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# Autosport

"Davidson has looked impressive to me"

Jackie Stewart



**WRC SCARE**  
Solberg in  
horror shunt



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**SPA GP PREVIEW**  
Why F1 needs its  
greatest venue

**EXCLUSIVE F1 ANALYSIS**  
**WHO'S THE**  
**FASTEST**  
**BRIT?** 

**Four home-grown heroes**  
**in fight to make 2005 grid**

## A SAFETY WARNING

TOUCHY subject, motorsport crashes. Yet if we're being honest, they're an integral part of what we find entertaining. A car in a glorious tail drift will get us excited. An awesome overtaking manoeuvre will leave us fired up. And a spectacular accident will get everyone pointing at the television screen and shouting. No-one likes to see anyone get hurt, of course – which is why our 100 greatest crashes features drivers who recovered from any ill effects after their incidents.

And yet motorsport is such that we can put together a special on the most spectacular crashes logged in our own memory banks – and strive to keep it as clean as possible – only to face a weekend where six drivers and co-drivers ended up in hospital on Rally Deutschland.

Thankfully, all were released after a maximum of one night under observation – although having seen the wreckage (Petter Solberg's is shown to the right here), it's a miracle that more serious injuries weren't incurred. World championship rallying has enjoyed a decent run of safety. But when someone with as much technical know-how as Subaru boss David Lapworth admits that every single safety aspect of the Subaru Impreza was tested in Solberg's shunt, it's surely time to find some fresh margin for error.

Crashes are part of motorsport; whether we like it or not, the drama they cause is part of its appeal. But accidents like those witnessed in Germany last weekend are a firm reminder to all of us that it is much more important to see the driver emerging from the wreckage.



**JOHN McILROY**  
EDITOR

**"The main thing is that my co-driver Phil Mills is okay – we can build another car"**

**Petter Solberg**

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**RALLY DEUTSCHLAND REPORT**



**Petter joins the casualty**

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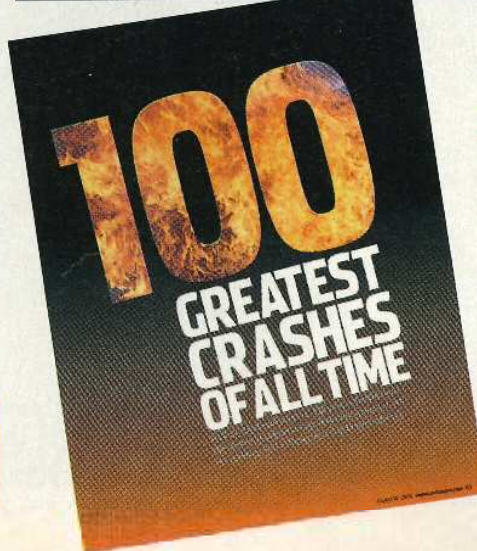


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**SMASHING TIME**  
Colin McRae's had so many shunts that he's earned his own section in this feature





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Grab your chance to read Autosport before it hits the shelves with...



**DAVID COULTHARD**



**KNOWLEDGE**

Has masses of experience at top teams Williams and McLaren

**PEDIGREE**

13 grand prix wins, but in a Williams and McLaren perhaps he should have more

**MONEY**

Well paid at McLaren and knows his worth, but equally keen to stay in F1

**ANTHONY DAVIDSON**



**KNOWLEDGE**

Plenty of testing this year at the wheel of a competitive BAR. Only two F1 starts

**PEDIGREE**

Has grabbed the headlines with fast testing pace. High on a few shortlists

**MONEY**

No personal backing but is desperate to get into a race seat so cash not an issue

# Brits get boost in

**Autosport**  
**EXCLUSIVE**  
**NEWS ANALYSIS**

**T**he collapse of talks between energy drinks giant Red Bull and Jaguar over a long-term future partnership could be the catalyst that helps British drivers grab the final places on next year's Formula 1 grid. Red Bull boss Dietrich Mateschitz confirmed this week that his negotiations with Jaguar had now ceased and that his company's support would not continue into 2005. It is also possible that his long-time backing of Sauber could come

to an end, with a final decision due in a few months' time. Despite the financial implications of losing £4 million worth of sponsorship, the situation could free Jaguar to focus on selecting its driver line-up without any outside political pressure, as happened with Christian Klien last season. It wanted to take him on in a testing role but Red Bull insisted he was given a race seat. The young Austrian's disappointing form this year makes it unlikely he will be retained and that

could pave the way for Jaguar to take on two British drivers. It looks likely that David Coulthard will sign for Jaguar next season, although he remains an outside contender for a berth at BAR and Sauber. Former world champion Sir Jackie Stewart, speaking exclusively to Autosport this week, claimed there was little doubt that Coulthard would be a valuable asset to any F1 team. "I would have to look at this guy on the basis that he is going to get you a lot of points and podiums -

and he also has the credentials which have earned him a total of 13 grand prix wins," he said. "Simply, he knows how to do it, he might be a little late in the day but you never know." The experienced Alexander Wurz remains a possibility for a seat, but should the team decide that it should sign two British drivers then the man most likely to be handed the opportunity alongside Coulthard is Anthony Davidson. The BAR team driver has a good relationship with

**GARY PAFFETT**



**KNOWLEDGE**

A little F1 testing and plenty of miles at F1 venues thanks to varied background

**PEDIGREE**

A former McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner. Strong in DTM

**MONEY**

Probably doing quite nicely in DTM thank you, but still a cheap buy in F1 terms

**RICHARD LYONS**



**KNOWLEDGE**

Formula Nippon doesn't give him experience of many current F1 circuits

**PEDIGREE**

Some decent British results, but recent promising form has all been in Japan

**MONEY**

Needs to find cash to buy a seat or even a test. Manager David Kennedy is hopeful

# hunt for F1 seats

Jaguar chief Tony Purnell and was the team's reserve driver in 2005.

Davidson is not short of options for next year and, as well as a likely test with Sauber after this season, he remains a strong contender at BAR if the team is unsuccessful in its bid to keep hold of Jenson Button. That decision will depend on whether BAR wants an experienced driver such as Mika Hakkinen, Jacques Villeneuve or Coulthard, or a more youthful line-up.

Although there is scepticism among some quarters of the

F1 paddock about Davidson's impressive showings in Friday tests this year, Stewart is convinced of his overall talent.

"Davidson has shown considerable promise," he said. "Of course it's difficult to accurately judge his comparative performance in the Friday free practice sessions where he may have more tyres and a different fuel load compared with his racing team-mates. But he's taken his chances where he can find them, made only one mistake [when he crashed on Friday in

Canada] and has looked pretty damn impressive in my view."

Joining Davidson in the Sauber tests at the end of the year will be DTM ace Gary Paffett, who remains a favoured choice for Peter Sauber after impressive performances in the German touring car series this year. However, both British drivers could lose out if Red Bull puts pressure on the team to sign Vitantonio Liuzzi (see sidebar).

Stewart believes that Paffett's chances of making a career in F1 will depend on him getting out of touring

**"It might be late in the day for David to win a world title, but you never know" Jackie Stewart**

cars as soon as possible. He said: "He did well in Formula 3 and is proving very competitive indeed in the DTM. He's got a really good reputation as a promising young star, but if he's to consolidate that he needs to be seen much more in single-seaters. If he can get the opportunity he'll need to do quite a lot of testing before people decide to choose him for F1."

A fourth British driver cannot be ruled out of the reckoning either. Formula Nippon series leader Richard Lyons met with all the

## MEN WHO COULD STOP THE BRITS



## KNOWLEDGE

F3000 takes him to F1's European venues and puts him in the right paddock

## PEDIGREE

Romping to the F3000 title this year. Said to have four F1 offers already

## MONEY

Now seems to be Red Bull's chosen man, so can boast useful backing



## KNOWLEDGE

Tons of experience from his F1 days at Williams and BAR. But has sat out 2004

## PEDIGREE

Won world title in 1997, in the best car. Has been committed but patchy since

## MONEY

One of F1's biggest earners of the last decade. But says he will race for bonuses

F1 teams at the Hungarian Grand Prix in his bid to land a race seat next year.

Although his only hope with the leading teams is for a test later this season, there is a chance he could follow in the footsteps of former Formula Nippon champion Ralph Firman and make the switch to F1 with Jordan.

Jordan's director of business affairs Ian Phillips confirmed the team was following Lyons' career, but said it was too early to make any firm decisions about its future line-up.

"Until we know what engine we're using and how much we are paying, it's a little difficult to do the maths," he said. "We have no plans yet to test Richard Lyons even though we've been watching his progress. Sadly we are not in the position to be philanthropists."

## VITANTONIO LIUZZI

VITANTONIO Liuzzi's domination of this year's International Formula 3000 Championship has led to significant interest from F1 teams about his future plans – and left him as a major threat to British drivers in the fight for seats next year.

The Italian has the backing of energy drinks giant Red Bull, which could prove vital in pushing him in front of the British hopefuls. Team boss Peter Sauber has confirmed that he will test Liuzzi later this year with a view to racing him, and the team could come under pressure to sign Liuzzi if Red Bull threatens to pull its backing of Sauber.

A deal with Sauber would also be the perfect scenario for Ferrari, which is understood to have expressed serious interest in Liuzzi. Although sporting director Jean Todt has made it clear that no firm

test offer has been made to the Italian, he admitted that the team is keeping an eye on several drivers. If Liuzzi got a season alongside Felipe Massa at Sauber, it would allow Ferrari the perfect opportunity to judge both men's capabilities.

A Sauber spokesman confirmed that the team was compiling a list of contenders for 2005, but refused to say how high up that list Liuzzi was. "It is not possible to give a detailed assessment of our potential candidates," he said. "Maybe within the next few weeks we can get an idea of which direction we will go." Liuzzi could also be targeted by Arden boss Christian Horner, who has an outside possibility of staging a Jaguar buy-out in a bid to enter F1.

**"If Liuzzi got a seat alongside Massa it would allow Ferrari to judge both men"**

## JACQUES VILLENEUVE

JACQUES Villeneuve has made no secret of his desire to grab a seat at BAR next season if the team loses its fight for Jenson Button, but he has also emerged as an outside contender for a drive at Sauber as well.

The 1997 world champion and his manager Craig Pollock requested a meeting with Peter Sauber last week and were duly shown around the team's facilities, including its state-of-the-art windtunnel.

Sauber himself said he was impressed with the French-Canadian's attitude and could see the possibility of the pair working together in the future.

"Jacques was immaculately groomed – and showed a deep desire to come back to grand prix racing," he said. "I know there are some people who describe him as being difficult,

but we are known as a team which takes good care of its drivers and I could easily imagine myself getting along with Villeneuve. There is no doubt that from a PR point of view, taking him on board could be a huge boost for Sauber. But there are other points to consider as well."

Although Sauber is not widely regarded as a potential race-winner next season, Villeneuve has suggested that there are reasons to join the team if a deal can be put on the table.

"They have a great engine and the car seems to be good as well, so then it's just a case of whether they can make the tyres work like Ferrari can," he told Autosport.

But Sauber is still understood to favour signing a younger driver and is in no rush to make a final decision.

He said: "We are under no pressure whatsoever, and that is why I am taking my time. I've not even decided whether we will select a young talent or an experienced driver. One thing is obvious, though – there is a huge interest in Sauber. For me this is a clear sign that we are a highly attractive team today."

For more about Villeneuve's F1 bid go to the Autosport Plus section of...  
www.autosport.com

# No end in sight to Button saga

**T**he resolution of Jenson Button's dispute with the BAR-Honda team over whether or not he drives for the rival Williams-BMW squad in 2005 seemed close to stalling early this week as no firm date for the Contract Recognition Board's review of the situation has yet been established.

As Autosport went to press, it appeared that Williams had yet to lodge its sealed copy of Button's 2005 contract with the CRB, raising speculation that there were separate legal issues which might mean the matter is steered towards the Civil Courts. That is despite an obligation for signatories of the Concorde Agreement, the document by which F1 is run, to abide by decisions of the Swiss-based arbitration

service to resolve issues over conflicting driver contracts.

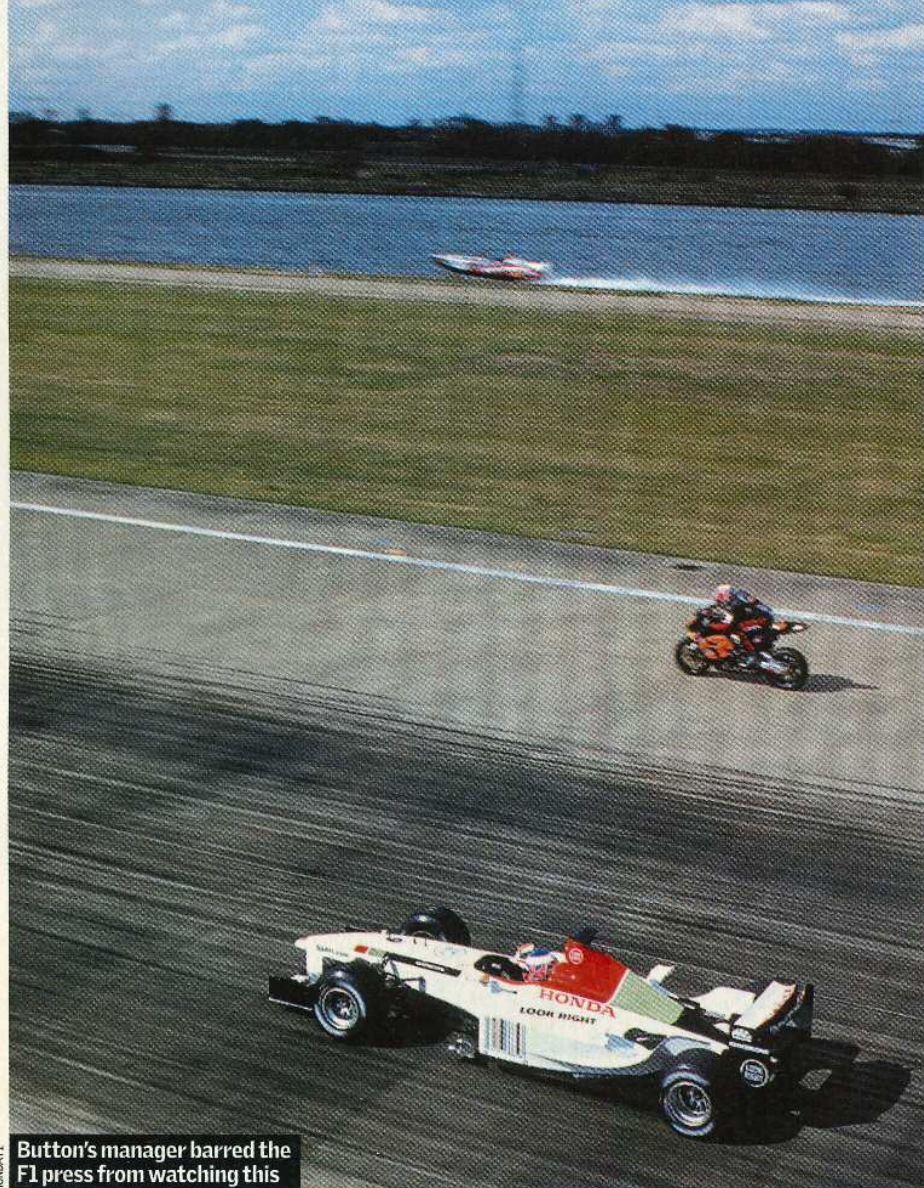
BAR-Honda team boss David Richards remains convinced the CRB will rule that his contract with Button is valid. "We've lodged the contract and it would be inappropriate to elaborate on the issues any further," he told Autosport on Monday. "We've submitted ourselves to the process and that's all there is to it."

Neither the Williams nor the Button camp were courting any sort of media attention this week. Button's manager, John Byfield, adopted an unusually defensive stance by preventing journalists – including a correspondent from Autosport sister magazine *F1 Racing* – from covering an event at London's City Airport where Button raced his BAR against a motorbike

and a powerboat.

Motorsport's governing body has made it clear that it is not involved in the contracts matter in any way. "The whole function of the CRB is to provide an independent and impartial adjudication system," said an FIA spokesman. "The Concorde Agreement requires drivers' contracts to meet three basic criteria: the contract with a specific team must be lodged with the CRB; it must not conflict with any previously registered contract; and it has to contain a clause agreeing to submit to the arbitration process in the event of a dispute."

Richards insists he will not consider another driver for 2005 and believes it is possible to repair the relationship with Button should the CRB rule in the team's favour.



Button's manager barred the F1 press from watching this

## Autosport FIRST PIC



## BLAST FROM THE PAST

### Rosberg goes Light



Keke wonders if he has the right car

IT'S back to the archives again as we go all misty-eyed over the time when McLaren swapped the iconic red-and-white Marlboro livery on Keke Rosberg's car for the unfamiliar yellow and white of its Lights brand for the 1986 Portuguese GP. The change did little to boost Keke's results though as he retired with engine failure.

### Renault faces further backroom loss

RENAULT could be about to lose another of its senior design staff.

Just weeks after joint chief designer Mark Smith resigned having agreed terms to join Jordan, engine technical director Rob White is believed to be considering a return to Cosworth.

White joined Renault last season

after a lengthy spell at Cosworth. The recent management shake-up at Cosworth means he could be in overall charge of the company's Formula 1 project should he return. White was recruited by Renault in the wake of its decision to adopt a traditional engine format for 2004.



**This is how** Jenson Button's BAR-Honda could look at this year's Chinese Grand Prix as team owner British American Tobacco tries to maximise publicity for its 555 brand. The decision to change the colour scheme would be made because the Lucky Strike brand is not sold in China

# Mark Hughes

F1'S INSIDE LINE



## "Death's brooding shadow was very recognisable to Fangio and his peers"

I'VE never been one for autographs, but I made an exception once. In the Hockenheim pits Juan Manuel Fangio was sitting in a Mercedes W196, having just demoed it. He signed my Fangio book with the look of a man who could see life's horizon making its way towards him. At the time I assumed his age and health were responsible for that look, like he was taking in the scene so he could remember it, making his final goodbyes with the car perhaps. But I've since recognised it in images of him at his peak, that same resignation that fate was stalking him with a plan.

He said he used to try to keep a survival margin in his driving. In fact, all the survivors from that era say that; the ones who didn't were quickly weeded out. But in his greatest race, the German Grand Prix of 1957, he discarded those margins as he sought to recover from a botched pitstop. He drove, he said, to a level he'd never before reached and didn't ever want to reach again. He claimed he would get a cold sweat thinking about how he'd taunted the forces that day. He *didn't* ever drive like that again and within a year he'd retired. He'd used up his will to win that day, he said.

Death's brooding shadow would have been very recognisable to Fangio and his peers. It stood there watching them in the form of trees, ditches, lamp-posts, buildings. They threaded their cars between its clammy grasp. Today the shadows have moved further back from the action and, though a driver is still dancing with fate much more intimately than most of us, it won't necessarily feel like that to him. Competitive desires can be pushed much further without feeling they're inviting the attention of the dark forces. We should never kid ourselves that those forces can't still jump out and bite, but they've become more random, less directly linked with an individual's will to win, and far less frequent. They've lost their fascination with the sport.

Eau Rouge is a corner whose natural majesty used to give modern drivers a few seconds' exposure to some of what the earlier heroes would have felt every time they were in the car. As you scream down the hill on the approach, the road beyond looks like a wall. A touring car driver once told me that, as his car accelerated down that hill, he would be alternately thrilled and irritated with its eagerness to build up speed towards that colossus. But the speed and grip of a Formula 1 car will shrink the time in which to feel that and right up to 2001 it was the ultimate thread-the-needle corner, and at that speed those dark forces will have felt very close to the track.

But in 2002 they changed the run-off from gravel to asphalt. Suddenly there seemed lots of track to use and suddenly too everyone seemed to be taking it flat as a matter of routine. We were disappointed, *they* were disappointed. Don't we all, despite ourselves, have some of those dark forces within us?



ILLUSTRATION: JIM BOMBER

## Kevlar coating on the cards

THE chances of on-track debris causing the kind of accident that injured Ralf Schumacher in the United States Grand Prix could be dramatically reduced if plans by the FIA come to fruition.

Autosport understands that motor racing's governing body is considering a rule whereby teams would have to coat carbonfibre pieces of exterior bodywork in kevlar. This would help ensure that, if the

bodywork breaks in an accident, the carbonfibre will not shatter into tiny shards as easily as it does now.

It is widely accepted that carbonfibre shards contributed to the punctures that caused Fernando Alonso and Schumacher to crash heavily at Indianapolis in June.

Consideration is also being given to banning carbonfibre suspension next year in the wake of Jarno Trulli's accident at Silverstone. It is feared that despite the suspension's strength, it can be weakened more readily than similar-strength metal suspensions if it suffers a stress impact in the wrong area or direction.



Schu Jr crashed at Indy after running over carbonfibre shards

PHOTOGRAPHY: JIM BOMBER

## Williams still waiting on Ralf's return

ANTONIO Pizzonia will drive for Williams again in this weekend's Belgian Grand Prix as Ralf Schumacher is still not fit enough to make a racing return.

Williams had held a slight hope of Schumacher being given the green

light by doctors for a comeback at Spa-Francorchamps, but it is now likely that the German will not be fit until the Italian Grand Prix in two weeks' time. He must complete the team's pre-Monza test next week if he is going to have any chance of making

it back into the cockpit for that race.

F1 medical delegate Sid Watkins said: "His medic will have to decide if he is fit and then he will have to complete a further test."

Pizzonia has scored points in both his outings so far for Williams.



What safety? Denny Hulme's McLaren leads at Spa in 1968



# Pit & Paddock

Formula 1 news round-up



Davidson and Button in China

## VISA WOES FOR SATO

While BAR team-mates Jenson Button and Anthony Davidson were enjoying a promotional trip to Shanghai in China, Takuma Sato had a nightmare visit to Brazil last week when he was refused entry to the country because of a visa problem. The Japanese ace, who has become hugely popular in the South American country after his clash with Rubens Barrichello at the Nürburgring earlier this year, had been due to spend the day with journalists in Sao Paulo. But authorities at Guarulhos airport declined to admit him and Sato was forced to spend eight hours at the airport before returning to Britain later the same afternoon.

## LEGAL ACTION NOT RULED OUT BY HONDA

Honda has not ruled out the possibility of taking arbitration action against the FIA over plans to change engine rules for next year. Sources claim that the Japanese car manufacturer could join BMW and Mercedes-Benz in the action because it feels that the new regulations will hinder any development plans. Honda's Otmaz Szafnauer said: "Honda has not decided on its course of action yet."

## AERODYNAMICIST GETS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FROM TECH BOSS

Williams technical director Sam Michael has dismissed rumours that chief aerodynamicist Antonia Terzi's place at the team is under threat. Terzi was the key architect of the team's controversial walrus nose that was dropped before the Hungarian Grand Prix. Michael said: "We look at the aero department and its structure all the time. We made a few changes to it recently, but we are behind Terzi. It is a matter of us moving forward and strengthening the department around the rest of the team."

## VERSTAPPEN'S F1 HOPES SUFFER BLOW

Former grand prix driver Jos Verstappen's hopes of returning to Formula 1 have suffered another blow after he injured his knee in a karting accident. Verstappen rolled his kart after a rival turned into him. He underwent an operation last week under general anaesthetic to fix torn ligaments.

## HUNGARIAN GP CONSOLIDATES POSITION ON F1 CALENDAR

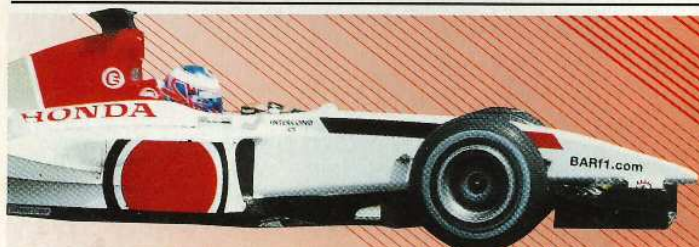
The Hungarian Grand Prix's place on the Formula 1 calendar appears secure for the long term after organisers concluded a deal with the sport's supremo, Bernie Ecclestone, to host the race until 2011. Although the current deal was due to run until 2006, Hungarian prime minister Peter Medgyessy wanted greater commitment on the back of increased financial backing for the race.

## CITY SLICKERS

Toyota attracted more than 40,000 spectators to its 'City Grand Prix' event in Cologne last weekend, when they were treated to a display of the Japanese car manufacturer's racing and rallying machinery. As well as F1 demos from Olivier Panis and Ricardo Zonta, Didier Auriol burned some rubber in a rally car and Allan McNish showed off one of Toyota's former Le Mans racers. Zonta said: "It's a shame we couldn't show the full potential of the cars."



Panis lights up his tyres in the City Grand Prix event in Cologne



# Schu on verge of taking title

MICHAEL Schumacher will wrap up his seventh World Championship title if he wins this weekend's Belgian Grand Prix, but Ferrari sporting director Jean Todt has warned rivals that the team will not ease up in its quest for race wins.

Even if team-mate and closest rival Rubens Barrichello finishes second, a win for Schumacher would leave him with an unassailable 40-point advantage. The Brazilian would be able to level the score, although Schumacher would get the verdict on number of race wins.

But Todt insists his team is targeting a win every time out

to complete an astonishing 17 victories from 18 events.

"I'm never relaxed - that is in my

nature," said Todt. "It's easy to say that nobody will beat us, but believe me they are all crazy about how they will beat us. We are going to fight as much as we can and we will beat them still."

Ferrari's F2004 is expected to be the class of the field around Spa-Francorchamps this weekend, but the team will not have use of the dramatic improved rear tyres that helped crush its rivals in Hungary two weeks ago. The tyres are unlikely to reappear until the Chinese Grand Prix next month.



Happiness is... Ferrari at Fiorano

## Albers puts back F1 test

DTM TOURING car ace Christijan Albers has postponed his Formula 1 test with Jordan until after the season so he can concentrate fully on his championship ambitions.

The Dutchman had been due to drive a Jordan at Silverstone early next month but, after losing ground in the DTM following two consecutive failures to score points, he fears the test could prove to be a distraction.

Albers is now likely to get his run-out at Jerez in early December, when Formula 1's winter-testing ban comes to an end.

"After the DTM championship I will prepare myself well for this test and I want to show the team I belong in F1," said Albers. "I am really happy to have the test session with Jordan and appreciate that they are willing to be so flexible."

Albers is a former Minardi test driver. The Jordan test has come through Dutch sponsor Trust, which had been supporting Jos Verstappen.

## THE BIG NUMBERS

### It's all Schumacher

**£300,000,000**

The estimated income of Michael Schumacher since he entered Formula 1 in 1991, the result of salary, merchandise, profit and personal sponsorship deals

**13,267,395**

How many miles Schumacher has spent in the lead of grands prix

**4568**

How many laps Schuey has led in Formula 1

**1462**

By this Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix, this will be how many days the invincible German will have been a reigning world champion

**159**

The number of times that he has finished in the points in F1 in 207 starts

**121**

The number of his 207 races that Schumacher has led at some point

**34**

How many times Herr Schuey has finished a race in second position - just one less than the record holder Alain Prost. That means that pretty soon he could be the man with the most wins and second places. Depressing for the rest!

**1**

The race number of Michael Schumacher's car since October 8 2000, when he became the first Ferrari world champion since Jody Scheckter secured the honour in 1979

**0**

Could be the chance the opposition has of stopping Schumacher winning 17 out of 18 races this year

## UNDER THE HELMET



**GIANCARLO FISICHELLA** I had always liked the colours white, green, blue and yellow. The original idea was to create something which would be easy to spot. So we went for the stripes with that special dayglo yellow. Later I altered the end of the yellow and green stripes a bit to give it a more dynamic look and I went from basic white to a more spectacular chrome.

## Leinders misses out on home debut

MINARDI Friday tester Bas Leinders will not make his Formula 1 race debut at the Belgian Grand Prix this weekend after all.

The ex-German Formula 1 champion had hoped to take part in his home race, but was unable to raise the budget needed to replace either Zsolt Baumgartner or Gianmaria Bruni.

"We tried to look for an opening for me to make my debut because it would have been helpful in the cause to get further backing for my F1 future," said Leinders. "But there will be other opportunities and I am hoping to get on the grid next year."

# BEAT JENSON TO THE NEWS...

# Drivers slam new Bus Stop

**T**he controversial new layout of the Bus Stop chicane at the Spa-Francorchamps track has been labelled a joke ahead of this weekend's Belgian Grand Prix. The modifications introduced for

this year mean that the entry to the corner now turns briefly right before switching left.

Williams racer Juan Pablo Montoya said: "It is nice to have a track like Spa back, but I heard the last chicane is a bit of a joke.

"Before it [the chicane] was just one down. Now it's a complete circus."

McLaren's David Coulthard is especially angry because the Grand Prix Drivers' Association has not been consulted about the alterations. "It's disappointing because, as a group, we

weren't informed of the proposed changes," he said. "And the comments I've seen aren't favourable.

"Quite how we can find ourselves in a situation where a track gets changed without input from the current drivers is a little bit strange.

"It's a lesson for us to be more proactive; we need to be asking the tracks, 'Are you making changes?' rather than sitting back and hoping and waiting for them to talk to us."

**Belgian GP preview 78** →



The new Bus Stop: but really these days it's more like a National Express depot

## IT COULD BE YOURS...

### A wooden F1 Ferrari

STUCK for a gift idea for the man who has everything? Or perhaps you just have a burning desire to sit in your garage at night pretending to be Michael Schumacher... Help is at a hand. How would you like to be the owner of a life-sized wooden

Ferrari, crafted by a cabinet maker in Belgium and signed by the champ? It's only a mouse click away.

This balsa replica is currently for sale on eBay. The bidding ends on Monday August 30 and the current top offer stands at €1125.



Check it out for yourselves on...

<http://cgi.ebay.co.uk/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&item=2487877851>

## DC backs fans over refuelling

McLAREN star David Coulthard has backed Autosport readers' calls for refuelling pitstops to be banned from grand prix racing.

In our recent F1 poll, more than 80 per cent of Autosport readers said pitstops add nothing to the spectacle. And Coulthard - who has never raced in F1 without refuelling as part of the show - says a ban on the practice could bring about more overtaking.

"That result does surprise me," he said, "but I agree. In the days before refuelling there was more chance of a change to the race as people were kinder to the tyres or not depending on how they drove. Looking at history it's fair to say to rely on a pitstop as being the pivotal excitement of the race is soon going to be forgotten by the public if they see a move on the track because someone's burned their tyres out or been too hard on the brakes.

"Get rid of refuelling and then the driver has the choice to do a tyre stop or go all the way through. Stops

break up the flow of the whole thing."

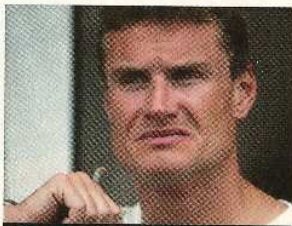
Despite the current domination by Michael Schumacher and Ferrari, readers rejected the idea of penalties to stop one team or driver becoming too successful. As one of the German's regular rivals, Coulthard agreed. "I think success should not be penalised," he said. "F1 is the fastest form of motorsport with the best technology within the rules designed by the FIA to keep the speeds at whatever level they decide is safe. If, in any given year, someone wins all the races, then so be it. In any individual sport there will always

be one guy that's better than the rest at any given time."

Coulthard also understands the fans' belief that those involved in F1 do not care about the sport's public perception. "I don't have my finger on the pulse of what it takes to run a grand prix team," he said, "but if I just put my fan's cap on, too many of the key people speak about the importance of improving the show for the spectators and then don't follow up and give them something.

"Some people think that giving more access to the drivers will improve the show, but the show is essentially what happens on the circuit. The circus is what happens around it, so there are two separate things - how do you improve the motor racing show, and then how do you give extra value for money with the sideshows?"

"As an outsider it was disappointing that it appeared the teams were making changes and then they weren't. In my opinion they made themselves look a little bit silly."



DC: won't get fuelled again!

THE IRISH JOURNAL

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# This week in pictures

We're going snap happy



GRAFFIUS/LAT

**STRAIGHT TO THE POINT**  
Funny how they put their advertising slogan just where most bloke's eye would be wandering, isn't it?



WWW.MAGLEN.DE

**A BIT OF A TANK SLAPPER**  
Citroën ace **Sebastien Loeb** dared to tread where far larger vehicles had faltered on Rally Deutschland



KEBRY WARWICK, JUST YOU WAIT UNTIL YOU GET HOME

**50 YEARS YOUNG**  
This is a sprightly **Derek Warwick** way back when he was enjoying success in Superstox. This week he celebrates his half-century. Happy birthday, Del-boy!

# 'The best bit about this weekend'

**LITTLE AND LARGE**

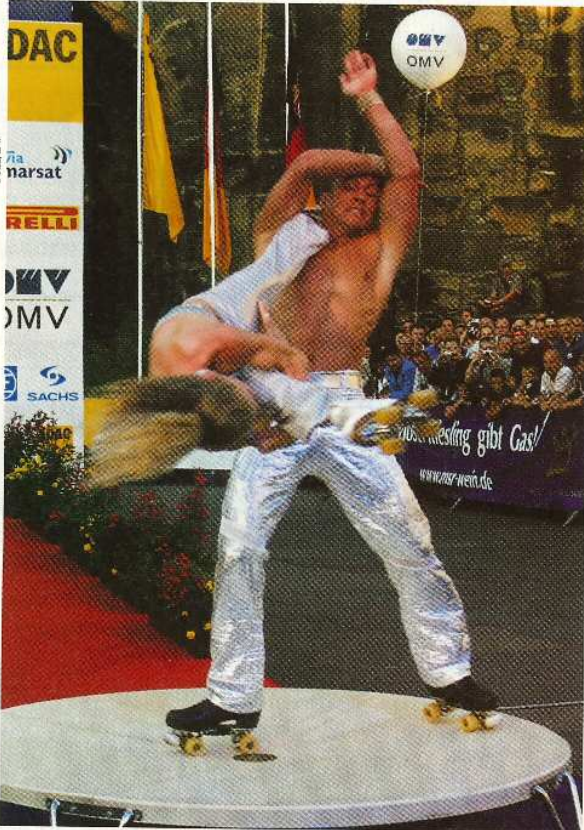
A young karter appears to make for more interesting viewing than **Butch Leitzinger** powering his Lola round Road America



**HAWKES EYED** Chesney Hawkes, whose only hit was called 'The one and only', watched Brands Hatch's BTCC round. And someone remembered him



**SIDEWAYS ACTION** Looks like quite a few fans stayed on for the demo of classic rally cars after the main Rally Deutschland field had passed through



**MAN IN DREADFUL TROUSERS ATTACKED BY LOW-FLYING GIRL** Rally Deutschland's side-show entertainment left everything to be desired



**SMOKE 'EM**

Infiniti Pro Series racer **PJ Chesson** celebrates his third Infiniti Pro Series race win in a row. Not a bad year for a man who's only started six races in the series

**Racing Lives**

**David Warren: Allsport Commercial Director**

WITH the eyes of the world focussed on Athens, it's worth acknowledging the FL paddock's very own Olympian. David Warren is known for his involvement in the commercial side of Grand Prix racing, but 24 years ago he took part in one of the most famous events in the history of the Games.

The son of an Essex doctor, Warren developed his interest in athletics at school, winning a national steeplechase title. He earned a scholarship to an American university, and went on to win the British senior 800m title in 1977 and 1980. The latter result put him in the team for the Moscow Olympics alongside Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett, whose rivalry had been built to fever pitch by the media. Warren not only made the 800m final, he actually led the first three-quarters of the race, only to finish eighth and last.

"We all thought that Coe would go out very hard, and he didn't," he recalls. "He dithered around, and the first lap was very slow indeed. No one expected me to do anything, so I went to the front and tried to force the pace. I thought there was a chance that I could pick up a medal rather than just jog around with the pack. It went wrong, but I don't regret it!"

With Steve Cram now also on the scene, Warren retired gracefully a year later. He went into sports marketing with the West Nally concern, where his first connections with motorsport came through Williams sponsor Canon in 1985. After running his own company, he worked briefly for Camel, before joining Benetton as marketing director in 1997.

In January 2000 he joined Paddy McNally's Allsport concern, where his responsibilities include in-circuit merchandising, the official programmes, and liaising with support race organisers such as Porsche and Maserati.

He's also nominated by the FIA as master of ceremonies for the victory ceremony, making sure that everything runs smoothly. He's been on the podium at every race in the last five years, and even Michael Schumacher can't say that! He rarely talks about his own sporting past.

"I look back on that race with an immense amount of pride," he says. "I would like the result to have been slightly different, but I also believe that you have to move on. It's very important not to dwell on the past."

Adam Cooper



**Ex-Olympian David Warren runs the grand prix podium ceremonies**

**Office obsessions No26**

What we're talking about (assuming we know)

**Officialdom goes mad**

POOR Nazir Hoosein, the FIA Steward who can't help tripping over himself. But at least this time the unfortunate official, who hit the headlines when he let Michael Schumacher win the 1998 British Grand Prix from the pitlane and awarded nominal times. Trouble is, that nominal time was 13sec quicker than the distracted Duval's effort. Not best pleased to lose 13sec to his rivals on a stage they hadn't even driven, Duval's Ford team launched an appeal.

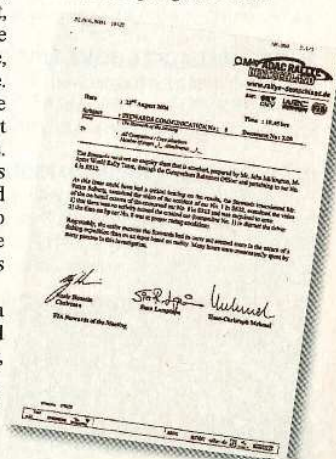
First, the background: following Petter Solberg's monster shunt, Duval had passed the scene of the accident but, as rules dictate, driven by and finished the stage. Meanwhile, the two Citroëns he was chasing were halted on the start line and awarded nominal times. Trouble is, that nominal time was 13sec quicker than the distracted Duval's effort. Not best pleased to lose 13sec to his rivals on a stage they hadn't even driven, Duval's Ford team launched an appeal.

But the trio of stewards took a dim view and, when they delivered their verdict a day and a half later, their reaction was scathing... and, we can't help feeling, related to its post-dinner release.

"Regrettably, the entire

exercise the Stewards had to carry out seemed more in the nature of a fishing expedition than input based on reality," said the release, signed by Hoosein and fellow stewards Simo Lampinen and Hans-Christoph Mehmel. "Many hours were unnecessarily spent by many persons in this investigation."

Regrettably, an image of clowns and a circus spring to mind...



**That it's over'**

Markko Martin bids an unhappy farewell to Rally Deutschland

22.08.2004

# Pit & Paddock

International news round-up

## EVERYBODY WINS IN NASCAR SWAP

NASCAR Craftsman Truck racer Carl Edwards, 25, made his Nextel Cup debut in a Roush Racing Ford at Michigan last weekend and finished 10th. Edwards replaced Jeff Burton, who has left the team to drive a Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet. Edwards will complete the year with Roush ahead of a full programme in 2005.

## ROBBY GOES TRUCKING

Robby Gordon will return to the Craftsman Truck Series at Bristol this weekend. Gordon has driven the in the series three times, but not since 1997.

## STEWART RUNNING RINGS AROUND THEM

Tony Stewart sported an Olympic colour scheme on his Nextel Cup Chevrolet at Michigan. The car carried images of athletes associated with Stewart's sponsor Home Depot.



Stewart got into the Athens spirit

last weekend – and qualified on pole. The pole was the first in the IPS for Kenn Hardley Racing, although Simmons failed to finish the race.

## TOMLINSON BUYS TVRS

British GT Championship racer Lawrence Tomlinson has purchased the Synergy-Chamberlain TVR T400Rs, one of which he raced in this year's Le Mans 24 Hours. The 40-year-old is planning to race them in the Le Mans Endurance Series, starting next month at Spa, with the RSR team that has run his similar cars in the British series this year.

## MCCARTHY SPA PLAN FAILS

Perry McCarthy's plans to race the Graham Nash Saleen in next month's Spa Le Mans Endurance Series race have fallen through.

## BELL'S VOLVO GIVES TROUBLE

Derek Bell endured a difficult return to the SCCA World Challenge GT series at Elkhart Lake last weekend. The At Speed Motorsports Volvo S60R suffered from overheating, propshaft and suspension problems and retired after five laps.

## YOUNG EXTENDS AUSSIE STAY

Ex-Minardi Formula 1 racer Alex Yoong will compete in the remainder of the Australian V8 Supercar series. The Malaysian has joined the Ford Falcon-equipped WPS Racing to replace Mark Noske, who has left the team. Yoong's debut with the squad will be the upcoming Sandown 500 enduro, although it has not been decided who he will be co-driven by.



Bell's Volvo couldn't go the distance

## BLEEKEMOLEN GETS HOME ADVANTAGE

The DTM commission has allowed Dutchman Jeroen Bleekemolen to upgrade to a 2004-spec Opel Vectra for his home race at Zandvoort on September 5. Bleekemolen has driven an Astra Coupe so far this season.

## DE POURTALES RETURNS TO F3000

Prosthetic-limbed single-seater veteran Jean de Pourtales has rejoined the Euro 3000 Series, starting at Donington Park this weekend. The 38-year-old Frenchman, who lost his left hand and forearm in a road accident in his 20s, will drive for Italian team Scuderia Fama.

## On the box

THE Belgian Grand Prix is the obvious highlight of the weekend. You can always enjoy the spectacle of the world's quickest racing cars lapping the stunning Spa circuit, even if Schumacher is way out front. Qualifying is live on TV1 on Saturday at 12:30, and race coverage starts on Sunday at 12:10.

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# Portland deal extended

CHAMP Car will continue to race at Portland after the track's owners opted to extend their contract with the series rather than jump ship to stage an IRL IndyCar Series race.

The circuit was approached by the IRL to be part of its first wave of road-course venues next year. But no agreement was reached and plans have been drawn up to renew links with Champ Car, which has raced at the Oregon track since 1984.

Champ Car boss Paul Gentilozzi confirmed that a three-year 'memorandum of understanding' had been signed with the track.

"I told people that the IRL was just messing around and never intended

to race at Portland," said Gentilozzi. "I'm happy everything worked out."

Portland has opted to keep its date despite falling attendances in recent years. But with Champ Car on the verge of a signing a major title sponsor, series president Dick Eidswick is convinced that the event has a prosperous future.

"We always wanted to continue racing in Portland," said Eidswick. "The market is important and the drivers enjoy the track. With the right promotion it can be successful, or we wouldn't be interested."

The IRL looks set to run just two road courses next year – Watkins Glen and Sears Point.

## THE BIG NUMBER

# 784

THE NUMBER of laps led by IRL IndyCar points leader Tony Kanaan this season. The Brazilian is now just 25 laps shy of breaking Tony Stewart's record

# Smith

Former Le Mans 24 Hours winner Guy Smith was instantly on the pace in his first Champ Car oval test at the Vegas Speedway last week.

The Rocketsports Lola driver set the sixth fastest time overall in most competitive showing since took over the drive from Mel Gidley last month. It was the 31-year-old's first oval run since raced in Indy Lights in 1999.

"I was a little bit apprehensive ahead of the test because you never know how things will go on oval," said Smith. "But within 10 laps I was on the pace. I really enjoyed the test. The car felt great, although there are still a few things we need to change. I think the racing here will be awesome – we should be able to do a two-abreast quite easily."

## Las Vegas speeds

- 1 B Junqueira 203.482mph
- 2 S Bourdais 203.114mph
- 3 P Carpentier 202.977mph
- 4 R Hunter-Reay 202.817mph
- 5 P Tracy 202.073mph
- 6 G Smith 202.058mph
- 7 M Dominguez 201.635mph
- 8 R Lavin 201.372mph
- 9 J Vasser 201.072mph
- 10 A Tagliani 200.067mph

# Newman-Haas relations begin to thaw

THE prospect of top Champ Car team Newman-Haas Racing splitting up appears to be fading.

Team owners Paul Newman and Carl Haas are working towards patching up their relationship, which became strained when Haas received an offer from Honda to

switch to the IRL IndyCar series.

But Newman is optimistic that, following a meeting at the last Champ Car round at Denver, a split can be avoided. "All I can say is it looks promising, but nothing is set in concrete," he said.

If the 21-year Newman-Haas

relationship continues, it could be good news for Toyota Formula 1 driver Cristiano da Matta. The Brazilian has been tipped for a top seat with an expanded Champ Car line-up at the team, which is dominating this year's series with Sebastien Bourdais.



Dario Franchitti claimed his second IRL IndyCar Series win at Pikes Peak last weekend, despite this incident in the pits which left his refueller with an injured knee when Franchitti was waved away before the hose was detached. Turn to page 80 for the full story of the race

# quick on Champ Car oval debut

**"The car felt great. I think the racing here will be awesome"**  
**Guy Smith**



A crisp Smith performance

## Fittipaldi to Bell Doran

FORMER Champ Car and Formula 1 racer Christian Fittipaldi will contest the remainder of the Grand American Sportscar Series with last year's championship-winning team.

The 35-year-old Brazilian is returning to the Bell Motorsports Daytona Prototype squad with which he won the season-opening Daytona 24 Hours to contest the final four rounds.

Fittipaldi will share the team's Pontiac-powered Doran JE-4 with reigning Daytona Prototype champion Terry Borcheller.

Fittipaldi, a race winner with Newman-Haas in Champ Cars, said: "I'm happy to be racing again with the same team with which I won at Daytona."

"I hope Bell Motorsports, Terry and myself can put in a string of strong races together, so that the team is in a good position for 2005."

Fittipaldi, who will make his series return at Homestead on September 12, has been brought in to replace car owner Forest Barber.

The 52-year-old amateur has raced the car in the sprint events, but has stepped down in order to prepare for a return to the car in the enduros next year.

Team boss Jim Bell said: "It was decided we should bring Christian back for these last races while Forest concentrates on getting some testing done."

## STARS IN THEIR BRAS



IT'S Jason Playtex – or should that be British Touring Car Championship star and promising TV presenter Jason Plato?

Whatever, the SEAT ace made himself a quick £100 when he took part in race one of last weekend's BTCC round at Brands – in a bra.

Plato, a svelte 34C, had bet Kevin McGarrity £100 that he wouldn't race in a bra at the previous week's historic meeting at Silverstone. He didn't and offered Plato the same amount if he did at Brands.

The 2001 champ had taken the underwear off for his race-two win.

## Grand Am set for test ban

A BLANKET ban on private testing could be enforced during next season's Grand American Sportscar Series.

The championship organisers are looking at ways of reducing the gap between the top teams and their less well-funded rivals and have come up with a draconian plan to limit testing. The only significant running allowed outside of race meetings would be at up to half a dozen official tests.

Grand-Am boss Roger Edmondson said: "There is no doubt the level of testing undertaken by our top teams is affecting the competition and we need to address that."

"Testing will be severely curtailed

for next year and we are looking at other series, such as Champ Cars and IRL IndyCar, to see how they do it."

Edmondson explained the most likely plan would be a schedule of four, five or six official tests on top of the likely 12 Grand-Am championship rounds. Only shakedown runs for new cars would be allowed outside of these days.

The plan appears to have met with the support of Grand-Am's teams and constructors.

Bob Riley, whose eponymous company is the premier constructor in Grand-Am, said: "Anything that reduces costs has to be good for the series."

## SEAT weight gain

JASON Plato's late charge for the British Touring Car Championship has been hit after series boss Alan Gow slapped a 25kg increase on the base weight for Super 2000-spec cars.

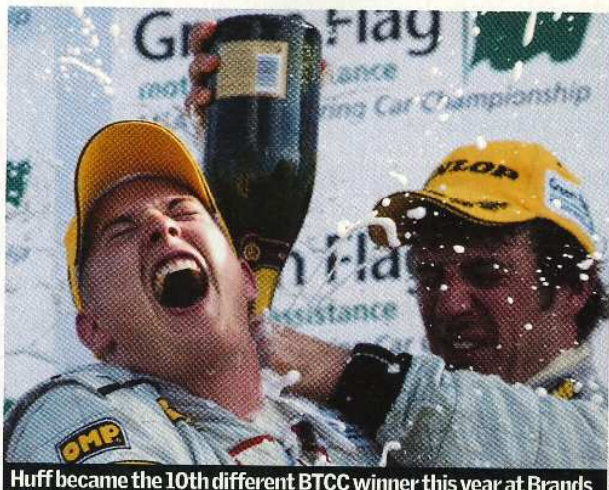
The increase follows another highly successful weekend for the SEAT Toledo. Plato and team-mate Rob Huff took a win apiece at Brands Hatch and Plato is now just 37 points behind the series leader, Vauxhall's Yvan Muller, with six races to go.

The decision raises the base weight to 1115kg for the SEAT, compared to 1174kg for BTC Touring-spec cars. During the pre-season tests the front-wheel-drive Super 2000-spec SEATs ran at 1140kg.

Gow said: "If you look at their performance now, compared to when the weight was last changed earlier in the season, they don't need so much of a break now. The change is made on the basis of strict analysis of performance."

SEAT motorsport boss Scott Dennis accepted the decision. "It's in the regulations, so it's not as if it's unexpected," he said.

But works Vauxhall team boss Ian Harrison wanted more. "The cars that SEAT started the season with weren't nearly as well developed," he said. "It's common sense to go back to the original weight – halfway doesn't address the issue."



Huff became the 10th different BTCC winner this year at Brands

In brief

International news round-up



FERRAROLI/AT

O'Neill hits the track again

O'NEILL LEADS BTCC AGAIN

Ex-Vauxhall factory driver Paul O'Neill, who is sitting out the British Touring Car Championship season after being diagnosed with diabetes, was behind the wheel of the much-used safety car at Brands Hatch on Sunday. O'Neill led 17 laps, fewer only than Jason Plato (29) and Matt Neal (22).

