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BATTLE FOR LE MANS

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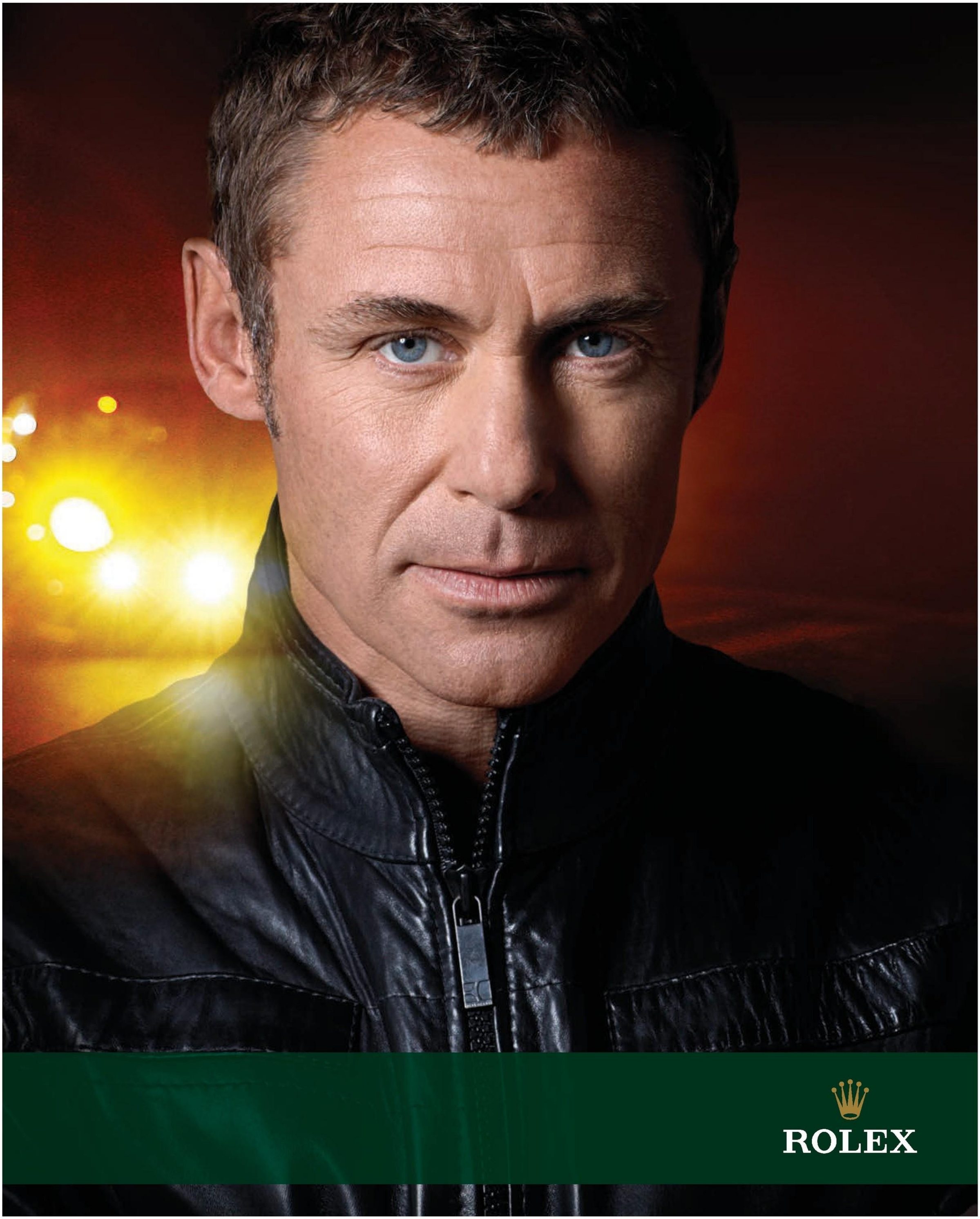
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TOM KRISTENSEN

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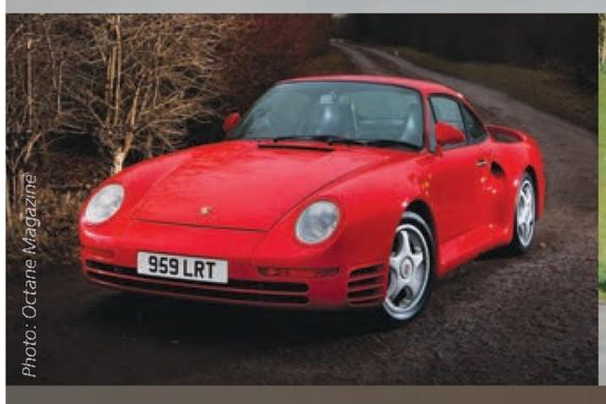


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LAT

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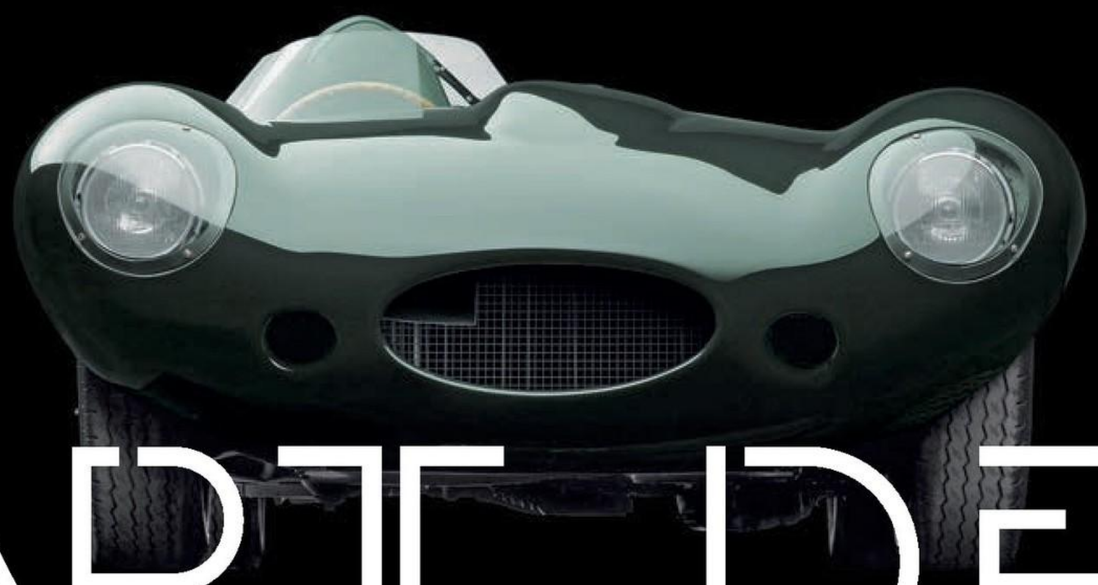
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Gimmicks are a 'Band-Aid'

We should be careful what we ask for. After years of bemoaning the lack of overtaking in Formula 1, we now have so much it's hard to keep up! From the anti-climax of Abu Dhabi last year to the non-stop drama of the Chinese GP: it's like a different sport.

The race in Shanghai was by far the most entertaining ever seen at this modern 'Tilke-drome', and as I write the morning after, it's difficult to remember the last time a GP winner passed four rivals in the final 20 laps of a dry race to secure victory. Lewis Hamilton's performance was sensational and his pass on McLaren team-mate Jenson Button was a genuinely great move. The race was not won by the fastest car, but by a team that called the right strategy and by a driver on the top of his game. In that sense, all very satisfactory.

And yet… enthusiasts can't ignore that it all felt contrived, artificial. Variables are what we crave in racing, but greater freedom within technical regulations, tyre wars – they're not realistic in these straitened times. Instead, we have control tyres designed intentionally to wear out, rules that encourage drivers to qualify at the back of the grid and moveable aero devices to help drafting, but only in a designated 'overtaking zone'. It's as fake as NASCAR.

But am I being po-faced, a Grand Prix snob? This race was really exciting. Why question it? Well, it seems many of you are doing the same. On our website the general response to the Chinese GP was 'great entertainment, but it's clearly contrived'.

I've previously stated in this space that I won't complain if the 'gimmicks' provide great racing. Well, fine: we're in for a thrilling season, after all. But the great action won't change *Motor Sport's* belief that the 2011 regulations are a Band-Aid over a deep wound. F1 cars are inherently designed to race in clean air – not to make it easier for drivers to race each other. If we must have restrictive regulations – and I accept we probably have to if costs are not to spiral – why not tackle the aerodynamic conundrum properly, once and for all?

Now, I'm not saying it's easy. As Pat Symonds wrote in our April issue, the overtaking question is complex, and aero is not the sole problem. But he concluded by suggesting "a coordinated long-term strategy aimed at embracing all aspects of the topic in a coherent manner for the good of all". Makes sense. That way, we might enjoy genuine wheel-to-wheel racing without the synthetic need for gimmicks and inferior tyres. Is anyone listening?

As you can read in Nigel Roebuck's Reflections this month, Ayrton Senna has a lot to answer for. But for all the questionable ethics of his approach to racing, the power of the man and his legacy still captivates 17 years after his death, as a new cinematic documentary set for UK release this summer will remind us.

Next month's issue will feature more on this remarkable film (we've been lucky enough to gain a sneak preview and all I'll say is it's not to be missed). For now, I'd like to draw your attention to an exciting *Motor Sport* reader evening that we've organised to celebrate the release of the film. On June 6 at the Everyman Theatre in Belsize Park, Camden, you can join us to watch *Senna* in the company of the writer and producer, Mannish Pandey, and a very special guest – Senna's close friend from his McLaren days, Jo Ramirez. Once the credits have rolled, our own Nigel Roebuck and Rob Widdows will join Mannish and Jo for a forum session on the great man. The stories will flow and you'll have the chance to ask the panel questions. Visit our website – **www.motorsportmagazine.com** – to find out how to buy tickets. I do hope you'll join us. It promises to be a great evening.

Damien Smith, Editor

CONTRIBUTORS



Nigel Roebuck

It would be a strict minimalist who binned all his tickets, programmes, passes and notebooks after each race he'd attended. Luckily Nigel has always had a historian's mind, so when we asked for personal material to illustrate his first year of F1 reportage, he was able to produce relics from the Spanish GP which was his rookie job. After he'd dug down through 40 years of memorabilia, of course.



Gary Watkins

A career spent reporting on international sports car racing means that Gary hasn't celebrated his mid-June birthday since 1990. Or not properly, anyway. The fear that if he does so he will age 20 years in one fell swoop, in the manner of Dorian Gray, keeps him going back to the Le Mans 24 Hours every year. One problem: this year's race doesn't clash with his birthday. Will he age overnight?



Ed Foster

Having survived the Soldier Challenge – a military-style dash across London – our own fully poseable Action Man now has a helmet cam to play with. Ever YouTubed on-bike footage round the Paris Peripherique? It's not a patch on Ed's scooter blast to City Airport… But it was his 'sensible' transport – Lance the Lotus – which took him to Gaydon to peer under the new Aston Le Mans racer's skirts.



Mike Doodson

Mike's many years in and around the Grand Prix world as a reporter (beginning with our one-time sister paper *Motoring News*) stretches back to when drivers had time to spend with the press and weren't so worried about being 'on message'. Mike considered Elio de Angelis a friend, which gives his recollections of this cultured and charming Italian a uniquely personal quality.



HISTORICS

Lotus V12 to get demo runs

One of five Lotus T102s, complete with 3.5-litre V12 Lamborghini engine, has been restored by Classic Team Lotus and will run in demonstrations this year with owner Andrew Morris.

The five cars were raced during the 1990 Formula 1 season by Martin Donnelly (above) and Derek Warwick. Donnelly suffered his career-ending accident in one of them during qualifying for the Spanish GP at Jerez.

Morris has chassis 4 and the car is now in race-ready trim. The T102 is the only Lotus ever fitted with a V12 engine. Morris has invited Donnelly to drive the car.



FORMULA 1

Newey given top honour

Red Bull designer Adrian Newey has been awarded the prestigious Segrave Trophy at the Royal Automobile Club.

Former bosses Sir Frank Williams and Patrick Head joined Sir Jackie Stewart and Damon Hill to honour Newey who has built title-winning cars for Williams, McLaren and Red Bull.



FORMULA 1

Bernie stirs new tensions with Todt

Tensions have risen between Bernie Ecclestone and Jean Todt in recent weeks, and now Bernie has made his feelings known with an unexpectedly personal swipe at the FIA president.

"Jean Todt is a poor man's Max [Mosley]," he told the *Daily Express*. "He has been travelling around the world doing what Max didn't do too much – kissing the babies and shaking the hands. It is probably good for the FIA, but we don't need it in Formula 1." He added that Todt had "not so much had a positive effect on F1".

Todt, who has been keeping a relatively low profile recently, offered a measured response to the *Financial Times*. "It is important not to overreact," said the Frenchman. "I feel that with confrontation, unless it is necessary to achieve a result, you lose time. I prefer to achieve results with harmony rather than confrontation."

So what's it all about? Publicly at least Ecclestone's main gripe is with the 1.6-litre turbo rules, which were confirmed for 2013 some months ago. Despite the fact that all parties were involved in the discussions – the process actually started under Mosley – Ecclestone believes that the turbo plans should be dropped.

"TODT HAS BEEN TRAVELLING AROUND THE WORLD, KISSING BABIES AND SHAKING HANDS"
BERNIE ECCLESTONE

He has a genuine fear that they won't sound spectacular enough to properly satisfy spectators, and believes that F1 should be about noisy V8s. He's also well aware that there's a major cost implication for competitors.

Things have been ticking along quite nicely under the V8 engine freeze, but a new formula will force an explosion in costs. His feelings are shared by the teams, which met with Bernie in Malaysia. Of the engine manufacturers, only Renault has any real enthusiasm.

Asked by *Motor Sport* about his "poor man's Max Mosley" comment, Bernie playfully said: "I'm very happy with Mr Todt. I think he's working very hard and he's doing a good job. Max is very rich, correct? And Todt said he's working his backside off and he's not being paid for what he does. Which is all wrong, anyway. So that was the comment..."

He was more serious about the turbo issue: "The only thing we disagree on, and I hope he's right and I'm wrong perhaps, is that I think the whole thing about F1 is the atmosphere and the noise. The first time people come to F1, it's 'Wow.'"

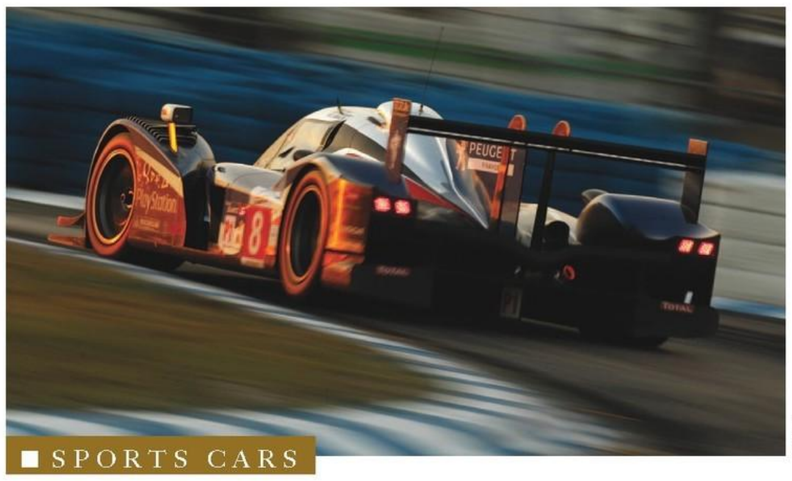
Turbos aside, the bigger picture is the commercial background of the sport. In April 2001 Ecclestone and Mosley signed the now infamous 100-year F1 commercial rights agreement. Since then it has been ticking away like a time bomb, before finally clicking into gear as of January 1 2011.

Todt has asked the FIA lawyers to study the agreement, and he appears to have accepted that it is set in stone, telling the *FT*: "It is what we have..."

The fact that Todt has been pushing for a better deal for the FIA has presumably rankled with Bernie, and that process will continue with negotiations over the next Concorde Agreement, which will start in 2013.

Bernie told *Motor Sport*: "Normally when you make a contract, and you don't stick to the contract, things happen, which is not always good for everyone. But I'm sure the FIA will stick to their contract. Certainly we will."

So does it annoy him that Todt has even been looking into the deal? "No. Anything that anyone can do, I can look after..." *Adam Cooper*



DPPI

■ SPORTS CARS

FIA investigates after second Peugeot flip

The latest accident in which one of the new Peugeot 908 HDis became airborne is now being investigated by the FIA.

Nicolas Minassian flipped during testing at Paul Ricard in February, the second time that the second-generation 908 turbodiesel has taken off. That has resulted in a meeting between Peugeot, the FIA and the Le Mans-organising Automobile Club de l'Ouest.

FIA technical consultant Peter Wright, who oversaw the aerodynamic study that resulted in the introduction of the 'shark fin' on all new prototypes for 2011, explained that the governing body had become involved because it had blanket responsibility for safety in motor sport. He explained that the FIA was now examining data from the incident and that there would be no action taken before a thorough examination was complete.

Peugeot has revealed that the first accident, in which Marc Gené took off at the MotorLand Aragon circuit in Spain, was the result of a rear wishbone failure. Peugeot Sport technical director Bruno Famin insisted that Minassian's accident was a result of the "driver losing the car".

The Peugeots have taken off despite the introduction of the shark fin. These are designed to cut down on aerial accidents by raising the take-off speed.



■ HISTORICS

Tour heads west and gets bigger

Readers of *Motor Sport* can gain a 10 per cent discount on the entry fee for Tour Britannia, which runs from June 17-19 this year after moving from its traditional early September date.

The classic race and rally tour will take in 11 new venues in South Wales and the West Country, with races at Pembrey and Castle Combe, before finishing at Silverstone on the Sunday.

The entry is already at more than 60, making the 2011 event the best supported in its seven-year history. Notable contenders include John Sheldon (Lotus Elan) and John Clark (Porsche 911), while event newcomer Chris Steel fields a Ford GT40.

■ FORMULA 1

Austin aims at wide appeal

The Austin Grand Prix venue has been branded the "Circuit of the Americas" in an attempt to position it as a destination for fans from all over the continent.

Race chairman Tavo Hellmund has strong connections in Mexico and has made it clear from the start that he wants to attract visitors from Latin America. With Sergio Perez and Pastor Maldonado joining the Brazilian contingent in F1, the pitch is well timed.

"We are building a destination for entertainment and business, not simply a race track," said Hellmund. "This brand reflects that entire idea."

The 'COTA' will also host MotoGP from 2013, the year after the maiden F1 race.

US GP feature, page 76

■ HISTORICS

Pre-war test at Brooklands

One hundred pre-war cars will contest the Brooklands Speed Trials on June 18 as part of the Brooklands Double Twelve Motorsport Festival. The following day, over 140 cars will then take part in a Driving Concours.

The Vintage Sports-Car Club sprint will use the Mercedes-Benz World circuit, while competitors in the driving concours will tackle a series of tests inspired by those used in the 1939 Junior Car Club Rally at Brooklands, as well as being judged against the exacting criteria of a concours d'elegance.

The tests will take place in evocative environments including the Members' Banking and Test Hill.



GEPA/Red Bull

■ RALLYING

Mixed response to extended Rally GB

Rally GB will cover the length of Wales following a major revamp to the route of Britain's round of the World Championship.

Starting in the north coast town of Llandudno on Thursday November 10 and finishing three days later in the capital Cardiff, the event will cover a total of 1149 miles and feature 24 mainly gravel stages.

The action gets underway with two runs around the Great Orme toll road, which is back on the schedule for the first time since 1981. Crews then head to Clocaenog forest and return to Llandudno for an overnight halt.

Friday is based around a covered central service area in Builth Wells and consists of four repeated stages including the classic forest runs Dyfi and Dyfnant.

Overnight parc fermé is in Cardiff from where the event will resume on Saturday morning, heading north to the spectator-friendly loop of Hafren, Sweet Lamb and Myherin. The day closes with an asphalt superspecial stage in Cardiff.

Sunday comprises three repeated stages in the Epynt military ranges, including the mixed-surface Halfway test and the Monument Hill Power Stage, which will be televised live.

But although the cross-country route will appease the event's backer, the Welsh Assembly Government, leading teams have voiced their concerns.

"We need a lot of hotel rooms and we're not going to find them in Builth," said Ford's John Millington.

His counterpart at Citroën, Sven Smeets, said: "The route is a complete nightmare."

However, there was support from top British driver Matthew Wilson, who said: "It's great – it's going to be a real challenge."

Richard Rodgers

CHANGE



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Richard Styles

■ SPORTS CARS

Le Mans Lotus tested

The car that will take Lotus back to the Le Mans 24 Hours has broken cover.

The new GTE class Evora (above), developed in conjunction with Dallara and Ycom in Italy, was put through its paces at Hethel and then Snetterton by James Rossiter and Johnny Mowlem ahead of its handover to the Austrian Jetalliance team, which will field two cars at Le Mans.

■ HISTORICS

Briggs B42 to run again

The F2 Chevron B42 raced in 1978 by American John David Briggs will run again this year in the hands of Chevron fan Hugh Price after 30 years in a Yorkshire barn.

In 1978, chassis 16 was run by Peter Gethin's team for Briggs, before being sold to British racer Warren Booth for the '79 season and used in some F2 races and the Aurora British F1 Championship.

Booth raced it in the colours of Crown Paints, but Price has had it restored in the ICI colours of the works car of Derek Daly. Fellow racer Mike Catlow has completed the project.



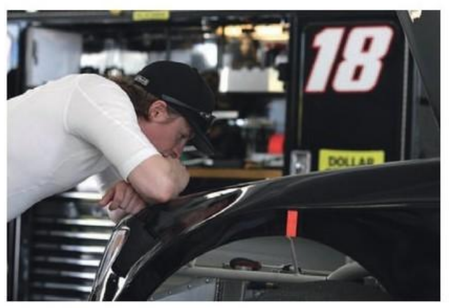
Ice 1 Racing

■ NASCAR

Kimi eyes Sprint Cup

Former World Champion Kimi Räikkönen is following in the footsteps of fellow Formula 1 drivers Juan Pablo Montoya and Jacques Villeneuve by trying to break into the NASCAR Sprint Cup.

Räikkönen, who left F1 for the World Rally Championship after the 2009 season, has signed up for a selected programme of events in the Camping World-sponsored Truck Series. He will race a Toyota Tundra in three to five Truck events, starting at Charlotte on May 20, alongside his WRC programme in a factory-run Citroën.



The car will be fielded by Kyle Busch Motorsports under the banner of Ice 1 Racing, which Räikkönen (above) is also using for his WRC campaign in 2011. He got his first taste of the car on the half-mile Gresham Motorsports Park oval at the start of April (top), completing 400 laps over the course of two days of private testing.

The Finn has yet to speak publicly about moving up the NASCAR ladder but talked about the deal as "the start of my venture into NASCAR". He described the test at Gresham as "a lot of fun".

Räikkönen wouldn't be the first driver to compete in F1 and at the highest level in rallying and NASCAR: occasional F1 driver Vic Elford, a Monte Carlo Rally winner before the advent of the WRC, made four premier NASCAR starts in 1969-72; and double F1 world champion Jim Clark made a one-off stock car appearance at Rockingham in 1967, the year after his starring performance on the RAC Rally at the wheel of a Lotus Cortina.



IRL Media

■ INDYCARS

Tracy racing with another Penske

Former Champ Car title winner Paul Tracy is renewing his links with Penske, the team with which he made his name in CART.

The 42-year-old (above) has signed a five-race IndyCar Series deal with Dragon Racing, which is run by Jay Penske, son of Roger. Tracy, who contested three IndyCar races last year, made his debut for the team at Long Beach in April, finishing 16th.

Tracy was signed as test driver for Penske in 1991 after winning the previous year's Indy Lights title and making a one-off CART appearance with Dale Coyne at Long Beach. He went on to win eight races for Penske in 1992-94.

JOIN *MOTOR SPORT* ON JUNE 6 AND SEE THE NEW SENNA FILM

ON MONDAY JUNE 6 *MOTOR SPORT* WILL HOST AN EXCLUSIVE evening for its readers to celebrate the life and career of three-time Formula 1 World Champion Ayrton Senna.

We are offering *Motor Sport* readers the chance to purchase tickets for the evening, which will include a special viewing of the newly-released award-winning documentary *Senna* as well as complimentary drinks and canapés.

After the film, *Motor Sport* features editor Rob Widdows will host an open discussion with Jo Ramirez – the former McLaren co-ordinator who was a close friend of both Senna and his great rival Alain Prost during their explosive era at the team. Mannish Pandey, writer and producer of the documentary, and *Motor Sport's* editor-in-chief Nigel Roebuck will also take part in the forum.



The event will take place at the Everyman Theatre in Belsize Park, Camden, London and will cost £75 for readers and £65 for subscribers, a discount of 13 per cent. There are only 120 spaces available, and each guest will also be entered into a free competition to win tickets to the 2012 *Motor Sport* Hall of Fame.

For more information please contact 020 7349 8472 or visit www.motorsportmagazine.com



Paul Melbert

HISTORICS

Goodwood tunes up

Goodwood's press day, a mini-Festival in its own right, flagged up a squad of anniversaries as a host of racing names assembled to hear Lord March's plans for 2011 and demonstrate their wares. Indycars, bikes, rally cars and supercars screamed up the hill or gleamed on the grass, while World Champion Mika Häkkinen ran a taxi service in the wild Caparo (see page 33).

With a 'racing revolutions' theme, the Festival of Speed (July 1-3) gets even bigger, preceded by the Moving Motor Show on Thursday June 30. No fewer than nine current F1 teams will tackle the hill, a mini 'Gasoline Alley' of 33 Indycars celebrates 100 years of the Brickyard, and the centenary of the IoM Mountain TT attracts a wealth of famous 'bikes and riders.

While Blitzen Benz chased NASCAR Buick and Ferrari 312PB on the hill, Group B rally cars like Stratos and RS200 and a McLaren MP4/1 reminded us of technical leaps such as 4WD and carbon fibre, and Jaguar showed RW77, the Geneva Show E-type from 50 years back to highlight the Style et Luxe concours.



But the Festival isn't all history. Press day brought the first public run of the new Aston Martin LMP1 car, driven by Darren Turner (left), with the WRC Mini as its stablemate, while a Tesla whispered reminders of the FoSTECH technology show.

In September the Revival (16-18) features a tribute to Juan Manuel Fangio and celebrates 100 years of Ford of Britain, while the Fordwater Trophy boasts a spectacular entry entirely of E-types. On a packed race card the Madgwick Cup is for small sports-racers, and the TT Celebration again crams the grid with great GT racers and famous drivers.

But the stand-out event is on the airfield: it's 75 years since the Spitfire flew, so grab a place for the mass scramble and formation take-off of the most beautiful fighter of all.



Paul Lawrence

Unique V8 Rover barks again

Nearly 40 years after it last raced, the ex-Bill Shaw Racing Rover P6 returned to the track at Donington Park recently after a four-year restoration for current owner Ian Giles.

The unique Traco V8-powered car was built in 1970 as an experiment with a view to Rover entering the 1971 British Saloon Car Championship. The prototype was built by Bill Shaw Racing on behalf of the British Leyland competitions department and raced in 1970 club events by Roy Pierpoint. Giles, who has had the car painstakingly restored after it was discovered in a lock-up garage in Exeter, plans to race it this season.

Delecour stages return

Former World Rally Championship ace François Delecour returned to Welsh forests at the start of April to contest the Bulldog Historic Rally in a Porsche 911 – and came away impressed.

Delecour, runner-up in the '93 WRC, was a guest driver on the opening round of the Tuthill Porsche Challenge, an arrive-and-drive series running within the British Historic Rally Championship.

Being new to standard route notes left Delecour dropping time to the leading Escorts in the early stages, but he picked up pace during the day and later set top-10 times.

"It didn't feel like an old car. It was superb," he said. "My co-driver had only done a couple of rallies before, and as the notes weren't mine I lost time over the crests in particular. But I would like the chance of another go."

Röhrl recalls historic drive

To mark 30 years since one of the most remarkable drives in the history of the World Rally Championship, Walter Röhrl and Christian Geistdörfer got back in the Porsche 911SC they drove on the 1981 San Remo Rally to tackle the Targa Tasmania.

The 911 had been restored by the Porsche Museum for Röhrl to contest the 20th Targa Tasmania, a five-day rally on the closed roads of the island off Australia.

"It's a very nice feeling after 30 years to come back to this car," he said. "San Remo was one of the biggest moments in my career."

Röhrl's 1981 drive went down in WRC history as he headed the more powerful Audi Quattros until a driveshaft failed. Ironically, a similar failure on day two in Tasmania cost him any chance of a strong result.

E-types massing for Challenge

Demand for grid places in the E-type Challenge has surpassed all expectations, with over 70 cars registered for the new race series to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Jaguar E-type.

Created by Jaguar Heritage and run by the Historic Sports Car Club, the series starts at Brands Hatch in July and then takes in races at Silverstone, the Nürburgring, Oulton Park and Goodwood. The twin races at Silverstone Classic (July 22-24) will set a new record with a capacity field of 58 E-types expected.

Numerous cars are being restored and prepared for the series, which is placing great emphasis on correct period specification. Racing veteran and Demon Tweeks founder Alan Minshaw and his elder son Jon are among the contenders, and E-type fan Jon will be one of the leading runners having had great success in the cars.

"I raced a Modsports E in 1971, but never since," said 75-year-old Alan of his return to the model after 40 years. He shook down his car at Donington Park in April.

Another freshly prepared car will be that of Mike Wrigley, who commissioned E-type specialist Valley Motorsport to build a replica of the famous 1962 car '49 FXN' raced by Peter Lumsden and Peter Sargeant.

Wrigley brought Lumsden, Sargeant and Samir Clat, the designer of the low-drag body, together to chat about the car. "We've built it as it was originally, as a roadster, and then built up the fixed head from that," he said.



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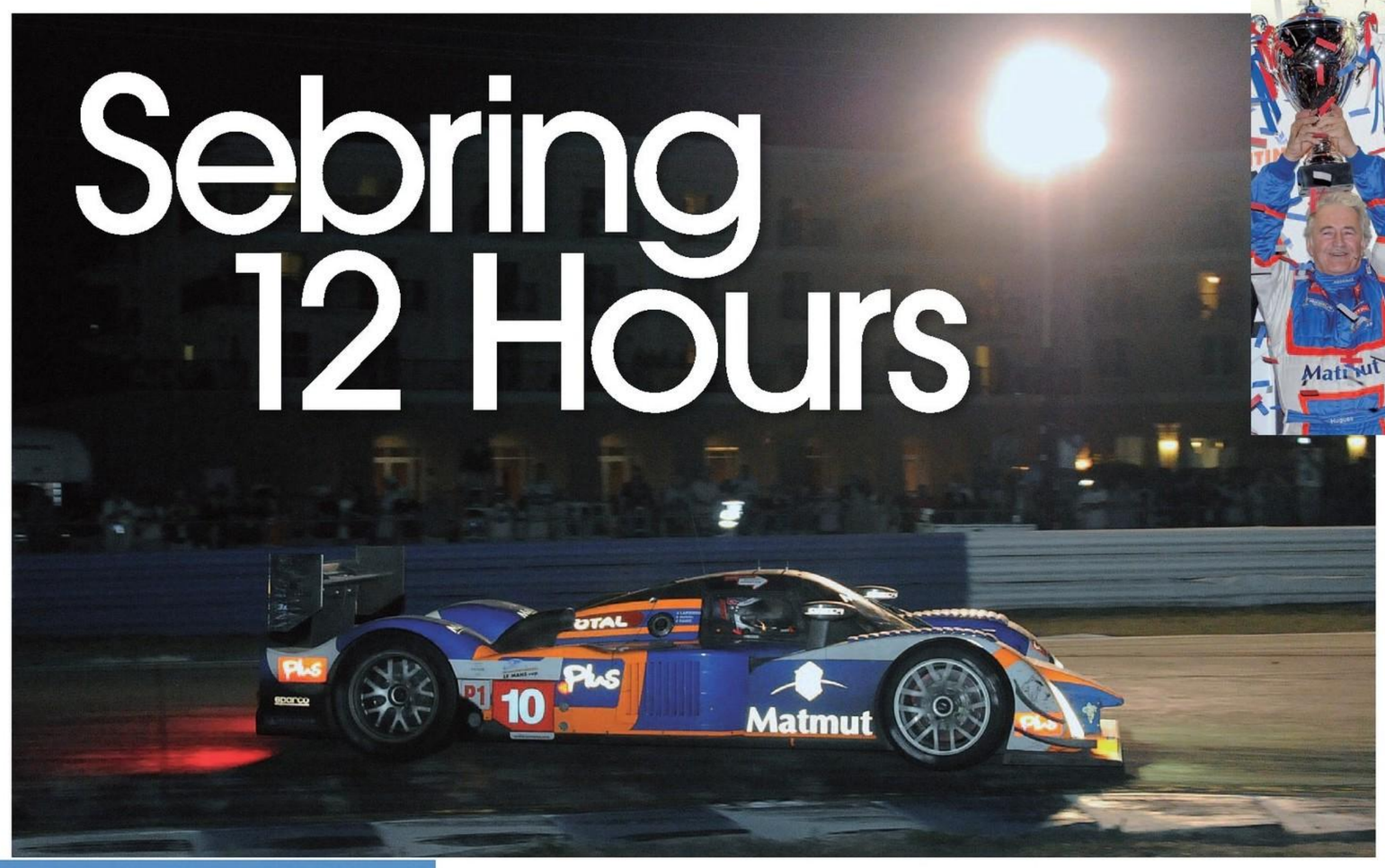
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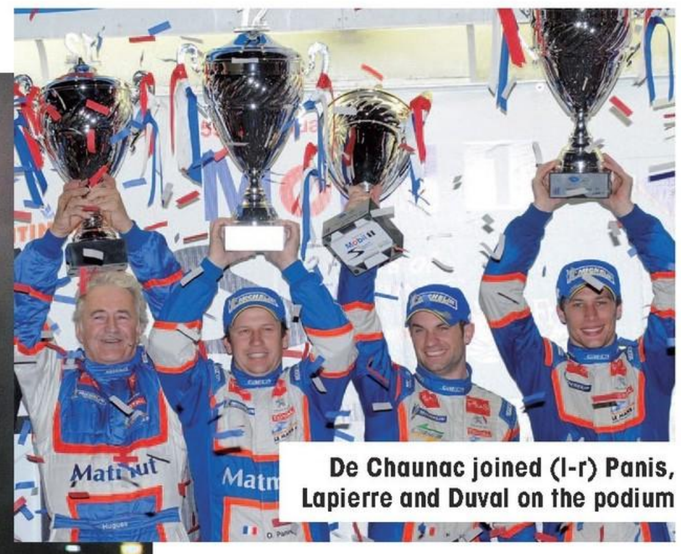
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De Chaunac joined (l-r) Panis, Lapierre and Duval on the podium



Highcroft Racing took superb second, beaten only by ORECA's 908, above

Florida, USA

LAST YEAR AT LE MANS HUGUES DE Chaunac cried tears of despair after an engine failure cost his ORECA team victory. At Sebring in March, the tears flowed again – but for very different reasons.

