Andrew Lawson (MG ZR) scored maximum MN Class A honours, second in Class A2 on the event.

Overall winners Smith and Walsh added the **D2** class to their victory reel at Cadwell Park, while West added his second class **D1** victory in two rallies.

West said: “We're still suffering a few teething troubles, but the biggest change I've been trying to get used to is the switch from Pirelli to Michelin tyres. It's a totally different feel.”



Class C honours for English



Homan pair won class A2



Sheard: MN Class B victory

# RALLY AUSTRALIA



BY DAVID EVANS

## Running order and rain made Australia a tense showdown

**A** dramatic finale provided a fitting conclusion to one of the hardest-fought World Rally Championships ever. Toyota could argue it had the fastest car in 2018 and Thierry Neuville led the points standings for much of the way, but in the end the title went to the man who has been here before. Sebastien Ogier secured a historic sixth crown in his last outing aboard an M-Sport Ford Fiesta WRC.

Not since 2003 had three drivers arrived at the final round with a chance of the crown, but the three crews in question had little interest in the past. It was the immediate future that interested them more.

Post a near-perfect penultimate round in Spain, a back-to-the-front Ogier was busy telling everybody it was better to have the points rather than a preferable position on the road.

Neuville was similarly sure second on the road would pay dividends more handsome than three points.

And Ott Tanak? He wasn't really saying much at all. As he had for the rest of the season, he was ready to let his driving take a lead in conversation.

In an effort to tally tiredness with a time zone turning a European evening into a bright Oz morning, the teams arrived earlier than ever. For the drivers, there had been photoshoots alongside Sydney's opera house, even a stroll along Bondi beach. The move up to coast to Coffs Harbour meant more manufactured smiles and a toboggan ride for Ogier, Neuville and Tanak.

Friday morning couldn't come soon enough.

M-Sport's service park manager Stewart Berry couldn't keep still. Walking, stalking, prowling, he smiled thinly. "We just need to get on with this now," he said. "We've been waiting for long enough."

He spoke for the entire service park. But, just at that precise moment, another minute or two wouldn't have gone amiss for any of the drivers.

Ahead of the final Friday's first loop, the teams were staring at the sky and wondering. What would the weather do? The drizzle intensified into rain. Then lifted, lightened. But the clouds were sitting heavy over the hills into which the cars were heading.

Ultimately, tyre choice was straightforward. With cooler ambient temperatures, everybody went with the softer choice.

Championship leader Ogier sat on a desk in M-Sport's command centre, surrounded by his favourite Cumbrians. Nobody said a word. Nobody needed to. There was no witty banter, no one-liners. Not this time.

A season and the champion's reign

was on the line. Team principal Malcolm Wilson emerged, serious race-face set. "He's up for it," he said. "It's going to be some day..."

It was the same story next door at Hyundai. The atmosphere was an odd one. So many questions were about to be answered. For team manager Alain Penasse this was just the beginning of a very long three days. "Today is not so bad," he said. "It's tomorrow [Saturday] and Sunday when the pressure comes, that's when we start to know which way this one's going."

"Then again, Ogier could put it up against a tree, damage the rollcage and it could be all over within the hour. They could put it on a plate for us in the first stage... or we could put it on a plate for them."

Plates were not pictured in the first hour. And neither was the rain Ogier had hoped for so badly.

Regular readers of these pages will be painfully well acquainted with the consequences of leading the championship into a warm, dry gravel rally. For the uninitiated, the gravel-strewn surface gets 'cleaned' – and faster – with each passing car when it's dry. Rain is what you want if you're first on the road.

The road facing Ogier on Friday was water-free. There was no point philosophising this one, it was a crisis in danger of becoming a disaster.

"Today's stages are bad for cleaning," he said, "but it's even worse tomorrow. Tomorrow is a disaster to be first on the road. And right now, that's me..."

Utterly hamstrung as his Ford Fiesta WRC floated across the loose surface, Ogier spent the morning spreading the stones and digging out a faster line for those following. The only crumb of comfort was that Neuville was only one place behind.

"It's very difficult," said Neuville. "I had a really big moment on the last stage, the car was on its nose over some of the jumps – I backed off a little bit after that. If it stays like this, the powerstage will be very, very important."

'Like this' was ludicrous. 'Like this'... surely couldn't continue. 'Like this' was Neuville ninth and Ogier 10th overall. The title race's top two were propping up the top 10.

"It makes us look stupid, eh..." said Ogier. "The best drivers in the championship and we're all in these positions. Try to explain that to your readers."

Third on the road and 'enjoying' conditions fractionally better was Tanak. The current form man showed flashes of the speed that has provided the talking point for the season's second half. Sherwood, in particular, was a blast. Until the bumps. The ones that almost caught Neuville? They got Tanak.

Struggling to get the Toyota slowed for a right-hander after the Yaris WRC had put its nose in the dirt, the rear slid wide, bounced off the bank on the outside and pivoted the front up and into the greenery.

Asked how close to the limit he'd been through the morning, Tanak smiled thinly. "I think I have been a little bit over it," he said. "Any time you go off the road and you don't find the tree, you are lucky. I was lucky this morning."

Fastest time on the first Friday rerun stage and Tanak was up to fourth. Worse was to follow for Ogier as Neuville's SS5 scratch moved him into seventh spot. Ignoring the powerstage connotations, that meant the title would be heading



to Belgium for the first time in history.

That was as good as it would get. The Sherwood stage had provided plenty of drama through the morning, when Andreas Mikkelsen crashed off the road distracted by a tractor being driven down the stage to put a chicane back in place (*see rally news*).

The histrionics continued into the afternoon. An awkward landing knocked the left-rear tyre off the rim of Neuville's i20 Coupe WRC. Eight tenths of a second up on Ogier at split two, the Hyundai started to lose time into the second half, but it was only when he got to the scene of the tractor drama that the significance of his problem was laid bare. Unable to slow the car, he slammed into the bales and lost more time.

He arrived at the finish, 54.4s down on fastest man Craig Breen, but had little interest in the Irishman. He was looking at only one time. He'd dropped 40.2s to Ogier to relieve his rival of the unwanted 10th place.

Asked what this might mean to his title challenge, Neuville took one last

look at the time, pursed his lips and said: "I have no idea." As he pulled first and drove away, he knew only too well what it meant. It was nothing short of a disaster.

Rubbing salt into a wide-open wound, Ogier's M-Sport team-mates Teemu Suninen and Elfyn Evans pulled absolute blinders to slow down just enough to allow Ogier ahead of them, while keeping Neuville behind. Saturday's running order was decided after SS6. The gap between ninth-placed Evans and Thierry? Two tenths of a second.

Team orders will forever remain one of motorsport's most controversial topics, but the British squad's decision was as understandable as the deployment admirable.

Not that anybody ventured such a point with Neuville. Now forced to run first on the road, his back was well and truly against the wall now.

The Argents Hill and Welshs Creek stages were by far the worst for cleaning; fast and flowing, these two most southerly stages carve their way

through the countryside across a surface inches deep in dry, dusty gravel.

Neuville did everything he could, but he was a lamb to the slaughter. "It's so frustrating," he said. "I can see no line. Every corner, I know they take more."

Urunga, the final stage of the loop, is back into the jungle. Back between the trees with a slightly better surface. Neuville knew he had to push here. He pushed. And it went wrong again. He slid wide, flirted with the trees and was fortunate to escape with just a damaged left-rear suspension arm. "It's OK," he said, sounding like a man trying desperately to convince himself. "I can still drive."

"What can I say? I will never give up. Let's try again and see what happens."

Another ninth fastest time, another 8.5s shipped. "I cannot do more," he said. "I really pushed in there. That one was flat-out."

The last remaining hope appeared to be with the weather. Neuville had managed to elevate himself past Breen and Suninen, but still Sunday



Mads Ostberg was strong early on

*'His best performance in recent years'*  
Paddon's drive rated, p23



# ROUND 13

# WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP



Miikka Anttila and Jari-Matti Latvala celebrate

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, WRC.com

Latvala took his only win of 2018 season in Australia



Ott Tanak suffered damage early on before crashing out for good

## STAGE TIMES

- **SS1 Orara East 1 (5.45 miles)**  
Fastest Lappi 4m45.5s **Leader**  
Lappi **Second** Tanak +0.8s
- **SS2 Coldwater 1 (8.77 miles)**  
Fastest Latvala 7m56.3s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Lappi +0s
- **SS3 Sherwood 1 (16.58 miles)**  
Fastest Ostberg 12m49.0s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Lappi +5.4s
- **SS4 Orara East 2 (5.45 miles)**  
Fastest Tanak 4m43.5s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Lappi +4.5s
- **SS5 Coldwater 2 (8.77 miles)**  
Fastest Neuville 7m51.1s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Latvala +5.9s
- **SS6 Sherwood 2 (16.58 miles)**  
Fastest Breen 12m35.6s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Latvala +6.2s
- **SS7 Destination NSW - 1 (0.79 miles)**  
Fastest Ogier 1m23.4s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Breen +7.6s
- **SS8 Destination NSW - 2 (0.79 miles)**  
Fastest Tanak 1m23.0s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Breen +6.8s
- **SS9 Argents Hill Reverse 1 (8.16 miles)**  
Fastest Paddon 7m20.9s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Latvala +7.0s
- **SS10 Welshs Creek Reverse 1 (17.91 miles)**  
Fastest Tanak 15m12.6s **Leader**  
Ostberg **Second** Latvala +3.7s
- **SS11 Urunga 1 (12.50 miles)**  
Fastest Tanak 11m32.3s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Tanak +4.6s
- **SS12 Raleigh 1 (1.24 miles)**  
Fastest Evans 1m33.1s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Tanak +3.2s
- **SS13 Argents Hill Reverse 2 (8.16 miles)**  
Fastest Paddon 7m16.8s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Tanak +3.2s
- **SS14 Welshs Creek Reverse 2 (17.91 miles)**  
Fastest Tanak 15m01.4s **Leader**  
Tanak **Second** Latvala +0.8s
- **SS15 Urunga 2 (12.50 miles)**  
Fastest Lappi 11m32.5s **Leader**  
Tanak **Second** Latvala +7.4s
- **SS16 Raleigh 2 (1.24 miles)**  
Fastest Tanak 1m32.2s **Leader**  
Tanak **Second** Latvala +9.7s
- **SS17 Destination NSW - 3 (0.79 miles)**  
Fastest Tanak 1m23.1s **Leader**  
Tanak **Second** Latvala +20.0s
- **SS18 Destination NSW - 4 (0.79 miles)**  
Fastest Neuville 1m24.1s **Leader**  
Tanak **Second** Latvala +21.9s
- **SS19 Coramba 1 (9.66 miles)**  
Fastest Latvala 9m38.1s **Leader**  
Tanak **Second** Latvala +12.6s
- **SS20 Sapphire 1 (11.97 miles)**  
Fastest Paddon 11m30.2s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Tanak +5.0s
- **SS21 Wedding Bells 18 1 (4.45 miles)**  
Fastest Lappi 4m14.9s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Tanak +5.0s
- **SS22 Coramba 2 (9.66 miles)**  
Fastest Latvala 10m05.1s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Tanak +6.3s
- **SS23 Sapphire 2 (11.97 miles)**  
Fastest Latvala 11m48.1s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Paddon +32.1s
- **SS24 Wedding Bells 18 2 (Power Stage) (4.45 miles)**  
Fastest Ogier 4m16.2s **Leader**  
Latvala **Second** Paddon +32.5s

# COLIN CLARK

*"Jari-Matti Latvala is the most frustrating of characters"*



**R**ally Australia was once again a fitting end to a remarkable season. Sebastien Ogier taking his sixth championship crown was no forgone conclusion and the hype, anticipation and excitement that preceded the event was entirely justified.

The World Rally Championship is in a good place right now, and yes, it would have been good to see someone other than a Seb winning, but both Thierry Neuville, and in particular Ott Tanak will have their days soon enough I'm sure.

But the one man who might still surprisingly have his day is Jari-Matti Latvala. I know we've seen false dawns many, many times with Latvala but I genuinely believe that the more mature, less self-critical and far more relaxed Latvala that we saw taking the win in Australia now has all the tools necessary to one day be world champion.

