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to seventh consecutive
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Misfortune for Bottas as Formula 1 records continue to tumble

Valtteri Bottas must be feeling a bit fed up. Not only does he have the phenomenon of Lewis Hamilton as his team-mate, standing in his way despite the excellence of the machinery at his disposal, but when there is bad luck going in the Mercedes team it seems to go the Finn's way. Formula 1's return to Imola was another example.

We're not talking about the fortuitous virtual safety car that ensured Hamilton kept the lead after his late pitstop – as Alex Kalinauckas shows in our report on page 20, the championship leader was putting himself into the fight for victory with his pace on ageing medium rubber anyway. But the Ferrari debris that damaged the floor of Bottas's W11 and hampered his speed was very unfortunate and surely cost him a likely victory.

Bottas is a very good racing driver up against a great one and, like Nico Rosberg in 2016, he needs a bit of luck to go *his* way if he is ever going to win the world title. As it is, Hamilton is now 85 points clear in the championship table and could clinch his Michael Schumacher-equalling seventh crown next time out in Turkey.

Mercedes has now surpassed Ferrari's record of six consecutive constructors' titles, and one more race win would put it on 114, matching Williams. The only major Schuey record that Hamilton isn't about to break is fastest laps – he's on a 'paltry' 53 to Schuey's 77...



Kevin Turner

Kevin Turner
Chief Editor

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**NEXT WEEK
12 NOVEMBER**

Button on life after F1
We catch up with the
2009 world champion
and GT team boss



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Steven Tee/Motorsport Images

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ETHERINGTON

F1 POISED FOR 23-RACE SCHEDULE NEXT SEASON

FORMULA 1

Formula 1 is set to announce plans for a 23-race calendar in 2021, adding a new grand prix in Saudi Arabia to the roster originally planned for this year.

Teams were handed a first draft of the schedule in an F1 Commission meeting last week that confirmed plans for a more traditional calendar after the COVID-19 pandemic forced significant revisions this year.

Saudi Arabia is set to host its first F1 race next November with a street race in Jeddah, acting as a first step towards a permanent circuit that is due to be built in Qiddiya in time for a race in 2023. F1 would become the latest international sports series to stage an event in Saudi Arabia, with the country previously hosting Formula E, boxing and football, but has faced criticism from Amnesty International for being “part of ongoing efforts to sportswash the country’s abysmal human rights record”.

The 23-race schedule remains provisional, and only has tentative date slots for the second half of the season due to the uncertain nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions placed by countries on international travel. Teams were not informed of any back-up events in case of cancellations.

One of the biggest changes from the planned 2020 schedule is a date shift for the Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort from May to autumn, creating a triple-header with races in Italy and Belgium. A second triple-header will be formed by races in Singapore, Russia and Japan, tentatively setting up a run of six races in the space of seven weeks.

Although the eventual 2020 calendar featured four triple-headers, including a run of nine races in 11 weeks



DUNGAN

to start the season, teams had warned that running races on three straight weekends could not become the norm in the future. F1 first attempted a triple-header in 2018, running races in France, Austria and Great Britain on consecutive weekends, but had agreement from teams not to do so again due to the pressures it placed on personnel.

But Renault F1 sporting director Alan Permane felt 2020 proved it was possible for teams to cope with the challenges of triple-headers more regularly. “I’m not overly concerned, honestly,” he said. “I think we’re going to do four triple-headers this year, if my maths are right, and we’ve coped well with it. The way we organise our travelling staff and their time off and how we rebuild between races works pretty well for us. I’ll be very happy to get back to some normality, and if we do 23 races, then great.”

By forming a triple-header with Singapore, Sochi and Suzuka, F1 has created an extra one-week gap in the calendar for Saudi Arabia to join the schedule ahead of the season finale in Abu Dhabi.



Williams puts paid to Perez rumours – finally

FORMULA 1

More pieces of the 2021 Formula 1 driver market have fallen into place after announcements from AlphaTauri, Alfa Romeo and Williams at last weekend's Emilia Romagna Grand Prix.

AlphaTauri confirmed last Wednesday that Pierre Gasly (below) would be staying with the team in 2021, ending suggestions that he could return to Red Bull after his star performances through this year. The Italian GP winner admitted that he was surprised he had not been considered for a potential Red Bull return, but team boss Christian Horner said the team had "made it very clear" it was not an option for Gasly to be recalled.

AlphaTauri has not confirmed who will partner Gasly next year, but Honda-backed junior Yuki Tsunoda is the favourite to get the seat. The F2 rookie completed his first F1 test at Imola this week in a 2018-spec Toro Rosso car.

Red Bull is still undecided on

who will partner Max Verstappen at the team next year as pressure continues to build on Alexander Albon. Sergio Perez and Nico Hulkenberg have both been linked with the seat, with Racing Point refugee Perez refusing to rule out the possibility of a move.

Perez had also been linked to a seat at Williams as a replacement for George Russell, only for the team to put an end to the speculation by confirming it would be making no changes to its line-up for next year. Acting team principal Simon Roberts (above, with Russell and Latifi) apologised for any "confusion" caused by his refusal at the Portuguese GP to confirm that Russell and team-mate Nicholas Latifi would be retained as planned, but stressed there would be no changes despite Williams's new ownership.

Alfa Romeo confirmed its 2021 line-up last Friday by announcing that Kimi Raikkonen and Antonio Giovinazzi would continue together for a third year, as well as extending the partnership between Alfa Romeo and Sauber to the end of next year.

With Giovinazzi staying in the Ferrari-controlled seat, it means that any of the Italian marque's F2 juniors would have to be placed at Haas. F2 championship leader Mick Schumacher is widely expected to get a seat, with Ferrari boss Mattia Binotto saying a decision is set to be made prior to the F2 season finale in Bahrain.

LUKE SMITH



ESTIMATED FORMULA 1 CALENDAR

ROUND	VENUE	DATE
1	Melbourne AUS	21 March
2	Sakhir BHR	28 March
3	Shanghai CHN	11 April
4	Hanoi VNM	25 April
5	Barcelona ESP	9 May
6	Monte Carlo MCO	23 May
7	Baku AZE	6 June
8	Montreal CAN	13 June
9	Paul Ricard FRA	27 June
10	Red Bull Ring AUT	4 July
11	Silverstone GBR	18 July
12	Hungaroring HUN	1 August
13	Spa BEL	29 August
14	Monza ITA	5 September
15	Zandvoort NLD	12 September
16	Marina Bay SGP	26 September
17	Sochi RUS	3 October
18	Suzuka JPN	10 October
19	Austin USA	24 October
20	Mexico City MEX	31 October
21	Interlagos/Rio BRA	14 November
22	Jeddah SAU	28 November
23	Yas Marina ARE	5 December

Doubts remain over the Brazilian Grand Prix, which is set to move from Interlagos to Rio de Janeiro for 2021, but faces pressure from environmental groups about the planned location for the circuit. An agreement is in place between F1 and the Rio promoters to host the grand prix pending government approval.

Pre-season testing is scheduled to take place in Bahrain at the beginning of March, acting as the final running prior to the Australian GP season opener.

LUKE SMITH



Hamilton and Wolff 'not finished' with Mercedes F1

FORMULA 1

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff is clear that he and Lewis Hamilton are “not finished” with Formula 1, despite speculation about their future following last weekend’s Emilia Romagna Grand Prix at Imola.

Wolff is weighing up a new role within the Mercedes F1 team as he ponders a long-term succession plan, while Hamilton said on Sunday night that there was “no guarantee” he would race on next year.

Speaking to journalists at Imola about the future of Wolff and what impact his departure would have on the team, Hamilton said: “I don’t even know if I’m going to be here next year, so it’s not really a concern for me at the moment. We have a lot of deep conversations, Toto and I, so I’m very aware of where he is mentally, and we share a lot of, and carry a lot of, the weight together I think. I’ve been here a long, long time. I can definitely understand wanting to pull back a little bit and giving more time to family and those sort of things.”

Hamilton’s comments doubting his own place at Mercedes fuelled talk that he could shock the sport and quit after claiming a record-equalling seventh drivers’ world championship this year. But Wolff has insisted that there should be no doubts over his or Hamilton’s future, as he said their

futures would get sorted together.

“I think we go together in a way,” said Wolff. “We have a symbiosis and obviously it’s important where our heart is and mindset is for next year. But I’ve said that this is my team. I’m in a very proud corner with Mercedes and I’m not going to go anywhere. My role may change in the future, and it’s something that he is asked, and I think nothing is ever secure.”

“It was like Niki Lauda in the 1970s: you could wake up one morning on a Friday or Saturday at a track and say, ‘I’m just not having fun anymore’. And I think that can happen to anybody. But we want to continue this journey, we are not finished. Lewis and I and all the team, we’re not finished.”

While neither Hamilton nor Wolff are under contract for next season, Wolff said that the delay in both deals has been caused simply by the team wanting to focus on wrapping up both world titles — Mercedes secured a record-breaking seventh consecutive constructors’ crown at Imola.

“With Mercedes and I, we are pretty much clear: it’s just down to putting pen on the paper at the right moment,” he said. “I was also concentrating on bringing these championships home and it always feels not right to spend days with lawyers, when I’m so focused on just what’s happening on track.”

JONATHAN NOBLE

Grosjean eyes IndyCar future

INDYCAR SERIES

Soon-to-be Haas Formula 1 refugee Romain Grosjean says he has opened talks with IndyCar teams, after admitting he is now interested in a switch to the US.

The Frenchman has previously been reluctant to switch to IndyCar because he was not too eager to race on ovals. But with the series only featuring four oval races next year, he says the make-up of the 2021 schedule is attractive to him.

“It is an option,” said Grosjean. “And if I’m brutally honest, I haven’t been sleeping very well for the last two weeks. It’s a tough year for the world, for the economy, so it’s not a good year to be out of contract, and out of the sport that you are in. So yes, I’ve been looking at IndyCar. I’ve had some contacts and some good ones. And I kind of regret I didn’t check the calendar earlier, that there were only two speedways and one short track in terms of ovals. But it’s not over. And it’s something that I would consider.”

Grosjean’s interest in IndyCar comes as several teams still have vacancies for next year, and he would not necessarily need a big sponsorship budget. He said he had spoken to former F1 driver Marcus Ericsson, who made the switch to IndyCar in 2019, about his experience, and claimed that the feedback was encouraging.

“He says it’s different, but the drivers get a big role to play in the car,” said Grosjean at Imola. “Yes, there are teams better than others, but everyone has got a chance to win the race, and, you know, a day like today, where I think Kevin [Magnussen] and myself, we did bloody good-quality laps [in qualifying] and we’re 16th and 17th, it’s hard to swallow, and probably now I want to win races and have a chance, and win races where I can have fun. So, IndyCar is on the menu.”

Grosjean has also expressed an interest in being part of Peugeot’s WEC project.

OLEG KARPOV AND JONATHAN NOBLE



S BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Adelaide could switch to FE

FORMULA E/SUPERCARS

The future of the Adelaide street circuit has unexpectedly become a political bargaining chip in a battle between private businesses and local election candidates.

Despite holding a contract with Australian Supercars for 2021, the South Australian Tourism Commission has pulled the famous Adelaide 500 race from next year's calendar on the grounds of falling fan attendance in addition to the impact posed by COVID-19, which meant an "inability to recoup costs".

But Autosport understands that Adelaide's absence from the Supercars calendar could pave the way for Formula E to host its first event in the country, which would use elements of the former Australian Grand Prix venue.

FE co-founder and chief championship officer Alberto Longo told Autosport: "Australia is a market that is showing considerable interest in e-mobility, with [electric vehicle] sales tripling in the last year alone. We are in discussion with multiple cities around the world and across Australasia to host future events – including Adelaide, which has great motorsport heritage and a tech hub for the future – but our priority remains the safe and successful



running of the upcoming season."

A potential FE race follows a submission by Business South Australia, backed by significant private sector interest, to the state government to host the series in a bid to drive economic recovery and showcase the state on a global level.

Business SA chief executive Martin Haese, the former lord mayor of Adelaide, said: "Forget Formula 1, Formula E is the future. It's motorsport, technology, renewable energy and an exciting street party all rolled into one and South Australia is the only

state in the country that ticks all the boxes."

The Adelaide 500 could yet return to the Supercars calendar now that South Australia's opposition leader Peter Malinauskas has signed a deal with the series to reinstate the race if the Australian Labor Party wins the next state election. Amid a wave of social media backlash against the 500's cancellation, Malinauskas flew to Sydney to meet Supercars boss Sean Seamer, signing a memorandum of understanding to bring the race back in 2023 if elected.

MATT KEW AND ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

Dennis beats DTM stars to plum BMW electric seat

FORMULA E

When Alexander Sims cut his Formula E ties with BMW Andretti and joined Mahindra Racing, it was expected that the German manufacturer would take the path of least resistance and give the vacant seat to one of its DTM drivers. Philipp Eng, Marco Wittmann and Lucas Auer all tested the iFE.20 in recent months as part of the evaluation to see who would partner two-time E-Prix victor Maximilian Guenther, already confirmed for 2020-21.

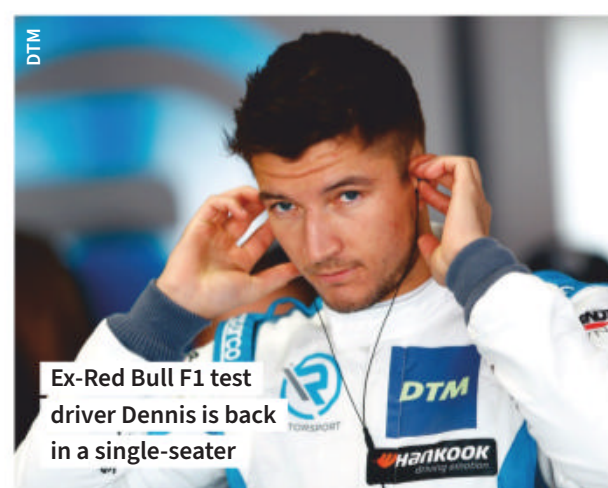


But the surprise recipient of the seat is Jake Dennis, who entered the frame after impressing BMW during his testing outings and with his work in the simulator.

The 25-year-old Brit was left without a top-line drive for 2020 following the demise of the short-lived R-Motorsport Aston Martin Vantage programme in the DTM. This season he's been left to make cameos in the European Le Mans Series and Bathurst 12 Hours.

"I'm really looking forward to the new challenge that awaits me and would like to thank all those in charge at BMW i Andretti Motorsport for their trust," said Dennis. "I'm aware that I will be confronted with unique requirements in Formula E, which I will need to get used to first. But versatility has always been one of my strengths, and I am confident that, with the help of the team, I will quickly get my bearings."

As Dennis lines up to make his first FE start, the championship bids farewell to mainstay Jerome d'Ambrosio. Had it not been for a non-start in the second Saudi Arabia race last season, the Belgian would have contested every one of the 69 events in FE



history. The ex-Marussia and Lotus F1 racer has called time on his professional driving career to assume the position of deputy team principal – reporting to Susie Wolff – at the Venturi Racing squad. D'Ambrosio's options had looked bleak, with his former team Mahindra expected to announce Alex Lynn alongside Sims.

Meanwhile, double DTM champion Rene Rast has secured an Audi FE drive full-time after replacing Daniel Abt in the 2019-20 six-race Berlin Tempelhof season finale.

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Gavin winds back Corvette duty

IMSA SPORTSCAR

Oliver Gavin will step down from full-time driving duties with Corvette Racing after 18 seasons at the conclusion of this year's IMSA SportsCar Championship. But the Briton, who has taken five Le Mans 24 Hours class victories with the team, has revealed that he still expects to race for Corvette "at some point" next season.

Gavin, who turned 48 in September, explained that "now is the right time to stop full-time" despite going into last weekend's Laguna Seca IMSA round still in the hunt for the GT Le Mans title. Only the post-race disqualification of the Chevrolet Corvette C8.R in which he finished third with Tommy Milner handed the GT Le Mans title to Antonio Garcia and Jordan Taylor.



"We came to an agreement on both the team's side and my side that it wasn't in everyone's best interest for me to continue," he said. "It has been well thought out and talked through."

"To get pole position at the first race back [at Daytona in July] was nice and we've had some strong races: Sebring was a good victory and I thought I drove well. But there have been some other races where I haven't been able to wrap my head around what is happening with the tyre and the car. With the short weekends this season there has been no time to figure it out."

Gavin wouldn't elaborate on his comment about racing for the team in 2021, and whether that will mean him filling one of the endurance seats in the Pratt & Miller-run Chevrolet squad for Le Mans and the Daytona 24 Hours, Sebring 12 Hours and Petit Le Mans IMSA rounds. He started off in that role with Corvette Racing in 2002 before being promoted to join the full-time line-up for the first of his 18 seasons the following year. "What that role is has still to be determined," he said. "That's all I can really say."

Gavin said that picking a highlight from his time with the team, which has encompassed 51 wins and five titles across the American Le Mans Series and now IMSA, is difficult. He named his class victories at Le Mans in 2015 and Daytona in 2016 with the C7.R version of the 'Vette as particularly important to him.

"The 2015 win at Le Mans was amazing after what happened with the sister car [which was withdrawn after after Jan Magnussen crashed in qualifying] and then to come through the ranks from almost last," he explained. "One that stands out in terms of what I did in the car was Daytona in 2016."

GARY WATKINS

FORMULA E RULES CASSIDY OUT OF SUPER GT RACES

SUPER GT

Nick Cassidy's bid for the Super GT title in Japan with the TOM'S Toyota team has been ended by his Formula E commitments with the Envision Virgin Racing squad. The New Zealander will have to miss the final two rounds of the series in which he and Ryo Hirakawa lie only a point off the championship lead.

Cassidy will be replaced in the TOM'S Toyota GR Supra line-up by Kenta Yamashita for this weekend's Motegi round and then the Fuji finale on 29 November. Cassidy was testing for Virgin at Magione in Italy last week, and it is understood that Japan's 14-day quarantine rules prevented him from racing at Motegi, while Fuji clashes with the first two days of the official pre-season FE test at Valencia, in which the British team has confirmed he will drive.

Cassidy is expected to contest the next round of the Super Formula series at Autopolis on 15 November with TOM'S, but his return to Europe to continue preparations for his maiden FE season would appear to put his participation in the Suzuka double-header on 5-6 December in doubt. This series, in which Cassidy also lies second in the points, concludes at Fuji on 20 December.

TOM'S has previously called up Super Formula Lights points leader Ritomo Miyata this season for SF duty, when he replaced Kazuki Nakajima, who was busy winning the Le Mans 24 Hours, at Okayama.

GARY WATKINS



Kubica ready to walk away from DTM's GT3 future



DTM

Ex-Formula 1 driver Robert Kubica has strongly suggested that he will not stay in the DTM for the series' new GT3-based rules, which come into force in 2021.

Kubica moved to the DTM this year with single-seater powerhouse ART Grand Prix to drive a customer BMW M4. He suffered a difficult start to the campaign as he and ART got to grips with the series, but bounced back strongly to finish third at Zolder last month.

Asked about his plans for 2021, Kubica

said: "I joined DTM because of Class 1 cars, because of the feeling, the actual ability and what those cars are able to give to the driver. So if you ask me regarding DTM and next year, I don't know if I'll be taking part in this championship and to be honest I don't know what I will be doing."

"Normally this is the kind of period where you start getting an idea of what is possible. Of course with COVID-19, everything got a bit postponed. The next weeks will be quite crucial in understanding what is possible. For sure I have something in my mind what I would like to do. The

question is if it will be possible or not."

Kubica does have some experience of GT machinery – he contested the Dubai 24 Hours in 2017 in a Porsche 911 GT3. But he said he would prefer to compete in the Nurburgring 24 Hours or the Nordschleife-based NLS series over a GT3-based sprint series like the DTM.

"I spent all my life behind the wheel of high-downforce cars," said Kubica. "Once you step into GT3 you kind of have to reset your brain. It might be a good possibility but it's definitely not one I'm looking for."

RACHIT THUKRAL

Palou replaces Rosenqvist in Ganassi line-up

INDYCAR

Star IndyCar rookie Alex Palou has secured a seat at Chip Ganassi Racing as the team expands to four cars for the 2021 season.

The Spaniard will replace Felix Rosenqvist, whose move to Arrow McLaren SP has been confirmed, in the #10 Dallara-Honda. He moves from Dale Coyne Racing, where in his maiden season in the US he scored a

podium finish and set the fastest single lap in qualifying for the Indy 500.

Palou joins six-time champion Scott Dixon, seven-time NASCAR title winner Jimmie Johnson and Marcus Ericsson in the Ganassi line-up.

"To say I'm thrilled or excited to be making this step in my career would be an understatement," said Palou. "Driving for Chip Ganassi is just a dream

come true. I've followed the team for as long as I can remember, and it's the kind of team and owner any driver would want to race for."

CGR managing director Mike Hull said: "I love to watch the growth of young drivers. This year, racing IndyCars has been difficult for young drivers like Alex, but he did a heck of a job. He has that spark, that intangible thing."

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ



ABBOTT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

IN THE HEADLINES

ALONSO TEST RESISTED

Renault Formula 1 team boss Cyril Abiteboul is frustrated that rival teams are resisting his squad's attempts to field 39-year-old two-time world champion Fernando Alonso in the 'young driver' F1 test at Yas Marina in December. "It was the usual stuff of trying to play any little game possible," said Abiteboul. "But most teams are more pragmatic. We just need to hope the FIA will be. Renault does so much for young drivers."

BTCC FINALE IS ON

Next week's British Touring Car Championship finale at Brands Hatch will take place despite the UK moving into a new lockdown. The 14-15 November event is exempt because the BTCC is regarded as Elite Sport under government classifications. For a full story on how the lockdown has impacted UK events, see page 52.

EFO GOES CHINESE WAY

Chinese prospect Yifei Ye won all four races of the quadruple-header Euroformula Open finale at Barcelona last weekend, and clinched the title with his victory in race two. Ye, driving a Dallara-Spiess for the Motopark-affiliated CryptoTower team, led three of the races from start to finish. The exception was the third race, where he survived a clash with Sebastian Estner on the first lap, for which Ye was given a five-second penalty. He pulled out enough time on second-placed Louis Foster, having another outing with Double R Racing, to take victory. Other drivers to take a second place were Lukas Dunner, Cameron Das and Manuel Maldonado.

NOBLE DELIVERS IN LMC

British pair Colin Noble and Tony Wells won the final round of the LMP3 Le Mans Cup at the Algarve Circuit last weekend in their Nielsen Racing Duqueine. Third place was enough for Laurents Horr, who was separated from his usual co-driver Jean Glorieux, to take the title.



Cancelled Ypres OK for WRC?

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

FIA rally director Yves Matton says Ypres Rally organisers have "proven" their case for hosting a World Rally Championship event, even though this month's scheduled round has fallen victim to the coronavirus pandemic.

Just three weeks before the rally was due to make its WRC bow as the penultimate round, it had to be abandoned as the number of COVID-19 cases throughout Belgium remains worryingly high.

West Flanders governor Carl Decaluwe argued it would have been "irresponsible to allow the WRC to take place in Ypres", with those comments supported by city mayor Emmily Talpe.

Club Superstage president Alain Penasse said he hoped his team would be handed another chance to showcase the event in the sport's top tier, a view shared by Matton. "We are hugely disappointed after all the work the organising team has put in, but safety and public health must prevail," said Matton. "With more than 100 entries planned, their work has not gone unnoticed. They have proven that an event

here in Belgium deserves to be considered for a future inclusion in the World Rally Championship calendar."

The Ypres Rally has welcomed top drivers in recent times, including Thierry Neuville and his Hyundai team-mate Craig Breen, who won in 2019 (above).

WRC Promoter managing director Jona Siebel agreed that Penasse and his backroom staff had made a strong first impression since being called up to the revised WRC calendar in August. "The cancellation of the Ypres Rally is a big disappointment, but we thank the organising team for their sterling efforts since the rally was added to the WRC calendar at short notice," he said.

With no Ypres Rally, it leaves December's Monza Rally in Italy as the last remaining round of the series, and therefore strengthens the title prospects of Elfyn Evans, who leads the championship by 14 points from Toyota team-mate Sebastien Ogier. Despite the cancellation hampering his own title chances, Ogier said people's safety was "more important than rallying".

JASON CRAIG

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Brits win as rivals clash

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

British teams won both races as the International GT Open season reached a controversial conclusion at Barcelona.

A late charge from Joe Osborne gave the Optimum Motorsport McLaren 720S (above) started by Nick Moss victory in the first race, which had been dominated by Salih Yoluc and Charlie Eastwood. The TF Sport Aston Martin pair made up for it by inheriting top spot in the 2020 finale.

Osborne was sixth in race one when a safety car eradicated Yoluc's six-second lead, and mayhem ensued at the restart. Osborne came through it all to take victory, including passing the sister McLaren of Brendan Iribe, which had been started by Ollie Millroy. Yoluc was fourth on the road, but was promoted to third when Louis Prette (AF Corse Ferrari) was penalised for nerfing the Teo Martin Motorsport McLaren of title rival Henrique Chaves.