De Chaunac is an emotional Frenchman who for many encapsulates the true spirit of modern sports car racing. ORECA's first-generation Peugeot 908 HDi FAP was an outside bet for glory at the 12-hour classic, but when the factory teams of Peugeot and Audi faltered **Nicolas Lapierre**, **Loïc Duval** and **Olivier Panis** stepped up to complete the set of big enduro wins for their team boss. Victory at Sebring marks a triple crown of sorts for ORECA, which won Le Mans in 1991 with Mazda and the Daytona 24 Hours in 2000 with its super-successful Dodge Viper.

Peugeot chose to give its all-new 908 turbodiesel a race debut at Sebring, as the 12 Hours marked the beginning of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup, a seven-round global series that includes Le Mans itself and offers the big manufacturers a World Championship stage – in all but name.

The 908, built to the new 2011 regulations that demand a reduction in engine size, took pole position and ran reliably during the day-into-night race on Sebring's demanding concrete airport circuit. But driver errors would cost the French giant a debut victory.

First, **Marc Gené** lunged clumsily into **Dindo Capello's** Audi R15 Plus at the final corner during the fifth hour. Both cars were sent behind the pitwall for repairs, and although both returned

Phillip Island Classic

Victoria, Australia

THE SENSE OF ANTICIPATION IS TANGIBLE AND AN endless stream of open trailers provides a rattling symphonic accompaniment. Even at a relatively minor level, European paddocks are often swamped by pantechnicons and motorhomes, but this is Australia and the Phillip Island Classic is an engaging throwback. More than 500 old cars are entered with the majority exposed to the elements during transit.

Some entrants admit this has more to do with legislation than a craving for period accuracy – many Europe-built race transporters are barred from Australian roads on the grounds of width, while those that comply tend to be prohibitively expensive – but the landscape is all the better for it.

Phillip Island lends itself well to history. Australians talk up the 2.76-mile circuit's facilities – it is, after all, host to both MotoGP and the Superbike World Championship – yet it retains a cosy ambience.

"The locals couldn't be more helpful," says Brit **James Owen**, who's brought his Triumph TR5. "I have loads of spares, almost everything except the fuel metering unit that packed up. Another driver loaned me a replacement, which is set up for a different cam profile. I have to use fewer revs, and am now here to drive around rather than race, but that's still a treat at a venue like this."

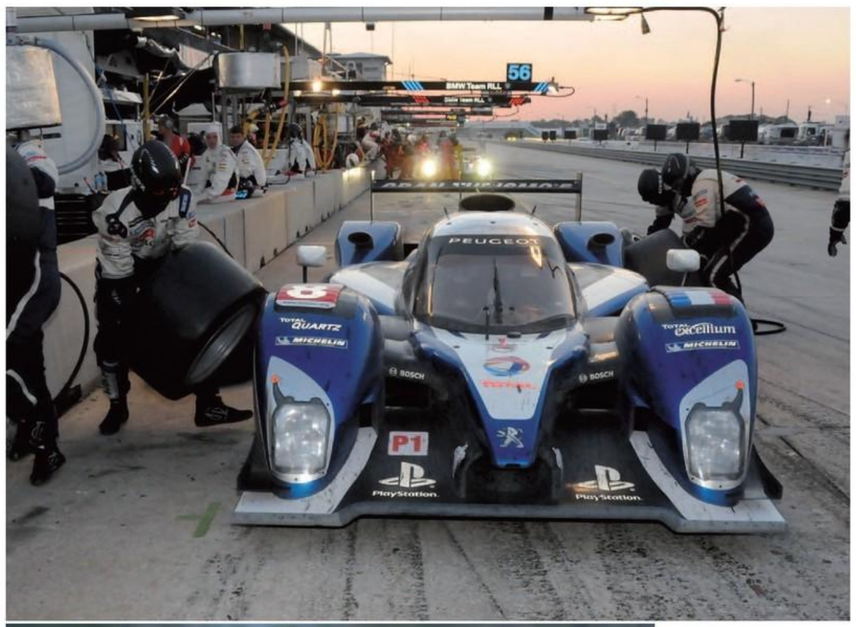
Andy Newall has travelled from the UK to Phillip Island for the fifth time, to drive both Chevron B8 and 31-year-old Palliser Formula Ford. "I live two miles from Donington and love racing there, but it's worth travelling 12,000 for this. It's a







Above: Stephen Perrott's Torana heads Jervis Ward's BMW. Below: Bert Skidmore in Gurney Eagle F1





Audi R15s lost out in last race, while new Peugeot (above) battled to third

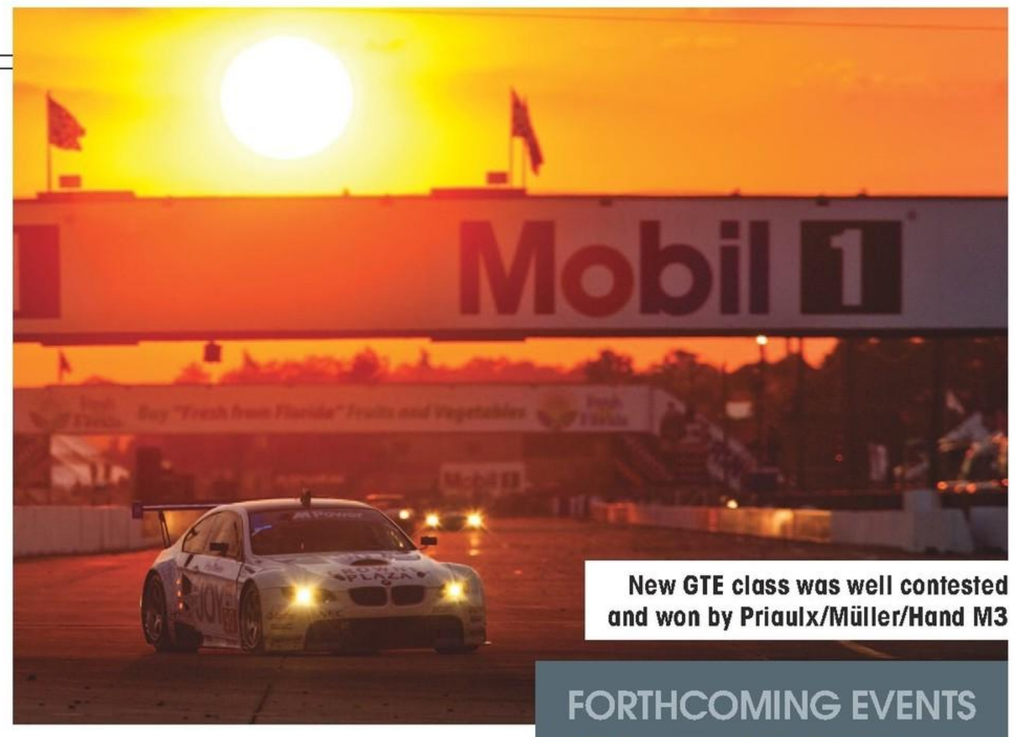
LAT

to finish they'd lost too many laps to challenge for victory.

The pole-winning 908 of **Stephané Sarrazin**, **Franck Montagny** and **Pedro Lamy** looked on course for glory – until it all went wrong in the 10th hour. Damage to air louvres on a front wing forced a pitstop for a new nose, before Lamy lost more time with a spin on his out-lap. Montagny charged over the final two hours, but third place was all he could manage.

These dramas not only played into the hands of ORECA, but also Highcroft Racing's new HPD ARX-01e, in which **David Brabham**, **Simon Pagenaud** and **Marino Franchitti** came close to pulling off a shock of genuinely giant-killing proportions. Pagenaud didn't have enough to take on Duval in the closing stages, but clever fuel strategy from Duncan Dayton's team helped him across the line for a superb second place.

Audi's heavily restricted 2010 R15, racing for the last time before the new R18 coupé takes its bow, went out on a whimper despite showing good pace, the two cars finishing a distant fourth and fifth after delays. Last year's Le Mans winners, **Timo Bernhard**, **Romain Dumas** and **Mike Rockenfeller**, were out of the reckoning at the end of the first hour. Rockenfeller picked up a puncture running offline in traffic, but his left rear immediately punctured again on his first lap back thanks to damaged bodywork caused by the first deflation. The drivers knuckled down to score ILMC points for Audi, which could prove valuable at season's end.



New GTE class was well contested and won by Priaulx/Müller/Hand M3

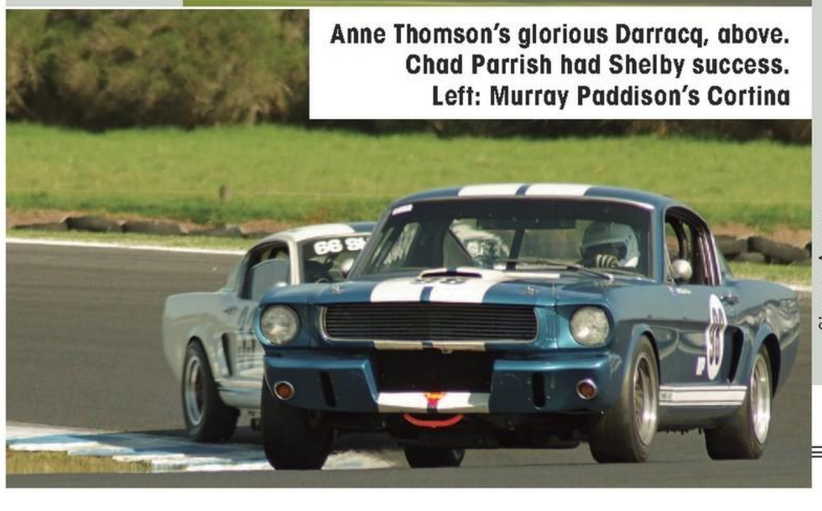
The GTE class lived up to expectations, as BMW, Ferrari, Corvette and Porsche fought for honours. Briton **Andy Priaulx** was inspirational as he shared the winning M3, after team-mate **Dirk Müller** lost time with a high-speed spin in the first hour after being tagged by **PJJones's** slow Jaguar RSR. Punctures for both the winning Priaulx/Müller/**Joey Hand** car and its sister M3, pedalled by **Augusto Farfus**, **Bill Auberlen** and **Dirk Werner**, couldn't stop a deserved 1-2 for Munich.

The ILMC resumes in May at Spa, where Audi's R18 will go head to head with Peugeot's new 908. Then it's time for the big one, Le Mans, in June. *Damien Smith*

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MAY 1 MOTOGP **Estoril, Portugal**
MAY 1 BTCC **Thruxton**
MAY 1 INDYCAR SERIES **São Paulo**
MAY 5-8 WRC **Rally d'Italia Sardegna**
MAY 5-7 LMS **Spa-Francorchamps**
MAY 6-8 F1 **Istanbul, Turkey**
MAY 13-15 BSB **Croft**
MAY 14/15 WTCC **Monza**
MAY 14/15 HISTORIC GP **Pau**
MAY 14/15 F3/GT **Snetterton 300**
MAY 14/15 HISTORICS **Silverstone**
MAY 15 MOTOGP **Le Mans**
MAY 20-22 F1 **Catalunya, Spain**
MAY 26-29 F1 **Monte Carlo, Monaco**
MAY 26-29 WRC **Rally Argentina**
MAY 27-29 HISTORICS **Spa-Francorchamps**
MAY 28-30 HISTORICS **Brands Hatch**
MAY 28-30 BSB **Thruxton**
MAY 29 INDYCAR SERIES **Indianapolis 500**





Anne Thomson's glorious Darracq, above. Chad Parrish had Shelby success. Left: Murray Paddison's Cortina

Simon Arron

proper circuit – fast and flowing. If we took these cars to such speeds at home, they'd put chicanes in."

The outlook is similarly positive for spectators. Large expanses of track are visible from many vantage points, the galleries are close to the circuit's fringe and there isn't a strand of debris fencing to compromise the view. More than 40 races are crammed into the weekend: most last five or six laps and each category runs twice a day. That can be frustrating, because the flag sometimes appears just as a contest is becoming interesting, but Newall favours the format: "There's less waiting around. As soon as one race finishes you start fiddling with tyre pressures and stuff for the next. It always feels busy."

Entry lists are both cosmopolitan and diverse. Yes, there are lots of indigenous Holden Toranas and Ford Falcons, but the temperate climate – and absence of road salt – means 30-year-old Alfa Romeos survive and thrive locally, so there are many of those, too.

Australia also has a rich seam of original Ford Mustangs – and Sydney driver **Chad Parrish** has restored a fair few. His latest project is a Shelby GT350, which wins first time out and goes on to take another two victories during the weekend. "I love everything about Phillip Island," he says. "There is no finer track – this is the best historic event in Australia."

South African **Greg Mills** christened his recently rebuilt Sana. "It began life as an F3 car in Britain," he says, "but was converted to Atlantic specification before somebody put a 5-litre V8 in the back, for hillclimb use. I was in the market for a Lola Formula Atlantic when I spotted the Sana in a shed near Chesterfield. I knew nothing about it, but couldn't resist the chance to tackle such an unusual project."

Restoration took three years and the car almost missed its renaissance after being bumped off a plane in Thailand en route. "It arrived too late for practice," says Mills, "so it's even more of a test session. It doesn't matter – the circuit is unbelievable and just being here is a privilege." *Simon Arron*

Nigel Roebuck



REFLECTIONS
– Amid the excitement, DRS is a gimmick too far
– It's time Formula 1 got rid of the 'one move' rule
– A joke or several courtesy of Frank Gardner

You could hardly fault the Chinese Grand Prix in terms of action – and this on a track hardly renowned for it. At different points five drivers led the race, and all afternoon there was more overtaking than any longtime Formula 1 observer could take in. Lewis Hamilton, at his combative best, won for the first time in eight months, and McLaren, after looking down and out in pre-season testing, have every cause to feel gratified by the way the MP4-26 has been turned around.

Perhaps what said most, though, about the revised 2011-style F1 was what Mark Webber was able to do with his afternoon in Shanghai. If Adrian Newey has again designed the quickest car this year, the Red Bull RB7 has been compromised to some degree by KERS problems – problems that did not occur in 2010, of course, when the teams voluntarily opted not to run the hybrid system so beloved by the FIA.

This year, though, it's back, and while such as the Mercedes-powered teams and Ferrari appear to have it working satisfactorily, such is not the case with Red Bull. In Australia the team did not so much as run it, and such was the car's inherent superiority that still Sebastian Vettel was able to win as he liked.

Melbourne, though, is unusual in lacking any straight of real consequence, and at Sepang there was no alternative but to run KERS and hope for the best. Webber's system was inoperative throughout the race, while Vettel was advised by his team to run without it from half-distance on – not that it mattered, for by then he had a handy lead.

In China, too, KERS had a part to play – and once again neither Red Bull driver had the use of it for the entire race. That being so, Webber's race performance



Vettel had little defence against Hamilton (on fresher tyres) in China, but it was still a battle worthy of post-race discussion, right



was the more startling, for he had been eliminated – together with Kovalainen, Trulli, D'Ambrosio, Glock, Liuzzi and Karthikeyan – in Q1.

How? Because the team, thinking in terms of saving soft tyres as much as possible, surmised that – even without KERS – Webber in a Red Bull would readily progress to Q2 on the harder Pirellis. Wrong.

That being so, Mark started from 18th on the grid – and again on hard tyres. Only two laps in he was already 12 seconds behind the leader, and after nine that had grown to 26. Next time round he made his first stop, and four laps later set a new fastest lap, but at that stage none could have foreseen a place on the podium for him.

Or perhaps, given the new way of things in F1, they could. In the closing laps Webber was quantifiably the fastest man out there, and readily picked off both Ferraris, both Mercedes and Jenson Button's McLaren en route to joining Hamilton and Vettel on the podium. At the finish line, indeed, he was only a couple of seconds adrift of his team-mate, having started 17 places behind him.

"The Chinese GP was all about tyres, and we'd better get used to that"

Fundamentally the Chinese Grand Prix was all about tyres, and we'd better get used to that. This is by no means the first time in Formula 1 history that the tyres in use have been less good – in terms of simple grip – than they might have been. Back in the late '70s, when Goodyear had a monopoly and saw no point in expensive development when there was no competition, I remember Mario Andretti talking about 'wooden tyres'. Latterly, during the time of the Bridgestone monopoly, two compounds were required for use during a race, and while the Japanese company complied with the FIA regulation, there was limited enthusiasm for producing a soft compound intended to have a very short lifespan. »»»

LAT

Nigel Roebuck

"It was one thing, in the old days," a Bridgestone man said, "for tyre companies to produce pure qualifying tyres – for one balls-out lap – because they were built for a specific purpose, and everyone knew it. To produce a *race* tyre with a very limited life, though… that's different. If you watch a race – and don't know the rules – you might conclude that Bridgestone tyres don't last very long."

Perhaps this, together with having nobody to beat, was a factor in Bridgestone's decision to quit at the end of last year. Some time ago the FIA decreed there should be only one tyre supplier in F1, and although several companies – including the much-wronged Michelin – expressed interest in replacing Bridgestone, in the end Pirelli got the nod.

I'm guessing here, but I wonder if – financial considerations apart – Pirelli was more amenable than some to the way F1's powers-that-be wished the sport to go.

In Montréal last June unexpectedly high tyre degradation created the most exciting and unpredictable (dry) Grand Prix of the season, and although it was because of circumstance and therefore *real*, it seems to have sparked a line of thought somewhere. If that's what it takes, why can't we *deliberately* recreate it every fortnight?

Thus, in 2011 we have tyres designed and built with exactly that in mind – tyres of limited life, tyres which 'go off' abruptly, so that the timing of pitstops is more crucial than ever to the outcome of a race.

In terms of the Grand Prix we saw in China, you would have to say that Pirelli has complied magnificently with the brief it was given: one of the prerequisites for a memorable Grand Prix – as we saw in 2005, when tyre changes were forbidden and one set had to last 200 miles – is to have different cars quick at different points during the race, and that was emphatically the case in Shanghai, as Webber and others demonstrated.

All that said, I'll confess that it *astounds* me that a company has been persuaded to build an artificially inefficient tyre. If I were merely quite interested in motor racing, and – without knowing the background – casually watched a 2011 Grand Prix, I'm not sure that my conclusion, when next buying tyres, would be that Pirelli P-Zeros (as they're also known in racing) were the thing to have. As it happens, my road car has Pirelli P-Zeros, and I think they're fantastic, but you get my point.

After his drive to third at Shanghai Webber was elated, for he had gone into the race hoping to scrape into the top six. At the same time, though, I thought his comment on the race significant: "Making progress in the early laps wasn't easy, because everyone was using their DRS [Drag Reduction System] at the same time. I'm still not a huge fan of how it is now – sometimes the overtaking moves aren't that genuine, because a guy'll have nothing left to fight back with. Seems to me it's more tactical now, and a bit less racing…"

Webber made up a mountain of time on team-mate Vettel in the late laps because he made three tyre stops (and was on soft Pirellis at the end when virtually everyone else was on hard), whereas Sebastian stopped only twice, and was required to do a long final stint (23 laps) on the hard compound. In the closing laps he could plainly do nothing to fend off Hamilton, whose tyres were seven laps younger – that's how crucial tyre wear is in 2011.

"When people have got newer tyres," Button commented, "you're a sitting duck."

Jenson is right, of course, but it can be argued that all drivers have the same allocation of tyres for a Grand Prix weekend, and it's up to them, and their teams, to decide how best to make use of them. It may be a contrivance to have certain wear qualities designed into tyres, but everyone is operating to the same rule.

Such is not, however, the case with DRS. 'Unless you're the lead dog,' read a bumper sticker I saw in Daytona, 'the view never changes', but in 2011 F1 to be the lead dog – or at the head of any queue down the order – is a reasonable guarantee that the view will change, and swiftly, for the dog behind is not operating to the same rules. So long, that is, as it's a second or less behind, and at a prescribed portion of the track. I could readily understand – and sympathise with – Niki Lauda's contemptuous remark about the FIA now deciding where and when a driver could overtake…



LAT



Which button is for DRS again…? Above: Vettel gets swamped by the KERS-powered McLarens in China

Sutton Images

On the heels of the Malaysian Grand Prix, I wrote my monthly newsletter for the website, questioning the latest path down which F1 has chosen to take itself. The F1 bosses appear to regard all the changes favourably, but, judging from your comments, you – the fans – don't necessarily feel the same. In reference to the effects of DRS, Charles Darley said that, "The predictable, undefendable overtaking is as bad as the lack of overtaking was…"

DRS puts me in mind of the notorious drag-inducing Hanford Wing, introduced by CART to increase overtaking – as if that were necessary! – on superspeedways. Without a doubt it worked, so much so that passing became commonplace to a point that one ceased to take any notice – a little like the numbingly dreary constant scoring in basketball.

If I dislike DRS, it is because its adoption means that not all cars are operating to the same rules at all times, and that surely should be fundamental in 'Grand Prix racing'. As things stand, as soon as you have a car within a second of you (on a piece of straight determined by the FIA), you are at a huge disadvantage, for the guy behind can press one of the 97 buttons on his steering wheel, open his rear wing, lose a lot of drag – and motor on by.

You, meantime, can do little to defend yourself (apart from chop across his bows, which we'll come to later on), and a situation could arise in which a Grand Prix takes on the hue of an old-fashioned NASCAR race, where the very last place you want to be – going into the last lap – is narrowly in the lead.



Pirelli's rubber-shedding tyres fit the FIA brief, but is it really good PR?

LAT

In Melbourne Fernando Alonso used the word 'gimmicks' to describe the 2011 innovations; discussing the state of F1 in our recent podcast, Allan McNish spoke of 'trying to fabricate racing'…

For countless years there has been debate about the lack of overtaking, and how the problem could best be addressed. I am no scientist, no engineer, but the evidence is that the powers-that-be are reluctant, for whatever reason, *radically* to change the aerodynamic rules.

What does DRS do, after all, except synthetically create a situation that could be real if a car were able closely to follow another through a fast corner, and come on to a long straight right behind it? What kind of innovation is this that penalises a driver for being in front?

It's a matter of statistical record that the overtaking problem worsened over the years, and I applaud the fact that finally the interests of the fans – who, one way and another, pay the bills – have been acknowledged, both by the F1 teams and the governing body. I have to say, though, that a device like DRS strikes me as an artifice working *around* a problem, rather than confronting it.

As I mentioned in the newsletter, when I asked Patrick Head some years ago how the quality of racing in F1 might be improved, his immediate response was to ban wings, although he knew that to be out of the question. I was quite taken aback, but Patrick went on seriously to talk about the challenge for an engineer of working around it, of getting back as much of the lost grip as possible.

I don't – in a hundred years – envisage such a thing coming to be. Formula Ford apart, a single-seater has wings, and there's an end to it. But – hardly an original thought – aerodynamics has long played an over-dominant role in F1, and undeniably that has been detrimental not only to the quality of the racing, but also the spectacle.

Of the Chinese Grand Prix it can hardly be said that lack of overtaking was a problem – indeed it was difficult sometimes to keep track of the order changes, and it would be churlish to complain that it was too much of a good thing. I do, though, think it no bad idea to keep the Hanford Wing syndrome at the back of our minds: I personally have never wished to see overtaking made easy, and on the evidence thus far it seems to me the new tyres alone do quite enough to shake up the course of a Grand Prix.

I've never been a fan of KERS in motor racing, never seen the point in spending tens of millions on new 2.4-litre V8s, rather than sticking with rev-restricted 3-litre V10s, and then spending tens of millions more on getting back – for six seconds a lap – 80 of the lost 200 horsepower. Still, I'm sure it went down well with the EU.

KERS is one thing, though. It may be a 'green' push-to-pass button, but at least all may have it, and use it in defence as well as attack. DRS is a different matter as far as I'm concerned – and, apart from anything else, in this safety-obsessed age it surprises me that the drivers apparently have such confidence in it. 'Suppose it doesn't close again as you go into the corner,' some murmured at first, but if that hasn't happened, in Shanghai Alonso's DRS (having refused to operate in Sepang) opened of its own accord – and not in the prescribed area of the track. Fernando will rejoice it wasn't at Eau Rouge or 130R.

Idly flitting around *YouTube* recently, I happened upon the footage of Gilles Villeneuve and René Arnoux in the closing laps of the 1979 French Grand Prix at Dijon. It was a fight which has gone into motor racing legend, and if you have seen it you won't need me to tell you why.

Somewhat unfairly, Jean-Pierre Jabouille's victory for Renault that day – the first for a turbocharged car, and before a home crowd – was rather overlooked, even as it happened. For everyone's focus was a few seconds down the road, on the other Renault driven by Arnoux, as it tried to separate Villeneuve's normally-aspirated Ferrari from second place.

Gilles had led most of the race, and his Michelins were shot. Tyre changes were not the norm in that era, but team-mate Jody Scheckter – who had not been near Villeneuve's pace – had taken new ones soon after half-distance.

Looking at it again now, these 30-odd years on, the intensity of the moment

Nigel Roebuck



Baghetti shades Gurney at Reims '61. Right: Häkkinen reads Schuey the riot act

comes alive once more, and two things strike you: first, there was late braking – and then there was Villeneuve's late braking; second, as the pair of them blasted down the long pit straight, whichever driver was in front *never deviated from his line*. Therefore the two cars went down the straight as one – and mighty exciting it was when they got to the braking area for turn one…

Time was when that was the way things were done in Formula 1, and always – Giuseppe Farina and one or two others apart – had been done. To swerve in front of an overtaking car had always been considered, as Stirling Moss puts it, 'dirty driving', and not to be countenanced.

I remember talking to Dan Gurney about the last lap of the 1961 French Grand Prix, in which his Porsche was narrowly beaten by the Ferrari of rookie Giancarlo Baghetti. Gurney led out of Thillois, the last corner, and on to the long straight down to the finish line, but although he was only too aware of Baghetti's power advantage he stayed resolutely on his line. Did you, I murmured, perhaps *contemplate* moving over on the Ferrari?

Gurney laughed. "Oh yeah, kind of! Up ahead was the guy with the flag, and here was the chance of my first Grand Prix victory! But not seriously, no – we just didn't do those things back then."

If ethics came into it, so, it should be said, did self-preservation, and a conversation with Phil Hill comes vividly back to me. "It was unthinkable, really, to touch another car, because of the potential consequences – it might sound corny, but those were the facts. Take an accident like [Herbert] Mackay Fraser's at Reims in 1957 – I remember going to the hospital to see how he was, and having a hard time understanding all these French words for 'dead'…

"They drive the way they do today because they can get away with it – that's the only possible explanation. If guys drove like that in my time, they usually… accounted for themselves pretty quickly.

"There was another thing, too," Hill continued. "To chop somebody seemed like a foul – what else can you call it? Now it's, 'Do you want to back off – or d'you want to *go* off?' In my time there was one guy, with a reputation for… imprudence, and he used that as a weapon to scare other drivers out of the way. I thought that was evil. Can you imagine *Fangio* doing something like that? Maybe not everyone was a knight on a white horse, but something like that was unacceptable…"



LAT

"Once Senna swerved at Prost, the world changed"

Ah, but that was then. Once Ayrton Senna had swerved at the overtaking Alain Prost at Estoril in 1988, almost putting him into the pitwall, the world began to change. At the time we were all stunned, for we had seen nothing like it before, but Senna escaped sanction from the stewards and that was to have far-reaching effects.

For all I admired Ayrton, I said to Damon Hill once that I believed his approach had been responsible for a fundamental shift in the ethics of the sport.

"I agree," said Hill, "and in motor racing in general – not just in F1. The moment with Alain in Portugal was extreme, but even before then… I was doing Formula Ford in 1985, and you could see that people were trying to *be* Ayrton Senna. They were using terrorist tactics on the track. The views I had when I came into the sport had been gleaned from being around my dad, and people like him – and I soon had to abandon them.

"Why? Because you realised that nothing was going to be done when a guy rammed you off the track – it would go to the stewards and they'd say, 'Oh well, that's motor racing…' So you'd say to yourself, 'Well, if that's the way people see motor racing these days, then I have to adopt the same sort of tactics'. I'm absolutely not in favour of that sort of driving behaviour, but if



LAT

someone gives it out, I'll give it back – you've got to..."

As Damon and others knew to their cost, none picked up the Senna ball and ran with it more ruthlessly than Michael Schumacher – indeed, it seems almost comical now to recall that, after the 1992 Brazilian GP, Michael expressed outrage at Senna's antics: "I don't know what his game was, but it wasn't a nice one. For a three-time World Champion, it is not necessary to do something like this..."

It's true. He said it. And then, for the remainder of his career, he acted upon it, as even his brother can attest.

Just as the powers-that-be should have stamped on Senna's behaviour, and later on Schumacher's, so they chose to look the other way. Everyone recalls Mika Häkkinen's amazing pass of Michael into Les Combes at Spa in 2000; perhaps less remembered is that the lap before, in the same place, Schumacher moved over on Häkkinen, and at nigh on 200mph the cars touched. Mika's marked front wing endplate adorns Martin Whitmarsh's office to this day.

Had Häkkinen not backed off it would have been a plane crash, and it was in cold fury that he stalked Schumacher up the hill next time around: when Michael chose to go left of a backmarker Mika went right, and nailed him in a perfectly judged move. In parc fermé, using words of one syllable, he advised Michael never to try anything like that with him again. Assuredly Michael was listening.

That could have been the perfect moment for the FIA to step in, to condemn potentially homicidal driving once and for all, but the opportunity was again passed up. Indeed for many years now we have had a situation in F1 where 'one move' to protect your position is tacitly accepted as kosher, and if there has been an overwhelming absurdity in modern motor racing – well, beyond Max Mosley's FIA sale of the F1 commercial rights to Bernie Ecclestone for *a hundred years*, anyway – it is surely this. And leaving aside all the morals, ethics, whatever you want to call them, the effect of 'one move' on racing has been disastrous.

How many thousand hours, how many million dollars, have been spent over time in an effort to increase overtaking in a sport dominated by aerodynamics? In 2011 we have seen the introduction of DRS to help drivers overtake – yet *still* we allow the car in front to chop across the bows of the one trying to pass! Am I missing something here?

Watch the movie of Villeneuve and Arnoux, as desperate a fight as ever you will see on a race track, and then note that they saluted each other immediately after taking the flag, embraced on the podium.

By the by, I remember watching the ceremony with a beaming Denis Jenkinson: "Got a little racer on our hands, haven't we?" he said.

To this day Arnoux – although beaten by Villeneuve – looks upon that race as the best of his life. Hard as it may have been, it was also fair: pass me on the straight if you can – I'll get you back into the next corner...

Years ago, in the 1970s, there was in Formula 1 a driver named Mike Beuttler who wasn't very quick but was renowned for being *very* difficult to pass, even lap. I mention this only because, so unusual was his behaviour at that time, he was singled out for opprobrium and awarded the nickname 'Blocker'.

There have been countless occasions when a driver wrongly escaped sanction for chopping across in front of another, yet after the coming-together between Hamilton and Alonso in Malaysia – which most saw as a 'motor racing accident' – both drivers were subsequently punished by the stewards, albeit for different reasons.

Just as we had all those years with Senna and then Schumacher, when you wouldn't have known there *were* any stewards, now, unfortunately, we seem to have gone to the other end of the scale, with every little incident scrutinised and invariably punished.

Nor is there any consistency, race to race. I applauded Jean Todt's decision to revamp the system at Grands Prix, to bring in an ex-driver to offer his expertise in the stewards' decision-making, but perhaps it won't be until we have the same panel of stewards at every race that a consistent pattern will begin to emerge.

The quest to make F1 more exciting has exercised many a mind for many a year, and the innovations this season – some good, some not – have undoubtedly had an effect. But it seems to me that there are other avenues, too, to explore, which would keep racing *real* and would not entail, in a time of economic darkness, spending hideous amounts of money.