Latvala is the most frustrating of characters. He has the ability to stun everyone with his pace and performance. He is one of only a handful of drivers capable of winning any rally on his day and when it all comes together, it's truly breathtaking.

But he has also had one of the most prominent self-destruct buttons in the world of rallying and he's been prone to activate it far too many times in the past.

I'm going to stick my neck out though and say all that is behind the eminently likeable Finn. He's a different man under the guidance of his boyhood hero Tommi Makinen. He knows his place and he knows that he's wanted. And more than that, he seems to feel comfortable in himself at long last.

The burden of challenging the French domination of the rally world and becoming the next Finnish rally God was a heavy one to bear for Latvala. He seems to now have accepted that if it happens it happens, and in the meantime he's going to go out and have some fun. That's not something he's always done in the past.

OK, he had a few small stumbles in the first half of this year, but Latvala has rebounded with a remarkable stoicism and his win in Australia means that he has won at least once every year for the past 11 seasons.

Toyota looks set to dominate the WRC in 2019. There's a lot of talk about Ott Tanak and Kris Meeke challenging for championship honours and I'm absolutely sure they will.

But I'm going to have a quiet few euros on Latvala. Ogier has shown us again this year that winning titles in this sport is as much about experience and intelligence as it is about pace. And if that's the measure of a future champion then J-ML fits the bill for me.

...d bring more cleaning. Unless  
...ned. Finally, something went  
...for Neuville. His rain came.  
...ing into the season's final day,  
...irtual championship had sixth-  
...ed Ogier on 212, seven ahead of  
...ville. But now Tanak had come  
...play. Toyota's strong second half  
...e season continued right to the  
...with the Yaris WRCs knocking  
...pen's Mads Ostberg and Breen  
...f their Friday night 1-2 and  
...acing them with Tanak and  
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...nd in the title race, one point up  
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...mbing aboard the i20, Neuville  
...ed up at the grey skies, shortly  
...six on the season's final Sunday  
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...rtunity.  
...ow we have to use it," he said.  
...ave to gamble. We have to push.  
...ave nothing to lose."  
...son looked a troubled man as  
...epared for the last 50 miles of  
...ompetition.

Continued on page 22

**NOW TURN OVER TO READ MN'S DRIVER RATINGS**

# RALLY AUSTRALIA



BY DAVID EVANS

## RALLY ESSENTIALS

### Day one: 63.18 miles; 8 stages

**Weather:** sunny 14-28 celsius

- Chasing a first manufacturers' title since 1999, Toyota has made the perfect start to Rally Australia with the Yaris WRCs 1-2-3 in the opening test. That first stage doesn't clean as much as the others, with most of it being used for the pre-event shakedown stage. Esapekka Lappi leads after SS1, but shares the top spot with Jari-Matti Latvala after stage two. That's as good as the day gets for Toyota, however. Latvala is third at the end of day one, but Lappi and Ott Tanak both lost time with post-watersplash misfires.
- Citroen demonstrates Sebastien Loeb's Rally of Spain win last time out was no fluke with exceptional day one pace down under. Mads Ostberg moves into the lead with fastest time in SS3 and remains there for the rest of Friday. Fellow C3 WRC driver Craig Breen is right there with him after a superb day from the Irishman.
- Hayden Paddon makes his trip across the Tasman worthwhile with an early fourth overall, despite having been out of the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC since Wales six weeks earlier.
- The German squad is the only one to suffer a Friday retirement after Andreas Mikkelsen rolls out of contention in Sherwood. The Norwegian's concentration is compromised after he overtakes a tractor a couple of corners before dropping the i20 under braking for a left-hander.
- There's more misery for Hyundai when Thierry Neuville drops from seventh to 10th after knocking the left-rear tyre off the rim in SS6.
- Tanak and Lappi round out the top six on Friday evening, with Ogier's afternoon position boosted by Neuville's problem and M-Sport's decision to ask Teemu Suninen and Elfyn Evans to drop time. The defending champion's up to seventh.

**End of day one:** 1 Ostberg/Eriksen 53m37.4s; 2 Breen/Martin +6.8s; 3 Latvala/Anttila +8.7s; 4 Paddon/Marshall +12.5s; 5 Tanak/Jarveoja +16.9s; 6 Lappi/Ferm +28.3s.

### Day two: 82.64 miles; 10 stages

**Weather:** sunny 15-28 celsius

- Citroen's hopes of a second consecutive win go south when Ostberg struggles for balance and pace through the faster, more flowing stages. A sticking throttle does for Breen, with the Irishman dropping from second to fifth on the day's second test. Worse is to come for him, however, when he slides off and damages a wheel on the next stage. Tenth place beckons after a late check-in and penalties greet him at the start of SS12.
- The French team's loss is Toyota's gain as the Yaris WRCs run first and second from SS11. Latvala is out front, but the question of team-orders is never far away with his championship hopeful team-mate Tanak right behind. Fastest time through SS14 is enough for the Estonian to get his nose ahead by 0.8s. Nobody expects a Latvala response...
- Paddon offers some cheer for Hyundai as he elbows his way past Ostberg for third place on the second run through Urunga.
- Lappi and Ogier are fifth and sixth, with the former's highlight being a scratch time in SS15. Joint fastest time in Raleigh 2 is reason for seventh-placed Evans to smile on Saturday.

**End of day two:** 1 Tanak/Jarveoja 2h07m52.0s; 2 Latvala/Anttila +21.9s; 3 Paddon/Marshall +26.3s; 4 Ostberg/Eriksen +46.6s; 5 Lappi/Ferm +50.4s; 6 Ogier/Ingrassia +1m44.8s.

### Day three: 52.17 miles; 6 stages

**Weather:** overcast/rain 14-24 celsius

- Latvala is back in the lead after a small mistake from Tanak on the second Sunday stage. Toyota keeps a close eye on championship permutations before deciding whether to ask J-ML to slow down. It's all academic when Tanak retires on the penultimate stage. Latvala wins and delivers a classic quote about how important this success was, saying: "I won every year since 2008, I didn't want this to be the first year without the win. I didn't want a sad Christmas!"
- Paddon moves up to second following the departure of the #8 Yaris, with Ostberg ending his season with a podium in his C3 WRC.
- There's another fastest time for Lappi as he bids farewell to Toyota – helping his current employer to the manufacturers' title's not a bad way to say goodbye.
- Ogier and Ingrassia are the day's other big winners, one place further back in fifth. The man with most to lose even rounds out his season with a powerstage win.

*Continued from page 21*

"I never sleep particularly well, but last night really wasn't so good," he said. "I kept thinking about all that rain and now this morning I've seen some pictures of the stages... There's just so much riding on this. Everybody's up in Dovenby [M-Sport's Cumbrian base], they've got a big screen and they're all watching. I just hope we don't let him down."

Ogier was classic Ogier: utterly self-confident. Everything would be fine. Of course it would. Why wouldn't it?

Watching the early onboard action did little to calm Wilson's nerves: cars were all over the place, with moments at every corner.

"It's horrendous," said Wilson grimly after the first loop. "What I wouldn't do to fast forward a few hours... Seb's fine, so relaxed. He keeps telling me: 'Malcolm, don't worry; we'll be world champions'. But it's still all so close."

But Ogier just kept on keeping on. Mistakes had been for others on Friday and Saturday, why would Sunday be different? It wouldn't.

First stage of the last loop and Neuville's dream was done. Visibly right on the ragged edge, he battled valiantly. But lost. Lost a wheel. Lost the championship.

"It's the way it is," he said. "We had to push, it was all or nothing."

One stage later and it was everything for Ogier as Tanak pinged his Yaris off another solid Australian gum tree.

For 23 of 24 stages of the finale, the WRC had delivered a thriller, mirroring the extraordinary twists and turns of this most compelling season. But then M-Sport radioed a message



Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Fifth place was enough for Ogier

into Ogier's #1 car: "Tanak out."

Driving down the road to the final stage wasn't how Ogier had imagined winning a sixth title. "It killed the moment a little bit," he said. "But then there was a big relief. This was definitely the toughest fight we had for the championship. It's been so intense."

With intensity comes emotion. And there was no shortage of that when Ogier arrived at the end of the final stage, having won the

powerstage. Naturally. "It's incredible," said Ogier. "I'm so happy to have done this for my team and for this guy..."

This guy was Wilson, who'd arrived right on cue. "This guy... the best boss I ever had."

Rarely, if ever, on these pages has fifth place been so well reported. For the record, Latvala won Rally Australia. In doing so he maintained an 11-year record of winning at least one WRC round

each season. More important than that, victory sealed the manufacturers' crown for Tommi Makinen's Toyota squad.

More than anybody, Makinen understood the hurt Tanak felt. "Next year," said the Finn, quietly. "Forget next year, it's next week that Ogier's focused on now. Next week's his first meaningful test in his new mount, a Citroen."

But what a way to say goodbye to the old one.

## Evans takes domestic success

The final corner of this year's Rally Australia was too tempting for Eli Evans. He couldn't resist the space offered by that open junction at the 90-left. Running his Skoda Fabia R5 wide, he yanked on the handbrake and opened the taps to send the thing into an Australian Rally Championship-winning celebratory donut.

Four drivers came to Coff's Harbour in with a shot at winning this year's ARC title. For the second season in succession, Molly Taylor lost out. Last year the engine in her Subaru ran sick costing her a shot.

This time around it was a near-100mph head-on collision with a straw bale that ruined the Japanese motor out front.

Harry Bates, son of four-time Australian Rally champion Neal, came close to following in his father's footsteps aboard his Toyota Yaris AP4.

Unfortunately for him there would be no dream result after his car hit engine trouble in the Welshs Creek Reverse test on Saturday afternoon.

Evans' own hopes of taking the title with a win went south when he punctured earlier on Saturday, but he knew he just needed to keep the car going to the end and the title would

be his. That's exactly what he did.

Evans said: "It's been a really strange and bizarre year in the Australian Championship. It's been really hard fought. We came here with a nice lead and I did all I could to give it away! But now I'm really happy."

Fellow Skoda driver Steve Glenney maximum scored on the final ARC round, which was some consolation to missing out on the title.

"I've got to say, it's a dream come true to be in the middle of the WRC here and winning the Australian round," said Glenney. "It's been a crazy weekend, we've all had some dramas, but we're here and to be in the top 10 of the WRC overall is really something special for me."

Alberto Heller won the WRC2 category in his Ford Fiesta R5. The Chilean was short on competition, especially when his brother Pedro Heller dropped his sister car onto its side on Saturday afternoon.

Alberto said: "This is fantastic result for me. It's only my second ever WRC2 round and the first time I competed at this level I had a really big crash in Argentina, so I am happy. It's been quite difficult to drive with a big lead, but I am here



SUPPORTS

Evans powered to the Australia title as his rivals fell by the wayside

for the experience – that's what I wanted."

Heller flew directly back to Chile, where he and his brother went from the airport to the recce for the penultimate round of the South American series – where both of them stand a chance to win the title.

Triple APRC champion

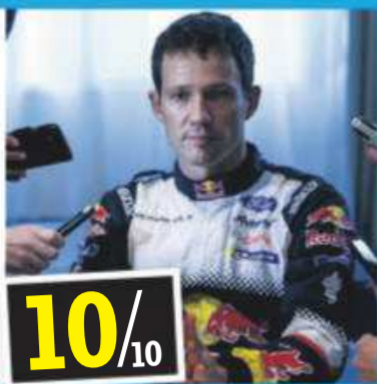
Gaurav Gill had been firmly in control of the RC2 class (all R5 drivers including those not registered for WRC2) and the Indian would have been on for a finish well inside the top 10 had he not slid off the road when he had little to gain or prove in his MRF-backed Ford Fiesta R5.

## DRIVER ANALYSIS BY DAVID EVANS



### SEBASTIEN OGIER M-SPORT FORD FIESTA

Never put a wheel wrong through some of the most challenging and high-pressure stages of his career and brought his Fiesta WRC home to fifth place and a sixth world title. An outstanding result to make two great years with M-Sport.