Yoluc was seventh in a cagey opening to race two, but Eastwood took over the Aston and moved up to third behind Miguel Ramos and Vincent Abril who, co-driven by Chaves and Prette respectively, were fighting for the crown.

Abril was given a 2s penalty for too short a pitstop, but was assisted by the sister Ferrari of Stephane Ortelli resisting being lapped by Ramos's McLaren. Abril closed in, and an ambitious penultimate-lap move left Ramos stranded in the gravel and brought out the safety car.

Eastwood took the win when Abril's 2s penalty was applied. A further 10-place penalty for the collision demoted Abril behind Ramos in the classification and lost him and Prette the title to Ramos and Chaves, although this has been appealed by AF Corse. It also moved Eastwood and Yoluc up to second in the standings, just two points behind the champions.

JAMES NEWBOLD

Renault Eurocup merges with Formula Regional

FORMULA 3

On the face of it, Renault Sport has won what was really an unnecessary Regional Formula 3 war in Europe over the past two seasons, with the FIA announcing a merger of the Formula Regional European Championship with the Formula Renault Eurocup to form a new series in 2021.

Plans were unveiled for the new series, known as Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine, at last weekend's Emilia Romagna Grand Prix, where the Renault Eurocup had a double-header support slot (below).

The Formula Regional European Championship was established in 2019. Renault Sport tendered to run the series in place of its historic Eurocup, but was beaten by a rival bid from the promoter of the Italian Formula 4 Championship. Renault responded by adopting the same Tatuus chassis as used in FRegional and keeping the Eurocup name.

Despite FRenault enjoying much stronger numbers and competition than FRegional, the FIA heavily favoured the FRegional series — in which the Ferrari Driver Academy placed its proteges — with F1 superlicence points, and Renault Sport had to successfully lobby for a reversal of a further reduction in points for the 2020 season.

Now the two parties will collaborate from next year. The schedule will include FRenault's traditional Monaco Grand Prix support round, with three rounds expected in Italy. The existing turbo Renault engine will be used, with the FRegional Pirelli tyres. Although the announcement said new cars will

be built at the Alpine base in Dieppe, it is understood that FRenault teams will continue with their current hardware, while the FRegional teams can swap their existing Alfa Romeo powerplants and retain the same chassis.

The involvement of Alpine comes as part of the Renault sub-brand's greater profile within motorsport, extending to a renaming of the French marque's F1 team from 2021.

A maximum of 36 cars will be allowed on the grid with teams running three each, but they will be allowed to run a fourth if their line-up includes a female driver.

Teams from both sides of the divide welcomed the development. Rene Rosin, whose Prema Powerteam squad has dominated FRegional in 2019 and 2020, told Autosport: "It's a wonderful idea, and it's something that should have been done already. Three years ago, I thought there was the market for just one championship, not two, and it's better to have one strong championship than two weak ones."

Ben Salter, team manager of the Arden International team that has been an FRenault race winner this season with Alex Quinn, said: "It's good that it's been sorted. I'm happy that they're merging and it's not muddying the waters anymore for drivers. We're really pleased it's happening, and it will strengthen that tier of motorsport."

Autosport also understands that some rounds could run on the same bill as Europe's various national F4 series, which in the UK's case would mean that it would join the TOCA package for a race weekend.

LUKE SMITH AND MARCUS SIMMONS



FORMULAMOTORSPORT LTD

Dooohan topped the
FIA F3 Jerez test
with Trident



Leclerc Jr tipped for F3 seat

FORMULA 3

Ferrari protege Arthur Leclerc and Red Bull Junior Dennis Hauger are both on the shortlist for Prema Racing's FIA Formula 3 Championship line-up for 2021, and have now driven with the series-dominating Italian team on all four days of official post-season tests in Spain.

Leclerc, the younger brother of Ferrari Formula 1 star Charles, is in the midst of a Formula Regional title battle against his Prema team-mates. Norwegian Hauger, the 2019 Italian Formula 4 champion, had a tough rookie FIA F3 season with Hitech Grand Prix. Both drove with Prema in the two-day test at Barcelona early last month, and were also on track in last week's follow-up outing at Jerez.

"Our ideas have always been to promote one driver from our Formula Regional team," said Prema boss Rene Rosin of Leclerc. "We think that's the right business model for our package. He's a Ferrari junior and we've been working with Ferrari since 2011, and he's gone well in the tests."

Of Hauger, Rosin said: "Dennis has done a good job. Immediately we got a great feeling together. After a very disappointing season, I expect much more from him. He showed us his real potential."

Prema also ran current Formula Renault Eurocup runner-up Caio Collet. The Brazilian Renault F1 Junior, who is managed by Nicolas Todt, also spent one day with ART Grand Prix at Jerez, and Autosport understands he could join either team.

The test was topped by Jack Doohan. The Australian, who raced with HWA this season, was testing with Trident and looks likely to line up with the Italian squad for his second season in the series.

MARCUS SIMMONS

TOP 10 TIMES - JEREZ

POS	DRIVER (TEAM)	TIME
1	Jack Doohan (Trident)	1m29.041s
2	Clement Novalak (Trident)	1m29.060s
3	Calan Williams (Jenzer)	1m29.328s
4	Jak Crawford (Hitech)	1m29.336s
5	David Beckmann (Charouz)	1m29.350s
6	Dennis Hauger (Prema)	1m29.361s
7	Caio Collet (ART)	1m29.461s
8	Johnathan Hoggard (Campos)	1m29.514s
9	Arthur Leclerc (Prema)	1m29.516s
10	Enzo Fittipaldi (HWA)	1m29.558s

IN THE HEADLINES

VAR BREAKS REGIONAL DUCK

Dutch team Van Amersfoort Racing finally scored its maiden Formula Regional European Championship victory at Barcelona last weekend. Pierre-Louis Chovet, a regular with the team, took honours in the final race from FIA F3 racer Dennis Hauger, who returned to VAR, with which he won the 2019 Italian F4 crown, to make his debut in the series. The first two races were won by Prema's Oliver Rasmussen, and the Dane has slashed the gap to team-mates Gianluca Petecof and Arthur Leclerc to make it a three-way title fight.

RED BULL JUNIORS BATTLE

Meanwhile, Van Amersfoort Racing's Red Bull Juniors Jonny Edgar and Jak Crawford will vie for the German Formula 4 title at this weekend's Oschersleben finale. American Crawford took a win at last weekend's Lausitzring round, while Briton Edgar's best result was a fourth, meaning Edgar is 23 points ahead with 75 on the table. Each was in action in last week's FIA F3 test, with Crawford the fastest F3 rookie with Hitech GP, and Edgar driving for MP Motorsport.

WTCR MOVES LAST ROUND

The World Touring Car Cup will stay put at Motorland Aragon for its series finale on 14-15 November, after its penultimate round also took place at the Spanish venue last weekend. The tin-top circus was supposed to travel to Adria, but reconstruction of the Italian venue to over 4km has been delayed by the coronavirus pandemic and heavy rain in September.

DTM ALLOWS DRIVER AIDS

The DTM has relented on its decision to ban driving aids such as traction control and ABS in 2021 on its switch to GT3 machinery. The removal of the devices, installed to help amateur drivers who race the cars elsewhere, would have necessitated the expense of developing parts such as new braking systems in a short timeframe.

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Mercedes' biggest challenge

Records continue to tumble for F1's most successful team. But what happens when the band breaks up, whenever that might be? Change is on the horizon

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

The all-conquering Mercedes team celebrating a constructors' championship victory well ahead of a season finale is not unusual. But there were a few aspects about the triumph at Imola last weekend that stood out from the six that had come before.

And, buried in all the bonhomie, was a lingering problem, which Mercedes is now tasked with addressing.

First of all, Mercedes' 2020 constructors' title is more momentous than the rest. The team has won in this terrible year of years, when so many previously predictable scripts have been ripped up and replaced thanks to the wretched pandemic. That the 2020 championship is taking place at all is incredible.

Second, by winning for a seventh successive time, Mercedes has bettered Ferrari's record of six constructors' triumphs on the trot from the turn of the millennium – with one bit of scarlet carbonfibre doing its best to cling on as the Black Arrows surged past last Sunday, as much as Valtteri Bottas will regret that it did. This new record is also incredible – it is now domination never witnessed before in Formula 1. And whatever anyone's feelings on one team enjoying so much success, it must be respected.

There was another nugget of history in Lewis Hamilton's win, too – he has now equalled Michael Schumacher's record of 72 wins for a single F1 team. He has also now led more than 5000 F1 laps; Toto Wolff has overseen 100 wins as team principal (for the three

“It has not only taken a toll on myself, but on everybody who is involved in this project”

Mercedes took in 2013, he was managing partner); the squad has reached 100 wins alone in the turbo hybrid era; and cars using the manufacturer's engines have now secured 500 F1 podiums.

But Hamilton matching Schumacher – again – stood out, because it felt for so long that what the German legend created at Ferrari might never be built again, at Ferrari or elsewhere, let alone bettered. Hamilton also reached this latest milestone at Imola, the circuit where, tragically, the Schumacher F1 era really got going as the Ayrton Senna era was brutally cut short.

It felt like a particularly emotional weekend all round. As the second wave of COVID-19 bites horribly in Europe, with fresh lockdowns announced or looming as the event wore on, fans had been banned from attending just three days before it got under way. But with the champion squad in particular, there was a sense of

release, all that hard work rewarded. Mercedes looks metronomic on the outside, but it's the unseen effort that makes the difference.

“It has not only taken a toll on myself, but it has taken a toll on everybody who is involved in the project,” Wolff said after the race, soaked in champagne. “Blood, sweat and tears – that is going on behind closed doors.”

Mercedes' 2020 success has come via possibly its best car yet – the crushingly dominant W11. Add in the anti-racism cause its colour scheme promotes and we have a car that cannot be ignored. It is the result of monumental effort to stay ahead of other teams.

The engine – which, it has been suggested to Autosport, was in a more perilous state of reliability when heading to the expected start of the season in Australia, before the spring lockdowns gave Brixworth the chance to address this – was produced to overcome the resurgent, and now disappeared, threat from Ferrari. As was dual-axis steering, as was every tiny innovation that Mercedes piled on to ensure it kept winning, which it will surely now do in 2021 too, thanks to the majority of the design being carried over.

But will the team win beyond that? It's a question worth asking. Wolff is on the hunt for his successor, poised to take a step back from the day-to-day team operations and upwards to a CEO or executive chairman-type role. Hamilton's contract for 2021 remains unsigned, and he hinted post-victory that “I don't even know if I'm going to be here next year”.

Suggestions are becoming louder that the delay is a result of the team, Wolff and Hamilton wanting to wait until the 2020 championships are certain before formal negotiations start. Unlike in 2018, they will need to consider social distancing if they are to be done face to face, with travel also getting ever harder. Plus, there's the consideration of announcing multi-million-pound deals at a time when so many people are facing economic hardships. Hamilton is conscious of this.

The way the Schumacher-era Ferrari squad ended represents what happens when the band changes or breaks up. And that is the challenge now facing Mercedes. It certainly has the capability to overcome such a task, as proved by its success in 2017 when it won in the face of a technical rules change, something that stumped Red Bull in 2014 and Ferrari back in 2005 and 2009.

It may take time to succeed in that challenge. But it doesn't have to look far for inspiration, with Mercedes' Formula E operation – which Wolff visited for its first races in Saudi Arabia instead of going to the 2019 Brazilian GP – winning right at the end of its first season in the electric championship.

But, as with so much of life, in motorsport or elsewhere, there is no guarantee of overcoming the challenge of change. ❧

P20 EMILIA ROMAGNA GP REPORT



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A fearsome electric alliance

Formula E has invested in Extreme E to shape the future of battery-powered motorsport competition and to allay fears of financial uncertainty

MATT KEW

News that Formula E has opened its chequebook and invested in Extreme E might come as a surprise. The two FIA all-electric series both work out of the same building in London. Both were co-founded by Alejandro Agag and both cars – the spec FE chassis and the ODYSSEY 21 E-SUV used by XE – are built by Spark Racing Technology and share electric motor componentry. Surely, on a surface level, they were sister series. So why has FE moved this week to become a minority shareholder, with its chief executive Jamie Reigle now on the XE board of directors?

“We’re calling it the ‘electric alliance,’” Agag says to Autosport with a wry smile as he sits next to Reigle, the pair making final visits to the Hammersmith office ahead of the second UK national lockdown. “The truth is that we have a really close operational cooperation – Formula E has taken some tasks on behalf of Extreme E already. But you never know if a venture like Extreme E is going to consolidate or not until you’re a few months or maybe a couple of years into the project. We decided it was a good moment to formalise this cooperation. The alignment is key.”

Their common objective is to use motorsport as a platform to bring about action to counteract the climate crisis by hitting a bigger audience than a conventional documentary about the environment might. And Agag is right in his cautious approach as to whether XE will “consolidate”.

“We have a close operational cooperation. Formula E has taken on some tasks already”

The off-road racing championship kicks off with its maiden event, a Desert X-Prix in Saudi Arabia, on 20–21 March – a delayed date and in a different location to what was first planned as a result of the pandemic. As highstreets again batten down the hatches, the financial devastation caused by COVID-19 is all too raw. XE launches directly in this headwind.

Agag already came within a hair’s breadth of watching his FE brainchild go bankrupt in 2015. Ahead of only the championship’s fifth race, in Miami, he used his own money to cover the costs of freight. That was in a period of comparative economic boom. The welcome cash injection into XE during the current uncertainty will help avoid another uncomfortable call to the bank manager.

“Obviously, to have the backing of Formula E, which means to have the indirect backing of Liberty Global and Discovery

Communications [FE’s majority shareholders], it gives great financial peace of mind to the Extreme E venture,” says Agag.

It’s also a welcome vote of confidence for FE’s own piggy bank. Autosport understands that some team sponsors requested refunds of up to 50% last season, when the championship docked in seven fewer countries than originally planned. Extrapolate that to FE as a whole, and given the series was hanging in balance just five years ago, questions have been asked over its security. That Liberty Global and Discovery have agreed to the investment suggests the balance sheets are healthy enough.

In his new role as an XE board member, Reigle will have a direct input on where the championship races, the event format, media coverage, growing the audience and the commercial relations. It’s a move that’s been, formally, six months in the planning. Although, informally, it stretches much further back. When Agag interviewed Reigle to see if he was the right person to replace him as FE CEO – which he was, assuming the role in September 2019 – Reigle wanted to see a plan in which the two would tie together.

“I wouldn’t claim that I pitched the idea,” says Reigle, “but certainly from the beginning of the relationship, it’s something we talked about given the platforms are so complementary.”

The takeaway from the new alliance is that the two most high-profile names in EV competition have combined to shape the future of single-seater and off-road competition. They welcome rival series as that serves to promote the cause, although those newcomers will face a tough ask to dethrone the incumbent kings.

Neither give much away when asked if they have a codified five- or 10-year plan for electric motorsport, but that’s not to say there isn’t a grand vision that, for now at least, is for their eyes only.

In the medium term, however, it’s easy to see how the partnership will work. The direct relationship between XE and FE powertrains means that when the former opens up development in 2023, it’s right to anticipate the likes of BMW and DS will move into XE – lamentably, SUV road car sales continue to grow – and rekindle their FE partnerships with Andretti and Techeetah and “piggyback” on the technology. In reverse, Agag expects FE teams to gain a load of information about extreme battery temperature management that will come with XE visiting Greenland and Brazil.

There’s also a less tangible outcome. With Formula 1 champions Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg creating their own XE teams, there was a perception that the off-road series was hogging the limelight. But Reigle, former commercial director of Manchester United, says the new partnership dismisses any notion that, as Alex Ferguson coined in deference to Manchester City, XE have become FE’s ‘noisy neighbours’. Instead, they’ll happily co-exist. 🏆

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YOUR SAY

*Juan Manuel Fangio was the greatest Formula 1 world champion.
He was also an absolute gentleman, one of the most modest of drivers*

JEREMY TAYLOR

Fangio outranks Schumacher and Hamilton

In my view Juan Manuel Fangio was the greatest Formula 1 world champion, surpassing both Michael Schumacher and Lewis Hamilton. Fangio was the grandson of Italian immigrants to Balcarce, a town 250 miles from Buenos Aires. He dropped out of school at 13 to train as an auto mechanic. The majority of his racing was in pre-war Chevrolet V8s and Ford V8s in cross-country racing across Argentina and South America on hundreds of miles of dirt roads.

He got his first world championship at the age of 40 and his fifth at 46 years old. He achieved his five championships with four different teams, Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, Maserati and Mercedes-Benz. He was also an absolute gentleman, one of the most modest of drivers.

Jeremy Taylor

Northiam, East Sussex

FIA and Red Bull should both levy punishment

Many congratulations to Jake Boxall-Legge on his piece for autosport.com regarding Max Verstappen's use of offensive language. An extremely well-articulated call for the FIA to levy a well-overdue punitive response.

Verstappen's arrogance and hubris needs to be reined in. Not only is it time for action from the FIA, it wouldn't hurt for Red Bull to signal its repugnance by imposing some form of internal punishment, too.

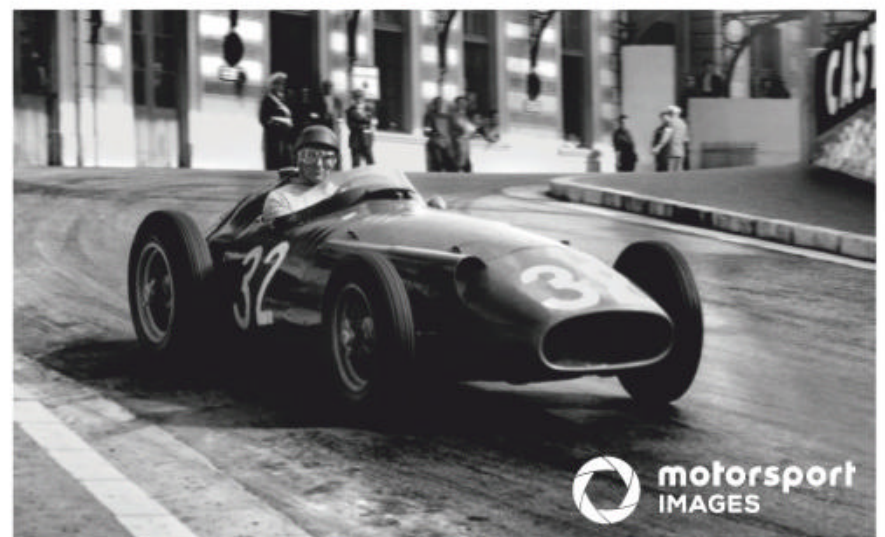
Chris Lake-Smith

Minnesota, USA

Comments were beyond outrageous

I would like to commend your article regarding Max Verstappen's beyond-outrageous comments. As a longstanding motorsport fan, I strongly believe that the sport must take a stance. This behaviour has no place in the sport we all love.

Verstappen is living an incredibly charmed life and that he would behave in such a manner is not acceptable. While one may understand that things can be said in the heat of the moment, his later attitude of it "not being his problem"



should be concrete proof of what we are dealing with.

I don't care how good a racing driver he is, he should be banned. We can do without him.

Michael Lee

By email

Ashamed of a fellow Dutchman

I thank you for bringing to light the totally wrong and offensive remarks from Verstappen at the Portuguese Grand Prix. I am Dutch but totally ashamed of him.

Henk Hagg

Amsterdam

No need to say sorry, Lando

Why oh why did Lando Norris feel the need to say sorry to Lewis Hamilton for stating the truth politely? He said Hamilton has the best car by a mile and has only to turn up to win the race, and only one or two other drivers are capable of coming near him in their cars before they, as usual, run out of puff. Short of the Second Coming, Mercedes can't be beat anytime soon.

Chaz Nash

By email


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STAT
7

Another race, another record – this time for consecutive teams' titles





HAMILTON AND BOTTAS BREAK MORE RECORDS FOR MERCEDES

A seventh straight constructors' title fell to the team at Imola, but it was far from a straightforward contest

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY



motorsport
IMAGES



he Mercedes W11 may well go down as one of the best Formula 1 cars that has ever been produced. But it is certainly *not* designed to run with a massive bit of Ferrari bodywork jammed into the aerodynamic structures of its slippery belly.

The chunk of Ferrari front-wing endplate was a major factor in Valtteri Bottas's defeat against Lewis Hamilton in the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix last weekend. But it was not the only factor that cost the Finn at Imola.

It had all been going so well for one lap and six corners. Hamilton had fallen to third off the line with "poor grip" heading out of his second-place grid spot, although he also hinted at the start process getting away from him somehow, saying cryptically afterwards: "I could have done a different job." The world champion's slow getaway let Max Verstappen follow Bottas into the Tamburello chicane, with Hamilton even briefly coming under pressure from Daniel Ricciardo after edging out Pierre Gasly.

Bottas surged clear, with a 1.452-second gap over Verstappen as he started the second tour of 63. But as he entered that lap's second sector, disaster struck.

Just before the Mercedes driver rounded the Tosa hairpin, his team had warned him to watch for gravel on the road following a first-lap collision between Sebastian Vettel and Kevin Magnussen (later judged by the stewards to have been "broadly similar to other first-lap incidents", and so they took no action to ensure consistency). But the incident had actually left something rather more dangerous on the road – part of Vettel's front wing, "on the racing line", according to Bottas.

"I didn't have enough time to react," he explained later. "I saw a big piece of carbon, so I decided the only chance [for] what I had time to do, was aim at least how to hit it. I decided to go straight over it instead of hitting one of the tyres and possibly getting a puncture. But, unluckily, it got stuck under the floor and apparently it was like 50 points of downforce [down] which, in lap time, is quite a big chunk."

Autosport estimates that such a downforce loss could have

cost Bottas around 0.7-0.8s per lap for the rest of the race. A major impact on Bottas's defeat indeed.

But, visually at least, it did not seem to hinder him in the early phase of the race. For the next 12 laps, Bottas gradually increased his pace into the 1m19s bracket, eking his lead out to 2.019s by the end of lap 15. Here, he reached the 1m18s, setting a string of new fastest laps as he raced towards the end of his first stint on the medium Pirelli tyres.

Red Bull opted to bring Verstappen in on lap 18, when he had been 2.507s behind, with Mercedes guarding against the undercut one tour later, when the leader also came in to exchange his yellow-walled tyres for the hards. This brought in the next factor in Bottas's defeat – Hamilton's alternative strategy.

Mercedes' aim, like the rest of the teams, is to finish 1-2 in every race. It's really not too fussed which driver finishes ahead, just as long as they are successful enough over the course of a campaign to clinch the points required to celebrate a constructors' title. Such revelries are commonplace for Mercedes, with the seventh successive crown it sealed at the race's end enough to overhaul Ferrari's six consecutive championship wins between 1999 and 2004 in the record books.

The team was therefore focused on getting Hamilton back ahead of Verstappen, so it quickly decided to extend his opening stint. The medium tyres on which the top three had started were holding up much better than the softs on the other seven Q3 runners, who all pitted at least seven laps before Pirelli's earliest estimation (lap 24) of when they would need to come in to go non-stop to the end. Significant graining on the softs had been seen in the limited practice running.

As soon as he was in clean air, Hamilton unleashed pace he had been holding in reserve behind Verstappen, explaining that "I backed off and just tried to keep within distance" while behind the Red Bull, because running closer to it had been "killing" his tyres.

His 1m18.477s on lap 19 was the quickest of the race so far, and he didn't dip out of the 1m18s bracket until he stopped on lap 30, even reaching the 1m17s on two occasions. Hamilton's average lap time



SUTTON



This piece of Vettel's front wing ruined the race for Bottas

“I DECIDED TO GO STRAIGHT OVER IT INSTEAD OF HITTING ONE OF THE TYRES AND GETTING A PUNCTURE”

between assuming the lead and his first pitstop was 1m18.280s. Behind, Bottas was averaging 1m18.690s and Verstappen 1m18.771s. This was despite Hamilton having to carve his way past five backmarkers.

Here, though, fate intervened again – and decisively for Hamilton. On lap 28, Esteban Ocon's Renault ground to a halt on the climb out of the second part of Acque Minerali, and a lap later the virtual safety car was activated so the marshals could “recover the car and push it back into the opening quickly and safely”, according to F1 race director Michael Masi.

The VSC was activated when Hamilton was entering the final corner, and a few moments later he pitted, gaining significantly as Bottas and Verstappen were forced to obey their lap time minimum-speed deltas. The result, when back to full speed at the end of lap 31 (the VSC ended with Hamilton exiting the pits), was a 3.713s lead.

He was never headed thereafter, despite rather a lot happening during the rest of the race. We must therefore consider whether Hamilton had a large enough advantage to come in and switch to »

QUALIFYING



FIAPOOL

It was almost the reverse of the Portuguese Grand Prix weekend. After topping the Emilia Romagna GP's sole practice session, Lewis Hamilton had forged ahead in qualifying, leading after the first runs in Q3. But, this time around, Valtteri Bottas found an edge.

He needed to overcome a gap of 0.031 seconds, with Hamilton running ahead on the track as they started their final runs. Unlike in qualifying at the Algarve Circuit, Q3 was a conventional affair, with all the top 10 runners using the soft tyres, after the Mercedes duo and Max Verstappen had made it through from Q2 on the advantageous mediums. No need for Bottas or Hamilton to decide how many goes they got at the end; this time it was all about nailing a sole final lap. One did, and one did not.