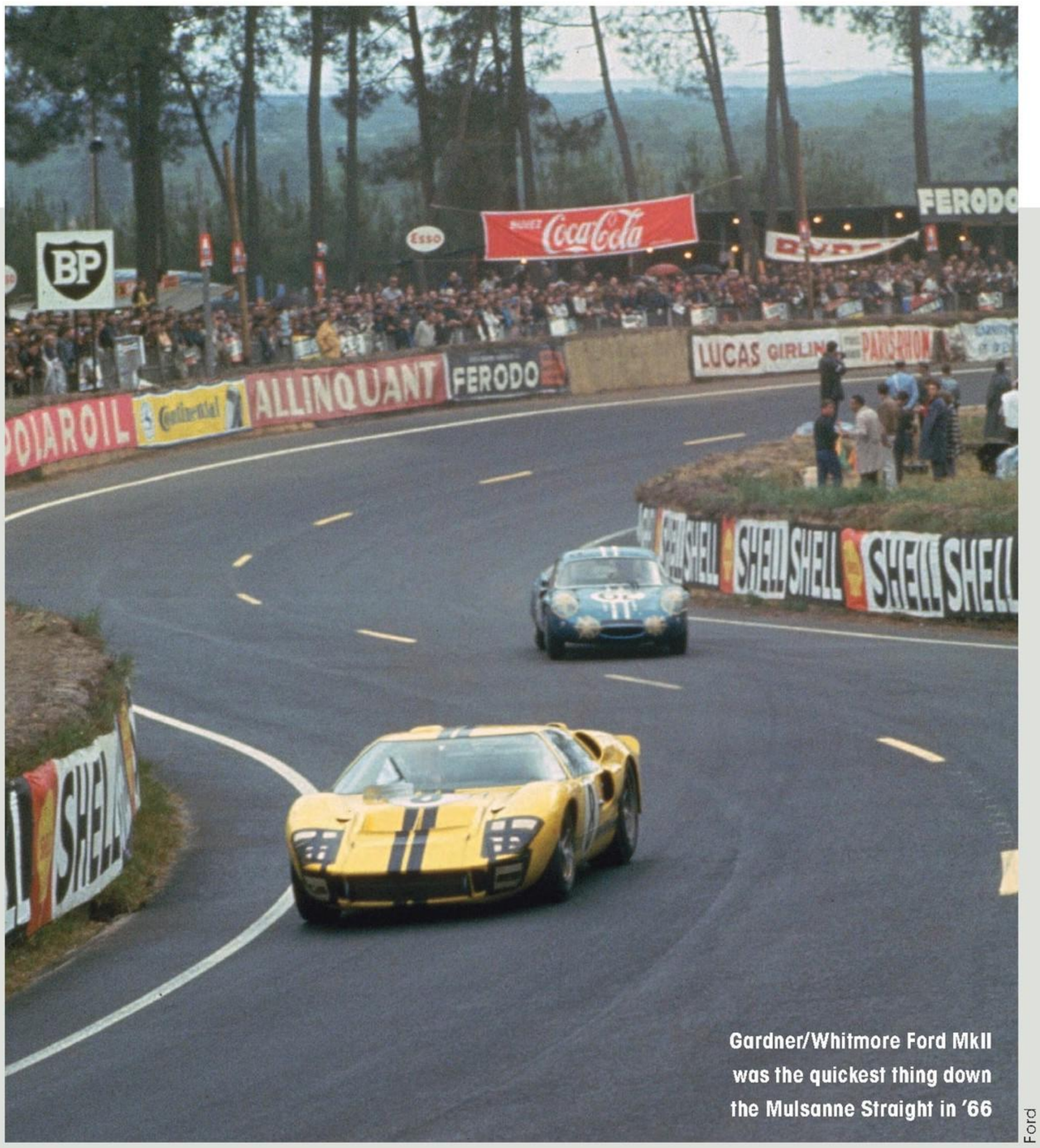
For a start, we can do something about the circuits, as Jackie Stewart suggested in *Motor Sport* three months ago, and it's encouraging that Todt seems keenly aware of this, declaring no-overtaking zones like Abu Dhabi unacceptable. Work is underway there to improve the situation, and similar modifications should be made at such as Valencia and Barcelona. As JYS says, it cannot be right that a driver can make a mistake, go off the road – and regain it without so much as losing a position.

And... we can jettison the absurdity of allowing 'one move' to keep a following car from trying to overtake. To me, it's akin to permitting a boxer 'one low punch' every time he is threatened, and should never have been allowed to creep into the dictionary of F1 in the first place. Somehow – thus far – it has not been responsible for a major accident, but that will surely come, and when it does there will be a lot of hand-wringing, a lot of wondering what the hell we had all been thinking of, allowing this idiotic practice in the first place.

As well as that, ridding the sport of it would further improve the racing. If you doubt me, watch Gilles and René.

In the end, they say, life is about simple pleasures. You can agree or not, as you wish, but undeniably simple pleasures have their place. Through my life in racing journalism I have interviewed countless folk in the sport, some erudite, some self-obsessed, some fascinating, some soporific, some modest (and some emphatically not), and on and on. Life is life, and you get all types in racing, as in any activity. »»»

Nigel Roebuck



Gardner/Whitmore Ford MkII was the quickest thing down the Mulsanne Straight in '66

Ford

Worst of all, perhaps, have been those who thought themselves funny and were not: nothing is more wearisome than having to pretend to laugh.

I have been mighty lucky, though, for in motor racing I have known many with a great gift for humour – particularly the dry and laconic kind which has ever been to my taste.

Take Phil Hill, for example, one of those you will miss for ever. No one ever had Enzo Ferrari's number like Phil: "It always seemed to me that *La Scala* lost a great star when Ferrari chose to go into cars…"

Or Mario Andretti, speaking of Amon's luck: "If Chris went into undertaking, people would stop dying…"

Or Rob Walker, on visiting Caesars Palace for the first Grand Prix in Las Vegas: "They're terribly thoughtful here – d'you know, they put a mirror on the ceiling in the rooms? I suppose that's so you can shave in bed…"

Unopposed, though, at the top of my list – and, I would guess, at the top for anyone who ever met him – was Frank Gardner. I talked to him many times, going back to 1973, and it was always something to savour, for Frank was the personification of 'good bloke', a compassionate man without being soft, witty without being overly cruel; just as François Cevert or Elio de Angelis might have been concert pianists, so Gardner could have made a very good living as a stand-up.

> "Gardner could have made a good living as a stand-up"

Although he dabbled with Formula 1, and was certainly good enough, it was never an absolute priority. "The question of doing F1 with Jack [Brabham] came up several times," he told me, "but he was offering £6000, whereas Ford were offering £15,000 for sports cars, saloons" – he never called them 'touring cars' – "and so on. It's a case of doing a job in a sphere, isn't it? In the end, it's all racing, it's all competitive. I'd never want to run in midfield in any class, including F1. Why would you want to do that? Just to be able to say, 'I'm an F1 driver'? Never made any sense to me. I'd far sooner have a competitive saloon or sports car drive than a midfield F1 drive…"

I must say Gardner's words echoed in my mind when I heard that Tonio Liuzzi had signed a contract with Hispania.

In my archive of interviews there sit several tapes recorded with Frank over time, and I've found that if I need to dig one out, to find a quote appropriate for a piece I'm writing, that's the morning gone. Start listening, and you're lost.

In September 1999, 10 years before Gardner's death, the Historic Sports & Racing Car Association of New South Wales put on a tribute race meeting in his honour, and at the dinner he was inevitably invited to speak. Very fortunately for all of us, one of the members – Marc Schagen – had the forethought to take his movie camera along, and thus the whole of Frank's address is available on DVD. It seems a good idea to give you a flavour of the evening.

The longer you're in this business, the more you come to see that in one particular respect racing drivers are no different from other people: they have their 'good stories' – or most of them, anyway – and over time these take on a certain familiarity. In the case of someone like Brian Redman or – overwhelmingly – Gardner, though, this matters not, for they invariably find a way of telling the tale a little differently each time. It's a fact that I'd heard most of Frank's 'classics' before – the early Porsche 917, the birth of the Nürburgring, and so on – but there were plenty related that evening in Sydney that were new to me.

Time was when motor racing abounded in black humour – as in the medical profession, drivers have told me that it was a defence mechanism, a means of coping with what was going on around them all the time, and Gardner was part of that generation.

"Of course," he began, "I was there in the early days, when you had glass in your goggles and metal frames – so if the glass didn't get in your eyes the frame went through your brain…

"You had a fuel tank on either side »»»

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Nigel Roebuck

of you, the pick-up tank above the family jewels, and the final delivery tank under your bum, so... if you hit a fence at high speed you attended your own barbecue. Then, of course, if you went off you ran into straw bales, and there's nothing like having a fire for a couple of days...

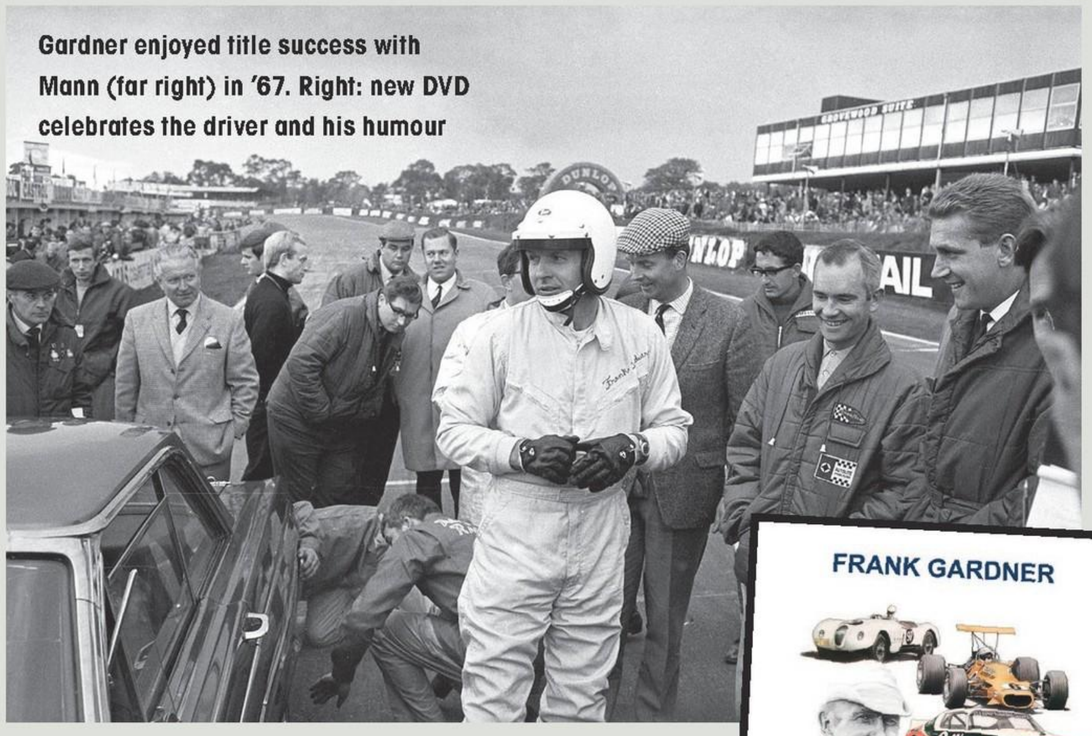
"The overalls in those days... they were blue and they had Dunlop on them, and nobody gave a bugger whether they caught alight or not. And if they did catch alight, the chances were that in (country deleted here), if you weren't dead when you arrived at the hospital, you certainly were when they started work on you...

"Then there were the helmets – they were a brilliant design. They had leather coming down the sides, with little holes so that you could hear your engine. And you talk to Jack Brabham these days, and you say, 'Jack, who's on pole position at Monaco?', and he says it's half-past two. So his hearing's not impaired at all..."

"In the days of the Tasman Series, we used to go to places like the Lady Wigram airfield in New Zealand – I always remember Piers Courage asking me what happened to Lord Wigram. Come race weekend, they would have the latrines in there, and the grandstands were all made of scaffolding, and of course there were the straw bales – and if you missed the straw bales you could go straight into a hangar where the petrol cans were kept...

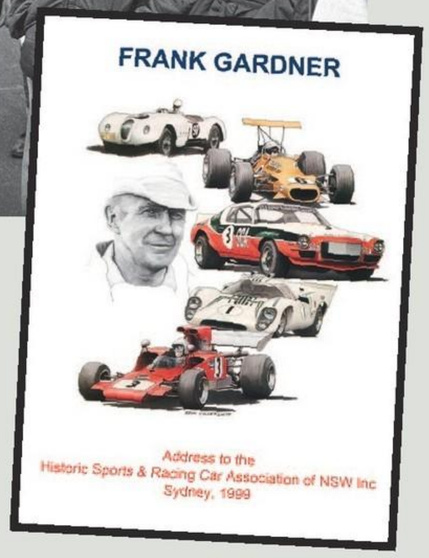
"At Wigram they supplied beautiful porcelain trays, so that if you dumped an engine, you could pour the oil in there. I remember blowing a 2.5-litre Climax – which wasn't too unusual – and we had a mechanic working with us called 'Mumbles', because he didn't say anything. Mumbles took the porcelain tray, filled with oil, to the toilet, poured it down there, and then – it was a hot day, and he must have been thinking of something else – threw a match on it. There was a reasonable *whoomph*, but nothing too spectacular. The only end product was that an 18-stone man came out – which wasn't too serious in itself, except that he still had his trousers round his ankles. I think he thought it was something he ate..."

In the course of Gardner's reminiscences, he pays generous tribute to such as Brabham: "You can't speak highly enough of Jack – the tenacity of that man was incredible", and Clark: "Jimmy never realised how good he was. You could have a better car – and he'd just out-drive you, and you'd look at the sky and think, 'Christ, I hope it doesn't come on to rain', because if it did the bloke would just make you look second-hand. He was the best in the world, and he thought, 'Doesn't everybody do this?' [Colin] Chapman knew he needed Jimmy – Jimmy could have gone anywhere without Chapman..."



Gardner enjoyed title success with Mann (far right) in '67. Right: new DVD celebrates the driver and his humour

LAT



One of the names synonymous with Gardner down the years was Alan Mann, for whose team he drove a variety of Fords. "Alan was like a Frank Williams ahead of his time. In the Ford days at Le Mans – you know, that unbiased, unprejudiced race, run by the French – he ran one of the cars, but for some reason I was seconded to drive the Holman-Moody car there, with John Whitmore – and that's still the quickest car down the Mulsanne Straight. We were timed at 259.4mph, and you didn't shift your chewing gum too far, I can tell you, because there was light rain and a little bit of fog about... We didn't have the downforce in those days, of course."

More than 30 years on, Gardner kept in touch with Mann. "I was over in Florida earlier this year, staying with him – he has a little estate down there. It was a bugger of a place to stay, because it had three golf courses and only one airport for jet aircraft. It's terrible to think these lads have fallen on such hard times, but he didn't seem to want a donation..."

Over the years there have been plenty of motor racing books about plenty of colourless individuals, and it beggars belief that Gardner's memoirs never appeared in this form. Thankfully, though, this DVD exists, and if I thought I knew a lot about the man, I didn't appreciate until watching it quite how extraordinarily varied his life had been.

I had been aware, for example, that Frank, like several other drivers, was involved in the filming of Steve McQueen's *Le Mans*, but I never knew that he had done stunt work for McQueen on other movies – that, for example, he claimed to have been the man to jump the motorbike over the barbed wire fence in *The Great Escape*, and to spin the Mustang into the service station at the end of the celebrated car chase in *Bullitt*...

Last month I raved about a new book on the history of the Cuban Grand Prix, and this time around I'm doing the same in respect of a DVD about a wonderful man. It is not ordinarily my habit to endorse a product in this column, but occasionally something exceptional comes along. The 90-minute DVD is available from Marc Schagen at PO Box 382, Berowra, New South Wales 2081, Australia, and trust me, in 2011 you won't spend 20 bucks better. If only Frank had written that book...

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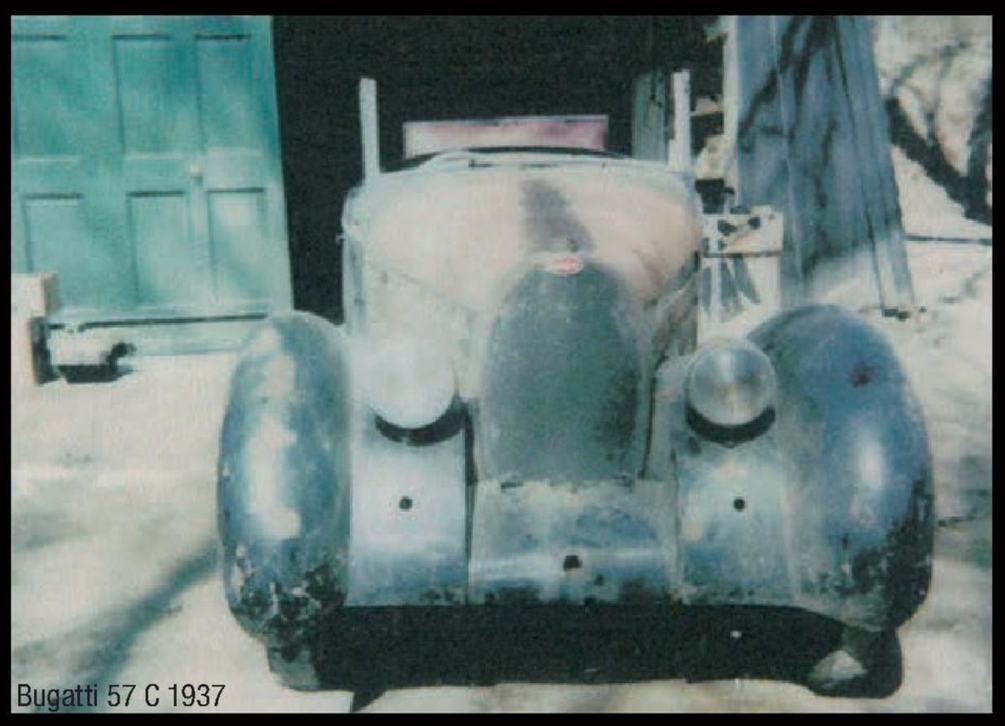
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RACING LIFE



LAT

THE RACE TO IMPROVE

AS I WRITE THIS, BETWEEN THE MALAYSIAN AND CHINESE Grands Prix, we can draw some initial conclusions about how each team has fared in the opening races.

During the season a comparator is available to each team every two weeks or so, but for about four months this comparator is missing. Each team is just working as hard and effectively as they are able to adapt to new rules and make performance steps on every parameter, but have little or no knowledge in how they compare. Some idea of competitive position is realised from viewing the cars and testing in February, but it's not until the first races that the pecking order becomes clear.

No rocket science is required to deduce that the combination of Sebastian Vettel and the 2011 Red Bull is outstanding. Red Bull have apparently moved seamlessly from 2010 into 2011, and it will be very interesting to see whether they can turn this into a clear points gap before the European season starts in mid-May.

McLaren are closest, a surprise after a troubled pre-season, but they have a remarkable capacity to recover and should never be underrated. Ferrari were disappointing after strong preparation but were a little closer in Malaysia. The car is reliable and Fernando Alonso is formidable, but I was expecting more. Sauber look to be well prepared, and their scrutineering problems aside, should have a strong season. Petrov in the Renault was outstanding in Melbourne. He improved strongly through 2010, and is now in the team on merit despite his spectacular mistake in Malaysia. Perez had a strong first GP, and surprised many with his single pitstop. Mercedes did not show strongly after their improvements at the last pre-season test, but I expect them to bounce back.

As for Williams, we've shown promise rather than achievement which is pretty galling for the guys who have been working their balls off on the new cars. Rubens made some errors in Melbourne which I am sure will not be repeated, and in the race we suffered some unreliability in the driveline, which did not occur prior to the season. In Malaysia our performance wasn't good and then an ignition coil failed on Pastor's engine, while Rubens had to drive a full lap on one driving wheel after a left rear puncture, which unfortunately put too much energy through the differential and damaged a hydraulic seal. That meant all the hydraulic oil came out and went into the gearbox.

Much of our testing was affected by sorting out the Williams-designed and developed KERS. I think we are the only team to have designed our own system, which has run totally reliably and contributed to the numerous overtaking manoeuvres by Rubens in Melbourne.

We have been pleasantly surprised by the new Pirelli tyres. Wear is high but degradation over distance is not as bad as in testing, in particular at Barcelona. The hot track and long fast corners were, however, challenging for the tyres in Malaysia and we saw some teams making as many as four stops for fresh rubber.

It will be interesting to see how the teams view the value of KERS as the season progresses – all teams are running on tight budgets, and KERS adds considerably to their costs. The lack of KERS application in 2010 was by agreement of the teams only, in the light of difficult financial times. I wonder whether the teams will consider it to be an asset to F1 by the end of 2011. As an engineer it is extremely interesting technology which has relevance for road vehicles, but added value for racing may be questionable.

So, no glory for Williams thus far, but we have some very good people at all levels on our race team, and I was doubtful that I could add to our work there. But the unreliability problems are something we should not have, and I suspect I can contribute more with the engineers and technicians in our factory to help eliminate these. So I will probably be less present at the track this year. I shall be taking a keen interest in our progression.

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DISPATCHES



LAT

MIKA'S NEW DRIVE

AS HE STEPPED OUT ONTO THE PORTICO OF GOODWOOD House there was spontaneous applause.

"Morning," he said, with that laconic smile. "Nice to be here." Flicking back the blonde hair, he began his message.

This is the man who, were it not for the skill and speed of Professor Sid Watkins, might well have died on the afternoon of Friday November 10, 1995. When Watkins reached a wrecked McLaren at Brewery Bend in Adelaide the driver was barely breathing.

But today, at the launch of a new Goodwood season, double World Champion Mika Häkkinen is very much alive and well. The 'global ambassador for responsible drinking', a title bestowed on him by Johnnie Walker whisky, comes with a simple message. "Don't drink and drive, take a taxi, take a bus, take control," he says. "If you drink and drive you are not in control. You saw my moves with Michael Schumacher, I know about being in control." This is greeted, by the British contingent, with cheers and laughter.

He is not here just to talk, but to drive a fearsome vehicle known as a Caparo, named after the Anglo-Indian steel company that built it, with not a little help from engineers who worked on the McLaren F1. It is in this that Mika and I will tackle the Goodwood hill.

"So you're my next victim," he says, as we change into fireproof overalls. "It's quite quick, about 600bhp. You'll enjoy it." We finish our green tea and strap in alongside each other. I'm beginning to wish I hadn't just eaten two of Goodwood's organic sausage rolls.

Mika gives me a thumbs-up, a nudge in the ribs, and suddenly we are rocketing between the lime trees in a crazy whirlwind of noise and tyre smoke. I would not, I admit, do this with someone I did not know. But Mika makes it all look so easy and for the next minute or so I sit back and revel in being thrown around by the man whom Michael Schumacher assured us he feared most.

"Like I said, stay in control," he says. "You saw there are many trees around?" Yes, I did.

At the finish Mika chats to a marshal. "Who was your favourite World Champion?" he asks her. "I should say it's you," she responds, "but it's Jenson Button." Big lopsided smile from Mika, and a long pause. "Not Michael Schumacher, then?" he says.

Later we talk about life after Formula 1. "Very difficult. F1 is so intense and gives you such an enormous buzz. Your adrenalin is so high, and nothing in normal life gives you that feeling. It's tough to settle down. I've never found anything that gives me the buzz that comes from racing cars – OK, maybe ski jumping would do it, but you need to start as a young kid to do that. So you have to keep busy, keep motivated. I have great kids, a great girlfriend, that's all good, but you always need something more when you've led such a highly charged life. Nothing else gives you the buzz of driving, and I prefer to drive, drive rather than chat, chat."

His nemesis has returned to the fray. Has Mika been tempted?

"Yes, yes, of course. But the most important thing is to enjoy it, and I decided it was not right to go back. In 1998 and '99 I had a goal. I didn't think about the pain. I was totally focused, and of course it was very stressful, but honestly now I think life is better. Michael took a very big challenge, and he is well aware of that."

I ask him, if he closes his eyes, can he imagine Michael beating Vettel, Hamilton or Alonso in close combat? Long pause. "Hmmm. I see what you mean. I'm not sure."

He has been impressed by Button and Hamilton at McLaren.

"McLaren has managed them very well. There is harmony. Jenson and Lewis are clever guys, they've achieved their goals, they are relaxed, but there is more to come. It's down to the management; there is confidence, and the team has enabled these two to function so well together."

Cruising home in my much-loved Renault Mégane GT I wish I spoke Finnish. In his own language, I suspect, there would be even more to enjoy about this thoughtful and interesting champion.

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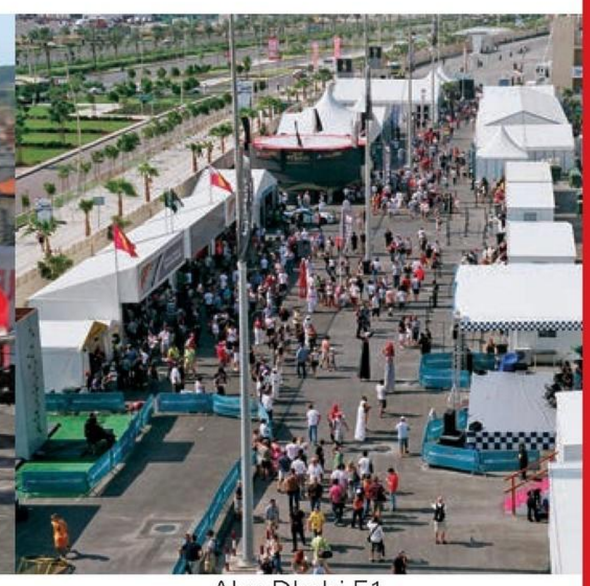
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Abu Dhabi F1

Monaco GP ~ 29 May

There's still time to book for the most glamourous race on the calendar. It's a bank holiday weekend too.

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Silverstone ~

We'll be there for no less than 4 races this year! On 12 June it's the MotoGP, Formula One on 10 July, World Superbikes on July 31 and the 6 hour Le Mans series race 9-11 September.

Nurburgring ~

Hosting the 2011 Formula One German GP on 24 July and the annual Oldtimer gathering of classic cars from 12-14 August.

Spa-Francorchamps ~

Three opportunities to watch superb racing at this awesome track. Sportscars will be thundering through Eau Rouge from 5-7 May, the F1 race takes place on its usual August Bank Holiday weekend - 28 August - and the great Spa 6 Hours classic event is on 23-25 September.

These are just a few of the highlights of the racing year but there's so much more

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Mat Oxley

ON TWO WHEELS



Reuters

TAMING THE DESMOSEDICI

ONLY VALENTINO ROSSI'S MOST ARDENT FANS EXPECTED him to start his association with Ducati covered in glory. In 2004 the Italian turned Yamaha's mid-grid YZR-M1 into a winner almost overnight. The fact he isn't repeating that miracle has destroyed the myth he is some kind of motor sport King Midas.

"It is clear now that Valentino is human," says his former Yamaha team-mate Carlos Checa. "He's a good rider, but he doesn't have some magic that makes any bike go fast immediately."

Ducati's Desmosedici MotoGP machine isn't just any bike. It is a fearsome and frustrating motorcycle that has befuddled several World Champions. Only Casey Stoner has mastered the Italian machine, and Rossi is determined that it mustn't defeat him.

Rossi says the problem is poor mid-corner turning, causing him to lose speed and run wide. Stoner used his dirt-track skills to ride around the Ducati's understeer, with a combination of rear brake and throttle skewing the bike mid-corner. Rossi says he could do that (I'm not so sure – he didn't grow up riding sideways like Stoner), but it's too risky, an opinion borne out by Stoner's win/crash ratio.

Ducati has a new version of its unique carbon-chassis on the way, with reduced lateral flex. This 'softer' chassis should improve mid-corner performance, doing the job that suspension cannot do at full lean, about 65 degrees from the vertical.

But Rossi's crew chief Jeremy Burgess believes the chassis may not be wholly to blame for the bike's misbehaviour. He thinks the root of the problem may lie within the engine. "I've learnt engine character plays a huge part in how a bike handles," he says.

Burgess may be alluding specifically to crankshaft configuration. In a motorcycle, crankshaft mass can have a crucial effect on machine behaviour, and a heavier crankshaft might be what the Ducati's engine needs. Until now engineers have done their best to tame the engine's dark side with electronics, but many would argue you can't mask a hardware problem with a software fix.

Rossi is keen to soften power at the first touch of the throttle, a critical moment in racing when the rider uses the merest whiff of gas to complete the turn and ready the machine for acceleration. Part throttle is a major issue in bikes, because there's not enough rubber on the road for big throttle openings from the apex.

"We work very much on this point," affirms Rossi who knows a millisecond gained here can gain a tenth down the next straight. "The main problem at Ducati is that they always work on maximum performance, but not on the details which to me are important."

Rossi already knows that increasing crankshaft mass works because he ran a heavier flywheel on his title-winning Honda RC211V to damp down the initial kick.

Crankshaft rotation is also important in bikes, affecting handling and steering through gyroscopic precession and torque reaction. This might be something else for Ducati to look at. The Desmosedici engine turns forward (with the wheels), while Yamaha's YZR-M1 turns backwards. A motorcycle with a forward-turning crank will be more stable and thus more difficult to steer. One with a backward-rotating crank requires an extra countershaft which steals horsepower but pays back with better turning because the machine is more gyroscopically neutral. No wonder the Ducati is renowned for its speed; the Yamaha for its sweet handling.

Crankshaft rotation was an even bigger consideration in the days of the peaky 500cc two-strokes. Yamaha ran a V4 500 that was effectively two parallel twins geared together, with counter-rotating cranks cancelling each other out to achieve neutral steering. Honda's V4 used a single crank and was faster but notorious for its evil handling – wide-eyed NSR riders would speak of "single-crank voodoo". Honda tried to calm things down by fitting tungsten plugs in the crank. Finally it turned the crank backwards. The NSR lost some power but was immediately friendlier. Like everything in racing, you win some, you lose some.

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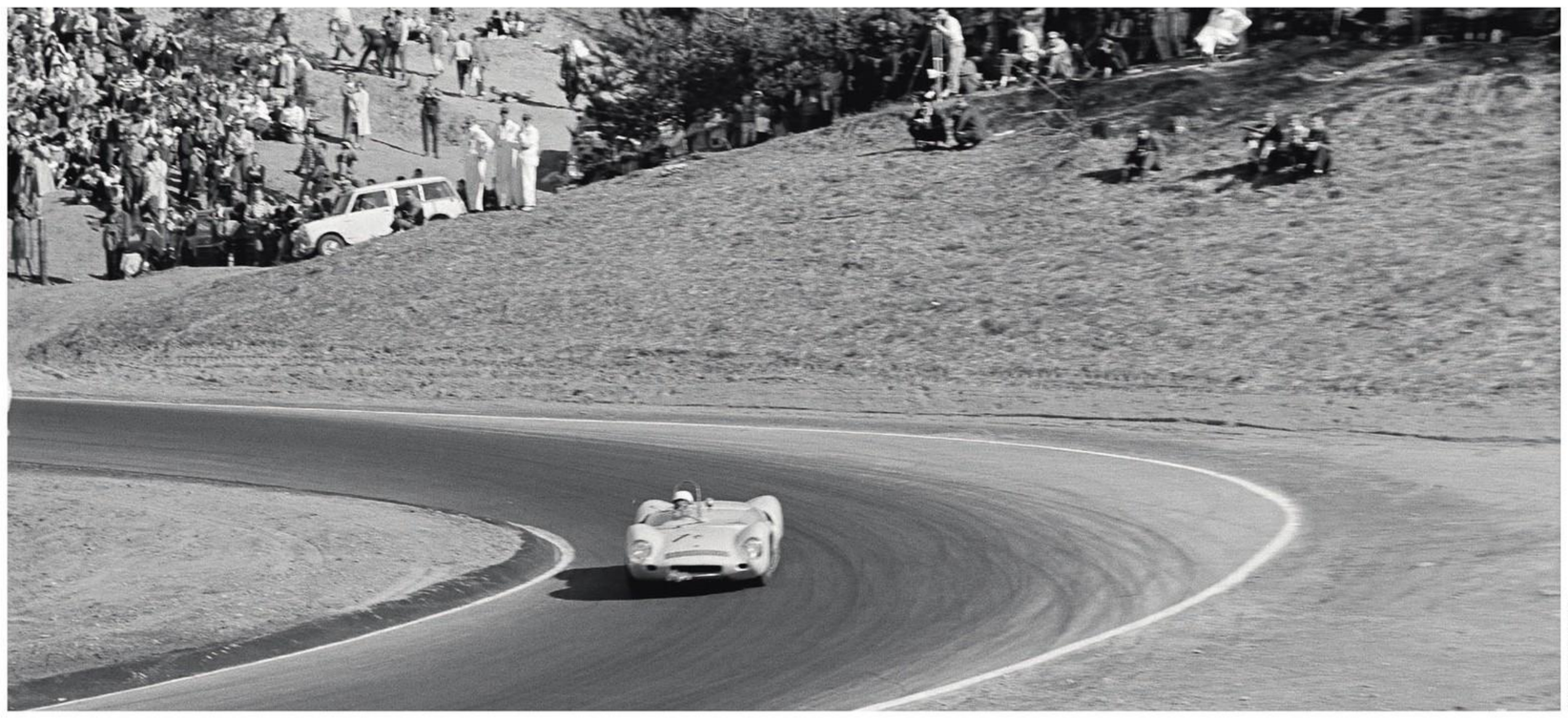
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THE US SCENE



Klemantaski

CANADA'S NURBURGRING

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE IT WAS 50 YEARS AGO. NOT QUITE 13, I WAS delighted to be driving east on Highway 401 with my father in his '57 Chevy. We were headed to the first professional race at the new Mosport road course located about an hour's drive north-east of Toronto. The race was called the Player's 200 and starred Stirling Moss, who had recently scored his famous victory over the 'Sharknose' Ferraris at Monaco.

It was a perfect June day, warm with blue skies, and we rolled along full of anticipation for my first big-time motor race. As we came to Bowmanville and took the exit north onto Highway 115 the traffic suddenly stopped, and it was bumper-to-bumper for the remaining 10 miles to the track. Still, we were able to find a good place to park on the outside between Turns 3 and 4. As we found our way to our spectating place we were pleased to see that Mosport was everything it was supposed to be – a real man's race track full of fast corners and plenty of elevation changes amid wooded southern Ontario countryside. Dan Gurney would later describe Mosport as a short version of the Nürburgring.

In the wake of his classic Monaco victory Moss was the man of the hour and sure enough he dominated the day in a brand-new pale green UDT/Laystall Lotus 19 (above), handily beating Jo Bonnier aboard a Porsche RS61 and Olivier Gendebien in an RS60. Moss won in front of a huge crowd estimated at 80,000, and Mosport immediately established itself as one of North America's great road-racing circuits. Three months later Mosport staged another big sports car race, called the Canadian Grand Prix, which was won by fast-rising Canadian star Peter Ryan driving his own Lotus 19. Over the next half-dozen years the Player's 200 and Canadian GP gave us a feast of rapidly-evolving, big-bore sports car racing culminating in the birth of Can-Am.

That was a fantastic era, and through the 1960s we saw many different types of cars race at Mosport. USAC Championship (Indy) cars raced there in 1967 and '68, with Bobby Unser winning the first year and Dan Gurney the next aboard one of his beautiful Eagle-Weslake/Ford V8s. USAC stock cars – as competitive as NASCAR in those days – also ran at Mosport, and in 1967 the Canadian Grand Prix became a World Championship Formula 1 race. I watched the opening practice session for the inaugural GP from the top of Turn 2, a fast, plunging corner with a blind apex known as 'The Elevator'. It's a superb place for spectating, unchanged today.