10/10

### ELFYN EVANS M-SPORT FORD FIESTA

Could see team orders coming from early doors on Friday and was, therefore, never really in a position to drive his own event. Not a hugely inspired effort from the Welshman, but not one to be hung for either...



5/10

### TEEMU SUNINEN M-SPORT FORD FIESTA

Like Evans, the Finn was required to fall on his sword for Ogier's greater good and, again like Evans, suffered in the worst of the conditions because of that. He belied his lack of Oz experience, apart from when he crashed on the last stage.



4/10

### THIERRY NEUVILLE HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT HYUNDAI i20

Never gave up and threw his Hyundai between the trees with admirable abandon in some of the season's most treacherous conditions on Sunday. Ultimately couldn't match Ogier's precision and pace when it mattered most.



6/10

### ANDREAS MIKKELSEN HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT HYUNDAI i20

Couldn't help but feel some sympathy for the Norwegian who almost tripped over a tractor in Sherwood. But then, while thinking how close he'd come to crashing, er... crashed. Never really at the races thereafter.



4/10

### HAYDEN PADDON HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT HYUNDAI i20

One of his best performances in recent years. Was never out of the top four from Friday afternoon onwards and always the quickest and most consistent of the factory i20 Coupe WRCs. Did enough to keep his job.



8/10

### MADS OSTBERG TOTAL ABU DHABI CITROEN C3WRC

Surprised himself with his day one speed, where he made the most of the grip available down the order. Couldn't keep the momentum up on Saturday's faster stages, but held it together to take a second 2018 podium.



6/10

### CRAIG BREEN TOTAL ABU DHABI CITROEN C3WRC

Brilliant on the opening day, his event went south when the throttle jammed on Saturday morning and sparked myriad issues. Loses further points for not even knowing Ireland were playing, let alone beating, the All Blacks.



5/10

### JARI-MATTI LATVALA TOYOTA YARISWRC

Brilliant effort from the Finn. The only doubt about Latvala's performance came when team principal Tommi Makinen asked if he might have a word... Faced down Ott Tanak in a final-day fight. Not many have done that this year.



9/10

### ESAPEKKA LAPPI TOYOTA YARISWRC

Spent much of Saturday slapping his team on the back for producing the perfect car – not something he's done all year – and might well now be wondering why he's walking away from Toyota bound for Citroen.



7/10

### OTT TANAK TOYOTA YARISWRC

By the Estonian's own exacting standards, this one fell short. Yes, he battled his way into the lead from third on Friday, but then crashed twice on Sunday – the second of which broke the transmission and cost him any hope of the title.



6/10

### ALBERTO HELLER FORD FIESTA R5

Superb – if mighty lonely – maiden WRC2 victory for the younger of the two Chilean brothers. Overcame a monster Argentina shunt to come back stronger and faster with victory on his second ever outing at this level. Great effort.



7/10

## MOTORSPORT NEWS STAR DRIVER



### JARI-MATTI LATVALA

Not since he started winning rounds of the World Rally Championship in 2008 has Latvala finished a season winless. And he's not about to start now. Kept his head and drove a horrible final day beautifully to take a maiden Australian win.

## MOTORSPORT NEWS WOODEN SPOON



### THE TRACTOR DRIVER

Seriously, what on earth were you thinking about? Absolutely understand the road was blocked by the bale, but how on earth did you think putting your tractor on the road was ever going to be a good plan? Shocking.

## RESULTS

Round 13/13, Rally Australia 2018, November 15-18

POS	DRIVER/ CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN)/Miikka Anttila (FIN)	Toyota Yaris WRC	2h59m52.0s
2	Hayden Paddon (NZL)/Sebastian Marshall (GBR)	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+32.5s
3	Mads Ostberg (NOR)/Torstein Eriksen (NOR)	Citroen C3 WRC	+52.2s
4	Esapekka Lappi (FIN)/Janne Ferm (FIN)	Toyota Yaris WRC	+1m02.3s
5	Sebastien Ogier (FRA)/Julien Ingrassia (FRA)	Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m30.8s
6	Elfyn Evans (GBR)/Daniel Barritt (GBR)	Ford Fiesta WRC	+3m05.1s
7	Craig Breen (IRL)/Scott Martin (GBR)	Citroen C3 WRC	+8m59.0s
8	Alberto Heller (CHI)/Luis Diaz (ARG)	Ford Fiesta R5	+22m28.5s
9	Steve Glenney (AUS)/Andrew Sarandis (AUS)	Skoda Fabia R5	+27m01.8s
10	Jourdan Serderidis (GRE)/Lara Vanneste (BEL)	Ford Fiesta WRC	+35m14.1s
11	Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR)/Anders Jager (NOR)	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+43m21.9s
R	Teemu Suninen (FIN)/Mikko Markkula (FIN)	Ford Fiesta WRC	SS24/accident
R	Ott Tanak (EST)/Martin Jarveoja (EST)	Toyota Yaris WRC	SS23/accident
R	Thierry Neuville (BEL)/Nicolas Gilsoul (BEL)	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	SS22/accident

## CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS			MANUFACTURERS		
POS	DRIVERS	PTS	POS	TEAMS	PTS
1	Sebastien Ogier	219	1	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT	368
2	Thierry Neuville	201	2	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT	341
3	Ott Tanak	181	3	M-Sport Ford WRT	324
4	Jari-Matti Latvala	128	4	Citroen Total	237
5	Esapekka Lappi	126			
6	Andreas Mikkelsen	84			
7	Elfyn Evans	80			
8	Hayden Paddon	73			
9	Dani Sordo	71			
10	Mads Ostberg	70			

**RALLY MONTE CARLO  
JANUARY 24-27, 2019**

**NEXT RALLY** Who will hit the ground running in the 2019 race?

# INTERVIEW

Photos: Ebrey/LAT

Matt James speaks to one of the BTCC's stalwarts, Rob Collard

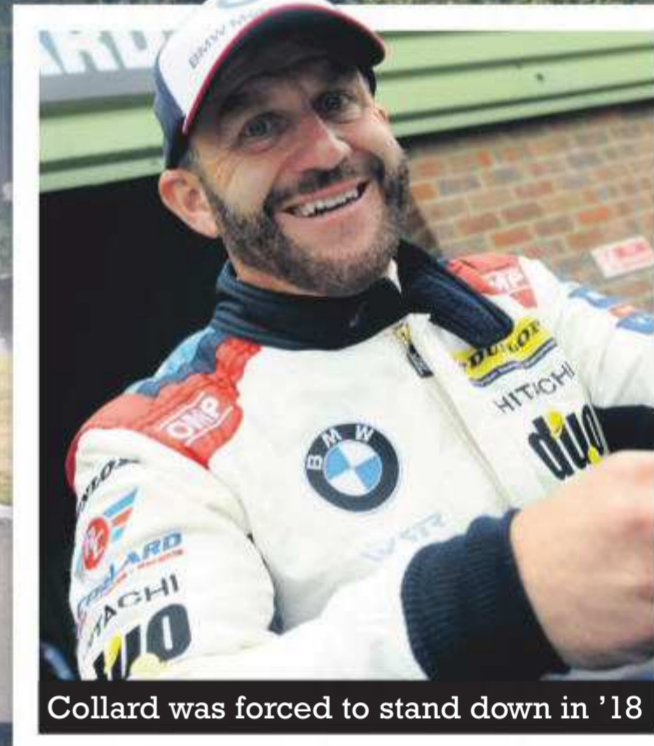
## COLLARD'S LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY



The BMW man won race three at Oulton



Snetterton was Collard's last race this year



Collard was forced to stand down in '18

**R**icky Collard is a podium finisher in the British Touring Car Championship, but he very nearly wasn't. The 22-year-old deputised for his dad Rob in the WSR BMW 125i M Sport after his father had been stood down on medical grounds following a reoccurrence of concussion he had first suffered at Silverstone in 2017.

Collard Sr was actually cleared to race in the days leading up to Silverstone this September, but decided to err on the side of caution and let his son continue at the controls of the tin-top.

There was no prouder person at the foot of the race one podium than Rob.

"Because Ricky had done so well at Silverstone, we decided to let him stay in the car for the Brands Hatch finale too," says Collard Sr, who has been a mainstay of the BTCC's top flight since 2003.

It was tough being on the sidelines for Rob. The first impact at Silverstone in 2017 in race one was the one where the major damage was done.

He was the innocent victim of some midfield contact which left him with broken steering and he was catapulted into the path of the pack.

"The impact was a rear impact which then twisted me around – those are the worst ones to have," says Rob Collard. "I was concussed, and that was it for the rest of my season."

Collard actually took part in free practice at Brands Hatch at the end of the year, but further tests at the track meant he was advised not to race.

"The doctors kept in touch and monitored me closely. Dr Naomi Deakin worked alongside the BTCC quack Dr Paul Trafford and she did some amazing work," says Collard Sr. "They kept an eye on me and were there all the way through my journey."

Collard's journey in the BTCC has been a successful one – he is in the top 20 race winners in the series' 61-year history with 15 victories under his belt.

He has been with WSR since 2010 and is a regular at the front of the pack. Qualifying has been a bugbear, but that isn't surprising when you realise that Collard is a full-time businessman and only a weekend racer,



Silverstone 2017: Violent accident

unlike many who he is up against. "I have to switch off from work mode on Saturday morning when I get in the race car, and it takes a while," he says. "But put me in a race session, and it brings the best out in me – I think that is my Hot Rod background. There you start behind 30 other cars and you *have* to make it to the front."

The Hampshire racer says that the demolition business commitments have often been a hindrance to performance on track, but it is something he doesn't regret.

"I love the industry I am in, and I wouldn't change it. But I think that for the benefit of my racing, I maybe should have taken more time away from the office," he explains. "But the business is still growing, and I can't seem to step away from it."

Stepping away from the cockpit for an enforced period was tough, but even the driver himself admits that maybe he pushed himself too hard to make a return to the door handle-to-door handle action of the British Touring Car Championship.

Collard was cleared to race at the start of 2018, but there were still some concerns. He explains: "I was getting headaches – not all the time, just occasionally."

"Sometimes in the car I was flying, like when I won at Oulton Park in June and I was very competitive at Donington Park too. At those times, there was no physical problem for me at all."

"But there were other times where my head was throbbing when I got out of the car. I had to cut short the two-day tyre test at Snetterton in mid-July because it was just so bad. I thought it was just part of the process – part of the healing that I had to go

through – but looking back, it was clearly a legacy of the 2017 shunt," says Collard.

He battled on and was running in 12th in the standings by the time the competition reached its half way point at Croft in June, but there was another severe impact at Snetterton's race weekend in late July which would have lasting effects for the remainder of the campaign.

"In fact, I had a shunt away from the start line when there was some bunching up and I sideswiped the pitwall in race one. Not a lot of people saw that," he recalls. "Then I hit the wall – not hard – at Riches in race two. After that, the doctors checked me again, and I failed the concussion test quite badly."

That led to Ricky stepping into the car, but Collard Sr is now raring to go again. However, there is something which is making his return all the more difficult: the success of his sons. Ricky, a BMW Junior driver, is pursuing options in international GT racing and single-seaters for 2019, while the younger son, Jordan, finished third in the Mini Challenge after a decorated campaign. Jordan is planning to either remain in the Mini series or looking at a move into the British GT competition.

"My main priority is to sort the boys out," says Collard Sr. "There are all kinds of options out there for them, but things are up in the air. I want to return, and I would love to be back in the BTCC but that is not high up on the list right now."

"A few people have been telling me it is time to give up, but I am not so sure. I feel that if I could get in a car, I still have the ability to do the job," adds Collard. "I did a track session at Silverstone for BMW in a 2-series cup car and I was quickly back in the groove. I am not finished yet and my career isn't over. I can't wait to make a race return."

Collard says that he has spoken to WSR and others about remaining in the British Touring Car Championship, but that is clearly not the focus.