SPA IS THE TARGET

Italian F3 championship team Target Racing is interested in entering the British championship round at Spa next month. It hopes to run regulars Andrea Tiso and Alessandro Ciompi.

NO STAND-IN FOR CHANDHOK

T-Sport will not replace Karun Chandhok for this weekend's British F3 round at Thruxton. The Indian is now looking to the World Series by Nissan, where KTR has a vacancy. RC Motorsport is a possibility, as Czech driver Tomas Kostka's funds are due to run out after Barcelona on October 3.



FERRAROLI/AT

Hodgetts had a nightmare

HODGETTS OUT OF LUCK

Stefan Hodgetts made his switch to a GA Motorsport Alfa Romeo for the Brands BTCC round. A series of misfortunes meant he didn't finish any of the races.

CARLIN TESTS OLD FAVOURITE

Reigning British F3 champion Alan van der Merwe helped out with testing for his old team, Carlin Motorsport, at Pembrey last week. Asian Formula Renault champ Rodolfo Avila also got a run.

AUSTIN COULD DOUBLE UP

Rob Austin will take part in Friday's test session for this weekend's British F3 round at Thruxton before Menu Motorsport decides whether to run him in the races. Austin will also race in the supporting Ginetta series.

On the box

IRL IndyCar Series

THE oval-based championship goes to the Nazareth mile in Pennsylvania for the last time, with live coverage on Sky Sports Extra at 1900 on Sunday

Listings 131 →

# Bahrain to host inter

## FIA GT heads to Bahrain in '05

THE new Bahrain Grand Prix circuit will play host to a round of the FIA GT Championship next season.

The series organisers have agreed a deal to take the series to the Sakhir track as part of a Middle Eastern double-header in October, as predicted in Autosport (June 3). The race will take place a week before the Dubai round of the series, which is being held for the first time on October 8 this year.

GT boss Stephane Ratel said it was likely that there would be four flyaway rounds of the European-based series next year, although he could not confirm the venues, apart from the Middle Eastern tracks.

One will be a round in China, although it will not necessarily be at Zhuhai, which hosts this year's FIA GT finale. The other possibility is the new Shanghai Grand Prix track.

There are a number of venues bidding for a fourth flyaway to join the eight events in Europe, according to Ratel. "Now we have an exciting product there are many places that want races," he commented. "We have received applications to have half the races outside of Europe."



## Lehto is Champion again

FORMER Le Mans 24 Hours winner JJ Lehto has sealed his first title since claiming the British Formula 3 Championship in 1988.

Lehto and Champion Racing Audi team-mate Marco Werner, who won with Biela last year, wrapped up the American Le Mans Series prototype drivers' championship with their fifth victory of the season at Elkhart Lake on Sunday.

The title, which has been secured with two races to run, came five years after he lost out on the same series courtesy of an administrative error.

Lehto said: "I've been working hard with Champion and Marco, so it feels good to win the crown. I've

come close a few times but it seems a long time since I won the British F3 title back in 1988."

The 38-year old Finn missed out on the inaugural ALMS crown in 1999 when he could not claim points from his victory in the season-opening Sebring 12 Hours. He contested that race on a European licence rather than one issued by the sanctioning body of the series, then known as SportsCar.

The Chevrolet squad wrapped up the 2004 GTS manufacturers' crown and Miracle Motorsport did likewise in the LMP2 prototype teams' division after scoring a first ALMS victory for the Courage-AER C65.



Lehto and Werner have put the 2004 ALMS title beyond reach

## Prema adds Hirate to Euro F3 line-up

TOYOTA-backed Japanese Kohei Hirate will compete in the final three rounds of the Formula 3 Euroseries with the Prema Powerteam.

Hirate is leading this year's Italian Formula Renault series and, by graduating through the ranks with Prema, will follow a similar Toyota-

backed career path to reigning Euroseries champion Ryan Briscoe and Frenchman Franck Perera.

Prema will run a fourth car Hirate, who is tipped for a full season in '05. He joins fellow Japanese Katsuyuki Hiranaka, Roberto Sato and Perera in the Italian squad.

## Turkey plans GP2 assault

TURKISH motorsport supremo Murtaz Tahincioglu is considering launching a team to carry his country's colours in the new-for-2005 GP2 championship, possibly as early as next year.

The team would tie in with the Turkish Grand Prix, which joins the Formula 1 World Championship next year, and would be run by a British outfit with Turkish drivers and backing.

Tahincioglu's son, Formula Renault UK racer Jason Tahinci, and International F3000 racer Can Artam are likely to drive, although the project may be held over until 2006

if the drivers need to acquire more experience. Tahincioglu said: "A

team with Turkish ethos but in Britain can develop the drivers we need a

hopefully, attract so sponsorship from Turkey

"We need good drivers at every level, and in Japan and Can we have two who can fill that requirement. Jason happens to be my son but I'd probably do the same for any single-seater driver."

Cadbury Schweppes, who backs Tahinci, and of which Tahincioglu is the managing director for Europe, could sponsor the team.

Artam



GP2-bound?

## Pover steps aside

ASHLEY Pover is to stand down as CEO of the Rockingham track.

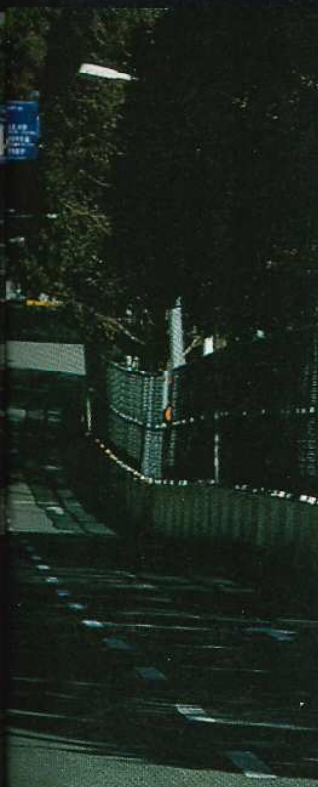
Rockingham chairman Joe Dickinson will succeed him and Gerry DeNotto will take over the role of chairman. Pover, who took over the role in October 2002, will remain a major shareholder in Rockingham.

## Grand-Am

THERE could be as many as 12 FIA Daytona Prototypes racing in the 2005 Grand-Am Series.

The Indianapolis constructor has taken orders for a further 10 examples of the MkXI chassis, which has already won five rounds this

# International F3 event



The Formula 3 Korean Super Prix has been dropped from the calendar – but teams and drivers will now compete in a brand new event on the Bahrain Grand Prix circuit.

International F3 competitors will now have a break after the traditional end-of-season classic, the Macau Grand Prix in China on November 18/19. Instead of racing on South Korea's Changwon track the following weekend, they will now regroup at the Sakhir circuit in Bahrain on December 9/10.

The South Korean event, first run in 1999, was cancelled after a change of government in the country. The new party in charge has been receptive to a group lobbying against the F3 event because of the noise and disruption it creates in the city.

According to international F3 race coordinator Barry Bland, the Bahrain races replace the cancelled event that had been scheduled for Dubai. He is working on a fixture to replace South Korea from 2005 onwards.

The Bahrain meeting will be held on a Thursday and Friday, as this constitutes the weekend in that country.

Bland was delighted to secure the Bahrain date, especially as the track

gives drivers experience of a Formula 1 circuit. "It means we have Macau to give drivers experience relative to Monaco, and then we go on to an example of the latest breed of F1 tracks," he said. "It'll be warm, it's not

too far away for the teams and the circuit is very well geared up to hosting our event."

Teams are happy with the change, as the Korean race was never popular. Hitech Racing boss David Hayle, who ran Richard Antinucci to victory in Korea last year, said: "There's only so much a

driver can learn driving around the car park of an athletics stadium – Korea was neither a road course nor a proper street circuit. But to have Macau, the most demanding of all street circuits, and then the most state-of-the-art GP circuit is great. Drivers were never so keen on Korea, but having Macau and Bahrain should entice a lot of them to do the events."

F3 Euroseries leader Jamie Green, who made his category debut in Korea in 2002, said: "I thought the Bahrain track looked good when I saw the GP on TV and it should be a great experience. Korea was always a funny circuit because of the chicane, but although the track was a bit too twisty they looked after you fantastically and it was very professional."

Green



It looks good

Korea's flirtation with Formula 3 looks to be over

## Alzen/Bartels squad to expand for '05

THE sportscar team set up by former DTM racers Uwe Alzen and Michael Bartels is poised to expand to run two Saleens for next season.

The German duo have joined forces with the Konrad team under the AB Performance banner to run a

solo Saleen S7R in FIA GTs and the Le Mans Endurance Series in 2004. Its plans for 2005 centre on two new versions of the US supercar.

Bartels said: "We want two new cars and a proper winter development programme. That's

what it will take to beat the new cars [including the Maserati MC12 and the Lamborghini Murcielago R-GT] coming into GT racing next season."

Alzen and Bartels would again share one car, while the second entry would be for younger drivers.

## Enge back in Ferrari

TOMAS Enge is on course to return to the wheel of a Prodrive-built Ferrari 550 Maranello next month.

The Czech driver is in line to race a second 550 Maranello entered by the French Larbre Competition team in the Le Mans Endurance Series finale at Spa on September 12. He would share the car with fellow Czech Robert Pergl and Patrice Goueslard.

The only stumbling block for a driver who has been a stalwart of the 550 programme since 2002 is that he is racing in the Formula 3000 International Championship at Monza the previous day. Enge expects to get dispensation to miss qualifying.

Enge, 27, said: "I want to do this because it might be my last chance to race the Ferrari. I know the car well and I know Spa, so I don't see a problem turning up on Sunday."

Larbre will also run the LMP1-class Panoz GTP coupe it took to Le Mans. Sebastien Dumez, Olivier Dupard and Jean-Luc Blanchemain will drive.



DAMS put the Lamborghini Murcielago R-GT through its paces at the Le Mans-Bugatti circuit last week. Andrea Piccini, Jean-Denis Deletraz, Beppe Gabbiani and Felipe Ortiz all drove. The team makes its competitive return at Imola next month

## Car sales on the up for 2005

They join the six cars owned by the three teams to have run Rileys so far.

Riley is refusing to name the teams that have purchased the cars, but Robinson Racing, a winner in Grand-Am in 2002, has revealed that it has bought one. It will contest the

enduros at Daytona and Watkins Glen and is looking for funds to contest the rest of next season.

Wally Dallenbach Jr, Paul Dallenbach and Johnny Unser will drive at Daytona, most likely with team owner George Robinson.

ON SALE Thursday September 2  
Next Week



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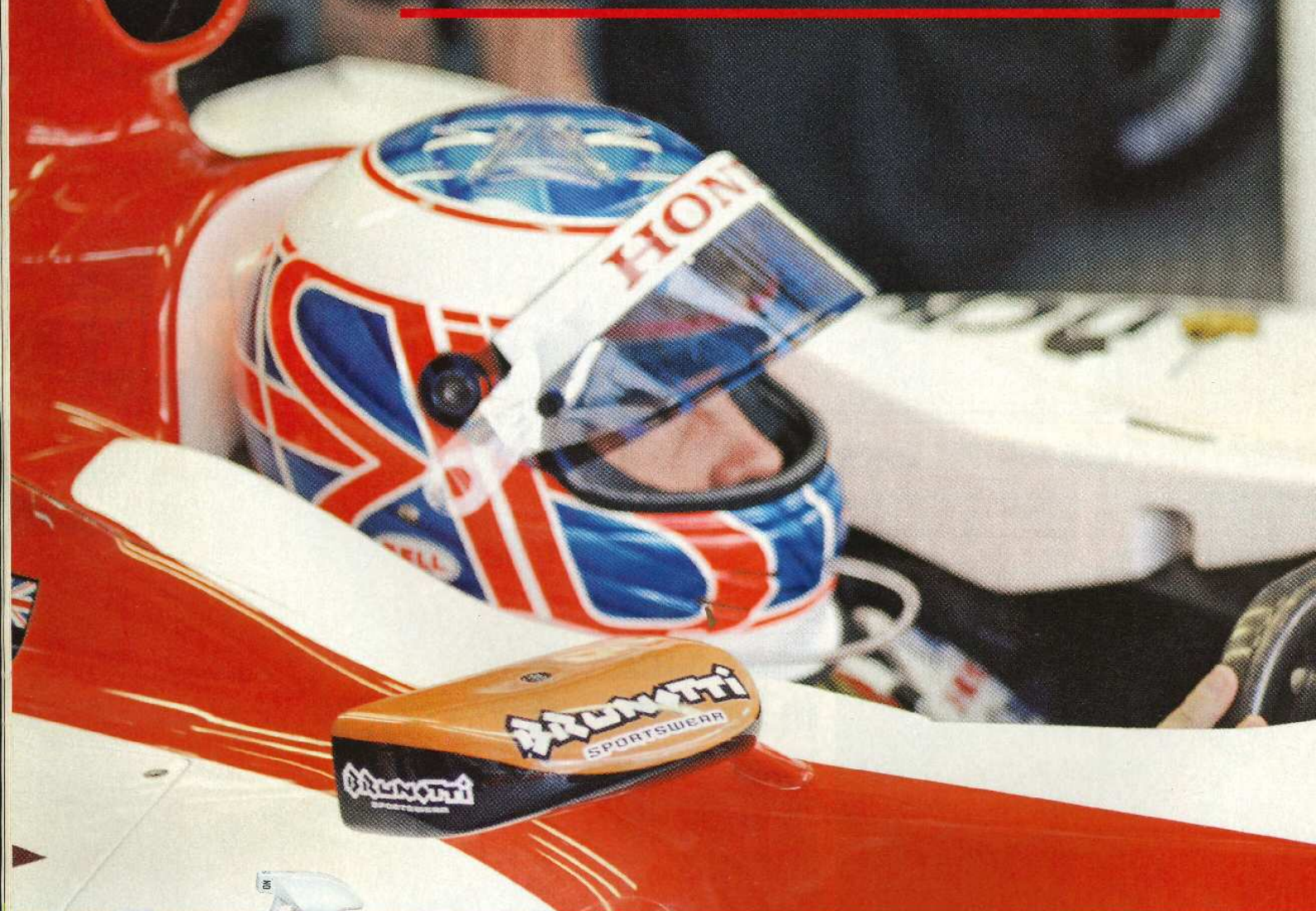
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# Rally crews demand safety probe after six are hospitalised

Rally crews are demanding an investigation to determine if there were any common causes of the major accidents that put six manufacturer drivers and co-drivers in hospital on last weekend's Rally Deutschland.

Petter Solberg and Phil Mills, Gilles and Herve Panizzi and Dani Sola and Xavier Amigo were all hospitalised following separate incidents on the event. All were later released without serious injury, although Mills suffered severe bruising and was kept in overnight.

Following the accidents, all of which happened during rainstorms, competing drivers and teams suggested a variety of contributing factors that they want the sport's governing body, the FIA, to urgently address. They propose not running the rally on the same roads again, not running wet stages when cars are on slick tyres, and reversing rules banning gravel-note crews which force drivers to select tyres upwards of five hours before they actually drive through a stage.

Solberg's accident was the

most severe of the three and occurred when he hit one of the notorious hinkelstein tank traps in Baumholder. In fifth gear, and at an estimated 80mph, he slid wide and hit a hinkelstein head-on, then hit one back-first before flipping up and hitting another roof-first. The bulk of the last impact was on Mills's side of the car.

Subaru team principal David Lapworth said: "The car has to deform to absorb the energy during an accident, but investigations suggest it is on the limit of what the safety features can take."

Solberg stopped short of saying the rally should not run on the military ranges, where both Ford and Citroën also suffered major accidents during pre-event testing, but added: "There are enough good roads in Germany that we shouldn't have to use these ones. If I have to go back I will, but there have never been so many accidents."

Daniel Elena, the co-driver of Sebastien Loeb, who was waiting to start the stage when Solberg ran up the track to call for medical assistance, criticised the response of event

officials. "Petter ran up saying Phil was injured and needed help, but the marshals refused to stop the stage or send in medical help until they had a decision from the clerk of the course," said Elena. "This is not right - we need to respond as quickly as possible."

Panizzi was in fourth gear when he touched the grass lining the road and hit a tree, which pitched him 200 metres down a bank and driver's-door first into another tree. "Having no gravel crew was one problem," he said. "The second is that this event is dangerous - it is so fast and there are so many changes of grip level that accidents are inevitable. As for Baumholder, I don't understand why the drivers don't refuse to go there."

Sola hit a tree head-on after losing control on the soaking second stage. "There was nothing I could do about it," he said.

Germany has gained a tough reputation since it first appeared in the WRC in 2002. Armin Schwarz, Jani Paasonen, Niall McShea and Armin Kremer have all sustained injuries in accidents there.

The FIA was unavailable for comment on the matter.

## Warning system 'must improve'

FRANCOIS Duval's co-driver, Stephane Prevot, has suggested a warning light is fitted to competing cars so that they can be told if a stage they are in has been stopped.

Running immediately after Solberg's accident, the Ford crew of Duval and Prevot were still sent into the stage in question because marshals did not know how severe the world champion's crash was.

Solberg was still in his crumpled Subaru when they passed and was therefore not showing an SOS board. In such situations, the rules dictate that a crew should continue through the stage until instructed otherwise. But even though the test was stopped to allow medical crews in shortly after Duval had passed the accident, no red or yellow flags further down the road warned him of this fact and he completed the stage at full speed.

"A yellow light could be flashed in the car if a stage is stopped," suggested Prevot. "We were given no warnings about the situation and that is unacceptable."

Solberg



Ran for help

Deutschland report 34 →

## What caused the chaos?

PART of the FIA's problem with addressing the issues raised by last weekend's serious accidents is that a variety of problems is being blamed.

### ARE THE STAGES TOO DANGEROUS?

At best Rally Deutschland's roads are high-speed, narrow and constantly changing as cars cut corners and throw up mud. At worst they are wet and - in the case of the Baumholder stages - lined with hinkelstein tank traps that do not move in an impact. All of the accidents happened on wet stages following heavy rainfall.

**Michael Park, co-driver:** "We aren't out there for fun - no matter what the conditions we are going to push. If that puts us in danger

of losing control, when you are on slicks in a storm they are going to have to start cancelling stages because of rain."

**David Lapworth, Subaru team boss:** "Rallying has an image of being about driving to the conditions, and there is an attempt to try and push us towards using tyres that work in a

broader range of conditions, but this event showed that cars can get caught on slicks in the wet and that it can be too dangerous. It's accepted in racing - perhaps we have to consider it too."

**Gilles Panizzi:** "The problem is simple - this rally is too dangerous. If you lose control, you will go off too fast. Baumholder is the worst - it is incredible we accept going there year after year when so many drivers and co-drivers have been injured on events and in testing."

**Armin Schwarz:** "If you go off in the wrong place in Corsica you go down a big drop. If you go off in the wrong place in Australia or Finland you hit a big tree. Every rally has its dangers."

### HAS THE BANNING OF GRAVEL CREWS INCREASED THE DANGER?

Early this season gravel crews, who went through each stage for each crew before it was run competitively and marked changes in road conditions, were banned to cut costs. In Germany a concession was made and a single set of notes was provided by the organisers, but many drivers said the information was inadequate.

**Sebastien Loeb:** "The organisers' gravel crew did a good job, but it is not the same level of information we had before, when you knew you could speak with your own crew and they knew what you wanted."

**Carlos Sainz:** "It doesn't matter if you have organisers' notes or your own gravel crew's notes if, eight minutes before the start of a stage, there is a big storm."

### ARE TYRE RULES FORCING CREWS TO CHOOSE THEIR COMPOUNDS AND PATTERNS TOO EARLY?

In a bid to cut costs last-minute tyre choices are a thing of the past. The new rules mean drivers must sometimes nominate their choice up to five hours before a stage starts. The early nomination forces competitors into taking as slick a tyre as possible except in extreme conditions, as avoiding severe wear on a rain tyre for upwards of 50 stage miles is nigh-on impossible, except in appalling weather. Cold tyres might also have played a part in Solberg's accident.

**Marcus Gronholm:** "To pick tyres so early is like a lottery. When the weather is so changeable it is asking for accidents to happen."

**Carlos Sainz:** "It can always rain unexpectedly when you are on the startline. A later choice would minimise risk."

### WAS IT COINCIDENCE OR A COMBINATION OF THESE REASONS?

**Petter Solberg:** "I am not suggesting these factors played a part in my accident, but there have never been so many big accidents on one event. Whether it is the event, tyres or notes, there are lessons to be learned."

**David Lapworth:** "You can't remove all danger from rallying, but we have been shortening the odds on it happening. By sending drivers out on tyres chosen half a day earlier you are raising the risk; by sending them out with less gravel-note information you are raising the risk; by using high-speed roads with concrete blocks you raise the risk. So there is a case for going through the event stage by stage, corner by corner and reducing that."



Solberg and Mills were lucky to escape without serious injury



Panizzi's Mitsubishi slithered across wet grass and hit a tree

**INTERNATIONAL ROUND-UP**

**GRONHOLM: TITLE IS GONE**

Marcus Gronholm conceded his world championship chances after crashing out of last weekend's Rally Deutschland. The Finn, now 34 points behind Sebastian Loeb with six events to go, said: "Forget it. Now I will just try to win every event and develop the Peugeot 307 for next year." In contrast Subaru's Petter Solberg, who is 32 points back, said: "I won't think about the title any more - but I won't give up on it. If I win every rally there is still a chance."

**SUBARU DUO FINED**

Subaru team-mates Petter Solberg and Mikko Hirvonen were fined 10,900 and 11,600 respectively after they got lost en route to receiving a stage and ended up back on a stage they had previously made notes for. After turning back they were both then caught speeding.



**McShea survived an early off**

**McSHEA'S CLOSE CALL**

Niall McShea took second in the Production Car category in Germany, but only after a near-miss on the first stage. The Northern Irishman went off on the same corner that accounted for Marcus Gronholm, but his car escaped serious damage.

**SWITCH FOR MEEKE**

Kris Meeke will be co-driven by David Senior on Rally GB. Previous co-driver Chris Patterson has swapped to Alister McRae's car for the event.



**C2 flew but then broke down**

**C2 HITS WRC**

Citroën's new Super 1600 car, the C2, retired with alternator failure on its world championship debut last weekend. Sven Haaf was driving the machine, which has seen use on the European Championship.

**WORK HITS MARSHALL**

Ollie Marshall withdrew his entry from Rally Deutschland following the recent hectic schedule for his fleet of Skoda Octavia WRCs. The Prospeed-run driver and co-driver Craig Parry completed the recce for the event instead in the hope that it is included in next year's Junior series.



**Dani Sola aquaplaned off on only the second stage of the event**

# Peugeot signs first deal for '05

Peugeot has given the first indication that it will alter its driving line-up next year by promoting rising star Daniel Carlsson to a works 307 WRC for Rally GB and taking up its option on him for next season.

The Swede, who has contested the bulk of this year's World Rally Championship in a 206 WRC, with a best result of fifth on the Acropolis, has no set programme next year. However, his signing is tipped to be part of a long-term strategy which could also lead to the team strengthening its squad by signing Markko Martin to

**Martin**



**In demand**

drive alongside Marcus Gronholm next season. Rumours suggest the Estonian has already signed an option with the team, agreeing he will join if Ford doesn't take up its own option.

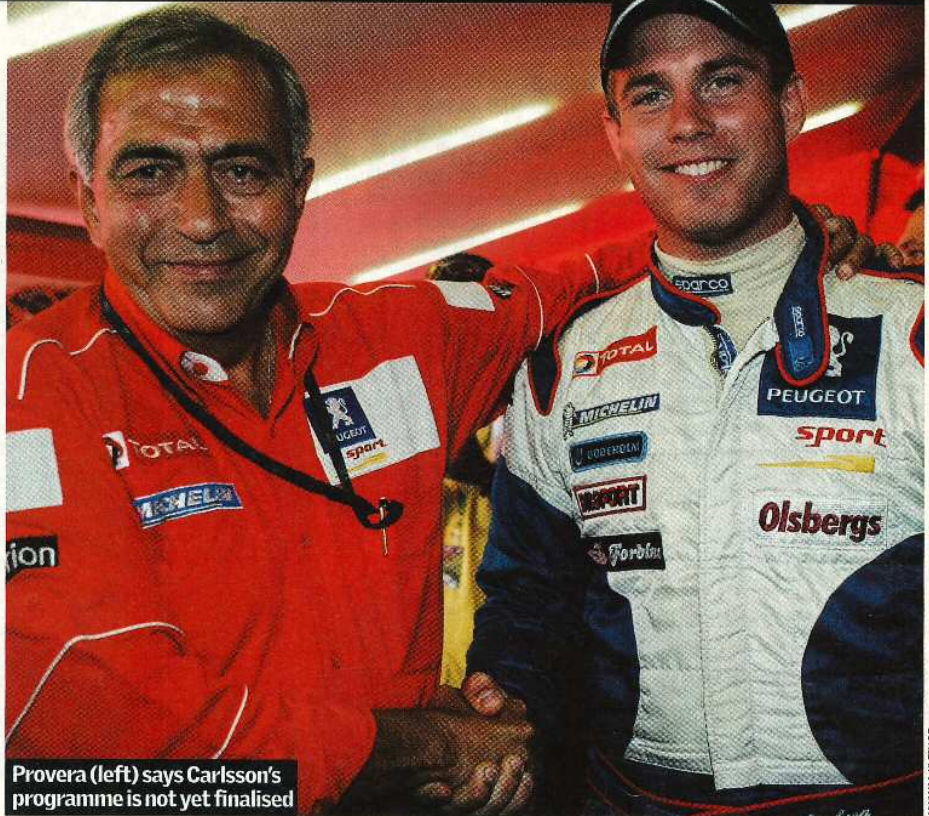
"There are always rumours, but it is too early to say anything about drivers yet," said Peugeot team boss Corrado Provera. "All we are confirming at the moment is that we have taken up our option on Daniel. It is not settled what car, what events or what status in the team he will have, but it is important to remember that, no matter how talented he is, he is still young. We are aware that we

must not put too much pressure on him too early."

Carlsson, 28, said: "As long as I'm driving, I am happy. It is probably better not to be nominated to score manufacturer points just yet, but, having said that, when I was at Suzuki, they put pressure on me to win and I responded well. Whatever happens, I will deal with it."

At present, Gronholm and Carlsson are the only drivers signed with the team. Ford retains an option on Martin's services until mid-September, although with the team's programme in next year's world championship still unconfirmed and budget cuts likely even if it does remain, boss Malcolm Wilson conceded: "I wouldn't like to lose Markko, but if we are developing a new car on a tight budget, then something might have to give."

● Rally Deutschland runner-up Francois Duval has pledged his future to Ford if the team stays in rallying. The young Belgian, who fought off Carlos Sainz in Germany, said: "My best plan would be to continue with Malcolm [Wilson] because there are some new things coming with the car and it would be good for my WRC challenge."



Provera (left) says Carlsson's programme is not yet finalised

## Panizzi wants quick decision

MITSUBISHI'S lead driver, Gilles Panizzi, has urged the team's Japanese bosses to approve its World Rally Championship future as soon as possible, and believes a decision could come in the next 10 days.

**Panizzi**



**Impatient**

The Frenchman refused to be downcast after both he and team-mate Dani Sola crashed out of the squad's last confirmed entry in the world championship, and insisted that the team could start next season challenging for podiums if it is given enough time to prepare.

"The spirit within the team is very

strong at the moment - the people are in place to build a winning car," said Panizzi. "What we need now is a very quick decision from Japan. Do we prepare for a return or stop? None of us is interested in continuing to stay at the back."

Although Mitsubishi insisted it would return next season when it first announced it was withdrawing from this year's WRC, insiders have said there are no firm plans of action in place beyond Rally Deutschland.

"We are waiting to find out," said team boss Sven Quandt. "At the

moment, we don't know what we will do next. Maybe we will be out again this season, maybe not."

If the team is given the go-ahead, it is expected to contest Sardinia and Catalunya, where it is expected to give its new suspension competitive outings. Panizzi tested the unit in Scotland two weeks ago and said: "I only had a short run, but immediately the feeling was good."

● Quandt says he will consider releasing his drivers to other squads if they are not needed for Mitsubishi work. Panizzi has ruled this out, but Spaniard Sola and Italian Gianluigi Galli have been linked with one-off outings on their home events.

## Fastest time boosts Fabia

ARMIN Schwarz scored the Skoda Fabia's maiden fastest stage time on last weekend's Rally Deutschland, and the German is optimistic the improved pace and reliability of the car will persuade the Czech make's board to stay in the championship.

Although Schwarz admitted his fastest time was fortuitous, because he started a stage first on the road, shortly before rain fell, he said the Fabia's pace was much improved.

"We are now only about half a second per kilometre away, and that is with last year's homologation," he said. "If we come back with the parts we have under development, that gap will close even further."

Skoda is expected to make a

decision on its future at the end of September or early October.

Team boss Martin Muehlmeier said: "I have asked for a two-year commitment from the board. It is impossible to achieve much with just one year."



Schwarz hopes his fastest time will keep Skoda rallying

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

**"It's the first time I've ever thought a dentist's chair might be a good place to be"**

**Mark Higgins**

Heading for a quick check-up back home in Wales, Mark Higgins learns that a thunderstorm is about to break on the notoriously slippery Rally Deutschland. That flight can't come quickly enough...



## Higgins lands Focus deal for Rally GB

FORMER British Rally Champion Mark Higgins will drive an Eddie Stobart-backed Ford Focus WRC on this year's Wales Rally GB.

The 33-year-old has been an M-Sport and Ford test driver for the past four seasons, and has competed on his home event for the team twice, taking sixth position after an impressive run in 2002 and running in the top six in '01 until he was withdrawn when team-mate Carlos Sainz crashed into fans.

Higgins will drive an '02-spec car on the event, with team boss Malcolm Wilson setting the target of getting among the top eight and scoring points.

"I'd like to better my previous best result, but there was a big step from the '02 to '03 car, so it is going to be very hard work," said Higgins.

The car will be run as a privateer entry by Dom Buckley Motorsport,



Higgins claimed sixth overall on home soil back in 2002

the team with which Higgins competed in the SCCA American Pro Rally Championship.

"I've worked with the Buckleys in the US, and we get on well, so it should be a good combination," said Higgins. "My goal now is to continue doing the BRC in a good car and, ideally, get back out in the Production Cup and put some of this year's problems behind us. I've only ever done six full events in a World Rally Car: these opportunities are special."

Higgins is also expected to contest the rest of this year's British championship at the wheel of a Focus WRC, replacing Dougi Hall in the Stobart-backed squad.

# Star letter

Time to leave the tank ranges behind

## Think WRC safety

I KNOW the World Rally Championship is supposed to travel to the four corners of the globe and take in all sorts of conditions, but I've just watched Petter Solberg's accident on Rally Deutschland and I'll be astounded if the series ever goes back there.

What sort of proper competition can have a situation where the top drivers in the world are asked to commit themselves to soaking wet roads with slick tyres? And all the time, those enormous concrete bollards are waiting to punish even the slightest mistake. Petter only ran very slightly wide, but from what I can see of the end result, he and Phil Mills were lucky to escape with their lives.

It has to stop. Every year there seems to be a big accident in Germany and there's a discussion about safety, and yet every year the series returns. What's it going to take for them to realise that at least some of the areas being used for the route are just too dangerous for modern top-level motorsport?

Coping with 'extreme' conditions is one thing – the WRC is terrific because it does take in everything from sheet ice and snow to scorching hot rocky tracks. But setting up a scenario involving wet concrete, cold slick tyres and enormous tank buffers at the side of the road is just ridiculous.

Margaret Forsythe  
By e-mail

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## Time to sign up

Why doesn't FOM set aside Thursdays or Fridays for driver signing sessions for at least a few grands prix a year? Apart from Monaco, no running takes place on Thursdays, and on Fridays they have limited running and set-up time. The drivers are already at the track and it would help bridge the gap between

the fans and the teams. Plus, it would have the added incentive of boosting ticket sales at the circuits for the promoters – and it could even prove a much bigger draw than the current qualifying system!

Come on F1 – show that you are serious about giving the fans a better deal and improving the show.

Richard Golding  
By e-mail

## BTCC on form

I read with interest the article in last week's Autosport about the current woes affecting Formula 1, which seems to be losing all touch with reality and its fanbase. I saw most of the Hungarian Grand Prix and all I can say is that I'm glad Olympic table tennis was on the other side!

Compare how dull F1 has become

to the thrilling series which is the British Touring Car Championship. Okay, we don't have glamorous stars like Montoya and Alonso but we do have close racing, different winners, reverse grids, success ballast and plenty of action. Last weekend's meeting at Brands Hatch was a classic example, with three races and three different winners. Even the Porsche races were exciting.

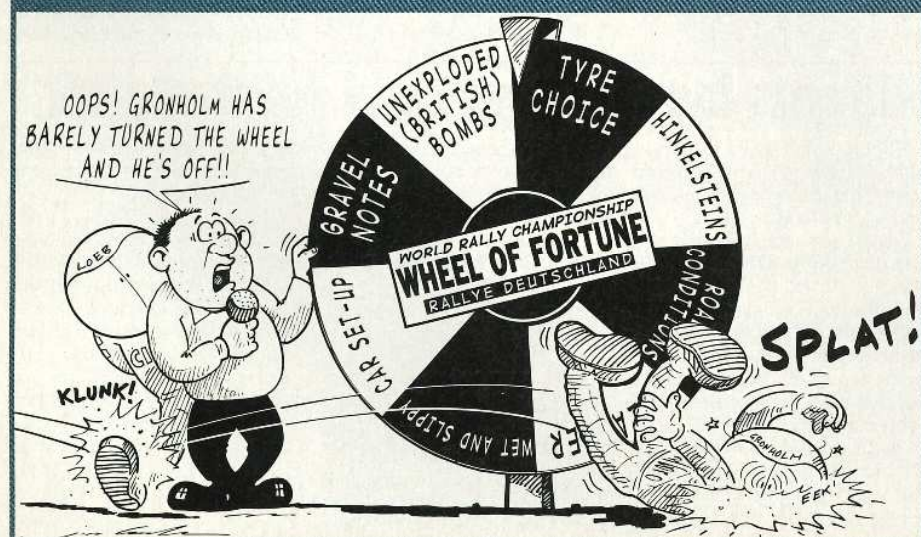
So F1 fans, why not tune in next time for the BTCC Snetterton round and watch some real racing?!

Chris Wood  
Huddersfield

## Brits are winning

With all the fuss over the state of F1 we seem to be overlooking successes of some of our drivers

## Bamber's view



competing in the USA. Last Sunday's IRL round at Pikes Peak International Raceway was another great win for Dario Franchitti, with fellow Brits Dan Wheldon and Darren Manning coming in third and fourth.

The results are particularly gratifying for Dario, coming after a terrible year in which his career was nearly ended after he suffered a back injury in a motorbike crash. I met Dario when he won at Rockingham in the last CART race held there, and a more pleasant and level-headed individual would be hard to find.

On a less happy note, it was worrying to see that yet another mechanic was injured in a pitlane incident. This seems to be happening with increasing frequency and it may be only a matter of time before somebody is killed. A driver fatality is bad enough, but those guys are paid a fortune for what they do. The risks for the pitcrews are fast-becoming unacceptable.

**George Sharman**  
Market Harborough

## Level playing field

I listened with great interest to Ross Brawn's suggestion for an F1 qualifying format. A one-hour open track session, as it used to be, but with the five slowest drivers removed after 15, 30 and 45 minutes, hence giving some excitement through the whole hour. I'd rather see some more overtaking in the races themselves, but if qualifying (and hence the race weekend) can be improved as a spectacle too then all the better.

My favourite alternative, though, would be to have the grid determined by a race in identical machinery. Preferably rear-wheel drive with decent power, say Porsche Supercup machines. Have the cars in 'team' colours, a top-10 start in reverse championship order, winner of the race gets pole for the grand prix.

**Alastair Arthur**  
Bristol

## Polls apart

Thank you Autosport for giving F1 fans a voice in the form of your reader

survey with which to express our opinions. But I wasn't surprised at all by the almost complete lack of enthusiasm or respect shown to the results by F1 team bosses.

Tony Purnell was quite positive but I have a sense that his passion for change exists to further the cause of his own team. Eddie Jordan bored me with his self-serving talk including such exciting words as "equitable", "marketable" and "saleable".

Then we had Paul Stoddart who disagreed with almost everything we said in the survey. The only other comment I could find was from Ron Dennis, and sadly Ron just echoed Jordan's and Stoddart's views that it's basically not really worth taking any notice of the results because the views of so-called "hardcore" supporters are too extreme.

Where were the opinions and views of representatives from the likes of Ferrari, Renault, Williams and BAR - this year's top teams? I imagine they didn't want to donate free tabloid column inches by admitting F1 has lost its way.

**David Herron**  
Sunderland

**AUTOSPORT SAYS: Some teams are still digesting the results. We'll pursue further reaction in Belgium this weekend...**

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## SOUND BITES

I can't believe Jacques Villeneuve is talking himself into the frame at BAR. If - and I stress if - the team does lose Jenson Button for next year, it should look no further than its current test driver Anthony Davidson. Go on, DR - give the lad a chance!

**Patricia Shorrocks**  
Taunton

Nice of Eddie Jordan and the boys to give us some reaction to the survey we all took part in. But I'd have appreciated a bit more feedback from the guys at the sharp end of the grid.

**Ben Tree**  
Tadworth

With all this Jenson nonsense, all of a sudden the Hakkinen rumour makes a bit of sense...

**Paul Thompson**  
By SMS

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### STAR WRITERS

**GRAND PRIX COLUMNIST**

Juan Pablo Montoya

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**WRC COLUMNISTS**

Marko Martin, Phil Mills

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### CORRESPONDENTS

**ARGENTINA**

Tony Watson

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Andy Hallberry

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**AUSTRIA**

Charles Bradley

**DEPUTY EDITOR**

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Ann Hartland

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Zee Ahmad

**SITE ADMINISTRATOR**

Richard Mays

**PROJECT MANAGER**

Wendy Southern

**COMMERCIAL EDITOR**

Julian Chislett

**EDITORIAL**

tel: +44 (0) 20 8267 5998; fax: +44 (0) 20 8267 5922

**ADVERTISING**

tel: +44 (0) 20 8267 5858; fax: +44 (0) 20 8267 5850

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# Nigel Roebuck

FIFTH COLUMN



## "The more I think about Purnell's idea, the more enthusiastic I am"

## The man with a plan

**W**hen Niki Lauda's spell as boss of Jaguar Racing was coming to a close, late in 2002, I asked his predecessor, Bobby Rahal, about Tony Purnell, the man who was to replace Lauda.

"Very bright guy," said Rahal. "Very quiet and calm. But absolutely *not* a guy to be underestimated..."

Purnell duly did take over, and since then Rahal's words have often gone through my mind, not least at a press conference in Indianapolis when team principals were discussing possible changes to the format of qualifying.

When his turn came, Tony said, "I think this is just tickling the edges. Fans want to see bunches of cars – and overtaking. We just don't have that, and we need it."

He then touched on an idea he had, in which qualifying *per se* was replaced by a couple of sprint races, whose finishing orders would determine the grid for the grand prix. After

describing it briefly, he concluded, "But that's just a bit of fun..."

It has become rather more than that. Autosport's sister magazine, *F1 Racing*, decided to champion Purnell's idea, and the more I've thought about it, the more enthusiastic I've become.

"That's surprising," another team principal said in Budapest, "with you being such a purist." Actually it's the purist within me that is so taken with it. As Purnell says, the great thing is that it is absolutely *not* contrived – not an artifice in the way that, say, refuelling (to create order changes) plainly is.

"I believe that fans like to see champions *work* to become champions. They're keen on them being *racing* drivers, as opposed to guys who can peel off fast laps on a clear track. That's the background to the idea."

The system works like this. On Friday morning the drivers pick numbers out of a hat, determining the grid for that afternoon's 10-lap race. For Saturday's race, the grid order is the

reverse of Friday's, so that if, say, Michael Schumacher drew number five, he would start fifth in the first race, 15th in the second.

Each driver would get 'points' from each race, depending on his finishing position, after which they would be added together – and that would determine the grid for Sunday's grand prix.

The more you think about it, the more brilliant it is. For one thing, it is completely even-handed. For another, it will add much-needed zest to Fridays and Saturdays, pleasing promoter and spectator alike. For yet another, it will lead to 'unexpected' grand prix grids.

As well as all that, there's the potential *spectacle* involved. "Because of the random nature of the grids," says Purnell, "you'd find brilliant drivers, like Schumacher, *having to overtake* not-so-good drivers, rather than their just getting out of his way.

"You'd get 20 points for winning, down to one for 20th, and none if you didn't finish, add the two together – and there's your grid. Basically, you'll start the grand prix from pole if you overtake more than anyone else – which is what good racing drivers should do."

What about 'draws'? Inevitably, after all, drivers are going to finish up with identical scores. "That's true," Purnell agrees, "and in that case it's the guy who got the fastest lap – in either race – who gets the nod. So doing a quick lap is important, too."

In Budapest he explained his plan to me in detail, his enthusiasm infectious. "Let's think of the ramifications of this. Would anyone want to miss those 10-15 minutes of highly-charged action on the Friday? It would give

guys like you something electrifying to write about, for a start.

"So now you've given everyone a teaser. On Saturday aren't they going to want to see the second race, that decides Sunday's grid? Would it make a good TV show? It would make a bloody *brilliant* TV show!

"Look at golf: the whole thing builds, doesn't it? You get to the third round, and the whole thing's teetering between Tiger Woods and Vijay Singh – and you absolutely *have* to watch on Sunday, don't you?

"Is there a down side? Some have said it would be more expensive, because there would be more smashed up equipment. Well, probably, but let's remember that entertaining the fans affects the money supply more than anything else – and it's not as if cars never get damaged in qualifying sessions.

"Then, some say there wouldn't be much overtaking – that drivers would be conservative. Well, I can't see that. If Fernando Alonso is behind Gianni Bruni, he's not going to wait for him, is he?

"Last, there's great concern that next year's rules – because of the politics of Formula 1 – will make the racing less interesting than it is now. But this will guarantee a more jumbled up grid on Sunday, won't it?

"I've talked to Bernie [Ecclestone] about this – in fact, he triggered this idea in a way, because he was pushing for numbers out of a hat to decide the grid. I don't think that would work, because the purists would hate it, and we sometimes forget just how many purists there are. But this plan should suit them, because the guy who races best starts from pole.

"I think people would be glued to their TV sets for the sprint races – and it's only 15 minutes, so it's not enough to detract from the main event. We've seen guys like Button and Alonso and Montoya have a go with Michael in the early part of a race, haven't we? And in a 10-lap sprint there's a *big reward* for having a go: your grid position for Sunday..."

"There's a last thing," said Purnell, "and it's very important. At the F1 Commission meeting, Max [Mosley] made a clear statement about, 'We need to ask the public...' Well, people need to 'Fax Max', or whatever, so that there's a lot of tangible support for the idea – because that really will have some worth. If there was a big response from people, saying, 'We thought about all the possible qualifying systems, and we like this the best by far', it would be a bit tricky for F1 to say, 'Well, we've consulted the public, but we're not going to take any notice, because we don't value their opinion...'"

I reckon Purnell's qualifying system is right on the money. If you agree, let Max know, either by e-mail (info@fiacommunications.com) or by fax (+33 1 43 12 44 66). As Tony says, "The fact that the TV figures are holding up just says to me, 'Wow! How big would this sport be if you really entertained the fans?'"



Under Purnell's sprint race idea, top F1 drivers would have to fight their way past backmarkers for a decent grid position



Nigel Roebuck's top 50 Fifth Columns, dating back to 1980, are all available on the Autosport Plus section of...

[www.autosport.com](http://www.autosport.com)



# John McIlroy

EDITOR



## "Germany, it seems, is now the most daunting destination in the entire WRC"

For an elder statesman, Carlos Sainz can do a pretty convincing impression of a desperate young hopeful. At one point on last weekend's Rally Deutschland, he attacked a blind crest with such vigour that I actually winced at my television screen. Double champion, most successful guy in the history of the sport, and he didn't lift at all. The Citroën flew, landed about an inch away from a stone wall and then slithered through the following left-hander. All in about a second and a half. An 18-year-old with a point to prove couldn't have done any better.

To tell the truth, Germany was an edgy experience throughout. ISC's in-car cameras have long captured the emotion on the drivers' faces - or the lack of it, in some cases. But every time we flicked to Carlos, or Francois Duval, or Markko Martin on Sunday's show, there was a touch of hesitation in their eyes. You could almost call it fear, though I'm sure none would admit to it.

And who could blame them? Germany, it seems, is now the most daunting destination in the entire World Rally Championship. In the space of three years it has gained a reputation as a car-breaker, a suspension-wrecker and (when it rains) the sort of place where you hold your breath from start to flying finish.

The worst point, of course, was Petter

Solberg's horrendous accident, which left poor Phil Mills in hospital overnight. And yet the Welshman was actually lucky. Over the last few years, rally car designers have realised that the co-driver is a piece of weight that can be moved lower and lower in the chassis, to the point where they can barely see over the dashboard. If Mills - a tall guy at the best of times - had been in an Impreza of, say, 2001 vintage, he might still be in hospital now, or worse.

That accident, coupled with those which accounted for Gilles Panizzi, Daniel Sola and Roman Kresta, prompted serious questions about Germany's viability as a WRC venue. And yet the WRC's profile - under threat with the departure of manufacturers like Mitsubishi and the continuing uncertainty over Ford's commitment - is bound to benefit considerably from an event so easily accessed from so many European countries.

However, as Solberg himself says, lessons do need to be learned from last weekend's chaos. It's all very well hacking back on costs with reduced servicing and no gravel crews. But as the infrastructure that surrounds crews and teams is being pared back, the gambles taken on tyre choice and car set-up are bound to increase. And when you put that trend in an environment as unforgiving as Baumholder, you're asking for trouble. ☒



Solberg and his co-driver Phil Mills fell foul of the car-breaking Rally Deutschland



Not usually shy or retiring, Jason Plato celebrates his sixth victory of the season

# Charles Bradley

AUTOSPORT.COM EDITOR



## "Tim Harvey is no Brundle, but possesses the authority of a former champion"

Executives at ITV must be left scratching their heads on Monday mornings when it comes to motorsport. On the one hand they have the pinnacle, Formula 1, in which there is no overtaking and most of the intrigue happens off-track. They have the World Rally Championship, in which there is also no overtaking (no surprise there) but supplies them with enough stunning crashes for a whole new series of Martin Brundle's *Great Escapes*. Then they have the premier domestic series, the British Touring Car Championship, which boasts so much overtaking it leaves its viewers' heads spinning.

I've seen plenty of last-lap action in my time covering the BTCC - which lives and dies by its level of television coverage - but I've never witnessed anything like I saw thanks to ITV1 at Brands Hatch last weekend. There were plenty of reasons for it, not least Jason Plato's blatant mid-Paddock lift off the throttle that really sparked the chaos, but was left feeling short-changed after the race. I wanted to see Rob Huff on the top step of the podium, I wanted to hear Plato and Matt Neal agree to disagree over that massive moment at Paddock, I wanted to know why Yvan Muller seemed more intent on pushing Plato wide at Druids than he was on winning the race. And what about erstwhile series leader James Thompson, what the hell happened to him?

So many questions, so few answers. ITV cut away from the race leaving its gripped viewers hanging. Unless you had access to the in-depth coverage on Motors TV, it was "Good night Irene", to borrow a Charlie Cox-ism. It wouldn't happen if a football game went to extra time - and it shouldn't happen if a safety car period means a motor race overruns slightly, either.

Speaking of commentators, Ben Edwards once again showed that he is a class act when it comes to conveying the excitement of the BTCC - raising his tone, rather than his voice, to bring the action across. Granted, Tim Harvey is no Brundle, but possesses the authority of a former champion and needs to use that to praise and, more importantly, condemn. Be more nasty than nice, Tim!

A real highlight came in the calm before the storm of that final restart. As the producers grappled with technology, and Plato's race engineer briefly took over the commentary, Edwards finally got to speak to the race leader who was irate at the slow pace set by the safety car. After a brief disparaging comment about the adverse affect on his tyre temperatures, Jason signed off by saying that he "couldn't talk any more because he had to concentrate".

Surely this is the first recorded occurrence of Jason Plato spurning the opportunity to broadcast to the nation? ☒



DEUTSCHLAND  
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# Vintage Loeb

The Citroën ace drove what many cited as the best rally of his WRC career to extend his title advantage. JIM HOLDER reports

Points leader Loeb stayed on the edge to score his third straight Deutschland win

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As chaos reigned around him, Sebastien Loeb rode the storm to win last weekend's Rally Deutschland from the front. It was an incredible performance on the frequently rain-lashed and regularly mud-strewn stages, all the more so because, given his 22-point championship lead coming into the event, no-one would have blamed him for easing off.

Instead, Loeb took what pundits are calling his finest ever victory – his third on the trot in Germany – and all in conditions that even the modest Frenchman, now 29 points up in the championship, conceded were the worst he had driven in. Certainly the severity and frequency of accidents highlighted how bad they were.

Optimists can point to the 1992 championship battle, when Carlos Sainz nipped by for the crown by scoring two wins while his one-dominant rival, Didier Auriol, failed to score a point. But it is hard to imagine anyone other than Loeb being this year's world champion.