Out they came, led by Jo Siffert in Rob Walker's Lotus 49, followed by Jim Clark's works car, Jack Brabham's eponymous racer, Dan Gurney's superb blue-and-white Eagle, and Chris Amon's rasping red Ferrari. I was in heaven. Later we went up to the paddock and into the tent that housed the F1 cars and teams. It was delightfully cosy, as far removed from today's F1 paddock and garages as you can imagine. We spectators were separated from the cars and stars by a thin line of rope. We could almost touch the cars and talk to the mechanics and drivers if we chose. I stood in awe as Jim Clark and Dan Gurney discussed the track and weather conditions. The abiding impression was that the drivers were colleagues full of respect for each other, as much as rivals in a demanding and sometimes deadly sport.

The Canadian GP departed Mosport for Montréal in 1978 and the track slipped into a slow decline. But Don Panoz bought the circuit in 1998, entirely repaved it and established the ALMS's 'Mosport Grand Prix' as the big mid-summer race. Now 50 years old, Mosport continues to run a full schedule of professional and club races, motorcycles included. There's also a half-mile oval for stock and sprint car racing. So Mosport remains very much a driving force of Canadian racing and stands with Watkins Glen, Laguna Seca, Elkhart Lake and Road Atlanta as one of North America's finest, most challenging and historic road circuits.

Letters

Brands one-off for F1?

Sir,

With events in Bahrain having caused the postponement – and likely cancellation – of this year's GP, are we not presented with a chance for the Formula 1 circus to stage an additional meeting in 2011? In these unique circumstances, there is scope to organise a non-championship Race of Champions at Brands Hatch.

Coming 'home' to this wonderful British circuit, which has often played host to such informal F1 races in the past, would be a great gesture of appreciation by the sport for the UK's many motor racing fans and its world-class motor sport industry.

Justin Bedford, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex

Run-off and out

Sir,

I read with great interest the comments of Jackie Stewart on how circuit design affects the overtaking debate in F1 (April issue). His point about run-off areas being non-punitive is a surprisingly easy one to fix at zero cost.

At Jonathan Palmer's excellent facility in Bedford, if you run over a white line which they determine you shouldn't, the engine cuts. It kills your lap time, and in a race you would lose out to anyone behind you. This would punish the mistakes at corners such as Copse or Turn Eight in Turkey, where crossing the line is rewarded with slightly faster exit speeds.

It's a simple, effective, reliable, cheap solution. Hang on – that would never work in F1…

Martin Brooks, Ealing, London

Kimi's States of play

Sir,

Do my eyes deceive me, or is Kimi Räikkönen really heading to NASCAR? Oh well, I suppose he can take comfort in the fact that Juan Pablo Montoya will be there to coach him through the gastronomical delights of the NASCAR paddock. Super-sized Coke and chicken wings, anyone? A far cry from Monaco…

Sean Martin, Vancouver, Canada

Mears also bounced back

Sir,

Doug Nye is scrupulous in his research for every book or article he has written, but I fear that in his article 'Bouncing Back' (May issue) he has committed an injustice by omitting Rick Mears from his chosen drivers who have returned after severe injury.

After winning his second Indy 500 in 1984 Rick had a horrific accident at Sanair, Canada, when his feet were almost removed after hitting a barrier head-on. Following a year of intense reconstruction and physiotherapy, upon his return he won the Pocono 500, having to be carried to and from his car.

During the following five seasons, before he retired in 1991, Rick won two further 500s and eight Indycar races. He is still affected by his injuries, but Rick has never complained once or used them as an excuse for any lack of subsequent performance.

For a great many reasons, including his remarkable recovery, Rick Mears must rank high in any list of outstanding race car drivers. Perhaps most especially in the Indianapolis 500 edition of *Motor Sport*!

Nick Goozee, Maiden Newton, Dorset

[I could have included several more, but there's only so much space on a page… – DCN]

Humbled in Hungary

Sir,

Nigel Roebuck's Reflections (May issue) reminded me of a support race I competed in at the first Hungarian GP in 1986. I'd never driven across an Eastern bloc border – a high barbed-wire fence stretching as far as the eye could see, passports examined by machine gun-toting officials, checks for people being smuggled out under transporters. It wasn't the only time that week I had cause to think about how the accident of birth place affects us, fairly or otherwise.

The crowd was huge on race day and afterwards when we were packing up a couple of chaps came over with books they wanted signed. They told us they had to have special permission to travel that weekend, it had taken them three days to get to the circuit, they had never been allowed out of Hungary, they had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the sport, and they had tears in their eyes when we said we didn't know whether we'd be back. "So this may be the only time in our lives we'll see these cars."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Write to: Motor Sport, 38 Chelsea Wharf,
15 Lots Road, London SW10 0QJ
or e-mail: editorial@motorsportmagazine.co.uk

(Please include your full name and postal area)

'The price of everything and the value of nothing'; the phrase took me right back there.

"F1 must never be political," Mr Ecclestone is quoted as saying. If only life was that simple.

Mike Knight, Abbots Leigh, Ascot, Berks

Exposure to kill for…

Sir,

Well done *Motor Sport* on assisting the new DCI Barnaby in *Midsomer Murders* to determine that the body in the 'barn find' Cooper hadn't committed suicide all those years ago. I'd love to know whether the magazine was used under commercial television's new product placement rules, or had the producers recognised just how accurate the standard of *Motor Sport's* reporting was 50 years ago (and continues to be today)?

Philip T Cracknell, Waingroves, Derbyshire

[The latter, I'm happy to say. Far from negotiating any deal we provided some mock-up covers last year and forgot about it. But we couldn't have had more exposure if we'd paid! – GC]

Dreams of race car design

Sir,

Loved the articles on the Tyrrell P34 and the designers Gardner, Murray, Southgate et al (February issue). As a boy, I wanted to be a race driver until I saw Werner Buhrer's beautiful illustrations in *Road and Track*. From then on I wanted to be a race car designer (and astronaut, it being the early 1970s and I being 10 or 11).

It was a bit tough to pursue those options living in a north-west Canadian city. However, I did see some fantastic cars and great drivers at Edmonton International Speedway. This was an amazingly ambitious facility for the time and place, affording 'track-rats' like me the chance to see Gilles Villeneuve and Keke Rosberg in Formula Atlantics and Mark Donohue and Denny Hulme in Can-Am. In particular, I recall the astonishing differences between the thundering 8-litre Chevy McLarens and the turbo Porsches. The McLaren bellowed and roared, while the Porsche whistled and popped.

Naturally, I filled school notebooks with sketches of race cars with great attention paid to velocity stacks or thinking of new ways to route turbocharger plumbing. To this day, when I'm in a not very interesting meeting, I find myself drawing a new Indycar or the next F1 winner.

Thanks again for sparking my imagination.

Earl McKenzie, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

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Letters

I shared Tiff's dark day

Sir,
Thank you for another varied and interesting edition of *Motor Sport*, of which I've been an avid reader since the mid-60s, and especially Tiff Needell's scrapbook (May issue).

All motor racing fans of a certain age remember where they were when Jim Clark was killed, and like Tiff, I was also at Brands Hatch, although on the other side of the fence marshalling at Hawthorns Bend. The race was in part televised by the BBC, which had a camera near our post, and one of its team told us the sad news. It is not an understatement to say that we were all dumbfounded. The news didn't leak out as far as any public announcement, but that did surprise me in view of its momentous importance.

I look forward to more pieces on that era which to me was one of the finest, with World Champions and their contemporaries racing in several different classes at the same meeting and being accessible to the general public.

Ian B Masters, Upper Colwyn Bay, North Wales

Kavanagh led Oz advance

Sir,
Mat Oxley's column 'Advance Australia' (May issue) referred to Jack Ahearn: 'who in 1964 became the first Aussie to win a 500cc Grand Prix'. That honour actually belongs to Ken Kavanagh, who as a member of the Norton works team won the Ulster GP at Dundrod on August 15, 1953. Kavanagh disputed the lead with Geoff Duke's works Gilera for much of the race, until Duke was delayed with clutch trouble following a pitstop and had to settle for second.

This is not to take anything away from Jack's fine performance in Finland 11 years later, achieved as a true privateer, 20 years into a career that still had a decade to run. Jack's runner-up position in the 1964 500cc World Championship was Australia's best result in the premier class until Wayne Gardner's '87 win.

Congratulations on a superb magazine.

Jim Scaysbrook, Grose Vale, NSW, Australia

[It's a fair cop, guv. Brain fade caused me to forgot about Kavanagh – Mat Oxley]

Proud to own Head's Jag

Sir,
It was with great interest that I read Patrick Head's piece about his father, Michael (March issue). With most of us, our father's interest in all things fast and mechanical seeps down the family tree – in my case grandfather to father Jeremy, then to myself. I wish to thank my father for purchasing Michael Head's first Jaguar, an aluminium-bodied XK120 'GOT 900'. I've had the privilege of racing this lovely old car at the 60th anniversary Goodwood meeting in 2008 and also at Classic Le Mans.

The car has a superb history in the hands of Michael Head, who purchased it at the Swedish Motor Show in 1950. He then lent it back to the Danish importer for display on its motor show stand, so rare were these cars at the time.

Michael soon started competing in the 120, including a fine win in the Helsinki GP and many outings at Goodwood, Boreham, Helsinki and Silverstone. By 1953 he was still taking 'podium' places with the 120, but then bought a new C-type, followed by a D-type and then the Cooper Jaguar 'HOT 95' seen in Patrick's piece.

In 1962 the XK120 was purchased by a friend of my father, who began a restoration although the car was still under 50,000 miles and quite usable. Restorations can take time; in this case it was 36 years later that the car reappeared, at the XK50th event at Donington in '98, still not MOT'd or taxed! The owner suffered a stroke a few years later, so in 2006 a deal was done and we collected the still untaxed 120, the last tax disc showing 1963! This superb car made it back to Goodwood and gave me the most enjoyable race I could've wished for. It's such a privilege to relive these great times in great cars.

Guy Broad, Corley, Coventry

Summer of '79

Sir,
Patrick Head's column in the May edition brought back a flood of memories for me, especially a long-promised trip to that Grand Prix at Silverstone with my late father. He had promised we would stay in a hotel close by and take in all the GP weekend, rather than just the Sunday race as we had in previous years. It's funny how you remember the music droning from the tannoy at the end of the day as the mechanics continued their work – Fleetwood Mac, as I recall. Summer evenings at Silverstone in those days were a real treat.

I also recall walking around a virtually deserted paddock at the end of qualifying and being able to get close to the drivers. Messrs Scheckter and Villeneuve were soaking up some late evening sun, sat in deckchairs without seemingly a care in the world. There was little security and the ability to walk up and ask for autographs and chat with them was almost surreal. A far cry from today.

David Mountain, Calgary, Canada

KEEP IN TOUCH

The *Motor Sport* website is fast becoming one of *the* places to discuss motor racing past, present and future. Don't miss the opportunity to comment on blogs, video and audio podcasts, and read Nigel Roebuck's newsletter and the editor's monthly letter. To get involved in the discussion simply log on to www.motorsportmagazine.com and tell our writers exactly what you think! Also, don't forget that if you have any images which would be suitable for our You Were There feature in the magazine, please send them to the office (address on p38).

EJ as the new Bernie?

Sir,
In Bernie Ecclestone's recent interviews he has stated that if he does stand down, a good replacement wouldn't require motor sport experience, more that they have good business acumen and negotiating skills.

Although Eddie Jordan does have motor sport experience as a driver, manager and team owner, he has banking experience and on-screen reporting know-how as well as excellent negotiating skills – many of which I witnessed first-hand while working with him for some years, followed by my time at March and Team Lotus. Even if Eddie's 'one-liners' aren't as subtle as Bernie's, they are just as funny.

I believe Eddie would be a more than capable successor to Bernie.

Scott Williams, Taroona, Tasmania, Australia

Hardly a model experience...

Sir,
Bill Boddy's piece on model cars in May brought back memories of a disastrous meeting attended by Bill in November 1956, when the Miniature Motor Sport Club's 'London Hundred Final' at Plough Lane, Wimbledon, had to be abandoned when a section of rail parted company with the track surface. Construction of a new four-lane circuit was put in hand; the largest ever built, this was in regular use until 1960 when we had to leave our home ground at Boston Manor. By then interest had waned and some of us had moved on to other activities or commitments.

Don Roskilly OBE, Pinner, London

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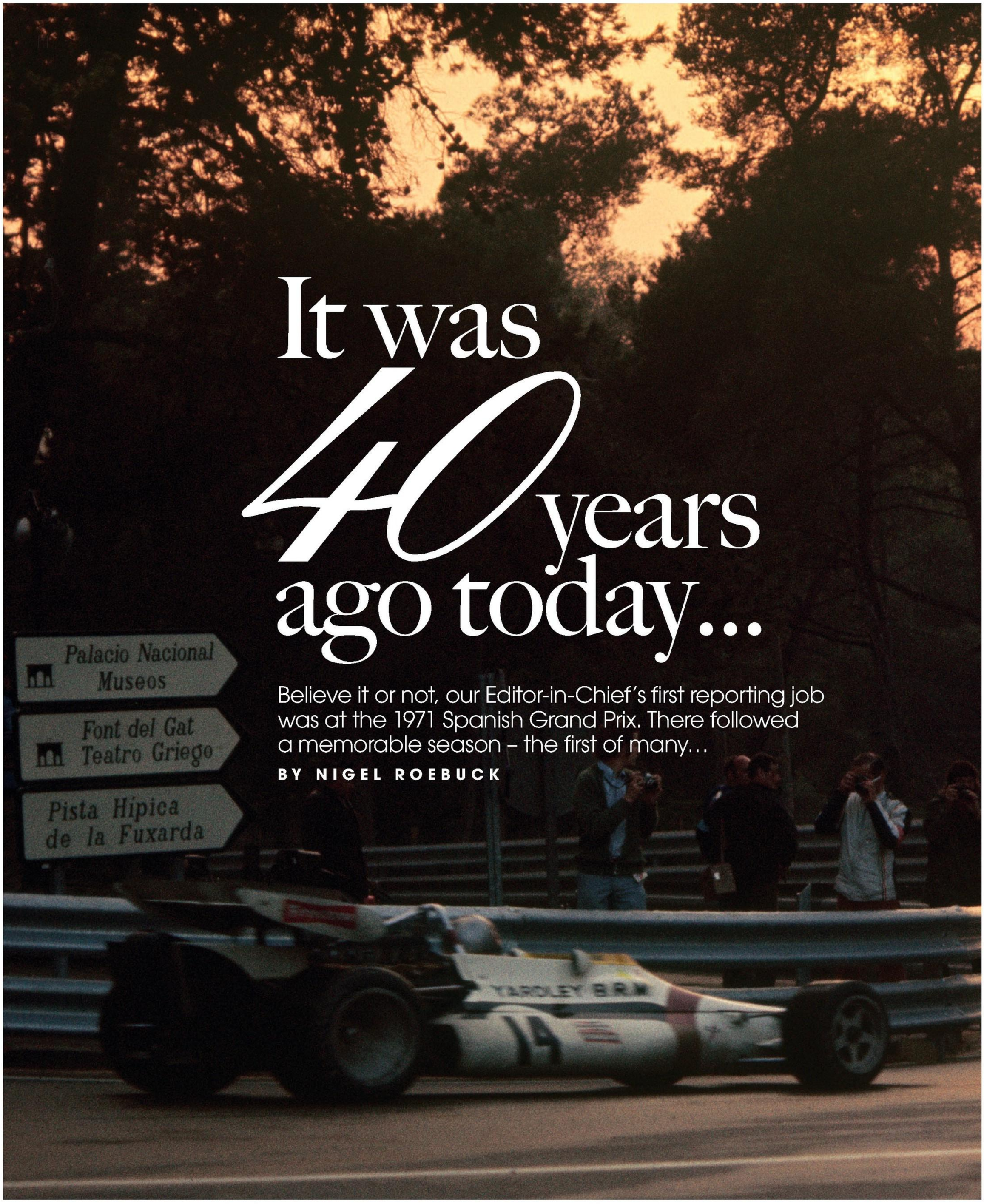
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It was 40 years ago today...

Believe it or not, our Editor-in-Chief's first reporting job was at the 1971 Spanish Grand Prix. There followed a memorable season – the first of many...

BY NIGEL ROEBUCK



LAT



By the spring of 1971 things were starting to get a little desperate. Since leaving school six years earlier I had worked in industry and hated every second of it, to the point that the previous summer I had resigned from my job, reasoning that being out of work – and, more to the point, out of money – would oblige me to do something about getting into racing journalism. It must be said that my parents struggled on this occasion to understand. Everything would be all right, I assured them.

Or maybe it wouldn't. I wrote to Simon Taylor, then editor of *Autosport*, advising him of my ambitions, and received a charming reply inviting me to report from such as Lydden Hill. Taylor had missed my point, I felt – had he not appreciated that I was talking about Formula 1?

Then I rang *Motor Sport*, by chance on the one day of the year when Denis Jenkinson was in the office. Jenks came to the phone, what's more, chatted a while, and said I should seek him out in a paddock somewhere.

That was not impossible then, of course, for one could buy a paddock pass, and I habitually did. Beyond the feeling that I'd talked to God, though, it didn't advance my quest. The Labour Exchange was beckoning, and, as my father gently pointed out, it was unlikely there would be many vacancies for Grand Prix reporters, no previous experience necessary.

As a last resort I ventured further afield, dropping a line to *Car and Driver* in New York, but in no great hope of receiving a reply. As it turned out, my letter landed on the desk of Caroline Hadley, who worked there as managing editor – and was English. She suggested that I go to the Spanish Grand Prix and write a piece: if they liked it, they would run it – and if they ran it, they would pay me. Hallelujah!

Then I panicked. I knew no one in motor racing, so how was I to write a Grand Prix report? For a start, how was I to get a pass?

It was Easter, the weekend before Barcelona, and on Good Friday there was a non-championship F1 race at Oulton Park. I had thought to speak to Jenks, but he wasn't there, so I tentatively approached Rob Walker, the last private team owner.

My instincts served me well. Rob was kindness itself, suggesting hotels in Barcelona and giving me details of the organising club. "Have you got a letter from the magazine?" he asked. I said I had. "Well, be sure to take it with you. They can be a bit excitable down there, but you should be all right if you don't argue with them..."

Finally he said I should look for him in the paddock when I arrived, and as I headed home that day I felt a first mountain had been climbed.

Quite why I decided to *drive* to Barcelona I have no idea. At the time I had a Lotus Elan, Colin Chapman's maddening masterpiece, but if the car were a delight to drive, it was hardly ideal for a trip to Spain. I had come to look upon any journey of more than 50 miles as an act of faith, and London to Barcelona was a little over 900. Then there was the journey back.

I was, however, ensnared by Elans – it was like having a wilful but irresistibly gorgeous girlfriend, the very kind your mother warned you about. The pleasures always had the edge – just – on the pain, but the secret was to regard an Elan as a toy. My mistake was to think of it as a means of transportation.

Anyway, off I set, and although the rorty little twin-cam was less than relaxing for high-speed touring I doubt I have ever been happier than that April day when I headed down the Autoroute du Sud. Apprehensive, of course, about this dive into the unknown, but aware that beckoning – if all went well – was the life I wanted.

All day I pounded down through France, the Lotus running like a watch, and I wanted the drive never to end. Into evening I intended finding an hotel, but kept putting it off for one more hour, one more hour... Through Narbonne, through Perpignan – and finally, coming up to midnight, I reached the Spanish border.

There was a bar there, and parked outside – I might have scripted this – was the Ferrari transporter. In I went, for coffee and a cognac, and there was Giulio Borsari, the team's legendary chief mechanic. As we left, he beckoned me over to the truck and presented me with a Ferrari Yearbook from 1970. I have it still.

Once back on the road I felt I could drive for ever, and at about three got into Barcelona, parked in the only available spot – a building site – and slept in the car. Next morning I found a hotel room, showered, and set off to the Automobile Club, where they duly gave me a paddock pass.

Then I drove up to Montjuich Park, and that day will stay with me always, for suddenly I was surrounded by my gods. Wherever I looked there seemed to be a cluster of drivers, chatting, laughing – no motorhomes in 1971, of course. Clay Regazzoni went to a vendor's stand to get Cokes for himself, Jo Siffert, Mario Andretti and Pedro Rodríguez. The days of *cordon bleu* in the paddock were some way off.

Eventually I found Rob Walker, who introduced me to members of the team, including John Surtees, and then proceeded to walk me round the paddock: "If you're going to write about Formula 1," he said in that mahogany drawl, "it would be a good idea if you met everyone..." And I think within an hour or so I *had* met pretty well everyone, including Chris Amon, who was to become – like Rob – a lifelong friend.

> "Rob Walker walked me round the paddock; within an hour I'd met everyone"

Difficult as it may be to believe now, that was how it happened. Here was my first day as 'a journalist' – and it was at a Grand Prix. No PR morass to work through, no need to make appointments weeks ahead. I asked Jackie Stewart if we could do a tape some time, and he said, "Sure, d'you want to do it now?"

We sat on some tyres near the Tyrrell truck. And tyres, I remember, were a conversation piece that weekend, for Firestone had brought slicks to an F1 race for the first time. ›››

Stewart, World Champion in 1971, was at the height of his powers during our man Roebuck's first season

LAT

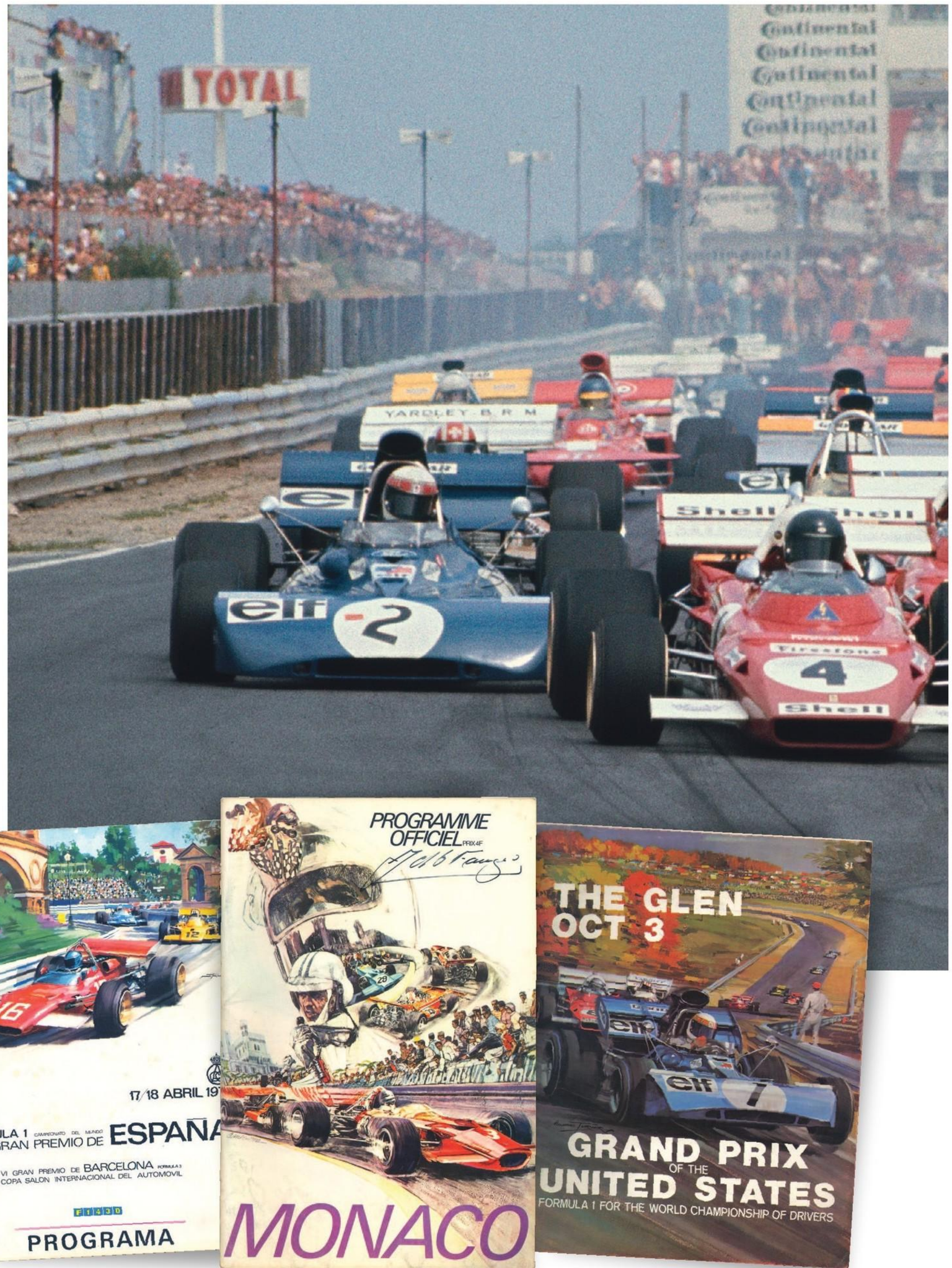
ROEBUCK'S FIRST SEASON

The age of uniformity had still to arrive 40 years ago. The three practice sessions were run in early evening at Montjuich, and under a low sun they came out finally to take on this most daunting of all street circuits. At over 150mph they went slightly left past the pits, launched themselves over a crest, then plunged downhill to a left-hand hairpin. This was some place to watch Grand Prix cars.

Stewart was fastest, but on Friday was leapfrogged by the Ferraris of Jacky Ickx and Regazzoni and by the Matra of Amon. On Saturday it rained, and so the grid was set.

Race day was hot, and although Ickx led away Stewart was all over him, and took the lead half a dozen laps in. JYS pulled clear, but in the late laps Ickx closed again. At the finish the gap was three seconds, with Amon, hampered by a broken shock absorber, third. As I began my new life, so a Tyrrell won a Grand Prix for the first time.

My only concern that weekend was that the Elan needed five-star petrol – remember that? – and in Franco's Spain it was virtually unobtainable. On the brew available there was a lot of 'pinking' and the engine ran hot, but I made it back into France, put the right juice in, and got home to Regents Park Road without a hitch.



In those days there were fewer Grands Prix than now – 11 in 1971 – and Monaco, the next round, was five weeks away. Already, though, I had been to non-championship races at Brands Hatch (where Regazzoni won) and Oulton (Rodríguez), as well as the BOAC 1000Kms, and next on the agenda was Silverstone, where Graham Hill took his last F1 victory in the 'lobster claw' Brabham BT34. How well served was the British aficionado in those days.

My travel arrangements for Monaco had been made long ago, for I had been to the three previous races with Page & Moy, and booked the same trip, staying at the Hotel Alexandra as before. There my press pass was greatly envied, and I tried not to be smug. General admission to the circuit, after all, was 20 francs: two quid…

The weather wasn't great in Monte Carlo. On the Thursday it poured down, and I remember the shrieking of Amon's Matra as it opposite-locked out of Casino Square en route to fastest time. In early-morning practice on Friday Stewart was quickest, and Andretti lost the whole session with Ferrari problems – this would cost Mario dear, for it rained again on Saturday, and he failed to make the race.

Each circuit had a press room, of course, but fairly primitive they were. You couldn't – as you do now – sit there, with track action on some TV screens and statistics on others, because there were no TVs. There were no press releases from the teams, either – and press *conferences*, too, were unknown. Consequently, unless you were typing, you spent all your time in the paddock or out on the circuit. I watched from the chicane, then still a very fast left-right flick on to the harbour front.

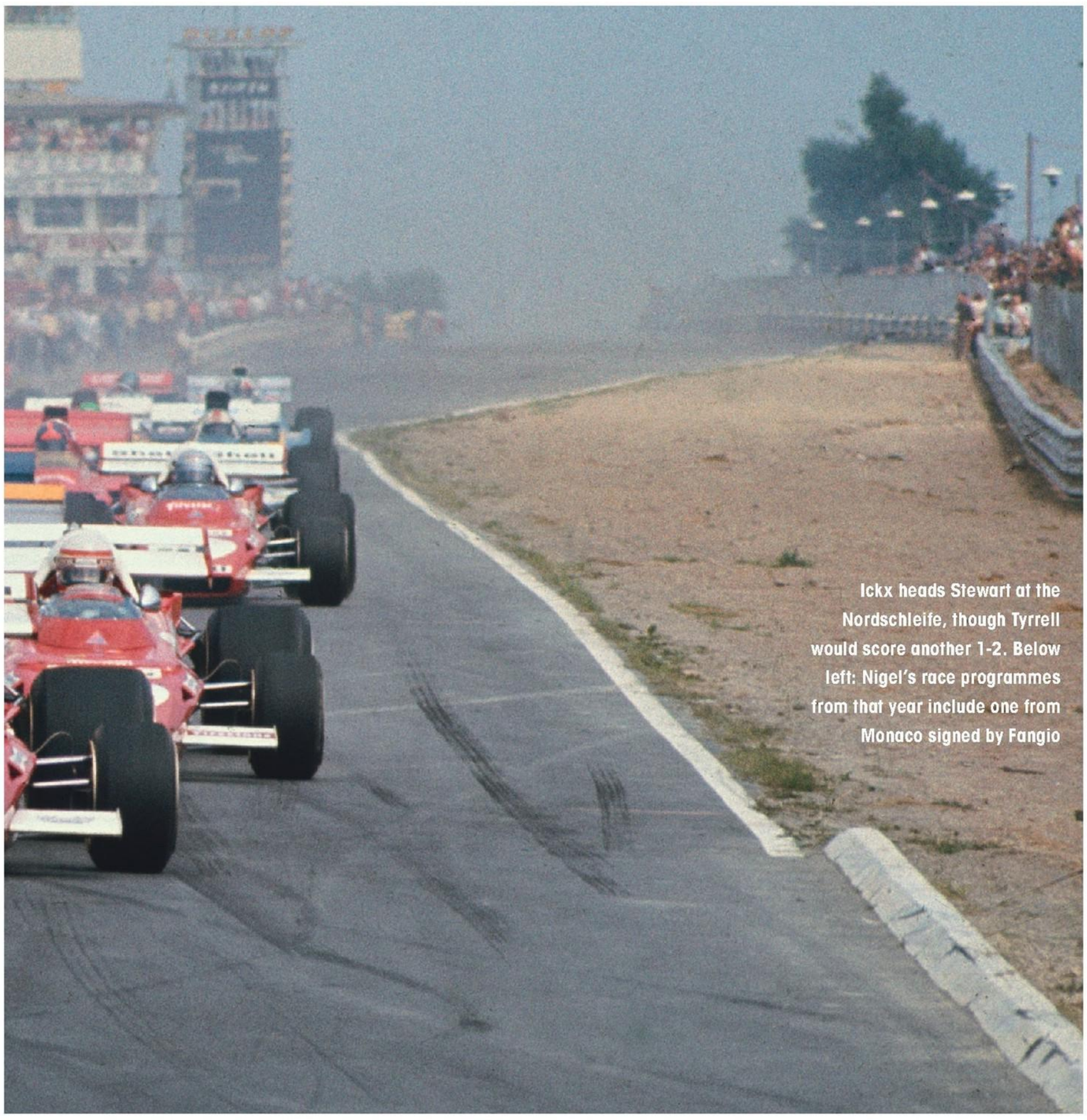
Stewart won again, but the big talking point was the performance of one Ronnie Peterson, who was second in the 'tea tray' March 711, and scored the first points of his career.

My best memory of Monaco, though, had nothing to do with the race. On the Monday morning, killing time before leaving for the airport, I noticed something of a clamour outside Rampoldi's, just down from Casino Square.

Over time Rampoldi's was to become one of my favourite restaurants, but I didn't know it then: my interest was caught by a pretty girl outside, smoking languidly, and holding a movie clapperboard.

I ventured in, and found a crowd around one of the tables, arc-lights everywhere. And there, sitting calmly, was Juan Manuel Fangio. On the wall behind him was a photograph of the multiple accident at Tabac in 1950, through which he had threaded his Alfa to victory. Now, with knives and forks and Solido model cars, he was fighting the battle again. During a break in filming I asked him to sign my programme, and he stood up, smiled and held out his hand. Now I really *had* talked to God.

Another month went by, and it was time for



Ickx heads Stewart at the Nordschleife, though Tyrrell would score another 1-2. Below left: Nigel's race programmes from that year include one from Monaco signed by Fangio

LAT

Zandvoort. I was always fond of this track in the dunes, which invariably provided a season's overtaking in a single afternoon. Why Hermann Tilke has never duplicated Tarzan, I know not.

Ickx took the pole, followed by Rodríguez, Stewart, Regazzoni and Amon, but on race day it rained, and after a start delayed to allow the fuel pump on Andretti's Ferrari to be changed – yes, really – the Dutch Grand Prix distilled to a two-hander between Jacky and Pedro: they were on Firestones, and Goodyear's wets were hopeless to the point that I beheld the sight of Stewart being overtaken by the Surtees of Gijs van Lennep! JYS was lapped five times that day, and it impressed me that he resisted the temptation to park it. Ickx eventually won, with Rodríguez's V11 BRM in second place and Regazzoni third.

Next, a couple of weeks later, was the French Grand Prix, at a new venue. The Circuit Paul Ricard may be in an agreeable part of the world, but anyone familiar with Rouen Les Essarts or Clermont-Ferrand found it hard to enthuse. It seemed appropriate that the race was a bore, Stewart and François Cevert coming in for the first Tyrrell 1-2.

As usual I used the Elan, but its oil consumption was beginning to worry me, and I dared to broach the subject with Chapman. "Of *course* it uses oil!" he responded at once. "What d'you think's lubricating it? What you need to worry about," he added, darkly, "is an engine that *doesn't* use oil…" You could see how he got on.

What I remember most about Ricard, though, is interviewing Rodríguez, as ever wearing his deerstalker, despite the heat. It wasn't long – maybe 20 minutes – but he couldn't have been more charming.

I never did use the interview, though, for a week later Pedro was killed at the Norisring, driving Herbie Müller's Ferrari 512M in a meaningless Interserie race. For the first time I came face to face – on a personal level – with motor racing's dark side. As for the tape, I lent it to someone years later and never got it back.

The weekend after that was Silverstone, inevitably clouded. BRM folk were distraught at the loss of Rodríguez, but Siffert stepped up magnificently and qualified third, behind Regazzoni and Stewart.

Clay's pole lap was typically brave – and all the more so when you'd talked to him about it, for the Firestone slicks were setting up a vibration so disturbing that on occasion he was close to blacking out. "Goodyear," he said, "seem to have solved this problem, but they won't say how – and I think they should…" I could see his point.