Bottas knew he had to maintain his advantage over his team-mate at the corners where he had better speed, but the key to beating Hamilton would be to improve at the specific areas where he was losing time: the Tamburello chicane and the two Rivazza lefts. To find that time, Bottas felt he had to take extra risks, and the result was his fourth pole of 2020.

“I had some issues sometimes in Turn 2 [the first part of Tamburello] with locking up, trying to brake too late,” he explained afterwards. “Sometimes into the last two corners, the downhill braking, I braked too late, and that's why I lost a bit of momentum out of those corners. So it was just small things like that. There was no time to be wasted under braking, which I wasn't quite comfortable in places yet, but I'm glad I could get there eventually. You either go for it or go home. I'm glad it was a good enough lap.”

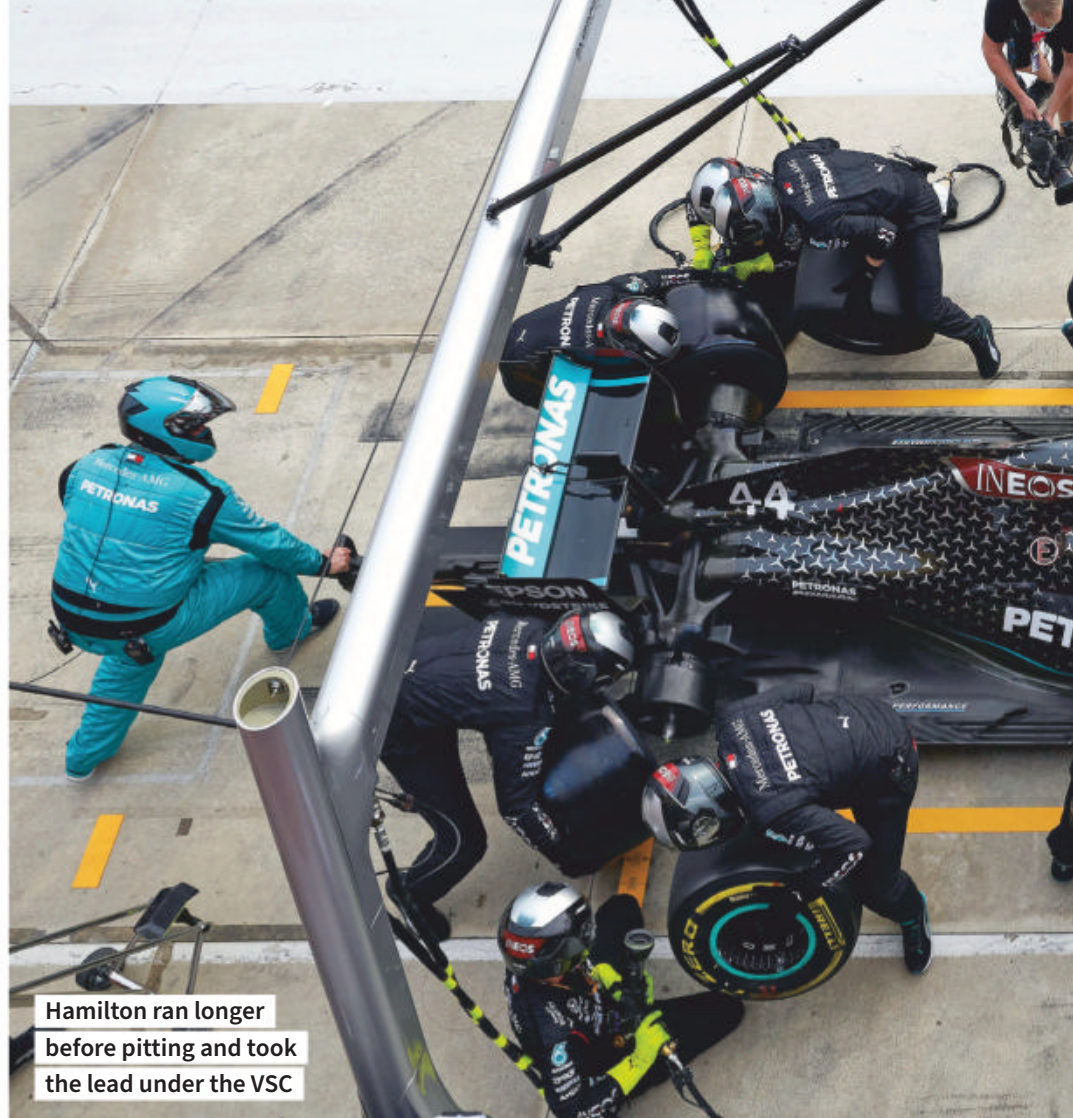
Hamilton was not happy with his final effort – a lap he called “piss poor” after stepping from his W11, as he came up 0.097s short of pole. “The lap is just non-stop, medium-high speed,” he explained. “The grip is very high and so, naturally, the faster you're going, the harder it is to be inch-perfect.”

Behind the Mercedes pair, inevitably, came Verstappen – claiming “my seat”, the third-place chair in the post-session press conference. It had been tense for the Dutchman, as a spark plug problem meant he had to come in early in Q2, with Red Bull rapidly fixing the issue. He got out in time to get through, but felt the lost momentum “ruined” his session, as he wound up 0.567s from pole.

Pierre Gasly starred to take fourth for AlphaTauri, ahead of Renault's Daniel Ricciardo and Alex Albon. George Russell again made it through to Q2, lining up 13th on the grid.



**NO ADS.
JUST MORE
PERFORMANCE**



Hamilton ran longer
before pitting and took
the lead under the VSC

the hards and keep the lead, even in normal green-flag conditions.

And the answer is, at that precise stage, no. The fastest total time any single car set through Imola's long pitlane in the race was Verstappen's, when he travelled the distance in 29.427s during his sole race visit to the pits. Hamilton's lead at the start of the lap the VSC was activated was 28.190s. And so, assuming Mercedes would have been able to match Red Bull's turnaround time (the team's actual quickest total pitlane time was 29.600s, with Bottas), he would have come out 1.237s behind Bottas. But, and again with the caveat that this would have required Mercedes turning him around faster than it ever did in reality, he would have just edged Verstappen by 0.353s, given his lead over the Dutchman on lap 30 was 29.780s.

But even if Hamilton had come out behind the Red Bull, he almost certainly still would have won F1's first Emilia Romagna Grand Prix, assuming events played out exactly as they did.

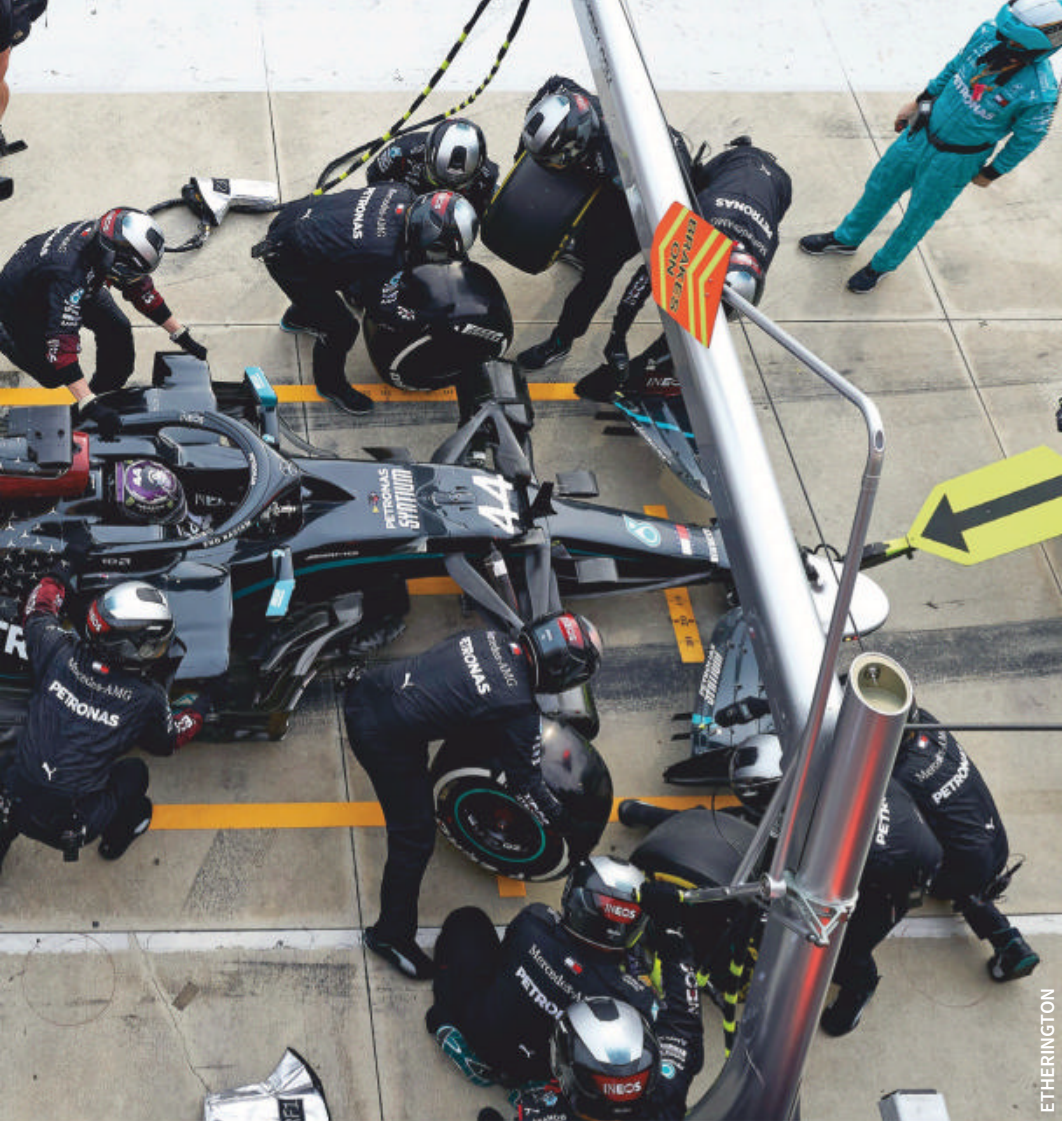
With Hamilton gone – romping to a maximum lead of 13.935s after his VSC stop – the intrigue among the leaders concerned whether Bottas, who after he had stopped was informed of the damage to his car, could keep Verstappen at bay.

Mercedes had attempted to remove the errant piece of Ferrari bodywork at Bottas's first stop, but could not spend too long trying to extricate the piece as it had to ensure he maintained track position. And so Bottas went into the race's middle phase driving a badly hobbled car.

"How it affected me," he explained, "[was] I would say mainly in high-speed corners. I could feel the car was sliding a bit and in some braking [points] it was a bit unpredictable, so sometimes I would lock the wheels and sometimes it would stop pretty quickly. The downforce was not really consistent. It made it really tricky and I could see I just didn't quite have the pace and Max was putting on a lot of pressure."



Verstappen chased
down Bottas but tyre
failure ruined his day



ETHERINGTON

“IT WAS UNPREDICTABLE. SOMETIMES I WOULD LOCK THE WHEELS AND SOMETIMES IT WOULD STOP QUICKLY”

The result of this hounding was Bottas eventually making two small trips into the Rivazza gravel. After the first, on lap 36, he managed to stay in front, but the second on lap 42 gave Verstappen a much better chance, as Bottas went further off the road and lost more momentum. With DRS, Verstappen pounced, surging ahead on the outside approach to Tamburello after closing in across the long run from the second Rivazza left-hander down to the first part of Imola's first real sequence of corners.

For the next eight laps, Hamilton and Verstappen traded a few tenths here and there as they generally lapped in the 1m17s, with the Mercedes' lead holding firm around the 13s mark. But this phase ended with fortune again intervening in proceedings.

As Verstappen raced towards the Villeneuve chicane on lap 51, his race engineer, the delightfully deadpan Gianpiero Lambiase, was informing him that Mercedes had told Hamilton to push to gain two seconds to create a buffer sufficient to see him through any potential safety car. The message tailed off with Lambiase noting "...you're off", which was quite an understatement.

While his engineer was diligently telling him of an unfolding race situation, Verstappen's car had been pitched into a dramatic spin when his right-rear tyre blew spectacularly. The RB16 was sent spinning into the gravel, fortunately stopping before it swung backwards onto the >>



The Dutchman cades a lift back to the pits after losing second place

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circuit. The safety car was called into action.

With Bottas holding 30.094s in hand over third-placed Sergio Perez (it was 54.157s for Hamilton), Mercedes did not hesitate to bring its second car in, taking the time to finally remove the piece of Ferrari. But Hamilton was just passing the pitlane entry when the safety car was announced, and so was forced to tour slowly around. He was picked up by the safety car, and engineer Peter Bonnington was concerned he was going too quickly compared to the required time delta.

"I think [he was] just overly cautious," Hamilton said of this radio exchange. "For whatever reason, the safety car was out, and the delta wasn't an issue at that point. We were quite down."

But he very nearly lost the lead. Mercedes had decided to definitely get rid of his hard Pirellis after spotting a small vibration issue on his rear tyres and, while Hamilton was exiting the pitlane, Bottas was bearing down the pit straight, even at the reduced speed. Hamilton stayed in front, with the lapped Vettel in between the two Black

"IT WAS INCREDIBLY INTENSE, VERY HARD, PHYSICALLY QUITE DRAINING BECAUSE IT'S A VERY FAST CIRCUIT"

Arrows, but it was a close-run thing.

The safety car period was extended significantly when George Russell threw away a fantastic weekend performance by spearing his Williams into the wall on the run to the first right of Acque Minerali. The Briton said he was caught out with "the tyres too cold", and he was left painfully contemplating his error in the glare of the TV spotlight.

When all the debris had finally been cleared up, with Pirelli suspecting a piece of such detritus was behind Verstappen's tyre failure — it had, after all, happened on the run where Lance Stroll's wing fell apart on lap one after his tag against Ocon's right-rear — racing resumed with a six-lap dash to the flag.

Hamilton and Bottas were unleashed, with Bottas's floor damage meaning it still wasn't the fairest fight. But it was a 'battle' Hamilton comprehensively won, producing yet another flurry of fastest laps (eventually bringing it down to 1m15.484s on the final lap) to take victory by 5.783s. On the short third stint, he gapped Bottas by 0.859s per lap.

"It was an exhausting race, the speed we were having to go," said the victor. "It was incredibly intense, very hard, physically quite draining as well, and mentally — mainly because it's a very fast circuit, very bumpy."



Another step: Hamilton prepares to celebrate victory number 93

Behind the two Mercedes came the Renault of Ricciardo, who clinched his second third-place finish in three races — that's the same number of podium visits as he had in his final year at Red Bull in 2018, although they were both wins.

It didn't look as if that was on, though, before the safety car appeared. After his brief look at Hamilton into Tamburello on the first lap, Ricciardo had quickly fallen away from the leaders. By the time he stopped on lap 14, he was 19.011s behind first place, having given away more than a second per lap compared to even the hamstrung Bottas.

From there, he'd headed the soft-starting drivers for the rest of the race, getting stuck behind Magnussen's Haas for 12 laps after rejoining on the hards. So, when Verstappen's tyre let go, it was Racing Point man Perez in the pound seats to capitalise.

After starting 11th, and therefore free to take the much faster medium tyres, the Mexican had driven impressively to rise the order. When he stopped on lap 27, his lap average since the start was a 1m20.247s, compared to 1m19.143s for the race winner, but Ricciardo's was a 1m20.443s. That 0.196s pace difference meant Perez had just enough margin to overcut Ricciardo, now finally ahead of Magnussen, by 1.783s at the end of his out-lap. >>



Ricciardo scored his second podium in three races for happy Renault



TRACKSIDE VIEW

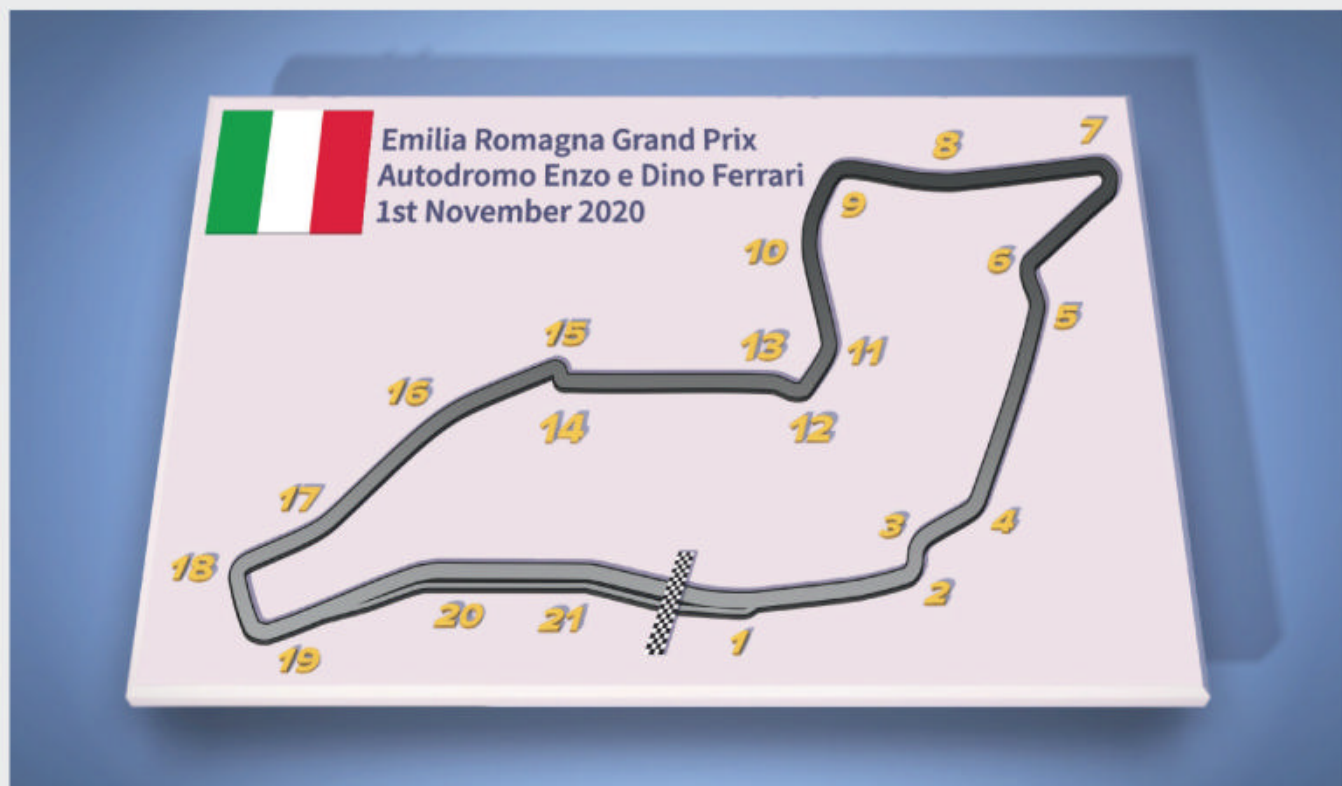
Autosport is standing alone overlooking Imola's pit exit. The Ferrari-badged hospitality and office block tower stands before us, Formula 1 cars rushing solo towards the track's infamous Tamburello sequence. Every now and then, the gearchange noise from cars that have long since surged through the chicane travels back to us on the wind. In the late-October sun, it's a joyful experience.

This is as close to 'trackside' as we can get, again an understandable result of the Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari's COVID-secure set-up. But it remains an absolute treat.

The field is very busy – these 90 minutes make up the only practice time the teams will get ahead of Imola's first F1 race in 14 years. It's so pressured, even the Mercedes are out early – before the session goes green, in fact, with Valtteri Bottas queueing at the end of the pitlane.

There are no single-tour installation runs – the drivers are sent out on lengthy stints from the off, their chance to build up to speed urgently limited. They race by in small packs early on, Imola getting an F1 DRS experience for the first time, no doubt to the purists' fury.

Kimi Raikkonen's Alfa Romeo and the two Red Bulls are sparking heavily over a bump near to the end of the pitwall, the others skating over without



“THE NOISE FROM CARS TRAVELS BACK TO US ON THE WIND. IT’S A JOYFUL EXPERIENCE”

generating a shower of sparks. Raikkonen's passage is less spectacular the longer his run goes on, suggesting a heavy fuel load is being burned off.

We turn to visit the other end of the seating area in front of what is usually Imola's media centre, which for this weekend has been converted into a hospitality area – before the wretched, rising pandemic forced the authorities to

ban spectators from attending three days before the Emilia Romagna event got under way.

We pass over the Williams garage, where Nicholas Latifi comes by on successive laps, roaring away from the pitbox. On his third passage he's wheeled back in, and he won't return thanks to a brake-by-wire problem. As the FW43 is pushed underneath us, we spot the fuel filler cap is open, a pungent fuel smell completing an F1 car's visceral impact after returning hot from on-track action.

After an hour, we return to the makeshift media centre to track the long-run efforts, with the teams trying to gather what tyre data they

can ahead of the race. Pierre Gasly puts in a particularly eyecatching run on the mediums.

Later we ponder the impact of the two-day format. The drivers clearly love it – another day at home, and it would make things significantly easier for the team members across a season. But Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff raises a good point – at tracks where huge crowds come to watch, two days feel like they would leave fans short-changed. The reduced schedule does work although, as we've previously suggested, it simply won't shake up F1's competitive order in isolation.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS



Imola's return was most welcome, even if it was empty of crowds

COATES



DUNBAR

Team-mates acknowledge their latest record achievement for dominant Mercedes



But Racing Point was “concerned it would be difficult to switch on the hard tyres after the safety car”, according to team boss Otmar Szafnauer. So, it brought Perez in behind Bottas when the suspension was called. This dropped him to sixth at the late-race restart, albeit armed with new soft rubber – and Ricciardo, Charles Leclerc and Alex Albon were ahead on 43, 44 and 43-lap old hards respectively.

Yet it wasn’t Perez who made the most impressive restart. That went to Daniil Kvyat, who rescued a fine result for AlphaTauri after Gasly’s radiator weld failure-induced retirement from fifth on lap eight. Kvyat, on new softs, slipstreamed bravely past Perez and Albon at the restart, then barged past Leclerc on the run up to Piratella. But he just didn’t have enough time to bring his advantage to bear on Ricciardo, who had worked hard with his engineer to ensure he had his old hards just warm enough to scamper clear and hang on over the final laps.

“Perez pitted, which, obviously, I was smiling about because I was

“I DEFINITELY THINK THESE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS I’VE BEEN ABLE TO REALLY STEP IT UP”



Hamilton gets in on some Ricciardo ‘shoeey’ action on the podium

[thinking], ‘Well, that’s given me third on track,’” said Ricciardo. “I knew hanging on with the hard on the restart was going to be tricky but I was more than happy to fight for it at the end. Both myself and the team were very willing to keep me out on track. We held on.”

Mercedes’ result gave it 44 points on the day (including Hamilton’s fastest lap bonus), enough to seal the constructors’ trophy that has been at home in Brackley since 2014. But while the team may not care which of its drivers finish in front, that removes the joy of human fluctuation in favour of cold logic. Classic F1.

When considering all that Hamilton and Bottas faced at Imola last Sunday, we can assume that, even without the slice of VSC luck that came his way, the six-time champion would still have triumphed.

Had he beaten Verstappen out of the pits after a green-flag pitstop, Hamilton would have been the one pressuring Bottas into his two Rivazza offs. Had he come out behind the Red Bull, its tyre would still have failed and, given his pace advantage even when Bottas’s bonus aero part had been removed, it’s fair to assume he would have found a way past the other Mercedes. It’s fair because this is all hypothetical – whimsical in the face of F1 facts.

Assumptions aside, Hamilton did triumph – for the 93rd time. He now has an 85-point buffer, and stands ever closer to the brink of yet more history. Equalling Michael Schumacher’s record drivers’ title haul of seven could come as soon as the next race in Turkey.

“I definitely think these last couple of years I’ve been able to really step it up,” Hamilton concluded.

“Quite big strides, I would say, in positive areas and I think that’s come with age. I’m getting older now and whilst not letting my physical side drop off, I’ve been getting stronger, which feels good. I think this year has been feeling that.

“Definitely really proud of this year’s performances, but I couldn’t have done it without the great people at the team working behind me.”

NEXT F1 REPORT

TURKISH GRAND PRIX 19 NOVEMBER ISSUE

Can Valtteri Bottas or Max Verstappen stand between Lewis Hamilton and his record-equalling seventh world title on F1’s return to Istanbul Park?



Leclerc stars, pitstop pain hits Vettel

Continuing the theme of Ferrari's 2020 season, Charles Leclerc impressed at Imola as Sebastian Vettel toiled in the lower midfield throughout the race.

Leclerc made a good start from seventh on the grid and cleared Alex Albon, holding the Red Bull driver off as he went in pursuit of Pierre Gasly. When Gasly had to retire with a coolant leak, Leclerc assumed fifth and then attempted an early pitstop to undercut Daniel Ricciardo's Renault. Although the margins were close, Leclerc couldn't quite find enough to make his way through, settling in behind the Australian for the duration of the race.