#### LEG ONE (83.90 miles)

Tyres. They are still black and round, but if you wanted to be with the in-crowd on the first morning of Rally Deutschland, they were the thing to be seen talking about. With just under 70km of stages to run without service, the weather in the tests swaying between bright sunshine and heavy downpour, and a tyre choice that had to be made upwards of four hours before the final stage of the loop, the decision was critical.

Strange, then, that after a sea-sawing quartet of stages that opened with a soaking run, moved onto a mostly wet stage and ended with two mainly dry tests, the top two on different compounds were separated by just 3.5 seconds. Loeb, on softer rubber also favoured by Citroën team-mate Sainz and Mitsubishi men Gilles Panizzi and Dani Sola, just edged Francois Duval (Ford).

So was the morning's fretting a load of fuss about nothing? Certainly Loeb played down the significance, pointing out that while the tyre had given him an advantage in the wet, he had lost just as much on the drier stages. Then again, the majority of the medium-compound runners were hasty to suggest that Citroën's call had given it a decisive edge.

"If you study the stage times in isolation, then it looks like the tyres made a big difference – and they did early on – but by the third stage I was having to drive carefully to preserve them for the whole loop," said Loeb, who had benefited from starting the second stage just before a downpour.

Duval was less inclined than most medium-compound runners to talk tyres – not least because he knew he could have arrived at service with a decent lead but for an overshoot at a tight right in the opening stage which cost an estimated 10 seconds, with an understeer-induced run into a field

on SS4 nicking a further five seconds off the Belgian's time.

After going fastest on the opening stage, Sainz was the only man in touch with the front two, ending the loop 15.3sec off Loeb.

Behind him, the long faces really began. Petter Solberg was fourth, but already 44.2sec back. Armed with an Impreza deliberately set up to cover wet and dry conditions, and therefore compromised in both, he found the going frustrating.

"We can't afford to get caught out this early," said Subaru team principal David Lapworth. "The car isn't ideal in any conditions, but it is driveable in nearly everything."

At least Solberg was almost 30sec up on the fifth-place battle between Cedric Robert (Peugeot), Panizzi, Armin Schwarz (Skoda), Markko Martin (Ford), Alex Bengue (Peugeot) and Roman Kresta (Skoda), who were, incredibly, covered by fewer than 10 seconds.

Of these, Martin was perhaps the most frustrated. Sat on the startline of stage one, he watched the heavens open, and admitted his confidence suffered – particularly as he had missed all the team's asphalt testing after his Rally Argentina shunt. His times were well off team-mate

### "At the first braking point, on slicks in the wet, I started skating" Marcus Gronholm

Duval's, who had the same tyres but a slightly softer suspension set-up. There were suggestions, too, that Martin's neat driving style didn't help get heat in the tyres.

But while the lead duo had used different tyre compounds to end up with almost the same times, there was no denying the treacherous conditions they had encountered to get there. Marcus Gronholm, fresh from his Finnish win and with the entire Peugeot effort now directed towards his drivers' title bid, takes up the story: "At the first braking point in the first stage, on slicks in the wet, I started skating. I lifted, turned in, but lost the back end."

Exit a double world champion, a rear hub broken by the subsequent impact with trees. By stage two Dani Sola was also out. The Spaniard had starred on the opening stage, setting the third fastest time, but on the following test, he crashed heavily into a tree. He and co-driver Xavier Amigo were taken to hospital, but later released without serious injury.

Hopes that Duval could continue to snap at Loeb's heels on the rerun through the four stages, now muddy from corner-cutting, ended even before the Belgian had got out of the service park. Going to pull away, the automatic gearshift failed, forcing him onto the manual, handbrake-

free unit. With the first three stages of the loop on the tight, hairpin-littered Mosel vineyards, and only the fourth on the more open, flowing Saarland roads, it was a disaster. Over the loop, Duval stalled three times and had to select reverse another six. By the close of play he was third, just under a minute off the lead.

Team boss Malcolm Wilson shrugged: "Christian Loriaux [tech boss] said only yesterday it was 12 months since we had changed a gearbox on an event. Talk about the kiss of death. We've had the pace today to have been leading."

Faced with a tide of four fastest times by Loeb on the now dry stages, the opposition couldn't stop his onslaught. Only Sainz got close, but each time he was pipped. Deutschland is far from being the Spaniard's favourite, and he had to concede Loeb had a better feeling for the roads as he fell 26.5sec back.

To compound Duval's frustration Solberg had capitalised and closed the gap to just 12.3sec, although a too-soft tyre choice left the Norwegian frustrated at being 1m10.8s from the leader as he was forced to conserve his rubber.

Martin, too, felt he had chosen too soft a compound, and his already bad mood darkened further despite moving up to fifth. "The best part of today is that it is over," he said.

Wilson had sympathy for the Estonian, but added: "His car's almost the same as Francois'. It's a confidence thing."

Martin's rise moved the titanic scrap among the bulk of the field to sixth, with Panizzi leading the way, but with just 30 seconds covering the drivers down to ninth. Unhappy with the suspension, the Frenchman could find no compromise that gave him the handling precision he so wanted – and nor did he reckon it existed on the current Mitsubishi.

Panizzi was also under attack from Kresta, who had started the loop with a mighty third fastest time and kept up a good pace to the end. Reigning French champion Bengue continued to lead the privateer attack in eighth, while Robert – who had shown good pace despite an overshoot and overheating brakes in the morning – fell to ninth with a fourth-gear spin.

#### POSITIONS AFTER LEG ONE

1	Loeb/Elena	1h18m 15.4s
2	Sainz/Marti	+26.5s
3	Duval/Prevot	+58.5s
4	Solberg/Mills	+1m10.8s
5	Martin/Park	+2m00.7s
6	Panizzi/Panizzi	+2m12.6s

#### LEG TWO (110.2 miles)

If early-morning downpours made tyre choice easier, with intermediates sporting a variety of cuts and a soft compound putting drivers on a similar level, it did little to improve the mood among competitors.

Their main concern was safety. On the opening test, which was



Sainz was left looking over his shoulder as Duval charged and passed him for second



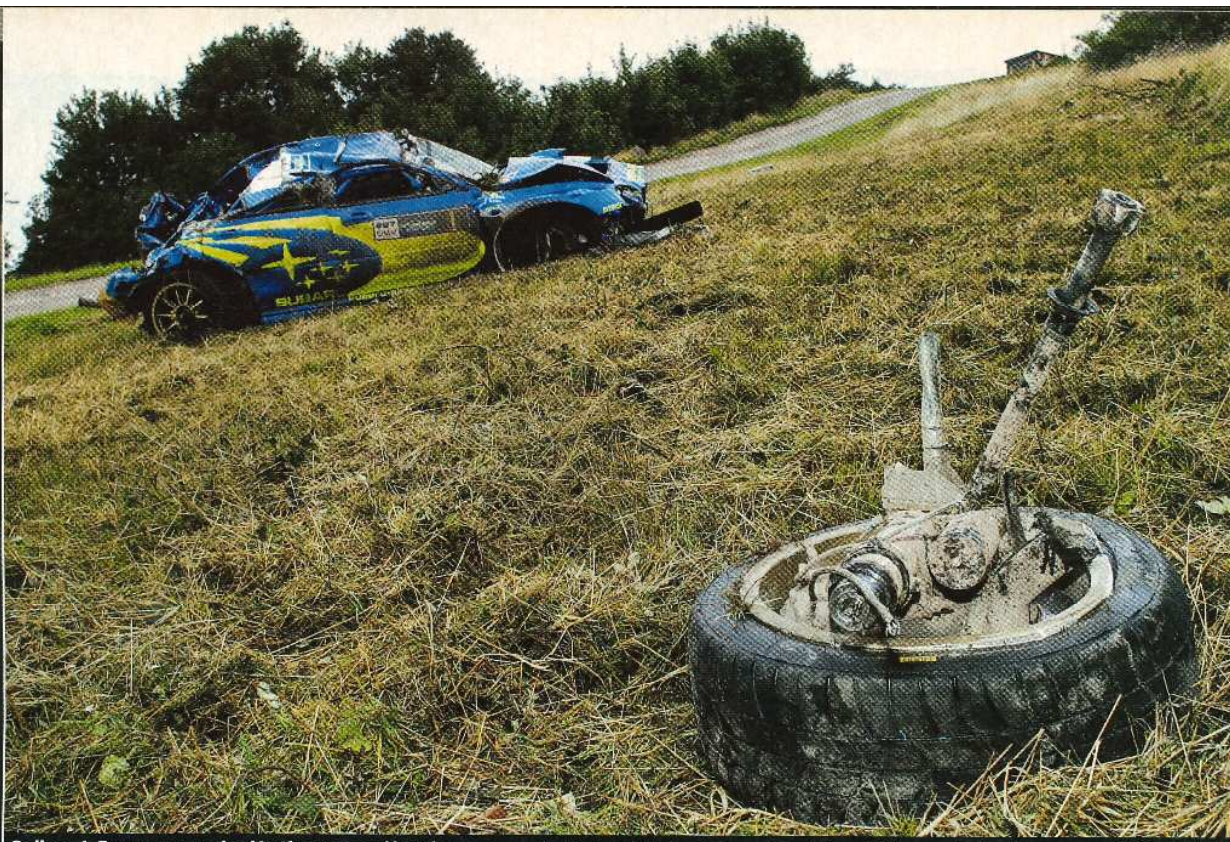
Gronholm was an early victim of the tough conditions with a broken hub on his Peugeot



Kresta was on the pace in the Fabia before a crash in heavy rain on leg two ended his run



Sola and co-driver Amigo joined the list of hospital casualties after smacking a tree



Solberg's Impreza crashed in the wet and hit three concrete hinkelstein tank traps. Co-driver Mills was lucky to escape with bruising



Duval, angry at having a time advantage to the Citroëns wiped out, focused on reeling in Sainz to head the Ford effort in second place

# Markko Martin

FORD WRC DRIVER



## "On the straights, the car was aquaplaning - and at times I had no control of it"

QUITE frankly, I'm glad Rally Deutschland is over. It wasn't an enjoyable weekend for me for all sorts of reasons, and, fourth place or not, I'm happy it's behind us.

It started badly and didn't really improve. I never got the confidence to drive well in Germany, something that wasn't helped by the appalling weather conditions and some of the regulations we are being forced to put up with. To drive fast in the worst of the rain was like going to the casino - I never gamble, and I wasn't about to start last weekend.

I am always happy to take risks, but only if they are calculated. The decision to go without gravel note crews has been a big talking point this year, but in Germany it made no sense at all to drive without them. It is all very well having organisers' notes for every crew, but what are you meant to do if you are given information for a 40km stage saying, 'Some parts of the roads are slippery? How do you approach the stage? You might go through three corners and think that the conditions are okay, and then arrive at the next corner and find that is the one that they meant was slippery. It's not a smart way to do things.

The opening stages of the second morning were particularly bad - the worst conditions I have ever driven in. They were incredible stages and I was happy just to get out of there without injuring myself or anyone else. On the straights, the car was aquaplaning - at times I had no control of where it was trying to go.

It is right for the World Rally Championship to come to Germany, but last weekend was too much - it was too dangerous. The roads are too narrow and slippery, even in the dry when all the mud is thrown up from corner-cutting, to go without gravel notes and on tyres that we have to choose so long before we actually drive the stages. If they changed those regulations, then at least we would have a better chance of being safe.

It is clear something has to be done. The drivers have been saying these things would happen for eight to 10 months, and yet there we were asking after other crews' health after two of Saturday's opening four stages. That can't be right.

On the positive side, at least my BP Ford World Rally Team team-mate, Francois Duval, was able to show that the Ford Focus RS is fast enough in these kind of conditions. He showed very good pace, and I never really had the confidence to push as hard as him.

Maybe there was a bit of knock-on from my Rally Argentina accident, because that meant I missed the team's pre-Germany asphalt test, but that's life. I am not about to make up excuses for a disappointing weekend.

www.fordrallysport.com



Martin played it safe in dangerous conditions to finish in fourth

blasted with rain, both Kresta and Panizzi crashed. The Czech driver limped out and stopped with a broken suspension linkage, but Panizzi's accident was more fearsome. The Frenchman, in fourth gear, touched wet grass and was catapulted into a tree. The resultant spin shot the car across a verge, accelerating it into another tree 200 metres further on.

"The car stopped with the tree in my door," said Panizzi. "[co-driving brother] Herve got out and climbed to the road, but it wasn't so easy for me. My left arm was in great pain."

Martin, next on the road, responded to the SOS board being shown by Panizzi by stopping at the next radio point to alert organisers. The crew was taken to hospital and later released without serious injury, while the stage was stopped and notional times awarded.

Then, on the staggering 40.3km run through Panzerplatte, one of the infamous hinkelstein tank traps attacked. Coming over an off-camber left at an estimated 80mph, Solberg lost control, hit the concrete block nose on, flipped round and hit another with the back of the car, and then landed roof first on yet another.

"We rolled several times," said the shaken Norwegian. "But the main thing is Phil [Mills, co-driver] is okay - we can build another car."

Eyewitnesses reported the roof on Mills' side taking the bulk of the second impact, with the cage above him bent in. The stage was cancelled and a bruised Mills spent a night in hospital before being released.

The drivers who were lucky enough to make it through the morning's tests returned with tales of near-misses, spins and frustration at the regulations banning gravel note crews and forcing them to make tyre choices hours before the stages.

Martin, who'd had a better morning than most by taking (and being awarded, following his stop to warn of Panizzi's off) a stage win, two shared stage wins and a second fastest time, was the most vociferous: "It's no fun when you are asking after the health of drivers on every other stage. We are making tyre choices when we don't know the conditions, we are driving on roads we last saw three days ago and have no more information on, and, in one sixth-gear place, there were spectators lining the roads. It's dangerous."

Sainz, who did not tackle Panzerplatte after Solberg's shunt, provided a counter to Martin's view: "On the first stage, a hell of a lot of rain fell five minutes before the start, so a gravel crew could have done nothing to warn us. On the other two, conditions were so changeable that the information would've depended on when they went through."

The net result of this mayhem at the top of the leaderboard? Very little. Loeb held a 27.7sec lead over Sainz, who suffered ECU problems that increased fuel consumption and forced him to switch off his anti-lag for two stages. Even so, he edged out the gap to Duval, although the Belgian was frustrated to lose 13 seconds - his morning's gain - to the Citroëns in Panzerplatte, when they were given his team-mate's fastest time despite not driving the stage.

The Ford team promptly set about entering an appeal.

Anyone who thought the fight for victory was dead only needed to look to the sky. Citroën did, and made the decision to put its men on soft slicks with light cuts. Everyone else put far bigger cuts in - and before long heavy rain was making Citroën pay.

Duval soon got the message. Schwarz reaped the reward of going into the stage first, before a cloud burst, and set fastest time, but Duval was next up and now just 20.2sec behind Sainz. With each stage, the gap came down, and by the end of the four-test loop he was 6.1sec behind. "On these tyres, with no grip, what could I do?" said Sainz.

Duval had been on - and over - the limit. On the opening stage of the loop, he had run across the grass, and 10km into Panzerplatte he skated perilously close to a tree. "I have had to risk some big moments," he said.

Loeb, who described the tyre choice as "stupid" despite having more cuts than his team-mate, was better able to cope. Picking his way through the muddiest sections, he built his lead over Sainz to 50.5sec.

Some might call it a champion's touch, in fact, because even a stupid tyre choice had seemed to strengthen his hand. "Today I have been conservative; yesterday was my attack," he shrugged.

Following the St Wendel spectator stage Loeb's advantage was 54.7sec - over Duval. The day had a final sting in the tail for Sainz, who spun, stalled and dropped 5.7sec behind his rival.

The rest? Martin spent the day in a lonely, unhappy fourth. His times

## "It's no fun asking after the health of drivers on every other stage" Markko Martin

were generally good, but being more than a minute off third and a similar gap ahead of fifth did little for his motivation to attack.

New fifth-placed man Robert showed flashes of pace in the 307 WRC, although a spin on a soaking straight in the second stage of the day cost time and dented his confidence. He was also unlucky to keep starting stages just as the rain fell, but he still nosed 12.6sec ahead of team-mate Freddy Loix. After a disastrous first day, in which a misfire and gearbox problems meant he only got three clean stages, Loix was revelling in a healthy car and showing great pace, belying his total lack of wet practice.

Toni Gardemeister (Skoda) had initially headed this pair after working his way up from an overnight 10th. Having put early problems with throttle response behind him, he concentrated on a clean, tidy run, but slipped 24.7sec behind the irrepressible Loix.

Former Formula 1 driver Stephane Sarrazin, driving in only his sixth rally, held the last points position. He had damaged his Subaru's differential over a jump on the second Panzerplatte run and opted for slicks on the second loop, but did enough to edge Mikko Hirvonen's

Impreza. Leg one star Bengue faced a distant 10th after an oil leak and gearbox problems, plus three punctures in the afternoon.

### POSITIONS AFTER LEG TWO

1	Loeb/Elena	1h18m15
2	Duval/Prevot	+54
3	Sainz/Marti	+1m00
4	Martin/Park	+2m00
5	Robert/Bedon	+3m33
6	Loix/Smeets	+3m46

### LEG THREE (61.1 miles)

Little wonder Loeb wasn't making any rash predictions as the final dawned shrouded in fog. With the prospect of the entire day's mileage being run with no more than a minute tyre and refuel service, there was still much that could go wrong.

Not that Loeb was about to let a hard-earned and potentially decisive win in the title battle slip. Faced with half-wet, half-dry roads which were increasingly being covered in mud, he claimed to be easing off - although he was rarely far off the leading pace.

On the yet muddier second loop he did back off, but still won in 29.1sec. "Yesterday morning was the worst conditions I have driven in," said Loeb. "So to win under the circumstances is very special."

Not that there was any disgrace for Duval's swashbuckling drive in second. Denied by the stewards' 13 seconds he lost in the cancelled Panzerplatte stage on day two, the angry Belgian took matters into his own hands, raking chunks of time from Sainz to end the opening loop stages 17.1sec clear of the Spaniard.

Sainz conceded: "It hasn't gone well this morning. Francois is showing great confidence."

It didn't get any better for the Spaniard, as his 25-year-old rival eclipsed him on the last four tests, setting the fastest time on two. While the pundits were left to ponder Loeb's drive was his best ever, Duval was in no doubt about his own.

"Yes, definitely," he smiled, conceding that some of the stage resembled the sort of events he has cut his teeth on in Belgium. "It has been a good battle with Carlos."

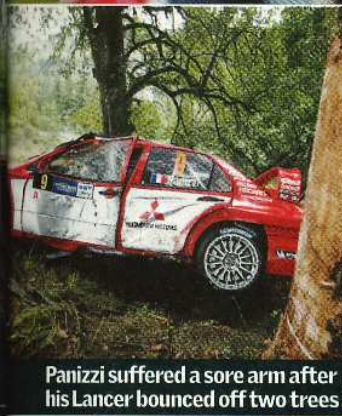
Fourth-placed Martin's only concern was the inter-Peugeot test battle between Robert and Loix, which was dragging the pair close to him. Not wanting to risk a decaying haul, he played it safe on slippery roads and held on comfortably.

Throughout the morning, Robert and Loix traded seconds, enjoying fastest times as they underlined the 307 WRC's potential. Come afternoon, though, and Loix was troubled by a vibration. When a test change failed to fix it, he eased off after five months out of action and having lost about 2m30s with troubles on the first day, he wasn't sad to concede fifth to Robert.

Gardemeister was seventh, his best result on a 'pure' asphalt event. After an anonymous rally, hampered as he learned the Pirelli asphalt options and got to grips with the wet, Hirvonen pipped Sarrazin for final point when the Frenchman opted to switch off his anti-lag system and revert to the manual gearchange for the final four stages. ☑



Gardemeister scored his best result on asphalt with seventh



Panizzi suffered a sore arm after his Lancer bounced off two trees



Robert traded times with team rival Loix and headed him in fifth



Loix was content in sixth after five months out of WRC action

Round 10/16 20-22.8.04

Trier  
Germany

DEUTSCHLAND  
WRC  
ANALYSIS

## A first for Pons

Production World Rally Championship

XAVIER Pons became the Production World Rally Championship's latest new winner when he excelled on the slippery roads of Rally Deutschland.

The Spaniard, driving Mitsubishi's latest Evo 8, which features a lower centre of gravity thanks to a new fuel tank position plus other handling and engine refinements, enjoyed a relatively trouble-free run compared to his rivals. His only worries came when he had minor brake problems on the opening leg and then clipped a tree – crushing his exhaust and knocking his rear wing askew – on the second morning.

Far more likely to have disrupted his victory celebration was Gigi Galli. The Italian started well, heading out on intermediate tyres, while his rivals had slicks for the opening stages. Benefiting from the Lancer's capacity to carry two spares, rather than the Impreza's one, he bolted on slicks to the front when it dried for the next three stages of the loop.

Galli's gains were wiped out on SS6 when his gear linkage broke, though. Finishing the stage in fourth gear, he was able to fix the problem on the next road section, but the damage had been done – he dropped 40sec and fell down to second.

Thereafter, Galli went on the attack, and had sliced back in front when he slid off on a patch of oil in the second run through Panzerplatte on leg two. He was in good company, as he joined Peugeot 206 WRC driver Daniel Carlsson at the same place.

That promoted Niall McShea to the runner-up spot. The Ulsterman was struggling to set his dampers to his liking, but was showing top pace



Pons (right) and co-driver Oriol Julia celebrate victory

nevertheless. His undoing was a run into a bush on the opening stage, which cost him 30sec and any real chance of putting pressure on Pons. He didn't give up, though, setting four fastest times to end up 30.4sec back.

That put McShea well clear of Alister McRae, who had a frustrating event in his Subaru. He spent day one trying to identify the source of a traction problem (which was traced to the rear differential) then charged up into fourth behind McShea. That would have been it, but a half-spin and small relay fire in the second Panzerplatte run dropped him behind the consistent Toshi Arai, who was uncomfortable on the wet roads.

But no sooner had the Scot conceded the place than Arai ran wide with the end in sight. On a charge, McRae outpaced his rival and snatched the final podium spot.

In the championship battle, Jani Paasonen had to be content with fifth. The Finn was lucky to escape a car-denting spin in Panzerplatte, but admitted he was driving with the title in mind. Points rival Manfred Stohl had a nightmare event, dropping a chunk of time with differential and gearbox problems to finish 10th.

McRae went on a charge to claim the final podium position



### PRODUCTION WRC RESULTS

Pos	No	Driver/co-driver	Car	Result
1	47	Xavier Pons/Oriol Julia	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VII	4h24m11.4s
2	34	Niall McShea/Chris Patterson	Subaru Impreza	4h24m41.8s
3	39	Alister McRae/David Senior	Subaru Impreza WRX	4h25m57.0s
4	31	Toshi Arai/Tony Sircombe	Subaru Impreza WRX	4h26m03.4s
5	41	Jani Paasonen/Sirka Rautianen	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VII	4h28m29.3s
6	32	Karamjit Singh/Allen Oh	Proton Pert	4h30m34.6s

Points 1 Paasonen (FIN), 29pts; 2 Arai (J), 20; 3 McRae (GB), 20; 4 McShea (GB), 19; 5 Stohl (AUT), 18; 6 Sola (E), 16; 7 Pons (E), 14; 8 Al-Attiyah (QAT), 10; etc.

# Results



Loeb led from the front in Germany to consolidate his title claim

## FINAL STANDINGS August 20-22, Rally Deutschland, round 10 of 16

Pos	No.	Driver/navigator	Car	Time	Driver table	
1	3	Sebastien Loeb/Daniel Elena	Citroën Xsara WRC	4h01m57.4s	1 Sebastien Loeb (F) 76	
2	8	Francois Duval/Stephane Prevot	Ford Focus RS WRC	4h02m26.5s	2 Markko Martin (EST) 42	
3	4	Carlos Sainz/Marc Marti	Citroën Xsara WRC	4h03m06.9s	3 Carlos Sainz (E) 46	
4	7	Markko Martin/Michael Park	Ford Focus RS WRC	4h04m37.8s	4 Petter Solberg (N) 44	
5	6	Cedric Robert/Gerald Bedon	Peugeot 307 WRC	4h05m27.5s	5 Marcus Gronholm (FIN) 42	
6	16	Freddy Loix/Sven Smeets	Peugeot 206 WRC	4h06m03.4s	6 Francois Duval (B) 39	
7	12	Toni Cardemeister/Paavo Lukander	Skoda Fabia WRC	4h07m41.6s	7 Mikko Hirvonen (FIN) 19	
8	5	Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen	Subaru Impreza WRC2004	4h08m38.5s	8 Janne Tuohino (FIN) 16	
9	21	Stephane Sarrazin/Patrick Pivato	Subaru Impreza WRC2003	4h08m56.3s	9 Harri Rovanpera (FIN) 14	
10	22	Alex Benque/Caroline Escudero	Peugeot 206 WRC	4h12m24.1s	10 Freddy Loix (B) 7	
Retirements/exclusions		Stage stopped and reason			11 Daniel Carlsson (S) 0	
Rtd	1	Petter Solberg/Philip Mills	Subaru Impreza WRC2004	SS12, accident	Manufacturer table	
Rtd	9	Gilles Panizzi/Herve Panizzi	Mitsubishi Lancer WRC04	SS9, accident	1 Citroën 125	
Rtd	10	Daniel Sola/Xavier Amigo	Mitsubishi Lancer WRC04	SS2, accident	2 Ford 96	
Rtd	5	Marcus Gronholm/Timo Rautiainen	Peugeot 307 WRC	SS1, accident	3 Subaru 61	

**Class winners** A8 Loeb/Elena; A7 No finishers; A6 Markus Foss/Glenn Patterson (Peugeot 206), 5h00m30.2s; A5 Jurgen Hohlheimer/Wilfried Kippe (Fiat Siccato Sporting), 5h02m22.6s; N4 Xavier Pons/Oriol Julia (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VII), 4h24m11.4s; N3 Peter Zehetmaier/Jurgen Breuer (Honda Civic Type-R), 4h47m46.0s; N2 Sven Schadler/Andreas Schwab (VW Polo GTI), 5h00m52.6s; N1 No finishers.

**Starters/finishers** 63/32 **Rally leaders** SS1 Sainz, SS2-SS24 Loeb.

### Rally summary

Based again in Trier, Rally Deutschland featured different characters of stages on each day. Friday's mileage was in vineyard roads, Saturday took crews into the Baumholder military ranges and Sunday's final leg was based on more flowing roads in open countryside. Servicing on all three days was based at the Bostalsee complex.

## SUBARU

**CAR Impreza WRC2004**  
Tyres Pirelli



### PETTER SOLBERG

Philip Mills  
Retired

Accident, SS12

Petter Solberg played it safe on the opening leg, setting his Impreza up to work in as broad a range of conditions as possible. This, coupled with a brace of off-kilter tyre choices, left him fourth overnight, but still optimistic. He was left wishing he could go for an even softer tyre after the first three stages of Saturday, but this paled into insignificance after his massive shunt a stage later. Happily, both crew escaped serious injury.

### MIKKO HIRVONEN

Jarmo Lehtinen  
Finished 8th

Mikko Hirvonen didn't light any fires with his stage times, but nor was he expected to. He had next to no asphalt experience in the 2004 car prior to this event, nor of the characteristics of the range of Pirellis on offer. He made tyre choice errors, but was pleased with how much he learned.

## CITROËN

**CAR Xsara WRC**  
Tyres Michelin



### SEBASTIEN LOEB

Daniel Elena  
Finished 1st

For Sebastien Loeb to emerge as victor from such a treacherous event was an impressive feat in itself – to do so from the front in such appalling conditions, and when he could have been forgiven for giving up the battle to consolidate his title lead, was superb. With six rounds to go, it is going to take a spectacular string of disasters to lose him the crown now, and for a man this cool under pressure that is very unlikely indeed.

### CARLOS SAINZ

Marc Marti  
Finished 3rd

The Spaniard wore a smile at the finish, content with his third podium in a row. He openly admitted that even without a wrong tyre choice on Saturday afternoon, when he took a very lightly-cut slick in what turned out to be pouring rain in a gamble to catch his team-mate, he would have struggled to beat him on level terms.

## PEUGEOT

**CAR 307 WRC**  
Tyres Michelin



### MARCUS GRONHOLM

Timo Rautiainen  
Retired

Accident, SS1

Marcus Gronholm went fastest on the shakedown, declared himself happy with the 307 WRC on asphalt and then lost it the first time he hit the brakes in the wet on stage one. The back came round and damaged the offside rear wheel beyond repair. Easily done, no doubt, but the lanky Finn made no excuses: going off on the first major turn of the rally was an embarrassing mistake.

### CEDRIC ROBERT

Gerald Bedon  
Finished 5th

Cedric Robert started cautiously, conscious of the need to score points on his first run as a manufacturer-nominated driver. The conditions did nothing for his confidence – nor did an overshoot and several spins when the rain was at its worst, but he battled on to take two fastest stage times and hold off Freddy Loix.

## FORD

**CAR Focus RS WRC04**  
Tyres Michelin



### MARKKO MARTIN

Michael Park  
Finished 4th

Markko Martin was never at home or happy in the wet – even when he was setting fastest times – and lacked any asphalt miles in the car after he missed a crucial test following his Argentina shunt. A big critic of recent rule changes, the conditions and ensuing accidents only confirmed all of this in his mind. Honest enough to admit Duval had outdriven him.

### FRANCOIS DUVAL

Stephane Prevot  
Finished 2nd

Francois Duval was brimming with confidence, and never afraid to hang it all on the line. Not too surprisingly he made some mistakes – an overshoot and off-course excursion cost him on the opening morning. But this was still the drive of his life, more so when you add in a time-consuming gearbox problem on day one. Quite an achievement to outfox the wily old Carlos Sainz in the fight for second.

## MITSUBISHI

**CAR Lancer WRC04**  
Tyres Michelin



### GILLES PANIZZI

Herve Panizzi  
Retired

Accident, SS9

Gilles Panizzi likened the Lancer's asphalt performance to its gravel pace on the opening day – inadequate. He tried softening the suspension, but felt that there was no decent solution. Held sixth overnight, but spun on the opening stage of leg two. After hitting two trees and sliding 200 metres down a grass bank, he was full of praise for his seat protection.

### DANI SOLA

Xavier Amigo  
Retired

Accident, SS2

A good tyre call by Mitsubishi put Dani Sola on the softer compound for the opening wet stages, and he duly obliged with a mightily impressive first fastest time on the first test. A major accident on the second run undid all his reputation-building, though, and left both crew in hospital for precautionary checks.



A pumped-up Francois Duval delighted his Belgian fan base



With little asphalt time in the '04 car, Hirvonen had to learn fast



Sarrazin drove well in only his sixth start in a WRC car

## EXTRAS

**CAR Peugeot 307 WRC**  
Tyres Michelin  
**FREDDY LOIX**  
Sven Smeets  
Finished 6th

Freddy Loix was back in the world championship after five months away, and back to suffering bad luck within about five minutes. A first-morning misfire tumbled him down the timesheets, while an afternoon gearbox problem left him to drive the bulk of a stage with just first and second gears. Recovered to set three fastest stage times.



## STAGE BY STAGE



## NEXT ROUND Rally Japan, September 3-5

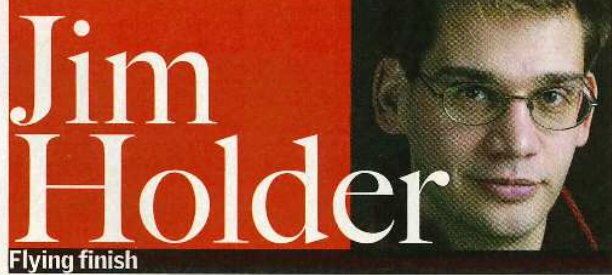
- SS1 Ruwertal 1 (17.84km)** 1 Sainz 10m51.7s; 2 Loeb 2.5s; 3 Sola +4.4s
- SS2 Dhronal 1 (21.04km)** 1 Duval 11m57.7s; 2 Loeb +0.8s; 3 Sainz +7.8s
- SS3 Moselwein 1 (17.84km)** 1 Duval 10m42.3s; 2 Loeb +12.2s; 3 Martin +15.6s
- SS4 Peterberg 1 (10.45km)** 1 Loeb 5m58.6s; 2 Duval +1.1s; 3 Solberg +3.9s
- SS5 Ruwertal 2 (17.84km)** 1 Loeb 10m15.1s; 2 Sainz +1.4s; 3 Kresta +4.0s
- SS6 Dhronal 2 (21.04km)** 1 Loeb 11m37.8s; 2 Sainz +3.4s; 3 Duval +8.8s
- SS7 Moselwein 2 (17.84km)** 1 Loeb 10m41.3s; 2 Sainz +2.1s; 3 Loix +5.0s
- SS8 Peterberg 2 (10.45km)** 1 Loeb 5m55.4s; 2 Solberg +2.5s; 3 Martin +4.3s
- SS9 Bosenberg 1 (17.11km)** Stopped for Panizzi's accident. Notional times awarded
- SS10 Erweiler 1 (20.00km)** 1 Duval 12m13.4s; 2 Martin +5.2s; 3 Loeb +9.0s
- SS11 Panzerplatte Sprint 1 (8.30km)** 1 Martin 4m46.6s; 2 Loix +1.1s; 3 Solberg +3.0s
- SS12 Panzerplatte Lang 1 (40.30km)** Stopped for Solberg's accident. Notional times awarded
- SS13 Bosenberg 2 (17.11km)**

- 1 Schwarz 9m36.6s; 2 Duval +4.8s; 3 Loix +12.4s
- SS14 Erweiler 2 (20.00km)** 1 Loeb 12m15.3s; 2 Robert +1.2s; 3 Duval +2.2s
- SS15 Panzerplatte Sprint 2 (8.30km)** 1 Loeb 4m45.6s; 2 Hirvonen 3.8s; 3 Schwarz +4.2s
- SS16 Panzerplatte Lang 2 (40.30km)** 1 Loeb 24m22.8s; 2 Robert +2.0s; 3 Loix +5.2s
- SS17 St Wendel (6.24km)** 1 Robert 3m29.2s; 2 Martin +3.4s; 3 Loix +3.9s
- SS18 St Wendeler Land 1 (14.80km)** 1 Loix 7m46.3s; 2 Duval +0.2s; 3 Robert +5.3s
- SS19 Teufelskopf (17.53km)** 1 Duval 11m08.0s; 2 Robert +0.1s; 3 Loix +0.9s
- SS20 Birkenfelder Land 1 (13.74km)** 1 Robert 8m04.8s; 2 Loeb +4.7s; 3 Martin +6.3s
- SS21 St Wendeler Land 2 (14.80km)** 1 Duval 7m39.9s; 2 Loix +8.3s; 3 Sainz +9.5s
- SS22 Teufelskopf (17.53km)** 1 Duval 10m56.8s; 2 Loeb +5.0s; 3 Robert +9.1s
- SS23 Birkenfelder Land 2 (13.74km)** 1 Duval 8m00.2s; 2 Loeb +1.8s; 3 Sainz +2.1s
- SS24 St Wendel 2 (6.24km)** 1 Loeb 3m24.8s; 2 Robert +0.4s; 3 Duval +1.6s

Round 10/16 20-22.8.04



Rally Deutschland Trier



Flying finish

# Jim Holder

## "Safety can slip under the radar of a series with a million other areas to focus on"

THE last time I reported on a World Rally Championship event was Rally Great Britain 2001, where I interviewed motorsport medic Paul Trafford. For 10 minutes or so the genial doctor dropped his bedside manner and spoke out against what he perceived as a lack of interest in increasing safety measures.

It wasn't rabble-rousing for rabble-rousing's sake, but the thought-through suggestions of a man with decades in motorsport behind him, including a pioneering role in upping standards in the British Touring Car Championship. Partly because of this racing experience, he was particularly keen to talk about side-impact protection, while other topics up for discussion included the HANS (Head And Neck Safety) device and window netting.

Given that all these issues were still on the agenda last weekend, particularly following the accidents of Dani Sola, Gilles Panizzi and Petter Solberg, it would be nice to say that Trafford's ideas were ahead of their time. The trouble is our original conversation, more than two and a half years ago, was addressing issues that needed urgent action back then.

After all, in the months leading up to that Rally GB, co-drivers Risto Manninenmaki and Daniel Grataloup had been seriously injured in accidents. So why is it only now that HANS is set to be introduced from next season, and that the same old future improvements, none earth-shattering in their novelty, are still "under discussion" rather than well on the way to being implemented?

Safety, it seems, can all too often slip under the radar of a championship with a million other areas to concentrate on. It's unfair to point the finger when the series has undergone such sweeping changes in recent years - including several safety advancements, such as the tracking system attached to every competing car - but it is also true that it has sometimes taken too long to harness the ideas and initiatives of men like Trafford.

Ultimately, governing body the FIA must take responsibility, but it must also tread a fine line. Already there are grumbles from drivers over the comfort and practicality of HANS, and many crews resent the way it is being imposed on them from the start of next year. But history also suggests the FIA is right to take a hard line. Formula 1 drivers were up in arms when HANS was made compulsory. One or two even threatened not to race - strange, given that three or four are now almost certainly only alive because of it.

But it is also time for the FIA, teams and drivers to take a more energetic role in promoting the other areas that Trafford touched upon and which HANS expert Hubert Gramling is now showing an enthusiasm for addressing.

There is a momentum behind the changes sadly absent when Trafford was trying to push his case, and no amount of discussion about the merits of the timing of tyre choices or gravel crews should be allowed to distract from this.

## SKODA

CAR Fabia WRC Tyres Michelin



ARMIN SCHWARZ Manfred Hiemer

**Finished 11th**  
Given a trouble-free run, Armin Schwarz would almost certainly have been in the top five on his 100th WRC event. Instead he attracted the bulk of Skoda's mechanical woes, including a split brake caliper on leg one and turbo failure on leg two. Never gave up in front of his home crowd and, slightly fortuitously, set the Fabia's first fastest time on SS13, when he got a drier run than his rivals by dint of being first car on the road.

TONI GARDEMEISTER Paavo Lukander

**Finished 7th**  
There was drama at the start for Toni Gardemeister when he was given the wrong time cards, followed by problems with poor throttle response and a small misfire. Thereafter, he decided to stay out of trouble and steer an extra-cautious line on the wettest roads. The plan worked, as he netted his best asphalt result.

CAR Skoda Fabia WRC Tyres Michelin

ROMAN KRESTA Jan Tomanek

**Retired**  
Accident, SS9 Roman Kresta set third fastest time on stage five, and did well to lie seventh overnight, despite slight brake problems. He crashed in the wet on the opening stage of leg two, and with three and a bit stages still to go, parked up with a broken suspension pin. He fixed the car under Supereally rules - and crashed out again.

**14**

CAR Subaru Impreza WRC Tyres Michelin

STEPHANE SARRAZIN Patrick Pivato

**Finished 9th**  
A confident world championship debut in potentially soul-destroying conditions from the former Minardi Formula 1 racer and Toyota tester, who was making only his sixth World Rally Car start. Variable and treacherous conditions should go some way to ensuring that Stephane Sarrazin isn't labelled as an asphalt-only driver, too.

**15**

CAR Subaru Impreza WRC Tyres Pirelli

ALASTAIR GINLEY Rory Kennedy

**Retired**  
Driveshaft, en route to SS9 "I'm not interested in talking to you," declared Alastair Ginley by way of a conversation opener. "I'm fed up with journalists writing down what I say and then not even using it in their reports." Er, we don't report every word everyone says, Alastair. Even Petter Solberg gets edited. And we've printed this.

**16**

Carlsson was one of many to fall victim to an accident in Germany



Panizzi was lucky to escape with a sore arm after hitting trees

# 1000

## GREATEST CRASHES OF ALL TIME

Well, accidents will happen... We've selected the most jaw-dropping, gob-smacking, hair-raising shunts from our archives. And, in these, no-one gets seriously hurt

# British racing

If you don't crash at some stage, you're not trying hard enough... Britain's national racers have always provided great entertainment for diehard fans



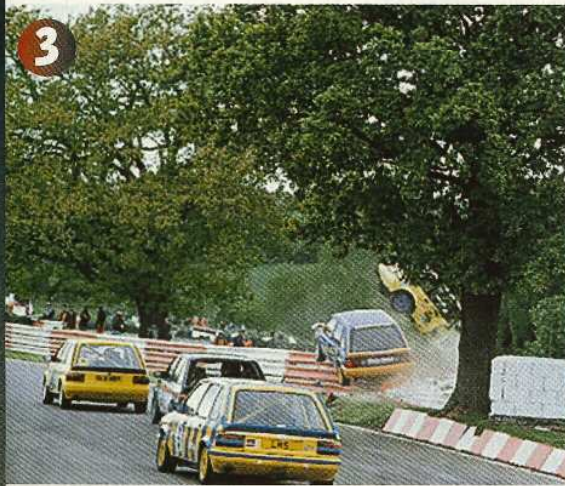
1

DUNBAR/LAT



2

LAT ARCHIVE



3

MACE/WAITING

**1** Renault Clio racer Jason Templeman gets struck by Bob Smith at Brands Hatch in 2002 - then gets a bit hot

**2** Brands again, this time 1988, and Ellen Lohr prepares for her DTM career with this novel Formula Ford passing method

**3** David Mellor (in the yellow car) heads for the signing-on office during an MG Maestro race at Mallory Park in 1995



4

SUTTON/IMAGES

**4** Bertrand Gachot looks a bit vulnerable after a collision with Paulo Carcasci during the 1985 Formula Ford Festival at Brands. CS gas wouldn't be much use this time



1



2

**2** Memo Gidley got a big break with Chip Ganassi Racing's Champ Car team during the 2001 season, but he was lucky to leave Elkhart Lake without any big breakages

**3** Baptism, literally, for rookie as world champion Nigel Mansell hits the wall at Phoenix in 1985



5

BLOKHAM/LAT

**5** Highland fling: on home ground at Knockhill, Scots Ryan Dalziel (8) and Iain Brown tangle during a Vauxhall Junior race in 1999. That's Gary Paffett in the white car

**6** Formula First racer Simon Packford joins the marshals after launching himself over the rear wheel of Derek Canham (blue car) at Brands Hatch in 1989



6

LAT

**8** British GT pile-up at Oulton Park in 2002 when a rainstorm reduces supercars to write-off rubble

**9** Michael Vergers barrel-rolls ASCAR at Rockingham in 2004. Flying Dutchman? (Groan...)

**10** John Village flips his Formula Ford at Silverstone in 1988, then hops over the barrier and into his sponsor's hospitality suite for a beer



4



**AND NOT FORGETTING...**

**7** Daniel Scandian flying in his Vauxhall Junior at Brands Hatch in 1999

# 1980s F1

America? Well, when it comes to shunts they (s), the bad (wrecks) and the ugly (aftermath)



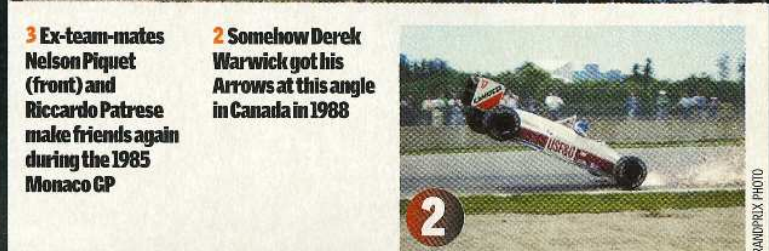
**1** Ryan Newman gets his 2003 NASCAR Winston Cup title attack off to a Dodge start when he rolls his Intrepid during the Daytona 500

WILLIAMS/LAT

Ah, those were the days... Turbos giving massive power, cars that still failed during races and loads of unpredictable drivers. Shunt heaven...



**1** Rene Arnoux and his Renault go straight on at Zandvoort's first corner during the 1982 Dutch GP



**3** Ex-team-mates Nelson Piquet (front) and Riccardo Patrese make friends again during the 1985 Monaco GP

**2** Somehow Derek Warwick got his Arrows at this angle in Canada in 1988



**2**

GRANDPRIX PHOTO



**3**

WILLIAMS/LAT

BETTY

**4** Tony Stewart gets airborne during a wreck in the 2001 Daytona 500. A tragic race, but no harm done here

**5** Daytona again, and even 'The King' could do it when he really tried. This is Richard Petty in 1988

**6** Kevin Cogan gets a fright during the 1989 Indianapolis 500, when his car hits the end of the pit wall

**AND NOT FORGETTING...**  
**7** John Morton on fire at Lime Rock IMSA, 1988  
**8** Mario Andretti flies son Michael's IRL Dallara at Indy testing in 2003  
**9** IRL has an 11-car pile-up at Atlanta in 2001  
**10** Tomas Scheckter's 2002 season in the IRL



**3**

BERNARD ASSET

**4** Derek Daly had numerous large shunts in 1980, but this one at Monaco was one of the best

**5** Gilles Villeneuve's 1980 Imola crash was so impressive they named the corner after him



**4**

LAT



**6**

AP



**5**

# Modern F1

With the media blitz on grand prix racing since the early '90s, there's scarcely a moment that isn't captured on image. Here are some to make you wince



**1** Some might argue this was the best treatment for a 1999 BAR. Jacques Villeneuve tries out the BARriers at Spa

**2** Some might argue this was the best treatment for a 2001 Prost. Luciano Burti launches it off Michael Schumacher at the start of the German GP

GETTY



GETTY



GETTY



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**3** Rubens Barrichello's Jordan charges into the barriers at Imola in 1994 to kick off a catastrophic San Marino GP weekend

**4** Martin Brundle turns up a bit late for the pre-Australian GP air display in 1996, but takes to the sky in his Jordan anyway

**5** For some reason it was deemed a bad idea for Allan McNish to race in the 2002 Japanese GP after he'd crashed his Toyota in qualifying

**6** Giancarlo Fisichella shows you can have a big one even at the twisty Valencia track when he crashes his Benetton during a 2000 test session



DPII

## AND NOT FORGETTING...

**8** Ralf Schumacher and multi-car pile-up at the start of the 2002 Australian GP

**9** Pedro Diniz loses his rollover at start of 1999 European GP - but luckily keeps his head

**10** Ricardo Rosset tries to destroy half the F1 grid at the start of the 1998 Belgian GP

**7** Bringing things right up to date, here's Jarno Trulli crashing his Renault in last month's British GP. He's probably quite chuffed about destroying one of Flavio's babies now!

# Golden old

From the days when 's motorsport and every



SUTTON IMAGES

**2** Hans Herrmann is definitely better off without a seatbelt during this shunt, when he crashes his BRM during the 1959 German GP at Avus...

## AND NOT FORGETTING...

**4** Huge pile-up at the start of the 1966 Indy 500

**5** Masten Gregory leaping out of his Tojeiro-Jaguar at Goodwood in 1959 - before it crashed - and sustaining surprisingly minor injuries

**6** Peter Clarke plopping his Escort into a lake on the 1971 RAC Rally



AP

es

# Rallying

ty was a dirty word in  
ng was in black and white

**1** Peter Gaydon still thinks he can control the slide as he disappears behind the barriers during a Formula 3 race at Mallory Park in 1968. Reine Wisell passes by in the foreground

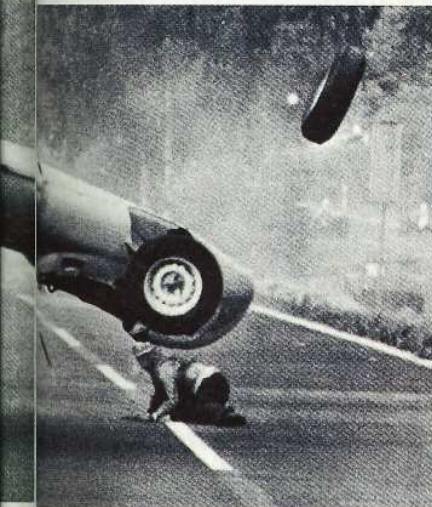


MIKE HAYWARD

**1** Francois Delecour's co-driver Daniel Grataloup took a week or two to recover from this huge impact on Rally Australia in 2002. And yes, that is the engine that's been flung 20 feet from their Mitsubishi...



**2** Even a world champ can get it wrong; Carlos Sainz flips his Toyota down under in 1991



**3** ...and so is Alberto Ascari, whose Lancia is fished out of the Monaco harbour in 1955



KEITH OSWIN

WWW.KICKLEINDE



**3** Who says 1600cc can't be exciting? Fabrice Morel proves otherwise on the Tour de Corse 2001



**4** Richard Burns seemed to have the New Zealand Rally '02 won. And then his Peugeot jimx struck

WWW.KICKLEINDE

**AND NOT FORGETTING...**

**5** Kenneth Eriksson's monster off testing with Subaru in Corsica in 1997

**6** Petter Solberg ditching his Focus in a Finnish lake in 2000. They had to cut down trees to get the battered Ford back out...

**7** Alister McRae getting out of phase and then barrel-rolling his Golf on the Manx Rally 1997.

**8** Louise Aitken-Walker's graceful roll down a cliff and then into deep water in Portugal 1990. Luckily she went on to be Ladies' champ

# Colin McRae

A man with such a varied back catalogue of accidents that he merits his own section. No-one can have tested Ford Focus roll-cage integrity to such limits so regularly



WWW.MCKLEINDE

**1** One innocuous left-hander catches out Colin in Corsica 2000 and he ends up trapped inside the Focus. Easily his most harrowing accident

**2** Under pressure from Marcus Gronholm in Cyprus 2002, McRae rolls not once but twice. Famously shuts Focus rear hatch with his right boot

**3** Time penalty in Finland puts Colin in the mood. He sets one scratch time, then does this on the next test. Derek Ringer shuts his eyes...