Regazzoni and Ickx blasted over the line at the end of lap one, but Stewart was soon by them, and the two Ferraris – Andretti was absent, racing his godforsaken McNamara in the USAC race at Pocono – later blew up. Jackie duly won once again, followed by Peterson and the Lotus of Emerson Fittipaldi. The only man to give chase was Siffert, until – suffering the Firestone vibration problem – he had to back off.

A fortnight later I was at the Nürburgring – by which I mean the *Nordschleife*, of course – and the means of transportation had changed, for the day after the British Grand Prix the Lotus ground to a halt on the M4. Another Rotoflex coupling – those words struck fear into the heart of Elan owners – had snapped, and with it went my patience. I traded the car in against an Alfa Romeo 1750 GTV – more of a girl-next-door, true, but she made a lovely noise and never let me down.

Stewart and Ickx were on the front row, and the Ferrari got away first, but JYS soon cleared off into a race of his own – before an audience of over 300,000. After Ickx had uncharacteristically gone off on lap two, Cevert made it another Tyrrell 1-2, followed in by the surviving Ferraris of Regazzoni and Andretti.

Publishing schedules meant that my American employer didn't need a report of the next race, at the Österreichring, and I regretted not going, for it was won by Siffert, who took pole position and resisted every challenge – including that from Stewart, who retired but still finished the day as World Champion, his points total now beyond reach.

After a quick jaunt to Oulton to see Surtees win his second Gold Cup on the trot, it was time for Monza, always my favourite race of the year. There were, believe it or not, *six hours* of official practice for the Italian Grand Prix, every minute of which counted for the grid, and on the first day it was that man Siffert who was quickest. I watched at the Lesmos, enthralled.

Back then Monza was still a flat-out slipstreamer, and although the place was routinely denigrated as no great test of a driver, still the feeling was that, like Monaco, it had its place as a maverick event on the F1 calendar.

It's becoming a distant memory now, but time was when Saturday qualifying at Monza was like Pole Day at Indianapolis. Much was on the line, particularly for Ferrari.

Prior to John Barnard's arrival, lunch – pasta and Lambrusco – was a ritual, and when I looked in on the team that day the drivers and mechanics were all at one table, Regazzoni taking a glass of wine with his tagliatelle. And they say things have changed…

It had been expected that the '12s' would have the edge at Monza, and the final session settled into a scrap between Ferrari and

BRM, with Amon's Matra thereabouts. Timekeeping, though, was... haphazard, for there was no automatic system, no TV screens showing order changes. After each session you waited – and waited – for the sheets to be issued, and when Ickx's Ferrari was shown as fastest, the local journalists rushed away to write suitably rabid stories.

When I saw Amon, though, he said that Michelle Dubosc, Matra's own timekeeper, had him on pole position. And, lo, eventually the authorities acknowledged – *after* the papers had gone to press – that, yes, Chris had run a lap faster than Ickx's best. Half a second faster, in fact, and over 156mph...

When the *tifosi* arrived on Sunday morning, they were disappointed to find a blue car, rather than a red, on pole, although slightly mollified that Amon, whom they still loved from his Ferrari days, was the driver.

They were further soothed when Regazzoni, on the fourth row, decided against waiting for the flag to fall, and left in his own time. Before the rest had moved he was in second gear – at least – but to penalise a Ferrari at Monza was unthinkable, and at the end of the first lap Gianclaudio had a sizeable lead.

Early on, though, most of the leading was accomplished by Peterson's March, hounded by Siffert's BRM, the Tyrrells and the Ferraris. As always at Monza attrition was high, and soon both Ferraris were gone, followed by Stewart, while Siffert found himself stuck in fourth gear.

As the race progressed others came into the picture, notably Hailwood, who hadn't been near a Formula 1 car for six years and was returning with Surtees. On lap 25, indeed, Mike – who had qualified 17th – came by in the lead! "I didn't know what this slipstreaming lark was all about," he said. "I was just minding my own business – and seemed to be passing people..."

All the while Amon was running around sixth, but on lap 37 he showed his hand, and the Matra – running surely the tiniest rear wing ever seen in F1 – suddenly vaulted from fourth to first. Eighteen laps to go... was Chris at last going to win a Grand Prix?

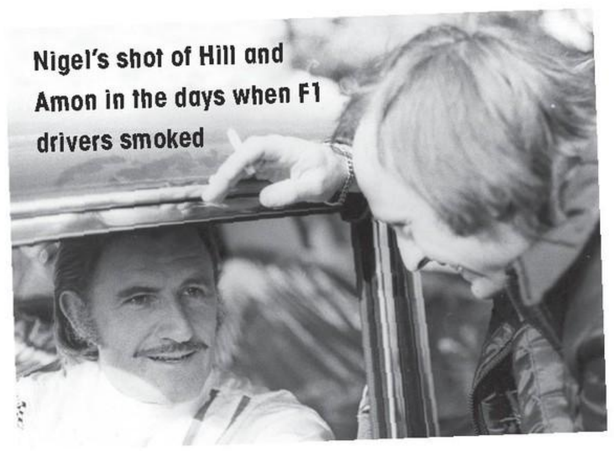
After 10 laps in the lead, though, he came by sixth – and holding his left hand in front of his eyes. "I'd been losing tear-offs, so this time I taped it more firmly – and when I pulled it off the whole bloody visor went! Actually, it wouldn't have made a lot of difference, because then I started to get fuel starvation, as well..."

Going into the last lap Peterson led from Cevert, Hailwood and the BRMs of Peter Gethin and Howden Ganley, but out of Parabolica, on the run up to the line, Gethin went a thousand revs over the limit before snatching top gear, and thus took his only Grand Prix victory. Ganley – fifth – was six-tenths behind his team-mate.

It was the last time around for the old Monza, devoid of what Hailwood would call 'these poxy chicanes', and that day the lead changed 25 times among eight drivers. I don't recall anyone talking about a need to improve 'The Show'.

I didn't go to Mosport, where Stewart won in the rain from Peterson, and Mark Donohue was a remarkable third on his F1 debut, but was at Watkins Glen for the season-closer. This was my first visit to the USA, and it seemed easiest to book with Page & Moy, who promised a couple of days in New York before going up to the Glen. Among my fellow travellers was Chris Craft, down to drive a privately-entered Brabham.

There weren't many 'flyaway' Grands Prix in those days – South Africa, Canada, the USA – and an appealing aspect of them was the appearance of unfamiliar faces. Peter Revson, for example, drove a third Tyrrell, Sam Posey a third Surtees, and John Cannon a *fifth* BRM!



Nigel's shot of Hill and Amon in the days when F1 drivers smoked

"I've never seen a more joyful driver than Cevert"

In total there were 31 entries, but the Ferrari of Andretti and the McLaren of Donohue, having practised, were withdrawn because the Trenton USAC race, to which they were contractually bound, was rain-delayed from Saturday to Sunday. Mario, praying for a further deluge in New Jersey, was mortified.

I adored everything about the Glen, about upstate New York in the fall. If it poured down at Trenton, it was cool and sunny 200 miles to the north, and Stewart, Fittipaldi and Denny Hulme qualified for the front row.

Afterwards I mooched around the Kendall Center with my tape recorder, and enjoyed the first of countless mugs of tea with Ken Tyrrell. All the cars were housed in the one building, and there the drivers hung out, too. Briefly Ken and I were joined by Cevert, who spoke of his hopes of another 1-2 the following day.

As it was, the Tyrrells were first and fifth, for though Stewart led for a dozen laps his car began to understeer badly, and he waved Cevert by. Soon Ickx was past, too, and the chase was on.

All season long Jacky had insisted the Ferrari B2 wasn't a patch on the original 312B, and an engine problem in practice had put him into the spare – which happened to be the older car. At two-thirds distance he was within a couple of seconds of Cevert, but eventually retired.

François therefore won his first – and, sadly, only – Grand Prix, and to this day I have never seen a more joyful racing driver. Formal podiums were virtually unknown, and he stood on a raised platform, surrounded by a crush of well-wishers. I couldn't get near, and so held up my camera, and hoped for the best. While no photographer, on this occasion I have to say I was gratified by the result.

Gratified, too, that Siffert had finished second, for I had drawn him in the Page & Moy sweep and pocketed 30 bucks, which was worth having back then.

If my first season of covering the Grands Prix was done, there remained one more event on the calendar, this the Rothmans World Championship Victory Race at Brands Hatch, organised at short notice following the cancellation of the Mexican Grand Prix. Ferrari and Matra declined to send cars, but still the entry was a good one, and the late autumn weather was sublime.

Siffert had pole position, but made a terrible start, and it was his team-mate Gethin who took the lead, chased by Fittipaldi. From mid-pack, though, Seppi began to move up, and by lap 12 was hard after Stewart for third place.

I was at Druids for the start, and then walked back to Paddock. Once there, I looked across the circuit, and was appalled by the sight of thick, black smoke in the area of Pilgrim's Drop, then by the worst of all sounds at a motor race: silence.

Returning to the press room, I ran into Philip Turner of *The Motor*, and asked the dread question of those days: "Who is it?" "It's Siffert," said Turner, "and I'm afraid he's dead..."

In the dip just before Hawthorn's the BRM had unaccountably turned sharp left, hit the bank, somersaulted and exploded. Although Seppi's only injury was a broken ankle, he died from asphyxiation in the smoke and flames.

So it was that in mid-November I made my way to Farm Street for the Memorial Service, having been there only three months before. One had long thought of Pedro Rodríguez and Jo Siffert, team-mates at BRM and Porsche, in the same beat. Now both were gone.

It was a crushing end to my first year of working in motor racing, but it wasn't a surprise – a shock, yes, but not a surprise – for the sport I fell in love with as a kid had always been like that. Looking back these 40 years, I find there is much I liked better about the Formula 1 of 1971, but not everything. Not by any means.



Young chargers and the Masters

Snetterton and Brands Hatch will soon be hosting F3/GT and Masters meetings – these are the cars and rising stars to look out for

ON MAY 14/15 THE BRITISH FORMULA 3 and British GT championships will make their way to Snetterton.

The event will be held on the new three-mile '300' layout and features two one-hour enduros for the GTs and three sprint races for the F3 cars. Although it's not the first race at the revamped circuit, it's a great chance to experience the new infield loop. There are plenty of overtaking opportunities and the sight of Audi R8s, Ford GTs, Aston Martin DB9s and Ferrari 430s thundering into new corners like Montréal and Agostini should stick in the mind.



British F3 has been a vital step for many drivers, with Jaime Alguersuari, Daniel Ricciardo and Jean-Eric Vergne all starring in F3 before either racing or testing in F1. The current grid includes Australian Scott Pye – who trounced his rivals in British Formula Ford last year with 12 wins and 17 pole positions – Kevin Magnussen, the son of ex-F1 driver Jan, and Briton Jack Harvey. Tickets for the weekend start at £17 and can be bought via the website at www.snetterton.co.uk or by calling 0843 453 9000.

On May 28-30 the Masters series will visit Brands Hatch for the unmissable Masters Historic Festival, including races for 3-litre F1 cars built between 1968-78, Group C/IMSA/GTP cars, Group 4 prototypes from the mid-60s up to 1974, pre-66 sports racers, and pre-66 GT and pre-63 sports cars.

The Masters series boasts one of the best collections of historic races in the world and always produces great competition. The first day of racing will be held on the tight and twisty Indy circuit, while on Sunday and bank holiday Monday the action will be on the longer Grand Prix layout.

There's also entertainment away from the racing with flying displays, stunt riders and a close-to-contemporary F1 car demo. Standard tickets start at £12 and can be bought at www.brandshatch.co.uk or by calling 0843 453 9000.



Herbert: thumbs up for new Snetterton

SNETTERTON HAS UNDERGONE A MASSIVE revamp. Jonathan Palmer told *Motor Sport* last month that the £3.5 million redevelopment, including a new infield loop, resurfaced track and bigger paddock, had been a bold move.

Since then various people have not only driven on the extended track but experienced it as a spectator. A bold move it may have been, but initial feedback has been excellent.

Three-time Grand Prix winner Johnny Herbert (above) has lapped the new '300' layout and was positive about the changes: "MSV have done a very good job. It's given the circuit more character. There are some tricky corners, but they're enjoyable at the same time. There are overtaking opportunities there for sure."

And the best way to find out how good it is? Go and try it for yourselves. We're sure you'll love it. For details speak to Club MSV, MotorSport Vision's in-house track day arm, on 0843 453 3000 or visit www.clubmsv.co.uk.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 30-MAY 2 OULTON PARK **BSB**
MAY 14-15 SNETTERTON 300 **F3/GT**
MAY 28-30 BRANDS HATCH GP **Masters Festival**
JUNE 4-5 OULTON PARK **BTCC**
JUNE 18-19 BRANDS HATCH GP **F3/GT**
JUNE 25-26 SNETTERTON 300 **Lotus Festival**
JULY 1-3 BRANDS HATCH GP **HSCC Superprix**
JULY 2-3 SNETTERTON 300 **BSB**
JULY 16-17 OULTON PARK **BSB**
JULY 22-24 BRANDS HATCH GP **F2 & GT Sport**
AUGUST 5-7 BRANDS HATCH GP **BSB**
AUGUST 6-7 SNETTERTON 300 **BTCC**
AUGUST 27-29 CADWELL PARK **BSB**
AUGUST 28-29 OULTON PARK **HSCC Gold Cup**
SEPTEMBER 2-4 BRANDS HATCH **DTM**
OCTOBER 1-2 BRANDS HATCH GP **BTCC**
OCTOBER 7-9 BRANDS HATCH GP **BSB**
OCTOBER 29-30 BRANDS HATCH **Trucks**

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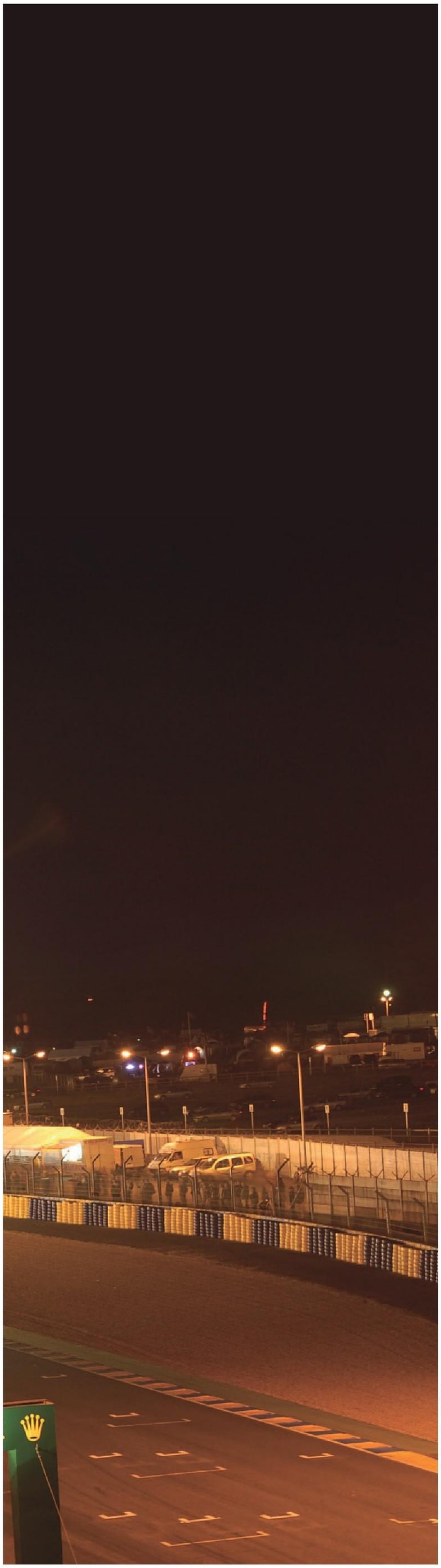
LE MANS 2011 PREVIEW



AUDI vs PEUGEOT vs ASTON MARTIN

It's a circus, a festival – and racing's greatest test. Twenty-four gruelling hours that stretch human and mechanical endurance until they snap. Three teams think they can go all the way...





Jacky Cordier/ACO



Audi

GOING UNDERCOVER

New rules have pushed Audi into building a dramatic closed car for its latest assault on Le Mans. We asked the team for the inside story

BY DAMIEN SMITH

There's no roar and certainly no scream. Just weird silence as the stealth-shaped missile, LED spotlights glaring crystal-blue in the bright Florida sunshine, takes some semblance of form as it grows ever larger. Then WHOOOOSH! The carbon-black thing has passed just feet from the thigh-high pitwall and is already chattering over the spine-compressing bumps of Sebring's Turn 1. As it passed, a dull drone could just be detected over the sound of minutely manipulated air and Michelin rubber on concrete. That'll be the engine, then.

The speed does not compute with the (lack of) sound, but that's always been the case since Audi Sport swept aside petrol power with its first turbodiesel Le Mans engine in 2006. Will we ever get used to it? Probably not. But this close up – without the expanse of a gravel trap to deaden the sensation – it's deeply impressive; in its own, darkly sinister way, almost as much as a banshee V12.

This one's tiny, too. Since that first sensational straight-out-of-the-box win at the 24 Hours five years ago, the German turbodiesel has shrunk from V12 to V10, and has now bypassed V8 for super-skinny V6, shedding weight and, yes, power along the way. But not necessarily much speed, even if that was the intention of the rule-makers. Le Mans organiser the ACO wants lap times to rise closer to the 3min 30sec mark at its famous 8.47-mile track (fastest race lap last year was 3min 19sec), so now regulations squeeze the

oil-burners from 5.5 litres to 3.7 in 2011. The manufacturers must conquer the motor racing oxymoron of going faster with less. More than ever, efficiency is the Holy Grail.

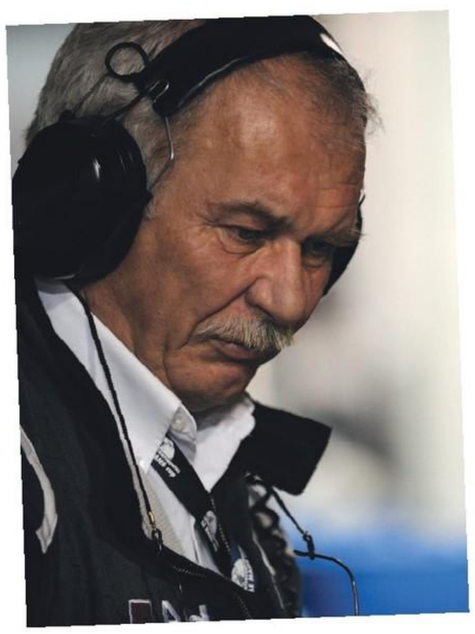
To overcome the loss of grunt, Audi Sport's crack design team has felt compelled to abandon the open-car concept it has followed since the birth of the all-conquering R8 11 years ago. That stealth-shaped missile is the R18, Audi's first prototype coupé since the hedge-betting (and short-lived) R8C, which ran alongside the R8R 'spyder' during Audi's first Le Mans campaign of 1999.

AUDI DRIVER LINE-UP

No.1 TIMO BERNHARD, ROMAIN DUMAS, MIKE ROCKENFELLER
No.2 MARCEL FASSLER, ANDRE LOTTERER, BENOIT TRELUYER
No.3 ALLAN McNISH, DINDO CAPELLO, TOM KRISTENSEN

The logic behind the change in philosophy is typically simple. Open cars create greater drag, that old foe of all aerodynamicists. Quicker driver changes used to be the trade-off for the compromise of an open cockpit, but now that advantage is null and void. New pitstop regs allow only two mechanics to change tyres. No matter how quickly drivers trade places, no time will be gained because the crews will take longer to put on new boots. So, no pitstop advantage plus less power equals a drag-reducing hard-top. It's the obvious choice, although Aston Martin clearly begs to differ (see page 60).

The other obvious change is the ugly great 'shark fin' that runs from the top of the cockpit over the back of the engine cowling. As *Motor Sport* explained last year (see October 2010 issue), it's *de rigeur* for all new prototypes as a method to stop the tendency for these cars to flip when they get sideways at high speed – although as Peugeot has discovered, it won't necessarily stop them from flying…



Audi

"A compact engine allows freedom for the designers"

DR ULRICH BARETZKY

"You know I can't talk about the new car, so this is going to be a short story. It's a one-pager!" grins Allan McNish, two-time Le Mans winner and, in our opinion, the best sports car driver on the planet today. He's in good humour despite the disappointment of the day before, when his final race in the old R15 Plus was ruined when a rash Marc Gené punted his Peugeot into the Scot's team-mate Dindo Capello in the fifth of Sebring's 12 hours (see page 18). It's history, just like the R15. Now he and the rest of the Audi Sport team are fully focused on R18, two of which – already in 'Evolution 2' guise following a January test here in Sebring – will pound round the rough road course for the next five days.

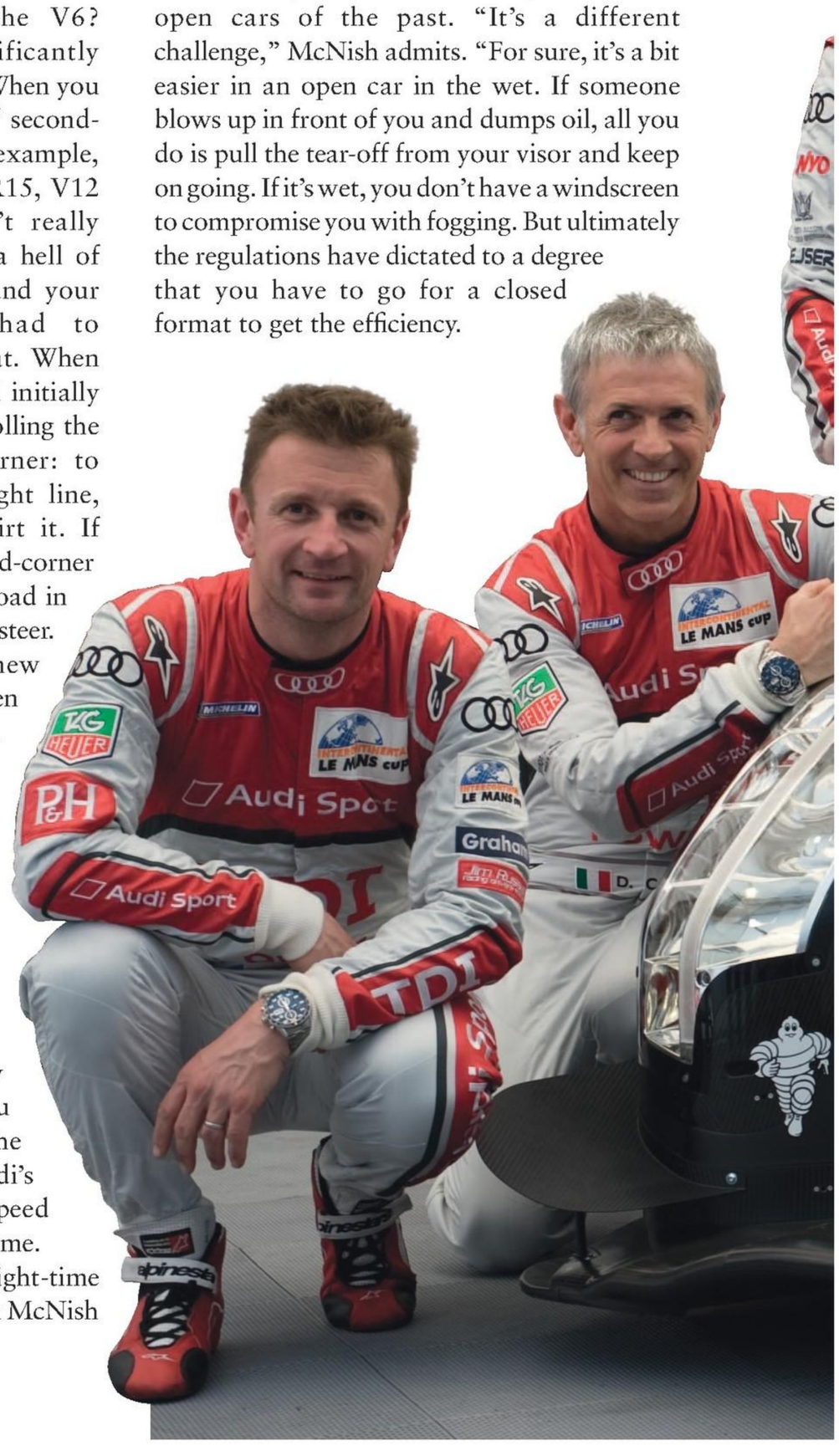
McNish was the first to shake down the R18 in Europe during November, and has tested it several times since then. So, what does he think? "In terms of pure performance, it's a wee bit tricky to say because until you stick it on a circuit against your rivals you don't really know. But it did all the things it should do; it reacted to the changes we made to it. I came away from the test thinking 'yep, we've got something to work with'."

What about the V6? "Definitely, significantly flatter," he says. "When you accelerated out of second-gear corners, for example, with the R10 or R15, V12 or V10, it didn't really matter, you had a hell of a lot of torque and your driving style had to accommodate that. When we went to diesel initially we had to stop rolling the car into the corner: to brake in a straight line, turn it and squirt it. If you wellied it mid-corner you'd get a real load in the tyre and big oversteer. Now with these new regulations, and even with the restricted power we had here in the race at Sebring with the R15 Plus, we're driving it a bit more like a Formula 3 car. Momentum is key because you just don't have the power and in traffic it's harder because you don't have any 'free passes'. If you go in too hot you have nothing when you come out the other side." With this in mind, Audi's new turbodiesels are driving a six-speed gearbox (instead of five) for the first time.

Tom Kristensen – all-conquering eight-time Le Mans winner and the man who with McNish and Capello completes Audi's 'super trio' (below) – picks up on the theme of less torque. "The R10 was a brilliant first diesel car that surprised me very much in the way we used it as a tool," he says. "It was a big, grumpy, robust thing with a little bit of terminal slow-corner understeer which is quite easy to handle but difficult to make perform. The R15, the second generation, was like a girlfriend with a lot of class, but very difficult! A peaky girlfriend! The performance band of R15 is quite narrow and to keep it in check over a few hours, 12 hours or 24, is a pretty good challenge.

"Now with R18 you need to think more about momentum and rhythm, and using every inch of the track. It's about being cool and smooth."

McNish last raced with a roof over his head at Le Mans in Toyota's GT-One way back in '99, Kristensen and Capello more recently in Bentley's Speed-8. The cockpit of the R18 looks claustrophobic and visibility will undoubtedly be restricted compared to the open cars of the past. "It's a different challenge," McNish admits. "For sure, it's a bit easier in an open car in the wet. If someone blows up in front of you and dumps oil, all you do is pull the tear-off from your visor and keep on going. If it's wet, you don't have a windscreen to compromise you with fogging. But ultimately the regulations have dictated to a degree that you have to go for a closed format to get the efficiency.



"But I'll be interested to see how Aston get on because they've obviously looked at it in a completely different way to everybody else. Sometimes you look at these things and think 'crikey, they've got it wrong'. But when they blast past you then you think maybe there's more ways to skin a cat…"

Dr Ulrich Baretzky is the architect of Audi's turbodiesel revolution and veteran of BMW's F1 turbo era of the 1980s. So I ask him: why a V6? "One of the reasons was to have a very short and compact engine to allow the biggest freedom possible for the car designers. The size also allows the possibility to use a hybrid system behind the engine.

"The other reason is we try to develop things which can be used in production engines. The load on every piston and cylinder in a V6 is higher than on a V8, which would have been the alternative and the route that Peugeot has chosen. So you have to respond to this and find solutions to help overcome such problems. We can develop some interesting techniques and have learnt a lot about how to manage really high combustion pressures and so on. There are other reasons, but I will have to talk about them in years to come!"

So, if Audi is developing efficient technologies for the road through racing and has allowed for the possibilities of a hybrid thanks to a small V6, that's the next step – right? Not necessarily. "It's not a question of whether I'd like it or not," says Dr Baretzky. "At the moment, in every comparison of a hybrid with a diesel from Audi, the diesel consumes less. The diesel is the more efficient powertrain. There are some powertrains now – Peugeot has launched one – that are both diesel and hybrid. Maybe this will help. But the overall problem, the weight, you always have. If you have to accelerate and decelerate with 200 kilograms extra this is a consumption that even a diesel could not cope with. You'd have more consumption than you'd have without a hybrid system.

"The system should pay for itself," he says, warming to the theme. "Motor sport should be about truth: the more efficient, quicker, better car should win, and the rules should be made according to that. The ACO says we have to encourage this technology. Why? If this technology is a better solution, it will come. If we have to encourage it and it turns out to be the wrong route, it is a waste of energy and time."

So what about a more conventional petrol route? Aside from Audi and Peugeot in the top prototype division, there is Aston Martin – and the British manufacturer has stuck to its guns on the back of equivalency promises from the ACO. Petrol engines have shrunk this year from six litres to a maximum 3.4 – but Aston has chosen something completely different: a 2-litre turbo straight six. Baretzky describes the move as "incomprehensible".

"They made an open car with the wrong engine," he scoffs. "A straight-six engine with a turbo – sorry, but this is one of the worst combinations I have ever seen. First of all, if you want to have a 2-litre, they have two cylinders too much. A four-cylinder would be enough to make this performance. And a straight six has a really critical thing with torsional vibrations, because you have a very long crankshaft. BMW did something similar in the late 1970s with the M1 and they had only engine failures. It was a really robust engine, but the torsional vibrations were destroying everything. They will find out. I'm sure about that. They just wanted to have a link to the V12 they are still building, so it's half a V12 in a way. Maybe. But things like that do not count if you want to win Le Mans."

But he is adamant that a petrol engine can beat a diesel – with the right resources. "You don't always compare concepts, a diesel and a petrol engine, you compare a factory team with a private team. Take our old R8 for example. With a private team, it immediately lost three seconds a lap because the overall performance of the team could not be the



David Downes & David Lord



BACKTRACK: 2008

AUDI SINGS IN THE RAIN

A star turn by its drivers helped Audi beat the faster Peugeots

AUDI TRAVELLED TO Le Mans in 2008 with its three-year-old R10 turbodiesel, but even the most pessimistic of Audi employees couldn't have foreseen just how much faster the Peugeot 908s would be.

In qualifying it was a Peugeot whitewash – the French manufacturer filling the top three spots on the grid with the pole car of Stéphane Sarrazin, Pedro Lamy and Alexander Wurz over five seconds quicker than the fastest Audi of Allan McNish, Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen.

When the race started at 3pm on Saturday the Peugeots threatened to pull out an unassailable lead. But crucially, the German cars could run a lap longer on fuel and managed to stay in touch. At 3am rain arrived and suddenly the Audis found that not only could they run as quickly as the Peugeots, but even faster.

In a masterful display of driving the trio of McNish, Kristensen and Capello (left with Ralf Jüttner and Dr Wolfgang Ullrich) closed the gap to the leading Peugeot of Marc Gené, Nicolas Minassian and Jacques Villeneuve, and eventually passed it.

The Peugeot drivers battled to the end of the race, but it was too late. The Audis had snatched victory from the much faster French cars.

"This one was probably the hardest race I've ever *lived* through because the competition was so strong," said two-time Le Mans winner McNish afterwards. "We knew we couldn't make a mistake, we knew that if we had any problems we would be out. We just had to be perfect. We had one chance, which was when it rained in the morning, and we took that chance and took it well."

Audi

same as a factory team. They don't have the resources, the specialists, the experience. I'm sure – and I've told the ACO very often – that if somebody like us comes and makes a gasoline-powered car on the same level and investment we do with the diesel, I think it would at least be on the level of a diesel – maybe even quicker. I'm pretty sure about that."

So if it is the quicker way to win Le Mans, why doesn't Audi do it? He doesn't give me a straight answer…

Finally, I have to ask him… the lack of noise. Die-hard fans struggle to warm to the whispering turbodiesels – and even Bernie Ecclestone has said Formula 1's switch to 1.6-litre turbos threatens to destroy the appeal of his sport because of the reduction in aural drama. Dr Baretzky is used to this question, but still bristles when he makes mention of Ecclestone – largely, and significantly, because the Audi man formed part of the panel of advisers who drew up the new F1 engine regs, which will come into force in 2013.

"Bernie should remember the time 30 years ago when his Brabhams had BMW's 1.5-litre four-cylinder and he became World Champion in 1983," he says. "He shouldn't forget about that. Maybe he is too old!

"Sound – noise – is energy. The less you hear, the more you use for propulsion. Also, I had a lot of discussions over the past two years about what our spectators expect. When you look at the crowd now they are only old people. In 20 years time they will be dead, and who is going to be in the grandstands then? We're missing the young people, and we have to ask them what they really want to hear. Do they really want to sit in a grandstand being deaf after one hour or do they want something else? Maybe the sound is nothing for them.

"The message has to be a completely different one. In the old days, the more sound, the quicker the car – this was the image we had in our head. But people change. We in motor sport have to take care of that. Also there's the fact that every race track is surrounded by an environment, with neighbours who don't want noise – and you in England know that better than anyone."

So noisy racing engines are an irrelevance in the modern age, apparently. Care to write in on that one? We await your letters.

Audi Sport often projects an austere image and it is personified in the form of the man in charge: Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. All of Audi's top hierarchy seem to be engineering doctors ("they're not medical ones!" McNish helpfully quips). The result is a team that goes racing with cold, clinical efficiency.

So I'm surprised to find that in person Dr Ullrich is warm and quick to smile. We ➤➤➤

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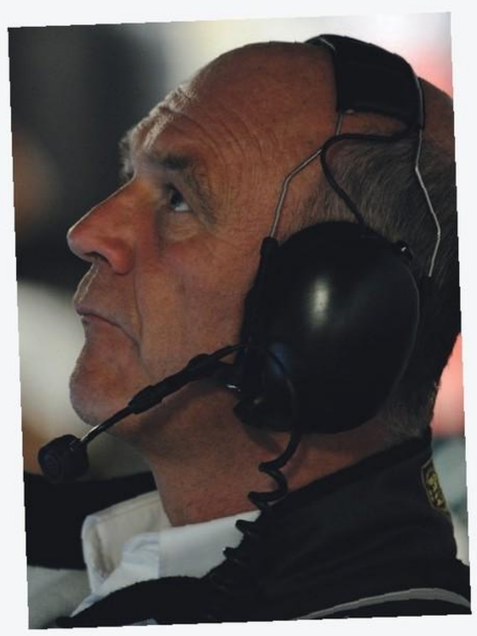


Lid and 'shark fin' have made for a very different Audi. Sadly, menacing black livery will be replaced

speak on the opening day of the Sebring test. Outside, two R18s are lapping hard: one sprints in and out of the pits as the team works on set-up programmes, the other completes race stints. Everything is calm and on schedule, and Dr Ullrich is relaxed, happy to talk, and despite all the years of success in sports car racing, keyed up to deliver Audi a 10th Le Mans victory.