He has even had his eyes on the British GT Championship himself too. While 2019 becomes clearer for both Collard and his two sons, there is something else on the agenda further down the road. "I would love to share a car with the boys one day," says Collard. "Maybe somewhere like the Spa 24 hours, Daytona or even Le Mans. That would really be a dream come true. I have got to keep racing until I can do that, haven't I?" ■

### BTCC CV

#### Rob Collard

Age: 50

From: Eversley, Hampshire

**2018:** Part season with WSR in a BMW 125i M Sport. One win, 19th in the points

**2017:** Missed the last two rounds in WSR BMW 125i M Sport after an accident. Finishes fifth in the points

**2016:** Two wins on his way to fifth in the points in the WSR BMW 125i M Sport

**2015:** Takes 10th in the WSR BMW 125i M Sport with three race wins

**2014:** One win in the eBay Motors-backed BMW 125i M Sport and takes sixth in the points

**2013:** First season with the WSR BMW 125i M Sport. Finishes 13th in the points with one podium

**2012:** A victory at Brands Hatch and back-to-back wins at Knockhill on his way to fifth in the standings in the WSR BMW 320si

**2011:** Eighth in the points in the WSR BMW 320si

**2010:** Rejoins WSR to race its BMW 320si and finishes eighth in the table with seven podiums

**2009:** Two triumphs in the Motorbase Performance-run BMW 320si on his way to sixth in the points

**2008:** Takes a Motorbase BMW 320si to 12th in the points

**2007:** Last three rounds in a GR Asia-run SEAT Leon, scores a single point

**2006:** Ninth in the standings in the Team RAC MG ZS with one podium finish

**2005:** Takes first overall victory at Knockhill and another at Brands Hatch on his way to seventh in the points in an MG ZS

**2004:** Finishes 12th overall in the family-tended Vauxhall Astra Coupe

**2003:** Independents Cup victory in his Vauxhall Astra Coupe with five class wins. Finishes 10th overall in the standings



Fifth position in 2016



Scotland in 2012: Glory



Victory with Motorbase



SEAT Leon back in 2007



Top Independent in '03

# RACING REPORTS

Photos: Gary Hawkins

BRANDS HATCH: BARC BY STEFAN MACKLEY

NOVEMBER 17/18

## HEDLEY SHINES THROUGH IN HECTIC WINTER SERIES



Winter Series champion: Hedley

Crash didn't halt Hedley's charge to wins on Sunday



Burton (57) led races for much of the weekend but came away with no win

### WINNERS

**Ginetta Junior Winter Series**  
Race 1: Ruben Del Sarte  
Race 2&3: James Hedley

**Britcar**  
Enduro: Simon Rudd/  
Tom Barley (Ginetta G55)  
Sprint race 1:  
David Brise/Alan Purbrick  
(Saker RAPX)  
Sprint race 2:  
Ross Wylie/David Mason  
(Ferrari 458)

**Hyundai Coupe Cup**  
Race 1: Wayne Rockett  
Race 2: Steve Kite

**Tin Tops**  
Race 1: Alfie Brooker  
(Vauxhall Astra VXR)  
Race 2: Kamran Tunio  
(Honda Civic)

**Intermarque**  
Race 1: Chris Brockhurst  
(Vauxhall Tigra)  
Race 2: Steve Burrows  
(Peugeot 206cc)

**Mini Miglia/Mini Se7en**  
Race 1, 2&3: Rupert Deeth

**Modified Saloons**  
Race 1&2: Rod Birley  
(Ford Escort WRC)

Two wins at Brands Hatch were enough to give James Hedley the 2018 Ginetta Junior Winter Series title, but thoughts of such success were a long way from his mind last Saturday evening.

A heavy crash in the eventually cancelled second race put the Elite Motorsport driver on the back foot as red flags and big accidents were the theme for much of the weekend, with seven stoppages occurring across the two qualifying sessions and four races.

Having finished fifth in the Ginetta Junior standings this season and competing in his third winter series, Ruben Del Sarte was the favourite on paper, but it was Douglas Motorsport drivers Gus Burton and Lorcan Hanafin who were initially the ones to beat after locking out the front-row for race one.

In typical Ginetta Junior fashion, the racing was frenetic and the safety car was called after only three laps to recover two stricken cars on the entry to Clearways.

On the restart, leader Burton found a wet patch on a damp-but-drying track in the middle of Clark Curve and skated through the gravel before Del Sarte lunged up the inside of Tom Emson at Paddock Hill to move from third to first in the space of a few hundred metres.

While Burton rejoined from his excursion, team-mate Hanafin wasn't so lucky the following lap and, when he was joined in the Clark Curve gravel by Theo Edgerton a tour later, the officials stopped the race with Del Sarte winning from Emson and Harry Dyson.

"At the safety car [restart] I was third and I knew there was going to be a battle for first and I'm lucky that [the front two running wide] happened so early on as on a damp track it's quite difficult to overtake someone," said Del Sarte.

Hedley had managed to gain third but was demoted to fourth courtesy of a lap countback and all hopes for a tilt at the title seemed gone when he lost control heading into Paddock Hill on the second lap in race two, colliding with the outside wall before rebounding and being clipped by team-mate Casper Stevenson.

The race was restarted and Burton

again made the best start from pole but, coming into Graham Hill Bend on lap two, he spun on dropped fluid. Facing the wrong way and on the racing line he was collected head-on by Elite Motorsport's Joel Pearson.

With light fading and a lengthy clear-up needed the second race was declared null and void.

"The worst day [for us] I have ever seen in five years we have been competing," was how Elite Motorsport team boss Eddie Ives described it, as his mechanics worked until the early hours of Sunday morning fixing three badly damaged cars.

But Hedley repaid their hard work with pole for both remaining races and a realistic chance at the title.

On the opening lap in race three, Dyson went heavily into the tyre barrier after being pushed wide at Druids and, as a subsequent safety car was deployed on the start/finish straight, Pearson and Ben O'Hare collided bringing another stoppage.

At the restart front-row starter Burton again beat Hedley off the line and drove defensively throughout but on the drag to the chequered flag, Hedley managed to reach the line first by just 0.133s having rehearsed the manoeuvre the previous lap.

Del Sarte climbed to third, once again hampered by a poor qualifying which left him sixth for both of Sunday's races, but he still led the standings by four points from Hedley heading into the final race.

Any slim chance for Burton to win the title disappeared just before the lights went out as he jumped the start from the front-row.

Informed by his team of Burton's 10-second penalty, Hedley followed for a while and when he had a sufficient gap to the bunch behind he lunged up the inside into Druids five laps from home to clinch the win and the title.

"I wanted to win it on the track to show that I could do it," claimed Hedley.

Del Sarte was promoted to second and claimed the series runner-up spot, two points behind Hedley, with Elite's Emson third overall as Total Control Racing's Daniel Gale claimed the Rookie title.

## DRAMA IN THE NIGHT AS BRITCAR ENDS ON A HIGH

Simon Rudd and Tom Barley guided their Ginetta G55 to a one-lap win in the two-hour 'Into the Night' Britcar finale at the Brands Hatch Indy circuit last Sunday, beating the SEAT Coupa of Ashley Woodman and Martin Byford.

Rudd and Barley took charge after Sprint competitors finished their involvement, with slightly less than half of the Enduro completed. Sam Randon, sharing a Toyota Avensis with aspiring touring car driver Michael Crees, suffered the embarrassment of beaching the car on his way to the grid.

After starting from the pits he made it into the lead before making way for Crees.

The former British Touring Car lacked a rapid refuelling system and dropped well back, but during his recovery Crees had a drive-through penalty for a pitstop offence and stopped again to have a dragging front splitter attended to.

A third place finish rewarded the Team

Hard crew, who had a 0300hrs session to replace a broken gearbox.

Matt le Breton had the distinction of finishing both fourth and fifth, sharing the driving duties in an Audi RS3 TCR a McLaren GT4.

In Saturday's 50-minute race the lead changed with a lap to go as the top three finished within four seconds. Winners were David Brise and Alan Purbrick, giving their Saker RAPX its best result when Purbrick passed the David Mason and Ross Wylie Ferrari 458 on the final tour.

A Ginetta G55, started by Lucky Khera and finished by Declan Jones, lapped faster than both in third place but fell just short of victory.

Mason and Wylie gained from a caution period to beat the Saker in the sprint half of Sunday's race, even though Mason lost much of his advantage with two gravel trap visits. Khera and Jones were third again.

The Ginetta G50 of Sarah Moore and Matt Greenwood secured the Britcar Endurance Championship, and Sprint title winners were Jon Watt and Kristian Prosser in their BMW M3.

The aptly named Wayne Rockett shot into the lead of the first Hyundai Coupe race, hanging on under



Wylie/Mason (7) lost win on last lap in race one

pressure from Steve Kite, who made a mistake on the first lap. Rockett's getaway was more of a damp squib in race two. Although he took the lead when Kite missed a gear, Kite eventually flew back in front.

Nobody else was in the hunt for victory, but exciting battles were fought down the order.

The South Eastern Tin Tops championship was decided in Ford Fiesta driver Rikki Taylor's favour

when main points rival Alfie Brooker had his Vauxhall Astra blow up at the beginning of race two.

Brooker had kept his title chances alive by winning race one overall with Taylor top of his class. Kamran Tunio's Honda Civic took race two in near darkness after delays caused by Ginetta Junior mayhem, but only after contact with Dave Charlton's SEAT Leon which broke a driveshaft on the Spanish car.

Steve Burrows (Peugeot 206cc) scored his first Intermarque win of the year on Sunday after a series of podium finishes, but it wasn't enough to beat Lewis Smith (Vauxhall Tigra) to the championship. Smith finished second to Chris Brockhurst (Tigra) in race one with Burrows third. Taking a cautious approach to avoid trouble from ninth on a part-reversed grid, Smith reached third in race two.

Brian Phillips



Brooker missed out on Tin Top title

# REPORT: MACAU F3 WORLD CUP

Photos: LAT

**W**hen Dan Ticktum topped Macau Grand Prix qualifying with a new all-time

record for the Guia circuit on Friday afternoon, it was arguably the greatest performance to date of the Red Bull Junior's career.

When Ticktum repassed Callum Iott and sped to a stray-dog-avoiding victory in Saturday's qualification race ahead of Motopark team-mate Joel Eriksson, his Friday qualifying antics had faded to arguably his second-best performance.

And when he exhibited an absolute masterclass on Sunday to claim Macau GP glory for the second successive year from the breathless Eriksson, that Friday form became his third-best day.

Ticktum was utterly supreme last weekend. Whereas in 2017 he won the race after leading just the final few-hundred yards, he really didn't have a challenger this time around. Eriksson was gifted an opportunity when Enaam Ahmed suffered his third shunt of the weekend, this time at Moorish, and the safety car set up a four-lap dash to the flag.

But Ticktum's brilliant restart and searing pace through Fishermen's and R Bends meant his slipstream was only sufficient to pull Eriksson alongside under braking down to Lisboa. Then Ticktum completely broke Eriksson's challenge with astonishing speed through the mountain sector, and the Swede – returning to F3 this weekend after his rookie season in the DTM with BMW – never got into his tow again.

The result was tempered by relief that a horrifying crash early in the race at Lisboa had not produced any life-threatening injuries.

The race had restarted on lap four following an early safety car, but somehow the yellow signalling lights were still on along the straight between the Mandarin kink and Lisboa.

That prompted Eriksson to duck out of what seemed a clear pass on Sacha Fenestraz for second place, and caused 15th-placed Jehan Daruvala to brake earlier for Lisboa.

Sophia Florsch was tucked right into the Indian's slipstream, and was unable to avoid Daruvala, riding over his right-rear wheel.

That tore the left-side suspension on her car, and she spun backwards, out of control towards Lisboa, having just flashed through the speedtrap at 171mph.

The German's Van Amersfoort Racing car smashed into the side of TOM'S-run Japanese F3 champion Sho Tsuboi, who was turning through Lisboa, and was launched into the air over his rollhoop.

It cleared the crash barrier, clipped the top of a debris fence, and its flight was halted by the photographers' bunker, before it crashed down again.

Florsch, Tsuboi, two photographers and a marshal were taken to hospital, where it emerged that former Ginetta Junior starlet Florsch – who was conscious throughout the ordeal – had sustained a spinal fracture. Tsuboi had nothing worse than lumbar pain.