WWW.MCKLEINDE



**3** Finland 1992. Given a WRC chance in a Subaru, Colin makes his mark. With three separate shunts

**5** Not Col's highest-speed off but his worst impact. Corsican shunt in '02 breaks a finger

AND NOT FORGETTING...

- 6** Head-on into a tree in Australia 1999. Nicky Cris sees his life flash before him
- 7** Rally GB title shootout shunt in '01
- 8** Reducing Scooby to scrap in Finland '96



**4**

LAT



**5**

# Bizarre stu

All you need to know a line, landing on a roof a after climbing out of y



**1** Major Peter Braid's Cooper F3 car landed on top of the army guardroom at Blandford in 1949 - then he fell out

**5** One-litre F3 cars of the late '60s were light, but surely Bev Bond is optimistic at Karlskoga in '68

AND NOT FORGETTING...  
**6** David C Adelaide  
**7** Nelsinh being hit truck, Du  
**8** FF2000 Cadwell a effluence overflow



ff

but rolling as you cross the finish  
 and being run over by a course car  
 or crashed F1 racer unscathed

1



1 It was always going to be a Macau F3 shot at number one, wasn't it? In 1999, 28 cars set off and, after Robert Lechner spins at the second corner, only six make it back to the grid under their own steam. Fifteen are finally prepared for the restart



2 The engine on Taki Inoue's Arrows fails in the 1995 Hungarian GP. He gets out - and gets hit by the Tatra course car (three months earlier he was hit by the safety car in Monaco after an accident...)



3

3 The Rally of Portugal 1980: first Hannu Mikkola slides off, then team-mate Ari Vatanen does the same and lands on top of his Rothmans Escort...



4

4 Promising F1 newboy Martin Brundle needs a swig of Johnnie Walker after this Monaco qualifying shunt in '84



4

AND NOT FORGETTING...  
 5 Soheil Ayari goes as high as the fourth floor of the hotel at Macau in 1997 - and then wins the rest of the race  
 6 Team Green team-mates Dario Franchitti and Paul Tracy collide in Houston Champ Car race in 1998. Then Tracy punches team boss Barry Green

4 Mexican Luis Diaz flips his Indy Lights car at Fontana in 2000 - but he still crosses the line 15th!

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 in  
 nlets, 76

5



# Touring and sportscars

It must be something to do with the secure feeling given from being surrounded by a nice, solid-looking car. Hah! Dream on guys...



**1** Gabriele Tarquini has a slight hiccup at Knockhill on his otherwise relentless march to the 1994 BTCC title for Alfa Romeo. This, as much as his wins, made him a hero in the UK

SUTTON-IMAGES



**2** Kelvin Burt subjects the Volvo 850 to its toughest ever crash test at Oulton Park in the 1996 BTCC. Amazingly, Burt missed only one round after this shunt

EBREV/LAT



**3** Send in the Clowndes: despite this mammoth effort at Calder Park, Holden star Craig Lowndes didn't miss out on winning his third Australian touring car title

ALL SPORT

**4** Andreas Scheld's Zakspeed Porsche took off at Homestead in 1998 - with this result

**AND NOT FORGETTING...**  
**7** Jesus Pareja's Porsche turns into a fireball at Montreal in '90. We've got pics but you can't see the car...  
**8** Charlie Cox in his Mondeo at Thruxton in the '95 BTCC  
**9** Gabriele Tarquini makes the top 10 twice! This time it's Diepholz ITC, 1996  
**10** Matt Neal does the business with his Mazda, Silverstone '94



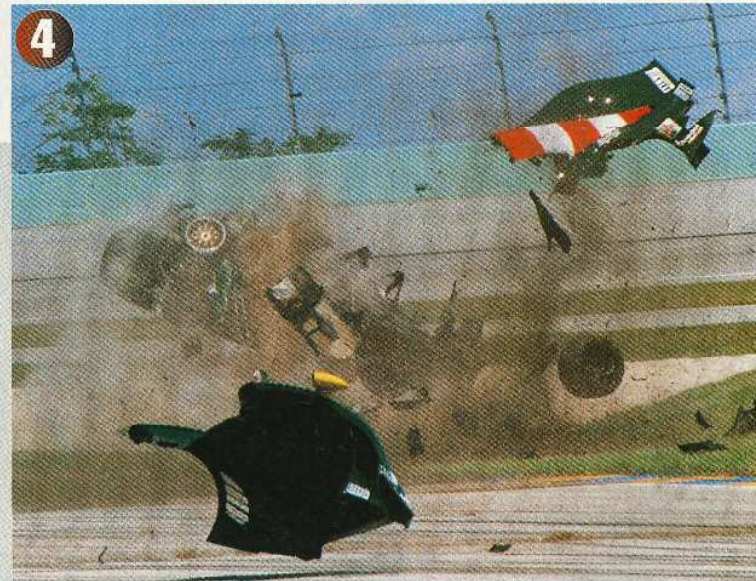
**5** Well we had to grade this shunt number five, didn't we? Nigel Mansell makes a mess of his Ford Mondeo at Donington in 1993

LAT



**6** Somehow Toyota bigwigs weren't impressed when Julian Bailey took out team-mate Will Hoy at the British GP meeting in 1993 - and handed the race to Nissan!

LAT



**4**

## F3/F3000/F2

Hmmmm. Sticking-out wheels and a bunch of ambitious young drivers? Sounds like a recipe for disaster, unless you're a spares supplier of course



**1** Ricardo Mauricio is a tiny bloke, so he thought he'd find out what it's like to be tall when he had this F3000 shunt at Monza in 2002

SUTTON-IMAGES

**2** Katherine Legge flips her Dallara at Rockingham during last year's British Formula 3 round



BLOXHAM/LAT

**3** Martin Brundle (see also pages 48 and 51) is savaged by Ayrton Senna at Oulton Park as their battle for the 1983 British F3 title takes a dramatic twist



SUTTON-IMAGES

**AND NOT FORGETTING...**  
**4** Satoru Nakajima gets aerial at Brands

**1978 GP F3 support**  
**5** Ronnie Peterson involved in F2 pile-up at Thruxton in 1975

**6** Nürburgring F2, Manfred Winkelhock at the Flugplatz, 1980

# Flippin' and flamin' hell! Our Top 10 Shunts

## 10 →

### 9.9 FROM ITALIAN JUDGES

Christian Fittipaldi thought it was a great idea to try to nab seventh place from Minardi team-mate Pierluigi Martini on the run to the finish line in the 1993 Italian GP. Not so... "I kept my eyes open, because I felt that if I closed them I might never open them again," the Brazilian said. And yes, he did cross the finishing line

SUTTON IMAGES



## 9 ←

### OUT OF FOCUS

One innocuous bump on the right-hand side of a fast piece of road in Argentina; one enormous accident. Markko Martin and co-driver Michael Park had to undergo medical checks after surely the biggest WRC shunt since the introduction of the World Rally Car formula in 1997. Six weeks after the accident, Markko is still suffering from hazy vision...

WWW.MICKLETYPE



## 8 →

### RUSSELL IN THE TREES

BTCC qualifying at Oulton Park in 1999: Russell Spence found Lodge Corner slippier than expected and, in trying to avoid the already parked Ford Mondeo of Alain Menu, he launched his Renault Laguna over the barriers and into the spectator area. Good job it wasn't race day and that there was hardly anyone standing there

BLOXHAM/AT



7 →

**FROM OCTAVIA TO FABIA**  
World Rally Cars continue to filter down the ranks but, as Jan Kopecky proved on the Rallye Matador in 2003, the end results of a major shunt are the same, regardless of the level. Despite understandable concerns about both Kopecky and his co-driver Filip Schovaneck, they recovered quickly enough to get back into an Octavia for Rally GB later that year

WWW.RALLY5K



6 →

**RICARD RIDE HELL**  
Mauricio Gugelmin somersaulted his March to destruction during a first-corner bottleneck at the 1989 French Grand Prix. Amazingly, the Brazilian took the spare car for the restart and set fastest lap!

GETTY IMAGES



5 ↓

**MINE'S A LARGE ONE**  
American Sandy Brody tried unconventional means to enter the Redgate Lodge pub at Donington Park during a Formula Ford race in 1989. Brody had launched his Reynard off the rear of Harry Nuttall, and actually landed in the pub's backyard



4 →

**OH-HIGH-OH**

Travelling at 190mph down Mid-Ohio's back straight during the 1998 CART race, Michael Andretti tried to squeeze between PJ Jones and Patrick Carpentier. But Jones's steering failed as he ran over debris and he drifted into Andretti, who was launched into a series of four barrel rolls. Thankfully that's an extremely big gravel trap



BRYN WILLIAMS

2 ↓

**SATO IN THE DANGER SEAT**

Takuma Sato was minding his own business, coaxing his Jordan through Turn 2 during the 2002 Austrian GP, when he was struck by the out-of-control Sauber of Nick Heidfeld, which was barrelling backwards across the grass. The press-on Japanese was fine, and went on to crash twice at Monaco within the next fortnight!

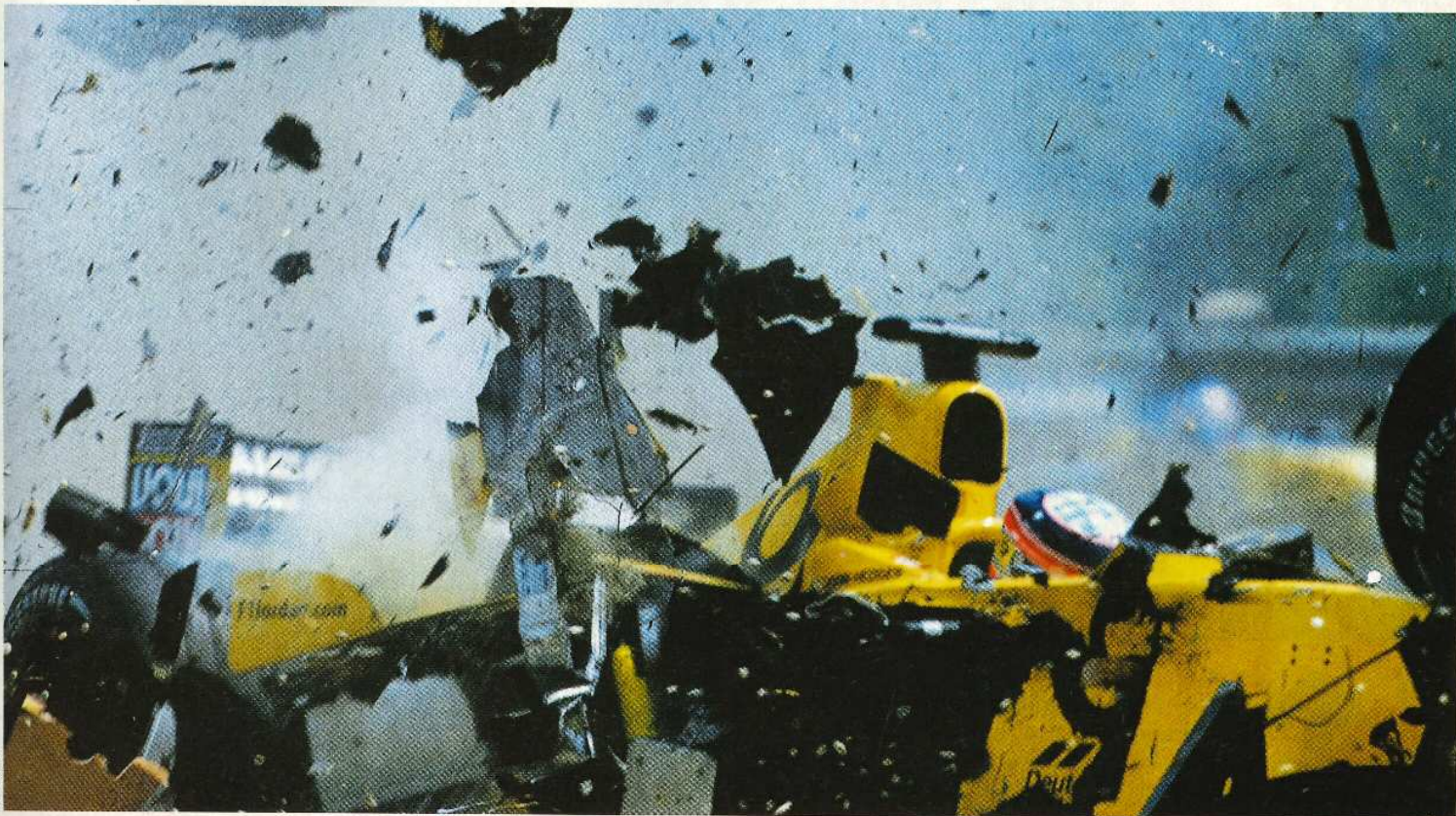


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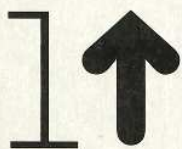
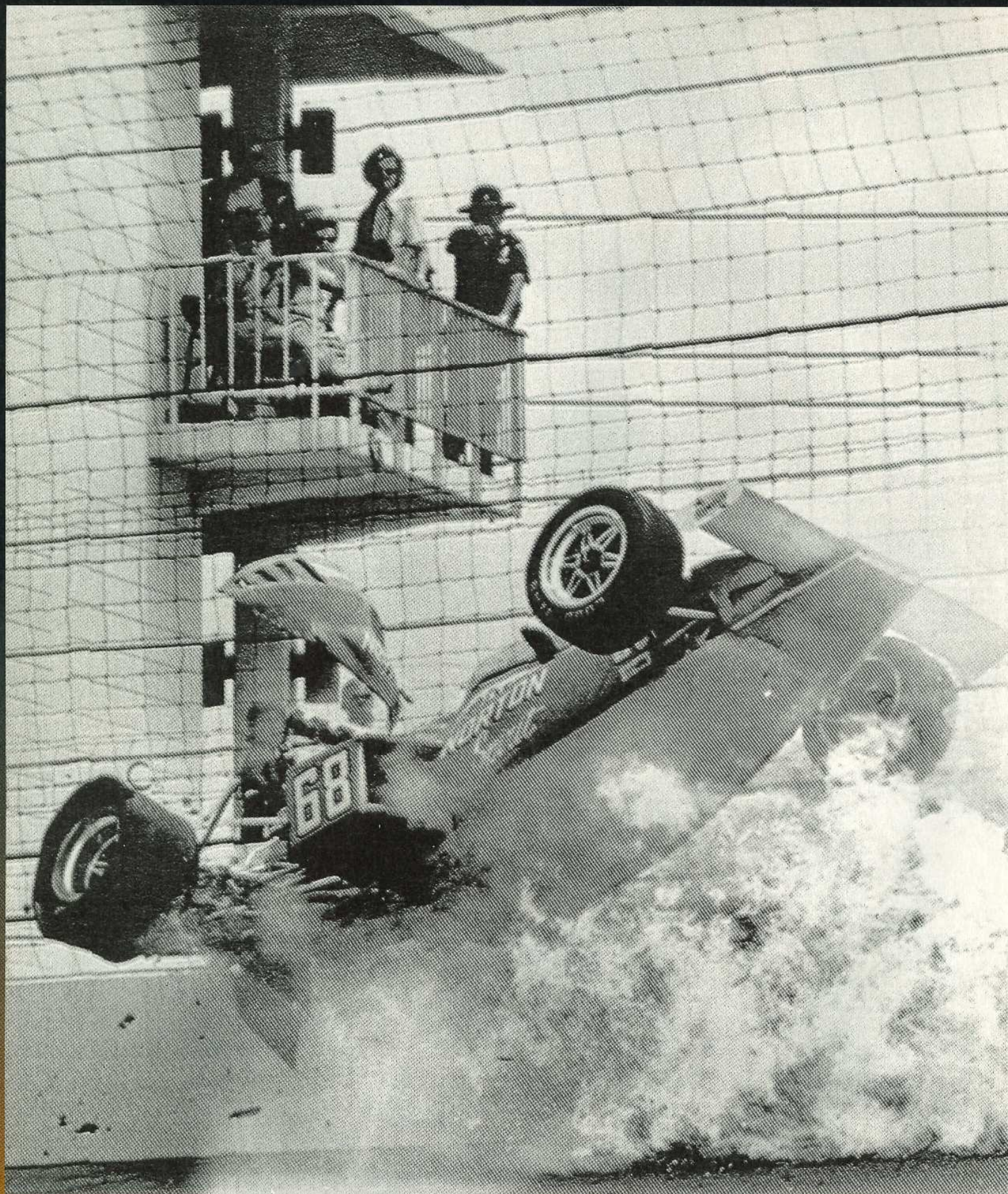
3 ←

**WHO NEEDS LUFTHANSA?**

Mercedes was forced to quit the 1999 Le Mans 24 Hours after no less than three aerial accidents for its CLR. Mark Webber (left) suffered the first two during practice and qualifying, then Peter Dumbreck had a monster accident during the race. Both men escaped without serious injury, to the mighty relief of everyone



LAT ARCHIVE



**GROUND CONTROL TO MAJOR TOM**  
Tom Sneva was running fifth, two-thirds of the way through the 1975 Indianapolis 500, when his Penske-run McLaren clipped backmarker

Eldon Rasmussen in Turn 2 and was launched into this fiery accident. Miraculously, Sneva broke no bones and sustained only minor burns in the flames



SEAT

COLLECTORS' EDITION

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## HOLIDAY INN SEAT CUPRA CHAMPIONSHIP

Rounds 11/12

## THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

**Donington**  
August 28/29  
2004



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### REVIEW OF ROUNDS 9 & 10

Local hero Shedden shines as Pickford consolidates his series lead at the penultimate SEAT Cupra rounds at Knockhill

### DONINGTON PREVIEW

It's the last chance saloon for the three title rivals

### DRIVER-BY-DRIVER

The lowdown on all the drivers in the series

### DONINGTON TIMETABLE

When to catch all the action this weekend

### POSTER

Exclusive centre-page SEAT Cupra Championship poster

### THE RACE FOR THE TITLE

Jason Plato on the three championship front-runners for the 2005 Touring Car drive

### ROBERT HUFF

How last year's Cupra Champion has made his mark in the British Touring Car Championship

### THE BTCC MASTERS

British motorsport's clash of the titans

### A LAP OF DONINGTON PARK

Why Jason Plato thinks the East Midlands circuit is the best in Britain

# 2004 HOLIDAY INN SEAT CUPRA CHAMPIONSHIP

## ROUND 9: FLASH GORDON FLIES AT HOME

Gordon Shedden delighted the thousands of Scottish fans who had come to watch their local hero at Knockhill by convincingly winning Round 9 of the Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship.

The 25-year old Knockhill senior driving instructor started from 3<sup>rd</sup> on the grid, moved up to 2<sup>nd</sup> at the start, overtook Championship leader James Pickford at Taylors hairpin on lap three (when he also set the fastest lap of the race) and stormed to a 2.3 seconds victory in his Scottish Sun/Tracker/BT Broadband Yahoo! Leon Cupra R.

Pickford's Haribo/Vivaldi Leon Cupra R shadowed Shedden closely, until the Scott slid sideways at Clark corner. It forced James to ease off, allowing Oli Wilkinson (talkSport Leon Cupra R) to catch up. Oli overtook James at the hairpin on lap six, and James was merely happy to hold onto 3<sup>rd</sup> place and increase his Championship lead.

Tom Boardman suffered from starting 9<sup>th</sup> on the grid and was caught up in a first lap incident involving a number of cars – which saw Tom take avoiding action by driving through the gravel trap at McIntyres corner. He still finished 7<sup>th</sup> in his Exchange & Mart Leon Cupra R.

One of the most spectacular drivers at Knockhill came from Daniel-Lee Stevens, in his RG Stevens Building Services/CB Tech Motorsport Leon Cupra R. Yet again his result didn't do his performance credit, as he had to recover from being nudged into a spin on lap one.

### Round 9 race results

1	Gordon Shedden	17:33.088 (79.90mph)
2	Oli Wilkinson	17:35.389
3	James Pickford	17:35.813
4	Gavin Smith	17:36.236
5	Emmet O'Brien	17:39.544
6	Rui Chagas	17:40.755
7	Tom Boardman	17:42.067
8	Emmanuel Crouvisier	17:59.108
9	Ben Winrow	18:00.650
10	Melanie Healey	18:33.985
11	Daniel-Lee Stevens	1 Lap
	Lewis Carter	DNF
	Simon Hepplewhite	DNF

Fastest lap: Gordon Shedden 57.586 (81.18mph)





## ROUND 10: OLI GOES RADIO GAGA

Oli Wilkinson sent the talkSport airwaves buzzing with excitement by winning his first Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship race at Knockhill. Having finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the day's first race, it was a richly deserved win. Oli also bagged more points than anyone else at Knockhill, to keep his title hopes alive.

James Pickford recorded his 9<sup>th</sup> podium in ten races with a safe 2<sup>nd</sup> in his Haribo/Vivaldi Leon Cupra R. Emmet O'Brien recorded his first podium with 3<sup>rd</sup> in his Loaded/DABL Leon Cupra R, just ahead of Ben Winrow who put in the drive of Round 10. The 19-year old Earls Barton driver's quickest lap was just 0.001 seconds off the fastest lap of the race, and 4<sup>th</sup> was his best ever finish in his Telemecanique Leon Cupra R.

Tom Boardman did well to race from 11<sup>th</sup> on the grid to finish 5<sup>th</sup> in his Exchange & Mart Leon Cupra R, to maintain 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Championship.

There was great disappointment for Gavin Smith and Gordon Shedden, whose title hopes are over. Gavin took the lead of Round 10 in his Smiths Hire Centre/Supagard Leon Cupra R, but was ruled to have been creeping forward before

the red lights went out and came into the pits for a drive through penalty.

Gordon made a fantastic start from 5<sup>th</sup> on the grid, but clashed with Lewis Carter twice on the opening lap. The impact moved the suspension on Gordon's Scottish Sun/Tracker/BT Broadband Yahoo! Leon Cupra R, causing a driveshaft to break exiting Taylors hairpin at the end of the second lap.

### Round 10 race results

1	Oli Wilkinson	17:34.036 (79.83mph)
2	James Pickford	17:34.381
3	Emmet O'Brien	17:38.599
4	Ben Winrow	17:39.128
5	Tom Boardman	17:45.904
6	Gavin Smith	17:46.020
7	Rui Chagas	17:47.427
8	Emmanuel Crouvisier	18:03.201
9	Lewis Carter	18:07.347
10	Melanie Healey	18:31.145
	Simon Hepplewhite	DNF
	Daniel-Lee Stevens	DNF
	Gordon Shedden	DNF

Fastest lap: Gavin Smith 57.957 (80.66mph)

**Holiday Inn**  
SEAT Cupra Championship

## Trio battle for SEAT title

James Pickford, Tom Boardman and Oli Wilkinson will race for the biggest prize in British motorsport – a works touring car drive with SEAT Sport UK next year – when they go head-to-head in the final two rounds of the 2004 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship at Donington Park.

Out of the 18 registered drivers, three go to the final showdown with a chance of winning the title. Pickford has been the sensation of the series, finishing on the podium nine times in ten races, including three race wins, six fastest laps and six pole positions.

Even with a 20 point lead anything can happen, and Boardman and Wilkinson are waiting to pounce if the leader slips up.

Mathematically, Gavin Smith can still win the title in his Smiths Hire Centre/Supagard Leon Cupra R. The Rathfarnham driver is 36 points behind the leader, and two race wins and two fastest laps at Donington would give him 37 points.

The one time series leader is capable of scoring those results, but Pickford has to fail to score any points, which on current form is unlikely.

James Pickford: "I only need to stay close to Tom and Oli at Donington and the job's done. I'm not bothered about winning races or setting fastest laps.

"I don't need to take risks and I'm just going to make sure I finish the first race of the day in the points and see what the situation is then. I'm trying not to think of the 'what ifs' and concentrate on doing all that's needed to win the title."

Tom Boardman: "Donington is one of my favourite circuits with lots of good overtaking opportunities. My plan is to score two race wins and two fastest laps and see what happens. If James has a problem the title will fall into my lap, and if he doesn't I want to have a good weekend and show everyone what I'm capable of out on the racing circuit."

Oli Wilkinson: "It's got to be maximum attack right from the word go. James has got a healthy points lead, but it's not over yet. I've raced at Donington plenty of times and I know the circuit well.."

### THE WEBSITE

For more details visit  
[www.seatsportuk.co.uk](http://www.seatsportuk.co.uk)



# 2004 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Cham

## Racing Rivals revs up weekend mornings on Channel 4

While the finale to the 2004 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship is played out at Donington Park this weekend, Racing Rivals is already revving up weekend mornings on Channel 4.

Racing Rivals is the docu-soap which delves behind the scenes and follows the ups, downs and spinning around of the drivers in the SEAT Cupra Championship – and it's been a great season, with three drivers taking the fight for the biggest prize in British motorsport down to the wire.

The cameras are always rolling, interviewing drivers as they skip off the podium or crawl out of a gravel trap. The old saying about familiarity appears to be true, as the drivers often completely forget the cameras are there – and that's when the 'beep machine' goes into overdrive.

Superb in-car and trackside camerawork captures all the spectacular track action, and for once the cameras aren't just pointed at the front runners, because Racing Rivals also follows the great battles that are raging in the middle and towards the back of the field.

4D Productions and Granada Sport have ploughed through hundreds of hours of tape to produce 6 x 30 minute shows for Channel 4. This series will be repeated on Motors TV in the autumn, while a separate 10 x 30 minute show will be shown on Bravo later in the year.

Racing Rivals is presented by Hollyoaks star Terri Dwyer and the irrepressible Jason Plato, who offers his expert and honest motorsport opinion. With access to all areas, the Racing Rivals film crews have followed drivers to their homes, interviewed parents and partners and been through the good and bad times with all of them.

Racing Rivals can next be seen on Channel 4 on:

Saturday 28 August	08.30am
Sunday 5 September	08.00am
Sunday 12 September	08.00am
Sunday 19 September	08.00am

### 11 Emmanuel Crouvisier

**Lives:** Le Mans, France and Harrold, Bedfordshire  
**Date of birth:** 28 August 1978  
**Place of birth:** Cleveland, Ohio  
**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1997



Emmanuel Crouvisier, 25, is an experienced racer – he's competed in everything from karts to Formula Ford single-seaters. In 2002 Emmanuel raced in Formula Campus, scoring a podium at Le Mans. He took on Formula Palmer Audi last year, finishing 11th out of 30. He missed the final races of 2003 when he was diagnosed with testicular cancer but after successful treatment he'll tackle the 2004 SEAT Cupra Championship to raise awareness of the disease and funds for Cancer Research.

*Autograph*

### 4 Simon Hepplewhite

**Lives:** Lindfield, West Sussex  
**Date of birth:** 19 June 1980  
**Place of birth:** Cuckfield, West Sussex  
**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1997



Simon Hepplewhite, 24, started in motocross at the age of nine and competed in the discipline from 1989-'94. Then he took in karts and Formula Ford before returning to motorbikes in 1999, in road racing. In 2001 he moved up to the Superclub 600 Supersport series on a Yamaha R6 and he won a round of the series at Mallory Park the following year. Simon raced a Yamaha R1 in the 2003 Powerbike series, but switched to cars halfway through the season when he decided to contest the 2004 SEAT Cupra Championship.

*Autograph*

### 2 Gordon Shedden

**Lives:** Dunfermline, Fife  
**Date of birth:** 15 February 1979  
**Place of birth:** Edinburgh  
**Status:** Engaged to Jillian  
**Race debut:** 1998



Gordon Shedden, 25, stunned the BTCC in 2001 by qualifying on pole – for both races – on his series debut at Knockhill. A former Scottish Young Driver of the Year, Gordon sprang to fame in 2000 when he dominated the Fiesta Championship with 9 wins and 9 poles. He also raced in the Dutch Touring Car Championship. In 2003 Gordon was never lower than third in the Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship points table. He finished runner-up in the series, with one race win at Oulton Park.

*Autograph*

### 12 Daniel-Lee Stevens

**Lives:** Chelmsford, Essex  
**Date of birth:** 20 October 1978  
**Place of birth:** Hastings, East Sussex  
**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1987



Daniel-Lee Stevens, 25, has a six-year stint in Junior Formula Stock cars aged 10. After several seasons in karting he won the twin-engine Pro-Kart Championship at Bucknham Park in 2002 and finished second in 2003. He also competed in the Locost Championships taking his sportscar to 3rd in the series. This formula took him to Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Oulton Park and Donington, leaving Croft and Knockhill as the only two tracks he hasn't raced in the 2004 SEAT Cupra Championship where he finished 11th.

*Autograph*

### 14 Rui Chagas

**Lives:** Hayward's Heath, West Sussex  
**Date of birth:** 13 December 1978  
**Place of birth:** Lisbon, Portugal  
**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1991



Rui Chagas, 25, started racing karts in his native Portugal in 1991 and finished runner-up in the National Kart Championship twice. He made his racing car debut in 1995, driving a Formula Ford in Portugal, but became Portuguese National Kart Champion in 1996. Rui raced in Formula BMW in 2000, but then stopped racing in order to finish his education in England. Since then he has been preparing to return to racing, and he selected the 2004 SEAT Cupra Championship after driving a SEAT Sport UK-built Leon.

*Autograph*

### 5 Melanie Healey

**Lives:** Cheam, Surrey  
**Date of birth:** 13 April 1980  
**Place of birth:** Epsom  
**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 2001



Melanie Healey, 24, made her racing debut in 2002, contesting 10 rounds of the Alfa Romeo Championship in an Alfasud. Melanie raced in the 2003 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship and was one of only three drivers to finish all 12 races. Her best result was a superb 8th at Rockingham, in front of a record crowd of 44,000 – she also received the 'Mintex Most Improved Driver of the Year Award' and a cheque for £1,000. A keen Crystal Palace FC fan, Melanie recently gained a HND in Motorsport Engineering from Brooklands College and free from studying can now concentrate on her racing.

*Autograph*

### 9 Lorcan Johnson

**Lives:** Malahide, Ireland  
**Date of birth:** 20 March 1956  
**Place of birth:** Dublin  
**Status:** married to Grainne  
**Race debut:** 1981



Lorcan Johnson, 48, made his racing debut in mid-1981, when he won three races in a standard Opel. Five more victories followed in 1982, and in 1983 Lorcan took class titles in the Dunlop Sexton Trophy, the Northern Ireland Touring Car Championship and the Dealer Opel Cup. He moved from FF2000 to rallycross and then karts before stopping racing altogether in 1995. Lorcan is taking his return to the sport seriously, though – he has been training for two years, lost a stone in weight and is virtually tee-total.

*Autograph*

### 6 James Pickford

**Lives:** Macclesfield, Cheshire  
**Date of birth:** 30 April 1979  
**Place of birth:** Macclesfield  
**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1997



James Pickford, 25, made his racing debut in karts in 1997. He won back-to-back Formula Honda titles in 1997 and 1998 and also finished sixth in the one-off drive in the Formula Ford Slick 50 British Championship. James has sampled Formula Palmer Audi, the Formula Renault Sport Championship and Enduro Championship rounds in Belgium. After years away from the sport James made a superb return in 2003, claiming 5th in the Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship.

*Autograph*

# Championship driver profiles



## 10 Oli Wilkinson

**Lives:** Tooting Beck, South London  
**Date of birth:** 1 December 1975  
**Place of birth:** Solihull, West Midlands



**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1992  
 Oli Wilkinson, 28, went karting for his 16th birthday and has been racing ever since. In 1999, after several kart titles (including a European crown), Oli switched to cars and won three out of the four Europa Cup (Class B) races he contested. Selected drives followed in 2001 before two years in the Clio Cup – he took fourth in the series in 2003. Oli then entered the Racing Rivals Scholarship Drive Competition on ITV2 and after a series of tests he won the top prize of a fully-funded drive in the 2004 SEAT Cupra Championship.  
*Autograph*

## 17 Ben Winrow

**Lives:** Earls Barton, Northants  
**Date of birth:** 5 July 1985  
**Place of birth:** Northampton



**Status:** Girlfriend, Lucy  
**Race debut:** 2001  
 Ben Winrow, 19, showed his great promise with an impressive run in the 2003 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship. Ben won the 2002 Caterham Academy title before he was old enough to drive a car on the public road! He entered the SEAT Cupra Championship in 2003 with a three-year plan. He qualified 6th at Rockingham before suffering a big shunt. That was followed by a 100mph accident – the biggest crash of the series – at Thruxton. But Ben returned at Brands Hatch and was straight back on the pace.  
*Autograph*

## 7 Tom Boardman

**Lives:** Forton, Lancashire  
**Date of birth:** 15 October 1983  
**Place of birth:** Lancaster



**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 2000  
 Tom Boardman, 20, drove cars around fields of the farm he lived on when he was four. After racing stock cars at 10, Tom raced in autograss at 14, winning the Class 1 British and Junior National Championships. He was 2000 T-Car Champion in his first year of circuit racing, then in 2002 he moved into BTCC driving a BMW in the Production Car BTC series. Last year he won all the races he finished, and was fourth overall. A keen rally driver, Tom contested the Peugeot 206 Winter Cup in 2003, and this year is competing in both the SEAT Cupra Championship and the 206 Super Cup rally series.  
*Autograph*

## 15 Gavin Smith

**Lives:** Rathfarnham, Dublin  
**Date of birth:** 15 September 1977  
**Place of birth:** Dublin



**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1998  
 Gavin Smith, 26, won the Irish Fiat Uno Championship in his first season of saloon car racing in 1998, recording 12 race wins. The following year he moved into single seaters, claiming 2 race wins and 3rd in the Irish Formula Opel series. After finishing 9th in the 2000 British Formula Renault Championship he stopped racing in 2001, but he returned in 2002 to record 6 podiums and 2 fastest laps in the British F3 Scholarship. In 2003 Gavin tackled the Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship, winning a round at Rockingham.  
*Autograph*

## 8 Lewis Carter

**Lives:** Bathgate, near Edinburgh  
**Date of birth:** 25 February 1982  
**Place of birth:** Edinburgh



**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 1996  
 Lewis Carter, 22, is the reigning Pirelli Maranello Ferrari Challenge Champion, having dominated the 2003 series in a 420bhp Ferrari 360. He started from pole in all 14 races and won 10 of them! Lewis started out in karts, winning the 1998 Scottish Junior Kart title. He moved into cars in 1999, winning the Formula 600 series, before stepping up into the Slick 50 Formula Ford Championship in 2000 and the Avon Junior Formula Ford series the following season. Last year he focused on finding the funds to contest the Pirelli Maranello Ferrari Challenge.  
*Autograph*

## 19 Emmet O'Brien

**Lives:** Monkstown, Dublin  
**Date of birth:** 7 May 1981  
**Place of birth:** Dublin



**Status:** Single  
**Race debut:** 2000  
 Emmet O'Brien, 23, started racing karts in 1995. He raced for Ireland from 1997-2000 in the Five Nations Karting Cup, finishing second in both the All Ireland and Formula A Championships in 1998. He studied Motorsport Engineering at Swansea University before working for Palmer Sport as an instructor. Racing in the 2000 Formula Palmer Audi Winter Championship, his pace attracted the attention of Murray Racing and in 2001 the team won the British Formula Ford title. Fifth in the 2002 Formula Ireland Championship, he joined the SEAT Cupra Championship in 2003.  
*Autograph*

## Donington timetable

### Saturday 28th August

0915-0945	Euro 3000
1000-1030	Group C/GTP
1045-1115	Grand Prix Masters
1130-1230	Euro 3000
1240-1300	Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship Qualifying
1400-1420	EuroBoss
1430-1510	Group C/GTP
1520-1550	Grand Prix Masters
1600-1620	Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship Qualifying
1630-1650	EuroBoss

### Sunday 29th August

1000	Euro 3000 – Warm Up
1040	Grand Prix Masters Race 1 – 18 laps
1120	Group C/GTP Race 1 – 40 minutes
1220	Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship Race 1 – 16 laps
1300	EuroBoss – 18 laps
1412	Euro 3000 – 48 laps
1530	Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship Race 2 – 16 laps
1610	Grand Prix Masters Race 2 – 18 laps
1650	Group C/GTP Race 2 – 40 minutes

### 2004 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship points after Round 10

1	James Pickford	136pts
2	Tom Boardman	116pts
3	Oli Wilkinson	114pts
4	Gavin Smith	100pts
5	Gordon Shedden	97pts
6	Lewis Carter	69pts
7	Rui Chagas	51pts
8	Emmet O'Brien	46pts
9	Ben Winrow	37pts
10	Emmanuel Crouvisier	23pts
11	Rob Austin	21pts
12	Spencer Marsh	21pts
13	Andy Neate	8pts
14	Jon Lanceley	8pts
15	Simon Hepplewhite	7pts
16	Melanie Healey	7pts
17	Daniel-Lee Stevens	5pts
18	Lorcan Johnson	2pts



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SEAT LEON

Holiday Inn  
SEAT Cupra Championship

Oli Wilkinson

Tom Boardman



James Pickford

## James Pickford

James has been the sensation of the 2004 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship. In 10 races he has finished on the podium nine times, won a record three races, finished 2<sup>nd</sup> twice, 3<sup>rd</sup> four times and scored an extra point for each of his six fastest race laps. Only three drivers have qualified on pole, and James has been fastest six times.

The only dent in his armour has been a split-second decision to dive down the inside of Gordon Shedden at Druids Hairpin, when challenging for the lead in Round 2 at Brands Hatch. The collision in his Haribo/Vivaldi Leon Cupra R dropped him to 12<sup>th</sup>.

A 20 point lead is a nice cushion, and James only needs to finish 5<sup>th</sup> in both races to become a professional racing driver.

**Jason Plato's verdict:** "James has really come on strong this year and he's the man to win for my money. He's a fast driver, very presentable, good at PR and has all the ingredients to be a professional driver."

## Tom Boardman

Round 8 at Croft was a turning point for Tom. He had just extended his SEAT Cupra Championship lead with his second victory of the season, when a tangle with Gavin Smith heading down to the first corner ended with his Exchange & Mart Leon Cupra R in the wall. He recovered to finish 8<sup>th</sup>, dropping him to 2<sup>nd</sup> in the series. His season got worse at Knockhill, where he qualified 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Even his electric starts couldn't save him from mid-field battles.

Despite the setbacks, with six podiums and a fastest lap at Oulton Park to his credit, he is just a race win away from Pickford and will be trying to exert as much pressure on the leader as possible.

**Jason Plato's verdict:** "Tom has improved massively from where he was in the past. He had a reputation as a crasher and a bit mad and reckless, but I haven't seen any of that this year. He's done a very good job and he's a really nice personable lad. I think if he won the title he'd do a good job in touring cars."

## Oli Wilkinson

Oli won a place in the SEAT Cupra Championship by winning the Racing Rivals Scholarship, and he has justified that decision by scoring six podium results. At Silverstone he was sensational in the wet, qualifying his talkSport Leon Cupra R nearly half a second clear of the field. His race victory at Knockhill proves he can also turn it on under pressure, as he needed to win last time out to keep his title hopes alive.

Oli must win the penultimate round to take a season of hard work down to the motorsport equivalent of a golden goal.

**Jason Plato's verdict:** "Oli's come on really quickly and he's a very nice guy. I think all three guys would do a good job in a touring car. Oli's certainly in with a shout and that's what counts."

One of these  
three drivers is  
just two races  
away from a 2005  
Touring Car drive

# ROBERT HUFF

## THE BIG INTERVIEW

As the 2004 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship showdown nears, Rob Huff knows all about the pressure of going to the final race meeting and the one race weekend which could change your career forever.

Having made that leap from an amateur to a professional racing driver, what's the last 12 months been like for the 2003 SEAT Cupra Champion? How has his life actually changed and what advice can he give to this year's title contenders?

### **Now that you've had time to reflect, how important was winning the 2003 Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship?**

"To be fair there is no way I'd be driving for a works team in the British Touring Car Championship if it wasn't for that prize. Entering the SEAT Cupra Championship was the best decision I've made in my life.

"I was just lucky to be in the right place at the right time and in the right championship – and then to be consistently faster than anyone else at the time. It's crazy, it's still like a complete dream and it's difficult to get your head round the fact that you're now coming to work and this is my job.

"Racing is what I've always loved and what I've

always had a passion for doing, and I'm now being paid to do it!

"It's a strange feeling. What's nice is that it hasn't taken the fun element out of racing, but it's obviously become a lot more serious. It is different but you adapt to it. Being a professional racing driver is what I've always wanted to do and here I am. I doubt I could have ever done it without the SEAT Cupra Championship."

### **How big is the Holiday Inn SEAT Cupra Championship, now that you've lived with it for the best part of a year?**

"I've been racing almost every weekend for the last five or six years, and every Monday to Friday I've been instructing – and now I don't have to worry about instructing!

"Weekends have changed too, because if I take a corner off the car I don't have to go and 'phone a sponsor and beg for them to pay for it so we can get out for the next race, so it allows you to explore your own talents further.

"Last year we had a full budget to race but we didn't have any money for repairs, so although I knew I could drive my heart out, it was always at the back of my mind that if I did go off and have a big one, it could potentially be the end of my championship.

"This year I can push that extra ten percent and see how far I can actually go, and that's what has really shown in my driving."

### **Do you have any advice to offer the drivers that are going for the SEAT Cupra Championship title at the moment?**

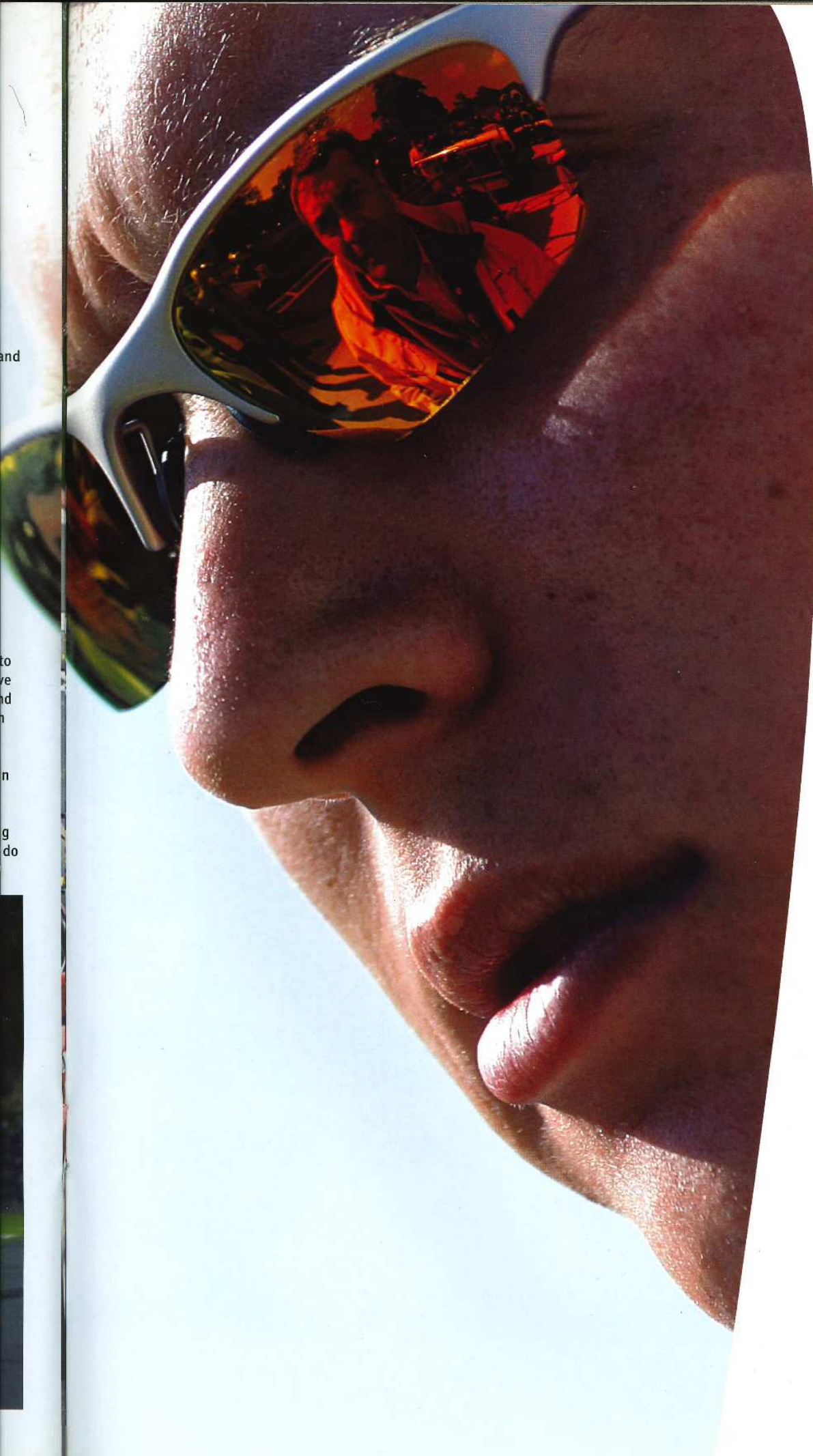
"As it's a one make championship, and because you spend so much time together and all stay in the same hotels, you do make friends, but you've got to block that out.

"You can't make mates; you've just got to get your head down because the only person that can win the title is you. When you start getting into battles with your mates you tend to give them a little bit more room than you'd give a driver who is not your mate, and then you end up asking yourself 'Why?' because that person has just overtaken you and he doesn't give a toss that he's done so. At the end of the day I didn't make any friends last year but I wasn't in it to make friends – I was there to win the championship and that's what I did.

"I think that's what James Pickford is showing this year. My advice is to get your head down, do your own thing and try your hardest."







**“I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time and in the right championship.”**

**Have you got any advice to the future champion?**

“Don’t expect it to be easy because it’s not. That’s the biggest mistake I think a lot of people make – I’m a victim of it should think Jason is and so is anyone that’s ever walked into Touring Cars.”

“You come from winning in every championship you’ve ever done into Touring Cars and you find yourself fifteenth on the grid. It’s very easy to get your head and think ‘It can’t be me it can’t be the car’. You’ve just got to up your game a lot and switch on to the fact you’re not here to have fun.”

“Okay, we have great fun, but that’s not at the hotel. When we come to the circuit we come to work and it’s serious stuff. I’m not here for myself, I’m here to represent SEAT as a manufacturer, so everything I say and do is all watched and monitored by the press, the public and everybody.”

“It is a huge step up, not just in the racing side of things but in terms of the fans and press. It completely blows away all your expectations.”

**Did you think you’d fit in as well as you have?**

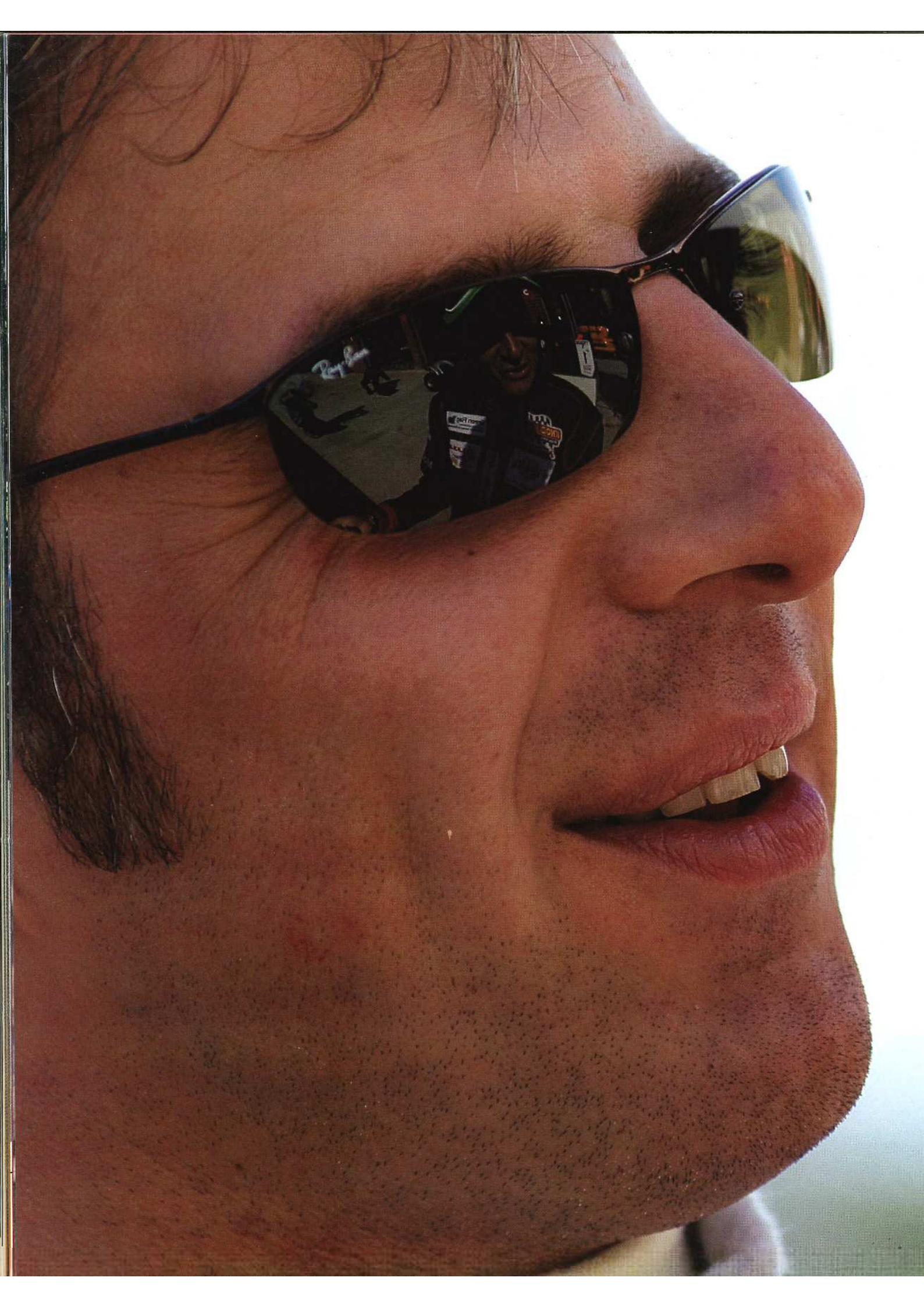
“I don’t know really because everyone last year had a certain perception of me because of the way I was in the SEAT Cupra Championship, but I was like it was a reason...”