"It is a completely new challenge every year and the more competitive you have been the more you want to continue to show it," he says, speaking with slow and thoughtful purpose. "With the new rules it is a new era. With the downsizing of the engines a step has been made that is also relevant to road car development. The new cars have to be far more aerodynamically efficient to be fast with these smaller engines, and for us it was very important to be a part of this new era."

Dr Ullrich gives examples of Le Mans racing feeding into road cars: the use of direct injection in the R8 and how 90 per cent of parent company VW's fleet now features such engines; the transformation of diesel technology into the dominant power in sports car racing that has given these engines a "sporty touch" they have never had before.



Le Mans has been good for Audi in less expected ways. "Every year a German magazine runs a poll of its readers to vote for the best cars of the year, and they also have questions like which car manufacturer is the most successful in racing," smiles Dr Ullrich. "We managed, with never being in Formula 1, to at least be at the level of Mercedes and BMW in the minds of the people."

So Audi doesn't need F1? "We haven't up to now. We have always decided not to do it because the technology in the rulebook of F1 never had relevance to our road car development and our customers. Therefore it makes no sense."

"The new cars have to be more aero efficient"

DR WOLFGANG ULLRICH

But as we've already learnt, Audi played a part in the formation of F1's new smaller-engine rules. Grand Prix racing is about to become more relevant to VW, so will Audi take the plunge? The sports boss remains non-committal. "It depends very much on what is going to come. At present I think we are exactly right with what we are doing: the mix of sports prototypes and the DTM."

He is enthusiastic about the new Intercontinental Le Mans Cup, a seven-round World Championship in all but name that includes the 24 Hours itself. The Sebring 12 Hours marked the first round. "This was really impressive, eh?" he says. Most people at Sebring agreed that the FIA should grant the series world title status, because with major manufacturer interest in both prototypes and GTs it deserves it. Plus the ILMC, the clumsiest motor racing acronym yet, will be meaningless to the outside world. But Dr Ullrich is cautious.

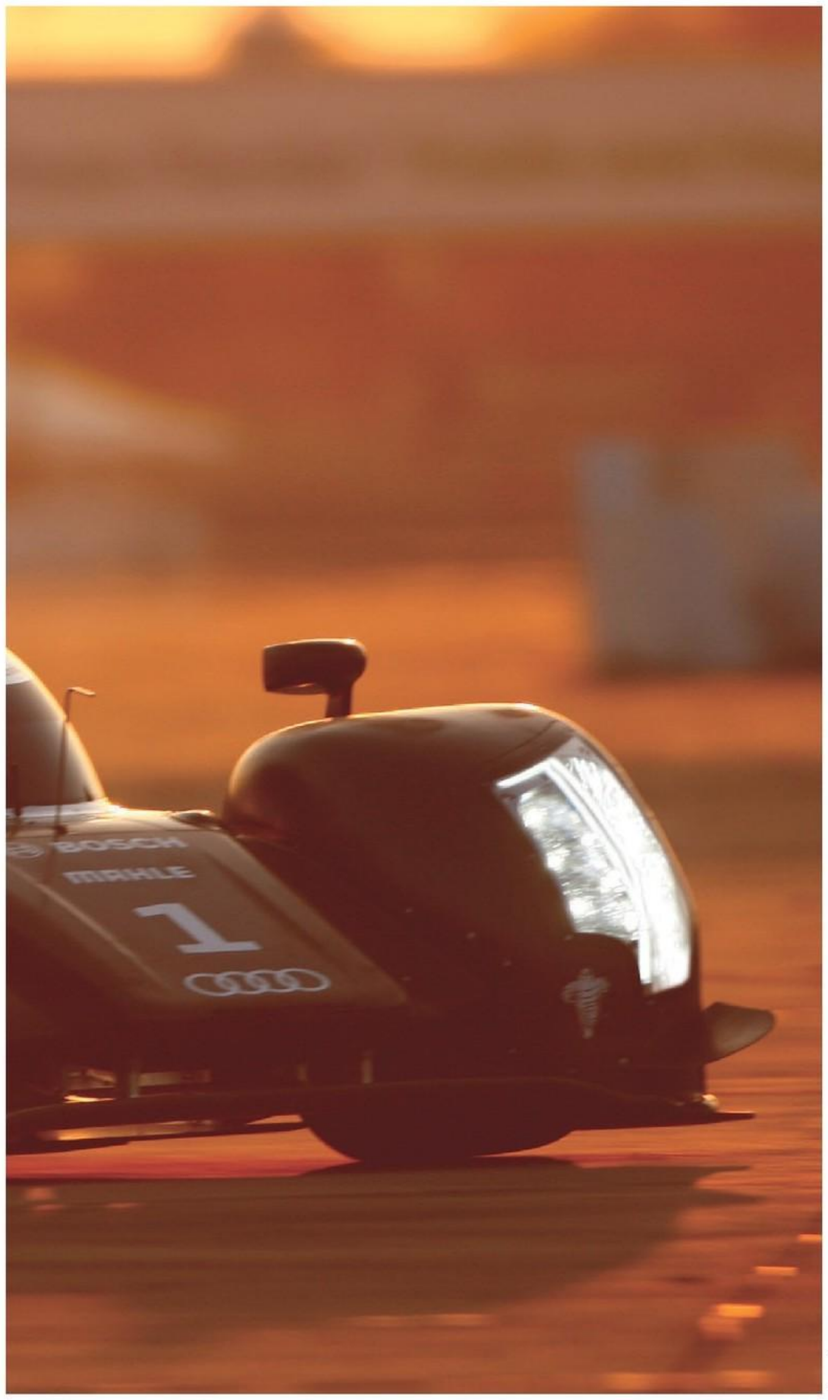
"This is a point that has to be clarified. Only the FIA can give this name to a championship and today it follows only an ACO rulebook. But whenever you go into an FIA championship they will put their hand on it and they will start to steal it, and you never know whether it will go in the right direction. Therefore, I think we should give the ILMC a chance to position itself in the motor sport world, then we can see. But I think we shouldn't push too hard. If you try to make two steps instead of one you sometimes make three steps back."

His wariness of the FIA is obvious, and although he doesn't mention him by name, Dr Ullrich was clearly no fan of former FIA president Max Mosley – as his answer to a question about his dialogue with Mosley's successor, Jean Todt, suggests.

"There are dialogues, ongoing dialogues about championships within the FIA, what the FIA is going to plan, what the FIA thinks the manufacturers want to do. But I think we need to stabilise the relationship between the manufacturers and the FIA, which has not been in a good shape. There is quite some improvement to be done. I'm hopeful that we can improve now with new, responsible people. It's a good chance for motor sport, but I think there have been some chances given away in the last years."

Back to Le Mans. We are in the middle, or perhaps still only at the beginning of, a great era for the 24 Hours. Audi's rivalry with Peugeot is as intense as any in the race's great past. Dr Ullrich describes it as "thrilling".

"Working at a very high level of competition is something we like. We all know the stronger the competition, the more perfect you have to be. You must always look intensely and clearly at what the others are doing, but you must take your own route because you can only beat people with your own strengths – not with the



Audi

strengths you see in others. That's not the way. We have seen with Peugeot when they came for the first two years they just tried to see how we did it. Now you see they are through this phase, they have built a base and they work to their own ideas, as we do."

"Those bastards!" laughs McNish when quizzed about the rivalry with Peugeot. "No, I've been very lucky. I was there at the end of the 1990s during the big bubble [of manufacturer involvement], then it had a bit of a lull in terms of competition from others. But since 2007 with Peugeot in Europe and Le Mans, and also Porsche and Acura over here in America, the mentality and the racing has been superb. It's been hard-edged. On the circuit, there have been times with rivals when there wasn't a lot of love lost and we had some big, terse discussions. But there was still that element of respect, going both ways.

"It's hard and we have to fight for every inch of Tarmac. But we're also not 18 any more, trying to make a name. I think that's important, that we're established as drivers. We've got to a point where we know what the risk is and also what huge accidents are. So we'll push it to the limit – but we'll give just the right amount."

The rivalry has just stepped up a notch, as we prepare for a new era to begin on June 11/12. Audi vs Peugeot, the balance between speed and efficiency, the edgy respect between the world's greatest sports car racers… It's a recipe for a true classic.



DPPI

IT'S (NOT) ALL IN THE NAME

Smarting from last year's debacle, Peugeot has changed everything about its Le Mans challenger – except the race-winning designation

BY GARY WATKINS

The name is the same and the family resemblance is there for all to see. Yet that is where the similarities end between the original Peugeot 908 HDi and the second-generation turbodiesel coupé that will carry the French manufacturer's hopes in the Le Mans 24 Hours this June.

It's not just that the 2011 908 HDi is an all-new car which, according to the launch rhetoric, carries over nothing from the original turbodiesel bar its windscreen wiper. That catchy PR hook may or may not be true, yet the new car is different in its very concept, according to Peugeot Sport technical director Bruno Famin.

"Be careful," he warns. "The cars look similar, but the aerodynamics work with what you don't see. They have nothing to do with each other in terms of the overall aero concept."

Famin argues that they can't be, pointing out that new downsized engine regulations for 2011 have robbed LMP1 prototypes, both diesel and petrol-powered cars, of approximately 150bhp.

"The aerodynamic set-up is completely different to before," he says. "The car has to have less drag, otherwise it would be stuck in a straight line."

The latest 908 is clearly a low-downforce car designed to fly down the four 200mph-plus stretches of the 8.47-mile Circuit de la Sarthe. That much was plain to see on its debut (above) in the Sebring 12 Hours in March, the opening round of the ➤➤➤

BACKTRACK: 2009

PEUGEOT ALMOST PERFECT

Embarrassing pit crash aside, the 908s finally got the better of Audi



Nicolas Cousseau/ACO

IN ITS THIRD YEAR OF competing for outright victory at Le Mans with a diesel, Peugeot finally beat the Audis fair and square in 2009.

Audi was now running its R15, and not only was it slower than the Peugeot 908s, it was less reliable too.

In qualifying the 908s did not have such a convincing advantage as the year before, but all four cars still qualified in the top five places, with only the Audi of Allan McNish, Tom Kristensen and Rinaldo Capello able to split them by landing second on the grid.

In the race it wasn't all plain sailing for the French make, though, as early on it released Pedro Lamy's car from its pit box into the path of the sister 908 run by the Pescarolo team. The new R15, however, was plagued with fuel pressure problems, small niggling failures and set-up issues that led to understeer. Peugeot needed no further invitation and the 908 of David Brabham, Marc Gené and Alexander Wurz finished a lap ahead of the second-placed, all-French 908 of Franck Montagny, Sébastien Bourdais and Stéphane Sarrazin. McNish, Kristensen and Capello had to settle for the final step on the podium.

"They drove without mistakes and the car was perfect," said Peugeot Sport director Olivier Quesnel of the winners. "We were here as challengers and our mission was to topple the favourites. And that is exactly what we did. It was a huge challenge and I am so proud of this truly magnificent team. I really sensed that the public wanted this victory for us."

DPPI

Intercontinental Le Mans Cup. The car lacked the poise of the original 908 – and for that matter the old Audi R15 Plus – through the Florida airfield circuit's fast corners.

Peugeot's focus on maximising straightline speed was evident at Sebring, even though it wasn't using the low-drag 'snowplough' front end seen in testing on the new 908 and likely to be brought into play at Le Mans. It experimented running without a rear-deck gurney – in layman's terms, a flap on the back of the engine cover – through race week. Only as qualifying approached did the Peugeot Sport team change its mind and fit an aero component that most engineers regard as *de rigueur* for a track like Sebring.

Even so, the 908s were still light on downforce, so much so that the two cars were able to run the softest Michelin tyre throughout the 12 Hours. Audi, like Peugeot in previous years, ran the medium compound during the day before switching to soft rubber when temperatures fell during the hours of darkness.

The new Peugeot has been clocked at more than 330km/h (205mph) on the long Mistral Straight at Paul Ricard during an endurance simulation that finished just as the Le Mans Series field was arriving at the track for the following weekend's race. That figure puts the top speed of the new Peugeot somewhere in the region of 10km/h (6mph) faster than its predecessor.

All Famin will say is that the new 908 "is much lower downforce than the previous car" and that the "aerodynamic compromise is different to before".

PEUGEOT DRIVER LINE-UP

No.7 ALEXANDER WURZ, MARC GENE, ANTHONY DAVIDSON
No.8 NICOLAS MINASSIAN, STEPHANE SARRAZIN, FRANCK MONTAGNY
No.9 SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS, PEDRO LAMY, SIMON PAGENAUD

The Peugeot drivers are a little more forthcoming on the subject. Marc Gené, winner at Le Mans with the marque in 2009, reckons the new car isn't the same "joy to drive" as the first 908. "You feel the lack of power and the lack of downforce immediately," he says. "This one is definitely quite different to drive."

The Peugeot is clearly not the conservative take on the new 2011 rulebook that some observers first postulated when images of the car testing emerged in the autumn. At least in terms of the chassis.

The all-new engine is less of a departure. In its 5.5-litre V12, Peugeot "had an engine that was a reference in the category", claims Famin.

"There was no question of setting it aside and starting from scratch," says Peugeot Sport's technical boss, who calls the 90-degree 3.7-litre V8 a "smaller version" of the V12.

The 2011 908 was conceived as diesel-electric hybrid running energy-retrieval technology, or KERS in Formula 1 parlance. It emerged that the new car was not in hybrid-specification ➤➤➤



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as it began its test programme in the second half of last year, but it wasn't until the launch of its 2011 contender in February that Peugeot confirmed it would be racing at Le Mans as a pure turbodiesel this year.

That decision had in fact been made in the immediate aftermath of Peugeot's failure to win the 24 Hours last June.

"After what happened at Le Mans last year [when engine failures put out three of the four 908s], the board asked us to try to do the maximum to win again," says Peugeot Sport boss Olivier Quesnel. "That is why we will not run as a hybrid."

Quesnel suggests that running an energy-retrieval system could have been "an extra complication for nothing", pointing out that his team "can't do everything".

"A hybrid is only interesting," he adds, "if you are sure you will be more competitive, and I am not sure."

The hybrid project is still very much on the stocks and a car, dubbed the 908HYbrid 4, was unveiled at the Geneva motor show in March alongside Peugeot's first hybrid production car. The 908HYbrid 4 is believed to have already tested, but Peugeot has decided against giving the car a public airing at the Le Mans Test Day on April 24.

"We have time to do a hybrid later, I think for 2012," says Quesnel, though he hasn't ruled out racing the car later this year in ILMC events.

The decision not to run as a hybrid at Le Mans this year probably explains why Peugeot has confused the world by keeping the 908 name for an all-new car. Quesnel had hinted during 2010 that the 90X codename of the 2011 challenger was likely to be retained when the car started racing. But the 'X' stood for experimental, a reference to the hybrid system.

The marketing department came up with the idea to retain the 908 badges, according to Quesnel. Xavier Peugeot, the company's director of marketing and communications, explained that the 908 had "become the standard bearer for the entire range".

It's not the first time Peugeot has got into a bit of pickle over the nomenclature of one of its prototypes. It replaced the original 905 halfway through its first full season in 1991 with the 905 Evo 1 bis. This car, built around the same monocoque as the original, quickly became known for simplicity's sake as the 905B.

Quesnel admits that the world will probably come to refer to this year's car as the 908 '2' or something similar. Whether the marketing men kick up a fuss will probably depend on whether Peugeot Sport has got its sums right. If the second-generation Peugeot 908 HDi emulates the 905B and wins the Le Mans 24 Hours a couple of times, they can have no complaints.



Aston Martin

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT...

Without the diesel option, Aston Martin has to find the clever route to be on a par with the big boys. And convention isn't on the menu

BY ED FOSTER

There was a hushed silence as Aston Martin chairman David Richards helped pull the cover off the 2011 AMR-One in February. There had been rumours that the new Aston Martin would be a bit different, but what greeted the 50-strong crowd was more than that. It was radical.

In recent years Aston Martin's Le Mans cars have followed conventional thinking. Unfortunately, its rivals have followed a less conventional and hugely successful route to conquering the race. In 2008 – when Aston returned to the top prototype class for the first time since the AMR1 in 1989 – it entered a V12 petrol car when the leading Audi and Peugeot teams were using turbodiesels. Fourth place in '09 and sixth last year were fine results, but on a vastly smaller budget than the giants from Germany and France, and armed with a heavily modified Lola coupé, Aston was never in with a hope of victory.

Of course, Aston had nothing even vaguely resembling a diesel in its road car line-up, but despite performance balancing promises from Le Mans organiser the ACO, the petrol V12 was outclassed.



Work continues on the AMR-One, which broke cover late and was publicly put through its paces at Paul Ricard in April

DPPI

Diesel is still irrelevant to Aston Martin in 2011 so good old gasoline must remain the source of power. The team only committed to the campaign on the back of new promises of equalisation, but even if the ACO has got its sums right, it was clear a new approach would be required to take on Audi and Peugeot – especially as the budget deficit between those two and the British make remains very much unchanged. Aston Martin has to be clever.

So what Richards pulled the cover off was an open-top prototype the like of which we've never seen before, powered by an inline six-cylinder turbocharged engine. Intriguing – although Audi's engine guru Dr Ulrich Baretzky has hardly sat on the fence in his reaction. "Incomprehensible" was his description of this choice when we quizzed him (see page 53).

To make the challenge even greater for Aston Martin, the go-ahead on the new car came incredibly late. As team principal George Howard-Chappell explains: "We needed to get all our ducks in a row in terms of sponsors, drivers and funding, and once that was sorted we didn't press the button until we got assurances from the ACO that Article 19 was going to happen." Article 19 being that all-important balancing of engine performance.

The AMR-One only ran for the first time (three days of testing at Snetterton) three weeks before its race debut, the Le Mans Series opener at Paul Ricard on April 3. That was very much a public test session, during which the car was five seconds off the pace. As Le Mans preparations go, it's as unconventional as the car.

Motor Sport visited Aston Martin's Gaydon base to talk to Howard-Chappell before the car had turned a wheel. As usual he was friendly, but unsurprisingly he seemed distracted. He had a few things on his mind, as he explained some of the thinking behind the AMR-One concept. "It's a really complex subject," he says after closing the door to his office. "If you went round the constructors and asked 'how did you make that decision?' 90 per cent of them would have done an aerodynamic study of an open and a closed design with either CFD or a wind tunnel, and then made a comparison between the two.

"The quality of that experiment is going to largely determine the decision made, but the crucial thing is that what's assessed is not going to be the same at every place. Everything is interactive and it's unlikely… in fact, I guarantee no one will come up with the same answer.

"In our case the comparison between the two showed a slight advantage for the closed top. However, that's just the aerodynamics. There are so many other aspects. You'll have a slightly higher centre of gravity with a closed car, but it will be slightly stiffer because it's a closed section. There are also issues with visibility, which are very important, and with ventilation.

"For smaller teams like us you have to think, 'if we chose an open car, would we have more time to spend improving the rest of the car if we didn't have to think about the screen, wiper, ventilation and doors? Could we overcome the slight aero advantage?' Maybe we can."

But what of driver changes, which are easier in an open car than with a closed cockpit? As discussed in the Audi R18 story, driver changes are no longer the limiting factor when it comes to pitstops as only two mechanics can change tyres at once, so that benefit is gone. "That's if the race goes according to plan," counters

Howard-Chappell. "It doesn't always work out like that, and if things aren't going to plan you'll struggle to change the driver and fuel in time if you're in a closed car."

There have been rumours that Aston has come up with a new 'trick' aero idea. Whatever the team has found, it hasn't been designed via a wind tunnel. Similar to Nick Wirth's Acura/HPD prototypes and his Virgin F1 cars, the AMR-One has been created in cyberspace using Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD). "We do something slightly different to what Nick does, though," says Howard-Chappell. "We have a full-scale testing technique that compliments our CFD, whereas I think he tends to take his CFD result and go straight to the circuit." So does this 'full-scale testing technique' involve a wind tunnel? Howard-Chappell is tight-lipped: "It's the actual car and I'm not going to say more than that." Whatever it is, he believes it's produced some interesting results.

"It's really difficult, because we believe there are some unique things on the car in the way we've approached it. But we're not about to advertise them to people in a magazine! That's not in our interests and we'd never get our rivals doing that either." He stops and looks patiently at me. Next question!

So what has the team come up with? It's a genuine secret. In our May issue, however, Delta Motorsport technical director Nick Carpenter gave us some insight into what might be going on. "They've pulled the splitter exit further back, so the air is exiting just forward of the rear wheels – that's going to generate an awful lot of front downforce," he said.

Aerodynamicists, designers, engineers, drivers, the press – we'll all be keeping a close eye on the team to try to fathom what Aston has discovered when we get to La Sarthe.

The next big talking point is the engine. Under new rules engine sizes have been cut this year, meaning Aston has finally turned its back on the classic V12. Thanks to the importance of reducing drag, the engine had to be neatly packaged yet still produce the required power. Enter the 2-litre turbocharged inline six.

"This is where we have differed a bit from conventional thinking," explains Howard-Chappell. "The reason for that is when you take a car like this, you don't have any packaging issues in terms of length. We have gone for the inline six because it's a very slim engine, it's light and when we are looking at the sort of output we've got it works really well with a six-cylinder."

ASTON MARTIN DRIVER LINE-UP

No.007 DARREN TURNER, STEFAN MUCKE, CHRISTIAN KLIEN
No.009 ADRIAN FERNANDEZ, ANDY MEYRICK, HAROLD PRIMAT

As mentioned earlier, Baretzky isn't a fan of the choice. According to the Audi engine man, a four-cylinder turbocharged unit would have been the way to go, and he reckons an inline six will produce calamitous torsional vibrations.

As usual, Howard-Chappell gives little away when I – very tentatively – pass the message on. "Everyone's entitled to their opinion, aren't they? That's absolutely fine – that's his opinion. There are no such problems, we've measured it and it's fine. We believe that engine is our best solution and the one that gives us the most potential. We stand by that."

A turbocharged engine will offer a new challenge to Aston's regular drivers who are used to a V12 with plenty of torque. "The engine does feel down on power because of the new regulations," works driver Darren Turner tells me at Paul Ricard as he prepares for what would become a six-hour test session. "It's a very different feeling from the V12, which had *masses* of torque. Even though we're not running at anywhere near our full potential you can still tell.

"I haven't got a huge amount of experience driving turbos and it's just something you have to adapt to. It's a different driving style and throttle application. You obviously notice it more in the corners because you have to minimise when the turbo kicks in and what effect it has on the car's balance."



LAT

"The turbo is just something you have to adapt to"

DARREN TURNER

The engine may well be the biggest challenge Aston Martin is facing this year as it is entirely new. The V12 was taken out of existing production cars and modified for racing. It was a proven entity. Running reliably for 24 hours straight out of the box is asking a lot.

"Of course we're worried about the engine," Howard-Chappell admits. "We started the programme very late and we haven't had the development time we'd have liked, but we're confident that with everyone's effort we'll arrive at a good solution. It's just a question of when." I duly ask when. "Le Castellet [the Paul Ricard race] will be very much a test, then we have the Le Mans test [April 24] and the Spa 1000Kms [May 5-7]. By then we should be in reasonable shape, but we don't believe we'll be on power with the diesels unless there has been an adjustment by then. We'll have to wait and see."

The ongoing adjustments to the petrol and diesel regulations are exactly that – ongoing. Baretzky is adamant that you could win Le Mans in a petrol car if it was properly funded and prepared. "The counter-argument to that," says Howard-Chappell, "is that if you think there's more potential currently in the petrol rules, why don't you develop a petrol car?" The editor put that exact question to the Audi engine man, and as you might already have read, he didn't get much of a reply.

Will the engine perform and stay reliable? Is sticking to petrol the right option? Will the ACO peg the diesels back enough? Only time will tell. Aston's 'test' session at Le Castellet threw up various problems, most of which were to do with a misfire, but little can be taken from that. It's early days and it was brave – but probably unavoidable – to test so publicly in a race.

Whatever Aston Martin learnt at Paul Ricard, the team must have returned to Gaydon with an 'action list' that stretched to the M40.

The challenge for 2011 is huge, but of course Aston Martin is looking far beyond this year with the ambitious concept of this car. The manufacturer wants to win Le Mans and its determination should not be underestimated. Audi works driver Allan McNish commented in his recent *Motor Sport* audio podcast, "you mustn't forget that George Howard-Chappell knows how to build a very good sports car". That he does, and coupled with a strong driver line-up and one of the most hard-working teams in the sports car paddock, you can't write them off.

"It's always hard to tell who your competitors will be," says Howard-Chappell as I leave Gaydon. "To be honest, I really don't know. I always say that's the whole point of the sport. When people come with new cars, new line-ups and new teams you don't know what's going to happen – and that's the great joy of it. If you knew the answer you wouldn't need to go racing, would you?"

Aston Martin is beginning a new chapter in its against-the-odds quest to catch Audi and Peugeot. It's going to be an adventure.

BACKTRACK: 2009

ASTON'S OUTRIGHT ATTACK

The British marque ticked a box when it stepped up full-time from GT1

ASTON MARTIN RETURNED TO LE Mans with a full-blown works bid for outright victory in 2009 after a 20-year hiatus, armed with a petrol Lola-Aston Martin LMP1 car.

Its chances of beating the Audi and Peugeot oil-burners were slim, though, due to the speed advantage they appeared to hold. Not to mention the fact that the Aston Le Mans programme was only given the go-ahead six months before the race. Unsurprisingly, in qualifying the two 6-litre V12 Astons were eighth and ninth, over four seconds off pole position.

Come the race, however, and various problems for the well-funded Audi and Peugeot teams allowed the 007 Aston driven by Jan Charouz, Tomáš Enge and Stefan Mücke to quickly climb up the order. The gorgeous-sounding V12 may not have been quite on the pace of the eerily silent diesels,



but it encountered few problems.

In the second half of the race the drivers were told to look after the V12, which was on the edge of its durability because of the amount of power the team had eked out of it. Thankfully it finished a very respectable fourth (and first of the petrol-powered cars, left), just two laps down on the third-placed Audi of McNish, Kristensen and Capello.

"We exceeded all our expectations and I am absolutely delighted," said the chairman of Prodrive and Aston Martin, David Richards. "We came here with modest expectations, but once again Aston has punched above its weight and this is a fantastic achievement for everyone involved."

Aston Martin went on to win the 2009 Le Mans Series, 50 years after it had won the World Sportscar Championship with the muscular DBR1.



LAT

2011 LIEGE ROME LIEGE

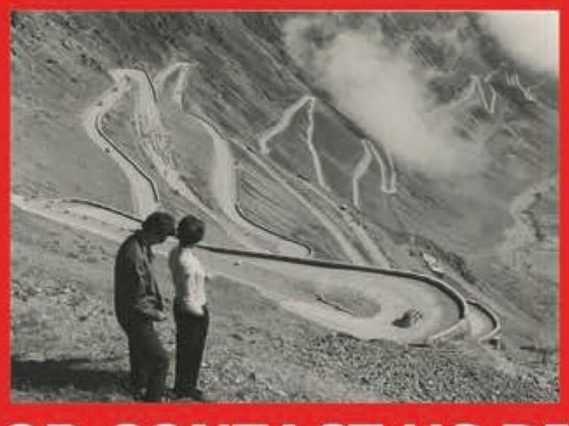
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Privateers prepare to step on the gas

Question marks over the new Aston could leave Pescarolo and Rebellion vying for top petrol honours

ONE IS COMING BACK TO TRY TO CLAIM WHAT seemingly became its rightful place as the top privateer. The other is stepping up for its fourth season in the prototype ranks with a works Toyota engine and big ambitions. The fight between Pescarolo Team and Rebellion Racing for petrol honours behind the turbodiesels could provide one of the most intriguing battles at Le Mans 2011.

The team that bears the name of Le Mans legend Henri Pescarolo returns after a year's hiatus, with the man himself back at the helm. The name has changed, from Pescarolo Sport to Pescarolo Team, but the squad is very much the same one that between 2000 and '09 notched up three podiums and finished in the top 10 every year.

Pescarolo fields one of its eponymous 01 chassis with a restricted 'grandfathered' 5-litre Judd V10 for team old boys Emmanuel Collard and Christophe Tinseau and newcomer Julien Jousse (left with Pescarolo, after winning the LMS opener at Paul Ricard). The crew, including engineer Claude Galopin, is to all intents and purposes the same group that accrued those previous successes.

The team's return is an amazing story of philanthropy. The assets of the organisation that its founder had been forced to sell over the winter of 2008/09 were purchased by Jacques Nicolet, boss of the Pescarolo-equipped OAK Racing team, and Jöel Rivière, who runs an upmarket track-day company. Then they were handed back to Henri Pescarolo on an open-ended loan.

Pescarolo, the most vocal critic of rules generally reckoned to favour the turbodiesels over petrol-powered machinery, insists he's "not back for one year only". He has plans to build a new car, more likely in 2013 than '12, and promises that if there's a level playing field, he will "fight with the factories".

The Rebellion squad, formerly Speedy Sebah, is a Swiss-funded, British-run organisation that has landed a supply of a new Toyota LMP1 V8 for its fleet of Lola LMP1 coupés. Rebellion has to pay for the factory-built engines, but the deal is a coup nonetheless for a team bidding to become the top privateer not only at the 24 Hours but also in the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup.

Team boss Bart Hayden, who took charge after the death of father Hugh over the winter, describes working with Toyota as a "real privilege". The target for Le Mans, he says, is "to pitch ourselves against Aston Martin and the other top petrol teams like Pescarolo and hopefully come out on top".

In pursuit of that aim, Hayden's team has expanded and undergone a re-organisation for 2011. A bolstering of its engineering staff has included bringing in former Williams and McLaren Formula 1 race engineer James Robinson.

Rebellion Racing has already shown its pace, claiming pole position for the LMS opener at Paul Ricard (below), but there is more to follow. A new aero package from Lola was due to come on stream at the Le Mans Test Day at the end of April. *Gary Watkins* >>>



DPPI



Richard Prince

The GTs looking to right a wrong

BMW and Chevrolet floundered at Le Mans last year, but now they should be right in the frame for GTE honours

CHEVROLET AND BMW, THE TWO FULL FACTORY operations contesting the renamed GTE category at the 24 Hours, each have something to prove this year. Chevy should have won a class then known as GT2 in 2010, while BMW was frankly nowhere. A desire to right the wrongs of last year at least in part explains why both manufacturers ramped up their programmes over the winter.

Le Mans 2010 was both a high and low for the Pratt & Miller Chevy factory squad, five times a winner in GT1 at the 24 Hours. The Corvette C6.R, racing on the Circuit de la Sarthe for the first time, had a clear edge on rival machinery from Ferrari and Porsche, but ultimately missed out on a class victory courtesy of an engine problem – related to cam timing – which put both cars out.

The 'Vettes flew down the straights at Le Mans, to the extent that Corvette Racing admitted its poor pace in the American Le Mans Series was the result of a lack of downforce. There's a new aero configuration for 2011, but Corvette stalwart Oliver Gavin believes that the car (left) retains its advantage from last year.

"We have looked for more downforce over the winter, but we think we can get the car back to where it was in terms of straightline speed," says Gavin. "Making sure the car is strong at Le Mans is still a big focus of the team."

Gavin reckons the BMW will be strong in a straight line at Le Mans, at least on the evidence of the Sebring 12 Hours in March (below), a race in which Bimmer claimed a 1-2 victory.

"If there was one car we couldn't keep up with in the tow it was the BMW," he explains. "They have clearly worked super-hard over the winter."

Gavin is right there. BMW Motorsport has a new version of the V8-powered M3, the result of natural development and revisions to the rules, to be run by the Rahal team in the ALMS and Schnitzer in Europe and the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup.

Three-time World Touring Car Champion Andy Priaulx, back at Le Mans for the second time, isn't so sure about Gavin's predictions.

"It's difficult to judge before we get to the Test Day (in April) because a car that is good for the ALMS circuits isn't necessarily good for Le Mans," he says. "It's a big car, and that frontal area takes its toll at high speed. I'm not sure we are going to get close to the Corvettes on the straights."

The BMWs should be more competitive than last year. Its 2010 Le Mans campaign was very much a toe-in-the-water affair: the European-spec version of the car was late and Schnitzer's focus for the first half of 2010 was the Nürburgring 24 Hours. Worse still, it was handed a smaller-diameter air restrictor ahead of the 24 Hours. *Gary Watkins*



BMW

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MONEY GREASED THE WHEELS, BUT TALENT TURNED THEM

Elio de Angelis was more than just a 'rich kid' – he was a naturally talented driver who, on his day, could outperform Senna

BY MIKE DOODSON

Elio de Angelis, whose death from race-track injuries 25 years ago will be commemorated on May 15, is remembered with endearing fondness by almost everyone who knew him during his seven-year Formula 1 career. The eldest son of a wealthy Roman family involved in the construction business, he was dismissed by critics as a *dilettante* in the junior formulae, then joined the Shadow team as a pay-driver for his debut season in 1979 in exchange for a rumoured $25,000 per race. Although de Angelis confounded those early critics, his record of three pole positions and two wins from 108 Grand Prix starts hardly marks him down as a 'great'. But he had a charm and modesty that belied his wealth, together with an incipient talent that deserved respect, however inconsistently it may have blossomed. As this tribute will show, the path to the top of his profession was not exactly strewn with rose petals.

The circumstances of Elio's violent death caused bitter distress within the Brabham team, which had never lost a driver to a mechanical failure before, and caused Gordon Murray, its senior engineer, to consider his future in the sport. The cause of the crash was the loss of the Brabham-BMW's rear wing, which sent it crashing and overturning into a fast corner. The wreck caught fire and the marshals, most of them wearing shorts, were disgracefully slow to assist. It was half an hour before a helicopter arrived and de Angelis – whose external injuries were minor – died in a Marseilles hospital the following day of smoke inhalation. He was 28 years old.