News filtered through to the drivers and teams in the pitlane that Florsch was moving in the car, to the great relief of everybody, and the race resumed after a lengthy delay to repair the fence.

Eriksson took this opportunity to squirm down the inside of Renault F1 Junior Fenestraz's Carlin machine on the brakes for Lisboa and set off after Ticktum, but even the subsequent safety car could not prevent the Brit from taking a brilliant win.

The victory was as supreme as last year's triumph was a shock, coming

# TICKTUM: KING OF THE STREETS

Red Bull Junior stuns with Macau win. By **Marcus Simmons**



Back-to-back wins for the Brit

Ticktum was untouchable

## RESULTS

Macau, November 17/18, 2018  
15 laps - 57.042 miles

P	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Dan Ticktum (GBR)	Motopark Academy Dallara-Volkswagen F318	1h46m22.108s
2	Joel Eriksson (SWE)	Motopark Academy Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+1.208s
3	Sacha Fenestraz (FRA)	Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F317	+2.505s
4	Jake Hughes (GBR)	Hitech GP Dallara-Mercedes F316	+3.521s
5	Mick Schumacher (GER)	SJM Theodore Racing by Prema Dallara-Mercedes F318	+4.542s
6	Ralf Aron (EST)	Theodore Racing by Prema Dallara-Mercedes F317	+6.406s
7	Callum Iott (GBR)	Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F317	+8.340s
8	Marcus Armstrong (NZL)	SJM Theodore Racing by Prema Dallara-Mercedes F317	+9.597s
9	Robert Shwartzman (RUS)	SJM Theodore Racing by Prema Dallara-Mercedes F314	+11.840s
10	Ferdinand Habsburg (AUT)	Motopark Academy Dallara-Volkswagen F316	+12.793s

11 Guan Yu Zhou (PRC) SJM Theodore Racing by Prema Dallara-Mercedes F315 +13.461s; 12 Jehan Daruvala (IND) Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F312 +13.985s; 13 Ritomo Miyata (JPN) TOM'S Dallara-Toyota F317 +16.934s; 14 Yuki Sekiguchi (JPN) B-MAX Racing Team Dallara-Volkswagen F314 +18.697s; 15 Frederik Vesti (DEN) Van Amersfoort Racing Dallara-Mercedes F316 +19.773s; 16 Toshiki Oyu (JPN) Toda Racing Dallara-Toda F316 +23.348s; 17 Yoshiaki Katayama (JPN) Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F312 +32.873s; 18 Sena Sakaguchi (JPN) Toda Racing Dallara-Toda F316 +35.245s; 19 Juri Vips (EST) Motopark Academy Dallara-Volkswagen F315 +46.952s; 20 Dragon (JPN) B-MAX Racing Team Dallara-Volkswagen F312 +1m48.963s; R Enaam Ahmed (GBR) Hitech GP Dallara-Mercedes F315 8 laps; R Sho Tsuboi (JPN) TOM'S Dallara-Toyota F317 3 laps; R Sophia Florsch (GER) Van Amersfoort Racing Dallara-Mercedes F316 3 laps; R Ukyo Sasahara (JPN) ThreeBond Racing Dallara-Tomei F318 1 lap; R Marino Sato (JPN) Motopark Academy Dallara-Volkswagen F314 0 laps; R Alex Palou (ESP) B-MAX Racing Team Dallara-Volkswagen F312 0 laps; R Charles Leong (MAC) Hitech GP Dallara-Mercedes F317 0 laps; R Keyvan Andres (GER) Van Amersfoort Racing Dallara-Mercedes F317 0 laps.  
Winner's average speed 32.176mph. Fastest lap Ticktum 2m10.246s, 105.109mph.

Qualification race (10 laps - 38.028 miles)

1 Ticktum 23m41.034s; 2 Eriksson +1.563s; 3 Iott +3.165s; 4 Fenestraz +3.948s; 5 Hughes +11.098s; 6 Schumacher +11.878s; 7 Vips +12.518s; 8 Armstrong +13.713s; 9 Aron +14.199s; 10 Shwartzman +16.535s; 11 Sato +18.374s; 12 Palou +19.602s; 13 Habsburg +20.235s; 14 Sekiguchi +21.445s; 15 Ahmed +22.161s; 16 Tsuboi +24.244s; 17 Daruvala +24.763s; 18 Leong +27.513s; 19 Florsch +29.159s; 20 Andres +30.851s; 21 Oyu +32.442s; 22 Sasahara +33.995s; 23 Dragon +1m58.193s; 24 Zhou -1 lap; R Vesti 6 laps; R Miyata 6 laps; R Katayama 2 laps; R Sakaguchi 0 laps. Winner's average speed 96.338mph. Fastest lap Ticktum 2m10.620s, 104.808mph.

as it did following last-corner shunts for Sergio Sette Camara and Ferdinand Habsburg as they fought for the lead.

"The best way to describe it would be to say 'less surprising but more enjoyable,'" said Ticktum.

"I don't want to sound overly cocky, but it's been a pretty perfect weekend on my part and the team's part. I'm ecstatic.

"The whole weekend I just focused on every little job I had to do, and ticked every box."

Fenestraz finished his rookie F3 season with an excellent third place, while GP3 regular Jake Hughes put in a fine performance on his return to the category to take fourth for Hitech GP.

Iott, who has been Hughes's ART GP3 team-mate this season, faded after leading the opening lap of the qualification race in his Carlin car.

He felt he lacked straight-line speed on his way to third place in Saturday's race, during which Eriksson scuffed

the barrier on the approach to Lisboa as he passed Iott.

Iott then lost out in the mad dash on the run to Lisboa at the start of Sunday's main event, dropping to fifth. After the red flag he was double-drafted down to seventh, and took the flag eighth, only to be promoted to seventh when Juri Vips was penalised 40 seconds for overtaking Marcus Armstrong under the red flag.

After Guan Yu Zhou's last-lap crash out of fifth place in the qualification race, Prema Powerteam's fortunes rested with the team's F3 European champion Mick Schumacher, who finished fifth from team-mate Ralf Aron.

Schumacher topped both practice sessions, but could only qualify ninth after sustaining a puncture by clipping the wall at Moorish. And he didn't exactly enamour himself to his team-mates by delaying them and scuppering their own late bids as he struggled back to the pits.

## Tarquini survives crash drama to take WTCR

In the first year of World Touring Cars' new WTCR era, it was two of the all-time greats of tin-top racing that duked it out for the inaugural title in Macau.

Seven drivers headed to the season finale with a mathematical chance of claiming the World Touring Car Cup, but realistically it boiled down to a straight head-to-head between Gabriele Tarquini and Yvan Muller.

Tarquini, with a 39-point advantage and 87 left on the table heading into the weekend, should have sealed things comfortably – but this was Macau. A seventh-place berth on the grid for the opening race was solid – Muller was four places up the road – but second qualifying was less successful. A biff with the barriers at Lisboa on his final Q1 run ended his session, resigning him to 14th for the final two races. Muller would start from fifth then sixth.

The Italian was still in a decent position after race one – Muller finished second, two places ahead, to reduce his arrears by six points – but then left the door open for his rival heading into the finale when he was an innocent victim in a lap-one crash in race two, which felt inevitable given his midfield start.

That put Tarquini's BRC team in a race against time to repair his Hyundai for the final race – one they won – but he still faced a sweat. Eventually, though, 10th place, plus Muller finishing fourth, was enough to hand the veteran a second world title at the age of 56.



Italian won world title aged 56

Rob Huff, a nine-time winner in Macau, scored both qualifying pole positions yet failed to win any of the weekend's three races.

Despite prodigious pace in the mountain section, Huff forfeited the lead off both his pole position starts and, without sufficient grunt in his Volkswagen Golf GTI on the long run off the final corner down to Lisboa, had to settle for a third and a second. The races were instead won by Jean-Karl Vernay, Frederic Vervisch and Honda racer Esteban Guerrieri.

● Oliver Jarvis did not enjoy a successful return to Macau. Making his first start since winning the Grand Prix in 2007, Jarvis finished 12th of the 14 finishers in a depleted FIA GT World Cup field in his KCMG-run Nissan GT-R NISMO. The race was won by BMW driver Augusto Farfus in Charly Lamm's final race as Schnitzer team boss.

Jack Cozens



Eriksson survived a brush with the wall

## FEATURE

Photos: Mick Walker, Gary Hawkins, chasingthecars.net, Jakob Ebrey

Jamie Anderson has made a winning swap from rallying to truck racing this year. By Jack Benyon

# FROM MUCK TO TRUCK



In recent years Anderson has been a rally frontrunner in a Lancer



Now Anderson is winning in trucks

It is very easy to dislike those people who are good at everything. Jamie Anderson is one of those, at least when it comes to anything with a wheel.

Having spent over 10 years rallying, starting in the humble Peugeot 205 Challenge, he gradually worked up to winning BTRDA events in a Mitsubishi Lancer WRC05, winning the Woodpecker Rally in 2015 and the Severn Valley in 2016 to cap his achievements.

Not content with his rallying, it was time for a change for Anderson, and for 2018 he switched full-time to truck racing in Britain and Europe, taking two wins and 12 podiums in the British Truck Racing Championship.

It was a more natural transition than probably appears obvious, with Anderson running an eponymous commercials business, offering MOTs, servicing and diagnostics on trucks in the day job.

"As a kid I used to go and watch truck racing, and the guys that work here always said 'we need to have a go at truck racing, stop the rallying', because our business is framed around commercials," Anderson explains.

"I did BRC [British Rally Championship, in 2016-'17] and it didn't quite feel right, there was a lot of time away from work and I wasn't really getting the enjoyment out of it that I should have been."

A company called Diagraph is commonplace in truck racing and works with Anderson's business regularly. Its bosses were keen to get Anderson out and racing and invited him to test Dave Jenkins's truck in a demo at Rockingham. Despite Jenkins also doing rallies, the pair had never crossed paths.

Anderson did the Pembrey round of the championship and scored a podium on his debut weekend, having never seen the track before.

Indeed, Anderson hadn't been involved in motorsport until the mid-2000s and had never driven on a circuit before.

Despite being at a massive disadvantage, not knowing the tracks, it's been a brilliantly successful year.

"I'd never touched a track in my life. Talk to me about Kielder Forest and it's fine, but not somewhere like Pembrey or Brands Hatch," he says. "I've just rocked up every week, got my push-bike out and cycled the tracks. That's it. Nothing prior to that to try and get my head around them. I cycle it everyday I am there just to get myself familiarised."

"I've had to drop being flamboyant! You can get away with it on gravel but you have to be a lot more neat and tidy in circuit racing."

"The one thing I have struggled with is reference points because in rallying you wouldn't normally use a reference point for braking or turning the car in, it's done on



Truck awards for rookie racer

natural feeling. Even now at the end of the year, I'm still trying to get my head around reference points. That's been the biggest difference, how strict you have to be.

"In rallying there's a lot of balls involved, on the circuit your driving style has to change dramatically to be more precise."

Wins at Donington in July and Brands in November – where he also scored fastest lap – were particular highlights in a fantastic debut year.

While he has confirmed that he wants to return to rallying, being alone in the cockpit and tracking his prey on a circuit has excited the Leicester driver.

"The experience of winning is the same, but the thing I have enjoyed is the on-track action," he adds. "Being able to trade paint with people, having a target."

"I have struggled with qualifying,



Anderson was losing enjoyment in rallying during 2017 BRC year

because of the reference points. When I get in a race I seem to come up trumps, make a lot of manoeuvres and do things people have never seen.

"With rallying you're so set and determined to listen to the pacenotes, with the race you've got your bit between your teeth and you have a target. With rallying you're set against the clock. In racing, you have live target practice."

As well as competing in Britain, Anderson – not content with the massive change to circuit racing – decided doing the European Championship (see sidebar) was a good idea as well.

"It's like going from the Woodpecker compared to Ypres," says Anderson, comparing a smaller clubman event to a big international rally like Ypres in Belgium.

"It's phenomenal. We were in Germany at the Nurburgring and

there was 120,000 spectators. It's the second largest attended motorsport in Europe after F1. In Europe it's got a very high standing, the competition is a lot higher. The quality and competition is a lot cleaner.