“I didn’t want to make mates and I didn’t want to come across like I was really arrogant because I knew that when everyone saw it on TV it would throw them off.”

“Everyone that knows me knows I’m confident, but I’m not the arrogant bloke that I came across as last year! That was just an act and it worked, I did it for a purpose.”

“It’s strange because a lot of the people I worked with last year were probably thinking, ‘Oh God, I don’t know if I can handle him,’ but I’ve come into the team with my hands up saying, ‘Look guys, I’m out of my depth here to start with and I need as much help as possible’.”

“We’ve got a hell of a team at SEAT UK, everyone works very well together we wouldn’t have been able to record our first one-two BTCC race result at Croft weren’t one hundred percent committed and get on as well as we do.”





# “We will all want to win. Badly”



## Plato can't wait for BTCC Masters showdown

It's been talked about for many years, but until now it's remained a pipedream. Now the 'BTCC Masters' race is on, and one day you'll be able to tell your grandchildren 'I was there.'

It may happen again, but it will never happen for the first time again. Touring car legends past and present will race identical 250bhp turbocharged SEAT Leon Cupra Rs at Donington Park on Sunday 26th September. It will be a fitting and spectacular climax to a season in which the British Touring Car Championship has been reinstated as the world's best domestic tin-top racing series.

BTCC Series Director Alan Gow has done many remarkable things this year, but two stand out. Firstly, he has answered the call of the fans to create a theatre of magnificent racing, with top drivers racing top cars in three action-packed races. Secondly, he's convinced SEAT Sport UK that loaning a grid-load of prized Leon Cupra Rs for past BTC Champions to race is a sensible thing to do. There's no mistaking he's a fan at heart – and awfully good at persuading people to do mad things!

One of the 'BTCC Masters' will be the 2001 Champion, Jason Plato. Not a man renowned for doing things by half, Jason wants to win. He wants to be crowned 'BTCC Masters Champion'. All the other drivers want to win too. Badly. Let's face it – it's going to be a cracking race.

“For me the BTCC Masters race is important because all of the people that I watched racing when I was growing up will be there, and now I'm going to race against them,” says Jason. “We will all want to win. Absolutely everyone will want to win and it would be great to be crowned 'BTCC Masters Champion'. It'll be a great thing to have on your CV and a fantastic event to be part of.

“Alan Gow has talked about this for as long as I've known him, trying to get an event like this up and running, but for some reason it hasn't quite come together until now. It'll be a hard race, very rough, with a lot of bumping and barging going on.

“Everyone will want to win because at the end of the day they're all champions. Every driver in the race is a winner, they're no journeymen or plonkers, they're all real top class lads and I think the competition will be fierce. For that to be the last race of the Touring Car year will be brilliant and I hope the crowds turn up in their thousands to watch. If I wasn't racing I'd want to watch it – I'd want to be there to see it!”



### PLATO'S COSMIC VIEWING TIP:

"Donington is great for spectators. From the hill on the infield you can look down at the Craner Curves, the Old Hairpin, Starkeys and McLeans. It's a good spot to watch the racing from."



### DONINGTON – NATIONAL CIRCUIT

Located: off J23A or J24 of the M1, next to the East Midlands Airport.

Circuit length: 1.957 miles

Tickets: [www.donington-park.co.uk](http://www.donington-park.co.uk)

"Donington is probably my favourite circuit in the country because it's fast and flowing and it's got a really good rhythm. It's also one of the most picturesque tracks to drive."

"The first corner is Redgate. A third-gear corner, you arrive at 125mph. It's wide on the way in and it's possible to use too much road on the approach and lose time – or position. Then you've got the Craner Curves, a flat out downhill right-left which is exciting as you often get two abreast down there. Then on to one of the best corners in the country, the Old Hairpin. It's fourth gear, very fast, downhill braking and a bit of a camber change on the way in. It's one of those where you think you can go quicker and the next time you try it you go off."

"Once passed Starkeys you start climbing up the hill into the right-hander called McLeans. There is a very fast left-hander before it and the car's not straight as you turn into this blind over a crest, so it's tricky to get right. Sometimes it is like a skating rink, because if the wind is blowing in a certain direction you can get aviation fuel on it from planes taking off from the East Midlands Airport, which is just the other side of the fence!"

"From McLeans you climb towards Coppice, which is over the top of a crest. You turn in before you see the corner as it's blind – a great corner and an important one as it leads onto the back straight where a lot of overtaking is done. After 140mph down the straight, Goddards chicane is a tight right-left and a good overtaking point before the start-finish straight."

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From the ARCHIVES



Michael Schumacher gathers his thoughts before the 1994 Belgian Grand Prix. He finished first on the road, but was later disqualified over a technical infringement

On this week in motorsport

10 years ago...

It's announced that **Nigel Mansell** will return to the Williams F1 team for the last three GPs of the season; NASCAR ace **Ernie Irvan** is hurt in a head-on impact at Michigan after a front tyre on his Ford Thunderbird punctures.

20 years ago...

**Alain Prost** wins the Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort to give McLaren its ninth victory in 13 races. Finishing second, **Niki Lauda** holds on to his championship lead.

30 years ago...

**Alain Serpaggi** wins the European Two-litre Sportscar Championship for the Alpine Renault team when he pips **John Lepp**'s Chevron-Hart B26 by just 0.8sec at Hockenheim. It is the team's fifth win in a row.

40 years ago...

Austrian GP glory on Zeltweg airfield goes to **Lorenzo Bandini** (Ferrari), after team-mate **John Surtees** retires with mechanical woes; **Denny Hulme** (Brabham) wins the F2 race at Zolder.

50 years ago...

**Juan Manuel Fangio** (Mercedes-Benz) becomes world champion for the second time by winning the Swiss GP, lapping all rivals except for his **Froilan Gonzalez** in a Ferrari. Gonzalez needed to have beaten his compatriot to keep his title hopes alive.

1982 Swiss Grand Prix - Dijon-Prenois

AN afternoon spent on the limit paid off beautifully for Williams' Keke Rosberg at the Swiss Grand Prix in Dijon - yes, that's right, Dijon in France... (August 29, 1982).

For much of the race Alain Prost's pole-sitting Renault looked in control ahead of team-mate Rene Arnoux. Victory, though, would be snatched from under his nose in the dying laps.

Rosberg qualified in eighth, but was unhappy with his car. "Understeer, dreadful understeer," said the Finn.

When the lights went out, Arnoux staged a textbook start, passing Prost on the run to the first corner, but the Frenchman soon regained the lead.

From the start Rosberg's intent was

clear, passing Niki Lauda (McLaren) and then Riccardo Patrese (Brabham) for fourth. The Finn's charge, though, was to be hindered by the awkward Alfa of Andrea de Cesaris: As Rosberg went to lap him, the Italian moved over and blocked the Williams. "When a guy is being lapped he should move over, not shut the door!" stormed Rosberg. By the time he had muscled his way past, Keke had conceded 10sec to the Renaults.

Meanwhile, Arnoux was closing in on Prost for the race lead. But with 20 laps left Prost ran into trouble, as one half of a skirt started to break up. On lap 72, the fight intensified: Arnoux was zeroing in on Prost, with Rosberg driving like a man on the edge. Could

he do it? Lap 73 and the Finn came round in front of Arnoux. Soon afterwards, Arnoux retired, citing a fuel-injection fault, which left Prost and Rosberg to duke it out.

Bizarrely, on lap 78, the man with the chequered flag came out ready to unfurl it - with two laps to go! Quickly, Williams team manager Peter Collins pointed out the error and the flag was put away. Prost and Rosberg screamed by, and Keke snatched the lead.

After 80 laps, Rosberg found there was no chequer, so he continued for another tour. Lap 81 and Keke Rosberg finally received waved confirmation of his first grand prix win, and an 11-point lead over Prost in the world championship. ☒



Rosberg's persistence against the turbos paid off in Dijon. Sadly, his trophy was a giant cow-bell

Anniversaries

AUGUST 26

**Dominique Dupuy** (b1957)  
**Swede Savage** (b1946, d Jul 2, 1973)

AUGUST 27

**Gerhard Berger** (b1959)  
**Maurizio Sandro Sala** (b1958)  
**Derek Warwick** (b1954)  
**Mark Webber** (b1976)

AUGUST 28

**Mike Parkes** (d1977)

AUGUST 29

**Tony Dron** (b1946)  
**James Hunt** (b1947, d Jun 15, 1993)  
**Brian McGuire** (d1977)  
**Jean Ragnotti** (b1945)

AUGUST 30

**Will Davison** (b1982)  
**Francois Delecour** (b1962)  
**Ignazio Giunti** (b1941, d Jan 10, 1971)  
**Bruce McLaren** (b1937, d Jun 2, 1970)  
**Phil Mills** (b1963)

AUGUST 31

**Miguel Angel Guerra** (b1953)  
**Luca di Montezemolo** (b1947)  
**Raymond Sommer** (b1906, d Sep 10, 1950)

SEPTEMBER 1

**Stefan Bellof** (d1985)  
**Franck Lagorce** (d1968)



# Spa therapy

**SPECIAL FEATURE** After a year out Spa's new promoter is determined to show why the fabled track deserves its place on the F1 calendar. By ADAM COOPER

**A** trip to the Spa 24 Hours last month provided me with a poignant reminder of when Formula 1 last visited the awesome Belgian venue, for above one of the garages in the pitlane was still painted the legend 'Orange Arrows'. Two years is a long time in motor racing.

After an absence last season due to the political hot potato of tobacco sponsorship, we will be back this weekend at the place regarded by most grand prix drivers as the finest venue on the calendar. Anyone feeling jaded as we near the end of a long season will have a spring in their step. It's going to be more fun than Hungary.

"I have missed it," admits past winner David Coulthard. "It's a daunting track. You take a breath when you first go down to Eau Rouge. It's a great challenge, and such a contrast to somewhere like Hungary. It's not a coincidence

that 90 percent of the drivers have it down as their favourite track. It just offers something that we can't get from the other circuits."

"We like the track a lot," says Ferrari tech chief Ross Brawn. "It's a good, challenging track from an engineer's point of view. It has overtaking opportunities and is interesting strategically. I'm really looking forward to going back there."

This year the track has been resurfaced and has a lot more grip, but the main novelty is the revised Bus Stop chicane. It was regarded as something of a joke when it was first introduced – the nickname says it all – but during the 25 or so years that the original version existed, it acquired a certain kerb-hopping charm.

That's all changed, at the request of the FIA. The cars now veer to the right before braking into a tight left-hander, followed by a burst of acceleration into what approximates to the old

Bus Stop. Those who raced in the 24 Hours confirmed that it kills overtaking.

The area has a couple of other quirks. The cosy view for spectators has been spoiled, as there are now bare acres of asphalt run-off on the outside, far more than would be required by an out-of-control car. Quite where the water goes when this area floods remains to be seen. Secondly there are still large rocks and stones strewn about the bit of grass that has been left, and they could easily be chucked onto the track.

The other great change has happened behind the scenes. For years Belgium was one of a select group of races promoted by F1 supremo Bernie Ecclestone rather than a local organisation or entrepreneur. Now the regional government is providing the guarantee.

The actual promotion has been handed to Didier Defourny, who at just 38 years old has to



Spa has been a cornerstone of GP racing since the '20s. This is 1958



Eau Rouge, oh bliss. Spa's return to the GP calendar is welcomed by all



The perils of racing in the wet are often highlighted at Spa

## Nivelles '74 Bernie's first GP



Texaco and Marlboro saw their car win

IT'S rather ironic that Bernie Ecclestone has chosen 2004 to give up his role as the promoter of the Belgian Grand Prix, for 30 years ago the event marked his first foray into that side of the business. From a little acorn of inspiration, his mighty empire has grown.

The 1974 event was held in May at the unloved Nivelles circuit. The venue was only a few years old, but had already gone bankrupt. Texaco and Marlboro sponsored the race, and Bernie – in his role as the boss of teams' organisation FOCA – also helped to get hi-fi company Bang & Olufsen on board. That raised enough money to pay for the hire of the circuit and the personnel to run the meeting.

be one of the youngest men ever to take on such a role. Until now, his Liege-based company has been best known for organising Belgian concerts for top French language acts such as Celine Dion and Johnny Halliday.

"It's the same kind of event as F1," he says with typical enthusiasm. "You have to build 40,000 seats, and have security control and ticketing. But instead of one artist you have 20! Also you have to promote the grand prix internationally, and this is the main problem that we've found."

This is his first major venture in motorsport. However, Defourny is a racer at heart, and competed in the Opel/Lotus series at the same time as Rubens Barrichello, Coulthard and Gil de Ferran. He was a little too old to make it in single-seaters, and back injuries received in a road accident in 1995 stopped any aspirations he had.

He still competes in tin-tops and was French GT champion in 2003. Four years ago he won the Spa 24 Hours in a Peugeot, and in the same event this year, shared a Ferrari with former F1 drivers Gianni Morbidelli and Emanuele Naspetti. Both that car and the sister 575M anchored by Mika Salo were covered with logos advertising the Belgian GP – one of the most unusual backers ever seen on a racing car, but typical of Defourny's imaginative efforts to plug the race. Historically, little was done in Belgium.

"Mr Ecclestone didn't want a lot of promotion, because at that time it was much more easy to sell 75 or 80,000 tickets than it is now. We had a break last year, and the race was only confirmed on December 8. It's hard to get people back. The problem is we have only a local audience of five

But there was still no cash to pay the teams. Brabham owner Bernie suggested to his fellow team bosses that they share the risk and split any profits that might accrue from gate money. The reaction from the likes of Colin Chapman and Ken Tyrrell was one of bemusement. So Bernie decided to gamble his own cash by guaranteeing the start and prize fund.

"Nobody else would do it, so I said I'd bankroll it," says Bernie today. "The teams would all benefit, and I was the one who took the risks. Right from day one the others had lots of opportunities to come in and do things. They said 'We're race teams, we don't want to be in finance, and certainly not in risk-taking.'"

Ecclestone didn't even work out how many tickets he needed to sell: "Why do the sums and then it doesn't happen? Do the accounts afterwards, and not before. We didn't know how many people we were going to get – the worse thing is to guess; you've just got to take a chance. I can remember waking up, looking out, and seeing the rain, and thinking, 'This is not good.'"

Despite dodgy weather 70,000 people showed up, and Bernie laughed all the way to the bank: "It worked out all right in the end..."

In those days the business end of the sport didn't get much media coverage, reflecting the apathy of Chapman and Tyrrell. But Autosport's astute grand prix columnist reported the saga the following week, with fulsome praise for Ecclestone. And the name of the writer? Paddy McNally, who would later join forces with Bernie and make his own fortune by taking care of various commercial aspects of F1.



BE became a promoter 30 years ago

to six percent – most visitors are from Holland and Germany – and we haven't had a Belgian driver for 10 years. You can see the difference in Spain and England where there is a local driver."

The campaign has included advertising in foreign media and on billboards across Belgium. The latter caused a major domestic controversy, as they featured prominent Marlboro logos on the Ferraris. But any publicity is good publicity...

Defourny has followed the lead of other tracks in having a pit walk today (Thursday), open to grandstand ticket holders. It was also supposed to be available to allcomers for just £10 a head, but he was told to stop that particular promotion. However, folk who have seen the ads and turn up will be sold tickets: "You can't send people home when they've shown an interest in F1!"

Rather more spectacular is his plan to distribute 50,000 pairs of entry tickets for Friday

in competitions run by newspapers, TV stations, Coca-Cola, Total and mobile phone company Proximus. By giving away pairs of tickets, winners aren't forced to buy extras for Friday, but the idea is that they pay to attend for the rest of the weekend.

"It's really to invest in people," says Defourny. "I'm sure they'll have to taste it again. When you see an F1 car on the track it's something special. It's a case of come and see – and then think about buying a ticket for this year or maybe next year."

Those who come will find a more customer-friendly Spa. There will be a 'goody bag', while grandstands now have proper seats rather than benches, plus a guaranteed view of the action.

"We've changed some things for the public," says Defourny. "We've put in 19 giant TV screens, when before there were 11. So everyone can have a screen in front of them – including the people who are standing in the mud! Today with the qualifying system if you only see one turn, it's not enough. We have a new grandstand at the Bus Stop, which is covered, and we've also covered another [at the end of the main straight]. Next year we're going to have 10 out of 19 grandstands covered. Usually in Belgium it rains a lot, and if it's not raining it's sunny, so it's good for both."

Come rain or shine, the focus is sure to be on Michael Schumacher. He could score his 13th win of the year on the 13th anniversary of his debut at the track he has made his own, a result that will guarantee his seventh world championship. It would also be Ferrari's 180th win in the team's 700th grand prix. One way or another, there's probably going to be a party...



F1 first used the modern-look Spa in '83

# He's a Schu-in

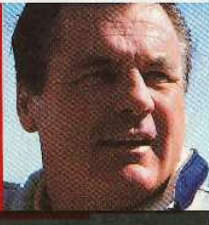
Or maybe not, because Jonesy has put his GP jinx on Michael Schumacher

**W**ell, I'm not going for Fernando Alonso this time, if that's what you're thinking. I seem to put a curse on him. And to be honest I've lost faith that the Renault can win again this year. I'm not too impressed with the criticisms the team seem to be levelling at Michelin either. Michelin makes a bloody good tyre and Bridgestone does too. The difference is that Bridgestone was smart and declared its intentions to work with the chassis designers to develop the best tyres. And given that you tend to back a winning horse, that meant working with Ferrari. Michelin, on the other hand, supplies the other major teams - Williams, Renault, BAR and McLaren - and has to have tyres to suit all.

But by saying things like that you start opening a Pandora's box: should there be a single manufacturer? I'm against that myself, because why in a supposedly free market should tyre manufacturers be militated against any more than chassis builders or engine makers? And there would still

## Alan Jones

1980 FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPION



be the question over whether or not one team was being favoured over another. No, having just one tyre supplier would be false. And anyway, whatever tyres they were on, those bloody Ferraris would still walk it.

We just have to accept that until the Michael Schumacher-Ross Brawn-Jean Todt axis is broken, they're going to remain the guys to beat. Sure, in the history of F1, it's an anomaly for a team to score six constructors' titles on the trot, but it has been together for so long without change that success has just bred success. It's really up to the others now to catch up.

And I'm sorry to say this, but I don't see anyone catching the Ferraris at Spa, not Michael's anyway. I mean, you

can say all those fast corners suit his style of driving, but the fact is that if there are fast corners, slow corners, wet corners or dry corners over the course of a lap he'll be well ahead of Rubens Barrichello. And yes, Spa is a favourite for Michael. I remember in 2002, when he was throwing victories here and there to Barrichello, he just couldn't help himself at Spa: he just went flat-out and left Rubens in the dust. By the end of the first lap, you knew he was going to win it.

I do have high hopes for Williams: the BMW is still a powerful engine and the team wouldn't have changed to the conventional nose if it wasn't better.

The McLarens screwed up in Hungary on tyre choice, but I reckon

Kimi Raikkonen should be pretty awesome to watch this weekend. Bloody fast, bloody brave and with a car that he can chuck around knowing it will do what he wants. The BARs should have plenty of grunt from the Honda engine, and I expect both drivers to revel in the circuit. But, to be honest, so should any Formula 1 driver worth the name. Spa was always one of my favourites, along with the Osterreichring. Once you get into a rhythm around this sort of circuit, you don't ever want to stop, not even to pit. It looks great on TV too; even when you have one of those races where no-one's really passing, it's good watching just one car going round Spa.

I'm sorry to say that the one car out on its own will be Schuey's. Juan Pablo Montoya's Williams can split the Ferraris and Barrichello will take third, with maybe Raikkonen in fourth. I hope by predicting a Schumacher win I'll put my curse on him just for a change. In fact, I might go on predicting him for the rest of the year. It'll be one of those situations where I'll be delighted to be proven wrong. ☒



## VIEW FROM THE COCKPIT



**Mika Salo**

GT racer and former Formula 1 driver

I RACED in the last Belgian GP in 2002 and I did the Spa 24 Hours last month, so I'm more qualified to tell you about the changes to the Bus Stop than many of the other drivers!

La Source is a first-gear hairpin, and it's easy to lock your inside front wheel. You take the white line on the way out to get a good exit, then you accelerate down the hill.

Eau Rouge is flat in sixth, and even if you make a mistake there's asphalt run-offs everywhere. It used to be more of a corner in the mid-'90s but it's not a challenge now, although you still have to concentrate when you turn in. There's only one line. If you're too

wide or too deep in you make the exit tighter and you go off. At the bottom of the hill you're really pushed into the ground.

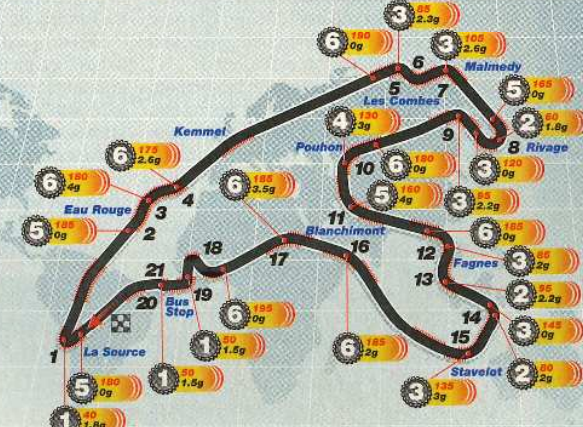
You go into sixth on the straight, maybe 100 metres after the exit. At the end you brake down to third gear for Les Combes; you can use the kerb on the inside. The next turn is the same. Again it's done in third, which you hold through the next one. It's a bit off-camber and a bit slippery. As soon as you exit it's fourth, then fifth, then braking down to second. It's hard and you always understeer.

Then it's up to third and a little lift through Turn 9, then third, fourth fifth and sixth before Pouhon. You brake a little, then it's down to fifth and back to full throttle. Turn 11 is flat in fifth, then up to sixth before Turn 12, which is a third-gear corner.

You exit Turn 13 and go up to fourth for a short time, then back to third for Stavelot. You brake a little before Turn 15, then up to sixth.

After that it's all changed. Before, when you exited Blanchimont, you could stay on the right side of the track ready for the Bus Stop. Now you have to go sharp left, because you have the line for braking into this new chicane. It's hard and bumpy, and

<b>SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS</b> <b>44 LAPS</b>	<b>CIRCUIT LENGTH</b> 4.333 MILES	140.41mph
	<b>RACE DISTANCE</b> 190.652 MILES	<b>2002 FASTEST LAP</b> M SCHUMACHER
	<b>2002 WINNER</b> M SCHUMACHER	1m47.176s/145.32mph
	<b>2002 POLE POSITION</b> M SCHUMACHER	1m43.726s/150.280mph



you're braking while turning right. The next one comes very quickly, and it's always a surprise. You're braking, then it's sharp left and first gear. It feels narrow. They could have done a better job here. There's lots of run-off there. If you make a

mistake you should suffer for it and not just be able to carry on. It's first all the way through, and as soon as you exit the second part it's second, third, fourth, then fifth. The kink is taken flat, whereas before you couldn't do it like that.



ILLUSTRATION: PAUL LAGNETTE





## BELGIAN GP STATISTICS AND RACE ODDS

2004 rank	Name	Team	BEL GP starts	Best BEL qualifying	Best BEL finish	Career starts	Career GP wins	Career points	Odds to win race
120	Michael Schumacher	Ferrari	11	1 (1)	1 (6)	208	82	1158	1/3
82	Rubens Barrichello	Ferrari	10	1 (1)	2 (1)	193	7	419	6/1
65	Jenson Button	BAR	3	3 (1)	5 (1)	79	0	110	12/1
46	Jarno Trulli	Renault	6	4 (1)	6 (1)	126	1	117	20/1
45	Fernando Alonso	Renault	1	20 (1)	n/a	45	1	100	12/1
38	Juan Pablo Montoya	Williams	2	1 (1)	3 (1)	63	3	201	33/1
19	David Coulthard	McLaren	9	2 (2)	1 (1)	169	13	465	40/1
18	Kimi Raikkonen	McLaren	2	2 (1)	n/a	63	1	142	12/1
18	Takuma Sato	BAR	1	16 (1)	11 (1)	31	0	22	66/1
14	Giancarlo Fisichella	Sauber	6	4 (1)	2 (1)	137	1	108	150/1
7	Mark Webber	Jaguar	1	19 (1)	n/a	45	0	26	300/1
5	Felipe Massa	Sauber	1	4 (1)	n/a	29	0	9	1000/1
5	Olivier Panis	Toyota	7	9 (1)	7 (1)	154	1	71	300/1
4	Antonio Pizzonia	Williams	0	n/a	n/a	13	0	4	66/1
3	Nick Heidfeld	Jordan	3	14 (2)	10 (1)	80	0	28	1000/1
1	Zsolt Baumgartner	Minardi	0	n/a	n/a	15	0	1	3000/1
0	Christian Klien	Jaguar	0	n/a	n/a	13	0	0	1500/1
0	Gianmaria Bruni	Minardi	0	n/a	n/a	13	0	0	3000/1
0	Giorgio Pantano	Jordan	0	n/a	n/a	13	0	0	1500/1
0	Ricardo Zonta	Toyota	2	13 (1)	12 (1)	45	0	3	1000/1

\*Number of times achieved shown in brackets. †Odds correct at time of going to press  
Odds supplied by Paddy Power. Visit [www.paddypower.com](http://www.paddypower.com)

## PREDICTIONS

**JONATHAN NOBLE**  
Grand prix editor  
**POLE Michael Schumacher**  
Car superiority on his favourite track will pay dividends  
**WINNER Michael Schumacher**  
Just because he can

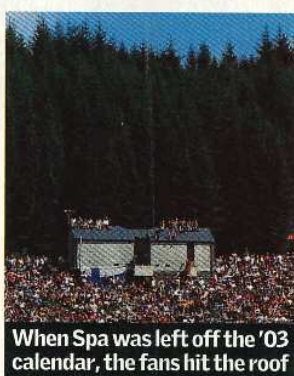
**ANDREW VAN DE BURGT**  
News editor  
**POLE Rubens Barrichello**  
Logic dictates that it will be Michael, but Barrichello could spring a surprise  
**WINNER Michael Schumacher**  
No surprise in the race, but look for Fisichella to shine

## PAST WINNERS

2002 Michael Schumacher Ferrari  
2001 Michael Schumacher Ferrari  
2000 Mika Hakkinen McLaren  
1999 David Coulthard McLaren  
1998 Damon Hill Jordan  
1997 Michael Schumacher Ferrari



Schuey dominated last time out in Hungary. More of the same at Spa?



When Spa was left off the '03 calendar, the fans hit the roof



Will David Richards' BARs smoke 'em off, or just smoke?



Spa is the sort of circuit that suits the attacking style of Montoya

PIKES PEAK  
**IRL**  
ANALYSTS

Pikes Peak  
Colorado  
USA

22.8.04

Round 12/16

# Dario at his Peak

**[RACE REPORT]** Dario Franchitti maintained his mastery of short ovals by winning at Pikes Peak, despite running over a member of his pitcrew. By JEFF OLSON

## Kanaan plays it cool

Keeping his eye on the prize

TONY KANAAN would be the first one to admit it. He's being careful—very careful.

With one eye on the track and another on the IRL IndyCar standings, Kanaan took few chances at the end of the Honda Indy 225 at Pikes Peak. He'd seen his closest challenger, Buddy Rice, crash on the first lap. Kanaan knew he needed only to finish relatively well to expand his lead, and he did precisely that.

Kanaan backed off late in the race, slipping from fourth to fifth to avoid a risky situation. The result was a 68-point cushion with four races remaining in the 2004 season. That's 18 points better than the lead

**"I thought, 'Let's not be too aggressive'"**  
**Tony Kanaan**

Kanaan held before the race began. He credited his fifth-place result—a remarkable 11th consecutive top-five finish this season—with his visual observation of team-mate Dan Wheldon conquering a bump in Turn 1.

"He hit that bump and woke me up a bit," Kanaan said. "It got to 10 laps left and I thought, 'You know what? Let's think about this championship. Let's not be too aggressive.'"

Kanaan also said he lost traction control late in the race which, coupled with a loose racecar, could have led to a spin. So he backed off, let Darren Manning get past him for fourth, and padded his points tally.

"Knock on wood," Kanaan said. "The team is very strong. We're working together so well and putting more cars toward the front, and that's what we need to do."

"If we were to finish fifth every race, we could win the title," Kanaan said. "We just need to capitalise on all of our chances and stay focused."

**A**mazing what can change when you flip through 14 pages of a calendar. Seasons pass, wounds heal, battles are won and lost. Dario Franchitti knows only too well the capabilities of time, but his knowledge became even more acute after Sunday's Honda Indy 225 at Pikes Peak International Raceway.

A year and two months ago, after

finishing fourth in an IRL race at the one-mile oval in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, Franchitti accepted his doctor's advice and decided to undergo spinal surgery. Vertebrae that fractured during a motorcycle accident hadn't healed properly; if he didn't have that surgery—and surrender the rest of the season—he would endanger his career and quite possibly his health.

Franchitti accepted the surgeon's call, sat out the remainder of the 2003 season, and devoted himself fully to recovery. That devotion paid off on Sunday when he won convincingly in his Andretti Green Racing Dallara-Honda on the track where he finished his 2003 season.

"It was a difficult year," Franchitti said. "There was a lot that happened. This team never gave up on me. This was payback for them."

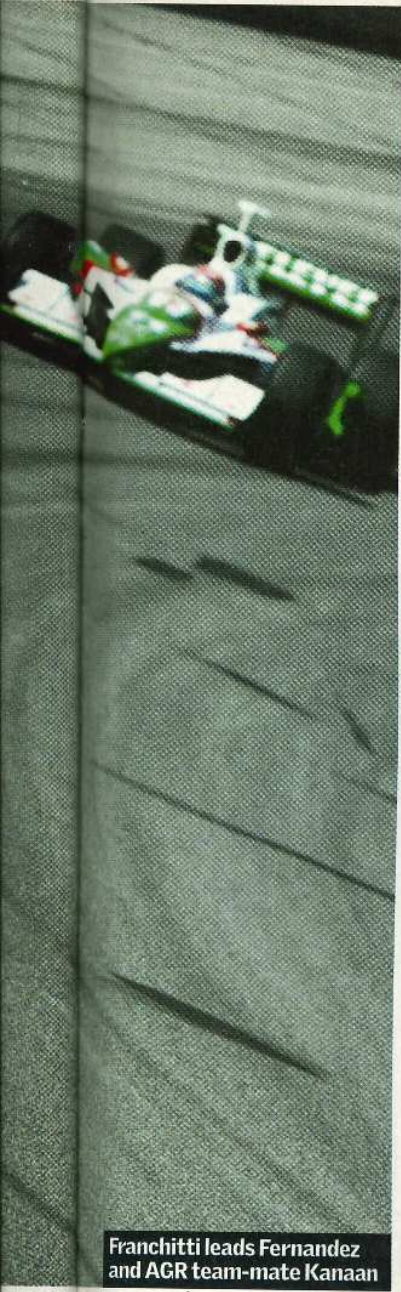
It was payback for a decision that carried two misconceptions. First, Franchitti didn't want to compete in the IRL IndyCar Series, which he had joined only months before. Second, that perhaps Franchitti didn't want to race at all.

The answers to both questions came last month, when Franchitti prevailed at the Milwaukee Mile. As a result, there are now few remaining questions about Franchitti. Except, conceivably, the one that bubbled to the surface after Pikes Peak: how many more can the Scot win?

"The only people who matter are the people who really know what's going on," Franchitti said. "My boss and the guys at Honda—they knew what



Help! Dario's prize was to be buried in a mountain of ticker-tape



Franchitti leads Fernandez and AGR team-mate Kanaan



Sam Hornish Jr bruised his knee when he crashed while lying in third place. He's now slipped to sixth position in the standing



... but at least the medics cleared him to drive in the next race

# Dario Franchitti

ANDRETTI GREEN RACING DRIVER

AS I was circling the track on the cool-down lap, my guys told me over the radio to stop at the start-finish line. I said, 'OK, as long as you don't want me to do any donuts.' I was *not* going to do any donuts.

After the win at Milwaukee last month, I decided that showing off is not my bag. I corresponded with Alex Zanardi – the king of donuts – after that race, and we both concluded that donuts are not my forte. We just left it at that.

Mike Miller, my vent guy, received an apology and some medical treatment after his right knee inadvertently was twisted when I was sent early from a pit-stop. He's got a few bum ligaments and he's a little sore, but the good news is he'll be OK. He's a big part of this team's success.

I'm not sure why, but the short tracks seem to suit me. Milwaukee was a flat mile oval; Pikes Peak is a slightly banked mile oval. The way we set up the car really fits these tracks and my style. It doesn't put as much stress on the tyres as some of these other guys had. It all played into my hand. It definitely has worked so far.

It's also worked for Andretti Green Racing. Since the team joined the IRL IndyCar Series, it has won four of the five races on one-mile tracks. That has a lot to do with where our engineers have come from. With the experience the drivers have, we know how to set up the cars. Right now we're getting it right.



Wheldon hugs Dario (right)

was going on. Why would I do this if I didn't want to? I enjoy my racing a lot and next year's schedule [with road races for the first time] is going to be even better for me. I have a great team and some great team-mates. Things are pretty good for me right now."

That's not in question anymore. In fact, things were so good for Franchitti at Pikes Peak that he needed just one pit-stop to get things right before he bolted into the lead. From then on, it became readily apparent that Franchitti had the fastest car on the track. By the time the distance had been met, he was 2.2429sec ahead of Adrian Fernandez and into the top five in the IRL standings.

"The difference between getting the set-up right and getting it wrong is so small at these tracks," Franchitti said. "You can never take anything for granted."

Following Fernandez's G Force-Honda to the finish line was Dan Wheldon, completing a one-two-three sweep for Honda and paving the way for a four-in-the-top-nine effort from Andretti Green Racing, which also had Tony Kanaan in fifth position and Bryan Herta in ninth.

When asked if he had suffered any problems, Wheldon turned comedian.

"I had problems in Turns 1 and 2, 3 and 4 and down the straights," he said. "At varying points in the race I had problems with either end. If you ask my engineer or the guy who called my race, they'll tell you. I bet none of you were intercepting my radio

**"I had problems in Turns 1 and 2, 3 and 4 and down the straights. I think I aged about 25 years"**  
**Dan Wheldon**

conversations. This is a difficult place – I think I aged about 25 years."

Darren Manning, who came from a lap down to finish fourth, matched his best finish of the season and took Toyota's best of the race, looking solid in the face of Honda's dominance. "I'm very proud of this fourth-place finish because we worked so hard to get it," said the Chip Ganassi Racing ace. "We took a gamble on fuel strategy and it paid off for us. We got a yellow at just the right time and I was able to ride the momentum to the end."

Kanaan, the IRL points leader, benefited from a first-lap crash involving main rival Buddy Rice and expanded his lead from 50 to 68 points with just four races remaining in the 2004 season. "I needed a break like that, but I also needed a better finish, maybe something like third," said Kanaan, who has finished among the top five in 11 consecutive races. "If we keep capitalising the way we are now, if he [Rice] takes 10 to 15 points every race [off Kanaan's lead], he still doesn't make it. I think after Nazareth [the next race] we can really start to see what'll happen."

Rice spun as a pack of cars were

LENTILAR

www.franchitti.com

Consistent Penske ace Helio Castroneves (3) mixes it with Scott Sharp (8) and Alex Barron



LEWIS/AT

barrelling out of the second turn on the first lap. It didn't appear as if the Rahal Letterman Racing G Force-Honda hit another car hard enough to disturb it. Instead, Rice spun alone into the grass inside the backstretch and struck the safety barrier.

"I don't know what happened," Rice said. "It was probably just everybody going for it and the way the air goes. I just lost it coming out of Turn 2. That's the way it goes."

Franchitti's AGR Dallara-Honda led early on in the race before being overtaken by Sam Hornish Jr (Team Penske Dallara-Toyota) on the 60th lap. Franchitti fell further behind on a bad pit-stop when his car shot forward with fuel and vent hoses still attached

**"I moved about half a foot, but it was enough to catch him with the rear tyre"**  
**Dario Franchitti**

and hit one of his crew. Vent/jack man Mike Miller was taken to the infield care centre, then to Penrose Hospital in nearby Colorado Springs for treatment of injuries to ligaments in his right knee. "I was sent and then stopped," said Franchitti. "I took off and moved about half a foot, but it was enough to catch him with the rear tyre."

Hornish was also treated later in the race after his car spun away and hit the wall in Turn 4 on the 157th lap. At that time Hornish was in third, trailing Franchitti and Tomas Scheckter. Hornish was released and cleared to drive after complaining of a bruised right knee. "I was just trying to get back up on some guys and it got away from me," Hornish

Rice loses it exiting Turn 2. Lazier passes by en route to eighth



LEWIS/AT

said. "I wasn't pushing it that hard. I don't know. It was a weird deal."

Scheckter also fell out of contention with a broken halfshaft, continuing a year of frustration for Panther Racing. It was the seventh time this season that the Dallara-Chevy was parked due to a mechanical problem. Just last week, at Kentucky Speedway, the clutch went out, leading to a fuel spill in the pits and ending Scheckter's race after he had led for nine laps. "To have it end like that is like falling off a cliff," Scheckter said. "Talk about heartbreak. We were cooking all day. It is a huge disappointment."

Fernandez continued his hot streak with the runner-up finish a week after his first IRL win at Kentucky. This time the Fernandez Racing G Force-Honda stayed within a second of Franchitti for the first 25 laps of racing following the final caution period of the race. During the closing 23 laps, though, Franchitti opened up a lead as large as 4.9sec.

"It was a fantastic day, especially after last week," said the Mexican. "It was one of the most challenging races of the year, at least for me. The track was changing constantly."

Wheldon moved closer to Kanaan in the points, but stays third, 82 points behind. Castroneves, who finished sixth in his Penske Dallara-Toyota, is

fourth, while Franchitti moved past Hornish into fifth position.

"You guys get excited about this stuff," Wheldon teased reporters about the fluctuation in the standings. "The title really doesn't bother me. Obviously I want to win it as much as anybody. Maybe I'm getting older, but I just feel that if it's meant to be, it's meant to be."

Behind Castroneves, Vitor Meira went some way to making up for Rice's crash for the Rahal Letterman team by taking seventh, while Jaques Lazier recorded his best finish so far with Patrick Racing (eighth) and was the highest Chevy. Rounding out the top 10 were Herta and Alex Barron.

In the end, though, Franchitti was proving his mastery of short tracks and giving Andretti Green its fourth win in five races. He was also inducing some bold predictions from team-mates.

"We're going to see Dario back next year the way we saw him a few years ago," Kanaan said. "He's in a growing process and a learning process with this car and this series. He's the kind of guy that takes his time. He doesn't mind waiting an extra race to get to the point he wants. Right now he's got it."

Nobody is questioning that these days - or much of anything else about Dario Franchitti. ☐

**RESULTS** August 22, IRL IndyCar Series, Pikes Peak (USA), round 12 of 16

225 LAPS, 225 MILES					CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE				
Pos	Driver (nationality)	Team	Chassis/engine	Result	Qual*	Grid	Pos	Driver	Points
1	Dario Franchitti (GB)	Andretti Green Racing	Dallara-Honda	1h34m56.9156s	20.8199s	4	1	Kanaan	463
2	Adrian Fernandez (MEX)	Fernandez Racing	G Force-Honda	1h34m59.1585s	20.9674s	7	2	Rice	395
3	Dan Wheldon (GB)	Andretti Green Racing	Dallara-Honda	1h34m59.5743s	20.7390s	2	3	Wheldon	381
4	Darren Manning (GB)	Chip Ganassi Racing	G Force-Toyota	1h34m59.8433s	20.9698s	8	4	Castroneves	326
5	Tony Kanaan (BR)	Andretti Green Racing	Dallara-Honda	1h35m04.4308s	20.6527s	1	5	Franchitti	319
6	Helio Castroneves (BR)	Team Penske	Dallara-Toyota	1h35m07.6697s	20.8823s	5	6	Hornish	295
7	Vitor Meira (BR)	Rahal Letterman Racing	G Force-Honda	1h35m08.4156s	20.7913s	3	7	Fernandez	286
8	Jaques Lazier (USA)	Patrick Racing	Dallara-Chevy	1h35m14.1080s	21.3122s	15	8	Meira	282
9	Bryan Herta (USA)	Andretti Green Racing	Dallara-Honda	224 laps	20.8928s	6	9	Herta	271
10	Alex Barron (USA)	Cheever Racing	Dallara-Chevy	224 laps	21.3890s	17	10	Manning	268
11	Ed Carpenter (USA)	Cheever Racing	Dallara-Chevy	224 laps	21.5272s	21	11	Dixon	255
12	Townsend Bell (USA)	Panther Racing	Dallara-Chevy	223 laps	21.3792s	16	12	Barron	246
13	Kosuke Matsuura (J)	Super Aguri Fernandez	G Force-Honda	221 laps	21.2698s	14	13	Matsuura	227
14	Mark Taylor (GB)	Access Motorsports	G Force-Toyota	221 laps	21.4559s	19	14	Sharp	205
15	Scott Sharp (USA)	Kelley Racing	Dallara-Toyota	221 laps	21.4712s	20	15	Takagi	199
16	Felipe Giaffone (BR)	Dreyer & Reinbold	Dallara-Chevy	219 laps	21.2133s	12			
17	Tomas Scheckter (ZA)	Panther Racing	Dallara-Chevy	161 laps - halfshaft	21.2485s	13			
18	Sam Hornish Jr (USA)	Team Penske	Dallara-Toyota	157 laps - accident	20.9711s	9			
19	Tora Takagi (J)	Mo Num Racing	Dallara-Toyota	101 laps - handling	21.4222s	18			
20	Scott Dixon (NZ)	Chip Ganassi Racing	G Force-Toyota	93 laps - handling	20.9980s	10			
21	AJ Foyt IV (USA)	AJ Foyt Racing	Dallara-Toyota	53 laps - handling	21.7276s	22			
22	Buddy Rice (USA)	Rahal Letterman Racing	G Force-Honda	0 laps - accident	20.9990s	11			

\*Due to rain washing out qualifying, grid positions were set according to combined practice times.

**NEXT ROUND** Nazareth (USA), August 29

**RACE REPORT** Rob Huff found himself in the right SEAT as chaos reigned in race three to come through and score his maiden BTCC win. By NICK PHILLIPS

# The wonder Huff



Eventual winner Huff edges into the frame as Neal and Muller get set to tackle Plato before the final restart



Knockhill winner Reid finished 12th behind Bentwood in race one

**J**ason Plato, Rob Huff and SEAT played a tactical game again to take the bulk of the glory at Brands Hatch as the tension was raised another notch in typical late-season British Touring Car Championship style.

On track, it all built up nicely from a relatively calm race one win for Matt Neal – who matched Plato as the weekend's top scorer – to probably the maddest single lap in the series' history to end race three with a win for Huff to add to Plato's race two victory.

By the end of the weekend the spats were in full flow. There was

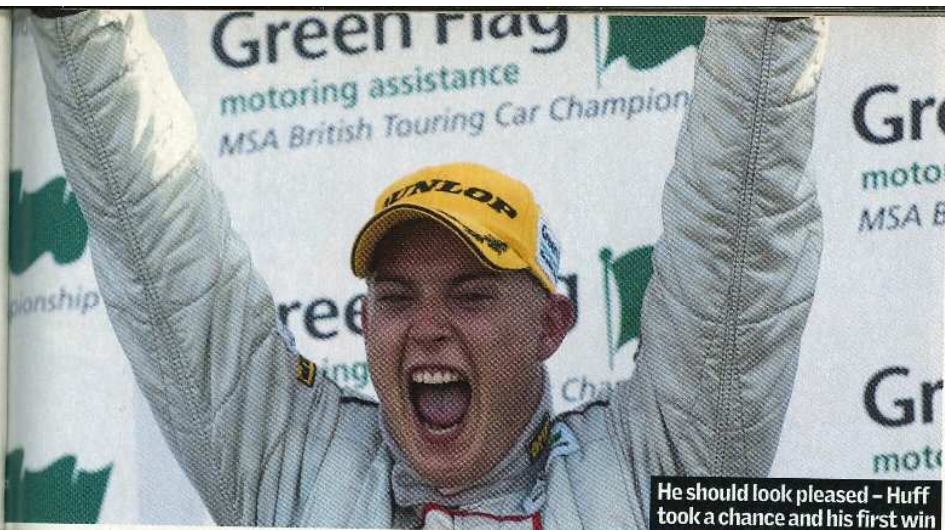
Yvan Muller versus Plato; Neal v Plato and even a new James Thompson v Muller fall-out, which could yet be the most significant for the title.

Back to the nitty-gritty, and there was plenty of it. The guys who joined the podium were Muller and Thompson (second and third in race one), Colin Turkington, who was second in race two, and Michael Bentwood, who eagerly grabbed an opportunist's third in race three. Huff and Plato were double podium visitors, with added second and third places.

Neal was probably the fastest guy at

Brands and he opened up with a position that he converted relatively smoothly into a race one win. Muller qualified and finished second, but admitted that he simply didn't have the pace to stay with the Neal Honda.

Thompson made up a place on qualifying slot to demote the sparky James Kaye from third to fourth. Behind them it all got a bit fierce. Luke Hines did well to hang onto fifth place, despite getting a thorough working over from Huff in the final half of the race. There was a queue of others swirling round behind the two as well. Huff eventually pu



**He should look pleased - Huff took a chance and his first win**

wheel on the grass out of Clark and Tom Chilton took up the Hines-harasser role to finish sixth.

Huff was happy with seventh and a second-row slot for race two, and Stefan Hodgetts would have been delighted to join him there. The youngster had done a great job to qualify the GA Alfa in eighth and had the pace to stay there - until a front trackrod breakage pitched him into the wall at Clearways. The failure was probably unrelated to a scary run-in he'd just had with Shaun Watson-Smith. The Proton driver had made a move out of Clark, which included a tap. As the South African powered alongside, it became clear that Hodgetts a) wasn't having it and b) is entirely fearless. Alfa squeezed Proton towards pitwall, both cars squirmed and slid, and Watson-Smith backed out of it.

"That was the most dangerous moment of my career," said Watson-Smith. "It wasn't him who was going to get turned into the wall," countered Hodgetts, whose damage was from the rear door backwards. "I didn't want to let him past because he'd hit me," concluded the youngster, who was reprimanded for the move.

Watson-Smith kept the place to the end, while Plato was a relieved ninth, having been a slightly troubled 12th early on.

Tenth place and that coveted pole position for race two initially appeared to be Bentwood's, but his last-lap tip-and-run move to take the place from Turkington's MG earned him a one-second penalty and Turkington got his place back.

Downhearted back in 12th place was Anthony Reid. "Talk about hero to zero," said the star of Knockhill. "I'm mystified. We tried our evolution set-up, which we've been developing over the past few meetings, and that didn't work. So we went back to the set-up we used in April, and that didn't work, either. The car seems to struggle to carry the ballast here."

Race two was all Plato's, although Turkington beat him away at the start. Plato sat in second place for just over a lap before catching Turkington napping with a fine move into Clearways. Plato controlled the race from there on in, although his stop-start tactics on the restart from a safety car period resulted in an informal warning.

Watson-Smith held third initially, but was distraught to spin off at Paddock on lap five - caught out by excess oversteer dialled into the car

in an attempt to delay the onset of understeer as the tyres wore down.

Huff then moved past Chilton to take up third place before the safety car was deployed to allow the Proton to be moved. On the restart, Chilton was the big loser as he and Thompson clashed at Druids. That bent rear bodywork onto rear tyre and meant a race-ruining pit-stop for Chilton.

Over the balance of the race, and through one more safety car period, Plato stayed in control as Huff made persistent but unsuccessful attempts to pass Turkington.

Thompson was a solid fourth and took a brief turn at the top of the points as a very angry Muller came

**"Talk about hero to zero - I'm mystified. The car struggles to carry ballast here"**  
**Anthony Reid**

to terms with an eighth-place finish. The Frenchman had clashed with team-mate Hines going into Paddock on lap one and dropped to ninth. He worked back up to seventh, but on the final restart was jumped by Bentwood and demoted. He even briefly dropped to ninth behind Dan Eaves, but the Honda driver couldn't make his move at Druids stick.

Bentwood got the angry tap treatment from Muller on the slowing down lap, but it went no further.

Between Thompson and Bentwood were Neal - quietly impressive on maximum ballast - and Kaye, having another excellent run. Eaves finished ninth and set the second fastest race lap as he tried to



**Muller pretends not to notice that Thommo ain't too happy**

make up for a back-of-the-grid start following a race-one fire.

Turkington and Thompson were fastest away in the last race, and for a while it looked as though Thommo would get the better of the MG driver as the pair ran much of lap one side by side. He even crossed the line first once (earning a valuable point), but Turkington was on the inside and went ahead into Paddock. Plato didn't waste much time muscling past Thompson, either, and soon JT was down in third place, with Bentwood and Muller behind.

Muller moved up to fourth on lap four, just before the safety car was deployed to retrieve Jason Hughes' MG, which had crashed on the run down from Druids after contact with Hines.