When the safety car emerged late on, Leclerc's chances of a podium were momentarily invigorated, but he was unable to keep pace with Ricciardo and was then swiftly dispatched at Piratella by the marauding Daniil Kvyat. Sergio Perez then threw everything at Leclerc, but the Ferrari held onto fifth by half a second.

Vettel, meanwhile, was in early bother as he tagged Kevin Magnussen's Haas at Tosa, and his front endplate ended up lodged in Valtteri Bottas's floor. Having escaped sanction, he ran with Kimi Raikkonen in the late-stoppers' club, but a glacial pitstop – in which the left-rear and right-front wheels were slow to go on – meant Vettel's chances of points evaporated as he dropped behind both Alfa Romeo cars.

Russell misses points chance

George Russell was left reflecting on “the biggest mistake I’ve ever made in my career” after crashing out behind the safety car as his first Formula 1 point beckoned at Imola.

After qualifying his Williams an impressive 13th, Russell gained a place with Pierre Gasly's retirement before getting the undercut on Renault's Esteban Ocon via an early stop for hard tyres to sit on the fringes of the top 10.

Russell managed his pace to ensure he did not lose out to the cars that started around him but had opted for longer first stints, allowing him to move up to 10th when Max Verstappen spun out due to a tyre failure, sparking the safety car period.

But just as Russell looked likely to score his first point, a mistake while running behind the safety car meant he spun into the wall just before the first part of Acque Minerali.

“I was pushing like hell from start to finish, and under the safety car I was just giving it absolutely everything to keep the tyres in and really trying to find the limit,” said Russell. “There are absolutely no excuses. I hit a small bump as I changed gear and I was already in the wall before I could save it. It's absolutely gutting.”

The mistake was all the more painful for Russell given Williams's limited points-scoring opportunities this year. “In junior series, if I were to make a mistake and lose



a race or lose a victory, you go to the next one and you are in that position again,” he said. “I think the team did an amazing job this weekend and there's a lot of things to take away that were positive to be in that position. We were there because we were very aggressive. Unfortunately, that was the reason that got us there in the first place, but equally why it ended how it did.”

Russell's team-mate Nicholas Latifi ran as high as sixth after a long first stint on mediums, but dropped back after pitting. He eventually finished 11th, boosted by not stopping under the safety car.



BIG NUMBER

19

The combined number of positions Alfa Romeo drivers Kimi Raikkonen and Antonio Giovinazzi gained in the race to take the team's first double points finish of 2020





Gearbox headache forces Magnussen out of the race

A gearbox issue left Haas driver Kevin Magnussen suffering from a “massive headache” that ultimately forced his retirement from the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix.

Magnussen dropped to last after being spun by Sebastian Vettel on the opening lap, but was then hampered by the problem when upshifting caused his car to judder. Haas discovered the issue after qualifying, but was prevented from changing the sensors on the

gearbox by the parc ferme rules.

“It was like a big bang every time you upshift,” said Magnussen. “It seemed OK for a couple of laps, but then it starts shaking your head crazily. By the end I just had a massive headache.”

Haas opted to retire him not long after he reported his headache as he was running second to last and stood little chance of scoring points. “They felt there was nothing to fight for, so they boxed me,” he said.

Imola podium chance missed for Perez

Racing Point was left to rue pitting Sergio Perez from third place under the safety car, giving up a likely podium as the Mexican couldn't make his way back through the order on fresh soft tyres.

The move undermined the team's earlier strategy call, keeping Perez out longer than the rest of his rivals to overcut them after his stop. He starting from 11th on the medium rubber as Racing Point failed to escape Q2, and then fought with the two soft-shod McLarens, but used his more durable tyres to stay out far longer.

In that time the runners ahead of Perez – Daniel Ricciardo, Charles Leclerc, Alex Albon, Daniil Kvyat, Carlos Sainz Jr and Lando Norris – were all caught in a train behind Kevin Magnussen, giving the Racing Point driver the opportunity to make up ground. When he stopped on lap 24 to take on hard tyres, Perez leapfrogged them all and was set for a net fourth place, which became third when Verstappen's tyre exploded.

Racing Point decided to pit Perez, sending him down to sixth, but the value of track position became evident and he could make no further ground – he was passed by Daniil Kvyat, who had also made a second stop, but gained a place back when Albon spun.

Lance Stroll had another horrendous race, breaking his front wing in lap one contact with Esteban Ocon, then turfing over his front jackman later in the race during his safety car pitstop.



Q & A

ANDREAS SEIDL McLAREN TEAM PRINCIPAL



Was your pace a shock today, with five teams having cars finishing ahead?

It's not a shock. That's the reality we are in. And that's how we also see it as a team; we know we still have a lot to improve, in all areas. And one thing is clearly the performance of the car, which is something we work hard on as a team. I think if you compare this car this year with last year's car, we made a great step forward.

What was the thinking behind the strategy? Was it maximum

damage limitation?

Yeah, I think it's definitely the right words: 'damage limitation'. We can be happy to go away with 10 points, and having been able to score more points

than Racing Point, and losing only a limited amount of points [five] to Renault. It was damage limitation in a weekend where we couldn't compete with them in terms of performance. In terms of strategy, we saw that the cars in front of us stayed out on the hard tyres. So, we wanted to put fresh rubber on, without losing positions, or maximum one position, to then have the restarting power on the softs, and try to make up positions. Which worked out for Kvyat. But unfortunately with

Perez in front of us not being able to overtake Leclerc, who was on the harder tyres, we didn't get any chance to attack any of the hard runners. So, I would say in the end that probably didn't really change any outcome for us.

How are you feeling about the next race in Turkey?

It's so difficult to predict. We have seen this year that, with the small gaps we have between the teams in terms of performance, the smallest differences in track temperature, track characteristics, the downforce levels you have to choose, can all make a difference of one or two tenths. Then suddenly, instead of P5, you find yourself even being at risk of not making it into Q3.



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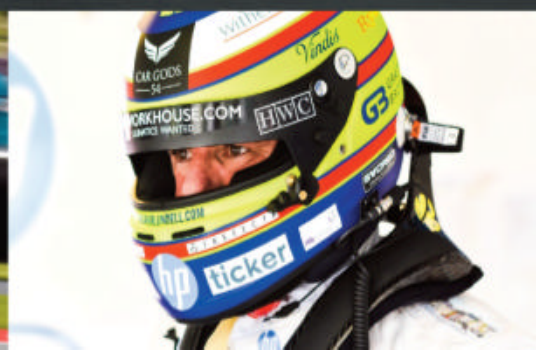
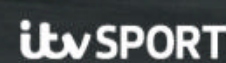
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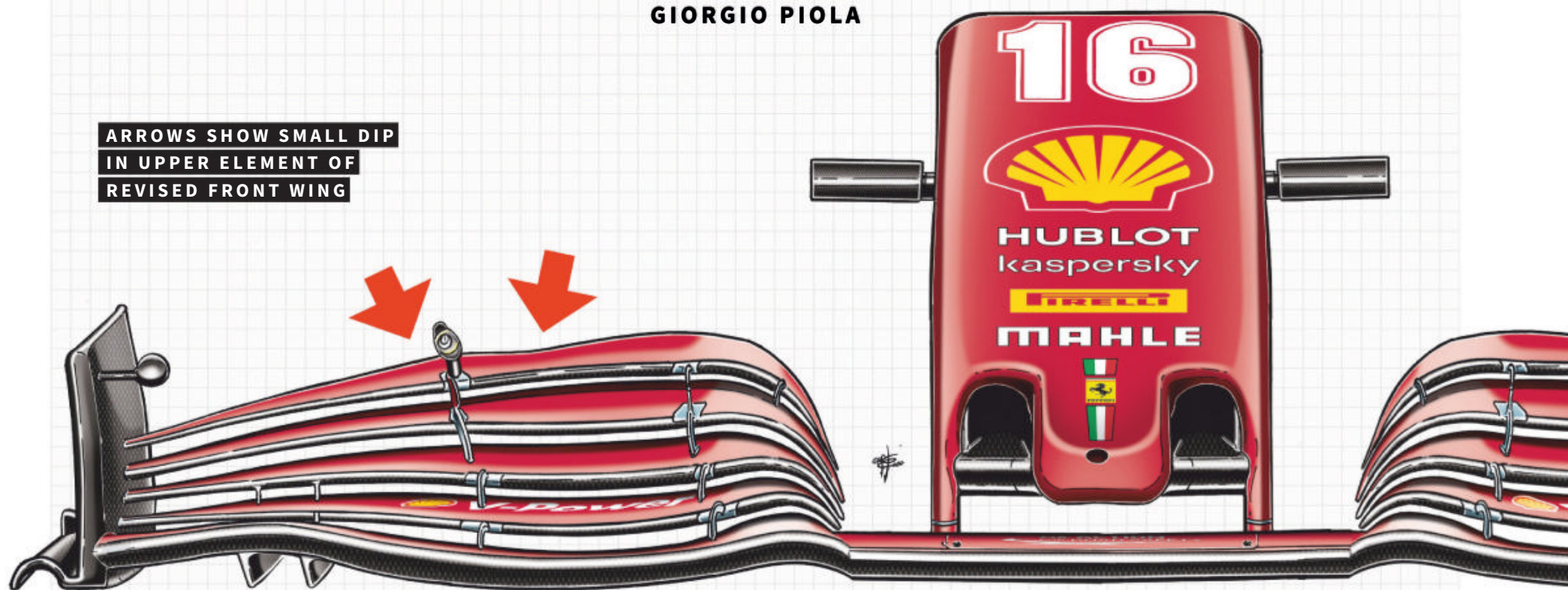
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DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA

ARROWS SHOW SMALL DIP
IN UPPER ELEMENT OF
REVISED FRONT WING



FERRARI CONTINUES ITS PUSH

Full credit to Ferrari for keeping the development of its 2020 car going. After the SF1000 popped out of the assembly line with more flaws than you should shake a stick at, Ferrari has been trying to chip away at them race by race with a range of aerodynamic tweaks, making the engine deficit more palatable.

At the Algarve Circuit and Imola, Ferrari ran a new front wing with a reprofiled upper element, which features a small dip next to the flap adjuster to help direct the airflow outwards. That also gives the wing more chance to bleed off a little pressure earlier on to limit the amount of drag produced, which has also been an overarching factor in most of its aero

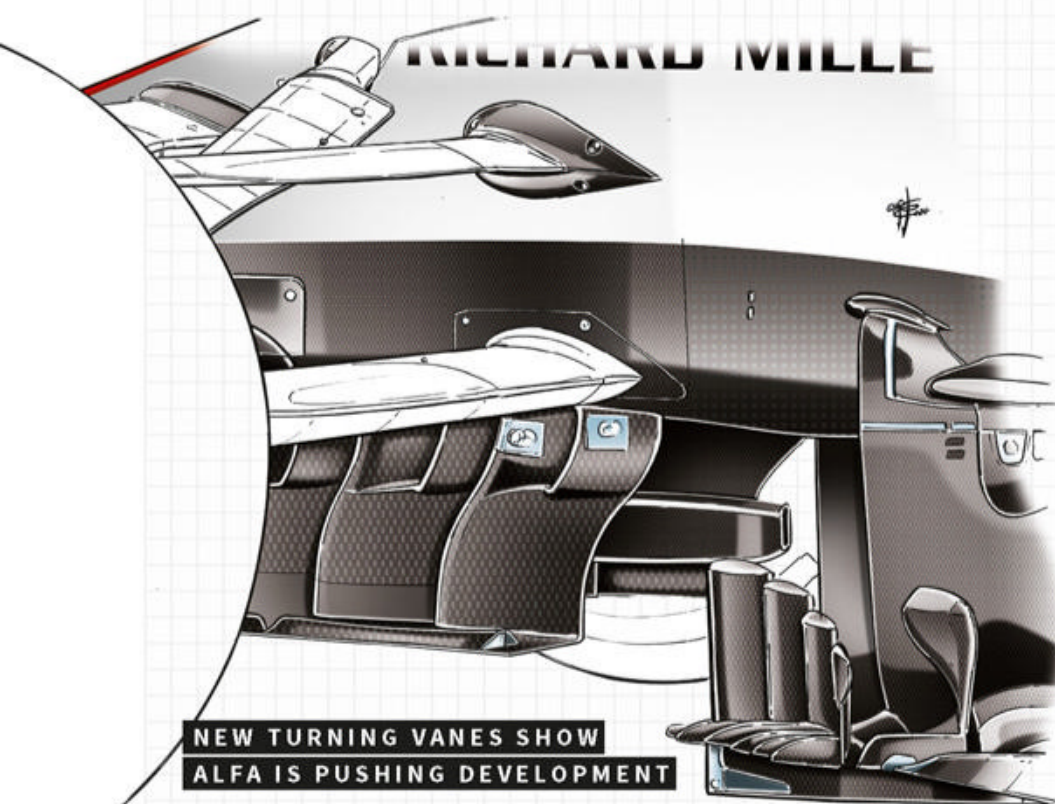


ENDPLATE CREATES CHANNEL
TO CONTROL AIRFLOW

developments throughout the year.

Ferrari also built on its new rear-wing endplates, having previously dropped its multiple-strake design for a slotted version. The first element's bottom portion sweeps back along the rest of the endplate's length, and the two elements behind it curl round and join up to it. This has created a channel in which Ferrari can carefully control the position of the released airflow underneath the wing. Presumably, this assists in creating that all-important low-pressure zone at the back, which increases the effective volume of the diffuser to boost downforce at the rear.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



NEW TURNING VANES SHOW
ALFA IS PUSHING DEVELOPMENT

ALFA ROMEO'S NEW TURNING VANES

The Imola weekend was a good one for Alfa Romeo. In the lead-up to the race, the Sauber-run team had announced that Alfa Romeo has extended its support for 2021, and that it had also retained the services of Kimi Raikkonen and Antonio Giovinazzi for another year. By the end, the two had also bagged a double-points finish for the first time since last year's Brazilian Grand Prix.

The team had new turning vanes underneath the front of the monocoque to try to boost the interaction with the bargeboards further down the car. At the trailing edge, there's a very small raised triangular section to trip the airflow up and outwards to assist that

interaction further.

Although qualifying was difficult for the Alfa pairing, and neither made it out of Q1, the car at least allows its two drivers to showcase what they're good at. Giovinazzi made another excellent start to run 14th on the first lap after starting last, while Raikkonen nursed his tyres deep into the race and captured two points for his efforts.

Before the weekend, Giovinazzi said that the new parts were to help the team keep its development moving in the right direction ahead of the 2021 season and, although qualifying pace seems iffy at best, Alfa Romeo seems to be handy in race trim.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

20	Giovinazzi #99	1m16.208s	18	Raikkonen #7	1m15.953s	16	Grosjean #8	1m15.918s	14	Vettel #5	1m15.385s	12	Ocon #31	1m15.201s
19	Latifi #6	1m15.987s	17	Magnussen #20	1m15.939s	15	Stroll #18	1m15.494s	13	Russell #63	1m15.323s	11	Perez #11	1m15.061s



FREE PRACTICE		
POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m14.726s
2	Verstappen	1m15.023s
3	Bottas	1m15.218s
4	Gasly	1m15.633s
5	Leclerc	1m15.688s
6	Ricciardo	1m15.839s
7	Ocon	1m15.945s
8	Kvyat	1m15.966s
9	Albon	1m16.061s
10	Stroll	1m16.082s
11	Perez	1m16.109s
12	Vettel	1m16.167s
13	Grosjean	1m16.550s
14	Sainz	1m16.560s
15	Giovinazzi	1m16.564s
16	Norris	1m16.671s
17	Raikkonen	1m16.684s
18	Russell	1m16.780s
19	Magnussen	1m17.060s
20	Latifi	1m17.779s

WEATHER Dry, sunny air 15C track 18C

SEASON STATS				
DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL	
1 Hamilton	282	1	1	
2 Bottas	197	1	1	
3 Verstappen	162	1	2	
4 Ricciardo	95	3	4	
5 Leclerc	85	2	4	
6 Perez	82	4	4	
7 Norris	69	3	4	
8 Sainz	65	2	3	
9 Albon	64	3	4	
10 Gasly	63	1	4	
11 Stroll	57	3	3	
12 Ocon	40	5	5	
13 Kvyat	26	4	8	
14 Vettel	18	6	5	
15 Hulkenberg	10	7	3	
16 Raikkonen	4	9	13	
17 Giovinazzi	4	9	14	
18 Grosjean	2	9	14	
19 Magnussen	1	10	15	
20 Latifi	0	11	15	
21 Russell	0	11	12	

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP		
1 Mercedes	479	
2 Red Bull	226	
3 Renault	135	
4 McLaren	134	
5 Racing Point	134	
6 Ferrari	103	
7 AlphaTauri	89	
8 Alfa Romeo	8	
9 Haas	3	
10 Williams	0	

QUALIFYING BATTLE			
Hamilton	9	4	Bottas
Vettel	2	11	Leclerc
Albon	0	13	Verstappen
Norris	6	7	Sainz
Ricciardo	12	1	Ocon
Gasly	11	2	Kvyat
Perez	8	2	Stroll
Perez	1	0	Hulkenberg
Stroll	1	1	Hulkenberg
Raikkonen	7	6	Giovinazzi
Grosjean	7	6	Magnussen
Latifi	0	13	Russell

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

WINS		FASTEST LAPS	
Hamilton	9	Hamilton	6
Bottas	2	Bottas	2
Gasly	1	Verstappen	2
Verstappen	1	Norris	1
POLE POSITIONS		Ricciardo	1
Hamilton	9	Sainz	1
Bottas	4		













QUALIFYING 1			QUALIFYING 2			QUALIFYING 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m14.221s	1	Bottas	1m14.585s	1	Bottas	1m13.609s
2	Hamilton	1m14.229s	2	Hamilton	1m14.643s	2	Hamilton	1m13.706s
3	Verstappen	1m15.034s	3	Gasly	1m14.681s	3	Verstappen	1m14.176s
4	Leclerc	1m15.123s	4	Albon	1m14.745s	4	Gasly	1m14.502s
5	Gasly	1m15.183s	5	Ricciardo	1m14.953s	5	Ricciardo	1m14.520s
6	Norris	1m15.274s	6	Verstappen	1m14.974s	6	Albon	1m14.572s
7	Ocon	1m15.352s	7	Leclerc	1m15.017s	7	Leclerc	1m14.616s
8	Albon	1m15.402s	8	Kvyat	1m15.022s	8	Kvyat	1m14.696s
9	Perez	1m15.407s	9	Sainz	1m15.027s	9	Norris	1m14.814s
10	Kvyat	1m15.412s	10	Norris	1m15.051s	10	Sainz	1m14.911s
11	Ricciardo	1m15.474s	11	Perez	1m15.061s			
12	Sainz	1m15.528s	12	Ocon	1m15.201s			
13	Vettel	1m15.571s	13	Russell	1m15.323s			
14	Russell	1m15.760s	14	Vettel	1m15.385s			
15	Stroll	1m15.822s	15	Stroll	1m15.494s			
16	Grosjean	1m15.918s						
17	Magnussen	1m15.939s						
18	Raikkonen	1m15.953s						
19	Latifi	1m15.987s						
20	Giovinazzi	1m16.208s						

WEATHER Dry, sunny air 20C track 26C



STARTING GRID

10 Sainz #55 1m14.911s		8 Kvyat #26 1m14.696s		6 Albon #23 1m14.572s		4 Gasly #10 1m14.502s		2 Hamilton #44 1m13.706s	
	9 Norris #4 1m14.814s		7 Leclerc #16 1m14.616s		5 Ricciardo #3 1m14.520s		3 Verstappen #33 1m14.176s		1 Bottas #77 1m13.609s

RACE RESULTS ROUND 13 (63 LAPS – 192.04 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISHTIME	LED	TYRES
1	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	1h28m32.430s	45	Mu, Hn, Su
2	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Mercedes	+5.783s	18	Mu, Hn, Su
3	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	Renault	+14.320s		Su, Hn
4	Daniil Kvyat (RUS)	AlphaTauri-Honda	+15.141s		Su, Hn, Su
5	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	+19.111s		Su, Hn
6	Sergio Perez (MEX)	RacingPoint-Mercedes	+19.652s		Mn, Hn, Sn
7	Carlos Sainz Jr (ESP)	McLaren-Renault	+20.230s		Su, Mn, Su
8	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Renault	+21.131s		Su, Mn, Su
9	Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+22.224s		Mn, Sn
10	Antonio Giovinazzi (ITA)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+26.398s		Sn, Mn
11	Nicholas Latifi (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	+27.135s		Mn, Hn
12	Sebastian Vettel (DEU)	Ferrari	+28.453s		Mn, Hn, Sn
13	Lance Stroll (CAN)	RacingPoint-Mercedes	+29.163s		Mn, Hn, Mu, Sn
14	Romain Grosjean (FRA)	Haas-Ferrari	+32.935s		Mn, Hn, Sn
15	Alexander Albon (THA)	Red Bull-Honda	+57.284s		Su, Hn, Su
R	George Russell (GBR)	Williams-Mercedes	51 laps-accident		Mn, Hn
R	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda	50 laps-puncture		Mu, Hn
R	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	47 laps-physical		Mn, Hn
R	Esteban Ocon (FRA)	Renault	27 laps-clutch		Mn, Hn
R	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Honda	8 laps-radiator		Su

FASTEST LAPS

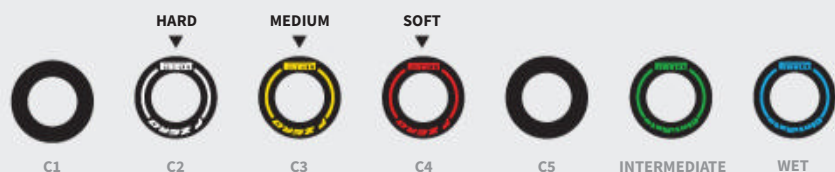
POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Hamilton	1m15.484s	-	63
2	Bottas	1m15.902s	+0.418s	63
3	Albon	1m16.177s	+0.693s	63
4	Ricciardo	1m17.552s	+2.068s	62
5	Verstappen	1m17.637s	+2.153s	44
6	Kvyat	1m17.666s	+2.182s	62
7	Vettel	1m17.767s	+2.283s	44
8	Norris	1m18.069s	+2.585s	63
9	Perez	1m18.084s	+2.600s	49
10	Raikkonen	1m18.088s	+2.604s	63
11	Sainz	1m18.118s	+2.634s	62
12	Leclerc	1m18.173s	+2.689s	62
13	Stroll	1m18.360s	+2.876s	46
14	Latifi	1m18.719s	+3.235s	37
15	Giovinazzi	1m18.794s	+3.310s	61
16	Russell	1m18.811s	+3.327s	43
17	Grosjean	1m18.822s	+3.338s	45
18	Magnussen	1m19.273s	+3.789s	45
19	Ocon	1m19.606s	+4.122s	22
20	Gasly	1m20.403s	+4.919s	5

WEATHER Dry, overcast air 18-19C track 22-24C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 130.14mph **FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED** 145.48mph

TYRES

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



RACE BRIEFING

GRID PENALTIES

GROSJEAN

Five-second penalty and one licence point for leaving the track multiple times without justifiable reason

STAT

72

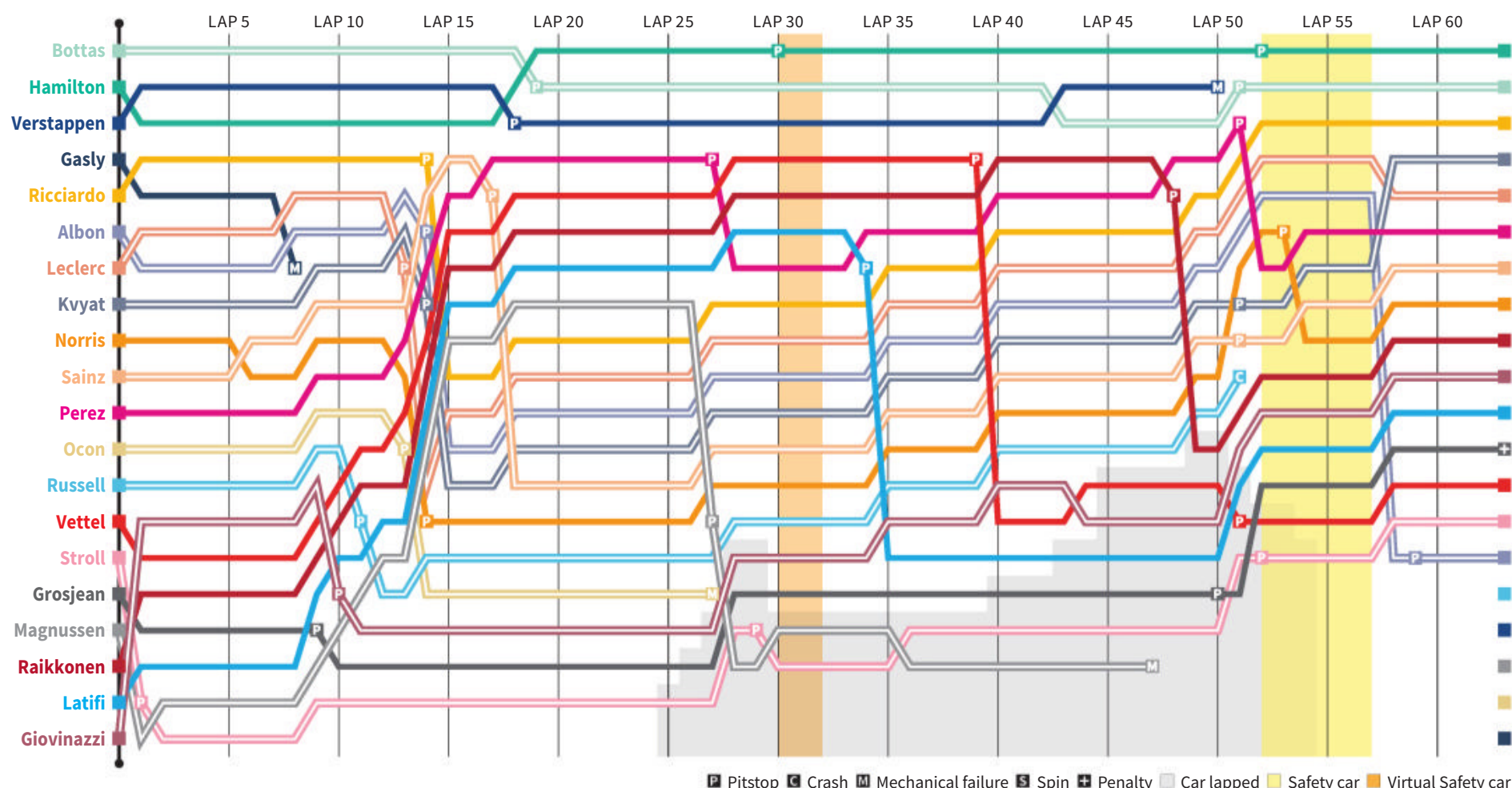
F1 wins for Hamilton at Mercedes, matching Michael Schumacher at Ferrari

STAT

31

Ricciardo now has 31 world championship F1 podiums, the same as Jack Brabham

LAP CHART What happened, when



NOBODY'S PERFECT, BUT SIX ARE DRESSED UP TO THE NINES

Half a dozen came close to optimum scores in our driver ratings at Imola, but the smallest of blemishes in a tough grand prix just marked them down

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

9 Misses out on a maximum score as a result of his qualifying defeat, and then lost another place to Verstappen at the start. His potential was unleashed when Verstappen pitted, pace in traffic giving him the edge. VSC timing was lucky, but likely would have won anyway.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

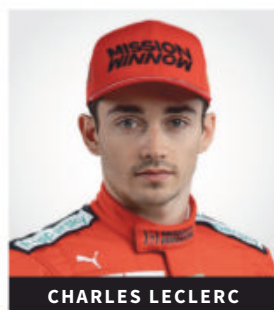
9 An excellent performance, ruined by bad luck with debris. He took big risks to gain time on Hamilton at Tamburello and Rivazza in Q3, which gained him a fine pole. Led well, but debris hurt handling, costing him pace and causing his two offs. Fortunate to get second back, but still a good drive.

FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

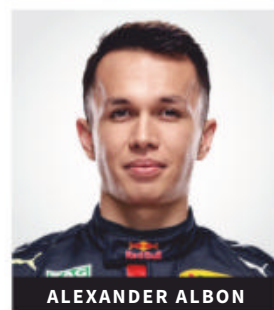
6 Eliminated in Q2 for the 10th time this season, even ending up behind a Williams as he again struggled in the SF1000. In the race, he put in a good 39-lap stint on the mediums, but a stripped wheelnut cost more than 10s at his stop, without which he'd probably have finished at least ninth.



CHARLES LECLERC

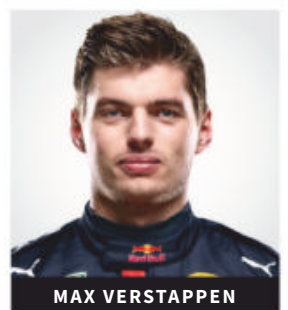
8 Again, a fine performance. Had he found just over a tenth in qualifying he'd had have started fourth, but he was unhappy with his Q3 lap. Followed Ricciardo in the race, nearly hitting him when he locked up at Tosa the lap after stopping. Powerless to stop Kvyat getting past after the restart.

RED BULL



ALEXANDER ALBON

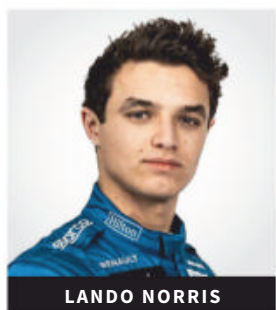
4 Yet another weekend where Albon's absence from the lead battle may have cost Red Bull in its fight with Mercedes. In qualifying he was beaten by Gasly and Ricciardo in slower cars. Fell behind Leclerc off the line and then spun out of seventh when battling Perez at the restart.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

9 How would Verstappen have got on against Bottas had the Mercedes not been compromised? But losing time before stopping just prevents a maximum score. Wasn't happy with his qualifying, despite being blameless for the spark plug issue. Nothing he could do about the puncture.

MCLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

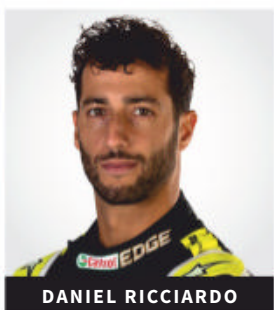
7 Frustrated at lacking the pace to make progress once the race had settled down, even when he had DRS available. Like Sainz, he was pitted under the safety car, albeit two laps later, but couldn't bring the fresher rubber to bear. Both McLarens only gained places because others hit issues.



CARLOS SAINZ JR

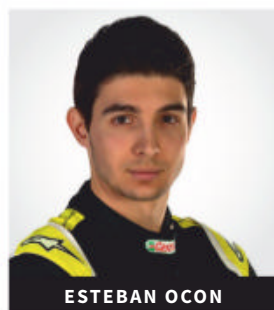
7 Qualified behind Norris, but made amends in the race, getting past early on with a DRS-assisted pass. But then he struggled behind the Ricciardo-Leclerc-Albon-Kvyat train. Did well not to hit Albon's spinning Red Bull after the restart, stamping on his brakes just in time to avoid contact.

RENAULT



DANIEL RICCIARDO

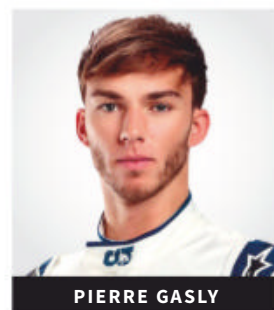
9 Got outqualified by the slower car of Gasly, but reversed that order at the start, even challenging Hamilton's third for a split second. Struggled on the softs, but did well to run ahead of Leclerc and Albon after stopping. Keeping his old hards just hot enough during the safety car kept him beyond Kvyat's charge.



ESTEBAN OCON

7 His Q2 exit, which left him seven spots adrift of Ricciardo, costs Ocon here. His unlucky race featured a tap from Stroll on the opening lap, then he had a visor tear-off strip get lodged in a brake duct, which forced an early stop for mediums, before a terminal transmission problem.

ALPHATAURI



PIERRE GASLY

9 An excellent performance, again. AlphaTauri had noticed a drop in water pressure on his laps to the grid, working on the car there. But it could not fix his radiator, and he dropped out of fifth having shone yet again in qualifying. His Q3 effort led to the best grid spot of his outstanding 2020.



DANIIL KVYAT

9 Qualified four places behind Gasly, but drove very well in the race. Team gambled on stop for used softs under the safety car, but he made it work the best of those who came in, nipping past Perez and Albon. Forced his way ahead of Leclerc bravely and just fell short of a fourth F1 podium.



RACING POINT



SERGIO PEREZ

8 He said missing Q3 was down to running a set-up more for the race. Starting 11th allowed him to use the mediums straight off, and he made the most of them. On for third after Verstappen was out, only for Racing Point to bring him in under the safety car. He couldn't recover the positions lost.



LANCE STROLL

3 Worst grid position of the season. In the race, he tagged Ocon's right-rear tyre, which broke his front wing on lap one. Was last when he stopped under the safety car, knocked over his jackman with cold brakes, then nearly wiped out Ricciardo when unlapping himself before restart.

ALFA ROMEO



KIMI RAIKKONEN

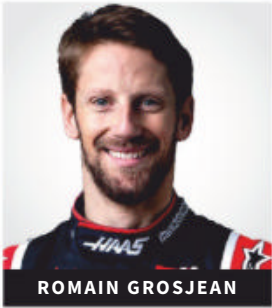
8 Missed Q2 for violating track limits exiting Variante Alta. Drove an excellent race, running the longest of all before swapping his ancient mediums for softs. Has Russell and Albon to thank for points, but the Verstappen-induced safety car two laps after he'd stopped was an unlucky break.



ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI

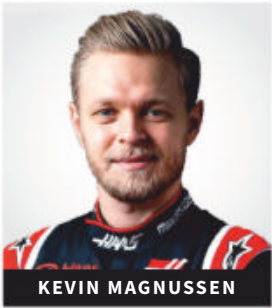
8 Drove an excellent first lap, following a poor qualifying in which he finished last. Was given the reverse strategy to his team-mate, starting on softs, but used them to go from 20th to 14th on lap one. Was lucky to gain four spots through safety car and retirements, but still a good race drive.

HAAS



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

5 Was given a five-second penalty, which dropped him behind Vettel and Stroll at the flag, for track limits violations. Qualified as the lead Haas, but frustrated in the race behind Alfas after a trip into the gravel on lap one. Was angered by a late, innocuous, clash of wheels with Latifi.



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

5 Weekend was dominated by a gearbox issue that began in qualifying. He qualified behind Grosjean and went off on his final lap in Q1. In the race, heavy, slow upshifts shook his car so badly it caused a headache, and Haas opted to retire the car as a result.

WILLIAMS



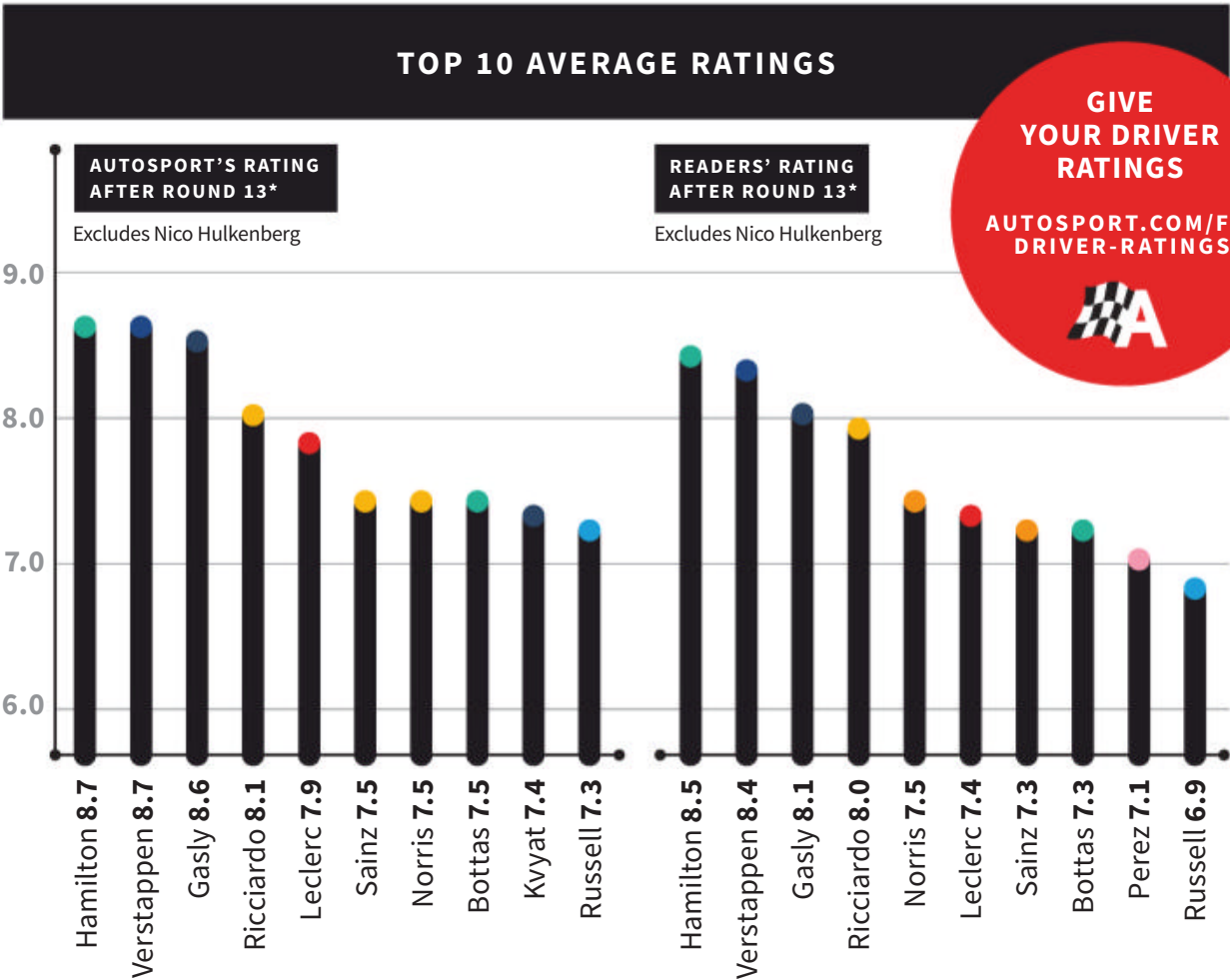
NICHOLAS LATIFI

8 A good weekend considering a brake-by-wire problem cost him time in the only practice session. The team reckoned that cost him a Q2 berth. Drove well in the race to take the third 11th of his rookie season, as he ended up 0.737s behind Giovinazzi after also not stopping under the safety car.



GEORGE RUSSELL

5 There's no doubt that his crash behind the safety car was a massive error, which he owned, and it was painful to watch his reaction out of the car. But on the plus side he showed excellent qualifying form to take 13th on the grid, and it was a brilliant drive to be running in the points.



Tin-top trio break their season ducks

WTCR

MOTORLAND ARAGON (ESP)

1 NOVEMBER

ROUND 5/6

Three drivers claimed their first World Touring Car Cup victories of the year, as title challengers Yann Ehrlacher and Esteban Guerrieri found little but pain in Spain during the series' maiden visit to a sun-kissed but chilly Motorland Aragon.

But while Jean-Karl Vernay, Mikel Azcona and Thed Bjork all broke their season ducks, the scene-stealer was Uruguayan Santiago Urrutia, who banked a hat-trick of podium finishes in his Cyan Performance Lynk & Co.

Team Mulsanne's Vernay scored his first WTCR win since Macau in 2018 on Sunday morning, making a great start from third to lead race one in his Alfa Romeo Giulietta, as Norbert Michelisz proved sluggish from

pole position. The reigning champion, who would have an engine change before race two, squeezed fellow front-row starter Gilles Magnus, then dropped to sixth by the finish. Urrutia shot from seventh on the grid to second after a brilliant first lap, with Magnus third in his Comtoyou Racing Audi.

Confusion over track limits violations made a mess of qualifying on Saturday, as drivers found their best times either being deleted or returned to them. Vernay was furious to lose his race-three pole position, but Spaniard Azcona gained on home ground by inheriting the race-two reversed-grid top spot. He made the most of it too, leading all the way in his Cupra to score Zengo Motorsport's first win at this level for five years. Urrutia again rose from seventh to shadow Yvan Muller and complete the podium.

Magnus secured the rookie of the year

title in race two, but failed to make the best of his inherited pole position in race three. Instead, Bjork streaked away with Urrutia, this time starting third, rubbing doors with Magnus through Turn 1. He later passed the Belgian to complete an impressive weekend performance. "I wanted to win," he said, "but Thed deserved it, so I just sat behind him at the end." Bjork seemed grateful that his team-mate was a "gentleman".

As Gabriele Tarquini put in a typically accomplished display to claim third, Ehrlacher toiled with a turbo boost issue on his Lynk & Co and dropped to 12th. He'd been in salvage mode all day since failing to get out of the Q1 qualifying session on Saturday, finishing 11th in the opener and sixth in race two. "We lost big today," he said. "I drove my arse off, but it didn't pay off for me."

But at least he wasn't in a Honda. The four Munnich Motorsport Civics were non-entities at Aragon, running maximum success ballast in the wake of Guerrieri's two wins at the Hungaroring. The Argentinian also failed to get out of Q1, but a 13th, a 10th and a ninth-place finish meant he lost just four points to his rival. "We started the weekend 22 points behind and now the gap is 26, so it wasn't too negative," he said.

The pair will hope for better at the season finale on 15 November. It had been scheduled to play out at Adria, but revisions to the Italian circuit are late thanks to delays created by the pandemic, so the teams will now return instead to Aragon. Early forecasts suggest it will be raining – which would suit Guerrieri just fine.

DAMIEN SMITH

Alfa racer Vernay leads race one ahead of standout Aragon performer Urrutia



Penske partners swap places to take points lead

IMSA SPORTSCAR
LAGUNA SECA (USA)
1 NOVEMBER
ROUND 10/11

Penske duo Helio Castroneves and Ricky Taylor moved to the top of the IMSA SportsCar table by two points with a race to go when they scored their fourth win of the year at Laguna Seca. This came as the erstwhile championship leaders, Wayne Taylor Racing's pairing of Ryan Briscoe and Renger van der Zande, only mustered sixth.

However, Castroneves and Taylor only won courtesy of their Acura Team Penske team-mates giving up a victory. Reigning champions Dane Cameron and Juan Pablo



Montoya were a hair quicker in qualifying courtesy of the Colombian ace, and significantly faster in the race. Part of that pace deficit was caused by Castroneves losing the dive planes on the right-front corner of his ARX-05 as he nudged a Chevrolet Corvette in the opening stint. However, Cameron pulled aside on the penultimate lap to allow Taylor ahead.

Third place went to Action Express Racing's Pipo Derani and Felipe Nasr, who kept Taylor under pressure but

didn't have the acceleration to pass.

Corvette Racing's Antonio Garcia and Jordan Taylor clinched the drivers' and teams' titles in GT Le Mans by finishing second in class, with their nearest competitors, team-mates Tommy Milner and Oliver Gavin, crossing the line third but dumped to the back after a technical infringement. But the race was all about Porsche's Laurens Vanthoor and Earl Bamber, who went just fast enough to stay out of reach.

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

Harvick blows title chances

NASCAR CUP
MARTINSVILLE (USA)
1 NOVEMBER
ROUND 35/36

With an average finishing position across the 26-race regular NASCAR Cup season of 6.61 (including a nine-round stretch of 3.6), Kevin Harvick's place in the championship-deciding race was a foregone conclusion. The Stewart-Haas driver just had to negotiate the Playoffs to ensure that a spot in the Phoenix finale was almost his by right.

Entering the last race of the semi-finals at Martinsville, Harvick was 42 points to the good in the Playoffs table. A smooth and quiet race would have done nicely. Alas, contact with Matt Kenseth's Chevrolet Camaro gave Harvick's Ford Mustang a puncture and put him two laps down by mid-distance.

Eventually, on lap 399 of 500, Harvick got himself back on the lead lap, as fellow hopeful Brad Keselowski joined him in the midfield – his lowly position a legacy of a speeding penalty.

Keselowski quickly cleared Harvick as the battle for the final spot to progress through to the finale boiled down to the Mustang duo, and a struggling Denny Hamlin in the closing stages.

By lap 496, the trio were separated by just a single point, with Harvick outside the bubble. At the final corner, in a "last-ditch effort", he tagged Kyle Busch in an attempt to get that crucial point. Harvick failed and ended up against the pitwall and 17th in the results.

Meanwhile, Chase Elliott won by 6.6 seconds over Ryan Blaney as he, Joey Logano, Keselowski and Hamlin all advance to fight for the title in Arizona.

JAKE NICHOL



WEEKEND WINNERS

- WTCR**
MOTORLAND ARAGON (ESP)
- Race 1** Jean-Karl Vernay
Team Mulsanne
(Alfa Romeo Giulietta Veloce TCR)
- Race 2** Mikel Azcona
Zengo Motorsport
(Cupra Leon Competicion TCR)
- Race 3** Thed Bjork
Cyan Performance
(Lynk & Co 03 TCR)
- IMSA SPORTSCAR**
LAGUNA SECA (USA)
- DPI** Helio Castroneves/Ricky Taylor
Team Penske (Acura ARX-05)
- GTLM** Earl Bamber/Laurens Vanthoor
Porsche GT Team
(Porsche 911 RSR-19)
- GTD** Mario Farnbacher/Matt McMurry
Meyer Shank Racing
(Acura NSX GT3 Evo)

- NASCAR CUP**
MARTINSVILLE (USA)
Chase Elliott
Hendrick Motorsports
(Chevrolet Camaro)
- NASCAR XFINITY SERIES**
MARTINSVILLE (USA)
Harrison Burton
Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota Supra)
- NASCAR TRUCK SERIES**
MARTINSVILLE (USA)
Grant Enfinger
ThorSport Racing (Ford F-150)



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G-Drive Racing finally returns to winning ways

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES
ALGARVE (PRT)
1 NOVEMBER
ROUND 5/5

G-Drive Racing mainstay Roman Rusinov has been able to call upon the talismanic performances of double Formula E champion Jean-Eric Vergne and Dutch young gun Job van Uitert in recent seasons to be assured of European Le Mans Series success. The title fell to the Russian squad in 2018, second place in the table – and a brace of wins – followed a year after.

But in the truncated 2020 campaign, the Aurus-badged machine has played second fiddle to the United Autosports pairing of Phil Hanson and Filipe Albuquerque. A hat-trick of wins at Spa, Paul Ricard and last time out at Monza meant the duo had already sewn up the drivers' crown come the season finale at the Algarve Circuit.

Here, finally G-Drive Racing struck back by notching up a victory. Rusinov was in the hotseat for the race start, superbly propelling his car from sixth on the grid to the lead at Turn 1 – including an outside pass on United Autosports' polesitting Will Owen.



The advantage swung back in Owen's favour soon after, when Rusinov ran wide as he negotiated GT traffic, before Mikkel Jensen – taking over the G-Drive machine – outbraked Owen for the lead on the run to the first corner. Jensen stretched that advantage to over 45 seconds when the safety car was deployed.

When green-flag conditions returned, he handed the car to Nyck de Vries, with the 2019 FIA Formula 2 champion able to extract an eventual 35s triumph.

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WEEKEND WINNERS

**EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES
ALGARVE (PRT)**
Roman Rusinov/Mikkel Jensen/Nyck de Vries
G-Drive Racing (ORECA-Gibson 07)

**FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP
IMOLA (ITA)**
Race 1 Caio Collet
R-ace GP
Race 2 Victor Martins
ART Grand Prix

**FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
BARCELONA (ESP)**
Races 1 & 2 Oliver Rasmussen
Prema Powerteam
Race 3 Pierre-Louis Chovet
Van Amersfoort Racing

**EUROFORMULA OPEN
BARCELONA (ESP)**
Races 1-4 Yifei Ye (below)
CryptoTower (Dallara-Spiess)

**INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN
BARCELONA (ESP)**
Race 1 Nick Moss/Joe Osborne
Optimum Motorsport
(McLaren 720S GT3)
Race 2 Salih Yoluc/Charlie Eastwood
TF Sport (Aston Martin Vantage GT3)

**SUPER TC2000
CORDOBA (ARG)**
Races 1 & 2 Matias Rossi
Toyota Gazoo Racing (Toyota Corolla)



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Martins profits from Collet woe

FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP
IMOLA (ITA)
31 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER
ROUND 8/10

Victor Martins edged closer to the 2020 Formula Renault Eurocup crown with a fine victory in the second race at Imola to move 33 points clear of nearest title rival Caio Collet – who suffered a win-or-bust runout as the championship supported Formula 1's return to the Italian circuit.

Polesitter Martins initially couldn't shake off fellow front-row starter Collet

on the opening tour as the pair ran side-by-side on occasion, but the ART Grand Prix driver didn't have to wait long for fortune to fall in his favour.

At the Variante Alta chicane, David Vidales locked the fronts on his JD Motorsport machine and tagged into the rear of Franco Colapinto. With his front wing ripped off, Vidales then careered across the track and wiped out Collet.

Collet was left beached on the exit kerb with a flat right-rear Hankook tyre and was forced into an early bath. It was a cruel fall from grace, with the young Brazilian having dominated the opening encounter to win by 4.4 seconds and close down the deficit to Martins.

When the safety car peeled in after the race-two shunt, Martins and Colapinto could run clear of the chasing pack. Although the winning margin was a comparatively slender 1.2s, Martins never looked under threat as he secured his seventh win of the season to increase his title grip with only the Hockenheim and Paul Ricard rounds remaining.