"It can be a damage-festival in the UK. You have to take each one in your stride, adapt to it and learn from it."

And that he has done. If the debut year is anything to go by – third in the British championship – then next year holds much fruit.

The calendar is likely to involve a few one-off British events and a "full attack" in the European championship, with development work being done on his MAN truck over the winter.

However, he promises he will never turn his back on rallying. Anderson will have a busy calendar next year. ■

## The European Truck Racing Championship is packing in some huge crowds

If you elbow your way through the crowds at an FIA European Truck Racing Championship round, you realise just how much there is going on. The ETRC field undoubtedly takes centre stage.

ETRA (the series promoter) has a calendar based around established events with a huge customer base, like the German Truck GP that has been going for 30 years. Autograph sessions are a feature of the weekend in the fan village, rather than in the teams' awnings. All the drivers are in a row, pen in hand as the stars of the show.

The fan village is the focal point of the paddock, with the autograph sessions, interviews and slot truck

racing tracks there too. It is where the podiums are conducted, rather than on the circuit's structure, meaning fans get to mingle with drivers.

Television coverage comes in the form of 24-minute highlight programmes after the event, in English, French and German, while major manufacturer presence (especially in Germany) adds to the scale of the event. Add in concerts, show truck parades and a go-stop competition, there is no escaping juggernaut jollity.

The diesel dicers get four races, two each day, while in France and Germany, the local racers get a chance to hit the track too in their domestic

series. But where ETRA has been savvy is in the Grammer Cup, backed by the German car and truck interior specialists, for the non-pro Chrome-graded drivers and an incentive for drivers that don't want to commit to the cost of registering for a whole season and who rock up as race-by-race entrants. Wherever possible, ETRA is welcoming rigs to the grid.

Grids, and exposure, are growing all the time. The ETRC is booming.

David Addison



European trucks are popular



Brands weekend yielded a second win and a race fastest lap



Jamie Anderson (centre)

# REVIEW: BTRDA RALLY SERIES

Photos: Chicane Media, chasingthecars.com

The wait for a front-wheel-drive Silver Star winner is over. By **Jack Benyon**

## LEPLEY AND WOODBURN ACHIEVE THE IMPROBABLE

### POINTS

#### Silver Star series

P	DRIVER	CAR	PTS
1	George Lepley	Ford Fiesta R2	138
2	Andy Davison	Talbot Sunbeam	126
3	Allan McDowall	Ford Escort Mk2	125
4	Bob Vardy	Ford Fiesta R2	125
5	Ernie Graham	Ford Escort Mk2	118
6	Chris Powell	Talbot Sunbeam	109

## SILVER STAR



Lepley/Woodburn won R2 Trophy too

**T**he year is 2007. That's the last time a front-wheel-drive car won the Silver Star category, Graham

Middleton steering a Hyundai Coupe Kit Car to the title. Now the duck has been broken by the brilliant George Lepley, in a 1600 Ford Fiesta R2 no less.

It was a dominant year for Lepley, winning the R2 Rallye Trophy in its inaugural year, topping the class on every single round he entered. But, despite the fact that the Silver Star is usually taken by a two-litre Ford Escort Mk2, it was also the target from the start of the season.

"I remember saying at the start of the year 'I reckon I can go for top three in the Silver Star, if not go for the win'," explains Lepley. "Some people looked at me funny. But I believed I could do it. I knew it would be a mega achievement as we're in the first R2, it's a 1600 and a bit outdated now."

The 21-year-old, studying Chemical Engineering at the University of Nottingham, could truly commit to this season having had a part year in 2017.

The biggest challenge was adapting to a left-hand-drive car, but thanks to the family business

it wasn't too much of a problem.

Since before George was born, his father Jason has bought and sold rally cars, many of them with great history and driven by Colin and Jimmy McRae, Ari Vatanen, Russell Brookes and Henri Toivonen, to name but a few.

"Hopping in and out of different cars gives you special awareness - I've done Goodwood and shows - you do get used to adapting quickly to lots of different cars," he says.

"Seeing the cars come out of the shed and driving them down the road now and again, even if I have to persuade dad. It's surreal when you've watched videos of the cars on YouTube and then you get to drive them, wondering what must have been going through the guys heads driving them on an event."

Lepley got quicker and quicker as the year went on, taking two sevenths with a third sandwiched between in the Silver Star on the Cambrian, Severn Valley and Plains rallies to start the year.

A class win in Carlisle, a second on the Nicky Grist and a win on the Woodpecker meant he'd wrapped up the Silver Star and the R2 Rallye Cup with a round to spare, and finished ahead of the likes of Luke Francis in his Ford Fiesta RS WRC, having done the same number of

events, in seventh overall.

Lepley's co-driver, Tom Woodburn, added the Silver Star and R2 Rallye Cup in the BTRDA to the Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship co-driver award, in a fulfilling year for his trophy cabinet.

Andy Davison and Tom Murphy were his closest rivals in a Talbot Sunbeam, but their bid was hurt by car trouble on the Nicky Grist and with a low score on the Trackrod Rally. Persistent struggles to get the most out of the car scuppered the pair's title push, but by the end of the year they looked much more like themselves and will be strong contenders next year if they return.

Allan McDowall took the title in 2011, and scored third in this year's Silver Star standings as the top Ford Escort, with Gavin Heseltine on the notes. Carlisle and Woodpecker retirements hit his bid hard.

Max Utting didn't finish outside of the podium places in the three events he did, and would have been a likely challenger for the title in his modified Ford Fiesta ST had he completed the year. Rob Dennis (Escort Mk2) and Ieuan Rowlands (Hillman Avenger) also took class wins, but the latter did one round and the former retired from the Nicky Grist and the Woodpecker. ■

### BTRDA CHAMPIONSHIP AND CLASS WINNERS

**Gold Star:** Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod (Ford Fiesta R5)

**Silver Star:** George Lepley/Tom Woodburn (Fiesta R2)

**Production Cup:** Russ Thompson/Andy Murphy (Mitsubishi Lancer E9)

**Historic Cup:** Ernie Graham/Robin Kellard (Ford Escort Mk2)

**Overall 1400:** Dave Brick/Toby Brick (Vauxhall Nova)

**Overall Rally First driver:** Matthew Baddeley (Toyota Corolla)

**Overall Rally First co-driver:** Liam Johnson (SEAT Arosa)

**Rally First juniors award:** L Johnson/Sam Johnson (Arosa)

**R2 Rallye Cup:** Lepley/Woodburn

**ST Trophy:** James Giddings/Sion Cunniff (Fiesta ST)

**Overall Junior driver:** Lepley

**Overall Junior co-driver:** L Johnson

**Seniors:** Ian Joel/Graeme Wood (Ford Escort RS Cosworth)

**B14:** Edwards/Garrod

**B13:** Joel/Wood

**B12:** Allan McDowall/Gavin Heseltine (Escort Mk2)

**B11:** Andy Davison/Tom Murphy (Talbot Sunbeam)

**B10:** Lepley/Woodburn

**NR4:** Thompson/Murphy

**N3:** Giddings/Cunniff

**H4:** Tom Coughtrie (Mitsubishi Gallant VR4)

**H3:** Graham/Kellard

**H1/2:** Barry Jordan/Paul Wakely (Fiat 131 Abarth, Hillman Avenger)

**1400C driver:** Perry Gardener (Nova)

**1400C co-driver:** Jane Wright (Ford KA)

**1400S:** D Brick/T Brick (Nova)

**Rally First 2.0 driver:** Baddeley

**Rally First 2.0 co-driver:** Calvin Houldsworth (Corolla) and Alex Booth (MG ZR)

**Rally First 1.6:** Emma Morrison/Jon Quintrell (Volkswagen Lupo GTI)

**Rally First 1.4:** L Johnson/S Johnson



Giddings: ST win

### CLASS ROUND-UP



Brick won 1400 title



Baddeley in RF2.0



Group N:Thompson

The ping-pong battle for **Production Cup** titles swayed back in Russ Thompson/Andy Murphy's favour, the 2016 champions taking a second triumph.

Naylor, the 2015 and 2017 champion, finished higher up in the overall championship in third, but Thompson's four class wins to Taylor's three was the decider.

Barry Jordan's second place on the Cambrian proved to be the deciding factor in the **Historic Cup**, with Ernie Graham taking the title. Graham and co-driver Robin Kellard scored five wins to Jordan's three, but Jordan did take the H1/H2 category in his Hillman Avenger, which arguably shouldn't have

challenged Graham's mighty Escort anyway. Jordan did bring out his Fiat 131 Abarth for one round, and was fifth in the H3 category on the Plains.

The difference of two points allowed the flamboyant Dave Brick and co-driver Toby Brick to take the **1400 Championship**, and the class 1400S win with it. Brick's better score in Carlisle by four points over second place man Chris Powell and Jim Lewis's Talbot Sunbeam helped to establish Brick's title. It was the Ludlow driver's first win in the series, the reliability of his Vauxhall Nova usually costing him ground but it was meant to be in 2018. It was a Rallyme Toyota

Corolla dogfight on the Trackrod to decide the outcome of the **Rally First series**, with Matthew Baddeley emerging ahead with victory as team-mate Guy Butler crashed out. It was the Rallyme team's send off as John Goff closes the team down having competed since the 1980s.

A knackered gearbox ruled Ewan Tindall/Paul Hudson out of an impressive year of battling for the **ST Trophy**. It was his first year rallying in the forests having graduated from the Junior 1000 Championship. James Giddings/Sion Cunniff ended the year with a win in Tindall's absence, their third maximum score of the season.

## EDWARDS TAKES GOLD STAR WIN IN DREAM YEAR

Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod took victories on all but two of the six rounds they started in the BTRDA this year, but the championship fizzled out after Paul Bird's departure from the series after the Carlisle Stages.

Ford Fiesta R5 driver Edwards took a wheel off on the opening round, the Cambrian Rally, despite dominating. Then he had two instances of power steering failure on the Carlisle Stages, meaning a second was miraculous.

Bird's title bid appeared validated by winning in Carlisle having taken maximum points on the Cambrian, combined with

two thirds, on the Severn Valley and Plains. But after Carlisle *Motorsport News* understands he was banned from competing, relating to an anti-doping matter, which he has appealed.

That left Edwards in the driving seat. He won the next two events to put the title to bed one round early.

Stephen Petch, the reigning champion, struggled to live with Edwards' speed despite the added pace of his Ford Fiesta RS WRC. He had been leading in Carlisle but visited a ditch, and that signalled the end of his realistic title hopes.

Three unlikely drivers rounded out the top five, with Pat Naylor/

Ian Lawrence taking third. Despite missing out on the Production Cup to Russ Thompson/Andy Murphy, finishing in higher positions on certain events gave Mitsubishi Lancer E9 driver Naylor third in the overall championship.

Ian Joel and Graeme Wood's trusty and still rapid Ford Escort RS Cosworth beat Thompson to finish fourth.

Luke Francis was strong in his first season in a Fiesta RS WRC. But retirements on the Cambrian and Carlisle stunted progress, and he did not contest the last round. Second in the standings would have been achievable.

## GOLD STAR

### POINTS

#### Gold Star series

P	DRIVER	CAR	PTS
1	Matt Edwards	Ford Fiesta R5	148
2	Stephen Petch	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	135
3	Patrick Naylor	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	129
4	Ian Joel	Ford Escort RS Cosworth	121
5	Russ Thompson	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	120
6	Paul Bird	Ford Focus WRC08	114



After winning all but two events he entered, Edwards/Garrod ran wild

## SPORTING SCENE

Photos: Hal Ridge, Colin Casserley

## HORTON TARGETS SUCCESS ON BRITISH RALLYCROSS COMEBACK



Subaru man will aim for final starts

By Hal Ridge

**Rallycross Supercar racer Simon Horton is planning a full-time return to the British Rallycross Championship next season, driving an updated version of his Subaru Impreza Supercar.**

Horton hasn't raced regularly since he competed in the BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship in

2017, largely due to clashing work commitments, but is working on the development of his self-built Supercar ahead of 2019.