Shortly after the restart, Plato dived inside Turkington at Clearways and took the lead going into Paddock. The SEAT certainly appeared better able to carry its success ballast than the MG, and Plato soon had a comfortable cushion.

There wasn't much comfort for those behind, though. Thompson was under pressure from Muller, and on lap 15 the Frenchman pushed his way past. Neal followed through the open gap and Thompson was down to fifth.

Before long, Huff, who was moving up after a torrid end to lap one that put him down to seventh, demoted Thommo to sixth.

Up ahead, Muller was harassing Turkington, but when the pair clashed going into Paddock, Neal pounced, passed them and set off after Plato.

The gap started to come down swiftly, but before the race could reach a natural denouement, the safety car came out again to retrieve Kaye's Civic, which had gone off at Druids with broken suspension - legacy of an earlier clash with Chilton.

By then Muller and Huff had moved up to third and fourth at the expense of the struggling Turkington, who got hung out to dry and dropped to eighth.

With time only for one racing lap before the end, it wasn't hard to predict an exciting conclusion. What we got was near-mayhem.

Plato failed to shake Neal at the restart, but went into Paddock clear and on a defensive inside line. Neal tried to keep up his momentum, but ran into the back of Plato mid-corner. That threw both sideways and Muller dived for the inside on the run up to Druids. Following so far?

At Druids, there was the →

# Luke Hines

TRIPLE EIGHT ENGINEERING DRIVER

I HAVE made good progress over the season and some of that showed at Brands Hatch, but it's never easy.

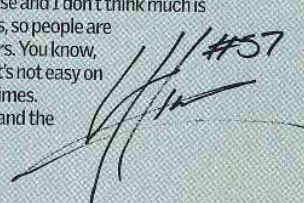
I qualified well [in fifth] and I had a good first race to come fifth. Then in the second race I had a contact with my team-mate Yvan [Muller]. He got pushed onto the grass and had the choice of a head-on in the wall or hitting me up the back, and it was a lot softer to hit me.

That wrecked the second race, and when you're back in 10th, it's a lot harder to get through the grid in race three. It's very tight at Brands Hatch - not easy. But I'm happy with it all. We're getting closer to Yvan and James [Thompson] in qualifying, within hundredths now. We're working on it and there's a hugely reduced difference in the times compared to the beginning of the year.

I knew that in my first year I'd have to judge everything; work out what other drivers do - which is a lot of hitting. That final lap of race three was definitely lock, stock and two smoking barrels.

The contact is starting to get worse and I don't think much is happening in terms of endorsements, so people are taking the piss. But that's touring cars. You know, watching on TV, I bet it's mega, but it's not easy on the driver, and it's frustrating sometimes.

But I'm happy with my progress, and the next two tracks [Snetterton and Donington Park] should suit the car better, so we'll be attacking - just like everyone else.



**FYI - Hines' old man, Martin, manages DTM ace Gary Paffett**

## Synchronised effort

Independents buy their own success

THERE have been eight race wins for Independent teams this year, but does the BTCC now present such a level playing field that you can succeed with an amateur outfit?

That might not be quite as stupid a suggestion as you think, because there is one such beast in the BTCC, and its car qualified third and took fourth and sixth-place finishes at Brands Hatch.

The team is Synchro Motorsport, and it is run by employees of Honda's Swindon factory in their spare time, and partly at their own expense.

"Our budget pretty much equates to what Vauxhall spends on catering," estimates driver James Kaye, the only non-Swindon interloper. "What you've got here is all amateur. They all pay for their own food and hotels. We're running on enthusiasm, and that's why we do so well."

The team includes guys who do a wide variety of jobs at Swindon -



**Kaye: Independent challenger**

one builds doors on the assembly line, one manages the welding plant and another is a carpenter. Overall, though, the effect is far from amateur.

Kaye himself has of course served time as a factory BTCC driver for Honda, but he's got his own thriving business to run, so the current BTCC format with just 10 race weekends and limited testing suits him. And when things are going right, it's very clear that the pace is still on tap.

Increasingly this year things have started to go right, and the Synchro Civic has shown real potential.

The car was redesigned over the winter by team lynchpin Andy Scott (a product engineer at Swindon), and as Synchro has knitted together, so its speed has become ever more apparent. An elusive but damaging damper set-up problem was fixed before Brands, and that seemed to be the final piece in the jigsaw.

Kaye lost out in the last race at Brands when an early whack spun him down the field and weakened a front suspension part, which broke and pitched him off later in the race. Still, he and the team will go to Snetterton on a high and with a light car, and we could yet see a team of guys who are paying to be there beating all the wage earners.

The finale of the 2004 British Touring Car Championship will take place at Donington Park on September 25/26. The event will mark the end of this year's explosive title battle and will be backed by a full support programme, including the unique BTCC Masters race in which a pack of the series' favourite old boys will line up to knock seven bells out of each other in a race for identical SEAT Cupras.

The Computeach Racing Honda Civic Type-Rs, driven by Matt Neal and Dan Eaves, have been among the most successful cars in the 2004

Championship. Now the Team is seeking to ramp up the entertainment and bring the Donington meeting to the masses. A demonstration from an RAF fighter plane; rally car passenger rides and a free concert featuring The Cheeky Girls will all be part of the meeting. Best of all we are making all of this available to many more people by running a series of top ticket offers.

Look out for the announcements in the press over the next few weeks as well as 2-for-1 ticket offers running on websites such as Autoexpress.co.uk and bigpockets.co.uk which will get you into Donington for only £15.



## Matt Neal: Race Report

### Computeach Racing



Rounds 22, 23, & 24—Brands Hatch

"We was robbed. The car was really good all weekend, but it all got chaotic at the end of race three

We had just managed to hit that sweet spot with the car in qualifying and I put in a good lap to take pole for the first race. That meant race one was relatively straightforward and I was really pleased to win comfortably.

I needed the win, and so did the team. It was a real boost for everybody and I hope it's some kind of thank you for the Computeach Team boys, who have really worked hard to sort my car out after the Knockhill qualifying crash – it was in a pretty sad state.

The first race result has also moved me off 13 wins in the BTCC, which I'm personally very pleased about. I once tried to beat the '13-thing' by requesting it as my BTCC number, but it didn't work and I had to change it mid-season!

Race two was also a good run, with the Computeach car carrying the weight well, on the way to fifth place.

I had the pace again in the last race, worked my way up to second place and immediately started to catch Jason Plato. Then the safety car came out and Plato was accelerating and lifting off on the re-start, but I managed to stay with him and get a run into Paddock. Then

he slowed the car right down just the apex and I had nowhere to go was just trying to be a bit too clever you just don't get that sort of speed differential at Paddock. The front of my car was wrecked. The rest of the race was mad, but I kept my head down and salvaged a reasonable finish. It was a disappointment because we could have had a double win. In the end I meant I was fourth in a race, and probably should have been mine.

Still I'm looking forward to the two meetings. The Computeach Honda's quick at Snetterton and Donington, so it's looking like a 2004 finale for us." □



Catch Matt Neal in action throughout September in the new Computeach TV advert on Sky Sports, Extreme, VH1, MTV, Men & Motors, Motors TV, and Performance

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Neal's pace was apparent with a lights-to-flag win first time out

Inevitable contact between Plato and Muller – both ran wide and it was Huff's turn to dive up the inside. On the exit, Huff got away clear as old pals Plato and Muller kept rubbing, and the Vauxhall was thrown sideways. That put Plato second again as Muller dropped to fifth behind Bentwood (fifth before the restart) and Neal.

Similar scenarios were being played out all down the field.

Bizarrely, Reid managed to keep the sixth place he'd soldiered his way up to, but no-one else completed lap 27 in the same place they'd been in on lap 26.

Those who moved up included Hines, Chilton, Collard and Breeze, but Turkington dropped from eighth to 11th, while Thompson swapped 10th – which he'd acquired when a day-long oil leak got worse, coated the tyres and sent him wide at Paddock – for 12th and last.

Huff, SEAT and Bentwood were elated, others were less pleased. Thompson felt thoroughly ill-used.

"Jason hit me, then Yvan pushed me, then the oil went on the front tyres and finally when I was just hanging on to a point, Collard fired me straight off at Surtees," he said. "I'm thoroughly pissed off."

Muller wasn't much happier after taking big hits from Plato and then Reid on that last lap.

"It's amazing, everybody is unhappy with the same guy – it's time to stop him," he said of Plato.

"He nearly put me in the gravel," responded Plato. "Boom. So if he's complaining about me rubbing – kettle, pot, black." Plato got a £500 fine and three points on his licence.

Neal and his team boss, and father Steve, were particularly miffed at what they saw as a brake test from Plato at Paddock on that last lap.

Plato disagreed: "I'm disappointed that now I've lost two guaranteed race wins because of people driving through me on restarts. Matt tried to drive through me. He says I slowed it up, but that's my prerogative. The corner's mine, I was off line because I had to defend. Had I gone in quick,

I'd have gone wide and he'd have gone by on the exit. So it's my prerogative to slow the car down – it's a well-used tactic. We all do it."

Behind the on- and off-track fireworks, the title battle has taken another twist. Reid's dreadful weekend means the Muller/Thompson combo is looking more secure at the top of the table (Muller is 37 points ahead of Plato with 104 left to win), but it looks like the gloves are now off between the pair, and that could still give Plato or Reid a half-chance.

Thompson's not happy with the

way Muller passed him in race three, muttering darkly: "He's shown his hand now – if that's how he wants to play it." Muller explained: "He was much slower than me – he had weight and I didn't. I touched him twice and passed him, and immediately I was half a second quicker. I didn't have a choice."

Wondering which driver in the BTCC is best equipped to implement the sort of divide and rule strategy which could undo Vauxhall? Hmm, that would have to be a toss-up between the third and fourth men in the points, Mr Plato and Mr Reid. ☒



Team-mate Eaves fared less well – a fire ended his first race

**RESULTS** August 22, British Touring Car Championship, Brands Hatch (GB), round 8 of 10

RACE 1 - 27 LAPS, 33.107 MILES						RACE 2 - 27 LAPS, 33.107 MILES				RACE 3 - 27 LAPS, 33.107 MILES				CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE			
Pos	Driver (nationality)	Team	Car	Result	Qual	Grid	Pos	Driver	Result	Grid	Pos	Driver	Result	Grid	Pos	Driver	Points
1	Matt Neal (GB)	Team Dynamics	Honda Civic Type-R	24m39.495s	49.332s	1	1	Plato	25m33.956s	2	1	Huff	26m10.528s	3	1	Muller	214
2	Yvan Muller (F)	Triple Eight Engineering	Vauxhall Astra Coupe	24m40.506s	49.479s	2	2	Turkington	25m34.763s	1	2	Plato	26m11.892s	1	2	Thompson	211
3	James Thompson (GB)	Triple Eight Engineering	Vauxhall Astra Coupe	24m50.375s	49.637s	4	3	Huff	25m35.078s	4	3	Bentwood	26m12.136s	7	3	Plato	177
4	James Kaye (GB)	Synchro Motorsport	Honda Civic Type-R	24m50.896s	49.622s	3	4	Thompson	25m36.969s	8	4	Neal	26m12.655s	5	4	Reid	175
5	Luke Hines (GB)	Triple Eight Engineering	Vauxhall Astra Coupe	24m51.948s	49.684s	5	5	Neal	25m37.363s	10	5	Muller	26m12.887s	8	5	Neal	161
6	Tom Chilton (GB)	Arena International	Honda Civic Type-R	24m52.157s	49.689s	6	6	Kaye	25m38.520s	7	6	Reid	26m13.058s	20	6	Turkington	136
7	Robert Huff (GB)	SEAT Sport UK	SEAT Toledo Cupra	24m53.558s	49.707s	7	7	Bentwood	25m38.820s	11	7	Hines	26m13.384s	10	7	Huff	122
8	Shaun Watson-Smith (ZA)	Team PSP	Proton Impian	24m55.118s	49.799s	11	8	Muller	25m40.269s	9	8	Chilton	26m13.549s	13	8	Eaves	117
9	Jason Plato (GB)	SEAT Sport UK	SEAT Toledo Cupra	24m55.325s	49.788s	10	9	Eaves	25m40.516s	20	9	Collard	26m13.849s	17	9	Hines	89
10	Colin Turkington (GB)	WSR	MG ZS	24m56.179s	49.860s	12	10	Hines	25m40.920s	6	10	Breeze	26m14.229s	12	10	Chilton	87
<p>11 Michael Bentwood (GB), Tech-Speed Motorsport Vauxhall Astra Coupe, 24m57.089s (Q13-49.894s); 12 Anthony Reid (GB), WSR MG ZS, 24m57.579s (Q15-49.961s); 13 Carl Breeze (GB), GA Motorsport Vauxhall Astra Coupe, 24m59.280s (Q19-no time); 14 Jason Hughes (GB), Kartworld Racing MG ZS, 25m03.783s (Q16-50.298s); 15 Rob Collard (GB), Collard Racing Vauxhall Astra Coupe, 25m05.039s (Q14-49.941s); 16 Richard Marsh (GB), Quest Team Varta Peugeot 307, 25m25.951s (Q18-52.909s); 17 Farique Hairuman (MAL), Team PSP Proton Impian, 26 laps (Q20-no time); R Stefan Hodgetts (GB), GA Motorsport Alfa Romeo 156, 22 laps – suspension/accident (Q8-49.738s); R John George (GB), Mardi Bras Motorsport Peugeot 406 Coupe, 10 laps – battery (Q17-51.173s); R Dan Eaves (GB), Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type-R, 3 laps – fire (Q9-49.739s).</p> <p>Winner's average speed 80.60mph. Fastest lap Neal, 49.840s (88.57mph).</p>																	
<p>11 Hughes, 25m41.986s (Q14); 12 Breeze, 26m23.961s (Q13); 13 Chilton, 26 laps (Q5); 14 Hairuman, 23 laps (Q17); R Marsh, 22 laps – spun off (Q16); R George, 18 laps – alternator (Q19); R Collard, 15 laps – accident (Q15); R Hodgetts, 6 laps – vibration (Q18); R Watson-Smith, 4 laps – spun off (Q3); R Reid, 0 laps – accident damage (Q12).</p> <p>Winner's average speed 77.74mph. Fastest lap Plato, 49.913s (88.44mph).</p>																	
<p>11 Turkington, 26m14.730s (Q2); 12 Thompson, 26m15.675s (Q4); R Kaye, 22 laps – suspension/accident (Q6); R Watson-Smith, 18 laps – accident damage (Q19); R Marsh, 18 laps – off (Q15); R Eaves, 16 laps – accident damage (Q9); R Hodgetts, 14 laps – accident damage (Q18); R Hairuman, 14 laps – driveshaft (Q14); R George, 13 laps – alternator belt (Q16); R Hughes, 3 laps – accident (Q11).</p> <p>Winner's average speed 75.93mph. Fastest lap Watson-Smith &amp; Huff, 50.196s (87.94mph).</p>																	
<p>11 Kaye, 38; 12 Bentwood, 34 Independents 1 Reid, 249 2 Turkington, 231 3 Neal, 223 4 Eaves, 190</p> <p>POINTS 15-12-10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 for first 10 finishers, plus 1 for pole position, 1 for fastest lap, 1 for leading.</p>																	

NEXT ROUND Snetterton (GB), September 5



# Tag wrestling

**INTERVIEW** Just like Jean Alesi in Formula 1, Alex Tagliani struggled for years before finally claiming that elusive first Champ Car win at Road America earlier this month. By DAVID MALSHER



Alex Tagliani and his Rocketsports team have grown in stature together this year

**S**napshot: September 3, 2000, downtown Vancouver. So there we are, in the stand at Turn 9, and the Champ Car pack, cruising under yellows and weaving to keep up tyre temperatures, has droned past and is now out of earshot. Then we hear a lone engine note, rising, the driver well on it. No need to look at the big TV screen: it's Alexandre Tagliani's Forsythe car, which had qualified 19th. A shunt with team-mate Patrick Carpentier had delayed him at the start, and the resultant pit-stop to repair damage had put him from near-last to absolute last. But now here he is, trying to catch up to the tail of the pack before the greens fly again. Then there's a screech of tyres, the engine note all but disappears, and the predominant sound is a jeer from the crowd at Turn 6. He's spun it *again!*

As accidents go, this one is frankly ludicrous: it's hard not to laugh.

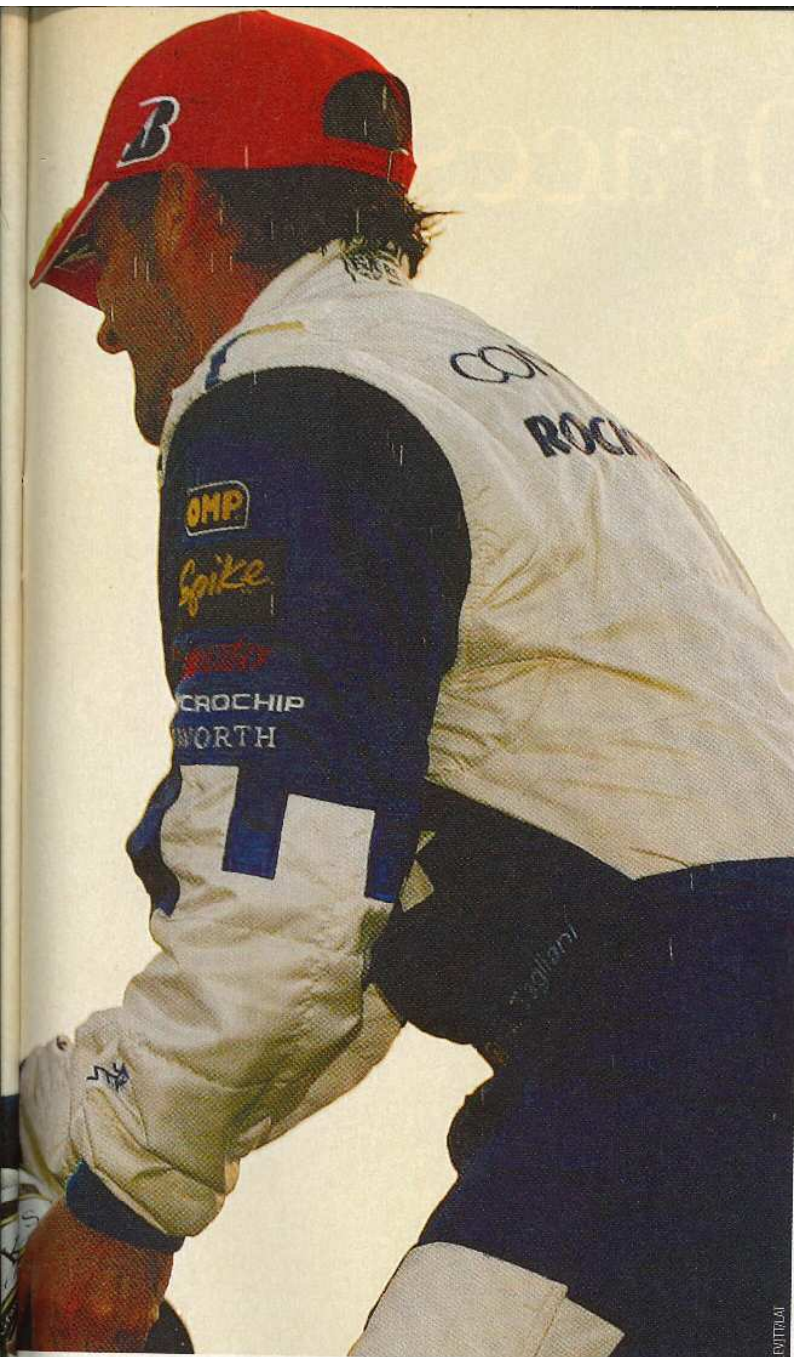
Snapshot: August 8, 2004, Elkhart Lake. It's the awesome Road America course – a place where he should have won in his rookie season (just a fortnight before that Vancouver farce) but was robbed by driveshaft failure. This time though, Alex Tagliani has risen from 15th on the grid, thanks to a three-stop pit strategy, great teamwork and perfect use of the push-to-pass button. He's now leading. He has kept out of trouble in this, his 85th Champ Car race, and with five laps

to go the only pressure comes from inside.

As canny drives go, this one is frankly perfect: it's hard not to root for him.

Of course Tagliani *did* go on to win Road America. But no-one could have expected the journey to Champ Car glory to be so troublesome. There's a line in the John Cleese comedy *Clockwise* when, for the umpteenth time, his ambition to reach his destination turns to ashes. He groans: "It's not the despair I can take the despair. It's the *hope*..." And that's a sentiment that Tagliani fans could relate to. Until the eighth round of the 2004 Champ Car series, he had led 15 of his 84 Champ Car races, started from pole for five of them, and had a handful of podium places to show for it. Tagliani took the Road to Damascus to reach Road America 2004. And perhaps that was wise, even if you were to look among the die-hard fans of his rivals, you'd have struggled to find many spectators or TV viewers who begrudged Tag his exultation.

However, there will have been times in the past when these same fans felt exasperated that their hero had been compromised by a wild moment from Champ Car racing's newest winner. Tagliani has a reputation for overcommitment, wildness – you name it. These accusations and more have been embossed large on the brickbats hurled his way as he stepped once more from a damaged



## Gentilozzi on Tag

PAUL Gentilozzi, as well as being a principal player in the running of Champ Cars, has also been a team-owner since 2003. To an outsider, Alex Tagliani wasn't the obvious choice to drive for a rookie team, but Gentilozzi has no doubts Tag was the right man for Rocketsports.

"I had watched Alex in Toyota Atlantics when Trans-Am was on the same bill at Trois-Rivieres, and I clocked his aggression and speed. I've always believed that you can take a fast driver with a lot of emotion and harness him without slowing him.

"When you look at Alex's past record, he wasn't irresponsible. Wanting to be one

position up and willing to take risks isn't a bad thing. If you don't start on pole but want to win, you have to pass, you have to take risks.

"Within the team, Alex has played an integral role too. We run Rocketsports like a family and the emotional closeness is strong. Alex works well within that; the chemistry is right.

"Sebastien Bourdais and Paul Tracy are currently dominating Champ Cars, and there are maybe four guys - Alex included - who we know can beat them if the circumstances are right. Those right circumstances are getting him in the top four in qualifying for every race. That's what we need to do now."



Team boss Paul Gentilozzi regards Tagliani as a part of the Rocketsports family



In only his third Champ Car race at Rio in 2000, Tag started on pole from Montoya

car. His response is firm.

"It's very rare that I have been accused of taking other guys out and certainly not deliberately. Maybe I'll crash, maybe I'll go into the run-off area, maybe I'll flat-spot tyres. But at least I'm making the move, I'm trying to make things happen. Sure, I increase the chances of damaging the car or losing time, but it's so tight in Champ Cars that you have to go for it. I have been driving like that for all my career and I'm going to still do that."

That's good news for Champ Car fans. When Tag is on it, he is quite something to behold. You watch him flashing on the opposite lock before you have time to worry for him, and it puts you in mind of another man who spent too many races waiting for his first win at the top level of his career: Jean Alesi. Like the French Sicilian, Alex is not playing to the gallery. His fan-base is a by-product, not a cause, of his 110 percent style. But why, when he is clearly endowed with such car control and bravery, is he too often scrabbling for minor points with lesser drivers?

"It comes down to reaching the right set-up," replies Tagliani. "For example, at Monterey this year we had bad problems in qualifying, but the car was so fantastic for the race that in the first 21 laps we went from 16th to third before anyone had pitted. I passed all those cars on the track, sometimes two or three cars a lap. But I can't



Tag has been prone to 'wild' moments

**"Maybe I'll crash, maybe I'll flat-spot the tyres, but at least I'm making the move"**  
**Alex Tagliani**

take all the credit for that, because my car was just so hooked up. The set-up was perfect.

"Being in a single-car team at Rocketsports in 2003 had its positives and negatives. It was great to feel that the whole team was focusing on just you, to make you quicker. On the other hand, it is difficult to have no other driver to compare with, no other set-up for him to try. It means you might only try one, maybe two modifications or adjustments instead of three or four. Many times last year we were heading into qualifying actually testing new stuff. So in that respect it helps having a two-car team this year."

Being part of a two-car team didn't help Tagliani's consistency at Forsythe. There he had a Reynard when Lolas were the chassis to have, and Ford engines when Honda and Toyota were dominant. Partnering Patrick Carpentier, one of the series' true enigmas, in 56 starts over the course of 2000-02, they outqualified each other 28 times precisely... More significantly, though, the weekends when they were both up at the front were rare. More significantly still, Carpentier scored three wins and even finished as high as third in the championship. Tagliani didn't, and it was him that took Forsythe's bullet when Tracy was signed for '03.

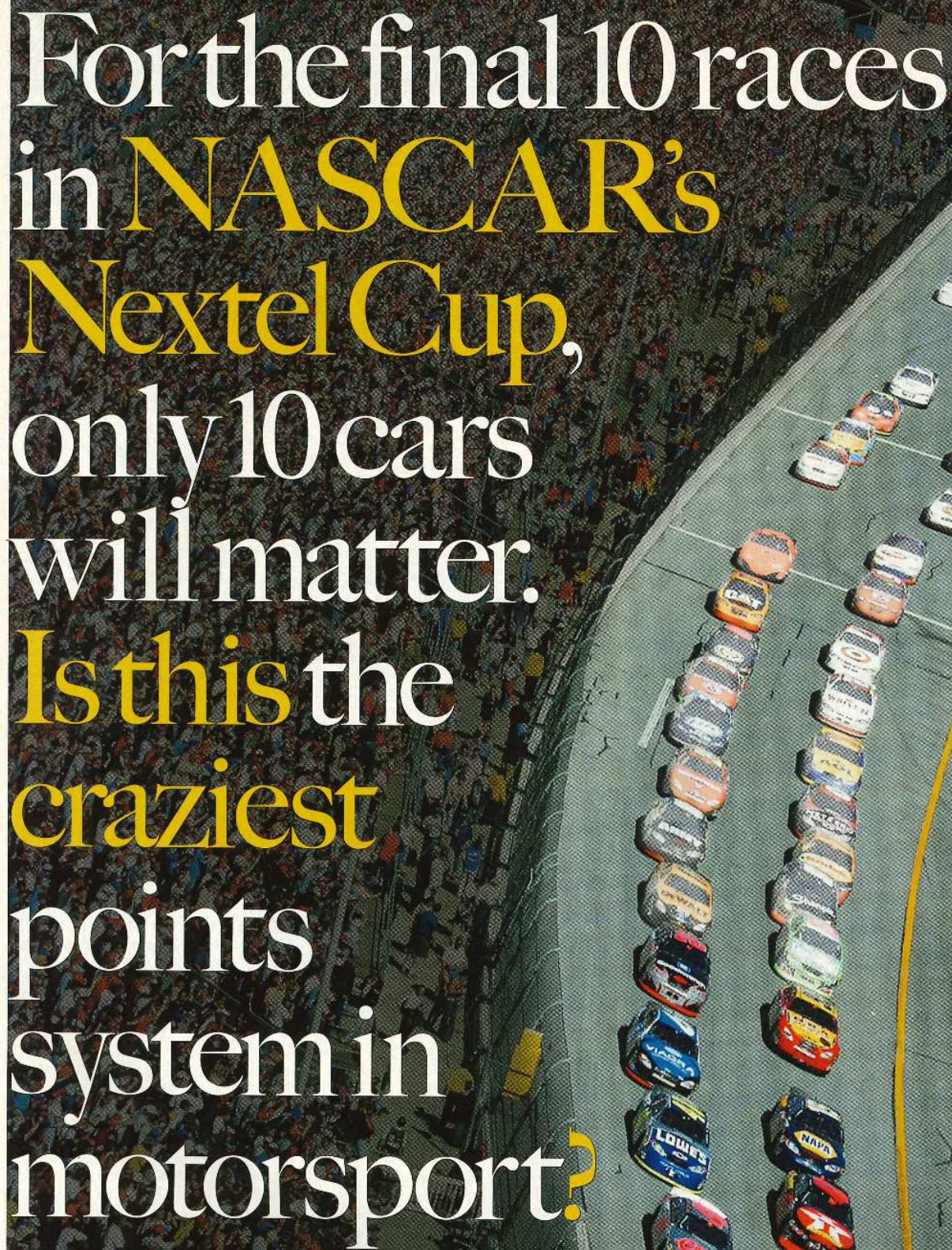
Tagliani sighs before admitting: "Yes, it was tough to separate myself from that team because I gave my heart, I was passionate about them. But then suddenly my goal shifted to helping a

rookie team become a strong one, and I think I have played my part in that. So what started as a bad situation has become one of the best moves of my career. In Paul Gentilozzi, I have a team owner who appreciates me for my technical ability to develop a car with no data, with no experienced engineer in the team. We had to put our arms round each other's shoulders and move along together. And we did it. Last year we had some good races, and this year we're fourth in the points, fighting with powerful teams like Newman-Haas and Forsythe. We're getting better all the time, and I think we want to stay together until this team is champion."

How much changes now that he and Rocketsports have got that first win is anybody's guess. The race at Denver, just a week after Road America, suggested any differences are not yet apparent. Tag qualified 11th, got messed up by someone else's accident and a full-course yellow, and finished 10th. Plus ca change...

Let's hope the Alesi analogy ceases to be applicable, for having won his 92nd grand prix, Jean competed in 109 more, without success. Let's look to Mika Hakkinen instead, who took 99 GPs to nail a victory, but started an avalanche of 20 wins and two championships.

Whichever way it swings for Alex Tagliani, it's going to make for entertaining viewing. And that's why, as at Road America earlier this month, it's hard not to root for him. ☹



For the final 10 races  
in **NASCAR's**  
**Nextel Cup**,  
only 10 cars  
will matter.  
Is this the  
craziest  
points  
system in  
motorsport?

**ANALYSIS** In its bid to win the TV ratings war, NASCAR may have sacrificed its credibility with the creation of a 10-man, 10-round play-off for the 2004 Nextel Cup. By BEN BLAKE

Some of the highlighted 10 will make the grade, some won't. But everyone will still be allowed to participate

**N**ASCAR has just spent a significant number of dollars of its immense marketing reserve to buy full-page advertisements in several of the nation's famous organs – *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune* – promoting its new championship formula. That expense, and direction of attention, indicates just how seriously the governing body takes its newly-devised season format, and what it believes is at stake.

From ground level, and from the garages, the 'Chase for the NASCAR Nextel Cup' (officially so designated) is a typical contrivance and more or less an irritation, as it has become a subject of dispute since it was announced last winter. From the top, looking down from NASCAR's vast plateau, the 'Chase' has become a central issue, vital to the further progress of the most successful racing sanction on earth.

It probably comes down to the imminent TV negotiations, with NBC, Fox and perhaps ABC/ESPN involved. There is a firm belief that NASCAR, with the Chase, is attempting to position itself, with a 'play-off', as a rival to baseball and the National Football League, the USA's two primary television sports properties. The NFL, America's number one, is due to conclude its contract talks with the networks, likely in the \$20 billion (£11bn) range. NASCAR, which has grown to consider itself the number two TV sport, hopes to siphon off some of that.

Clearly, the Chase is a blunt move in TV's direction, and why not? That's where the dollars come from. That's what makes a sport a *major* sport. Brian France, chairman and chief executive officer of NASCAR, understands that the world soon forgets what we say here. What matters is that on Sunday we can turn the TV on and, without cable or satellite assistance, see NASCAR. France's goal is for the series to surpass the NFL, to go all the way to No.1.

But the problem is that there seems to be conflict between corporate goals and truth in competition. NASCAR, for what now seems like 60 years, has crowned a champion based on a season's worth of work. Since 1948, when NASCAR ran its first series, the champion has always been determined, via various systems, from a driver's results over the course of a full campaign.

This year, however, NASCAR has instituted what amounts to a 'play-off' system, comparable to what happens in baseball, American football and basketball. In baseball, for example, the 30 teams play in six divisions, three divisions in each league. Following a season's play, the three divisional champions, plus the team with the best remaining record (the wild card), are entered into the finals. This marks the commencement of an elimination tournament, leading to the World Series, one against one.

That's where the comparison breaks down and where it begins to look twisted. In tournament play, all non-qualified teams are eliminated, and only those with winning records are allowed to continue. Under NASCAR's system, all teams will continue, whether they qualified or not.

Next must be to explain the format. Here's how it works: teams accumulate points as usual throughout the season, which comprises 36 races. Jeff Gordon currently leads the standings with team-mate Jimmie Johnson second. Under normal circumstances, those two would be at the eye of the storm. But not so this year, and you will begin to see why.

All the points accumulated from the first 26 races gives you a championship table after the September 11 race in Richmond. What will then happen is that the first-placed man, regardless of his prior acquisitions, will have

5050 points. The rest of the top 10 will be ranked downward in five-point increments, down to 5000. The intention is that the top 10, now point-boostered out of the reach of the rest, will be set loose in a horse race over the final 10 events, and beginning within 50 points of each other.

It sounds dramatic. It also sounds stupid to many of us, given that it offends the entire idea of a season-long championship – and all for TV, and for rating points versus the NFL. France, successor to his father (just this year) as NASCAR czar, is made to appear aggressive, and this is a result.

Richard Petty won seven championships, as did Dale Earnhardt, all under the season system. This year's championship, according to many, will thus be false and not comparable. But what matter is that, if it leads to the greater good of the sport?

This changes everything, start to finish, as the only thing that matters is the final 10 events – New Hampshire on September 19, through Dover, Talladega, Kansas City, Charlotte, Martinsville, Atlanta, Phoenix, Darlington to Homestead on September 21. NASCAR is playing up this shoot-out with vigour.

Most competitors have been against this foolishness from the start, but now seem willing to live with it, because it is inevitable. We'll no longer have a season champion, but instead a champion determined by a 10-race play-off, whether France likes that phrase or not.

The difference, of course, is that unlike regular league play-offs, the shut-outs will still be playing. It isn't like the top 10 will race alone over the final rounds. The remainder will still be on the track, but they just won't count.

That raises all kinds of possibilities, especially in the era of multi-car teams. Will there be blocking? Will there be allowing? You bet. And France has probably figured that in, given that controversy is news, news is attention and attention is glory, especially from a TV point of view.

With few exceptions, the competitors consider this concept a foolish charade, from a purely sporting point of view. Johnson, a frontrunner all year, has spoken freely against the device from the beginning, even before the season began. The primary objection, he and others say, is that the new format diminishes the value of a team's effort over a full season.

"It makes for great television for the fans that enjoy and love it," Johnson notes, with only a hint of scepticism. "But on the competition side, you're sitting there going, 'Wow, this is a totally different world that we're facing now; it's not like it's been in the past.' I haven't been a huge fan of it. My mind is 36 rounds, 400- or 500-mile races; and it's all about consistency, and the position should reflect that."

His team-mate Gordon, as points leader, has the most to lose. A five-time winner this season, he could yet find himself neck-and-neck with racers who haven't won at all, and whom he had outrun by 500 points after 26 events.

On the other hand, Ryan Newman seems to have the most to gain. The season's big winner in 2003 has struggled this year and has hovered around the critical number 10 position. However, despite the new system possibly working in his favour, Newman agrees with Johnson that a season championship should be just that: a reflection of a full season.

"I don't like the fact that it takes away from the leaders," Newman says. "I don't like the fact that it eliminates possible contenders. I don't think we would be out of it right now if we had the old system, and if we were then we wouldn't deserve the championship: that's my point. The title shouldn't be decided in the last 10 races."

Asked if he would consider himself the champion if he won, Newman says: "I would



Thanks to days like this, Ryan Newman is on the cusp of the Top 10. But he could still win the title

consider myself the champion in the grand scheme of things, but I wouldn't be the same champion I would have been if I had won the championship over 36 races. Has any other series ever done something like this? No. And that might lead you to believe it's a little irrational. A lot of people are acting as if they like the format... but a lot of people are two-faced."

That's part of it as well. Polled privately, it seems about 90 percent of the competitors disagree with the idea, but given its inevitability, most have adopted a 'let's give it one try' stance. "We'll just have to run through it and maybe make some adjustments for next year, as we go on," says '99 champion Dale Jarrett, also barking at the door of 10th place. "There's no way to know how it'll work until we go through it."

That's true, but some obvious perils loom. First, this championship will be in no way comparable to the previous 56 in the sanction's history, or in the history of any other sanction. What Tim Flock accomplished in 1952, or Ned Jarrett in '61, or Richard Petty in '69, or Dale Earnhardt in '94, were year-long accumulations – season championships. This year's champion

– the first under Nextel's banner – will be, simply the winner of a post-season tournament, a in basketball or any of the other formerly disdained 'stick-and-ball' sports.

Second, the very weirdness of the concept invites unfavourable comparisons. You can bet that many media providers, and many fans, will keep a running total of who would – or should – be the leader had the season progressed normally. That makes the odds 10 to 1 that we will have parallel champions, one officially determined by the Chase, and one unofficially declared as resulting from the traditional format.

NASCAR has spent many years and millions of dollars in seeking co-equal legitimacy with the league sports, and by heavens, it had come close. It remains to be seen, though, if the Chase concept pushes stock car racing back into the clown-show category.

I have colleagues who are betting that the Chase will kick NASCAR's TV ratings into the stratosphere from September through November. My wagers are small, because I'm a cheapskate, but rest assured, I'll let you know by Christmas who handed over the ducats. ☒

**"I don't like the way it takes away from the leaders. I don't like the fact it eliminates possible contenders"**  
**Ryan Newman**

LESTER/LAT

LESTER/LAT

LESTER/LAT



Mayfield fights for a Chase place with...



...super rookie Kahne, a star of 2004



Johnson's four wins and superb season-long effort could yet amount to nothing



Numero uno: Marco Werner makes his point after taking the title with a race win



# The glory boys

**RACE REPORT** The ALMS crown fell to the all-conquering Audi duo of JJ Lehto and Marco Werner following a disastrous day for Dyson Racing. By MIKE CAMPBELL

The Lola-MGs of Dyson Racing were again fast but fragile, allowing Champion Racing's Audi R8 duo of JJ Lehto and Marco Werner to clinch the American Le Mans Series title with a win at the high-speed Road America course. Having swept the front row, both Dyson cars then ran into exhaust manifold problems.

Werner became the first driver to win the prototype title in the ALMS two times, having paired with Frank Biela at Team Joest last year. For Lehto it has been a different story, with near misses since he joined the series in 1999 driving for BMW. Last year, he lost by seven points to Joest drivers Frank Biela and Marco Werner.

"It feels good to win the ALMS title," said a delighted Lehto. "I've come close a few times. And this is the first title I've won since 1988 in the British Formula 3 Championship."

The weekend began with Dyson putting on the pressure after a win at Mosport Park. Butch Leitzinger posted a record 1m51.893s to take pole, beating Tom Kristensen's 2002 record (1m52.166s) in the works R8.

"Our car loves high speeds," he said. "It flies through the corners."

Andy Wallace presented the Dyson team with a front row sweep, recording a time of 1m52.524s.

Lehto and Champion once again struggled with set-up, as they did at Mosport, and secured only third spot. The Finn then gifted Dyson a huge lead when a spin at the first corner after contact with the Lola of John Field left him at the back of the field.

"It was like I was looking at it in slow motion when all those cars were going by," said Lehto, who had to restart the car when the engine stalled in the spin. "After I stopped swearing, I decided I had to stay calm and go for it. The car felt very good and was fast."

The pole-sitting Dyson Lola of Leitzinger and James Weaver led the first 29 laps, but retired due to a broken exhaust header on the 31st lap. The Dyson of Chris Dyson and Wallace retired for very similar reasons after running in second behind its sister car for the first 13 laps.

This left the LMP1 battle to the Audi of Champion and the Lola-Judd of Intersport, driven by Field and Duncan Dayton. The American duo finished one lap down on the winners.

Once again, the Corvettes battled in GTS for the entire two-hour-and-45-

minutes of the event, and were within sight of one another at the flag. But they finished the same way as they started, with the C5-R of Olivier Beretta and Oliver Gavin in front of that of Ron Fellows and Johnny O'Connell. After a team orders finish at Mosport, this time each squad went wide open for the whole race, including the pit-stops, before the 'O boys' sustained their advantage from qualifying.

"Finally, things are going our way," said Gavin, referring to the bad luck that dogged his car for much of the season's first half. "Our car was three seconds faster in the pits almost every time, so the crew helped us win. Olivier and I work so well together, and this is a strong partnership."

Two-time ALMS GTS champion Beretta earned his third pole of the season and 13th of his career with a time of 2m00.868s, which improved on Gavin's record from last year by 1.1sec around the four-mile course. The one-two finish clinched the fourth straight manufacturers' title for Chevrolet in the GTS category.

The Saleen of Terry Borcheller and Johnny Mowlem finished third after a Pirelli failure pitched Mowlem into the gravel at Turn 14.

In LMP2, Ian James and James Gue were at the wheel of Miracle Motorsports' newly-acquired Courage C65-AER, which helped clinch the team the class championship.

Intersport Racing's Lola-Judd, driven by Clint Field and Robin Liddell, was excluded for working on the car away from its pit stall, handing the title to Miracle, whose Lola-Nissan, driven by Mike Borkowski and John Macaulis, finished second. ■

**RESULTS** 1 JJ Lehto/Marco Werner (Champion Audi R8), 2h46m24.215s (Q3-1m53.251s); 2 Jon Field/Duncan Dayton (Intersport Lola-MG B1/60), 79 laps (Q4-1m55.456s); 3 Olivier Beretta/Oliver Gavin (Pratt & Miller Chevrolet Corvette C5-R), 77 (Q7-2m00.868s); 4 Johnny O'Connell/Ron Fellows (Pratt & Miller Chevy), 77 (Q8-2m02.034s); 5 Ian James/James Gue (Miracle Courage-AER C65), 75 (Q5-1m58.847s); 6 Terry Borcheller/Johnny Mowlem (ACEMCO Saleen S7R), 73 (Q10-2m05.138s); 7 Jorg Bergmeister/Timo Bernhard (Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3-RSR), 73 (Q11-2m07.577s); 8 Craig Stanton/David Murry (White Lightning Porsche), 73 (Q13-2m08.919s); 9 Darren Law/Johannes van Overbeek (Flying Lizard Porsche), 73 (Q19-2m09.675s); 10 Patrick Long/Cort Wagner (Racer's Group Porsche), 72 (Q15-2m09.330s); 11 Tim Suggden/Justin Jackson (J3 Porsche), 72 (Q20-2m09.683s); 12 Lonnie Pechnik/Seth Neiman (Flying Lizard Porsche), 71 (Q17-2m09.529s); 13 Sascha

Maassen/Leo Hindery (BAM Porsche), 71 (Q18-2m09.589s); 14 Pierre Ehret/Philip Co (Racer's Group Porsche), 70 (Q21-2m12.027s); 16 Mike Borkowski/John Macaulis (Miracle Lola-Nissan B2K/40), 60 (Q14-2m09.233s); 17 David Saelens/Gunnar Jeannette (Panoz Esperante GTLM), 51 (Q16-2m09.344s); 18 Marc Lieb/Romain Dumas (Alex Job Porsche), 46 (Q12-2m08.353s); 19 Butch Leitzinger/James Weaver (Dyson Lola-MG), 30 (Q1-1m51.893s); 20 Andy Wallace/Chris Dyson (Dyson Lola-MG), 13 (Q2-1m52.524s); EX Clint Field/Robin Liddell (Intersport Lola-Judd B2K/40) (Q6-1m59.174s). **Fastest lap** Lehto, 1m54.050s. **Points** 1 Werner/Lehto 138; 2 Wallace, 85; 3 Weaver/Leitzinger, 79; 4 Dyson, 71. **LMP2** 1 James, 127; 2 Gue, 123; 3 C Field/Liddell, 80. **GTS 1** Fellows/O'Connell, 134; 2 Gavin/Beretta, 105; 3 Borcheller/Mowlem, 84. **GT 1** Bernhard 112; 2 Van Overbeek/Law, 110; 3 Bergmeister 87; 4 Stanton/Murry, 86. **Next round:** Road Atlanta (USA), September 25.

## GT Just the Job

**GT Porsches fight it out again**

In a fraught GT battle, the Porsche duo of Jorg Bergmeister and Timo Bernhard took class pole in the Alex Job Racing GT3-RSR.

Bergmeister took a record pole (2m07.577s) and it looked like his co-driver would be able to cruise around after an early excursion by the White Lightning entry of David Murry and the struggles of the Flying Lizard Porsche to find the pace.

However, a full-course caution brought the field back together with 45 minutes to go. The Job team emerged from the stops in front of Johannes van Overbeek. Bernhard then

edged away from him in traffic to keep the lead after the restart. White Lightning got back into the fray than to the caution, passing the Porsche for second with Craig Stanton on board.

Patrick Long and Cort Wagner got caught out by the yellow, stopping before the safety period. This left the team a lap down.

It was the fourth win for the Job car, but since Bergmeister missed Sebring due to illness, Bernhard stayed at the top of the points alone. Romain Dumas set the fastest lap in the sister Job Porsche, but a broken control arm and a blown clutch led to retirement.

The Dyson cars lead the pack away, but both would drop out



Greg Biffle leads Jamie McMurray and the chasing NASCAR pack



# Trounced NASCAR aces are baffled by Biffle

Blistering speed and a near-perfect car helped Greg Biffle lead an all-Ford Taurus top-three finish at Michigan Speedway. By MICHAEL IVINS

## NASCAR Nextel Cup

Gordon moves into the points lead

Michigan (USA), August 22, Rd 23/36

Greg Biffle started out in 24th, raced into the top 10 in just 10 laps, moved into the lead by half distance and then went on to dominate a race that would become his second career Cup triumph.

"My car was really, really fast right when the green flag fell," said Biffle, "and I started moving up real fast." He took the lead on the 104th lap of 200, but then lost it again to Roush Racing Ford team-mate Mark Martin who, at that stage, appeared to have just as good a car.

But luck was against Martin. His team miscued on a pit-stop and left a lug-nut loose, and he was forced to stop again to fix the problem.

The next challenge for Biffle came from Kasey Kahne's Dodge - the battling duo would swap the lead three times over the next 15 laps.

Martin, meanwhile, was making up time in fine style and he had moved into sixth place by lap 170.

On the last round of stops, Biffle fitted four new tyres, while Martin gained track position by taking on just two fresh tyres. This pushed Martin up to second place, but he was unable to match Biffle's blistering all-new-tyre pace.

That said, Martin did have the speed to deal with everyone else. He took second place from Dale Jarrett, Jamie McMurray and Kahne.

It was another disastrous race for long-time points leader Jimmie Johnson. He suffered a third engine failure in three races and has now

dropped behind Jeff Gordon.

Gordon, who finished seventh, has become the first driver to secure a definite place in the battle for the title under NASCAR's new top 10 play-off system, which starts out after three more rounds. Kahne is currently 10th the final 'Chase' place, but it's mighty close between him, Bobby Labonte in front and Jeremy Mayfield behind.

**RESULTS** 1 Greg Biffle (Ford Taurus), 200 laps in 2h52m35s; 2 Mark Martin (Ford), +8.216s; 3 Dale Jarrett (Ford); 4 Jamie McMurray (Dodge Intrepid); 5 Kasey Kahne (Dodge); 6 Kurt Busch (Ford); 7 Jeff Gordon (Chevrolet Monte Carlo); 8 Matt Kenseth (Ford); 9 Tony Stewart (Chevrolet); 10 Carl Edwards (Ford). **Points** 1 J Gordon, 3254; 2 Jimmie Johnson, 3186; 3 Dale Earnhardt Jr, 3115; 4 Stewart, 3089; 5 Kenseth, 3018; 6 Busch, 2909; 7 Elliott Sadler, 2864; 8 Kevin Harvick, 2832; 9 Bobby Labonte, 2799; 10 Kahne, 2792.

## Australian Konica Minolta V8s

Jones secures championship glory

Mallala (AUS), August 22, Rd 6/6

ANDY Jones is the first man to seal a 2004 V8 Supercar crown - but only by the smallest of margins.

Jones started the final Konica Minolta race of the season at Mallala near Adelaide needing only to keep fellow Ford driver Luke Youlden behind him, and he managed just that to take the title on a tie-break.

Following a season-long fight, none of the championship contenders became the round winner. That honour fell to KMV8 newboy Greg Ritter. Driving the 2003 championship-winning Ford that

was felled by engineering staff from Stone Brothers Racing (for which he will drive in the approaching endurance races), Ritter claimed pole and dominated the first and third races. He crossed the line fifth in the second, reverse-grid race. Finishing second, third and second, Jones was tied with Ritter on points for the round win, while Youlden missed out on countback, despite finishing with an identical haul to Jones, who had a better win average.

While Youlden praised Jones on his win, the other title contender was having a diabolical weekend - Owen Kelly's hopes ended with spins in race one and race three and a 22nd place overall in the round drops him to fifth in the points behind Mark Porter and team-mate Jose Fernandez.

Phil Branagan

**RESULTS** Race 11 Greg Ritter (Ford Falcon AU), 16 laps in 18m42.51s; 2 Andrew Jones (Ford), +2.44s; 3 Luke Youlden (Ford); 4 Marcus Zukanovic (Ford); 5 Matthew White (Ford); 6 Jose Fernandez (Ford). **FL** Jones, 1m09.19s. **Race 21** Wayne Wakefield (Ford), 16 laps in 19m05.41s; 2 Mark Porter (Holden Commodore VX), +0.33s; 3 Jones; 4 Kurt Wimmer (Holden); 5 Ritter; 6 Youlden. **FL** Jones, 1m09.85s. **Race 31** Ritter, 33 laps in 44m34.90s; 2 Jones, +3.30s; 3 Youlden; 4 Fernandez; 5 Alan Gurr (Holden); 6 White. **FL** Ritter, 1m09.44s. **Points** 1 Jones, 945; 2 Youlden, 945; 3 Porter, 877; 4 Fernandez, 857; 5 Owen Kelly, 830; 6 White, 827.