Martins won race two
after Collet scare to
take back points lead

FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP

EUROFORMULA OPEN

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Formula Vee is among the 750 Motor Club series affected by the permit suspension



CLUB-LEVEL MOTORSPORT IS SUSPENDED AGAIN

CORONAVIRUS

Club-level motorsport has been suspended for a second time in 2020 after the imposition of a fresh national lockdown in England by the UK government.

All Motorsport UK permitted events were halted between late March and the end of June during the initial wave of coronavirus cases across the country earlier this year. But tighter restrictions introduced in the wake of the virus spreading rapidly once more have again forced the governing body to act.

However, unlike last time, there is not a blanket ban of events during the upcoming four-week lockdown. Those that have been classified as Elite sporting events by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport are allowed to continue, albeit without spectators.

This means the planned British Touring Car Championship and British GT finales at Brands Hatch and Silverstone respectively have been given the green light to go ahead, while this weekend's British Truck Racing event has also been granted the status.

Given the time of year covered by the suspension, only a limited number of circuit racing meetings have been affected as many clubs' seasons had already concluded. Just four events are postponed or cancelled: two 750 Motor Club fixtures, and one each for MotorSport Vision Racing and the Classic and Modern Motorsport Club.

"It's really disappointing from a selfish perspective – we had put all these meetings on to give additional races to a number of championships that had lost events in the first lockdown so that they had a

credible number of rounds for a proper bona-fide championship," said 750MC competitions manager Giles Groombridge. "We had strong entries for both events – Donington Park and Silverstone are perennial favourites of the drivers. It's disappointing that we have lost them but understandable looking at the big picture."

Groombridge added the club is now investigating the possibility of running events in December instead.

"I think it will be difficult to find a significant amount of track time but we are looking to see if some of the races could be rescheduled and moved – but I think it's highly unlikely all of them will be able to run," he said.

MSVR is also exploring options for rescheduling its planned Donington Park club event that was due to run this weekend. It said in a statement: "This meeting is currently postponed, and MSVR is currently exploring alternative dates in December with a view to ensuring the championships and series affected can complete the season should circumstances allow."

Other disciplines have also been affected by the suspension. The British Rallycross schedule has already been revised a number of times this season and the series was due to be in action at Lydden Hill this weekend. That event has now been postponed to 5-6 December, while a final event is slated for January 2021.

With traditional stage rallying largely unable to restart after the coronavirus hiatus, due to it often taking place on public land, the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship had attracted a bumper entry for its first round at Oulton Park this weekend. But this, too, has been postponed.

STEFAN MACKLEY AND STEPHEN LICKORISH

Lancia Stratos special makes a winning return

CLASSIC SPORTS CAR CLUB

Andrew Knighton's self-built Lancia Stratos Special GT made a winning return at Mallory Park last weekend with Matt Manderson, after five years lying dormant.

Manderson propelled the machine, powered by a turbocharged 1340cc Suzuki Hayabusa engine, to victory in the second Special Saloons and Modsports race.

"The first time I saw it, as I drove onto the track on a Mallory test day a few years ago, the huge venturis intrigued me," said experienced sportscar racer Manderson, the ex-BAR Honda Formula 1 car painter who now runs his own specialist paintshop. "I had to have a closer look, and knew I wanted to race it straight away."

"Andy wants to sell the car – and I'd like to buy it – so we decided to give it a run. I drove it for the first time last Thursday, in torrential rain, but fell in love with it."



The aero is amazing, the reassurance of all that downforce is quite incredible – more than anything I've ever driven."

Knighton has developed the Stratos over many years. He made the composite monocoque (with a cockpit to fit his six foot 10 inch tall brother Simon) in his home workshop and all the suspension.

Currently with around 330bhp on tap, Manderson set a best lap of 46.625s chasing Andy Southcott's MG Midget in race one. "Andy's a great driver, but with brake balance tweaks I'm confident I can match his times," said Manderson.

MARCUS PYE



OPINION



With COVID-19 cases, hospital admissions and deaths sadly rising steadily, tighter restrictions

seemed inevitable. As disappointing as that is, in a motorsport context, the 'four-week' lockdown's impact – at this stage – is not *too* significant.

Not least because it is now November, and the conclusion of the traditional UK motorsport season. But also because there is a crucial difference to Motorsport UK's earlier suspension of permits as, this time, meetings determined as Elite sporting events can continue.

The British Touring Car Championship has been classed as Elite ever since the resumption of motorsport activity. And understandably so, as it has long been considered the premier motorsport series in the UK. There were greater questions surrounding British GT, as it did not initially receive this 'status'. But, considering it has a greater number of paid rather than paying drivers than the BTCC, quite rightly, it too has been added to the list and the Silverstone finale this weekend will take place.

However, there has been another exemption: the British Truck Racing event at Brands Hatch. And that is an odd one. Regardless of the fan following the Trucks receive, this event still surely has to be classified as a club one – the BTRC has an 'Interclub' permit after all, the lowest of all circuit racing categories. At a time when caution is needed, it is a decision that is the opposite.

But there is another way of looking at it, by comparing the situation to football. If the BTCC is the Premier League, Truck racing could be considered League Two. That is allowed to continue, so maybe the Trucks should, too.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Confusion in disrupted CSCC race

CLASSIC SPORTS CAR CLUB

The Classic Sports Car Club's 70s to Present Day race at Mallory Park last weekend featured confusion over an early safety car intervention before it was halted following the dramatic exit of Mark Chilton's Nissan Skyline R32, which threw its left-rear wheel and brake disc.

Having ridden the bucking bronco, the shaken Chilton remained inside until the safety car was deployed and a doctor arrived. When marshals alerted race control to the smell of fuel – the regular tank had ruptured, but the additional safety cell remained intact – red flags flew.

The race had already been neutralised by

a full-course caution after Stephen Woolfe's Mazda RX-8 went off on the opening lap. As that caution was signalled, during lap two, Chilton overtook leader Alex Taylor's Mazda RX-7 under waved yellow flags and several other place changes occurred at the head of the pack.

CSCC officials regretted the safety car not picking up the leader on either occasion – the first took eight laps to reorder and changed the race's complexion. "That was very disappointing," said club director Hugo Holder. "The competitor who passed two cars gave the places back immediately. Fewer officials [under COVID-19 rules] inevitably meant fewer eyes."

MARCUS PYE

Formula Ford driver Turner injured in Hayes crash



Scottish racer Turner has suffered life-changing injuries

WALTER HAYES TROPHY

Scottish Formula Ford competitor Colin Turner has suffered life-changing injuries after an accident during the Walter Hayes Trophy at Silverstone last weekend.

Turner was one of three drivers taken to hospital after a series of incidents along the pit straight during the Last Chance race on Sunday morning.

The accidents were triggered when Dean Forward spun his Vector TF93 out of Woodcote in the wet track conditions and tagged the pitwall. His car was first struck by the Ray GR89 of Ken Finneran, before Turner's Ray GR07 then also collected with the Vector. David Billington,

David Porter and George Ditchfield were also all caught up in the melee as debris littered the straight.

Finneran and Forward were both taken to Northampton General Hospital by ambulance, but the battered and bruised pair have both since been released. It was Turner who suffered the most serious injuries and he was airlifted to University Hospital Coventry.

Turner is said to be in good spirits despite the nature of his injuries. A JustGiving page has been started to raise funds to aid his recovery.

"The whole Formula Ford motorsport community wishes Colin well and our thoughts are with him and his family

at this difficult time," said Walter Hayes Trophy organiser James Beckett.

"The trackside marshals and medical crews were as professional as ever in such circumstances and I would like to thank them for their swift actions in dealing with such an incident – I have nothing but praise for them."

Track activity was halted for close to two hours while rescue crews dealt with the incident. Despite the rapidly fading light, the organising Historic Sports Car Club was still able to complete the rest of the scheduled racing as planned. Two-time runner-up Oliver White took the spoils in the final.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



BRM IS BACK BRM has become the latest classic motorsport constructor to announce plans to create a series of continuation cars celebrating successful models. Three new examples of the Type 15 Mk1 BRM V16 are being created by Hall and Hall to mark the 70th anniversary of the team's first world championship Formula 1 race. The car featured the unique V16 engine that developed 600bhp and produced a distinct wailing sound. The first of the cars will go to the Owen family, and the project has only been possible because of around 20,000 original technical drawings that have been preserved by BRM. "The fabulous noise of the engine still rings in my ears 70 years on!" said John Owen, son of BRM team boss Alfred Owen. "In a selfish way, I have always dreamed of hearing that sound again but now I'd also love to share that sensation with others." Hall and Hall founder Rick Hall worked as a BRM engineer in the early 1970s.

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IN THE HEADLINES

PAXMAN'S NEW FORD ESCORT

Oakcroft Garage proprietor Tony Paxman has commissioned a new FIA Appendix K specification Ford Escort RS1800 from chassis guru Sonny Howard for next season. The narrow-winged two-litre BDG-powered Zakspeed replica will be run in a black Castrol tribute livery, contrasting with Paxman's long-time sparring partner Malcolm Harding's white example.

SECOND RX-7 FOR TAYLORS

Father and son Trevor and Alex Taylor are building a second Mazda RX-7 for 2021, aimed at an entry in the Goodwood Members' Meeting's Gerry Marshall Trophy race. A 1981 TWR livery is currently favoured. Their current Pentax-schemed RX-7 – in which Taylor Jr trumped allcomers in the second Historic Sports Car Club race at Spa last year – popped a turbo pipe at Mallory Park on Sunday.

MORLEY'S SUPERKART TITLE

Superkart driver Liam Morley had his worst weekend of the season with two non-finishes from the three races at Oulton Park, but a win in his other race gave him sufficient points to secure the British Superkart Racing Club championship in the Division 1 class. Other championship winners were Lee Plain (F250 National), who beat Andy Gulliford by two points; Matt Robinson (F125 Open), who was six points clear of Clint Bridge; and Nick Flint (F450 National).

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Swedish driver Alexander Andersson has won the first edition of the RaceDriver.me scholarship after impressing in a range of on and off-track assessments at Silverstone last month. He is set to secure a year's coaching and support in club racing before receiving an entry into the Ginetta GT4 Supercup. "This is a dream for me, I can't believe it," said Andersson (below). "We've been tested in every possible race car you could think of and the finals in the Ariel Atoms were epic."



Solley lands another Junior Saloons double over Saunders

BARC

Alex Solley followed up on his success in the previous round at Silverstone with another double Junior Saloons victory at Oulton Park last weekend.

He initially sat behind the duelling Lewis Saunders and Charlie Hand in race one, before seizing his chance out of Old Hall on the penultimate lap. Saunders, who was unstoppable earlier this year, retained second after Hand was forced out at Island.

Saunders was pursued by Solley and Deagen Fairclough in the second race and, despite being put on the grass by Fairclough at Cascades, Solley fought back into the lead. When the luckless Hand was stranded at Old Hall with a broken throttle cable, red flags came out and Solley was

declared the winner from Saunders.

Ten years since he debuted in the CNC Heads Sports/Saloons with a Fiesta XR2, Jamie Cryer clinched the title after finishing second in class in the finale with his Ginetta G20.

It was Paul Rose's Saker RAPX that had a dominant win in the first race, restarted after Helen Allen crashed her Ford Fiesta at Druids. Paul Dobson's fast-starting Locost Mazda lost out to Paul Woolfitt (Lotus Exige) on the opening tour, with Luke Armiger (Vauxhall Tigra) getting ahead a lap later.

Woolfitt took a lights-to flag-win in a restarted race two, with Armiger a clear second once he had overcome Dobson's initial charge.

PETER SCHERER

Smith edges closer to fifth crown

BARC

Four-time British Truck Racing champion Ryan Smith edged closer to sealing another crown after taking three wins at Thruxton last weekend.

Smith was only beaten by Martin Gibson in the opening contest in Hampshire to put himself in the box seat ahead of this weekend's season finale at Brands Hatch.

There was a hat-trick of wins in the Division 2 class

too, as Steven Powell also notched up three triumphs, while last year's champion Luke Garrett took the spoils in the third race.

The Thruxton British Automobile Racing Club event was a replacement for the Pembrey meeting that was due to run at the start of last month before being called off amid the tighter coronavirus restrictions in Wales.

Two non-championship Classic Touring Car Racing

Club handicap encounters also featured on the timetable, with honours shared between the BMW E36 M3 of Bryan Bransom and the Ford Anglia of Bob Bullen.

Elsewhere, Clive Wood took two Open Sports and Saloon victories over a small field in his Mallock, while Monoposto Tiedeman Trophy wins were shared between Bryn Tootell (Van Diemen RF01) and Ed Falkingham (Jedi), both taking the lead in the closing stages.

Silverstone finale attracts 38-car entry

BRITISH GT

This weekend's British GT Championship finale at Silverstone will boast a season-high grid of 38 cars, including 20 GT3s, boosted by a plethora of new and returning entries.

The total comfortably exceeds the 24 cars that started the three-hour race at Donington Park in September and the planned 35-car full-season grid that was announced at the pre-COVID media day.

In addition to the previously announced McLaren 720S GT3 of Jenson Button and Chris Buncombe (15 October), there will be four extra McLarens and three Aston Martins, while the Richard Williams/Sennan Fielding-driven Steller Performance Audi R8 returns after skipping the most recent round at Snetterton.

Following his GT3 debut in International GT Open at Spa last month, 2019 GT4 champion Tom Canning will return to the series in a TF Sport-run Aston Martin Vantage GT3 alongside ex-Formula Palmer Audi driver Giacomo Petrobelli, while four-time British GT champion Jonny Adam will make his first appearance since August's Brands Hatch round in the Garage 59 Vantage he will share with Alexander



West. Aston factory driver Charlie Eastwood will join Andrew Howard in the Beechdean AMR machine that Howard shared with Adam at Brands.

In the expanded McLaren camp, Shaun Balfe and Rob Bell will make their first appearance of 2020 with Balfe's family-run 720S, after withdrawing their full-season entry on the eve of the first race. 2Seas Motorsport expands to a third car for 2018 Blancpain GT Asia champion Martin Kodric and former BRDC British F3 racer Al Faisal al Zubair, while Optimum Motorsport will enter two cars, one for its GT Open regulars Ollie Millroy and Brendan Iribe, and the other for LMP3 converts Alex Mortimer and Mark Crader.

The GTC class is bolstered by a Ferrari 488 entered by local team FF Corse for Jamie Stanley and Belgian Laurent de Meeus, as well as two Porsche Carrera Cup cars entered by Team Parker Racing for Ryan Ratcliffe/Justin Armstrong and Tim Bridgman/Karl Leonard.

Meanwhile, the winners of the one-hour Donington sprint race, Scott Malvern and Nick Jones, will swap their TPR-run Bentley Continental GT3 for a return to GT4 in the Mercedes-AMG GT4 they drove to victory at Silverstone last year. GT4 also gains an extra Vantage entered by Newbridge Motorsport for series returnees James Dorlin and Alex Toth-Jones.

JAMES NEWBOLD

Meyrick Cox 1964-2020

OBITUARY

National racing stalwart Meyrick Cox died last week following a battle with cancer.

Cox was chairman of the Citroen C1 Racing Club, helping it become one of the most popular UK series in recent years, as well as chair of the Mission Motorsport Board of Trustees, a charity aimed at helping ex-military personnel through motorsport.

He was also an experienced amateur racing driver, and contested the Nurburgring 24 Hours on numerous occasions among other forms of racing.

Mission Motorsport CEO James Cameron said: "He intuitively understood how MM worked, and loved it. A gifted racer, we met him on track and gained an inspirational ally, whose sheer joy and enthusiasm for life –

and particularly motorsport – lifted and inspired those around him.

"Meyrick had time for everybody, and a deep empathy for those who have served. We will miss him terribly."

C1 Racing Club director Phil Myatt, who first met Cox in the mid-2000s when both competed in 2CVs before eventually helping to run the series together, said: "He was

still involved [in the club] but didn't go to any of our races this year. We only had two but he didn't attend either because he was isolating as a vulnerable person.

"His input was invaluable to get the series moving as quick as it did. He was a one-off, unique person."

Autosport sends its condolences to Cox's family and friends.

STEFAN MACKLEY



Hunter or hunted?

Now the British GT finale has avoided cancellation, we can look forward to a fascinating battle as Barwell's Lambos chase down the leading RAM Mercedes pair

JAMES NEWBOLD

“We need to just take points when we can and if we have an opportunity to take more, then we should. With everything that’s going on with COVID, you never know when all of a sudden there’s going to be a lockdown, the championship’s not going to finish and it gets called as it is.”

When RAM Racing boss Dan Shufflebottom spoke those words after the last British GT round at Snetterton, he could not have known how close that hypothetical scenario was to becoming a reality. With the rate of new coronavirus cases showing no sign of slowing down and prompting the UK government to declare another national lockdown, commencing today (Thursday), there was a very real fear that the British GT Championship’s final round at Silverstone this weekend would fall by the wayside.

With the GT3 and GT4 titles finely poised and series organiser SRO working hard to build a season-high grid of 38 cars (page left), it would have been a huge anticlimax to a superb contest if the three-hour season finale had not been given dispensation to proceed by the UK government’s Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. Fortunately, the outcome of talks with Motorsport UK was positive and we will get to see the season play out in full this weekend, with Sam De Haan and Patrick Kujala’s RAM Mercedes defending a six-point lead over closest challengers Sandy Mitchell and Rob Collard (Barwell Lamborghini).

“A safety car at the wrong time and that 20s penalty could mean game over. That’s the reality”

There is a third car realistically in the mix – the second Barwell Lambo of Phil Keen and Adam Balon is just 11.5 points off the lead, with 37.5 up for grabs, after its second win of the season last time out at Snetterton (ending the run of seven different winners from as many races) – but with the caveat that they have a hefty 20-second penalty to serve at their final pitstop.

Finishing third in Norfolk – after a mistake from team-mate Ian Loggie promoted them a place – means De Haan and Kujala will also have a 10s penalty, but the silver lining resulting from the seatbelt-induced delay that dropped Mitchell and Collard from second to fifth at Snetterton is that they won’t have to serve any extra time in the pits this weekend. So, what would you rather have: fewer points or a penalty? Barwell boss Mark Lemmer is firmly in the former camp.

“I don’t think finishing third is the ideal scenario in race two going into a three-hour finale,” he says. “Obviously points on the board is a significant factor, but I would rather be in our position than theirs going into the finale.”

Lemmer says Keen and Balon will go into the title decider with a “pragmatic” approach, knowing that the 20s penalty presents them with an “uphill battle”.

“It just depends on safety cars,” he says. “A safety car at the wrong time and that 20s penalty could mean game over. That’s the reality. But at the right time, turn it into an opportunity and they could be right in it.”

Still, Shufflebottom is happy with his team’s lot heading to a track where Loggie and Callum Macleod won for RAM last year, especially knowing that unless they win – no easy feat given the plethora of strong one-off entries in the field – Mitchell and Collard will need to have a car in between them and De Haan/Kujala to overcome their deficit.

“We know there’s obviously a lot of points on offer at Silverstone,” continued Shufflebottom, “and we did talk about the fact that actually leaving [Snetterton] with third and fourth place finishes would actually be the ideal result. It’s not something we planned, it’s just how it ended up and it hasn’t worked out too badly.”

Both De Haan, the 2019 runner-up with Barwell, and Kujala – a regular in Barwell’s GT World Challenge Europe roster since 2017, currently leading the silver class standings with only one round to go – have thrived this year in their first season in a Mercedes, a car that has to be driven with patience rather than hustled to the limit to work the aero like the Lambo.

“Sam really wants to beat his old team because he made the decision to switch, and they obviously would like to beat him for exactly the same reason,” says Shufflebottom. “He’s a young guy and he’s not planning to do British GT forever, but it’s a box he wants to tick before he moves on, so this is the final piece of this year’s puzzle – for him to get this race done and win the championship.”

Lemmer concedes: “I’ve spent the last two years trying to iron out all the weaknesses in their driving and that could quite possibly come and bite us on the arse. We taught those guys well and they’re pretty well-equipped to deal with it. I’m not going to overthink that one, they actually don’t have many weaknesses.”

The scene is set for an unusual decider at Silverstone, away from the traditional season finale setting of Donington Park and, as a COVID-19 necessity, without fans in attendance. But hopefully with the presence in the field of a certain Jenson Button, who is likely to bring plenty of new eyeballs to the series, it can still deliver a true classic. 🏁



White's delight as he finally wins, but Hayes triumph is marred by horror shunt

SILVERSTONE

HSCC WALTER HAYES TROPHY

31 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER

The 2020 edition of the Walter Hayes Trophy should be remembered for Oliver White finally overcoming his bad luck and taking a popular victory. It should be remembered for organiser James Beckett triumphing against the coronavirus odds to secure a 104-strong entry (more than double the Festival the previous week and up on last year's 'normality'). And it should be remembered for some sensational racing in the two historic finals.

But, for all those positives, this year's Hayes is more likely to be remembered for a terrifying series of accidents along the pit straight in the Last Chance race that left three drivers in hospital and those watching from the pitwall shaken (see p54).

Considering the lengthy extraction and clear-up required, and the rapidly fading light, it was no mean feat that the final took place at all. And, when it did, there was no shortage of classic Formula Ford action.

Predicting a winner proved nigh-on impossible. White and National champion Neil MacLennan had shown strong pace all



Middlehurst (left) was on a charge in the final, but Copse incident denied him victory shot

JEP

weekend, each victorious in a heat and semi-final. Then there were past winners Jordan Dempsey and Michael Moyers in the thick of the fight, and Chris Middlehurst looked threatening too.

Initially, it was advantage MacLennan. The Kevin Mills Racing Spectrum driver passed polesitter White into Becketts on lap two, survived a safety car restart and then repelled White's attacks until lap nine of the scheduled 15. Then, White's Souley

Motorsport Medina dived down the inside at Becketts and left MacLennan out wide, and that loss of momentum led to MacLennan falling to fourth. But White's lead was only a brief one. On the next tour, Middlehurst powered around the outside of Brooklands. Except his spell in front proved to be even briefer and, crucially, it did not count. Red flags flew after five cars were left stranded in the Luffield gravel – including Festival runner-up Jonathan

Medina driver
White resisted
attacks from all
directions to
win final



JONES

Browne — and White was back on pole (on countback) for the final five-lap shootout.

At the restart, Middlehurst was all over White. First, he tried on the inside of Brooklands. Then it was the inside of Copse on lap three. Next it was back to his previously successful path around the outside of Brooklands. And finally the inside of Luffield, but still White clung on. That was until the second race-defining moment. Middlehurst's pressure had led to the rest of the top six springing back into contention, and it all came to a head at Copse as contact sent Josh Fisher into the path of Team Dolan Van Diemen driver Middlehurst, who was spun. Cue anger from Middlehurst.

"I got absolutely speared off, I was completely taken out," he said. "People are desperate in the final but you've got to be there in the last few laps. I think I had it in the bag, the speed was there. It's the way it goes sometimes."

But the incident led to elation for White. He had a relatively straightforward final two laps to finally land a crown that had long evaded him. Twice runner-up, his three previous attempts all ended in misery. He did not even make it into the main event in 2017 after two engine failures in testing, >>

UNUSUAL FEAT AS ALMOST ALL FRONTRUNNERS EMERGE UNSCATHED FROM HEATS

Normally, the Walter Hayes Trophy heats feature plenty of action and more than a few woes for the expected frontrunners. But, in this most abnormal of years, even this feature was absent, with Joey Foster the only regular contender failing to progress automatically to the semi-finals.

While Foster had crashed out of the opening heat just before it was red-flagged as the rain intensified (see p60), his exit left Matt Cowley on pole for the restart. But Cowley made a bad launch and Jordan Dempsey surged into a lead he kept throughout the remaining five laps. Ross Martin relegated Cowley to third at Becketts at mid-distance.

Another heat winner to lead throughout was Oliver White, in the third race. Polesitter Josh Fisher lost out at the start — a recurring theme with the wet track — and White shot clear. Fisher ran wide at Copse to lose out to Jonathan Browne, but was ahead the following lap and began reducing White's advantage considerably in the final stages, as Jamie Sharp grabbed third from Browne.

Heat four had the driest track, and polesitter Chris Middlehurst was mindful of the advantage this would bring later on. Although he briefly lost out to Michael Macpherson, Middlehurst was soon back ahead, while Luke Cooper also passed Macpherson. Middlehurst then managed the gap back to Cooper to ensure he won in the fastest time to have pole for his semi-final.

The most interesting of the heats proved to be the second as Kevin Mills Racing team-mates Michael Moyers and Neil MacLennan battled as if it was the final, MacLennan eventually winning after Moyers ran slightly wide at Brooklands at mid-distance.

"I wasn't expecting it to be quite that tasty!" Moyers admitted. "I saw we had



MacLennan leads Moyers
in feisty first-heat scrap

JONES

a big gap and I thought I was going to be a bit rusty [having not raced all year] so it was really good practice."

Historics ace Cam Jackson was third in his modern Van Diemen JL15, but he was one of the losers in the semi-finals. He was having an entertaining battle for fifth with B-M team-mate Rory Smith when he spun at Brooklands with three laps to go.

"We braked at the same time, I ran out of grip and I didn't want to take us both out, but I glanced his pod and spun," said Jackson, who wanted to show what the Historic racers could do. "It's a real shame because we've put so much effort in."