"I'm definitely racing in a full British campaign next year with the Impreza," said Horton. "There's quite a lot going on in the background and the main goal will be to try and consistently be in the Supercar final throughout the season, and aim towards the

podium positions."

Horton's most recent season of selected British RX events was in 2016 when he contested five rounds and finished 11th overall in the standings.

"Having not raced in the British championship for a few years, I'm looking forward to having some close races again and also tackling Silverstone for the first time," said Horton, who finished on the podium in British RX's visit to Dutch

circuit Valkenswaard in 2014 on his way to fifth in the championship. "Hopefully there will be a lot of cars on the grid in 2019 – I absolutely relish that prospect," he said.

"It can only lead to closer racing, more competition and a better spectacle for the spectators."

Next season will mark 15 years since Horton's rallycross debut, when he campaigned a Stock Hatch class Peugeot 205.



Prost will make ice race return

## Prost plots a return to Andros Trophy in an electric machine

Experienced single-seater and endurance racer Niclas Prost will compete full-time in the Andros Trophy ice racing series this winter in a four-wheel-drive, four-wheel-steer electric car.

Prost debuted the new top-flight electric car, called the Andros Sport 01, last winter and will join Aurelien Panis and Franck Lagorce by racing the

machines in the mixed-power Elite Pro category this winter.

"I am very happy to return to the Trophee Andros for a full season," said Prost, who was the first champion of the sport's single-make electric category in 2010. Last winter, he also raced for the DA Racing squad.

"I have kept in touch with the ice these past two seasons

by doing several one-off races. Between the Enedis Trophee Andros electric [class] and the Formula E, I have always been a great enthusiast of driving in electric motorsport.

"I cannot wait to find out our performance against the thermal [internal combustion] cars and to be a part in this new historical challenge."

## ROUND-UP

John Fack and passenger Andy Gowen's run of domination in sporting trials continued on Sunday at the **Loughborough** event with their fifth trial overall win in the last six events of the autumn, dropping just a single point on the last round of sections.

Josh Veale proved his closest challenger dropping just three points, with Peter Fenson completing the podium in dry conditions. Northern club champion-elect Bryan Walker ventured to the Midlands to finish in fourth, tying with Jerome Fack who suffered from a poor first round.

Outgoing British champion Roland Uglow returned for the first time since the spring to finish in sixth. Roger Bricknell won the expert live-axle class, in ninth, while Bob Packham made a costly error on the last round to drop to 10th but was best intermediate live-axle from Arthur Carroll. Martin Grimwood won the intermediate independent-class in 14th. Darren Underwood won the Rookie class.

**Duncan Stephens**

**Loughborough Sporting Trial**  
Organiser: MSA/BTRDA Loughborough Car Club  
Where: Grantham When: November 18 Starters: 28.  
1 John Fack (MSR) 1 point; 2 Josh Veale (Sherpa) 3 points; 3 Peter Fenson (Hamilton); 4 Bryan Walker (Jedi); 5 Jerome Fack (MSR); 6 Roland Uglow (Crossle); 7 Boyd Webster (Crossle); 8 Julian Fack (Crossle); 9 Roger Bricknell (Facksmile); 10 Bob Packham (Kincraft).

## BriSCA F1

## Howard swaps F1 for... BriSCA F1 win

**BriSCA F1: Birmingham**

By Colin Casserley

Organiser: BriSCA BMB Where: Birmingham Wheels  
When: November 17 Starters: 71.

For most of the year, Ben Howard spends his time at the various grand prix circuits around the world working in the Williams F1 garage as a mechanic. He often spends any spare time racing his BriSCA F2.

When Finn Sargent suffered an arm injury during the week leading up to the event, he offered Howard the chance to drive his car at the Gala meeting. Howard jumped at the chance and it proved to be fruitful as he took his maiden final victory.

Although Howard led from flag-to-flag, it was not an easy victory as the field was bunched up several times by yellow flags.

However, on each restart, he maintained his advantage on his pursuers and held off a late-race charge from Joe Nickolls.

Howard said: "I can't believe it. Winning the final and bringing

Howard was untroubled



the Dave Leonard Memorial Trophy back to Rochdale – both mine and Leonard's home town – means a lot to me and is so special words can't describe it. I got a bit excited and emotional on the last lap and got the car a bit sideways but managed to collect it up before crossing the line."

Second placed Nickolls, who is in his first season of racing, said: "I know I shouldn't be disappointed with second, but I am. I needed a few more laps and I think I would have caught Howard. There were a lot of lapped cars between us on the restarts. That hurt my chances."

Anthony Whorton-Eales brought his Murray Harrison-

owned car home in third place. "Murray worked on the car all night and it was getting better in each race. It was on rails in the final. I wish I could have more seat time and then I would really be on the pace. I just love driving these cars."

Earlier in the night Lee Fairhurst won his second consecutive Under 25s championship. "Dave Leonard was a close family friend and as this is the last time I am eligible for the race I really wanted to win it," he said.

## Result

1 Ben Howard; 2 Joe Nickolls; 3 Ant Whorton-Eales; 4 Ashley England; 5 Jess Smith; 6 Gordon Moodie; 7 Mick Brassey; 8 Frankie Wainman Junior Jr; 9 Kelvin Hassell; 10 Dean Mayes.

## NATIONAL HOT ROD RACER

## SHANE BLAND

"The racing has been absolutely intense"



**W**hat a year I've had, I must say it's been the most challenging, enjoyable and successful year

I've had in National Hot Rods. I started the year coming off the back of a three-meeting ban and several missed rounds due to them being snowed off.

The first major championship was then quickly upon us and I was a bit rusty. When I arrived at the European Championship at Lochgelly in Scotland, the pace was there. A single practice session was all that was required for me to recognise I had a good car underneath me.

By Turn 1 the job was done: the polesitter went wide by half a car and I was in. The car had the pace to pull away and it was an easy win.

The next major was the World Championship in July. The previous mentioned ban and cancelled events conspired against me which resulted in not enough points gained to qualify. That was an unpleasant weekend at home.

In the National Championship in August, qualifying races were brilliant and put me second on the grid. The race was less than exciting and a result of third place felt like failure. On reflection, it wasn't, there were 50 cars entered so to finish third was no mean feat.

The final major of the year was the British Championship in Northern Ireland. I qualified outside pole but managed to go round the outside of polesitter Adam Hylands on lap one. I was confident of the win and managed the race perfectly until the last lap: my concentration lapsed for a split second as we arrived behind backmarkers, that split second was enough for Hylands to charge down the inside. Hylands went on to win while I went rallying across the infield...

That's normally the end of the significant races but there was one more event. The inaugural Angie Rowe Memorial was hastily planned to tie in with the last event of 2018, Bonfire Night at Hedgesford. This is always a great event as the atmosphere is electric, a big crowd is always guaranteed and racing under the floodlights speeds everything up. Angie Rowe was a legend of National Hot Rod racing, her dedication to the sport was immense, she would always be working away in the background to make events as well run and organised as they could be.

The racing was intense, the level of focus from all drivers was absolute. Racing three abreast became constant, overtaking relentless. Jason Kew was the man of the night and won the final in style, I finished third.

I have never enjoyed my racing as much as this year, winning my first major was a big weight of my shoulders. I am absolutely convinced that the future of National Hot Rods and oval racing will be a good one.



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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

### MN SAYS...

# A herculean effort shouldn't be ignored

## Sebastien Ogier's march to a sixth WRC crown wasn't easy, but his team helped

The battle for this season's World Rally Championship hung in the balance through the various twists and turns of Rally Australia last weekend, which made it an absorbing event.

Sebastien Ogier's title was taken, in the end, with a lame fifth position as both Thierry Neuville and Ott Tanak crashed out of the event. But that should take nothing away from the job that the Frenchman did over the course of the 13 rounds. He showed the class that has made him the most decorated man in the full-time WRC service park.

The efforts and expertise that Malcolm Wilson's M-Sport squad has put into this triumph can't be downplayed. The Cumbrian firm has taken risks, and has raided its own piggybank to make sure that it can continue to take on the weight of the works teams without its own factory funding. It really is a David versus Goliath story which should warm the heart.

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



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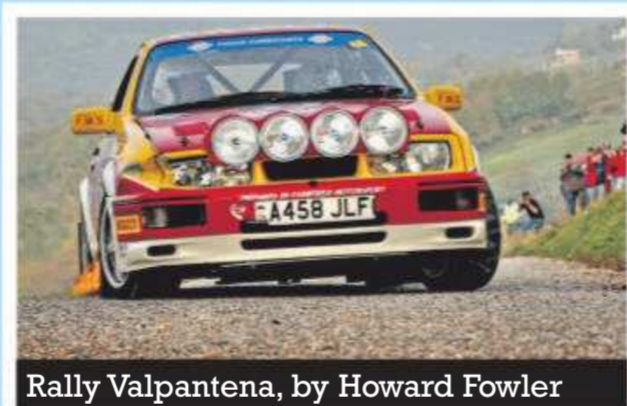
Tim Sawyer's photograph and a pair of Austin-Healeys from the Rally of the Tests



An AC Owners Club sprint at the Goodwood Motor Circuit, taken by Robert Clayson



BTCC Vauxhall testing, by Rich Cranston



Rally Valpantena, by Howard Fowler



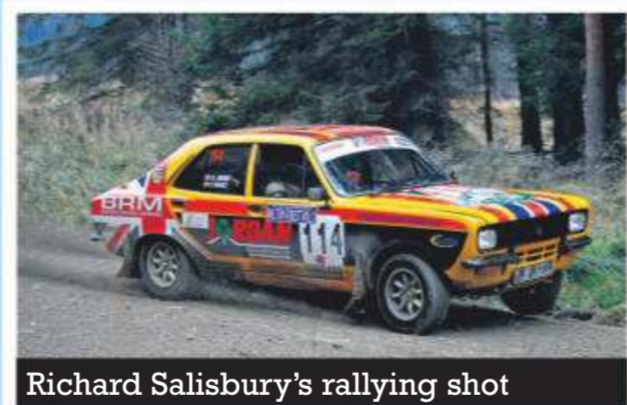
Patrick Henson from Rally of the Tests



Keith Jones caught Craig Breen at work



Mike Griffin from Rally of the Tests



Richard Salisbury's rallying shot



John Henderson's memory of the TCR UK Championship's visit to Knockhill this year



Dean Chilvers enjoyed watching Sebastien Loeb on Rally Spain recently

**GOT AN OPINION?**

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## TV GUIDE



Ticktum won 2017 Macau GP in thrilling last-corner drama

Tune in for the world-famous Formula 3 race from the streets of Macau as Brit Dan Ticktum attempted to repeat his triumph from 2017 (Thursday, 1700-1805hrs, Eurosport 2).

But 2018 F3 champion Mick Schumacher and a host of other drivers would be doing everything they could to win the Macau GP themselves.

Also racing on the streets of Macau was the WTCR series, (Thursday, 2100-2200hrs, Eurosport 2). Gabriele Tarquini had a comfortable lead in the standings but would he be able

to hold off the advances of Yvan Muller for the inaugural WTCR crown?

The latest round of the World Endurance Championship's 2018/19 superseason took place in China for the 6 Hours of Shanghai (Friday, 1430-1530hrs, BT Sport 3), as Fernando Alonso attempts to move one step closer to securing his maiden sportscar title.

And finally, relive the best bits of the 2018 Michelin Le Mans Cup with a season review on Monday (2230-2300hrs, BT Sport 3).