## Belgian Belcar GTs

Viper squad dominates

Zolder (B), August 21/22, Rd 5/7

ANTHONY Kumpen, Bert Longin, Mike Hezemans and Pedro Lamy eventually took their Chrysler Viper to a comfortable victory in the 24 Hours of Zolder after fighting hard in the first few hours of the contest.

The rolling start saw second-row driver Pertti Kuusmanen's Viper GTS-R take the lead ahead of poleman Marc Goossens's Corvette C5-R and Longin. Markus Palttala (Porsche 996 BiTurbo) and the similar car of Koen Wouters soon joined the battle for the lead, all setting a high pace. The Corvette C5-R, having regained the lead, was forced to retire with gearbox problems after two hours and by around quarter distance the Kumpen/Longin/Hezemans/Lamy Viper had moved into the lead.

Various accidents brought out the pace car during the event, and shortly before midnight a heavy four-car pile-up saw a lengthy track-clearing session. At the race's halfway point Kumpen and co had a seven-lap lead over the Porsche of Koen Wouters/Kris Wouters/Albert Vanierschot/Erik Bruynoghe and the Porsche 996 BiTurbo of Markus Palttala/Leo van Sande/Marc Duez.

By the end of the race the Porsche 996 BiTurbos had retired with mechanical problems, promoting the Kuusmanen/Karl Hasenbichler/Stefano Zonca/Matti Alamaki Viper into second, albeit 18 laps behind.

Gordon McKay

**RESULTS** 1 Anthony Kumpen/Bert Longin/Mike Hezemans/Pedro Lamy (Chrysler Viper GTS-R), 778 laps in 24h00m43.781s; 2 Pertti Kuusmanen/Karl Hasenbichler/Stefano Zonca/Matti Alamaki (Chrysler), -18 laps; 3 Ruben Maes/Francois Verbiest/Olivier Tanghe/Jacques Castelein

(Porsche 996 BiTurbo); 4 Frank Thiers/Hans Thiers/Kurt Thiers/Guy van Mol (Porsche 996 GT3); 5 Yves Lambert/Christophe Lefort/Sebastien Ugeux (Porsche 996 Supercup); 6 Kelly Jammers/Guy Kersten/ Kevin Leest/Dirk van Rompuy (Porsche 996 GT3).

## Infiniti Pro Series

Chesson stuns with a third victory

Pikes Peak (USA), August 22, Rd 9/12

THE hottest thing in open-wheel racing at the moment is a kid from New Jersey with piercings and tattoos.

PJ Chesson, whose career took a sharp turn from winged sports cars to the Indy Racing League training series, won an Infiniti Pro Series race for the third consecutive time on Sunday.

With just 26 laps remaining in the Pikes Peak 100, Chesson won by seven seconds behind Paul Dana. By the time it was all over, Chesson was 1.2093sec ahead.

"I didn't think I was going to win this year," Chesson said. "Being a rookie, and new to pavement at rear-engined cars, [team director] Kathryn [Nunn] told me there was pressure. If I had won a race this year it would have been unbelievable. Now we've won three."

Jeff Olson

**RESULTS** 1 PJ Chesson, 100 laps in 42m59.288s; 2 Paul Dana +1.209s; 3 Thiago Medeiros; 4 Jesse Mason; 5 Arie Luyendyk; 6 Al Unser. **Points** 1 Medeiros, 385; 2 Dana, 318; 3 Mason, 261; 4 Luyendyk, 250; 5 Chesson, 242; 6 Leonardo Maia, 216.



IPS rookie Chesson dazzled with his third win of the year

# In brief

## News from around the world

### US FF2000 CHAMPIONSHIP

Bobby Wilson clinched the title at Elkhart Lake. Wilson was second in race one before taking a hard-fought victory in race two which secured him the crown. Title rival Andrew Prendeville experienced a nightmare weekend, crashing out of race one and finishing eighth in race two.

### NASCAR BUSCH SERIES

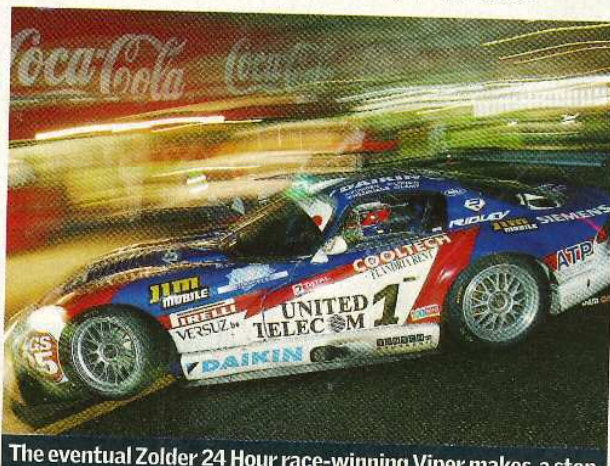
Kyle Busch dominated at Michigan to take his fifth win of the year, ahead of Nextel Cup veteran Mark Martin.

### US SPEED GT

Michael Galati and Randy Pobst took a one-two finish for Audi at Elkhart Lake.

### US SPEED TOURING CARS

Peter Cunningham's Nissan inherited victory at Elkhart Lake after Pierre Kleinubing's Acura TSX was excluded for a technical infringement.



The eventual Zolder 24 Hour race-winning Viper makes a stop

JACQUES LEFFHON

Editor  
Edd Straw

Assistant editor  
James Attwood

Editor-at-large  
Marcus Pye

# CLUB Autosport

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Nexa and JLR are the two top teams in the Formula Ford UK Championships

## FFord leaders eye switch

Top Formula Ford UK Championship outfits Nexa Racing and Team JLR are both evaluating options away from the series for 2005.

Nexa, which leads the points with Valle Makela, is set to expand to run in two series next year and is considering a Formula Renault campaign. Reigning champion Team JLR, which already runs in FRenault, is looking at switching to Formula BMW.

JLR boss Richard Dean said that he couldn't commit to FFord without information about plans for the series next season.

He said: "At the moment there are a lot of details that have yet to be confirmed. If it isn't possible for our team to operate in it then we will look elsewhere. We're interested in

BMW, and we will look at it very seriously if Ford isn't what we want to be in terms of professionalism. We are set up to run at a certain budget, and with the staffing we have we are not able to run below that. We remain committed to FFord, because it's the best formula for this level and there's a place for it.

"Our priority for 2005 is to get everything in place for FRenault. BMW is a good possibility if we don't do Ford."

Nexa co-owner Andy Kidby said that the team was evaluating running in four series.

He said: "We've made no firm decisions for next year. Ideally we'd like to know a bit more about what is likely to happen with Ford before we make any commitments.

"There are four options on the

table, and we're evaluating what to do. We're looking at Formula 3, FRenault, FFord and FBMW. F3 isn't likely to happen, but we should have decided by the end of August."

Formula Ford UK Championship boss Sam Roach said: "It's quite right that there's uneasiness with the teams - there's still doubt it will happen. Our plans are creeping forward for 2005. What we all need is confirmation of Ford's plans for '05.

"We're going to sit and watch for a bit longer to see how things settle down. Until then it's difficult to say what it's going to look like next year.

"There's lots of positive things we're working towards like sponsors and Ford's involvement. I'm conscious that the season is going on, but it's still only August and a lot of things are on the horizon that could make a night-and-day difference."

### Dean set for racing return

TEAM JLR boss Richard Dean is in line to make a racing comeback in the final round of the British GT Championship driving a GT Cup class Porsche 911 GT3.

Dean, who won the British GT title with Kurt Luby in 1998, is set to share

the car with owner Liam Wharton, who has linked up with the team.

A full assault is planned for 2005 although Dean admits that his commitments as team boss would likely prevent him from completing a full season.



Richard Dean was crowned GT champion in 1998 in a GT2 Viper

Roach



Still positive

# Briefs

News from around the UK

## CLARKE'S RENAULT BOW

Formula Ford front-runner Dan Clarke made an impressive Formula Renault UK Championship debut with Team JLR at Brands Hatch last weekend. He finished 9th and 15th despite accidentally turning off his engine before the start of race one.

## SIMPSON STICKS WITH JLR

Formula Renault UK Championship front-runner Stephen Simpson is planning to remain in the category with Team JLR next season. The Briton, who lies fifth in the championship, is planning an intensive winter testing programme.

## GORNALL'S FOCUS ON 2005

Formula Renault UK privateer James Gornall is unlikely to return to race action in the championship this season with his JA Motorsport-run car. He is instead focusing on securing a drive with a top team for next season.

## NO MOTA FOR FOSTER

Formula Renault UK Championship front-runner Joey Foster has parted company with Motaworld. The Cornishman is considering options in Formula 3 for the rest of the year.

## RUSSELL ON THE SIDELINES

Mark Burdett Motorsport driver Matt Russell was forced to miss last weekend's Formula Renault double-header at Brands Hatch after crashing in testing. The 20-year-old crashed heavily at the outside of Surtees, writing off his monocoque.

## STORCKENFELDT BACK

Alex Storckenfeldt returned to Formula Renault UK action at Brands Hatch after missing the previous round at Knockhill with a broken collar bone. The Swede, who was still recovering from an operation the week before the meeting, finished 16th and ninth after struggling in qualifying.

## WELCH IN RENAULT RETURN

Dan Welch has switched back to Formula Renault after his recent Renault Clio Cup outing. Engineering his own Welch Motorsport machine, complete with new engine, Welch finished 19th in race one at Brands before retiring from the second.

## NEW PUPIL FOR HOY

Jack Andersen made his circuit racing debut in the Team Griffin Racing-run Will Hoy Hard Charger Renault Clio Cup car at Brands Hatch last weekend. After crashing on the first lap of race one, he came home 15th in race two.

## ROBERTS IN BMW DEBUT

Recently-crowned North-West Formula Ford 1600 Champion Steve Roberts made his Formula BMW debut with Barwell Motorsport at Brands last weekend. Roberts finished 19th and 21st as the team struggled for pace with all three drivers during the meeting.

# Senna's tough BMW b

**B**runo Senna, the nephew of triple Formula 1 World Champion Ayrton Senna, endured a difficult circuit racing debut in last Sunday's Formula BMW double-header on the Brands Hatch Indy circuit.

The Carlin Motorsport driver crashed out of the first race after a collision with Matt Howson at Graham Hill Bend, before coming home 16th in the second.

Senna said: "I have done what I wanted to do and finished the race. No-one can expect me to be as good as Ayrton was in his last race in my first race, and although I made little mistakes, I have learned a lot."

Senna set the eighth fastest time in testing before putting in two mid-grid qualifying times for 11th and 10th place.

Team boss Trevor Carlin, who is hoping to run Senna in the championship next season, said: "He'll never have his first ever motor race again. Now he can relax and begin to build up the experience he needs to challenge for race wins next season."

Senna

Experience



Senna was sent flying after colliding with Matt Howson

## Pickford eyes BTCC drive

FORMER British GT racer James Pickford is favourite to seal the British Touring Car Championship prize drive at this weekend's SEAT Cupra Championship finale at Donington Park.

Pickford, 25, who has finished on the podium in nine of this season's 10 races, carries a 17-point advantage over Oli Wilkinson, with former BTCC Production class champion Tom Boardman a further three points adrift. Gavin Smith is also in contention, although he needs to win both races and take fastest laps to have a chance of victory.

Pickford said: "It's make or break. If I don't win this I've got maybe a

few more years of trying to find the money before having to go and get a proper job. I've just got to pick up 17 points and I can't be touched. I've got to stay out of trouble - and to do that you've got to be near the front.

"I got really fed up with motorsport a few years ago because finding the money was just impossible. Then I was lucky enough to get some backing from Haribo and here I am. I've just got to win it.

"Nobody thought SEAT would be so strong in the BTCC this year, and it makes me want to do it even more."

Pickford was team-mate to Formula 1 ace Jenson Button when they both competed in Formula Ford.

## China on Conway's menu

NEWLY-crowned Formula Renault UK champion Mike Conway is set to contest the Chinese Grand Prix-supporting FRenault 2000 race at Shanghai on September 25.

Conway is already competing in the Macau Grand Prix-supporting race with Team Firstair, and could race in China instead of driving in the final round of the British championship at Donington Park.

Conway said: "I'll definitely race at Snetterton, but we'll have to see whether we can get an entry for China with Firstair."

Conway, who had planned to step up to British Formula 3 with Fortec Motorsport after sealing the title, is

keeping his options open for 2004 and is instead focusing on finishing the year as strongly as possible.

Conway said: "There's lots of things we could do next year, but now we can go to Snetterton and get some more wins.

"It has been a massive team effort this year - to win the championship is the culmination of a lot of work."

Conway has won six out of 16 races this season, finishing every race on the top four and only missing out on the podium twice. Should he race in the championship finale instead of China, he could match 2003 champion Lewis Hamilton's record mark of 10 wins.

## Collins for British GT run

REIGNING Days of Thunder champion Ben Collins will make his British GT debut with Embassy Racing at Thruxton this weekend.

Collins, who currently sits fourth in this year's Days of Thunder championship, will team up with Neil Cunningham in Embassy's Chevrolet Corvette C5, in place of Paula Cook.

Collins said: "[Embassy boss] Jonathan France phoned me on Friday and asked me if I wanted to drive. We should be in good shape. Hopefully I'll be back at Le Mans next year in some shape or form. This will be

great, and I know they have big plans.

"They've got some stability, and although it's a one-off deal at the moment, they are a properly funded team with a proper car and good long-term prospects."

France said that he would be interested in running Collins full-time next season. He said: "He's good. You can't overlook someone with that level of talent. He's done a great job in Days of Thunder and he fits the profile.

"We'll see how it goes this weekend, but I'd love to have him drive for us next year. That will send out strong signals about our intent."

Collins

GT drive



Formula Renault champ Conway celebrates with his Fortec crew



# aptism



Alex Mortimer is hoping to carry his Radical form into Porsches

## RPM in Formula BMW aim

FRONT-RUNNING Porsche Carrera Cup GT outfit Team RPM is planning to expand into single-seaters, and could run as many as four cars in the Formula BMW GB Championship next season.

The team has already acquired a brace of the Mysale-built machines, and has begun a testing and driver evaluation programme.

Team boss Robin Mortimer said: "The intention is that we will be on the BMW grid next year, but it's dependant on getting the right drivers with the right budgets.

"We've got a dozen drivers to test, and we've just got to battle away and find the right package. I'm only interested if we can get the

right drivers, but with the interest shown it shouldn't be too difficult. We're looking at running three cars minimum, possibly four."

Mortimer plans to run the BMW campaign alongside its existing Carrera Cup commitments, with son Alex set to make his Porsche debut at Snetterton on September 4/5.

Mortimer senior is confident that the Radical BiDuro front-runner will be able to carry his race-winning form into the Carrera Cup.

"He's only driven a Carrera Cup car once at Snetterton, but he took to it like a duck to water," said Mortimer. "I'm not expecting him to be a top-six runner at this point as it is a massively different car to anything he's driven."

## Second Porsche for Tech 9 Cup bid

REIGNING British GT Cup class champion team Tech 9 will run a second Porsche 911 GT3 for the remainder of the season.

Formula Ford UK championship convert David Wandless will team up with Mark Cole in the ex-ABG car, alongside the regular car of Dominic Lesniewski and Adam Sharpe.

Team boss Phil Hindley said: "I am enthusiastic about running Mark and David. This is what the Cup class is all about, bringing new talent into GT racing at a level that has proven to be very competitive. Hopefully we can secure a deal for David to drive next year."

## Finance runs out for Blower VX220

BRITISH GT Cup class outfit Colin Blower Motorsport, which runs a Vauxhall VX220, is searching for funding to complete the season.

The machine, which has been driven this season by eponymous team boss Colin Blower and Dan Eagling, missed the last round of the championship at Silverstone.

"The car has been entirely built and run by us," said Blower. "It cost a fortune to build and a fortune to run, and I've already spent my fortune on it. I've got faith that the car will work and I've got a lot of plans for it, but I can't do any more until I get a budget."

## ONE to WATCH



Richard Keen

THE Silverstone Racing School's BRDC Single-Seater series has produced some impressive graduates, and Richard Keen's performances suggest he could shine at the next level.

Keen completed a part-season in Zip Formula in 2003, prior to this year's Single-Seater campaign, where the 17-year-old is in the thick of the title fight. He also impressed on his Formula Ford UK debut at Silverstone this season.

Looking to 2005, Keen has tests lined up with Team Firstair in Formula Renault and Barwell in Formula BMW.

## Bahrain gets green light

BRITISH GT Championship organiser Stephane Ratel has finalised plans for an end-of-season GT Festival to be held at the Bahrain circuit.

The event, a precursor to a planned FIA GT race in the Middle Eastern country next season, will be held on November 24-26. It will be open to runners from the British, French, FIA GT and LMES series, along with cars from other national series. A transportation budget has been allocated for up to 70 cars.

Ratel said: "I don't think there will be a problem putting a grid of 50 cars

together. There is a pool of 150 GT cars just taking into account the series I am involved with. I want a diversity of cars, from the Ferrari 550

Maranellos in the FIA GT Championship to some of the more unusual cars in the British series."

Ratel said that the race format was yet to be decided, but that it was unlikely to be a single endurance event.

"The national runners will probably not have the reliability of the FIA runners, so I don't want a three or four-hour race," he said. "It would make more sense to have three or four one-hour races."

### Ratel



Bahrain plan

# Marcus Pye

Humble Pye



## "Organisers can save competitors money by improving logistics"

DWINDLING entries are hitting the major race organising clubs in their pockets this season, but is it any surprise that numbers are down when their last priority is improving the competitors' lot?

Thruxton's Bank Holiday bill, next Sunday and Monday, is a good example. The largest entry on the British Formula 3 and GT double-header is 28 for the Avo Ginetta championship. Value for money is the key to its unprecedented popularity, thus keeping costs down is vital.

One would have thought that this would have been grasped by the Stephane Ratel Organisation – the promoter of the package – when the Ginetta circus bolsters its programme with seven double-headers per year? Not this weekend, for the timetable is ridiculous.

At this point I should declare a vested interest, for I am competing at the local circuit of my youth for the first time since a Boss Formula outing in 1996. To be qualifying at 0855 on Sunday – in the solo slot before the customary church break – would not be a problem if the Ginettas weren't racing last, at 1750! Our Monday race was also given the 'bump spot' initially, before a plea from company boss Martin Phaff to SRO's John Ward saw it moved to lunchtime.

As it is, the programme demands that any team travelling more than, say, 100 miles – and remember that the majority of competitors are amateurs who work at least five days per week to pay for their sport – will have to arrive on Saturday, thus incur extra cost.

Surely, given the final race slot on Sunday, last qualifying would have been more appropriate? A class racing earlier would always have less objection to the dawn kick-off. In fact, the TVR and Caterham fields – with but 14 and 12 entries as of Monday – have four and three-and-a-half hours to kill respectively until their Sunday races. The Ginetta's have eight-and-a-half.

The VW Racing Cup hordes and UK Formula Ford combatants have it worse still, qualifying on Sunday and racing late on Monday. Indeed the FFord round could easily be lost to delays, as at Silverstone internationals in the '80s, where practice for a race at dusk on Sunday was often run first thing on Friday!

Great racing at affordable cost is something of a rarity right now, so my message to organisers is nurture it. Don't suppress strong supporting classes, plan your timetables on merit and give spectators plenty to cheer at the height of the programme.

Fortunately, I've a cunning alternative plan for Ginetta folk on Sunday. Follow me to Gurston Down, and enjoy some spectacular British Hillclimb Championship action. For £8, we can watch the morning runs – and still be back at Thruxton for final F3 and GT qualifying...



The Ginettas – popular but low down on the Thruxton schedule

# Briefs

## News from around the UK

### FPA AUTUMN TROPHY EXTENDED

This year's Formula Palmer Audi Autumn Trophy has been extended to take in six races over two meetings. The series will feature three events each at Snetterton on October 23/24 and Brands Hatch on November 6/7.

### HERITAGE CURTAILED

Last Saturday's Heritage GT Challenge British Touring Car Championship support event was shortened from 50 to 45 minutes after some competitors felt they would not have enough fuel to finish the race. In the event, the race was stopped early for red flags at 39 laps.

### STEVENS CLOSES IN

Luke Stevens can wrap up the Caterham R400 Challenge at Thruxton this weekend. The 2001 ARP Formula 3 Champion leads rivals Jon Barnes and David Dyson by 30 and 32 points respectively.

### WILLS WANTS MOORE

Quadruple Castle Combe FF1600 champion Gavin Wills returns to his old stomping ground to take on series leader Ed Moore next Monday.

### BLACK TO JUNIOR SCHOOL

Crosse Cars boss Arnie Black makes his Historic Formula Junior debut at Oulton Park on Sunday at the wheel of the Bob Birrell's Brabham BT6.

### DYSON CLEANS UP IN JEDI

Graham Dyson made his circuit racing debut in Formula Jedi at Oulton Park on Saturday at the age of 60. The former hillclimber won the Masters class in his Suzuki-powered car, to which daughter Victoria aspires.

### SPRIDGETS IN THE SAND

Series leader Ian Hulett extended his advantage as the FISC Midget and Sprite Eurotour visiting Zandvoort last weekend. Having narrowly lost out to Dutchman Michael van Kooten on Saturday, the Briton won both of Sunday's races.

### A CUNNINGTON PLAN

Adam Cunnington broke an 18-year layoff with victory on the road in Zandvoort's Spridget opener. His newly-acquired car was ineligible for FISC points because it was running bigger front brakes, wider Yokohama tyres and was without a rev limiter.

### SPA COMES TO GURSTON

Guernseyman Justin Smith's Sports Libre record at Gurston Down, set with his Pilbeam-Hart MP43, is the target for Matthew Harrison and his newly-acquired Spa-Judd V8 in Sunday's national hillclimb.

### DELANEY DELAY

Veteran racer Tom Delaney, 93, has delayed his comeback after being thrown out of his Lea Francis at Silverstone last month. Delaney had planned to return in last weekend's Bentley Drivers' Club meeting, but admitted that his injured hand wasn't yet strong enough to compete.

### The Formula Jedi frontrunners set a stunning pace at Oulton Park



# Jedis top Oulton record

Four Formula Jedi drivers repeatedly went under Oulton Park's Island Circuit club lap record last weekend.

Race winner Alistair Goss, Fraser Corbyn, Luke Kidsley and David Roper all lapped within three-tenths of a second in their battle for supremacy in the motorcycle-engined cars' open class, with Corbyn bagging the record at 1m22.092s, an average of 97.61mph.

These remarkable feats eclipsed Jon Gray's ARP Formula 3 best of 1m23.220s (96.29mph) in a Dallara F399 and the 1m22.930s (96.63mph) of Radical Enduro winners Nigel Redwood and Hunter Abbott in an SR3 on the day.

Corbyn's new record compares with the equivalent Monoposto Club mark of 1m26.2s, set recently by Bob Couchman in a similar Jedi machine. The Formula Jedi cars have an

impressive power-to-weight ratio, producing an 150bhp from Yamaha R1 engines, in cars that weigh a minimum of 385kg, including driver.

Furthermore, Corbyn's record time was set with only a standard engine, loaned by rival Jonathan Croucher.

The record rout is expected to continue when Kidsley leads the title race into the next round at Mallory Park – where 43 seconds has been

the pace in recent testing – September 12.

Jodie Hemming continued to dominate the class for 600cc Honda-engined cars within the championship at Oulton. Already confirmed as series champion (see Autosport, July 8), Northamptonshire-based Jodie extended her impressive undefeated run, adding her 11th victory in many races this season.

## Ex-works Maseratis head for Gold Cup

SOME of the most evocative cars from the rich history of the Oulton Park Gold Cup, including a brace of ex-works Maserati 250Fs, will be in action at this weekend's 17-race retrospective event at the Cheshire circuit on Sunday and Monday.

A pair of 250Fs, including Peter

Neumark's ex-Stirling Moss machine, are set to contest Monday's HGPCA's front-engined race. Cooper T51 and Lotus 18 chassis, of the type in which the maestro won in 1959 and '60 for Rob Walker, are entered for the Pre-'66 event on the same day.

## Chinese driver to race in EuroBOSS

MACANESE driver Jo Merszai is set to become the first Chinese to race a Formula 1 car, with an outing in EuroBOSS this season.

Merszai, who is in talks for backing with a number of Chinese companies, has targeted a ride in the EuroBOSS season finale at Le Mans on October 9/10, with a ride in one of Team Ascari's Benetton-Judd B197s a strong possibility.

Merszai competed in British Formula Ford 1600 and ARP Formula 3 in the mid-1990s, and is also planning to compete in November's Macau F3 Grand Prix ahead of a full season in the category in 2005.

## Law set for Grand Prix Masters bow

HISTORIC sportscar ace Justin Law makes his eagerly-awaited single-seater debut in Sunday's Grand Prix Masters event at Donington Park at the wheel of Nick Rini's BRM P160.

"Nick wanted to concentrate on his Jaguar XJR-12 in the Group C/IMSA GTP race," said GPM's Christopher Tate, "and we are all excited to see how Justin adapts."

Another newcomer to the series is long-time Thoroughbred Grand Prix racer Chris Perkins, who runs his rarely-seen Fittipaldi F5A. Favourite for victory is Frank Sytner, who is commuting from Oulton Park to race his Penske PC3.

## Marcus Pye's club legends

21: Jedi 1/84

ENTREPRENEURIAL spirit, technical ability and dedication enabled Wellingborough *garagiste* John Corbyn to become a racing car manufacturer 20 years ago.

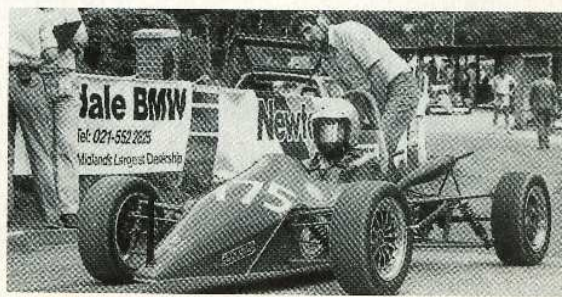
That's when the ardent speed hillclimber, tired of screaming 1100cc Cosworth BDJs in circuit chassis, tapped the potential of a 500cc motorcycle engine in a lightweight car of his own design.

Powered by a Yamaha unit, Jedi 1/84 took the hills by storm with

Corbyn and his old buddy, Nigerian-based John Bunting. It's performance led to a demand for replicas, and a new class.

Ever more potent engines, culminating in sidecar racing legend Egbert Streuer's cast-off Krausers, pushed speeds up and established the cars on the circuits.

Now with its own Formula Jedi championship, featuring 1000cc and 600cc classes, the firm has built almost 140 cars.



# National Gallery

Club motorsport in pictures



**HORSE POWER** British Equestrian Eventing Olympic gold medalist Leslie Law's training regime apparently involved jumping over Radical sportscars. Either that or it's a promotional stunt for sponsor Shearwater Insurance



**OVER THE EDGE** Hugh Birley rolled his Austin 7 during last weekend's Bentley Drivers' Club meeting at Silverstone. Despite landing upside down, Birley remarkably escaped without injury



**OOPS** Hitting your team-mate is never wise, but under red flags in insane. Step forward Franky Cheng



**A DIGNIFIED SIDE** Tim Wadsworth's 1931 Lagonda two-litre proves the perfect wedding car some weekends...



**...BUT IT HAS A WILD SIDE** The same car and driver just one week later on its way to second place in the Vintage & PVT Handicap race at Silverstone

The Bentley Turbo R was raced to its first competitive victory



## Turbo R's first win

**B**entley preparation expert Simon Worthington made history at Silverstone last Saturday when he took his Turbo R to what is believed to be the model's first ever race victory.

Worthington won the Bentley Vintage and PVT scratch race, which was the car's competitive debut.

The machine, built from a 'rough

road car' by Worthington's Farnham-based Phantom Motor Cars, is one of only three Turbo Rs known to race worldwide. Similar models are also campaigned in America and New Zealand.

The car tips the scales at 1.8 tonnes, despite half a tonne being shed during the build process. It features a 6.75-litre V8 engine that

produces 400bhp at one bar boost.

With suspension lowered by 3.5 inches from standard, low-profile tyres and extra-wide wheels, the car was one of the most purposeful on display at the Bentley Drivers' Club annual Summer meeting at Silverstone.

Silverstone report 122 →

## Fleetwood turns eye to Gurston

**A**DAM Fleetwood may have already landed his second straight MSA British Hillclimb title, but that will not deter the Shropshire prodigy from his quest to achieve the first 25-second ascent of Gurston Down, near Salisbury, on Sunday.

The battle for the runner-up spot still rages in his wake, with 1995 champion Roger Moran and BAR F1 aerodynamicist Willem Toet jousting with their Pilbeam MP88s, and Martin Groves in with a shout aboard his older Gould.

More than 30 cars – a fifth of the entry – comprise the feature class. Competition starts at 1030.

## BRDA select Nations Cup five

**SUPERMODIFIED** frontrunner Dave Bellerby will head up the British Rallycross Drivers Association's five-man team that will participate in November's InterNations cup event at Croft.

Bellerby will be joined in Team RallycrossUK.com by former champions Mike Turpin and Gordon Rogers and British Championship regulars Des Wheatley and Mike Dresser.

Team manager Bill Skermer said: "We've picked a team that is strong on experience as well as displaying good current form; three of them have won BRC events this year."

## Kit car runs for 750MC

**THE 750 Motor Club** will celebrate two decades of its thriving Kit Car Championship at Silverstone this weekend with a strong contingent of names and cars from the category's rich history joining a celebratory cavalcade.

Club president Neil Carr-Jones said: "We have managed to track down most of the champions and class winners from over the years, and the majority – including Lee Noble – have said that they will be attending for the reunion and track parade."

"It's a great opportunity to show enthusiasts who don't race what we do. A big Westfield contingent is expected, and marques in the display should also include Fisher, F27, Luego, Procomp, Raffo, Raw, Stuart Taylor, Sylva and Taydec."

Having wrecked his Sylva Phoenix at Mallory Park, current double champion Steve Taylor has had to re-prepare his old Striker to defend his now slender points advantage.

The Road Going Bike-engined kits will also be out on Sunday, led by Andy Charsley (Raw Striker), Tim Harmer (Genesis) and Jonathan Wright (Westfield Megabusa).

Saturday's 10-race programme is dominated by an 82-car Stock Hatch entry, to be whittled down via two heats and a final, and a 48-car Formula Vee contest.

## Johnson takes hat-trick

**SUBARU Impreza WRC** duo Barry Johnson and Stewart Merry secured their third consecutive maximum points haul on last Saturday's Little Jewellers Speyside Stages Rally.

The pair led the first five stages of the event before dropping

behind Raymond Munro, only for the latter to flip his Subaru onto its roof after striking a rock.

Dave Weston and Neil Shanks took second in their Ford Escort WRC, moving up when Gary Adams struck a gatepost in his Impreza.



Johnson and Merry's Impreza on its way to maximum points

Formula Renault UK

Form man makes hay

Brands Hatch, August 21/22

On a day when Mike Conway sealed a Formula Renault crown which has seemed to be his destiny from the moment the first wheel turned in anger, the new king was forced to give best to a supporting player at Brands Hatch.

Paul di Resta, clearly boosted by a belated first victory of the season at Knockhill two weeks earlier, was simply unstoppable. Such was his domination that two wins, backed up a brace of pole positions and fastest laps, do not do his supremacy justice. No-one looked remotely like challenging the Manor Motorsport charger, let alone beating him, and with three wins in the past four races you can't help but wonder what he might have achieved had he built up some momentum earlier in the year.

All the Scot had to do was get his starts right, and he duly stroked into the lead ahead of his fellow front-row incumbent, Team Firststair driver Sean McIntosh, at the start. But the start was to prove a false one, not specifically for di Resta, but for the whole field as the red flags were soon unfurled around the circuit. Ben Freudenberg, one of Conway's teammates at Fortec Motorsport, has swerved into Oliver Jarvis on the run up to Druids, launching him across the gravel trap and into the barrier. The incident also accounted for Stuart Hall and Rodolfo Gonzalez, a



Di Resta leads McIntosh, Barber and new champion Conway

# Total eclipse

Mike Conway may have sealed the Formula Renault crown, but Paul di Resta stole the limelight with an imperious double victory. By EDD STRAW

blow for the Venezuelan, who had qualified a career-best seventh.

It was the same again for di Resta and McIntosh at the restart, although Conway was fortunate to retain

his third-place slot after Westley Barber (Comtec) and the fast-starting Stephen Simpson (Team JLR) banged wheels on the run down to Paddock, dropping them behind the almost-champion.

Although the gaps between the top five ebbed and flowed to the finish, no-one was able to launch a credible challenge, although Simpson had accumulated an impressive train of cars in his wake by the finish led by Motaworld's Gustavo Sondermann and Barber's Comtec cohort Susie Stoddart.

Things were much the same in the second race. Di Resta held on to the lead with ease while Barber slipped to third, despite squeezing

Conway on the run into Paddock.

Once again the Brands Hatch Indy circuit proved difficult to pass on for the Renaults, although Team aka driver James Jakes fulfilled the Simpson role by holding off a train led by McIntosh and Jarvis to match his best result of the season in a fine fourth place.

Back in ninth place was Alex Storckenfeldt, a strong contender for second place in the championship at the halfway point of the season. The Swede, still recovering from a broken collarbone sustained in a karting accident at Knockhill two weeks earlier, proved overtaking was possible by moving up from 13th on the grid.

**FORMULA RENAULT UK CHAMPIONSHIP**

**(22 LAPS)** 1 Paul di Resta 16m40.386s (97.14mph); 2 Sean McIntosh 16m41.843s; 3 Mike Conway; 4 Westley Barber; 5 Stephen Simpson; 6 Gustavo Sondermann; 7 Susie Stoddart; 8 Charles Hollings; 9 Dan Clarke; 10 James Jakes.

**Fastest lap** di Resta 44.927s (98.25mph).

**RACE 2 (24 LAPS)** 1 Di Resta 18m12.147s (97.06mph); 2 Conway 18m12.479s; 3 Barber; 4 Jakes; 5 McIntosh; 6 Oliver Jarvis; 7 Hollings; 8 Stoddart; 9 Alex Storckenfeldt; 10 Rodolfo Gonzalez.

**FL** di Resta 44.998s (98.10mph).

**Championship standings after 16 rounds**

1 Conway 472; 2 Barber 347; 3 di Resta 316; 4 Stoddart 262; 5 Simpson 234; 6 Storckenfeldt 224; 7 Jarvis 207; 8 Stuart Hall 198; 9 McIntosh 197; 10 Hollings 193.



Welch (6) and Rocha (47) had a coming together in race two

## PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB



MISSING out on a race-two fastest lap was all that stood between Jason Templeman and a perfect weekend, but the former Clio racer wasn't too fussed on that count. Two victories, a fastest lap and the top spot in qualifying were enough to make it an emphatic weekend for the revitalised Team VLR driver.

Only briefly was Templeman threatened in race one, as the fast-starting Damien Faulkner found himself alongside through Paddock at the start of the contest. The former Indy Lights runner-up was forced to give best to Templeman after running side by side through Druids, and could only watch as Templeman edged away into the distance.

Faulkner soon had some company, as championship leader Tim Harvey had closed in on his tail by half-distance after dispatching the fast-starting Tom Ferrier on the inside of Druids on lap eight. Indeed, Ferrier was a little too fast starting,

earning himself a jump-start penalty. This succeeded in relegating him to seventh in the final reckoning.

Faulkner absorbed Harvey's attentions for several laps, and after a bid on the run into Paddock on lap 17 Harvey thumped the back of

Faulkner's 911 going into Graham Hill Bend on the following lap. Faulkner not only avoided spinning, but he even managed to hold on to third, a third which became second when Harvey ground to a halt with an unrelated left-rear puncture a lap from home.

This promoted Richard Westbrook to fourth, making up valuable ground on Harvey in the championship battle.

Templeman repeated the trick in race two, leading home Westbrook and Faulkner by over two seconds.

Harvey had to endure another

torrid race after an early puncture relegated him to last position. A dramatic charge to sixth by the flag limited the damage, but allowed the previously distant Westbrook to close the points gap to just five. *Ed Straw*



This was about as close as anyone got to Templeman

**PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB (22 LAPS)**

1 Jason Templeman 18m01.248s (89.88mph); 2 Damien Faulkner 18m09.771s; 3 Tim Harvey; 4 Richard Westbrook; 5 Jonathan Fildes; 6 David Pinkney; 7 Tom Ferrier; 8 Marcus Thomas; 9 Nigel Rice; 10 Chris Cooper.

**Fastest lap** Templeman 48.403s (91.19mph).

**RACE 2 (25 LAPS)** 1 Templeman 25m21.543s (72.57mph); 2 Westbrook 25m23.931s; 3 Faulkner; 4 Fildes; 5 Thomas; 6 Harvey; 7 Perry McCarthy; 8 Gary Britnell; 9 Andy Britnell; 10 Jason Young. **FL** Fildes 48.541s (90.94mph).

**Championship standings after 16 rounds**

1 Harvey 273; 2 Westbrook 268; 3 Templeman 196; 4 Fildes 184; 5 Rice 164; 6 A Britnell 149; 7 Young 103; 8 G Britnell 98; 9 Cooper 93; 10 Thomas 86.

### Renault Clio Cup

Adam makes ground as Pead falters

Brands Hatch, August 21/22

IT'S ironic that after disappointing on his home ground at Knockhill two weeks earlier and leaving without a win, Scotsman Jonathan Adam's trip to his least local track delivered a win, a second and a welcome championship boost.

Former champion Paul Rivett (Boulevard Team Racing) was Adam's closest challenger after qualifying, but his race-one victory chances faded as he bogged down off the line, allowing championship leader Ed Pead to attach himself to Adam's gearbox in second place.

Crucially, Rivett also lost out to SpeedEquipe's Richard Williams, who ran side by side with him through Druids before making third place his own at Graham Hill Bend.

After a safety-car hiatus, triggered by Pead's Mardi Gras Motorsport team-mate Fulvio Mussi harpooning heavily into the barrier at the top of Paddock Hill, it took Rivett another three laps to find himself in clear air ahead of Williams. Following several valiant, but unsuccessful attempts he passed the rapid green car around the outside of Druids.

By now Adam and Pead were long gone, leaving Rivett to take a lonely third place. As for the leading duo, they more or less cancelled each other out, with both circulating at a similar pace as Adam eked out a 1.4sec cushion by the finish.

Adam's TCR stablemate Nick Adcock battled his way to fourth after first scything under eventual sixth-place man Ian Curley into Paddock on lap 13, and then dispatching Williams into Clark three laps later.

Pead's race two was curtailed even before the contest started as his driveshaft snapped. This left Rivett to make a strong start and ambush Adam off the line. Adcock almost made it past both before settling into second, with the former Volkswagen Racing Cup champion seemingly the most likely to challenge Rivett as the top three pulled away. Curley and Williams were also in hot pursuit.

After Adcock had tried bravely – but unsuccessfully – for seven laps to pass the 2002 champion, Adam took up the chase on lap eight. Lap after lap Rivett was forced to defend, and it seemed he had victory in the bag before the final lap. But a charging Adam caught up and then drew alongside through Clearways.

Despite carrying good speed out of the corner, Adam fell a scant 0.059sec short of a second win of the day. "It certainly wasn't easy," admitted Rivett. "I was having to defend and Jonathan worked out a little trick I was pulling on the very last lap and almost got me."

Adcock ran with the leading pair right to the finish to match his best result of the season – he even claimed fastest lap in the process – while Williams went one better than race one by battling past Curley for fourth. *Edd Straw*

### ELF/BTE LAWLINE RENAULT CLIO CUP

(23 LAPS) 1 Jonathan Adam 22m29.068s (75.30mph); 2 Ed Pead 22m30.471s; 3 Paul Rivett; 4 Nick Adcock; 5 Richard Williams; 6 Ian Curley; 7 Matt Allison; 8 Jim Edwards Jr; 9 Neil Waterworth; 10 Michael Simpson.

**Fastest lap** Pead 52.739s (83.70mph). **RACE 2 (20 LAPS)** 1 Rivett 17m53.696s (82.29mph); 2 Adam 17m53.755s; 3 Adcock; 4 Williams; 5 Curley; 6 Allison; 7 Simpson; 8 Waterworth; 9 Edwards; 10 Tom Onslow-Cole. **FL** Adcock 52.984s (83.31mph).

**Championship standings after 16 rounds** 1– Rivett & Adam 365; 3 Pead 361; 4 Adcock 278; 5 Williams 276; 6 Curley 270; 7 Allison 203; 8 Waterworth 188; 9 Steven Hunter 185; 10 Edwards 156.



Championship leader Glew leads title rivals Fisher and Bridgman

### Formula BMW GB

Urbano and Sutton shade title chasers

Brands Hatch, August 21/22

THERE were two Formula BMW battles raging at Brands Hatch, one on track and one in the championship. While Joao Urbano and James Sutton shared a victory and a second place apiece, the title protagonists fought it out in a tense battle that ebbed and flowed in the dual dominators' wake. And, as if you needed telling, the season soon comes to an end, with two rounds to go...

First Urbano and later Sutton bagged clean sweeps of pole position, fastest lap and glory. The nature of the Brands Hatch Indy circuit rendered the start all-important, and the front-row men needed only to start well and drive tidily to guarantee themselves top results. So it was that neither Urbano nor Sutton were able to challenge the other when running in pursuit mode. This was more a reflection of how evenly matched they were than any sea change in performance.

"It probably looked a lot easier than it was," said Sutton after his race-two victory. "I just had to treat the race as 22 qualifying laps and push as hard as possible. The plan seemed to work pretty well."

Urbano told a similar story about his inch-perfect performance in the first race, with both delighted to take top billing ahead of the title battle.

"I pushed hard in the first six laps to open up a margin, and then just had to do the laps at a good pace," said Urbano of his second win of the year in race one. "You have to be careful not to push too hard or back off too much, because that is when it is easy to make a mistake."

Victory in the 'championship' class went to Tim Bridgman in the first race. Enjoying the benefits of using his pre-season test engine, Bridgman leapt ahead of slow-starting rookie frontrunner Jordan Wise to establish himself in a race-long third place. In his wake Philip Glew followed, but he was only prevented from taking third by some emphatic defending from Bridgman in the closing laps, the Soper Sport driver encountering only slammed doors where he had once glimpsed opportunity. So difficult was Bridgman finding it in the last four laps that the ever-improving Oliver Turvey and Wise had closed in on the battle. Back in eighth was the third of the title protagonists, Josh Fisher, the Motaworld driver unable

to make significant progress in race following some disappointing qualifying sessions.

For race two the three title holders started together, and once again started to prove paramount. Fisher pulled alongside Glew in Paddock. But the Soper driver, the measure of his rival, hanging in the run up to Druids and making third place his own by the end of the tight right-hander.

Perhaps most fortunate of the three was Bridgman who, despite a well-timed getaway, somehow found himself with Glew and Fisher at Druids. From thinking about challenging the pair, Bridgman was forced to focus on holding at bay a queue of cars led by Turvey and Matt Howson, the latter enjoying an improved second after colliding with Bruno Senna at Graham Hill Bend in race one. A Senna, the 20-year-old was happy to follow up a solid qualifying run with a cautious 16th place in race two.

Despite Bridgman struggling with the wrong set-up, the consequence of a punt on softening the rear never looked like losing fifth. Curiously, meanwhile, was delighted to see his title rivals in the shade.

If Brands is anything to go by the inaugural Formula BMW will not be won easily. *Edd Straw*

### FORMULA BMW UK CHAMPIONSHIP

(21 LAPS) 1 Joao Urbano 16m39.658s (92.80mph); 2 James Sutton 16m43.661s; 3 Tim Bridgman; 4 Philip Glew; 5 Oliver Turvey; 6 Jordan Wise; 7 Stian Sorlie; 8 Josh Fisher; 9 Sam Bird; 10 Peter Dempsey. **Rookie of the year** Wise. **Fastest lap** Urbano 46.955s (94.01mph).

**RACE 2 (22 LAPS)** 1 Sutton 17m26.964s (92.82mph); 2 Urbano 17m27.687s; 3 Glew 17m28.111s; 4 Fisher; 5 Bridgman; 6 Turvey; 7 Matt Howson; 8 Sorlie; 9 Dempsey; 10 Ross Curmow. **RC Curmow. FL** Sutton 46.989s (93.94mph). **Championship standings after 16 rounds** 1 Glew 178; 2 Bridgman 167; 3 Fisher 152; 4 Urbano 138.5; 5 Sutton 127; 6 Sorlie 107; 7– Simon Walker-Hansell & Curmow 58; 9 Turvey 56; 10 Ollie Smith 50.



Bruno Senna: in the limelight



Title trio: Jonathan Adam (3) is shadowed by Ed Pead as Paul Rivett (22) battles onto level terms

### Heritage GT Challenge

Thurtle burst nets victory

Brands Hatch, August 21

THE big bangers of the Heritage Grand Touring Car Challenge made a welcome return to the British Touring Car Championship support bill after last year's popular residency, with Greg Radley and Boysie Thurtle taking their immaculately-prepared Aston Martin V8 to victory.

Radley made the best of the rolling start to lead from the rumbling Ford Mustang of David Yates. The gap between the duo ebbed and flowed in the early laps until Radley pulled into the pits to hand over to car owner Thurtle on lap 11.

As the leader was in the pits, the safety car was deployed to retrieve the beached DB4 of Chris Clegg from the outside of Paddock Hill Bend. By the time the ensuing driver changes had been completed, Tom Alexander had the lead in another DB4, with Graham Scarborough taking over from Youles in the second-placed Mustang.

Thurtle was down in fourth at the lap 19 restart, behind the DB4 started by Jackie Oliver but now in the hands of Martin Angle. Nonetheless,

it wasn't long before Thurtle was back in the lead, as he dispatched Scarborough, who had himself passed Alexander, effortlessly for the lead into Paddock on lap 20.

Thurtle held first place without challenge to the finish, with the race curtailed six minutes early after Alexander ground to a halt at the exit of Graham Hill Bend, coating the track in oil. Scarborough held on to second, with Andy Jenkinson bringing the Youles car home third ahead of Morgan Plus 8 solo pilot Phil Hollins.

*Edd Straw*

### HERITAGE GRAND TOURING CAR CHALLENGE

1 Greg Radley/Boysie Thurtle (Aston Martin V8) 38 laps in 39m11.087s (71.37mph); 2 David Yates/Graham Scarborough (Ford Mustang) 39m15.159s; 3 Mike Youles/Andy Jenkinson (Aston Martin DB4 Lightweight); 4 Phil Hollins (Morgan Plus 8); 5 Ian McCallum/Paul Whight (Aston Martin DB5); 6 Norman Ricketts/Nick Cole (BMW 1502); 7 Pat Cooke (Aston Martin V8); 8 Gordon Streeter (Ford Anglia 105E); 9 Ian Moss/George Miller (Aston Martin DB4); 10 Jason Kennedy/Louise Kennedy (TVR Griffith).

**Fastest lap** Thurtle 52.756s (83.67mph). **Class winners** Yates/Scarborough; Youles/Jenkinson; Ricketts/Cole; Moss/Miller.



Aston Martin beats Mustang as Thurtle and Radley take victory

BDC

Bentley boys descend on Silverstone

Silverstone National, August 21

**B**entley preparation expert Simon Worthington ensured himself a place in motorsport history at Silverstone on Saturday when, on its debut, he took his nicely-presented Turbo R model to what is thought to be the world's first ever race victory by such a car (see *National News*).

Starting the Vintage & PVT race from pole, Worthington led for a lap before spinning down to 13th place at Becketts. His misdemeanour left Bill Tuer in the lead before the red flags flew after four laps when Hugh Birley tipped his Austin 7 onto its side at Luffield, thankfully without personal injury.

First Adam Stacy-Marks and then Tuer led the shortened rerun before Worthington went ahead on lap four. Once there, he kept the battling Susan Shoosmith and Tuer at bay, although erstwhile leader Stacy-Marks inherited third when Tuer's car broke on the final lap.

The handicapper got his sums right in the Bentley handicap race (see panel below) where, despite a maximum allowance of 200 seconds, the top three were blanketed by a mere 1.55sec. Tim Llewellyn (Mk VI Saloon) just pipped Mark Sturton and a fast-closing Richard Cresswell.

Paul Carter provided the host club with a third victory of the afternoon when he just scrambled home in a close finish to the Team Challenge race. His margin of victory was but 0.17sec over David Brock-Jest, who headed a quartet of Lagondas, the third- to fifth-placed men ensuring their marque bagged team honours.

The lead battle in the Formula Libre race made fascinating viewing, with

# A slice of history

Simon Worthington fought his way through the order at Silverstone to write the Bentley Turbo R into the record books with its first victory. By DUD CANDLER



Simon Worthington's Bentley Turbo R heads up the Vintage & PVT field

David Ham's Lister Jaguar and Neil Davies' Cooper Bristol circulating as one. The little Formula 2 car carried superior speed through and out of corners, but lacked the necessary grunt to ever threaten to depose the leader. Crispin Harris finished in a distant third position, just ahead of a recovering Ben Eastick, who

spun out of fourth place early on.

Robin Pearce was allowed no respite en route to winning the MGT Register/ACOC race, the AC Ace driver's mirrors full of a quartet of chasers. Fellow Ace racer Andy Shepherd ran second by half distance, but fell to fifth, his clutch slipping badly in the later stages.