Up front, MacLennan jumped Middlehurst at the start, and that was how it stayed, with Moyers third.

The second semi-final featured a thrilling lead battle between White and Fisher. White led for the majority, including surviving a heavy rain shower, before Fisher grabbed the advantage at Luffield on lap nine of 12. But White replicated the move on the next tour to win, while Dempsey pounced through Woodcote to relegate Fisher to third.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



White and Fisher had
a great battle for the
second semi-final win

JONES

the following year he ended the final in the Luffield gravel having been on the pace all weekend, and in 2019 he was taken out in his heat, leaving him on the back foot. But there were no such problems this time.

“It means a huge amount because I’ve been trying to win this for about eight years and have had some near-misses but now I’ve finally won it!” smiled White, who overcame pre-event back pain to compete. “It was starting to piss me off a little bit [all the bad luck] but it’s a such a challenging event.”

Fisher and Middlehurst dropped back to seventh and 13th respectively, leaving the way clear for MacLennan to take second and make up for the disappointment of crashing

out of the Festival final when challenging for the lead. “It looked a bit promising at the start but then we made a few mistakes,” he said. “But I’m happy to get second.”

Considering the number of established frontrunners in the lead pack, it was something of a surprise that Team USA Scholar Bryce Aron completed the podium. The American admitted he “had been struggling a little bit” all weekend in the variable conditions – as demonstrated by fourth and fifth in his heat and semi-final – but he stayed out of trouble to bag third.

“There’s being good in the wet in America but being good in the wet here is very different!” Ray GR18 driver Aron said

of the damp conditions all weekend. “We had the red flag and I wasn’t sure if that was a good thing or not because I had gone from ninth to fifth. Cliff [Dempsey, former team boss] told me, ‘You’ve got the pace to get to the front and win.’”

While he did not quite manage that, third was still a strong result as he headed home Ross Martin (Van Diemen RF99) and Matt Cowley (Van Diemen JL15). Moyers also put in a strong recovery to take sixth, having spun while challenging White for the lead.

“I had a mega run on Ollie [out of Becketts] but I just made a personal error,” said Moyers. “I braked far too late into Brooklands and spun. It was a good recovery, but this girl was good enough to win – it felt like it was on rails.”

Team-mate Dempsey also had a spin at Brooklands, but suffered damage and was not able to continue. Another in strife was Festival winner Rory Smith, as he tangled with Rob Hall out of Brooklands when battling just behind the lead pack.

For so many years, it was White who had been in that frustrating position. But not this time, although celebrations were muted after events earlier in the day. The racing from then on became of secondary importance, with Moyers saying: “All I’m thinking of now is the people who were injured.” As are we all.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



FOSTER'S FORTUNES JUMP UP AND DOWN OVER THE WEEKEND

Plenty of drivers will have rued a missed opportunity to grab Walter Hayes honours, but none more so than Joey Foster. The three-time Hayes victor turned a few heads with the pace of his Firman RFR20 ahead of this year's event, and expectations grew stronger when the Don Hardman-run racer set the fastest time of qualifying across all four heats.

But Foster was the big casualty of the heats, once racing commenced, after being caught out during a torrential rain shower. Approaching Brooklands on the third lap, Foster aquaplaned on standing water after pulling out from behind Matt Cowley's race-leading Van Diemen, sending him crashing into the barriers.

Although admitting that conditions leading up to his crash were “probably the

worst I've raced in”, Foster added that he had no qualms about the race having started, instead blaming himself for misjudging the amount of standing water off the racing line.

Foster and his mechanics worked until midnight on the Saturday to repair the car, with a trip back to the team's base in Lincoln required to collect replacement parts.

The car was back on track on Sunday, with Foster facing the task of making it through the Progression and Last Chance races for the second year running in order to make the semi-finals, after colliding with Michael Moyers during his heat in 2019.

Foster easily won the Progression race from near the back, but there was more drama as the car lost first gear during the race. The team hastily fixed the



issue in time to start the Last Chance race, which Foster duly won, despite the red flag that overshadowed proceedings.

But all the efforts were in vain as Foster's run in his semi-final ended in the Luffield gravel trap after contact from Jackson Lee while attempting to pass the Team USA Scholarship driver.

“The car has been so fast

every time we've gone out,” reflected Foster. “It's just not come together for us at all.”

Foster, who plans to return, was at least pleased with the promise shown by the car. “We showed what we could do in terms of pace,” he added. “We're over the moon with that, as we've worked really hard at it.”

STEVE WHITFIELD

SILVERSTONE
WEEKEND WINNERS

WALTER HAYES TROPHY

Heat 1 Jordan Dempsey (Spectrum 011C)**Heat 2** Neil MacLennan (Spectrum 011C)**Heat 3** Oliver White (Medina JL17, above)**Heat 4** Chris Middlehurst (Van Diemen LA10)**Progression race** Joey Foster (Firman RFR20)**Last Chance race** Joey Foster (Firman RFR20)**Semi-final 1** Neil MacLennan (Spectrum 011C)**Semi-final 2** Oliver White (Medina JL17)

Final (5 laps) 1 Oliver White (Medina JL17);
 2 Neil MacLennan (Spectrum 011C) +0.815s;
 3 Bryce Aron (Ray GR18); 4 Ross Martin (Van
 Diemen RF99); 5 Matt Cowley (Van Diemen JL15);
 6 Michael Moyers (Spectrum 09). **Fastest lap**
 Chris Middlehurst (Van Diemen LA10) 1m08.414s
 (86.32mph). **Pole** White. **Starters** 36.

JANET CESAR TROPHY

Pre-final Matthew Wrigley (Reynard 89FF, below)**Final** Jaap Blijleven (Reynard 88FF)

CARL HAMER TROPHY

Pre-final Jamie Vinall-Meyer (Merlyn Mk20)**Final** Ben Mitchell (Merlyn Mk20)

HSCC ALLCOMERS CLOSED WHEEL

Alex Taylor (Mazda RX-7, below)

HSCC ALLCOMERS OPEN WHEEL

Steve Worrad (Chevron B48)

SILVERSTONE ALLCOMERS CLOSED WHEEL

Lucky Khera (Ferrari 488 Challenge Evo)

ALLCOMERS OPEN WHEEL

Myles Castaldini (Van Diemen RF94)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.comBlijleven (centre) had close fight
with Wrigley and Brown

BLIJLEVEN AND MITCHELL STAR IN THRILLING HISTORIC FINALS

Some of the best action at the Walter Hayes Trophy was in the historic Formula Ford events, with both divisions serving up some incredibly close racing.

Tom Brown was many people's favourite for honours in the Janet Cesar Trophy for pre-'93 machinery in the Van Diemen RF91 with which he has shone in Heritage FF1600. But he didn't have things his own way, as Dutch airline pilot Jaap Blijleven pipped him to the crown.

Blijleven had pushed Brown hard for the pole in qualifying in his Reynard 88FF, and did the same in the early stages of Saturday's pre-final, with Brown leading a six-car train.

Blijleven briefly took over at the front with a move into Brooklands, before Brown nipped back in front at the same corner next time around. But Blijleven's challenge gradually faded with tyre pressure issues and it was left to Matt Wrigley, who had climbed from eighth on the grid, to take the fight to Brown. Wrigley made his move in the closing stages and held Brown off to win by 0.2 seconds.

Brown and Wrigley continued their battle in the early stages of Sunday's final. The lead pair were joined by Blijleven, who was able to break free of the chasing pack. As rain started to fall, Blijleven picked off Wrigley and Brown in successive laps to take over at the front, but conceded the lead back to Brown after running wide at Copse, moments before the race was brought to a premature end due to a red flag. Blijleven was declared the winner after results were put back by a lap.

Blijleven, competing in only his third race weekend of the season, only made the decision to enter the event two days beforehand.

"On Thursday, I found out we were able to participate," Blijleven explained. "All the paperwork was done, and we got here. The car was excellently prepared. This year my times were closer [to the front] than they've ever been. It was a great weekend."

The Carl Hamer Trophy for pre-'82 cars

also served up some thrilling action. Jamie Vinall-Meyer won the pre-final from sixth on the grid in his first ever Formula Ford race, at the wheel of Pierre Livingstone's Historic championship-winning Merlyn Mk20.

Experienced racer Ben Mitchell led after an early red flag, but a mistake dropped him to fourth, allowing Vinall-Meyer into the lead. Mitchell recovered past Henry Chart and F3 Cup race winner Alex Fores before closing back in on Vinall-Meyer, but missed out on victory by a narrow 0.075s.

Mitchell made amends to win Sunday's final after a frenetic battle with Fores. In heavily wet conditions, Vinall-Meyer struggled for pace early on, dropping down to fourth. The fast-starting Chart led the way before Mitchell moved up the inside of him into Copse. A trip through the gravel at Brooklands dropped Chart down the order, allowing Fores to take the challenge to Mitchell at the front.

The pair swapped places several times in the second half of the race, with Fores appearing to have made a race-winning move on the penultimate lap. But Mitchell was not to be denied. Through Luffield for the final time, he drove around the outside of Fores to grab a memorable victory by 0.196s.

STEVE WHITFIELD

Mitchell (80) went round Fores
to win Carl Hamer Trophy

Manderson guides Stratos Knightsport to victory

MALLORY PARK

CSCC

1 NOVEMBER

Andrew Knighton's self-built Lancia Stratos-inspired Special GT car was developed at Mallory Park and had not been seen in competition for several years. But the turbocharged Suzuki Hayabusa-engined machine was piloted to victory in the final race of the Classic Sports Car Club's Special Saloon & Modsports season on Sunday by Matt Manderson, ending Andy Southcott's winning run in his

ultra-low tubeframe MG Midget.

With the top five covered by 1.3s in qualifying, the first race started in brilliant sunshine as Manderson, poleman Wayne Crabtree (in David Abrahams's 575bhp twin-turbo Subaru flat-four-engined Ford RS200 clone) and Southcott from fifth all disputed the lead.

Once Southcott wriggled ahead, nobody could catch him as he set a 46.234s (105.11mph) best lap. Manderson, whose best was less than four tenths adrift, and Crabtree, in the low 47s, led the chase, pursued by returnee Tom Carey's Honda

CRX-BDG before it retired. Ricky Parker-Morris guided the family's revised Peugeot 309 Cosworth turbo to fourth, ahead of Joss Ronchetti's Talbot Sunbeam Lotus 'Bullet'.

Southcott did not reappear for race two, which Manderson dominated. With Steve Fray's loaned Ginetta G15-Honda parked beside the Stebbe Straight having dramatically lost its nose on lap two, Ronchetti, Carey and Ricky Morris (in the 309) usurped Crabtree. But Morris's 309 soon expired passing the pits, Carey peeled off with an electrical misfire and Ronchetti slowed to a crawl.

Thus Crabtree finished a distant second as Malcolm Harding's Zakspeed Castrol Escort-BDG clone grabbed third on the penultimate lap from Ronchetti.

Tim Davis bookended the day with Magnificent Sevens and Sunset Open race wins. Without poleman Stephen James, whose soggy session ended in the barriers at the Esses, Davis and BOSS team-mate Colin Watson, both in Caterham C400s, lapped the Magnificent Sevens field but the two made contact into Gerard's, which sent Watson across the grass.

"Colin fired it down the inside and passed me there on the previous lap," said Davis.



WALKER

Late drama in EnduroKa as Junkies win

BRANDS HATCH

MSVR

31 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER

Octane Junkies' trio of brothers Adam and Martyn Smith along with Baz Ward triumphed in the EnduroKa 500 event at Brands Hatch last Sunday, going one place better than 12 months ago.

The race was a mixture of heartbreak and heroism, punctuated by 22 safety car interventions during 388 frequently slippery laps over more than eight hours.

With Adam Smith at the wheel, the car beached at Paddock Hill Bend early on, but fought back up the order in the following hours. With 10 minutes to go they lay third with an outside chance of catching the leaders, before the leading Barwell Autosport car driven by Kester Cook stopped on Cooper Straight with a failed engine. A minor excursion had damaged the car's radiator and the problem remained under control until Cook was forced to slow for the race's



Octane Junkies didn't lead until final minutes

HAWKINS

final caution period.

The Barwell machine dominated long stages of the race, Cook sharing driving duties with Ryan Brimstead, Taylor Norton and James Ross after team patron Vic Hope stood down, explaining that he was too old and too heavy for the task.

The StuBurn Motorsport car of David Stubbs, Andrew and Jake Burns took the lead, but with 90 seconds until the finish served a stop/go penalty for overtaking while behind the safety car.

The Junkies inherited the win, narrowly in front of Pistonheads' Matt Dell, Charles Rainford, Oliver Lewis and Ben Lowden. The runners-up started last after their car was badly damaged while stationary in the

Paddock gravel and another car crashed into it within two minutes of the start of a chaotic Saturday qualifying session. It only made the grid after heroic efforts and generous support from rival teams.

StuBurn salvaged third place, just 0.121s behind the Pistonheads and less than 12s off the win, baffled by news of the late penalty and having also been handed a five-second penalty for a track-limits offence.

There were cameo performances by 1992 British Touring Car champion Tim Harvey and historics stalwart Michael Lyons. The former was racing with his son Jamie and Christian Szaruta, and led for a while before contact with a backmarker. Lyons, his car shared with three others, was last of the



“Expecting his car’s tail to kick out I made room; when I did the same [move] he didn’t. He wasn’t happy, but I was relieved he wasn’t in the wall.”

Watson finished a subdued second, while Graham Charman staved off Richard Carter in a class tussle for third as BOSS entries claimed the top four places.

In the absence of an orange orb in the late afternoon sky, the 30-minute finale ended in darkness. Davis outran the well-matched Carter and Sam Smith, still lapping inside

50 seconds with tiny LED headlights more alerting others to his presence than pointing the way. Andrew Rath’s modern Lotus Europa ran fourth, the Honda Civic Type R of Chris Emmett/Dan Ludlow and Matthew Sanders’s BMW M3 E46 leading the pursuit.

Ollie Reuben repeated the previous weekend’s Castle Combe Swinging Sixties win in a 1965 TVR Griffith. He did the hard work and dad Nigel completed the job in style. Dave Roberts (Datsun 240Z) usurped the TVR Tuscan of Jon Wolfe

and David Thompson for second.

The 70s to Present Day race was rendered chaotic by a miscued safety car intervention, following which driver discipline was atrocious, and it was red-flagged eventually with Mark Chilton’s Nissan Skyline GTR stranded on the exit of the Esses. A 33s pit infringement penalty dropped Paul Boulton (Nissan 370Z) from first to fifth. Tom Mensley was declared the winner in his Renault Clio 172.

MARCUS PYE



classified finishers, while Harvey’s machine was among only four unclassified in a 47-car field.

A brave final-corner move amid lapped traffic earned Alex Tait (Ford Fiesta ST) a win over Sam Pearce (Honda Civic) in the final round of the Trackday Championship on Saturday. Apart from the drivers, who were having to cope with dreadful weather conditions, the busiest people were those with calculators trying to work out dropped scores and net championship points. Ray Honeybone (Renault Clio) had a good race to fifth place and was confirmed as champion, just one point separating himself from Luke Reade (BMW 130i) in second.

A three-way contest for the MSV

Supercup title was reduced by one when Steve Gales crashed his points-leading SEAT Leon at Paddock. Nicholas Jackson and Ollie Pidgley shared a SEAT Supercopa for their second victory of the year, taking the championship from Darren Goes, also in a SEAT, who was almost a lap behind in third. Gary Hufford’s BMW M3 hustled the leading car until traffic trouble and a short excursion dropped him back.

The Toyota Celica of Richard and Roan Lundy won the Trackday Trophy, despite a spin that temporarily promoted the Honda Civic of Paul Harvey and Sam Pearce into the lead.

BRIAN PHILLIPS

WEEKEND WINNERS

MALLORY PARK

SPECIAL SALOONS & MODSPORTS

Race 1 Andy Southcott (MG Midget)

Race 2 Matt Manderson (Lancia Stratos Knightsport)

MAGNIFICENT SEVENS

Tim Davis (Caterham C400)

SUNSET OPEN RACE

Tim Davis (Caterham C400)

SWINGING SIXTIES

Ollie Reuben/Nigel Reuben (TVR Griffith 400)

70s TO PRESENT DAY

Tom Mensley (Renault Clio 172)

BRANDS HATCH

ENDUROKA

Octane Junkies (Adam Smith/Martyn Smith/Baz Ward)

TRACKDAY CHAMPIONSHIP

Alex Tait (Ford Fiesta ST 180)

MSV SUPERCUP

Nicholas Jackson/Ollie Pidgley (SEAT Supercopa Gen 2)

TRACKDAY TROPHY

Richard Lundy/Roan Lundy (Toyota Celica)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Hoffmann doubles up and takes the 270R title

SNETTERTON
BRSCC
31 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER

Frenetic Caterham action filled the majority of the programme at Snetterton last weekend, as three of the car maker's titles were still up for grabs.

No fewer than four drivers had a chance to walk away with the 270R crown, with Harry Cook and Ben Lopez-Appleton leading the points standings heading into the weekend. But it was Lars Alexander Hoffmann who

battled to the win in race one from Lopez-Appleton and Andy Lees, while Cook could only manage seventh.

Hoffmann, who entered the weekend six points shy of the coveted top spot, also won the second race in tough conditions, and with it took the title as Angelos Alvanos finished second and Lees third.

"I think I managed a gap because the guys behind were fighting with each other," said a happy Hoffmann. "But I came here to win, numbers didn't matter. I'm really very happy."

Tom Wyllys's brace of second place

finishes in Roadsport – the first race of which was shared with the 270Rs – was enough for him to claim that title. Carl Jones and Harry Eyre shared the race wins.

The 310R division also boasted a quartet of competitors with one hand on the trophy, as Greg Monks made a telling claim by winning race one from title rivals James Murphy and Lewis Thompson.

The second heat produced the toughest weather of the season, and the ultra-wet conditions caught out Monks, who went off and dropped to last place. Murphy needed a win to snatch the title and, while Monks

Eight on the bounce for Loake secures him Fiesta Junior crown

CROFT
BRSCC
31 OCTOBER

Joseph Loake said his season "couldn't have gone better" as he took an eighth successive win to secure the Fiesta Junior crown at Croft.

Loake snatched pole in the last minute of qualifying, and twice fought off opening-lap challenges from Bradley Beavers in the pair of races to maintain his 100% win rate in emphatic style as he battled strong winds and heavy rain showers to take the title.

"I just don't know what else to say!" Loake said. "It was good from start to finish, especially considering the long break because of COVID. I think that makes it even better because of the disruption. The competition was close, especially with Will [Orton, his main rival]. At Silverstone and Donington the gaps were really tight – it

made the victories even sweeter because they were so hard-earned.

"I still can't believe I won all eight races. The circuits we've raced on this year are so different, so it's great to be able to master them and have the knowledge that I've got the pace everywhere."

His race for the crown was made easier as nearest challenger Orton initially planned to skip Croft. He had sold his Fiesta to fund a move into the Ginetta GT5 Challenge next year, but a member of his team had calculated that he could still lose second in the championship. That meant racing a quickly hired replacement, and Orton cruised to eighth and seventh to pick up the points to maintain his runner-up spot and win the rookie class.

An inherited victory in the opening race, thanks to Oliver Turner getting a penalty for gaining an unfair advantage with a robust overtake, and a storming



run to third in race two proved enough for Sam Watkins to win the Fiesta title.

Watkins and Spencer Stevenson headed into the triple-header tied on points, and Stevenson didn't give up the title without a fight. He finished second behind Turner in race two, and then capitalised on the squabble between Watkins and Turner in the third race to take a comprehensive maiden victory. Stevenson's triumph proved to be in vain as dropped scores were his undoing. He had to drop 32 points compared to zero for Watkins (who had a non-finish at the



fought back to ninth, Murphy had taken the lead. As he did so, however, the race was red-flagged and the result was decided by the order of the previous lap, demoting Murphy to second behind Matt Sheppard, and ensuring that Monks's ninth place earned him the title.

John Byrne had already dominated the Caterham Seven UK Championship and wrapped up the title at the previous round at Donington Park. In attendance on the day but not competing, Byrne attributed his title to a team effort. "The car is set up so well, I'm able to do exactly what I want to with it," he said.

In his absence, Stephen Nuttall beat Henry Heaton in the opener – shared with the 310R drivers – by just 0.153 seconds, while Nuttall had to settle for the runner-up spot in the second, behind Gordon Sawyer.



The Britcar Endurance and Trophy championships were in action on Sunday, and numerous drivers were in line to win their classes and the overall titles.

Richard Higgins in a Porsche 996 won race one in the Trophy contest before Oliver Smith delivered the standout result in race two, charging from the back of the grid in his BMW M3 E36 to take the win and the overall Trophy crown.

The Endurance Championship was won by the youthful and blisteringly fast duo of Jem Hepworth and Danny Harrison in their Praga R1T. A first and a second across the two races secured the overall and class honours. "Incredible, speechless," said Hepworth after winning the title.

Jack Fabby and Garry Townsend took the win aboard their R1T in race two.

KIERAN RENNIE



Cadwell Park season opener) and that handed the Fiesta Junior graduate the crown.

British Touring Car racer Josh Cook took three dominant on-the-road wins, but his Invitational class Fiesta ST Turbo was ineligible for overall victory, which meant Turner's drive in the monsoon-like race two was rewarded with a first win of the season.

It was a multi-car battle for second that allowed Nic Grindrod to escape to victory in the opening CityCar Cup race in his Citroen C1, despite having to start on the 'wrong' side of the track from pole position.

Grindrod was denied a second win after his car refused to fire up in the assembly area despite "running fine" when warming up the engine in the awning. Instead, Steve Laidlaw took the win in his Peugeot 107, chased by Richard Brunning, who made a remarkable charge from the back row in his C1.

The Clubsport Trophy spoils went to SEAT Leon TCR driver Andrew Morrison, after chasing down erstwhile race leader Zachary Lucas's Fiesta in the final 10 minutes following a late safety car.

JOE HUDSON

WEEKEND WINNERS

SNETTERTON

CATERHAM 270R

Races 1 & 2 Lars Alexander Hoffmann

CATERHAM ROADSPORT

Race 1 Carl Jones

Race 2 Harry Eyre

CATERHAM 310R

Race 1 Greg Monks

Race 2 Matt Sheppard

CATERHAM SEVEN UK

Race 1 Stephen Nuttall (below)

Race 2 Gordon Sawyer

BRITCAR TROPHY

Race 1 Richard Higgins (Porsche 996)

Race 2 Oliver Smith (BMW M3 E36)

BRITCAR ENDURANCE

Race 1 Danny Harrison/Jem Hepworth (Praga R1T)

Race 2 Jack Fabby/Garry Townsend (Praga R1T)

CATERHAM ROADSPORT CHALLENGE TROPHY

Domenique Mannsperger



CROFT

FIESTA JUNIORS

Races 1 & 2 Joseph Loake

FIESTA CHAMPIONSHIP

Race 1 Sam Watkins (below)

Race 2 Oliver Turner

Race 3 Spencer Stevenson

CITYCAR CUP

Race 1 Nic Grindrod (Citroen C1)

Race 2 Steve Laidlaw (Peugeot 107)

CLUBSPORT TROPHY

Andrew Morrison (SEAT Leon TCR)



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CN36



Little leads Dagleish in the opening Mini race, but finished behind the champion



Dagleish proves unstoppable

**KNOCKHILL
SMRC
31 OCTOBER**

Robbie Dagleish cemented his position as the dominant force in the Scottish Mini Cooper Cup last weekend, by securing his second successive title as the Scottish Motor Racing Club's shortened season drew to a close at Knockhill.

The Mini Challenge regular, who won both the Scottish and Cooper Pro titles in 2019, headed into the weekend with a 24-point advantage over newcomer Chad Little and duly wrapped up the championship with his fifth win of the season in the opening 12-lap affair.

Jamie Blake again claimed the overall pole position and win in his faster R53 Cooper S car, while Dagleish and Little duked it out behind.

Dagleish made his move on lap six and opened a gap of nearly a second before a big moment at Leslie's on the final lap brought Little to within just

two tenths of a second by the flag.

"It's been a good year, we took five wins from five [before the final race], I sat behind Chad at the start, wanting to see where I was quicker than him, but trying to get past him in the wet [was hard] and he was blocking well at the Hairpin," Dagleish said.

"I saw the last lap board and thought, 'That's it done', and then I had a massive moment at the second corner and he was on my bumper again."

Little has been the revelation of the 2020 season and was rewarded with his maiden win in the second race, beating 2017 champion Mark Geraghty, while airline pilot Neil Hose took his first podium with third in class as Dagleish sat the race out.

There was nothing splitting defending champion Bruce Mitchell and two-time title winner Alastair Baptie at the end of the Scottish Classic Sports and Saloons season, with the pair tied on 150 points.

Mitchell, driving his regular Lotus Europa, and Baptie in his 2017 and 2018 title-winning Fiat X1/9, which is now up for sale, won every race in Class B and Class A, respectively. But organisers declared Mitchell champion as his overall finishing positions were better.

Up front, David Brown took his first SMRC win in his late 1990s TVR Griffith, while John Kinmond claimed race-two victory in his Rover 3500.