Thirty years ago, when there were only a couple of dozen reporters at a Grand Prix, F1 drivers were comparatively approachable, Elio more than most. With his Brando-esque features, fluffy hair and pastel-coloured sweaters, he could have been mistaken for a professional tennis player, although the odd cigarette hinted otherwise. His gifts included an uncannily good command of the English language, so it was a surprise to discover that he made no attempt to speak German with his long-term girlfriend, the fashion model Ute Kittelberger. This was perhaps a pointer to his reluctance to put an effort into anything that didn't come naturally to him. »»»

From the beginning, he and I had an easy and open friendship. In a conversation recorded on the eve of his first-ever GP, in Buenos Aires in 1979, he said, "You can buy your way into F1. But once your arse is in the metal monocoque, the only person who can help you is yourself."

Elio was the oldest of four children born to Giulio and Giuseppina de Angelis: after him came Roberto, Andrea and Fabiana. Giulio had raced powerboats with some success and owned a Ferrari. He enjoyed taking his sons to watch car races, which gave them a lifelong love of motor sport. Although the boys were allowed to race (all three would win the national karting title), Giulio ruled that only one of them – Elio – would be given an opportunity to take his ambitions further. That way, the business dynasty would have a chance of continuing if the worst should befall the first-born.

This edict evidently gave rise to fraternal resentment, as Elio's long-serving mechanic Nigel Stepney was to discover. "His family – his father and the two brothers – put him under a lot of pressure," says Stepney. "If he was slower in practice, they wanted to know why. If something went wrong on his car, they wanted to know why it hadn't happened to the other one, too. Elio never performed well when they were there, and he used to love racing in America because it was outside their area and he could relax. At least the father understood about the sport, but if Elio was racing anywhere close to Italy, or where the family could come, the brothers were… well, painful."

The boy was certainly gifted, with strong musical and artistic streaks. His talents carried over into motor sport, and by the time he was 18 he had three successful seasons of karting behind him. By the end of 1977, at the age of 19, Elio had won four races in the Italian championship, finished second in the Monaco Formula 3 classic in a Chevron-Toyota funded by his father, and been given two Formula 2 starts in a Chevron-Ferrari run by Giancarlo Minardi's Scuderia Everest.





> "If Gilles had had one more accident, I would've been given his place at Ferrari"

The collaboration with Minardi continued into 1978 but Elio had concluded that the overweight V6 Dino engine was uncompetitive. Sensing that he needed to demonstrate his ability wherever possible, he decided to have another crack at the Monaco F3 race, for which he dug out the year-old Chevron. In a sensational race this calculated gamble paid off with a win in the final from sixth on the grid, even if he took the opportunity to elbow race leader Patrick Gaillard off the road in the process. In those days Italian F3 drivers were treated with suspiciously generous tolerance by the stewards at Monaco: Elio was no exception, and it was decided not to take any action.

There followed a brief flirtation with Ferrari, starting with the test of a sports car intended for Le Mans (nothing came of it) and then an invitation to test an F1 car as a possible temporary replacement for an unwell Gilles Villeneuve (the Canadian quickly recovered). Elio was asked to sign some papers, although it seems not to have been a full-blooded commitment, as he told me a couple of years later.

"The document I signed in Maranello wasn't a full contract, although I was given the opportunity to test with Ferrari. I drove their F1 car on several occasions. Looking back, I think it was just a question of luck I didn't race one of their cars. I came close in 1978: if Gilles had had one more accident, I would've been given his place in the team.

"In Italy, when a team is going through a bad period, there is a tendency to look at the driver before anything else. I realised that my position with Minardi was in danger, and I decided to leave. I spoke to my father about it first and he advised me, 'You can't do it, you have a contract,' but I did. I knew I was taking a risk with my career, but I had to do it because I knew I'd be able to do well with an English team. So I drove one of the ICI F2 cars, and immediately I knew I'd done the right thing. But I have to admit there cannot be many 19-year-old drivers who have quit Ferrari. As I said, it was a matter of luck that it paid off. You're always alone when you make the big decisions of life: now, fortunately, even my father agrees that what I did was right for me."

By the end of '78 the precociously talented Roman had come to the attention of several more F1 teams, including Brabham, with Shadow inviting him to test at Silverstone in September. The first team owner to get the de Angelis signature on a contract, however, was Ken Tyrrell, although he must have known that his new recruit had not done enough in F2 to be sure of obtaining the Superlicence necessary to race in F1. Eventually the CSAI (Italian sporting authority) intervened to ensure a Superlicence was issued, allowing an agreement to be reached with Shadow, supposedly just for the first half of the '79 season.

Still not 21, Elio was firmly on the F1 radar, although the combination of inexperience and Shadow's outdated equipment stood in the way of hard results. Eventually team owner Don Nichols took advantage of the fact that Elio was behind with his payments to push him into a long-term deal as a paid driver. The first eight races still had to be paid for, though, for which Elio had to borrow money from his father. He made sure that those close to him were aware he'd been punctilious about repaying it, which he was eventually able to do from his Lotus earnings. ›››

Only mechanical woes halted a title bid by de Angelis in ’84 Lotus 95T. Above left: the Italian caught F1’s attention with Monaco F3 win in a year-old Chevron (below left). Far left: first GP win came at Austria ’82, when Elio’s Lotus-Ford outlasted faster turbos. Below: Shadow provided an F1 breakthrough in ’79, but was not up to the job





The hurriedly concluded Shadow deal turned out to be legally inconvenient when Colin Chapman, in search of a replacement for Carlos Reutemann, organised a test at Ricard at the end of 1979 in which five young drivers – Elio, Nigel Mansell, Stephen South, Eddie Cheever and Jan Lammers – were invited to take part. Even though Elio was quickest on the day, Chapman favoured the two Brits. But he had recently done a big-money sponsorship deal with the American-born oil trader David Thieme – a self-publicising rascal with seemingly limitless resources – and Thieme liked the idea of employing the debonair de Angelis with his tanned good looks and sophisticated tastes. Chapman could hardly refuse, having already been dropped by long-term sponsor John Player and having rejected an extension of a deal with the Martini & Rossi liquor giant.



De Angelis's victory over Senna at San Marino in '85 did little to win over Lotus. Right: despite their differences, Elio and Mansell became friends

Happy though he was to sign up with Lotus, Elio found himself involved in two High Court actions at about the same time, the first brought on his behalf against Tyrrell, who was ruled to have offered a contract in bad faith, and the other brought against him by Shadow, whose contract Elio had signed in equally bad faith. Chapman generously offered to help resolve the Shadow suit but may not have mentioned that the costs and damages would be deducted from Elio's retainer.

Astutely, Elio persuaded Stepney to join him in the move from Shadow to Lotus. "It was the right choice because we were the same age and both starting our careers," Nigel recalls. "He was a likeable guy because in spite of his wealth he was pretty down to earth. He had gifts that others didn't; he had charisma and style. He was spoiled, of course, and that allowed him to get into areas other drivers couldn't because they didn't have the money to do it, but he could also play the piano beautifully, which is a natural gift. He had a delightful attitude and a natural boyishness that anyone would find attractive.

"His results with Shadow in '79 hadn't been too bad – we'd finished fourth at Watkins Glen in difficult wet/dry circumstances, which was magic. He didn't have to work at his driving; he was naturally gifted. But it wasn't just as a driver that he was talented – he could do other things, like cooking. He wanted to be part of the team, so he'd prepare meals for 12 of us at the factory, using an old stove and ingredients he'd brought from Italy, just to rustle up lunch for the crew. When you'd been treated to something like that, a great relationship was the result. It also got rid of that 'rich kid' image you might have had of him. As did the piano playing…"

The Lotus move would prove to be inspired. Not only did Chapman warm to his new driver, there was an instant bond between Elio and Mario Andretti, who was 18 years older than his new team-mate. "As two Italians together it was almost a father-son relationship," says Stepney. "At races, he and Mario would share a rental car. You don't see anything like that today. Mario really nurtured him. Colin liked Elio's style, too – he was pretty flamboyant himself, of course – and they had a good relationship which fed through the whole team."

I once asked Elio about the tips Mario had passed on to him. "There are lots," he said, "but the one I particularly remember was the advice he gave me about slipstreaming, how to stay in the tow from another car, and how to use it. He was always teaching me something, and I'm still learning, though now from other people too."

On a less happy note, Elio's arrival at Lotus coincided with one of the team's downward cycles. Andretti left at the end of 1980, to be replaced by Mansell, and at first the relationship between the two men – who came from starkly contrasting family backgrounds – was uneasy, although they later came to genuinely friendly terms. In '81 Chapman was sidetracked by the ill-fated 'twin chassis' Lotus 88 project, and then the budget dried up following the dramatic incarceration of David Thieme in Switzerland. It would be Elio who lifted the team from the aftermath of that setback by narrowly beating Keke Rosberg to the line at the Österreichring and winning the 1982 Austrian GP after all the fast turbo cars had expired. Fortunately for Chapman, John Player had just come back on board as a sponsor, and the victory – Lotus's first in four years (and the 150th for the Ford-Cosworth DFV engine) – restored enough of John Player's faith to sustain its substantial sponsorship for several more seasons. Chapman had also secured Renault engines for 1983, although his sudden death in December '82 not only meant he would never see a Lotus-Renault in action, but also raised doubts about the team's ability to survive without him.

Now under the management of Chapman's faithful lieutenant, Peter Warr, Lotus started 1983 with the gruesomely bulky 93T and inconsistent tyres provided by a new supplier, Pirelli. Warr's commendably rapid response to the disaster of the 93T was to snap up Gerard Ducarouge as chief designer. Although the team would build three new cars in one year, by '84 its technical progress had transformed it into the only constructor capable of challenging the red-and-white McLaren-TAG steamroller. Only a string of mechanical failures deprived de Angelis of an opportunity to vie for the title, but Warr wasn't satisfied. He had seen the future, and it was called Ayrton Senna. At the end of '84 he prised the Brazilian rather clumsily out of his obligations to Toleman, and in only his second GP as a Lotus driver, on a soaking wet afternoon at Estoril in April '85, Senna took his Lotus-Renault to a memorable victory.

Ironically, Elio's performance in Portugal that day also deserves to be remembered, as Lotus tyre man Kenny Szymanski points out. "Even though he only took fourth, when he came into the scrutineering bay he told me the right front tyre was going down. When I went to check, sure enough the pressure was half what it should have been. That was a commendable effort, to go the distance with a half-flat tyre, completely overshadowed, of course, by Senna's first win."



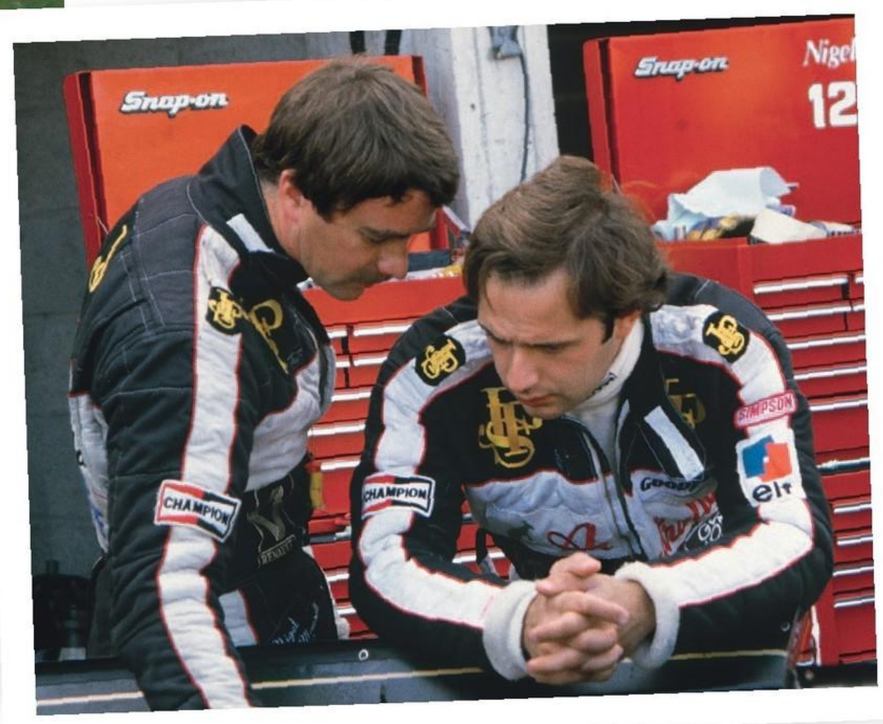
The sheer brilliance of Senna's driving, coupled with the brutal on-track tactics he brought with him from F3, made him the logical star of the team. But de Angelis was also picking up solid points (he'd finished third in Brazil), so when he won the San Marino GP two weeks after Estoril he moved into the championship lead. This second F1 victory, like the first, would not have happened if faster cars hadn't been left by the roadside (out of fuel) or disqualified for being underweight, like race 'winner' Alain Prost's McLaren. But then a solid third place at Monaco left Elio two points ahead in the table. If he felt this entitled him to preference over Senna, however, he was badly mistaken. As he told me later, he was made aware that he had outstayed his welcome – and he was able to pinpoint the day, even the hour, when the relationship ended.

The Jezebel, of course, was none other than Senna, and the venue was a Lotus test session at Ricard, two days after the Monaco race. "I was put on one side by Lotus," he said. "Starting right then, all they could think about was Senna. There had been some criticisms of the way I had been driving, because I'd been more cautious than Ayrton. But when I got to the circuit they allowed me on the track just to do three laps. Imagine, on the day that I was leading the World Championship, I was left to trundle round like some new kid on the team.

"It was that night, when I left the circuit, that I made up my mind to leave Lotus. From that moment on, as far as I was concerned Lotus was a chapter in my career that had been completed. I didn't want to be treated like that ever again."

His sense of rejection was all the more acute because he felt that Senna, for all his undoubted ability and speed, had acted in a fashion that was less than responsible. "I knew from the start that it was going to be a difficult year. I knew he would be a difficult person. I admired his determination, and he is very determined – maybe too much. I felt he found it necessary to show off his ability: even with the success he had with Toleman the previous year, he was desperate to show he had something more. Like the Arabs say, 'It is written'. There is something strong inside his mind: sometimes it is good for him, sometimes it is very bad. Ayrton became a protégé to Peter, almost like a son, his own discovery. But he is very quick, I must say."

There was a feeling at Lotus in 1985 – which Warr never evoked in so many words – that Elio had become something of a plodder, less motivated than he should have been in comparison with his brilliant young team-mate. Elio maintained that he, too, had once indulged in the sort of risks Senna was now taking, and that the time had come to concentrate on consistent points-scoring. "As far as motivation is concerned, I have much more now than when I started," he insisted. "Now I know exactly what I want: I'm not doing this just for the pleasure of driving in F1. That pleasure is what my team-mate has been enjoying."



"I know what I want: I'm not doing this just for the pleasure of driving in F1"

The season did not finish happily. With the McLaren-TAG juggernaut picking up momentum, so Elio's commitment to himself and his team proved increasingly fragile. As the year progressed, Senna hammered home a total of seven pole positions and scored a second win, in Belgium. Only once, in Canada, was Elio able to summon up the will to beat him, which he did with a resounding pole that left Senna powerless to respond. In the race, though, the pole winner was fifth. As if to mark the passing of the baton, Senna, unhappy with the service he was getting from his crew, somehow managed to wangle the transfer of Stepney and two other mechanics from Elio's car to his. At the end of the season, at Kyalami, the Lotus team-mates tangled in the race: "I was so angry," said Elio, "that I almost came to blows with him in the pits afterwards."

Although he had seriously considered retirement, Elio responded enthusiastically to the offer of a place at Brabham for 1986 and a chance to drive Murray's ultra-low-profile BT55. Plagued by an almost horizontal driving position and shortcomings in the lubrication of its 'lie flat' BMW engine, the car was a step too far. In his four outings as a Brabham driver, Elio never completed a race distance. His funeral was attended by hundreds, including none other than a tearful Senna.

So just how talented was de Angelis? Stepney pulls no punches: "Elio sometimes outperformed Senna which not many people could do, certainly not in qualifying, like the time Elio outqualified him in Canada. But in the race, as soon as tyre wear and other factors started to make things difficult, Senna would become stronger in the later stages, as his ability to manage the car came into effect. To maintain any advantage he had over Senna, Elio would be using his car to the maximum and destroying his tyres. Even so he did occasionally outshine Senna, which shows he had the ability, but he wasn't able to demonstrate it on a consistent basis."

Maudlin though it may seem now, Elio had elegantly justified his choice of career to an Italian journalist. "I was concerned with knowing who I was," he declared. "I wanted to have a life of my own, not simply [to be] the product of a certain family or a certain class. You have to build your own life. When you're young, there is no happy medium, there are two distinct sides: black and white. Never any grey. I thought the sport was like that, and I'd be able to express myself within it."

So it would be. Motor racing has never been anything but a harsh discipline. Without it, though, the world would not have heard of the gentle and talented Elio de Angelis. Many of us still miss him. Ⓜ

Silverstone Auctions bids for success

A new auction house has the venue, the people and a fast-growing client base to ensure it quickly becomes established





We're sure that many of you could list at least five classic car auction houses around the world – there are certainly plenty of them. However, there's a new arrival with a name all of you will recognise. Silverstone Auctions is the latest company to enter the bullring of auction houses, but this one's just a little bit different. Silverstone Auctions will be based in the Northamptonshire track's new 'Wing' pit complex and run by car dealer Nick Whale in partnership with the world-renowned circuit.

"The building of the new 'Wing' kicked everything off," says Whale, managing director of Silverstone Auctions. "What Silverstone's management realised was that the demand Bernie [Ecclestone] had made in terms of the new building, which was built for the British Grand Prix, meant they now owned something they could turn into a great facility to rent out as an exhibition centre.

"They were looking at all the possibilities this threw up, including an auction facility for classic and modern cars as well as motorbikes and racing cars. The management considered many auction houses, but felt an in-house business would allow Silverstone to capitalise on recent growth in the classic car world. I bring the operational expertise and many years in the automotive industry and, most importantly, a focus on client service and delivering the best possible experience for all parties involved."

The auction business in general has been the same for many years, but Whale is keen to create a company that can stand up to the likes of Bonhams and RM Auctions, two of the best in the business. "I'm only too aware that there are many auction houses already," he admits. "I'm not naïve, but you may ask why are we doing this? I believe that the strong will survive and the weak will struggle. I think we'll be one of the strong ones.

"We're in the middle of the country, in a high-profile location, it has great access and, most importantly, it's the home of British motor racing. Silverstone has great heritage and we want to create an auction company that mirrors the circuit's brand values. It's got to attract the best cars and 'bikes, and because of that we've got all the right people on board."

Ex-H&H and Coys man Guy Loveridge, MotoGP Eurosport commentator and 'bike



New 'Wing' pit complex is home to Silverstone Auctions. Future lots (above) include rare Jaguar E-type and Deep Sanderson racer

expert Toby Moody, experienced auction specialist Will Smith and classic car specialist Paul Campbell have all joined the team alongside newcomer Tim Illston, supercar specialist Mark Hickman, auction specialist and ex-joint managing director of Jordan GP Trevor Foster, motorbike specialist Tony Collins, researcher and well-known production saloon car racer Lionel Abbott and administrator Graham Wood.

"The biggest lever I can pull operating this business is employing the right people," adds Whale. "It's all very well having a fantastic facility, but ultimately that just keeps the rain off. The people make the business. Toby Moody is new to the auction world and he's a great character. He has a distinctive voice and style when he's commentating, and he has *lots* of passion. I've deliberately chosen him as an auctioneer for that exact reason – I don't want some boring traditionalist, I want to break new ground.

"We want to provide the best possible experience and support for our clients, and I think we've started off on the right foot by employing the right people as well as having things like a secure client account and a promise of payment within 14 days. It's the little things that make a difference, like sensible rates [10 per cent buyers premium and five per cent sellers commission]. We're only charging a £250 plus VAT entry fee for cars and £100 plus VAT entry fee for 'bikes. It's fair, honest and transparent, and I think that's important."



"We want to offer clients the best support"

NICK WHALE

News is spreading fast, and having only officially opened for business on March 1 Silverstone Auctions has already consigned several lots. Top of the list as *Motor Sport* closed for press was a very special E-type. The 1961 Jaguar is a Series 1 'flat floor' roadster 'outside bonnet-lock' car, of which only 91 were made. This is chassis number 80 which has been fully restored, so expect – especially this year, the 50th anniversary of the model – the £120-150,000 estimate to be reached with ease.

Other lots of note include a pretty one-off Deep Sanderson 301 Le Mans racer and a BMW Z8 'James Bond specification' car with just 25,000 miles on the clock. The prototype Deep Sanderson, expected to go for between £46-50,000, ran in the 24 Hours in 1963-64 as well as the Spa and Nürburgring races. The car was developed by builder and racer Chris Lawrence, using a rear-mounted Mini engine. Having decided that he wanted to race one at Le Mans, he developed it into a long-distance sports car.

Also key to Silverstone Auctions' success is that it can host sales at some of the country's biggest motor racing events. "We were able to sit down with Silverstone's management and organise the dates," says Whale. "I've deliberately only gone for three in 2011 because I didn't want to run before we could walk. I've also picked events that I think people will relate to. For example, the MotoGP round at Silverstone [June 10-12] is a massively high-profile motorbike event that is second only to the Isle of Man TT in attendance. It's a no-brainer to have a 'bike auction then, hence our event on the Saturday evening.

"If you're looking for a date for your first car auction, you'd have it at an event like the Silverstone Classic [July 22-24]. It's a huge meeting, it ties in with the classic car theme, all the car clubs are there with all the enthusiasts, and everyone's passionate about classic cars. It was an obvious one to target and we are very pleased that Nick Wigley and his team have agreed to us having a sale then."

So will Silverstone Auctions survive and prosper? "I know there is a shortage of classic cars and I know there are plenty of auction houses," says Whale. "But in three or four years time if we could be considered in the same league as Bonhams and RM Auctions then I'd be over the moon. We've got a great facility, a great venue and a superb team of people, so why not?" Ⓜ

FORTHCOMING AUCTIONS

JUNE 11, 5pm MOTOGP MOTORCYCLE SALE
Sale type: Motorcycles/Automobilia
Viewing: June 10, 10am-6pm and June 11, 9am-6pm

JULY 23, 5pm SILVERSTONE CLASSIC SALE
Sale type: Classic Cars/Modern Sports Cars/ Motorcycles/Automobilia
Viewing: July 21, 10am-6pm and July 22, 10am-6pm

NOV 4, 2pm THE WALTER HAYES TROPHY SALE
Sale type: Classic Cars/Modern Sports Cars/Motorcycles
Viewing: Nov 3, 10am-6pm and Nov 4, 9am-12pm

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E-mail: enquiries@silverstoneauctions.com
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Jakob Ebrey



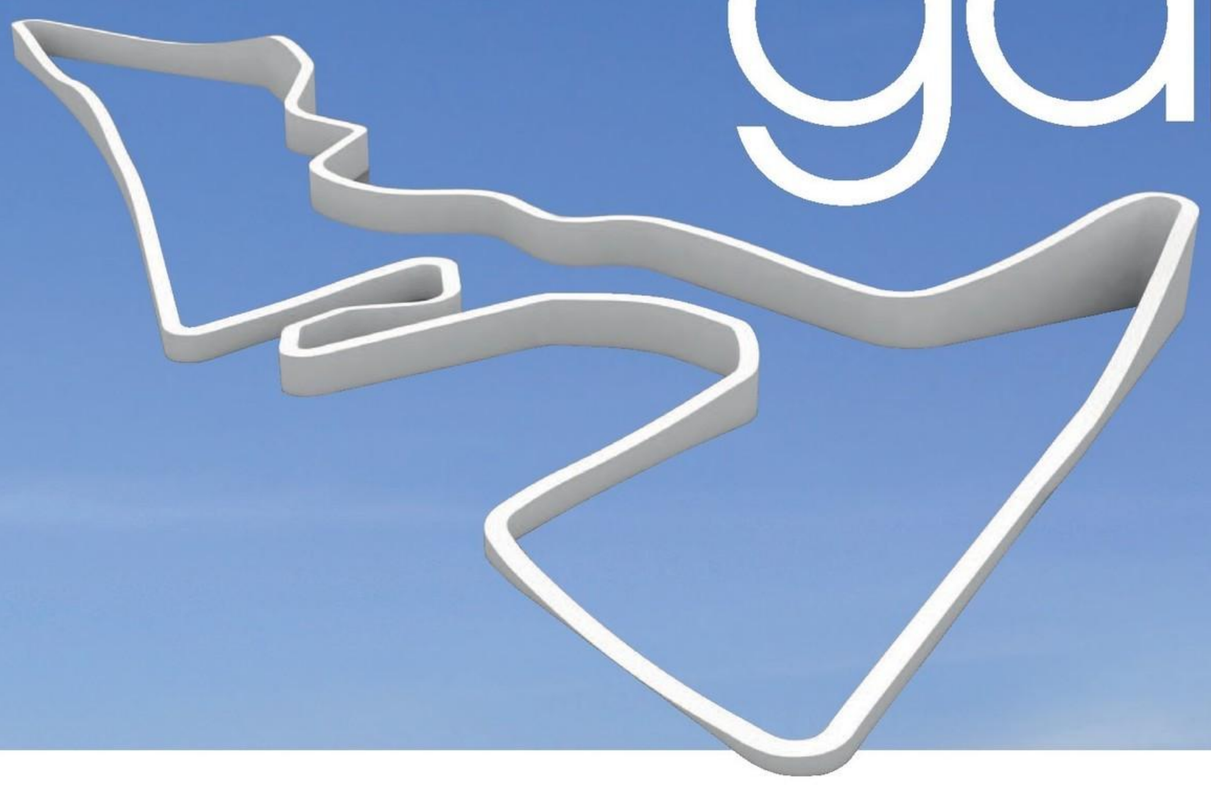
Shutterstock

Getting a Formula 1 race off the ground in the current economic climate is no mean feat. First of all you have to identify a suitable circuit or find the money to build one, which can cost up to (and over) £140 million. Then you need to ensure the race will break even on ticket sales alone since Formula One Management (FOM) keeps all other revenues. Imagine trying to do all that in America, which hasn't hosted F1 since 2007, two years after the Indianapolis tyre debacle when just three teams raced. Now how about picking Austin as the location – a city with no F1 heritage. Race promoter Tavo Hellmund must have something special up his sleeve if he's going to pull this off by summer 2012 when the US Grand Prix returns to the calendar.

Hellmund (top right) looks a little like Jim Carrey and shares the Canadian actor's rapid-fire manner of speaking. When it was announced last May that his company Full Throttle Productions had got a 10-year contract to host the US GP it was treated with scepticism – Hellmund was not well known in F1. Even FIA president Jean Todt described the deal as "just a project" and said it was "far too early to conclude anything". But luckily for Hellmund, the person holding the keys knew him well.

The great Texas gamble


Callie Richmond



Getting F1 back on America's radar is a tough call, but promoter Tavo Hellmund is sure he's about to hit pay-dirt – and Bernie believes in him

BY CHRISTIAN SYLT AND CAROLINE REID

Formula 1 boss Bernie Ecclestone jokes that he has known the 40-year-old Hellmund "since before he was born". His father, Gustavo Hellmund-Rosas, was president of Mexico's GP organising committee when the race returned in 1986 after a 15-year absence. "My dad and Bernie worked on the deal to bring the Grand Prix back," says Hellmund. "He also promoted the Indycar races in Mexico in the early 1980s, and the World Cup in '86."

Hellmund got involved with "all aspects of the company, from ticket taking and sweeping as a kid to the operational side in my late teens and early twenties". He was distracted by the allure of motor racing, however, and crossed the Atlantic to become a gopher at Ecclestone's Brabham F1 team. "I did that so I had an inside track on how F1 worked and what Bernie was doing to grow it into what it is today," says Hellmund. But back then he didn't want to make his name in F1 as a race promoter, dreaming instead of following in the footsteps of Phil Hill and Mario Andretti.

"I started racing as an amateur and did well in America at the lower levels," explains Hellmund, who worked his way up to the Grand National division of NASCAR. "Then I decided to go to England and be an F1 star. I did Formula Ford, Vauxhall Junior and F3. At the same time I couldn't get the events

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Hellmund was on hand when the track build started last December. Left: crucially, he has Bernie's backing

Photos: Full Throttle, Callie Richond & LAT

promotion business out of my system. So I dabbled in promoting events, be it concerts or hot air balloon festivals."

In the early '90s the untimely death of one of Hellmund's friends at the hands of a drunk driver led him to found a campaign called 'Safe and Sober', which involved racing drivers attending schools to educate pupils about wearing a seat belt and not drinking and driving. It grew into a year-round programme called Racing for Education, which was so successful that Hellmund was commended by then-US President George Bush.

Next came race promotion, and in 2004 Full Throttle ran its first 'Texas Racefest' in Austin. This combined a Grand National NASCAR race with a USAC Midget Car meeting, a series that spawned stars such as Jeff Gordon and Tony Stewart.

"Bernie was egging me on, saying 'when are you going to give up trying to be a bloody driver?'" says Hellmund. "He was this wise old sage knowing I wasn't going to get into F1."

A Formula 1 drive might have been beyond Hellmund, but promoting a race was becoming more realistic, with the sport in the middle of a turbulent eight years at Indianapolis. In 2007 Indy severed its ties with F1, and this was the catalyst for Hellmund's bid.

"We started talking hard about Austin two weeks after they announced they weren't going back to Indianapolis," he says. Over the past five years F1's global profile has accelerated, bringing the sport onto the radar of emerging nations such as Abu Dhabi, Singapore and South Korea. Their governments are prepared to foot F1's host fees, using the exposure to drive tourism and put their nations on the sporting map. This fuelled a bidding war that has sent the average race fee soaring to £19m and put F1 out of the reach of many locations. Indianapolis was one of them, giving Hellmund a foot in the door.



Austin will be a Tilke track, but with Hellmund's input

He has a good idea why the Motor Speedway, home to the Indy 500, wasn't right for F1: "Just like you wouldn't try to run NASCAR at Monte Carlo, how do you compete with an institution that has a 100-year head start?"

He makes the point that at most of the circuits visited by F1, the series dominates. But this could never be the case at Indianapolis.

Hellmund adds that the facility itself is crucial to F1's success. "Indianapolis has a permanent structure that you can only modify so much. When you look at the history of Grand Prix racing in America, all the way back to Sebring in the 1950s, the only time there was a permanent facility was at Watkins Glen." Even New York, which has been frequently mooted as a GP location, doesn't have the space to build this kind of F1-dedicated track. Texas does, and this was crucial for Ecclestone.

"Full Throttle are the only people we found in America who are going to build a world-class circuit," says Ecclestone. But it took more than this to get the green light. Hellmund says he "had to convince Bernie that Austin was the right place because he viewed it 25 years ago as a town". It's changed a lot since then. Austin is nicknamed Silicon Hills due to its status as the second most important technological centre in the US behind Silicon Valley. This makes it particularly appealing for F1, and multiple team sponsors – including AMD and AT&T – are located near the city.

With Houston and Dallas under 200 miles away, Austin has a catchment area of 22 million people and a low unemployment rate. It also has hundreds of bars for the twenty-something set, and is best known for its hugely popular South by Southwest music and film festival.

The geographic location is the big pull, though. Hellmund says: "An ideal location is central from both coasts, the closer to Mexico the better because then you start becoming the Grand Prix of the Americas instead of just the United States GP."

> "Austin is a venue that could work for F1"

Andrew Craig, the former chief executive of Champ Car, says: "Austin is in the unusual position of being one of the few major US cities that isn't home to a franchise for any major sport. So a US GP would have reduced competition and high appeal to residents starved of live sports events.

"The Texaco-backed Champ Car race in Houston, which ran until 2007, was successful in attracting high levels of corporate support and boasted full grandstands, and the Indycar race in Fort Worth is one of that series' most successful events. With the right promotion and date, Austin is a venue that could work for F1."

Weather-wise Hellmund says the best time for the GP would be in the autumn, but the date is as yet undecided. He has to be "ready to hold a race in June" – again, no mean feat. »»

With the luxury of space, Hellmund is building a 3.4-mile circuit within 10 miles of both downtown Austin and the city's Bergstrom international airport. The first stages of construction began in December and Hellmund says he is on target. But he adds: "The biggest challenge has been our timeline. We're trying to do a four-year process in 18 months."

Hellmund knows the circuit will be a flagship for F1 in America, so it's crucial that it lives up to expectations. "We've got to provide a venue that has proper entertainment value. It's got to be a good fan experience." As such, many of the track's corners can be viewed from each grandstand seat and, as a former driver himself, Hellmund has strived to ensure the circuit is challenging.

"We've taken four or five corners we like from other circuits and used them as a pattern for certain sections of our track," he says. "There's a corner from Turkey, a couple from Silverstone and one from Hockenheim." The track also has a total elevation change of 133ft and, in common with three other current F1 races – Istanbul, Abu Dhabi and Brazil – it will run in an anti-clockwise direction.