## LISTINGS



Caterhams at Rockingham

### RACING SATURDAY

#### Rockingham, Northants Super Send Off Meeting:

Saloons, Sports/GT, Single-Seaters, One-Hour Race, Caterhams, Starts racing from 1100hrs (qualifying from 0845hrs) Admission £16 Web rockingham.co.uk Contact 0870 1660438

### RALLY SATURDAY

#### Blyton Park, Lincolnshire Plastics 4 Performance Hall Trophy Rally

Starts 0930hrs Admission TBC Web clitheroedmc.co.uk

### SUNDAY

Trac Mon, Anglesey Pentraeth Automotive Group Glyn Memorial Stages Starts 1130hrs Admission TBC Web camconline.co.uk

Listings correct at time of press but please check before travelling

## LIVE F1

### Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

1200-1430hrs  
Race: Sunday, 1130-1610hrs

### Sky Sports F1 HD

Drivers' press conference: Thursday, 1100-1130hrs  
FP1: Friday, 0845-1050hrs  
FP2: Friday, 1245-1455hrs  
FP3: Saturday, 0945-1115hrs  
Qualifying: Saturday,

### Channel 4 HD

FP1: Friday, 0855-1035hrs  
FP2: Friday, 1255-1500hrs  
FP3: Saturday, 0955-1125hrs  
Qualifying: Saturday, 1155-1445hrs  
Race: Sunday, 1200-1635hrs



Verstappen and Ocon clash was key talking point from Brazilian GP

## LIVE TV



Russell is favourite to take Formula 2 title in Abu Dhabi this weekend

### Formula 2: Yas Marina

Race 1: Saturday, 1430-1530hrs, Sky Sports F1  
Race 2: Sunday, 0930-1030hrs, Sky Sports F1

### GP3: Yas Marina

Race 1: Saturday, 0825-0915hrs, Sky Sports F1  
Race 2: Sunday, 0805-0850hrs, Sky Sports F1

## NEXT WEEK

## OUT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28



WHO WILL WIN THE FINAL F1 RACE OF 2018?

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Registered as a Newspaper with Consignia

Printed by Sheffield Web  
Distributed by Seymour, 2 Poultry Avenue, London, EC1A 9PT  
Published every Wednesday by Autosport Media UK Limited, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1AG, UK

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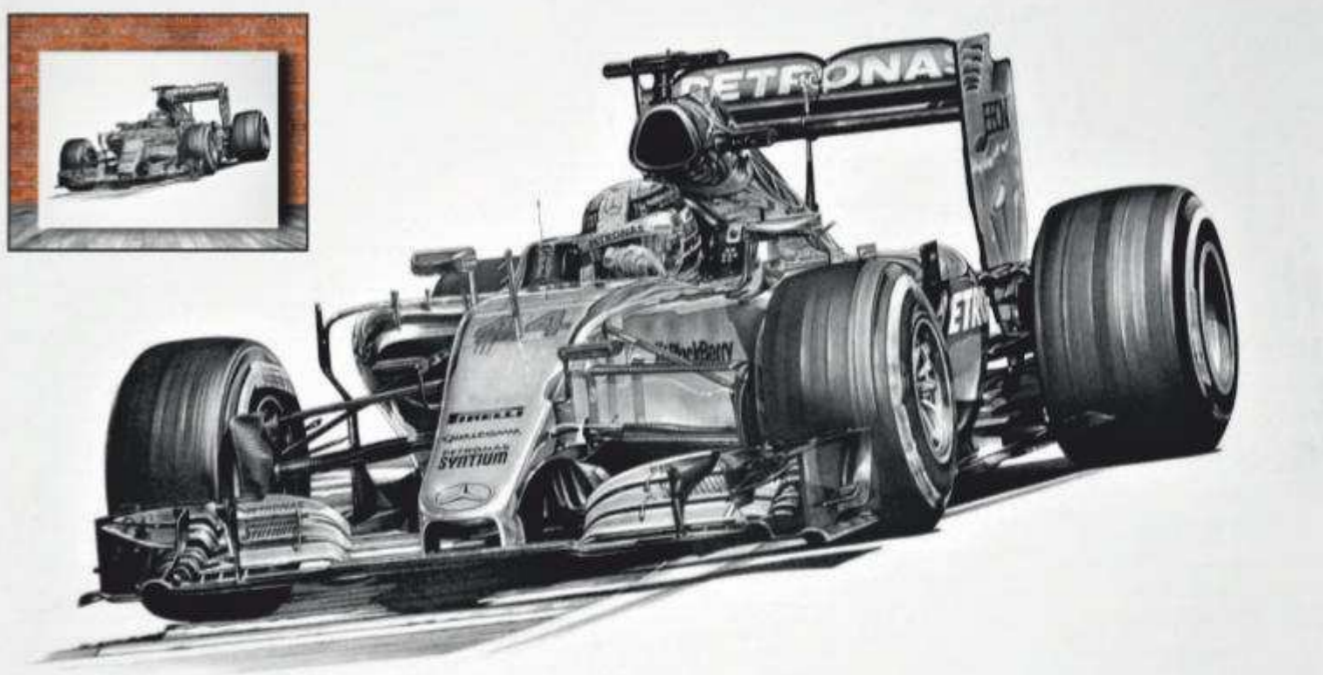
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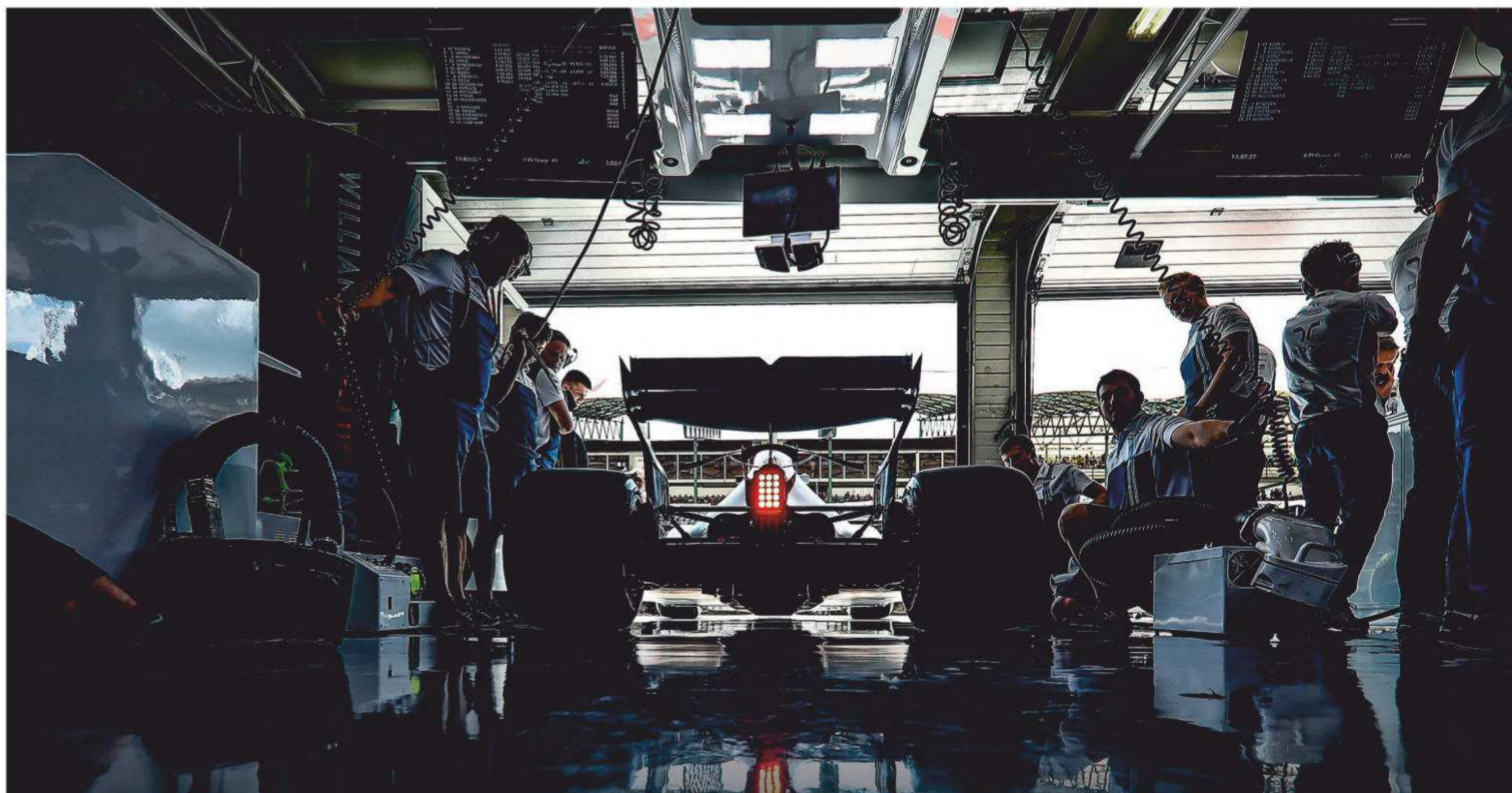
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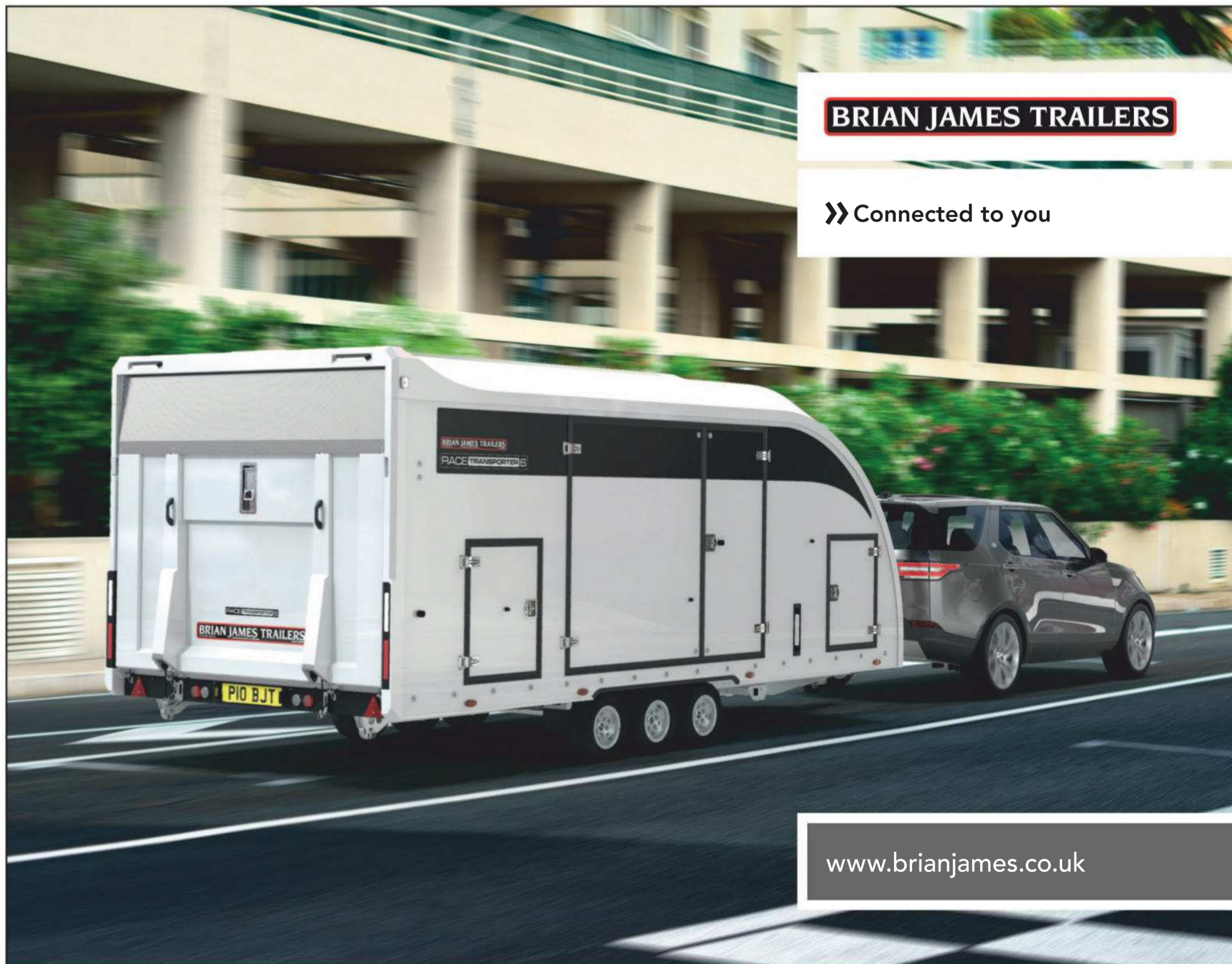
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