Ross Dunn brilliantly wrapped up the Scottish Citroen C1 Cup title after a pair of scintillating races, won by Colin Main and 2019 champion Finlay Brunton.

Dunn held a 15-point cushion over nearest rival James McCracken coming into the weekend, with the latter's task being made even harder after only



Mitchell's Europa took the Classic Sports title on countback

WEEKEND WINNERS

SCOTTISH MINI COOPER CUP

Races 1 & 2 Jamie Blake (Cooper S R53)

SCOTTISH CLASSIC SPORTS AND SALOONS

Race 1 David Brown (TVR Griffith)

Race 2 John Kinmond (Rover 3500)

SCOTTISH C1 CUP

Race 1 Colin Main (below)

Race 2 Finlay Brunton

SCOTTISH FIESTA ST CUP

Races 1 & 2 Liam McGill



For full results visit: speedhive.mylaps.com

qualifying ninth, with Dunn fourth. Despite this, McCracken finished ahead of Dunn in the opener as Main beat Ryan Smith and Brunton to the line.

Brunton, who survived a mirror-bashing moment through the chicane with Dan Martin in race one, won the second encounter as Dunn finished third behind interloper Paul Luti to claim the title.

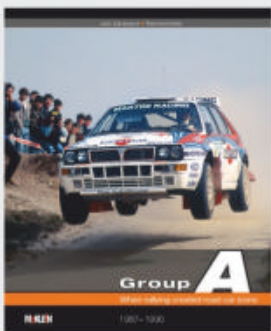
After recording his first podium last time out, Liam McGill won both of the Scottish Ford Fiesta ST Cup races while Dave Colville wrapped up the title.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



SUTTON
motorsport
IMAGES

APPRECIATING THE UNLOVED ERA



BOOK REVIEW
GROUP A: WHEN
RALLYING CREATED
ROAD CAR ICONS
RRP €49.90

“During those 10 years, rallying died a little.” The latest book in the series by World Rally Championship

historian John Davenport, covering the Group A years between 1987 and 1996, doesn’t shy away from the fact that it’s not a fondly remembered era. Released last year, *When Rallying Created Road Car Icons* follows previous efforts in which Davenport delves into Groups 2, 4 and B – the latter giving Group A a tough act to follow.

It wasn’t helped by the initial domination of Lancia. Its Integrale was the most successful example in the early A years of a manufacturer quickly responding to Group B’s demise by assimilating existing motorsport-derived technology into tuned road cars with a minimum production of 5000 examples. Then came Toyota’s Celica Turbo before new challengers from Ford, Subaru and Mitsubishi arose.

Group A was also dogged by controversies resulting from a well-meaning but fundamentally problematic rulebook that stipulated engines must produce no more than 300bhp – even though, as Davenport notes, “there was no way of checking whether an engine once installed in the car was over the limit”.

It was also hurt by the “much-despised” rotation of rallies that devalued grandee events, as little-known names grasped opportunities to bolster their CVs on

those poorly attended rounds that didn’t count towards the drivers’ and manufacturers’ championship points. Patrick Bernardini, anybody?

Davenport highlights it as a starting point for the gradual decline of rallying “outside the interest of its hardcore enthusiast to the point where national media practically ignored it”, but there were positives to be had. Group A spawned the first driver to truly transcend his discipline in 1995 champion Colin McRae; a non-Scandinavian beat the Finns in their own back yard for the first time courtesy of Carlos Sainz on the 1000 Lakes of 1990, and it gave a platform to future stars in Tommi Mäkinen – the last Group A champion in 1996 – and Richard Burns to name but two.

The main crux of the book, complemented throughout by photographs from the glorious McKlein archive (a shot of Sainz, still in full racewear, enjoying a beer in a Kenyan swimming pool is one of Autosport’s favourites), is dedicated to a year-by-year history summarising the key technical and sporting rule changes at the start of each chapter before delving into the events of all the main rallies.

Davenport doesn’t shy away from the many controversies but nor does he waste time dwelling on them either. Instead, he opts to devote a chapter to the black arts of Group A at the end of the book after an overview of all the manufacturers involved; from major players to the plucky efforts of Opel – Sepp Haider’s two-wheel-drive Kadett was an outright winner on Rally New Zealand in 1988 – and F2 marques such as Peugeot and Skoda.

The result is an effective and highly accessible overview that covers all the bases, with a full results section at the end to remind you of the time a humble



Juha Kankkunen balances
the over-boosted 1995
Toyota Celica in Argentina

OF RALLYING



Lancia pilot Miki
Biasion negotiates the
1989 Monte Carlo Rally

Renault 5 Turbo won the Ivory Coast Rally in 1989, and when Daihatsus filled positions fifth through to seventh on the 1993 Safari.

Naturally, one of its highlights is the aforementioned chapter exploring the black arts. It cover matters from illegal fuel on Sainz's Jolly Club Lancia on the 1993 Sanremo, allegations of nitrous oxide being injected into the Integrale's engine through a fire extinguisher valve on the same event two years prior and, most famously of all, Toyota's illegal turbo restrictor system uncovered on Rally Catalunya in 1995, described by then FIA president Max Mosely as "the most sophisticated and ingenious device I have seen in 30 years of motorsport".

While Group A may not be fondly remembered, this is still a fine addition to the set for WRC history buffs. We can't wait for the World Rally Car-era book to come out...

JAMES NEWBOLD

FINISHING STRAIGHT



youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom



After last weekend's Emilia Romagna Grand Prix at Imola, Sebastian Vettel now ranks a lowly 14th in the drivers' championship, while his Ferrari team-mate Charles Leclerc is a comparatively lofty fifth. In this video, Autosport takes a closer look at the causes of the four-time champion's recent struggles.

Go to bit.ly/VettelStruggles

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

DTM

Round 9/9

Hockenheim, Germany

7-8 November

TV Live BT Sport ESPN,
Sat 1215, Sun 1215

Formula Renault Eurocup

Round 9/10

Hockenheim, Germany

7-8 November

Super GT

Round 7/8

Motegi, Japan

8 November

TCR Europe Series

Round 6/6

Jarama, Spain

7-8 November

TV Livestream on Motorsport.tv,
Sat 1010, 1300

NASCAR Cup

Round 36/36

Phoenix, USA

8 November

TV Live Premier Sports 2, Sun 1930

NASCAR Xfinity Series

Round 33/33

Phoenix, USA

7 November

TV Live Premier Sports 2, Sat 2200

NASCAR Truck Series

Round 23/23

Phoenix, USA

6 November

TV Live Premier Sports 2, Sat 0100

European Rally Championship

Round 4/6

Nyiregyhaza, Hungary

6-8 November

TV Highlights Eurosport 2, Sat 2300,
Sun 2300

MotoGP

Round 12/14

Valencia, Spain (European GP)

8 November

TV Live BT Sport 2, Sun 1230

UK MOTORSPORT

Silverstone MSVR

7-8 November

British GT, GT5 Challenge, British F3,
Porsche Sprint Challenge GB

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sun 1245

Brands Hatch BARC

7-8 November

British Truck Racing, Legends, Mighty
Mini, Pickup Truck, Junior Saloon Car,
Super Silhouettes

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TOP FIVE



UNSUNG IMOLA F1 DRIVES

As Imola found itself back on to the Formula 1 schedule last weekend, we're reminded of the standout grand prix performances at the venue that went unrewarded by a podium or victory

JAMES NEWBOLD

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY
motorsport
IMAGES

5 ERIC VAN DE POELE, 1991

The Belgian scraped through pre-qualifying in fourth aboard his Modena Lamborghini 291, then outpaced the AGS and Footwork cars to start 21st. In the sodden race, de Poele rose gradually to the giddy heights of fifth as attrition took its toll on his rivals. He had the pace to keep Mika Hakkinen and Thierry Boutsen at bay until the final lap when the fuel pump broke. He was classified ninth on his first grand prix start.



4 JACQUES VILLENEUVE, 2000

For the third round of the season, the BAR 002 had taken another performance stride forward. That permitted the Canadian to qualify ninth, 0.69s up on team-mate Ricardo Zonta. Villeneuve then made waves at the start. He celebrated his 29th birthday with a gutsy drive to fifth – with only the Ferraris and McLarens ahead – that owed much to a demon launch from ninth on the grid, gaining four spots by Turn 1.



3 JENSON BUTTON, 2002

With a performance Autosport described as “faultless; quick, polished, error-free”, Renault R202 driver Button converted ninth on the grid into two points for fifth. After jumping Nick Heidfeld’s Sauber at the start, Button cleared team-mate Jarno Trulli at the first round of stops and then deservedly passed David Coulthard’s McLaren on the next visit to the pits. As a bonus, he finished as the last driver on the lead lap.



2 AYRTON SENNA, 1985

Fresh from his first win in the wet at Estoril and having snared pole at Imola with race tyres rather than qualifiers, Senna pulled away from team-mate Elio de Angelis – despite Senna lacking his Lotus counterpart’s new EF15 Renault engine, running the old EF4 unit instead. Senna was equal to the task of defending from Alain Prost and led all the way until his 95T coughed and ran out of fuel four laps from home.

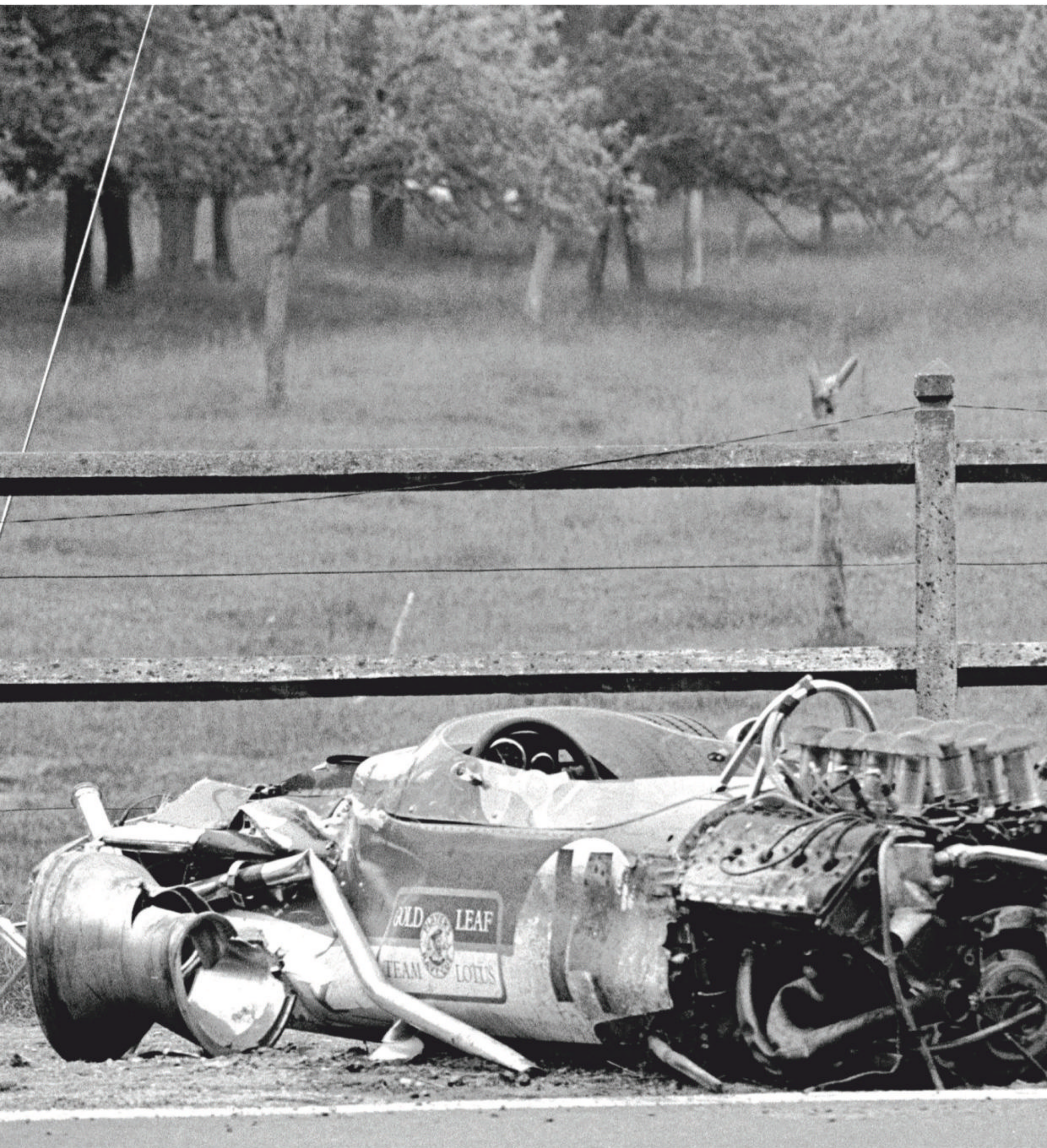


1 GILLES VILLENEUVE, 1981

Villeneuve led from a slippery pole position, with fast-starting Ferrari 126CK team-mate Didier Pironi in tow, before stopping for slicks on lap 14. No sooner had he rejoined, rain returned. That meant another stop for wets. Demoted to 14th, he recovered to within seconds of fifth place only for the clutch to pack up with two laps left and demote him to seventh, out of the points – a poor reward for a stellar drive.



FINISHING STRAIGHT



FROM THE ARCHIVE

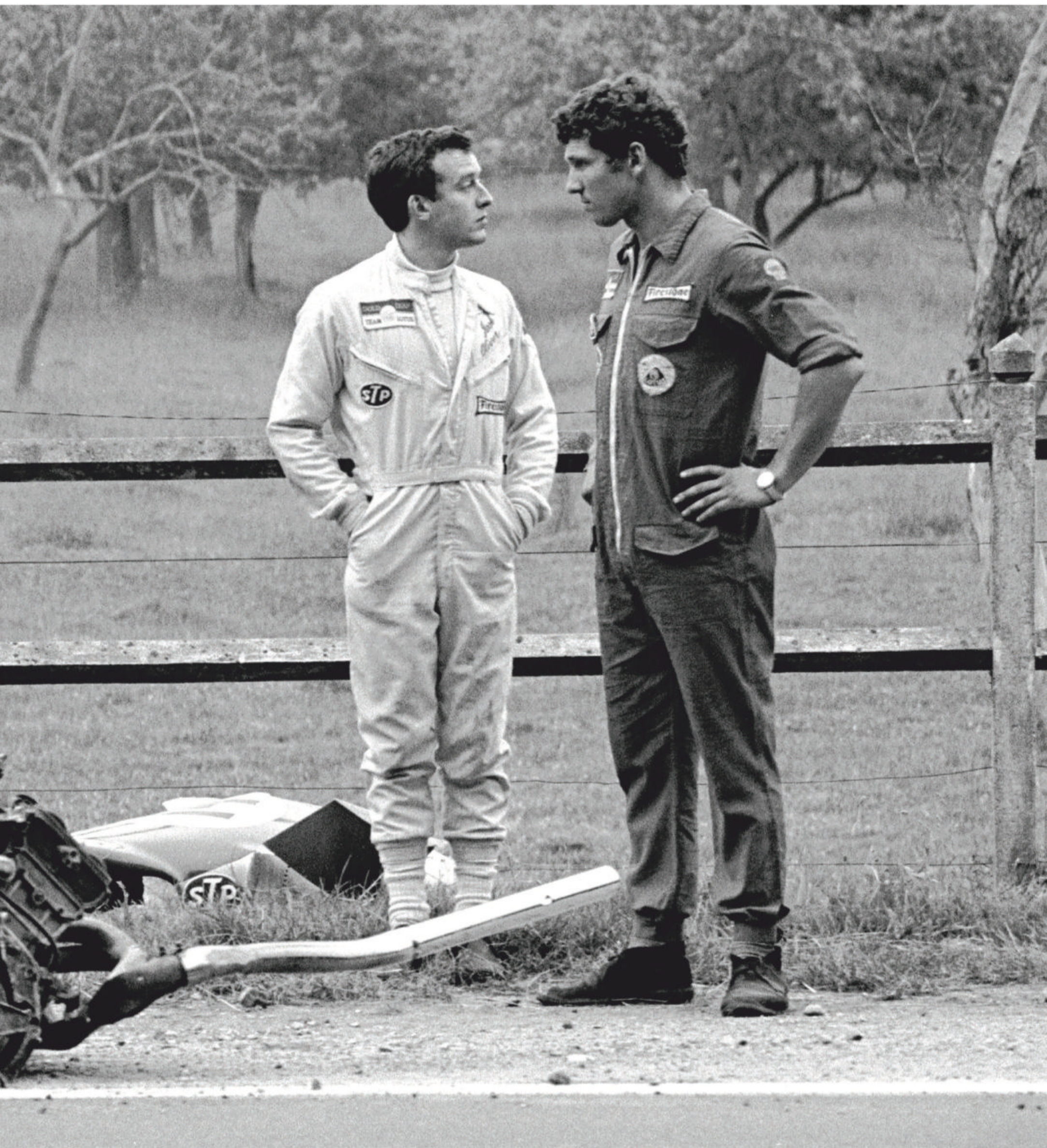
How did he get out of that? A pale Jackie Oliver ponders his lucky escape from the practice crash that left his Lotus 49B an obvious non-starter at the 1968 French

Grand Prix at fearsome Rouen-les-Essarts. The Lotus snapped away from the rookie on the fast downhill stretch before the pits and slammed into a wall by wrought iron gates outside a chateau.

Oliver has always believed the experimental high-stalked rear wing he was running for the first time was suddenly dislodged and fell backwards, lifting the rear wheels from the track.



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Autosport rants against F1's new rules

7 November 1958

“The Sabotaging of Grand Prix Racing” was Autosport’s dramatic headline for its coverage of the newly announced Formula 1 rules this week in 1958.

The sport’s governing body, the Commission Sportive Internationale, chose the presentation ceremony of the world championship trophies to Ferrari’s Mike Hawthorn and Vanwall boss Tony Vandervell to reveal its plans for F1. From 1961, the world championship was to be run for 1500cc machines, down from the 2.5-litre regulations that had been in place since 1954. Luigi Musso, Peter Collins and Stuart Lewis-Evans had been killed during 1958 GP events so it made sense that slower cars, with increased safety measures, were being considered, but few took the news well.

Autosport founding editor Gregor Grant described the move as a “bombshell” that “threatens to blow GP racing right out of the circuits altogether”. “The advice of experts was completely disregarded and, owing to the support of delegates from countries which neither build cars nor organise Formula races, the proposal was adopted,” continued Grant.

“None of the star drivers would think it worth their while to exert skill in machines which cannot possibly be made to go faster than a present-day F2 Cooper or Lotus. The crowds will never come to watch the pathetic sight of small-capacity machines.”

Enzo Ferrari did not immediately support the new F1 either, and proposed a two-litre formula instead. Italy joined Britain in voting against the French proposal, but Germany was chief among its supporters.

The arguments over the regulations went on for more than two years and even resulted in a brief attempt at an alternative category for the faster cars – the Intercontinental Formula. But Autosport’s stance softened and during 1961 it became increasingly obvious that the new rules, with a reduction in the initially suggested minimum weight of 500kg, were here to stay.

Ferrari was best prepared and dominated the first season (above), but thereafter the British firms got their acts together and the 1500cc formula would provide some great racing, innovation and the rise of several key players, chiefly Jim Clark and Lotus.



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IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

Button on life after F1

WE SPEAK TO THE 2009 WORLD CHAMPION

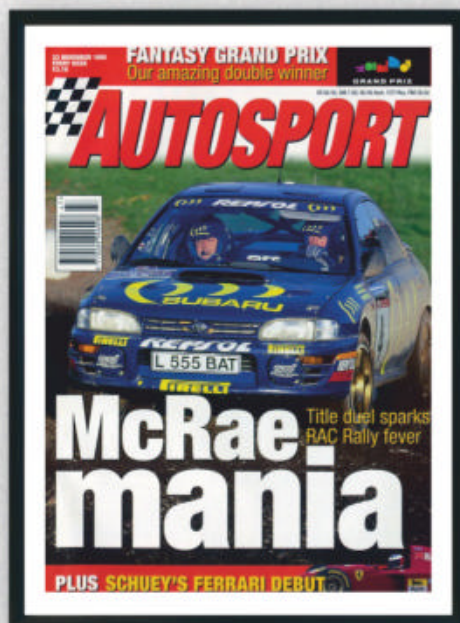
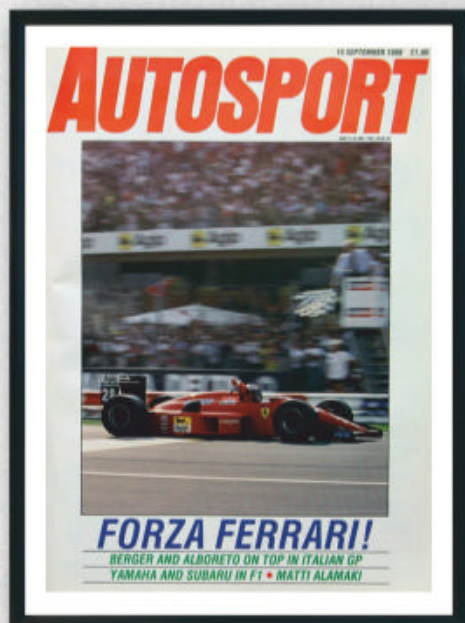
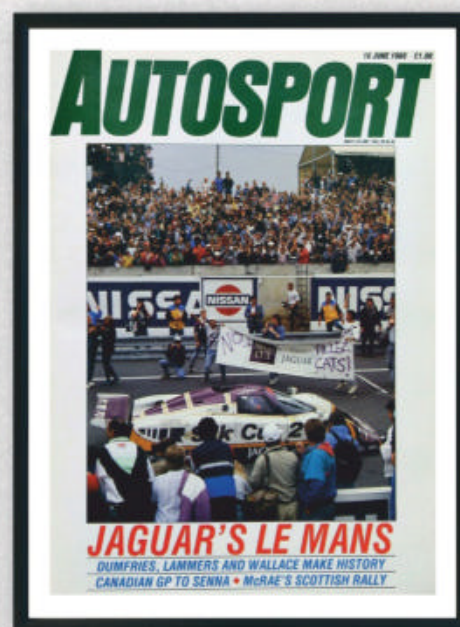
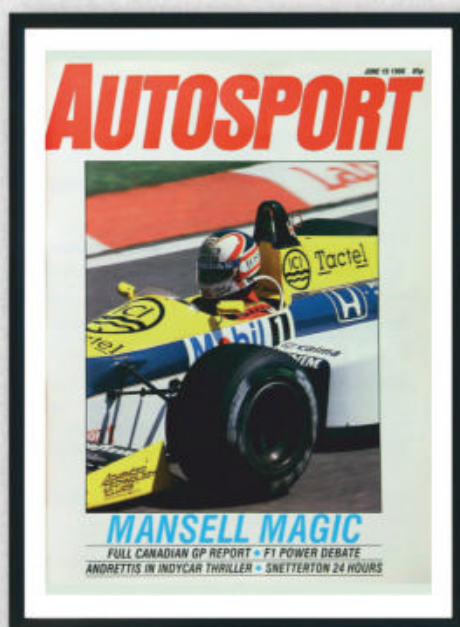
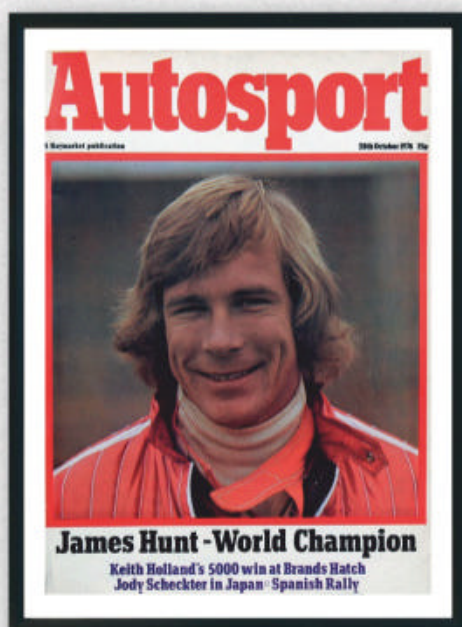
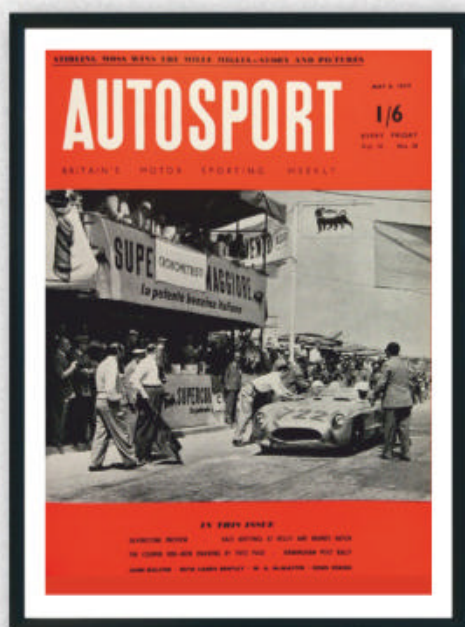
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