MG marque honours were upheld by Graham Coles (A), Stephen

Barlow (whose TC led on the first lap) and George Edney (TB) who split the AC men at the flag.

Keith Ahlers has made a habit of winning this meeting's Morgan Challenge round, and on Saturday the Jersey-based man made it four out of the past five years. Ahlers was exacting his revenge over pal Rick Lloyd who, a fortnight earlier, had beaten him in all three races at Mallory Park.

It was much closer in the third-place battle, where Chris Williams just hung on despite Graham Bryant's best efforts; while James Edgerton secured a safe fifth only after the place-swapping Peter Horsman spun down the order.

Ahlers and Lloyd found the pace even hotter in the concluding Allcomers race, where Ric Wood's mighty V8 Calibra made an all too rare appearance. Lloyd led first time around, but slipped to fourth within four laps as Ahlers and Andrew Newman (Radical Prosport) enjoyed

a mighty tussle over second, soon way behind a fleeing Wood.

The Bentleys of Gerard McCoo and Susan Shoosmith set a strong pace for 'on the road' supremacy in the opening Allcomers Handicap but were in the grip of the handicapper. One who wasn't a pipped his practice pace noticeable was Peter Dubsy who turned generous allowance into a winning margin of 18sec.

There was a similar scenario in the later Allcomers Handicap, where Mark Butterworth and Oliver Bryant sat on the same row. Butterworth's credit lap was the deciding factor as he still had 16sec in hand over runner-up Bryant at the flag.

Handicapping came to the fore in the Vintage & PVT race in which just 1.7sec covered second to fourth, with 'on the road' winner Joseph Singer at the tail of the quartet. Alvis Speed driver Richard Wadman made the most of his allowance to snare the spoils of victory.



Paul Carter took the Pre-war Team Challenge spoils ahead of David Brock-Jest in his Bentley 3/4.5

## BENTLEY IN MOTORSPORT: A UNIQUE RECORD

QUINTESENTIALLY British, yet now owned by the Germans in the form of the Volkswagen Motor Group, Bentley has a truly proud motorsport history. Six victories in the gruelling Le Mans 24 Hours race, spanning 1924-2003, gives the marque a unique record. Other manufacturers have won more often, but none over such a long period, and even before its ultimately triumphant return in 2001, it was well established as part of the folklore of la Sarthe.

At home, Bentley enjoyed much success in the pre-war Golden Era at

Brooklands, and it is to here that the roots of the Bentley Drivers' Club can be traced.

Invitation cards to form the club were left in every Bentley in the car parks at Brooklands by one Keston Pelmore in April 1936.

The first chairman was legendary three times Le Mans winner Woolf Barnato, and the first Bentley Drivers' Club race, a Bentley handicap, was run later that year. However, World War II would cut short the alliance with Brooklands.

Thus, in '49, the club turned its attentions to the then-fledgling

Silverstone circuit. It has hosted an annual race meeting ever since. A mixture of handicap and scratch races are run with the Bentley handicap still very much at the heart of things.

It is unique in that cars for this race start from the pitlane. Lap times vary widely and, accordingly, handicap allowances can be as much as four minutes. The pitlane start is the only way of ensuring that all competitors have the opportunity of driving the full race distance. Old-fashioned values – long may they continue.



Bentley drivers and enthusiasts were out in force at Silverstone



**Bentley and Silverstone have become inextricably linked**

**COUTTS-SKEETEX BENTLEY VINTAGE & PVT SCRATCH (6 LAPS)**

1 Simon Worthington (Bentley Turbo R) 7m45.62s (76.03mph); 2 Susan Shoosmith (Bentley Mk VI Special) 7m47.43s; 3 Adam Stacy-Marks (Bentley Mk VI); 4 Gerard McCosh (Bentley Mk VI Special); 5 Paul Conway (Morgan Plus 8); 6 Greg Bibby (Morgan 3 Wheeler SS). **Fastest lap** Worthington 1m14.83s (78.85mph).

**PHANTOM MOTORS BENTLEY HANDICAP (8 LAPS)**

1 Tim Llewellyn (Mk VI) 13m27.69s (61.09mph); 2 Mark Sturton (3.0) 13m29.05s; 3 Richard Cresswell (3/4.5); 4 Worthington; 5 Jock Mackinnon (3.0); 6 Sebastian Welch (3.0). **FL** Shoosmith 1m17.64s (76.00mph).

**MICHAEL POWLES PRE-WAR BENTLEY, LAGONDA, ASTON MARTIN TEAM CHALLENGE (8 LAPS)**

1 Paul Carter (Bentley 3/4.5) 11m40.26s (71.49mph); 2 David Brock-Jest (Lagonda V12) 11m40.43s; 3 Colin Bugler (Lagonda LG45); 4 Roy Williams (Lagonda LG45); 5 Piers Leigh (Lagonda Rapier); 6 Clive Morley (Bentley 3/4.5). **FL** Michael Rudnig (Bentley Mother Gun) 1m18.02s (75.63mph). **Winning team** Lagonda 2 (Bugler/Williams/Leigh).

**RICHARDSON HOSKEN FORMULA LIBRE (10 LAPS)**

1 David Ham (Lister Jaguar) 11m52.02s (82.87mph); 2 Neil Davies (Cooper Bristol) 11m52.29s; 3 Crispin Harris (Lister Jaguar); 4 Ben Eastick (Jaguar D-type); 5 Jamie McIntyre (Rejo Mk IV); 6 David Bennett (Aston Martin DB4GT). **FL** Davies 1m09.74s (84.61mph).

**THE LESLIE GROUP MG 'T' REGISTER & ACOC RACE (10 LAPS)**

1 Robin Pearce (AC Ace Bristol) 13m01.83s (75.47mph); 2 Graham Coles (MGA) 13m02.13s; 3 Stephen Barlow (MG TC); 4 George Edney (MG TB); 5 Andy Shepherd (AC Ace); 6 David Bishop (MG TC). **FL** Coles 1m15.72s (77.92mph).

**KEARSLEY PEARCE ROUND OF THE MORGAN MOTOR CO CHALLENGE FOR THE TONY MORGAN-TIPP MEMORIAL TROPHY (10 LAPS)**

1 Keith Ahlers (Plus 8) 10m40.66s (92.10mph); 2 Rick Lloyd (Plus 8) 10m43.79s; 3 Chris Williams (Plus 8); 4 Grahame Bryant (Plus 8); 5 James Edgerton (Plus 8); 6 James Paterson (Plus 8). **FL** Ahlers 1m02.97s (93.70mph).

**LONGSTON INTERNATIONAL ALLCOMERS HANDICAP (7 LAPS)**

1 Peter Dubsy (Aston Martin Ulster) 10m08.55s (67.87mph); 2 Ron Gee (MGB) 10m26.56s; 3 Hugh Birley (Austin 7); 4 Chris Guest (Bentley 4.5); 5 Adam Singer (Bentley 3/4.5); 6 Simon Jefferies (Aston Martin DB3). **FL** Gerard McCosh (Bentley Mk VI Special) 1m13.75s (80.01mph).

**JEREMY PADGETT ALLCOMERS HANDICAP (7 LAPS)**

1 Mark Butterworth (MGB) 8m06.35s (77.58mph); 2 Oliver Bryant (Morgan Plus 8) 8m22.57s; 3 Martin Brewer (Aston Martin DB5); 4 Pia Bianchi (Chevron B8); 5 G Bryant (Aston Martin DB5); 6 Simon Ray (Caterham 7). **FL** Andrew Newman (Radical Prosport) 1m01.44s (96.04mph).

**RR&B GARAGES VINTAGE & PVT HANDICAP (7 LAPS)**

1 Richard Wadman (Alvis Speed 20) 10m04.75s (62.69mph); 2 Tim Wadsworth (Lagonda two-litre) 10m10.05s; 3 Reg Nice (Austin 7); 4 Joseph Singer (Bentley 3/4.5); 5 Russell Hicks (Aston Martin Ulster); 6 Alistair Frayling-Cork (Austin 7). **FL** Chris Williams (Napier-Bentley) 1m16.99s (76.64mph).

**Dunne recovered from a first-lap spin to retake the lead and win**



**CCC**  
**Dunne deal in FF1600**  
**Mondello Park, August 22**

NOEL Dunne recovered from an opening-lap spin to take victory ahead of Victor Gibson in a superb Formula Ford 1600 race.

After pole-sitter Dunne's spin, Gibson grabbed the lead from the start. He began to pull away from his rivals, but a moment on lap seven dropped him into the clutches of Neville Smyth and Michael Edgar.

The trio was soon joined by a recovering Dunne, who eventually moved back to the front on lap 11, after which he was able to hold his rivals at bay over the closing laps. Gibson held on for second, with Edgar taking third.

Jackie Cochrane's Tiger scored its usual win in the Historic race, although Alan Kessie held him at bay for four laps in his Gryphon. But the

Tiger's V8 power finally took charge at the end of the main straight, with Kessie forced to retire after another four tours. Jim O'Reilly's Porsche thus took a distant second and handicap honours after a battle with Stephen's Doyle's Elan.

Mick Fitzgerald was again the man to beat in the shortened Dunlop Fiat Uno race, although newcomer Jamie Masterson caused a surprise by taking the lead for the first four laps. However, the novice was given a 10-second penalty for jumping the start, and compounded the problem by thinking he had to pit to take it. He was waved through the pitlane and still managed to rejoin ahead of the opposition, although he dropped down to third on the road by the end of the event. Fitzgerald moved past him to take the win, with David Donoghue second.

Enda O'Connor beat Brian Hearty

by four seconds in the opening Sheane Rover race. However, he had to settle for second place in race two, with Matthew Dunne taking the spoils. Dunne emerged from a three-car battle with Henry Davis and Hearty, who lost his nosecone on the opening lap. Davis finished second on the road, but was later excluded.

In wet conditions, Keith Colmeley took the opening Stryker race from Frank Cassidy. In the second race, Colmeley took an early lead, but was soon overhauled by Keith Dawson. Karl Dempsey emerged from a five-way struggle to land second ahead of Des Bruton, with Colmeley slipping to fourth at the finish.

Two Formula Libre races closed the day, with veteran Ken Fildes taking the Open Wheel encounter in his Formula Atlantic Ralt after early leader Dan Daly retired with engine problems. The Closed Wheel race went to the silhouette Honda CRX of Thomas Carey, who finished clear of Gary Graham's Global Light.

Paul Phelan

**HAVOLINE STRYKER (15 LAPS)** 1 Keith Colmeley 20m57.05s (49.38 mph); 2 Frank Cassidy 21m01.11s; 3 Keith Dawson; 4 Tristin Quinn; 5 Karl Dempsey; 6 Andrew D'Alton.

**Class winner** Quinn. **Fastest lap** Dawson 1m22.010s (50.46 mph). **RACE TWO (15 LAPS)** 1 Dawson 20m43.20s (49.93mph); 2 Dempsey 20m44.90s; 3 Des Bruton; 4 Colmeley; 5 Cassidy; 6 D'Alton. **CW** Colmeley, Dempsey. **FL** Dempsey 1m12.753s (56.88mph).

**FORMULA SHEANE ROVER (15 LAPS)** 1 Enda O'Connor 18m52.47s (54.81mph); 2 Brian

Hearty 18m56.86s; 3 Henry Davis; 4 David Donoghue; 5 Niall Hourigan. **FL** Masterson 1m13.029s (56.67 mph). **RACE TWO (15 LAPS)** 1 Dunne 15m55.51s (64.97 mph); 2 O'Connor 16m13.19s; 3 Dermot Doherty; 4 Hourigan; 5 Cahill; 6 Liam Murphy. **FL** Hearty 1m01.167s (67.66 mph).

**DUNLOP FIAT UNO (10 LAPS)** 1 Michael Fitzgerald 14m06.99s (48.86 mph); 2 Des Donoghue 14m09.14s; 3 Emmet Moore; 4 Cunningham; 5 Alastair Kellett; 6 Jamie Masterson. **FL** Fitzgerald 1m21.152s (50.99 mph).

**HISTORIC RACE (15 LAPS)** 1 Jackie Cochrane (Sunbeam Tiger) 17m18.24s (59.79 mph); 2 Jim O'Reilly (Porsche 911) 17m35.76s; 3 Richard Redmond (Mini Cooper); 4 Ed Cassidy (Sunbeam Tiger). **FL** Cochrane 1m06.478s (62.25 mph). **Handicap results** 1 O'Reilly; 2 Cochrane; 3 Cassidy; 4 Michael Cassidy (MGBGT V8).

**FORMULA FORD 1600 (15 LAPS)** 1 Noel Dunne (Van Diemen RF92) 17m50.26s (58.00 mph); 2 Victor Gibson (Van Diemen RF86) 17m51.09s; 3 Michael Edgar (Van Diemen RF90); 4 Neville Smyth (Vector MG94); 5 Rory Farrell (Crossle 30F); 6 John Morrow (Mondiale M86S). **FL** Dunne 1m10.194s (58.96 mph).

**OPEN WHEEL FORMULA LIBRE (15 LAPS)** 1 Ken Fildes (Ralt RT4) 15m01.46s (68.86 mph); 2 Derek M Daly (Mygale SJ00) 15m12.63s; 3 Michael Daly (Ralt); 4 Enda Byrne (Sheane Rover); 5 Johnny Flynn (Crossle 55F); 6 Euan Hearty (Reynard). **FL** Fildes 57.779s (71.62 mph).

**CLOSED WHEEL FORMULA LIBRE (15 LAPS)** 1 Thomas Carey (Honda CRX) 16m05.53s (64.29 mph); 2 Gary Graham (Global Light) 16m34.95s; 3 Nino Forte (Midget); 4 Michael Rice (Uno); no other finishers. **FL** Carey 1m02.739s (65.96 mph).



Keith Dawson triumphed in the second Dunlop Stryker event

**DUNLOP FIAT PUNTO**

JEFF Griffin, the son of former champion Steve Griffin, made a fairy-tale racing debut when he worked his way up from 10th on the grid in a drama-packed Dunlop Fiat Punto encounter to take the lead on the last lap and win.

For 10 laps it looked as though pole-sitter Richard Kearney would score his eighth win of 2004, but he was finally passed by Pat O'Sullivan after tremendous pressure. He later spun down to eighth, but was able to recover to fifth by the finish.

However, O'Sullivan's luck was

out, as he started his last lap trailing smoke and pulled off, allowing Griffin, who had climbed to second, to snatch the lead. Griffin just held off a final challenge from Pat McConnell, who was only a quarter of a second behind at the chequered flag. Simon Quinn was third after a race-long duel with Jenny Ryan.

**DUNLOP FIAT PUNTO (15 LAPS)** 1 Jeff Griffin 17m59.12s (57.52 mph); 2 Pat McConnell 17m59.37s; 3 Simon Quinn; 4 Jenny Ryan; 5 Richard Kearney; 6 Ian Conroy. **Fastest lap** Pat O'Sullivan 1m09.571s (59.48 mph).



Enda O'Connor beat Brian Hearty in the Sheane Rover encounter

BRSCC

Sollis breezes to Mini Miglia glory

Quilton Park, August 21

# Sollis tops Bill

Bill Sollis made the most of veteran Peter Baldwin falling by the wayside to bag another Miglia win.  
By PETER SCHERER

Bill Sollis fought off a determined Kelly Rogers to win the Dunlop Mini Miglia Challenge, after defending champion Peter Baldwin was forced into early retirement.

Baldwin led from the start, with Sollis and Rogers joining a three-way break on the third lap. As they came over Hilltop, Sollis dived down the inside into Knickerbrook to snatch the lead, while Mark Chandler had Colin Peacock and Mark Sims challenging hard for fourth.

A lap later Baldwin clipped the tyres on the inside of Knickerbrook and was forced out with damaged steering. After Sollis had managed to break clear, Rogers came back with a flourish in the closing laps to keep the leader on his toes. Despite a couple of exchanges with Peacock, Chandler hung on to third place.

Nigel Redwood and Hunter Abbott proved a cut above the rest in both Radical Enduro races. Simon Moulton and Daniel Stilp were equally comfortable en route to a pair of seconds. In race one, Juan Barazi and Nick Dudfield took third with a lap to go, but lost out to Phil Quaife and Stuart Moseley in race two.

Both Radical BiDuro races were lights-to-flag victories for Alex Mortimer. Once Chris Stoney had fought his way past Tim Greaves in the first race, he was able to close enough to threaten Mortimer's supremacy. Following Greaves' retirement on lap five, Henry Morgan consolidated his position after an exciting fight with Tony Freeman.

Stoney chased Mortimer from the off in race two, but was still forced to settle for second. Morgan and Freeman once again fought over third position, with Morgan taking the advantage from lap five.

Poleman Richard Marsh received a first-lap break in the ARP F3 race after James Winslow and Keith Baldwin touched in the battle for

second. As Winslow shot down the grass to retire at Cascades, Baldwin held onto second place, with Shane Kelly and Jon Gray hot on his heels. As Gray piled the pressure on Kelly, they started to close in on Baldwin who was still in second. By lap seven Marsh was well clear, as a three-car battle unfolded for second. A lap later Baldwin suddenly slowed at the foot of Clay Hill and pulled off, making Marsh's lead decisive. Kelly successfully defended his hold on second for another three laps before Gray managed to get by. However, far from meekly surrendering, Kelly came back to challenge, only to be thwarted by red flags.

Despite Luke Kidsley managing to grab the early advantage in the Formula Jedi race, David Roper was

determined not to let him escape. They took Knickerbrook side by side on the second lap, but Kidsley still kept his nose ahead. Frazer Corbyn and Alistair Goss were equally close for third, as David Hodgson lay in wait from fifth. Goss moved into third on lap three and started to drop his rival. But, as the leaders crested Hilltop for the fourth time, yellow flags caused chaos. Kidsley spun as he stamped on his brakes, with Roper, Corbyn and Goss all zipping by as Kidsley rejoined. In the confusion Corbyn had slipped back ahead of Goss and gave Roper a tap at Knickerbrook while unsuccessfully challenging for the lead. On the exit Goss made it three abreast, before slipping in front to claim the victory. Kidsley followed Corbyn home in third, after Roper fell back in the closing laps of the race.

James Hall made the best of the start in the Dunlop Mini Sevens, as Joe Tandy held off a very determined Lewis Selby for second. Selby quickly made it past Tandy and had the lead into Lodge on the second lap. Tandy then came under attack from Dave Banwell for third position, before Paul

Thompson split them on lap six as the whole of the top five closed up. Selby started to edge away as the battle for second became a four-way fight. Hall held onto his advantage and closed on Selby again at the end. Going into Island for the final time Hall staged his attack, but Selby moved over, made contact and sent his rival grass cutting to put his win beyond any doubt. Banwell had gone off at Island a few laps earlier after edging Tandy out through Cascades, forcing his rival to settle for second. James Hayman came on with a late charge to edge out Thompson for third on the last lap.

**DUNLOP MINI MIGLIA CHALLENGE (12 LAPS)** 1 Bill Sollis 20m07.951s (79.60mph); 2 Kelly Rogers 20m08.086s; 3 Mark Chandler; 4 Colin Peacock; 5 Mark Sims; 6 Tim Sims.  
**Fastest lap** Rogers 1m39.172s (80.80mph).  
**DUNLOP RADICAL ENDURO (24 LAPS)**  
1 Nigel Redwood/Hunter Abbott (SR3) 34m08.966s (93.96mph); 2 Simon Moulton/Daniel Stilp (SR3) 34m24.010s; 3 Juan Barazi/Nick Dudfield (SR3); 4 Nick Dove/Nick Padmore (Prosport). **Class winners** Dove/Padmore. **FL** Redwood 1m22.930s (96.63mph).  
**RACE TWO (28 LAPS)** 1 Redwood/Abbott

Bill Sollis leads Kelly Rogers on his way to Mini victory



39m49.762s (93.89mph); 2 Moulton/Stilp 40m03.989s; 3 Phil Quaife/Stuart Moseley (SR3); 4 Barazi/Dudfield. **CW** Dove/Padmore. **FL** Redwood 1m22.992s (96.55mph).  
**MATADOR TYRES RADICAL BIDURO (12 LAPS)** 1 Alex Mortimer (SR4) 17m51.474s (89.74mph); 2 Chris Stoney (SR4) 17m52.768s; 3 Henry Morgan (SR4); 4 Tony Freeman (SR4). **CW** Tim Jones (Clubsport). **FL** Stoney 1m28.210s (90.84mph).  
**RACE TWO (12 LAPS)** 1 Mortimer 17m42.963s (90.46mph); 2 Stoney 17m43.540s; 3 Morgan 4 Philip Gibb (Clubsport). **CW** Gibb. **FL** Stoney 1m27.277s (91.81mph).  
**DACS ARP F3 (13 LAPS)** 1 Richard Marsh (Dallara F398) 18m15.993s (95.05mph); 2 Jon Gray (Dallara F399) 18m22.664s; 3 Shane Kelly (Dallara F397); 4 Mark Dwyer (Dallara F3). **CW** Oliver Allan (Reynard 913). **FL** Gray 1m23.220s (96.29mph).  
**FORMULA JEDI (9 LAPS)** 1 Alistair Goss 12m38.110s (95.13mph); 2 Frazer Corbyn 12m38.110s; 3 Luke Kidsley; 4 David Roper. **CW** Jodie Hemming. **FL** Corbyn 1m22.092s (97.61mph).  
**DUNLOP MINI SEVEN CHALLENGE (12 LAPS)** 1 Lewis Selby 22m07.163s (72.45mph); 2 Joe Tandy 22m09.738s; 3 James Hayman; 4 Paul Thompson; 5 Paul McGarry; 6 Geoff Lettis. **FL** James Hall 1m48.733s (73.70mph).

## FIAT RACING CHALLENGE

MARTIN Riman battled his way to victory in what turned into an entertaining three-way Fiat fight, but he didn't have it all his own way. As the lights went out, it was Jason Greatrex who snatched the initial advantage over the polesitting Riman as they plunged down the Avenue. They were chased by Steve Twist and Adrian Miller.

Under braking for Knickerbrook on the third lap, Riman made his move but locked up, allowing Miller to nose in front. Having quickly reclaimed his lost place, Riman attacked again, successfully slipping inside at Cascades to lead on

Lakeside. Miller was still in with a chance, while fourth-placed Twist could only watch and hope.

Miller briefly lost touch with his rivals, allowing Greatrex to challenge Riman once more. This also helped Miller to close back in on the pair and join the fight. As they came down the Avenue three abreast for the final time, Riman just kept hold of his advantage. Miller also took the opportunity for a final push for second place. A half-spin at the Knickerbrook chicane came close to handing third back to Twist. Of the rest, Kris Greatrex held a solitary fifth place throughout, while Mark Braden took sixth after Jeff Stockton suffered a late spin.

**GEARBOX.COM FIAT RACING CHALLENGE (10 LAPS)** 1 Martin Riman (Uno) 18m19.521s (72.88mph); 2 Jason Greatrex (Uno) 18m20.950s; 3 Adrian Miller (Uno); 4 Steve Twist (Uno); 5 Kris Greatrex (Uno); 6 Mark Braden (Uno). **Fastest lap** Miller 1m48.561s (73.81mph).



Riman: Absorbing pressure



The Radical Enduro championship's two-driver format introduced pit-stops into the equation



# Clarke's pick-me-up

Kevin Clarke made hay with a Snetterton Pickup double while points leader Gavin Seager struggled. By OLIVER TIMSON



Kevin Clarke slithers through Russell at the head of the pack

## BARC

Pickups thrill after five-year break

Snetterton, August 22

Pickup Truck racing made a welcome return to Snetterton after a five-year absence with an entertaining double-header. After some typically close and committed action, Kevin Clarke kickstarted his hitherto disappointing campaign with narrow wins in both races.

"We've been chasing our tails a bit this year, but it all seems to have come together," said a relieved Clarke. But glory didn't come without a fight.

First time out he had to claw back defending champion Steve Dance's early advantage to snatch a mid-race lead. Behind Clarke, points leader Gavin Seager also fought his way past Dance and challenged Clarke until, with brakes fading, he locked up into Russell and fell back to third.

Clarke and Dance duly resumed their battle, briefly swapping places before Clarke surged ahead on the final lap to grab the laurels.

Race two was closer still as Clarke and Dance fought nose-to-tail, lap after lap. Although Dance threatened, he couldn't dislodge his obstinate rival. Meanwhile, Seager was having a troubled run - after colliding with Simon Carr on lap one, gear-selection problems left him in sixth.

With fastest qualifier Pat Gormley relegated to the back for an underweight car, championship leader Paul Jenson took advantage to dominate the Caterham Academy Group One race. Chris Sedgwick got the better of Patrick Scharfegger in a terrific scrap for second.

Polesitter Jeremy Ellis stole clear of a tight leading pack to win Group Two. Going into the final lap, Ellis, Peter Earnshaw and Tim Skipper had edged away from the rest and looked set for a fight to the finish. But as the trio tussled for the lead Skipper and Earnshaw spun at the Esses, securing victory for a delighted Ellis.

"Sideshow" Bob Davis managed to overcome a slow getaway to blitz the Classic FF2000 field. "I deliberately sacrificed first gear to run two

seconds, so it wasn't actually that bad a start," he explained. Behind the Thirsk veteran, an impressive drive from teenager Olly Hancock was sufficient to beat Class A rival Judd Coupland to the runner-up spot.

Nigel Lingwood beat off a stern challenge from multiple champion Simon Davey to wrest Classic FF1600 honours. The regular duellists took turns at the front, but Lingwood's final-lap move proved decisive.

Polesitter Peter Harper strolled to victory in a re-started Fuel Force Classic Clubmans race. He easily pulled away from brother Ray, who held off a hard-charging Mike Hickson to secure second position. Ian Mitchell again won the FF1600-engineered class in his self-built IM, which must have sweetened his long trip home to the west country.

**PICKUP TRUCKS (12 LAPS)** 1 Kevin Clarke 15m53.418s (88.44mph); 2 Steve Dance 15m53.707s; 3 Gavin Seager; 4 Nic Grindrod; 5 Simon Carr; 6 Dave Briggs. **Fastest lap** Seager 1m18.260s (89.79mph). **RACE TWO (12 LAPS)** 1 Clarke 15m50.499s (88.71mph); 2 Dance 15m50.925s; 3 Grindrod; 4 Briggs; 5 Phil White; 6 Seager. **FL** Clarke 1m17.560s (90.60mph) record.

**EVO CATERHAM RACE ACADEMY, GROUP ONE (4 LAPS)** 1 Paul Jenson 5m50.315s (80.23mph); 2 Chris Sedgwick 5m52.837s; 3 Patrick Scharfegger; 4 Adrian Wagstaff; 5 Adrian Argyros; 6 Luke Dimsdale. **FL** Sedgwick 1m25.377s (82.30mph).



Jeremy Ellis won a Caterham Academy Group Two cracker

## AMOC YOKOHAMA MID-ENGINE

**SPORTSCARS SERIES** 1 Sam Blogg (Lotus Elise) 14 laps in 15m05.126s (81.07mph); 2 Lee Noble (Noble M12) 15m05.589s; 3 Alistair Mackinnon (Lotus Exige); 4 Matthew Cummings (Lotus Elise Sport). **Class winners** Noble; Steve Kerr (Lotus Elise Sport 190). **Fastest lap** Blogg 1m03.505s (82.53mph).

## FRANK MCKENNA MEMORIAL AMOC

**INTERMARQUE** 1 Pete Foster (Aston Martin DB4) 18 laps in 20m34.212s (76.44mph); 2 Roy Stephenson (Aston Martin DB4) 20m35.636s; 3 Brian Robinson (Porsche 944 Turbo); 4 Bob Searles (Aston Martin DBS V8); 5 Stephen Archer (Porsche 993 RS); 6 David Grace (Austin Healey 3000). **CW** Robinson; Searles; Jeremy Cooke (Aston Martin DB4). **FL** Stephenson 1m07.675s (77.45mph).

## PRE-WAR/FELTHAM ASTON MARTIN/

**50s SPORTSCAR RACE** 1 Tim Parker (Aston

Martin DB2/4) 11 laps in 15m44.336s (61.05mph); 2 Mark Campbell (Aston Martin DB2/4) 15m46.275s; 3 Russell Hicks (Aston Martin Ulster LM15); 4 Keith Piper (Aston Martin International); 5 Colin Campbell (Aston Martin DB2); no other finishers. **CW** Piper. **FL** Parker 1m24.374s (62.12mph).

**MOSS EUROPE TR REGISTER** 1 Graham Miller (Triumph TR7 V8) 13 laps in 15m13.793s (74.56mph); 2 Andy Vowell (Triumph Spitfire) 15m29.440s; 3 Andy Baker (Triumph TR7); 4 John Thomason (Triumph Spitfire); 5 Steve Chapman (Triumph TR4); 6 David Thompson (Triumph GT6). **CW** Vowell; Baker; Chapman; Mark Humphries (TR7). **FL** Miller 1m07.983s (77.10mph).

**AMOC UBS ASTON MARTINS** 1 Gerry Marshall (Aston Martin DB4) 14 laps in 16m01.782s (76.29mph); 2 Edward Sharpe (Aston Martin) 16m05.369s; 3 Stephenson; 4 Foster; 5 Rowan Atkinson (Zagato); 6 Searles. **CW** Atkinson; Searles; Rikki Cann (Aston Martin V8 Vantage); Robert MacVicar (Aston Martin DB4). **FL** Marshall 1m07.507s (77.64mph).

**WELSH SPORTS & SALOON CARS** 1 Terry Brown (Radical Prosport) 16 laps in 15m33.610s (89.82mph); 2 Peter Williams (Prosport) 15m41.94s; 3 Jeff Davies (Prosport); 4 Huw Williams (Prosport); 5 Keith Butcher (Radical MS); 6 Rhodri Jenkins (Honda Civic Type-R). **CW** Jenkins; Christian Evans (VW Golf GTi). **FL** Brown 5781s (91.82mph).

## AMOC MILLER OILS HISTORIC FORMULA

**JUNIOR** 1 Edwin Jowsey (Lotus 22) 13 laps in

15m04.753s (75.31mph); 2 Barry Westmoreland (Lotus 22) 15m08.969s; 3 Paul Smeeth (Lotus 22); 4 Andrew Hibberd (Lotus 22); 5 Robin Lockford (Eva 100); 6 Duncan Rabagliati (Alexis HF1). **CW** Lockford; Michael Ashley-Brown (Eva 100). **FL** Westmoreland 1m07.201s (77.99mph).

## INVITATION ENDURANCE

1 Hall/Bickley (Westfield XTR4) 27 laps in 30m22.706s (77.84mph); 2 Noble/Baseley (Noble M12 31m11.89s; 3 Matthew Cummings (Lotus Elise Sport); 4 Michelangelo Segatori (Lotus Sport Elise). **CW** Rawles/Holland-Bosworth (Austin Healey 3000 Mk1); Robin North (Ford Mustang); O'Brien/Blower. **FL** Hall/Bickley 1m02.177s (84.30mph).



Jowsey triumphed in FJunior

## AMOC

Blogg on top

Pembrey, August 22

SAM Blogg emerged triumphant in the AMOC's inaugural visit to Carmarthenshire, claiming an AMOC Mid-Engine Sports Car win in his Lotus ahead of Lee Noble. Noble had led early on, while Blogg stayed in front of the battle for third before progressing into the lead.

"It was good to win the first race, despite a bit of rallycrossing," stated a jubilant Intermarque winner Pete Foster. The Slough driver claimed a tight victory after harrassing rival Roy Stephenson in a sister DB4. Despite a moment at Hatchets, Foster reeled in Stephenson as Brian Robinson's Porsche scythed through Austins and Astons to snatch third.

In a demonstration of historic elegance Tim Parker headed a thin Pre-War/Feltham Aston Martin/50s sportscar field in his DB2/4, with Mark Campbell's example second.

In the TR Register race Graham Miller's TR7 zipped past both John Thompson and leader Andy Vowell at Hatchets, guaranteeing fabulous action. As John Thomason spun at Diben, Miller stormed to victory, while Barry Blakely endured a huge off at the exit of Honda. This reduced the boot of his Spitfire to rubble.

Gerry Marshall battled past Edward Sharpe and Roy Stephenson to secure the UBS Aston Martin Championship race.

Graham Cole's Darrian threatened to spoil Terry Brown's Welsh Sports/Saloons victory, diving into first at Hatchets. Cole then visited the scenery, allowing Brown to win ahead of Peter Williams's Radical.

Edwin Jowsey led from lights to flag in Formula Junior, holding off a keen Barry Westmoreland in a battle of the Lotus 22s.

The Hall/Bickley Westfield XTR4 pairing seized the closing Invitation Endurance race, but not before Italian Michelangelo Segatori succumbed to the rain at Hatchets. Hall handed control to James Bickley at the restart, easily winning over the Noble/Baseley machine. *James W Roberts*



Segatori's ex-British GT Lotus spins after being hit by Adams

# Three to tango



**NATIONAL FOCUS** Today's racing drivers do it lying on their backs with their feet in the air, but this wasn't always the case as MARCUS PYE found out at Silverstone

ALL PICTURES: IAN HOLLINGWAVE

**R**acing three sensational cars, with a combined age of 145 years and spanning five decades, made last month's inaugural BRDC 500 Summer Races meeting at Silverstone a red letter day for me. One which provided not only a snapshot of the sport's evolution, but also enough memories to last a lifetime.

My challenge was to master the diverse techniques needed to drive the 1934 Talbot AV105, 1955 Cooper T39 and 1978 Ralt RT1 Formula 3 car. And not look out of my depth before their owners or discerning onlookers.

BGH 21 is one of three Talbot team cars which won the coveted team prize in the six-day, 2000-mile, 1954 Alpine Trial. Husband-and-wife team of Tommy and 'Bill' Wisdom drove Swiss-born Georges Roesch's engineering tour-de-force, and the latter also raced it at Brooklands. What's more, it finished fifth in the '36 South African Grand Prix. Extraordinarily, the lithe chassis also served London's ambulances into the '50s!

Charles and John Cooper were, by then, developing the T39 'Bobtail' sports racer on the back of their 500cc motorcycle-engined F3 cars. Powered by small Coventry-Climax engines, the featherweight streamliners were impressive performers, despite relatively crude transverse leaf springing. John Clark's is the first of a run which proved successful at home and overseas, and was driven by the likes of Jack Brabham.

When Brabham formed his own marque in 1962, his designer was Ron Tauranac. In '75, with MRD (Brabham) sold to Bernie Ecclestone, Tauranac returned to the fray with his Ralt cars, one of which took the European F3 title with Larry Perkins up.

The classic RT1, with its sardine can monocoque, served for five seasons and spanned the gulf from F2 to Super Vee. The most famous was chassis 131, in which Brazilian Nelson Piquet won the 1978 British F3 title. Something which his son Nelson Angelo Piquet is making a good fist of emulating this season.

Owned since 1980 by Frank Gomm, whose late father, metalwork genius 'Mo,' made Ralt tubs – the RT1 looks tiny against lifelong racing nut and car connoisseur John Ruston's imposingly perpendicular Talbot. But it also appears to dwarf the Cooper, designed when Ron and (brother) Les Tauranac – hence RalT – were making a 500cc car in Australia.

Racing the two younger cars did not concern me, but fortuitously Luke Stevens (who races Ruston's Alta) brought the Talbot to Silverstone on the eve of the event for a few laps of acclimatisation – done in the company of some banzai Formula Fordsters!

Roesch's pre-selector gearbox – an ingenious system whereby the driver chooses the next gear ahead of time, then kicks the left-hand change (clutch) pedal to engage it – is simplicity itself to use, and complements his superbly-advanced engine's torque characteristics to perfection.

Raceday started inauspiciously in the Cooper, having passed several cars at the start – including





Memories are made of this: Pye stands with his three steeds



Pye powered the Talbot to third in the inaugural BRDC 500 race

## Specifications

### 1934 TALBOT AV105 'BGH 21'

**Constructor** Clement Talbot Ltd, London

**Chassis** Steel girder box section

**Body** Aluminium over ash frame

**Engine** 3300cc Talbot straight 6cyl

**Power output** 180bhp

**Gearbox** 4-speed Talbot pre-selector

**Suspension (F)** Rigid axle, leaf springs

**Suspension (R)** Rigid axle, leaf springs

**Wheels** 18"x4" wire rims

**Brakes** 16" drums, hydraulic

**Tyres** Dunlop-treaded

**Weight** c. 25cwt (1250kg)

**Top speed** 130mph



### 1955 COOPER T39 CS/55/1

**Constructor** Cooper Car Company, Surbiton, Surrey

**Chassis** Tubular steel spaceframe

**Body** Aluminium

**Engine** 1460cc Coventry-Climax FWB 4cyl

**Power output** 120bhp

**Gearbox** 4-speed Citroën/Cooper transaxle

**Suspension (F)** Wishbones, transverse leaf spring

**Suspension (R)** Lower wishbone, driveshaft upper link, transverse leaf spring

**Wheels** 15"x4" cast alloy rims

**Brakes** 10" drums, hydraulic

**Tyres** Dunlop L-section treaded

**Weight** c. 400kg

**Top speed** c. 130mph



### 1978 RALT RT1-131

**Constructor** Ralt Cars, Woking, Surrey

**Chassis** Sheet aluminium monocoque, steel bulkheads

**Body** Fibreglass

**Engine** 2000cc Toyota 2TG/Novamotor

**Power output** 160bhp

**Gearbox** 5-speed Hewland Mk9

**Suspension (F)** Double wishbone

**Suspension (R)** Parallel lower links, top link

**Wheels** 13"x8"/10" cast alloy rims

**Brakes** Discs, hydraulic

**Tyres** Avon slicks (crossply)

**Weight** 460kg

**Top speed (dependent on gearing)**

c. 145mph



## Taming the trio

RACING any car effectively has always been about playing to its strengths, and engineering any weaknesses out of the equation in the ultimate quest for performance with reliability.

Balance is the key to the Talbot, because once I became acclimatised to its enormity – being perched atop it in a sumptuous leather armchair without seat belts doesn't help – the poise of Roesch's chassis is truly phenomenal.

Furthermore the power, and more importantly and torque of the engine, with its sturdy block and advanced valvetrain, is always on call, orchestrated by that magnificent pre-selector gearbox. Ruston and Gareth Burnett toiled for five years to match the 180bhp outputs achieved by 1938, indeed; the 3.3-litre six pulls like an ox to 4500rpm in all four ratios.

But the underpinnings – leaf-sprung

girder chassis, solid axles and narrow tyres – handle it all with absolute ease. Show the Talbot a quick corner, like Copse, keep the power on and its progress is majestic. Lean it into Brooklands or boot it out of Luffield and the tail slides controllably.

Braking is the only area in which it struggles. The monster leaps and lurches, which the team puts down to the latest non-asbestos linings within the massive drums.

Momentum is everything in the Cooper. Its 1460cc Climax engine (based on a fire pump unit) does not make huge torque or power, but scores because the T39's all-up weight is so low. Its drivetrain has humble origins too, for the transaxle is from a Maignet-type Citroën traction avant, reworked by renowned specialist Jack Knight.

Maximising the grip of the Avon slicks is vital in the Ralt, and that demands precision.

Being smooth and neat, so as not to upset the car's balance – at the risk of temporarily spilling away the downforce provided by the aerodynamic package, or more permanently sliding around haplessly and cooking the tyres – reaps the rewards of increased corner exit speeds.

The hefty Toyota twin-cam engine, strangled by the air restrictor around which the two-litre F3 rules were written for 1974, peaks at 6000rpm and must be kept singing with the Hewland 'box if its full 160bhp output is not to be compromised.

The low, stiff chassis – weighing little more than the Cooper, and a third of the Talbot's avoirdupois – which is clothed in a wind-cheating fibreglass shell, stops superbly with its disc brakes and changes direction instantly. Which is another reason for precise input in the cockpit.

rival Marshall Bailey's T39 – a rear stub axle sheared out of Luffield and I parked it.

A pity because, having initially felt vulnerable sitting upright between the curved longerons that form the upper chassis tubes, my head poking out into the airstream without a rollover bar, I was starting to acquire the taste for it.

In fact, the little machine has remarkable grip considering the skinny tyres' tiny contact patches. By floating through the corners it can be hustled along and retrieved from impressive angles. With the wheels enveloped you can't see them chattering, so it feels more like a magic carpet than a car. Only miles would master it.

The 160bhp of the Ralt's Toyota seems puny after the Talbot's silky smooth 3.3-litre 180bhp Talbot six, despite the Corolla unit (developed by Novamotor in Italy) having less weight to propel.

Those vibrant colours always worked well on Piquet's car, on which I reported in my youth at Autosport. That I was in it, 27 years on, was very special. Still on its original tub, the RT1

demanding respect, but thrived on being made to work through the corners.

Lying flat on my back in its aluminium-clad chassis offered me a worm's eye view of the National circuit, and took me back 17 years to when I raced in the fledgling 'historic' F3 series. With a tiny gear lever in my right palm, in contrast to the Cooper's long pole, I was instantly at home.

Powering out of Luffield, right foot nailed, then up the 'box for the sweep past the BRDC pavilion at Woodcote, that engine note soon came back to me as I chased the ex-David Sears Argo JM6 I raced in 1987 home in fifth.

Yet my day's highlight was still to come. The beautiful 'green goddess' beckoned. Fresh from a fine run at Le Mans, team-mate Josh Sadler was upholding Equipe Ruston honour in the one-hour BRDC 500 feature. With the prickly Alta out, Josh was the last of the frontrunners to pit.

Intensely nervous, I leapt aboard and, with the column stick obligingly showing I, hit the change pedal and the throttle. Then pre-selected second.

We thundered out onto the track in the middle of as wide a range of pre-war cars as I'd ever seen.

Steering wheel in my chest, I found that the Talbot was quite benign, other than under braking when it leapt about alarmingly. Stopping a ton and a quarter for the Becketts hairpin was an adventure every time – thank heavens both hands can grip the wheel – while leaning into Brooklands pulled my stomach muscles taut as I fought to stay in the seat.

John Guyatt, in Richard Pilkington's Talbot Darracq, and the BMW 328 streamliner of Patrick Blakeney-Edwards – both cars having stopped during an early safety car period – came past, leaving us third in this inaugural retrospective. But the sensation of growling out of Luffield, inside rear wheel spinning, tail sliding, gorgeous engine note akimbo, and all the while looking down that majestic bonnet has left an indelible memory. Not being able to catch Roesch's 70-year-old masterpiece on the way home another... ☒

# Why I love... Spa-Francorchamps

No other circuit today offers such a complete test of an F1 driver's skill and bravery, says SIMON STRANG

**F**or me, Spa-Francorchamps is the last circuit to measure *all* the aspects of a Formula 1 driver's talent. Monza is older and carries more historical significance, but it's just four corners and three chicanes. You need to be brave, but you don't need to be bright. Monaco is the most famous, but it is a precision-guided parade. You need to be bright, brave and fast, but you don't need to be able to race. At Spa, you need to do it all.

But the reason I love Spa is because of Gerhard Berger. Let me explain. I hated 1988, the year of total McLaren domination, just as many of you hate this season's never-ending 'redwash'. It's boring knowing who is going to win every Sunday. In times like these, you find yourself an underdog to support. For me, it was Berger. His fuel-starved Ferrari was no match for the sophisticated McLaren-Honda MP4/4, but he never gave up. After that, I always found myself cheering him on.

So to my first visit to Spa. It's 2001, and, through a feature for BMW's in-house magazine, my job is to get Berger, now a director for BMW Motorsport, to talk about his memories of the track while we walk up Eau Rouge on the Thursday prior to the Belgian Grand Prix. It's not a difficult job.

Berger is old school. He was a driver known for "pushing the limit" as he calls it, but even now Eau Rouge leaves him stupefied. The sheer acclivity, the stark reality of the tiny run-off, lined by tyre barriers, that despite their intended purpose provide small mercy on impact, provoke a disbelieving shake of the head. "In the old days it was all about balls," he says, as if staring up at Goliath. "The more you had, the faster you went."

For Berger, Spa simply meant Eau Rouge. Once you got through it safely, he says, everything else was a breeze. "The whole circuit is fantastic, but this is the corner. I could honestly find more time looking at the engine

telemetry than going flat through here. But corners like these are good for your boldness. You need them. To go through here flat would give you such confidence."

Antiseptic circuits were popping up all over the world, riddled with third-gear corners and gravel traps the size of coastal beaches long before Berger quit in 1997, so of course he understands why drivers see Eau Rouge as a rare totem. "If I was to go through Eau Rouge today in an F1 car it would scare me for sure," he says. "It is something very special. Very fast. You just have to stand here and look at it. F\*\*k, it's a serious corner."

So how did a man who used to play chicken with Ayrton Senna to see who could go through Eau Rouge the most times flat in one weekend, drive through it? "It's like a gun," he says. "Once you get here you are a passenger. You have to control the angle of the steering wheel but you have already decided how depressed your throttle is. If you lift or brake here you are in big trouble and that is a difficult thing to accept."

"You decide when you exit La Source whether you are going to do it flat. I remember thinking, 'Should I try it this lap or wait until the next one?', and I would say to myself, 'Not this time'. When I got out of the corner I would think, 'Yeah I can do that flat'. Then I'd come around again and think, 'Hmm, maybe next lap...'

So how many times did Berger 'do it flat'? "In all those times I came here, there was one year when we could do it flat, with the McLaren on wide tyres. I had a special trick. The problem with going flat was that my mind would say, 'Let's do it', and then my leg would subconsciously lift off anyway! So I had to trick my system - I stamped on the throttle with my right foot and moved my left foot to block the brake pedal, so I couldn't use it. In those days you didn't do that so much."

You couldn't do that at Monaco, and you wouldn't want to do it at Monza. That's why I love Spa so much: you need to do it all. ☒

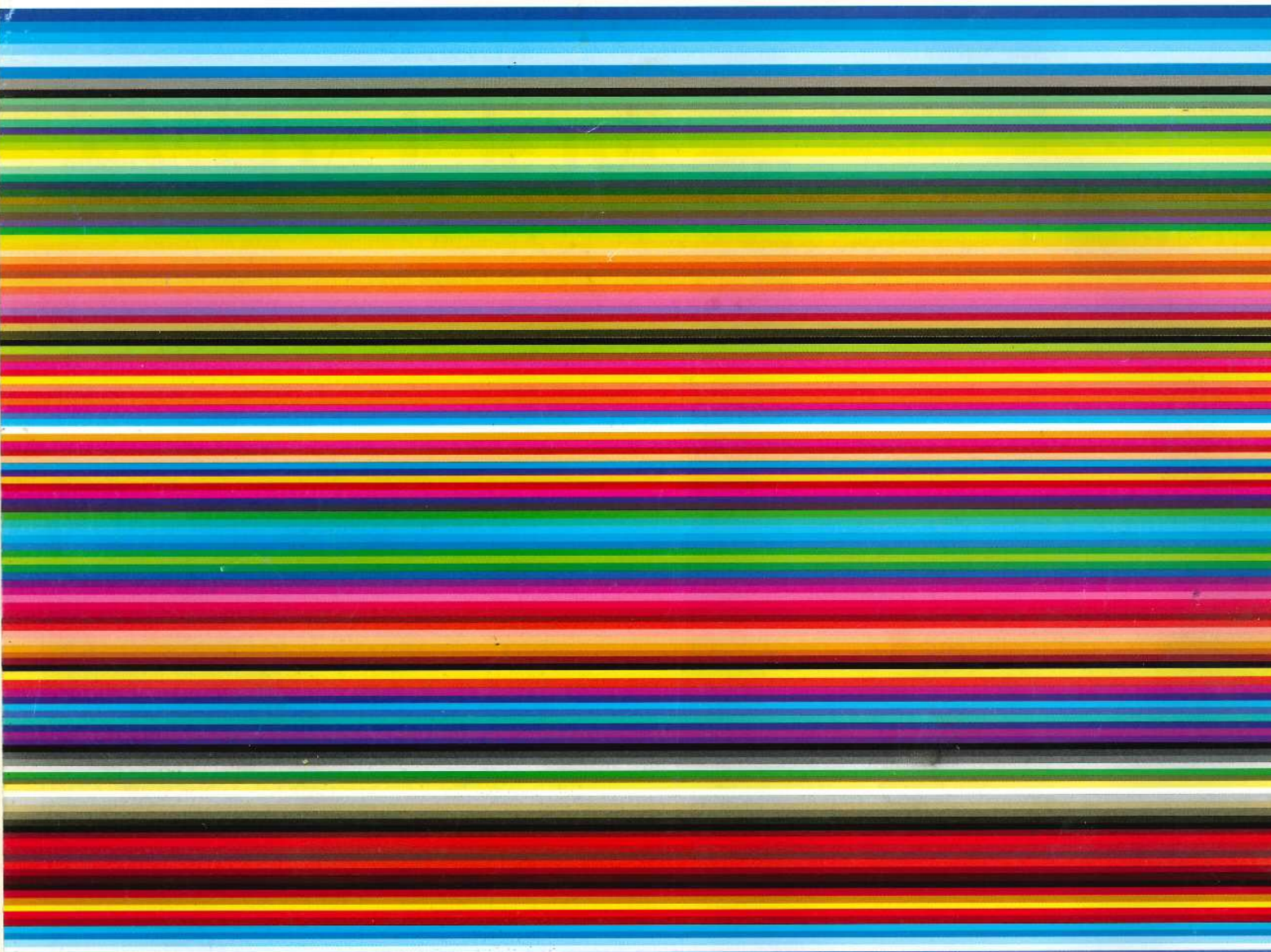
Berger, Ferrari 187, Eau Rouge 1987. 'Doing it flat' isn't viable in these conditions



**"Even now, Eau Rouge leaves Berger stupefied"**

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