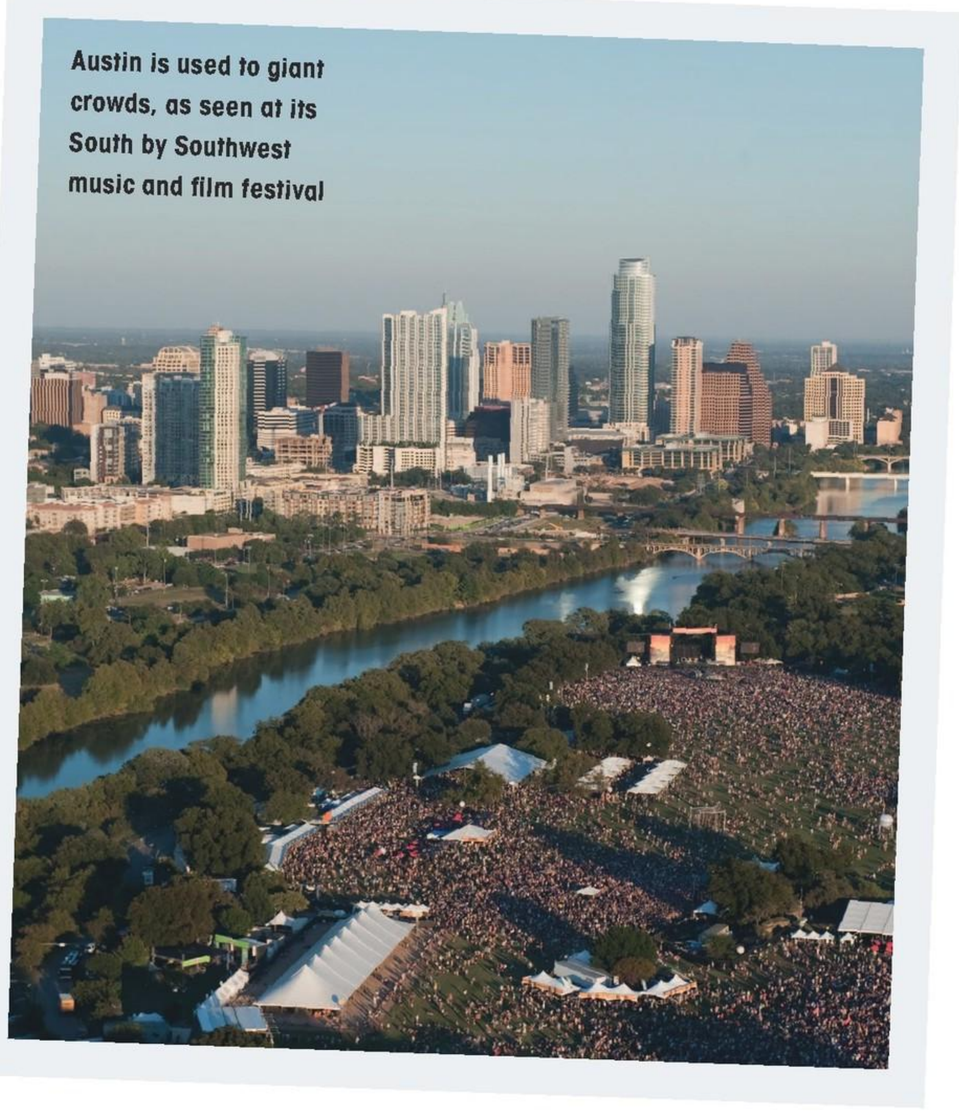
Given such attention to detail it may seem surprising that Hellmund is using the much-criticised Hermann Tilke to do the design work. "Don't think I haven't been fully aware of the criticism of Tilke and 'cookie cutter' race tracks," he says. "We had to dig in on a couple of ideas; fortunately Hermann knows we don't give in easily and we remind him that we are the client, not the other way around." Hellmund also installed Texan architects HKS to collaborate with Tilke. It sounds promising, and the state of Texas certainly thinks so.

In 2004 the Texan government passed a bill to make available a fund to attract major sporting events, and although F1 wasn't on the list, Hellmund persuaded the state to include it. As a result the state has made available up to $25m (£15m) for each year of the F1 deal.

Hellmund stresses that the money comes from "increased sales tax revenue generated by the event. Not only is it motel and hotel, it's retail, rental, alcohol and everything." He adds that unlike bids for events such as the Olympics and World Cup, he has privately financed his F1 bid. "The government should look like geniuses because they didn't spend a penny in three years of bidding for the F1 rights, and they're not going to spend a penny on building the circuit."

Ecclestone says "the government won't lose their money" and this is supported by research. An average of 160,000 spectators visit each Grand Prix and, according to F1's industry monitor *Formula Money*, this gives governments a 710 per cent return on their investments.

The state's $25m will cover what Full Throttle pays to FOM in 2012, but it will soon fall short. Written into contracts is a clause that increases the amount paid by 10 per cent annually. By the tenth year of its deal it is expected that Full Throttle will be paying around $59m (£36m), which would leave a $34m (£21m) shortfall after the state's contribution. Then comes the circuit construction cost, which Hellmund says "is not much less than $250m (£153m)". Accordingly, it's no surprise FOM wanted to see the colour of his money before giving the race the green light.


Austin is used to giant crowds, as seen at its South by Southwest music and film festival

ACL

"We've got to provide a venue that has proper entertainment value"

Hellmund's financiers include Prophet Capital Management, an Austin-based private investment company, as well as two Texans – former motorcycle World Champion Kevin Schwantz (whose backing no doubt helped the track land a 10-year deal to host MotoGP from 2013) and billionaire Red McCombs, who co-founded outdoor advertising company Clear Channel.

"Clear Channel will help with promotion," says McCombs. "This is natural for us to present because I think the American media will respond to it." Such support will almost certainly be key to F1's success in the US because when it comes to advertising agencies, they don't get much bigger than Clear Channel. With 900 stations under its control, the company is the largest radio station owner in the US. It also owns outdoor advertising space in 25 countries – very useful when it comes to spreading the word about a Grand Prix.

As a graduate of the University of Texas in Austin, McCombs is backing the GP for personal and professional reasons. "We look at what it would bring to our state, then at what it's brought to other countries. We're joining a world fraternity rather than one at state or national level. The international scope is what truly interests me."

McCombs has experience in the sports arena as a former owner of basketball and American football teams. "My F1 investment is comparable to the other sports teams I've had ownership in," he says.

"I think there will be a big financial return but that will come because of the ancillary programmes and not the race itself." McCombs has owned nearly 400 businesses in his career and currently runs the largest car dealership in Texas, so he stands to gain a great deal from the additional business brought in by the GP. But first Hellmund will have to reignite US interest in F1.

He believes people underestimate the support F1 has in the US. "We're working on a marketing plan which we hope to get out in the next 90 days. One of the things we'll do is have GP parties starting this year in parks, with big screens, music and a show car programme across the US.

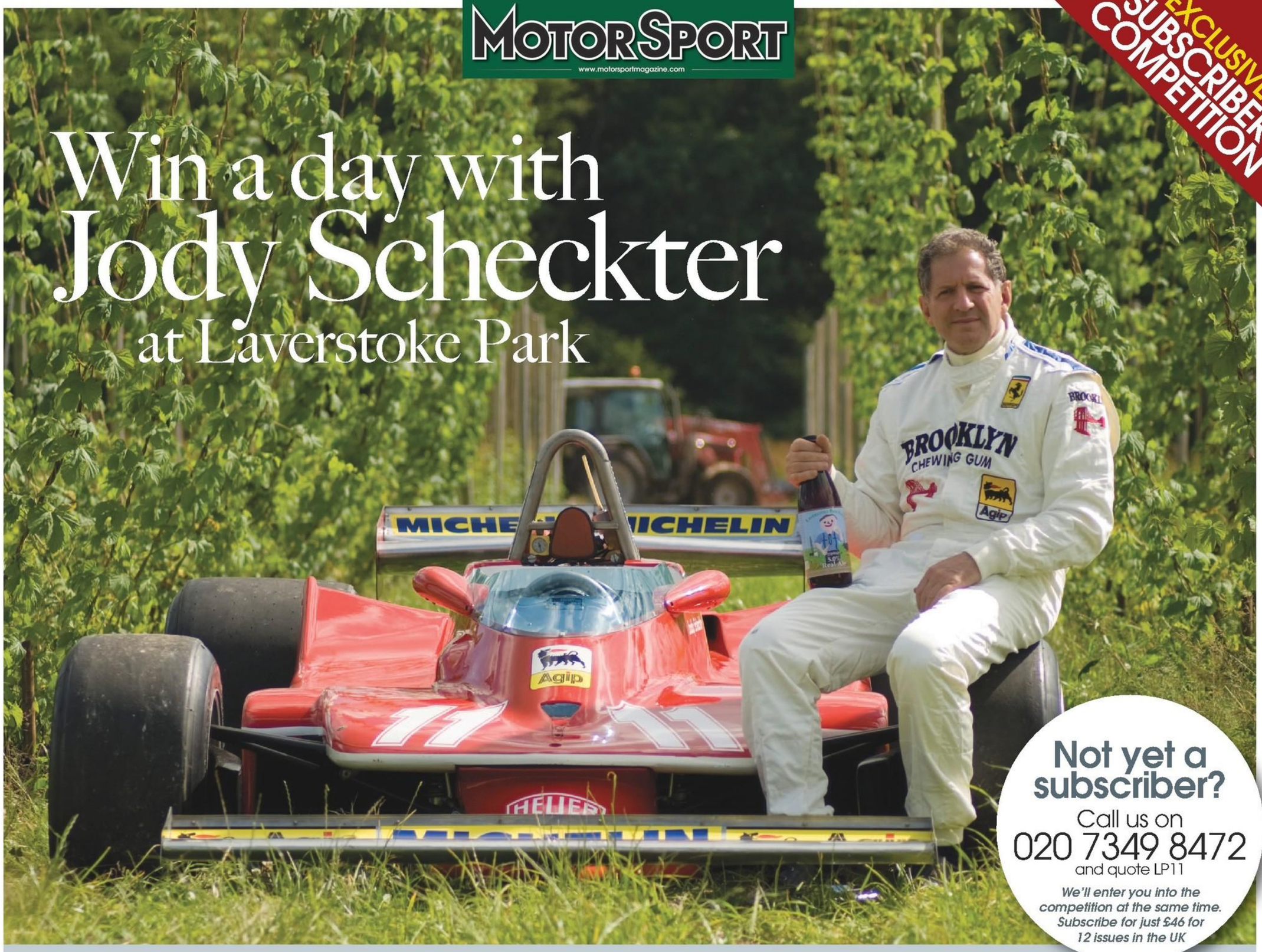
"It would be really nice to have an American who is excelling at F1, but I think if Sergio Perez gets on well in the Sauber that will help us with Mexico." Off-track, US celebrities such as *Star Wars* creator George Lucas and film star Sylvester Stallone are huge F1 fans, and their endorsement could bring in valuable publicity. But some things will be harder to pull off. Hellmund believes broadcasters need to do more to educate viewers about the sport: "As a group we agree there should be a 15-minute educational piece prior to each GP."

But the biggest risk to success in the US is still F1 imploding – just as it did to its shame at Indy in 2005. "If they build a good circuit and there's no politics they'll win fans in a heartbeat," says former World Champion Nigel Mansell. "The racing fans of America embrace great racing." If Hellmund can achieve this, he'll win the grandest prize of all.

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Lunch with...
HOWDEN GANLEY

Having sailed to Europe from New Zealand, this keen-as-mustard Kiwi embarked on a long career that started with a spanner and culminated in his dream of a Grand Prix drive

BY SIMON TAYLOR

Four New Zealanders have scored World Championship points, and stood on the podium at Le Mans and in Can-Am. That makes Howden Ganley one of a very special quartet. But his ties with Messrs McLaren, Hulme and Amon go deeper than that. In differing ways, all four exuded a resourcefulness that was typically Kiwi. In Howden's case it drove him on a journey from penniless mechanic to F1 racer, and then helped him create a successful race car marque.

Today he lives in California, but we meet for lunch at the Phyllis Court Club in Henley, where he used to escape from F1 pressures with a relaxing game of golf in the 1970s.

He was born in 1941 in Hamilton, south of Auckland, eldest son of an agricultural engineer, and was barely aware of motor racing until he was taken to the 1955 New Zealand GP on the old Ardmore airfield circuit. "I had no idea what to expect, but when the flag fell and the two red Ferraris of Peter Whitehead and Tony Gaze came storming towards us, I found my religion. Until that moment I had no clue what I wanted to do with my life, but now I knew. I was going to be a Grand Prix driver. Of course, it didn't turn out to be as easy as I'd hoped...

"To get involved, I started writing stories about local race meetings and sent them to Kiwi papers, then to Australian magazines, and finally to magazines in England. I decided to keep my real name for the famous driver I felt sure I'd become. I'd read stories by a Kiwi called Eoin S Young and thought his extra initial sounded grown-up, so I called myself James H Ganley. I was listed on the masthead of a short-lived English monthly called *Sports Cars Illustrated* as New Zealand Correspondent. I don't think they realised I was a schoolboy. Then I showed my clippings to the local newspaper, and they hired me as a cub reporter. I was still only 15. But they made me write about produce markets and Red Cross fêtes. To my disappointment they weren't interested in racing cars.

"As soon as I could get a licence I did some local events in my mother's Morris Minor, and I soon decided I needed a proper racing car. The only Lotus Eleven in New Zealand was for sale fourth-hand for £1300. I'd left the paper and was doing three jobs to fuel my motor-racing ambitions: on a construction site during the day, waiting tables in a restaurant at night, and pumping gas at weekends. I'd saved up £650, and persuaded my mother to lend me the ›››





James Mitchell

rest. Soon after my 19th birthday I entered the Lotus for the 1961 NZ GP meeting at Ardmore, where six years earlier I'd first seen a racing car. In the sports car race I won my class, which got me £15. I thought, 'I'm in the money now.' And at the end of the day there was a race for New Zealand drivers only. I won that outright – and the prize money was £150. That got me to Levin, where I won a bit more, then on to Wigram and Invercargill. That went on for two seasons until, in the rain at Dunedin, I tried to take the fast uphill curve flat, and wrapped it round a telegraph pole. Johnny Mansel was killed that day – he hit a pole too, in his Cooper-Maserati – and Chris Amon collected one in his 250F.

"It was time to get myself to Europe. I sold the remains of the Lotus, paid off my debts, and had enough left for a slow boat to Lisbon, and then a bus to London. When I set foot on English soil, several months later, I had £25 in the world. But one person I knew was the New Zealand journalist Bill Gavin, who was now editing *Autocourse*. He introduced me to Mike Moseley, who ran the Falcon glassfibre bodyshell business and had built a neat little sports-racer with Terrier spaceframe chassis and 1100 Climax engine. Bill told him I was the fastest thing on four wheels, so Mike ran me in a race at Silverstone. I was going quite well until I spun, and I thought, 'That's blown that,' but Mike said: 'I'm going upmarket with a road car called the Falcon 515. Come and be my development engineer.' I was 20, no job, no money, so I wasn't about to say, 'Development engineer? Me?'



"Whatever it took, you'd do it for Bruce"

"The deal was, as soon as I got the car into production, I could build up a lightweight version and race it. And to help build the cars I could get a friend over from Hamilton, John Muller, who was a brilliant mechanic. We found a bedsit over a railway line, ice on the inside of the window, single light socket hanging from the ceiling. There was a coin-slot meter, but we just plugged everything into that one light socket, because that was free, and put a six-inch nail across the fuse box.

"I really knew zip, and it was a steep learning curve at Falcon, but we got the car to the Racing Car Show at Olympia in January 1963. I did get to race the lightweight one, and went quite well against Jackie Oliver's Marcos. But Falcon's cash ran out, and they got in a new investor who vetoed all racing plans. So John and I left.

"Another Kiwi, Ross Grenville, was driving for George Henrotte's Formula Junior team, until he had a big shunt at Aintree and lost part of a leg. Through Ross, John and I went to be race mechanics for George, who operated out of a corner of a garage in Bexleyheath. His drivers were Roy Pike, the American, and Syd Fox, and the car was the needle-nosed, twin-radiator Gemini, designed by Chas Beattie and built by Graham Warner's Chequered Flag outfit. They hadn't had much success with it, but John and I cleaned the cars up and got them going pretty well, and Pike scored a fine win at Crystal Palace. Then John rebuilt Pike's engine, and we went to Brands on a public test day to run it in. It was pouring with rain, but George said to me, 'Take it round for 10 gentle laps and bed it in.' I did that, then George gave me another 10 laps at higher revs, and finally he told me to drive as hard as I liked, as long as I didn't shunt it. I was quicker than everybody else in the rain, so George said, 'We've got long-circuit Brands this weekend, but you can drive at Goodwood the weekend after.'

"Well, Brands was a disaster. There was a lap one pile-up, Syd was hit up the back, and Roy hit the bank and broke his leg. We loaded Syd's car onto the top deck of our two-car van, the van driver went out to collect the wreck of Roy's car – and forgot that the transporter was higher than the South Bank Bridge. So now we've got a wrecked transporter and two wrecked cars. And Goodwood was the following Saturday. I hardly went to bed that week, built a whole new front end onto the Pike chassis, John mended the Fox car, and we got to Goodwood for my first single-seater race. I was so tired I fell asleep on the grid. But I had a good dice with Paddy Driver's Lotus 20, and finished fourth. A week later we were at the Nürburgring with most of FJ's big names: Frank Williams, Charlie Crichton-Stuart, Pete Arundell and Mike Spence in the works Lotuses, and Jochen Rindt, who crashed his Cooper in practice. I finished 14th out of 41 starters. Then George's sponsors pulled their money, the team folded, and I was out of a job again.

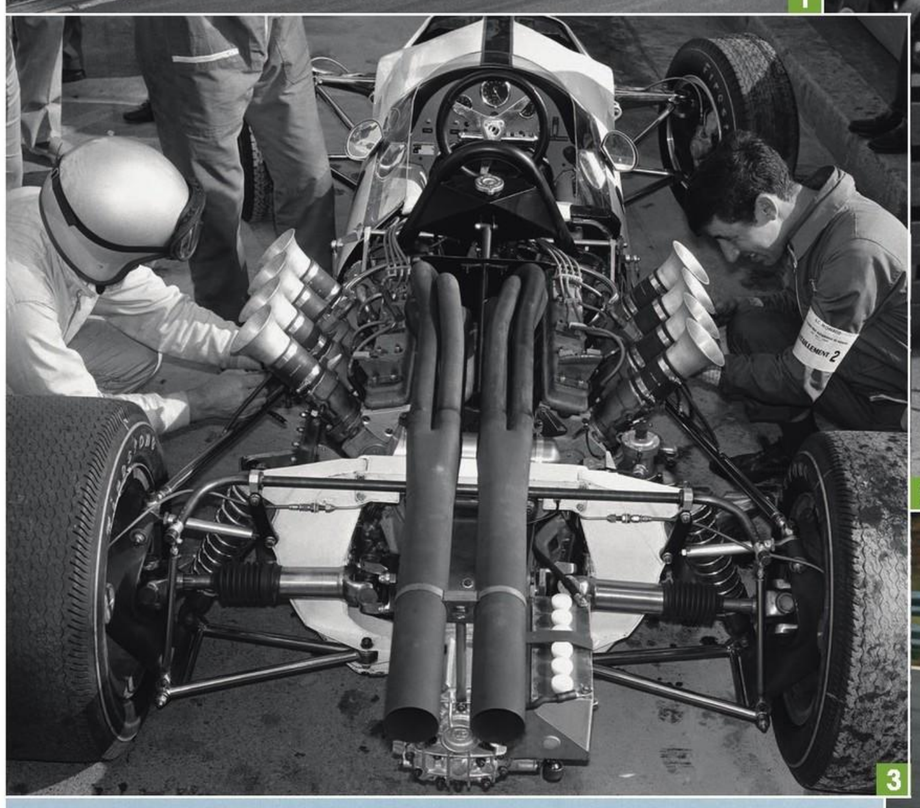
"After a few miserable months – they say it's always darkest just before dawn – I had a call from Eoin Young, who said, 'Someone here wants to speak to you.' And Bruce McLaren came on the phone. 'I'm going to expand my team,' he said, 'and I want to hire Kiwis.' So in June 1964 I became one of the first four employees of Bruce McLaren Motor Racing. There was Wally Wilmott, Tyler Alexander and me, plus Eoin as 'secretary', in a corner of a shed in New Malden full of earth-moving equipment: dirt floor, work bench, vice, set of welding bottles, a hacksaw and a file. Behind the diggers was the Zerex Special, which Wally and Tyler had just converted into the Cooper-Oldsmobile, and Bruce's Tasman Cooper. Tyler and Wally said, 'Why are you here?' 'I'm a mechanic,' I said. 'No you're not. We don't know whether you can thread a nut on the end of a bolt. You're a gopher.' They had no chassis stands, and had to prop the cars on wooden crates, so they sent me over to Cooper to pinch lengths of tubing to make some up. 'Don't talk to old Charlie Cooper, he'll tell you to f*** off. Talk to John.' So I go to Coopers, find John, 'G'day Mr Cooper, I work for Bruce, he said we could have some tubing.' 'That's all right, boy, help yourself.' So I get some tubing from the rack, and by the time I get back to New Malden it's late and the others have left. I had no girlfriend to go home to, so I cut the tubing and welded up some nice chassis stands. Next morning Bruce and Tyler said, 'Who did you get to do this? You mean you can weld like that? Right, you're the fabricator.'

"In fact everybody did everything. My first job was to chop the back off the Tasman car to take a Hewland HD5 gearbox. To show you what Bruce was like, we were going up to Silverstone to test it and he said, 'If you've got a helmet, bring it.' We get there, he's the driver, I'm the mechanic, he tests it, it's going fine, and then he says, 'Off you go.' I'm lapping the GP circuit in a 2.7 Tasman Cooper. That's the sort of guy he was. Of course it made you pull that much harder for him. Whatever it took, even three all-nighters on the trot, you'd do it for Bruce.

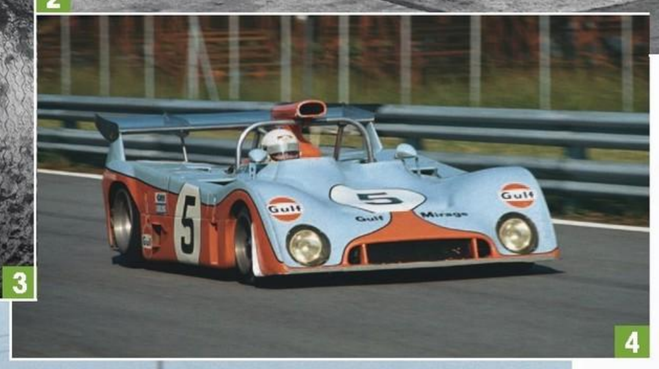
"By the time we built the prototype McLaren, the M1, which used Cooper corners and uprights, we were out of the dirt-floor shop and into a rented place in Feltham with a hard floor and proper work benches – real luxury. Teddy Mayer had joined by now to help Bruce run things, and eventually he became a partner. Teddy was a very intelligent guy, didn't suffer fools, and he was obsessed with tidiness in the workshop. If you were making something and went home leaving your cut-out bits of metal on the bench, you'd come in next morning to find Teddy had been round with a rubbish bin, cleared your bench and thrown all the pieces away. You soon learned to keep a tidy bench.

"When they all went off to do the 1965 Tasman Series I stayed behind to build the first M1A. Johnny Muller, who'd been working during the season for Winkelmann Racing, needed a winter job, and the two of us built that car. Bruce had drawn the basic chassis frame, but he hadn't had time to think about any of ➤➤➤







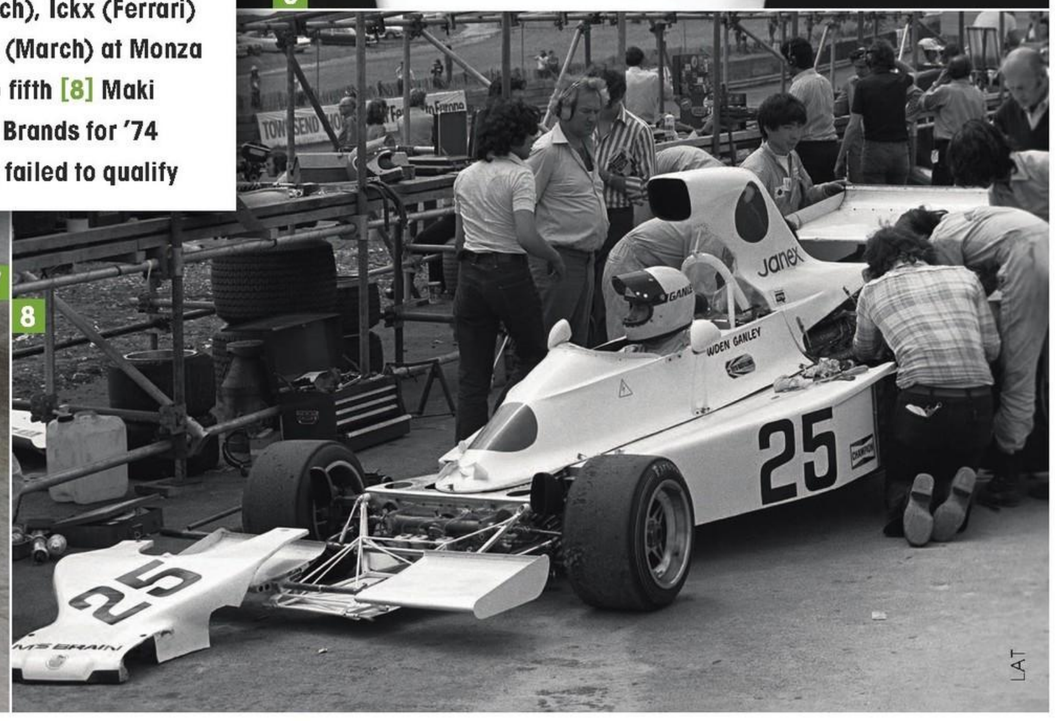






[1] In 1972 German GP Ganley was a season-high fourth in BRM P160 [2] Amon in GT X1 at Mosport '65 with Ganley and Gary Knutson (centre), plus Teddy Mayer (with clipboard) [3] Bruce McLaren (left) and Ganley with M2B at Monaco '66 [4] '73 season with JW Mirage included fifth in the Österreichring 1000Kms with Derek Bell [5] He enjoyed sharing Matra with Cevert at Le Mans '72, where they finished second [6] Howden in his prime [7] Ganley leads Peterson (March), Ickx (Ferrari) and Pescarolo (March) at Monza '71 en route to fifth [8] Maki arrived late at Brands for '74 British GP and failed to qualify





LAT

the details, the hundred and one widgets and brackets any car needs. Like gear linkage, or pedals. There were no drawings, so I worked it out in my head, cut the metal, and made them. During the night a draughtsman came in, looked at what I'd made and drew it for the production cars. That's how racing cars were built in those days. You just got on and made the thing.

"Ford had commissioned Bruce to build up the GT X1, a lightweight 7-litre GT40 roadster, using L72 aluminium for the monocoque instead of steel. Gary Knutson came over from Chaparral to work it up, and I was his right-hand man. When it was done we took it to America for Chris Amon to race, and I towed it all over, from Canada to California. After Riverside I took it down to the Bahamas for the Nassau Speed Week, back up to Kar Kraft in Dearborn, then down to Florida for auto transmission testing at Sebring. Somehow they'd got it into their heads that I knew about suspension and gearboxes. I didn't know anything about anything. But in the land of the blind the one-eyed man is king, and maybe I had half an eye now."

English-born Ken Miles was a key member of the Ford team. Having won Daytona and Sebring that year, he lost out at Le Mans in the stage-managed Ford 1-2 finish, and was killed six weeks later at Riverside, testing the new Ford J-car. "Ken was a pretty hard character, used to people jumping to his orders. Well, I'm a Kiwi, I don't jump. So we didn't get on very well at first, but between us we eventually got the X1 going seriously quickly. In March Miles and Lloyd Ruby won the Sebring 12 Hours in it. By now it was really tired, the L72 was brittle and I had to keep drilling holes at the end of cracks to stop them spreading. So after Sebring they crushed it.

"I was sent back to Kar Kraft to work on the J-car, which was quite advanced for its time with an aluminium honeycomb monocoque. Then Bruce said: 'I need you back in England: we're building an F1 car.' They'd moved to Colnbrook by this time and Robin Herd was on board. The first one, the M2A, was used for tyre testing. The second, the M2B, used the 4.2 Ford Indy four-cam shrunk to three litres. In May we took it to Monaco. The McLaren marque's F1 debut was a bit different to how they do things today. Johnny Muller and I towed the M2B down to Monaco on an open trailer behind an old Ford Fairlane station wagon with the car's designer, Robin, sitting in the back.

"All this time I was focusing everything on my ambition to race, saving every penny I made towards my goal. So I decided to leave McLaren. The policy there was, if you left you couldn't go back, and understandably Bruce wasn't too happy with me. To keep earning I got a boring assembly job at Lola, and then Peter Revson, who was putting together a Can-Am team with Skip Scott, hired me. I knew him well because he was one of the Ditton Road Flyers, living in that notorious house in Surbiton with Amon and Mike Hailwood. Two McLarens were being built up for him at Colnbrook. A few faces were pulled when I walked back in there to finish off the cars, but Revvie smoothed it all over.

"That Can-Am stint was good money, and when I got home I had enough at last to launch myself as an F3 driver. I got a new 1967 Brabham BT21 plus Transit van and trailer, and painted it in proper NZ racing colours. It's a myth that our racing colours are black: they're green with a silver stripe, just as Oz colours are green with a gold stripe. Because I lived on start and prize money, I couldn't afford to race much in the UK, but I travelled all over Europe from race to race, prepping the car, sleeping in the van. My lady friend Elaine polished the car, did the timing and heated the baked beans. Same in '68, and by now I'd also started a gearbox business in my garage at home. Mike Hewland put lots of servicing work my way until I was employing six people, doing work for F1, F2 and sports car teams, in premises rented from Frank Williams.

"I'd met Denny Hulme back home, doing gymkhanas in a rather flash red MG TF, and when I got to England he was working for Jack Brabham as a mechanic and getting the odd drive. When he first raced on the Continent with George Lawton [who was killed at Roskilde] they called themselves the New Zealand Racing Partnership, because if you had an important-sounding team name you got more start money. So Denny let me use it too. Despite his gruff reputation, I got on really well with Denny the Bear. Actually there were several bears: there was grumpy bear, but there was also kindly, soft bear. He was a good guy.

"At the end of 1968 I ordered a new Brabham BT28, but the delivery date was put back – Ron Tauranac was often slow to get his production going, because he was so fussy – and I heard of a cancelled order on a Chevron B15. I went up to the Chevron factory in Bolton, assembled the car, loaded it up and took it home. People reckoned the Brabham was more forgiving than the Chevron, which many said had an understeer problem. I just knuckled down to sort my B15 out, and learned to get the best from it."

Howden's 1969 season culminated in the F3 International on the Brands long circuit in October, against most of Europe's F3 best. Penalised in his heat for a jump-start, he was 22nd on the grid for the 20-lap final. By lap four he was 11th, by lap 14 he was sixth, and on the last lap he got past François Cevert's Tecno for fourth place. Into the final corner he attacked Bev Bond's works Lotus for third and got a wheel on the grass, allowing Cevert to sneak past again. But his reward for this sensational drive was not just fifth place: he shattered the Brands F3 lap record at an average of exactly 100mph – just four years after Jim Clark had first achieved the same speed in an F1 Lotus. "It was a mental turning point for me. When you're coming up there are some drivers you think, 'Maybe this guy's a bit better than me.' Now I wasn't afraid of anyone.



"Bruce used to ask me how things were going, and after that Brands race he said, 'Come to Goodwood and have an F1 test.' They had an M7C there for me and Reine Wisell (who'd won the Brands race) and afterwards Bruce said, 'We'll run you in some of the non-championship F1 races in 1970. And I want to put you in a works Formula 5000 car. You don't have to pay for it, it's all done.' He'd moved into a new house and his next-door neighbour, Barry Newman, had said, 'I'd really like to sponsor a young driver.' Bruce told him, 'I know just the man.'

"The 1970 F5000 McLaren was the M10B. The production cars were made by Trojan, but the two quasi-works cars, mine and Sid Taylor's for Peter Gethin, were built up at Colnbrook. Mine was dark green with the silver stripe again. It took me a while to get it working right, and we also had an oil problem – I was too stupid to realise the engine wasn't scavenging properly – and Gethin dominated the championship in the other car. We had one win, five seconds and three thirds, and wound up second in the series ahead of Frank Gardner and Mike Hailwood. The F1 rides never happened, because at the start of June came the tragedy of Bruce's death. It was totally devastating. But Bruce had built a fantastic team, with strength in depth, and everybody carried on, everybody knew what they had to do. That's the mark of a great leader.

"At the start of 1971 BRM gave me a test at Silverstone, and suddenly I was an F1 driver, number three alongside Pedro Rodríguez and Jo Siffert. As the new boy I saw their rivalry at first hand. Each was determined to beat the other. If I ever set a faster time than one of them in practice or in a test, the other was always delighted. They each wanted the new kid to put the other down. But they were both just wonderful characters, wonderful blokes. In July Pedro died in a private Ferrari in an Interserie race at the Norisring, and in October Jo died in the F1 race at Brands. That Christmas – the first time I'd been able to afford to go home for 10 years – my mother said to me: 'Two out of three isn't very good odds, is it?'



Monaco provided sole high in difficult year with Iso Williams in '73

LAT

"Jo was killed by a mechanical failure. Most people were, if you look back. When I think of some of the accidents I had because of things falling apart... I can honestly say, apart from wrapping my Lotus Eleven round that power pole at Dunedin, I never had an accident because of driver error. And I had a lot of accidents."

At the end of 1971 Howden was awarded the Von Trips Trophy for F1 rookie of the year. "My retainer was only £2000, but I also got 40 per cent of what the car earned, so if I managed to finish that could be a fair old slice. Louis Stanley was the boss, along with his wife Jean who was Sir Alfred Owen's sister. Tim Parnell was team manager with technical input from Tony Southgate, who was a really great designer. The P153 was a good car, the P160 was better, and the P180 was better still. Aubrey Woods was the engine man. I would have been fourth at Silverstone but I got a puncture, and I was fourth at Watkins Glen. At Monza, of course, Peter Gethin's BRM won the slip-streamer. I was fifth. In practice my engine was fantastic, and I qualified on row two. But after practice Tim decided to swap the engines around, and Gethin got mine. I still berate Tim for that.

"I didn't get on very well with Big Lou while I was at BRM, although I had reason to appreciate him later. He had a permanent suite in the Dorchester Hotel, and he couldn't sleep, so he liked to phone you at two in the morning, a very annoying habit. The problem was believing what he told you. When you were having tea with him he'd take himself off for a pee, and when he came back he'd say he'd just rung the engine shop at Bourne and they'd found another 20bhp. Adding all those pees together BRM should have had 200bhp more than Ferrari.

"Tony Southgate had designed a Can-Am BRM, the P154, but Pedro told him it was the worst car he'd ever driven. Tony said, 'Well, Pedro has driven some real dogs in his time, so this must be bad. I'd better try again.' He came up with the P167 which was brilliant, a completely different car. I did a lot of the early testing with it, and Pedro was meant to be driving it that fatal day at the Norisring, but because of last-minute engine problems the car didn't go. Then Sid Taylor ran it in America for Brian Redman. When Siffert was killed the week before the Riverside Can-Am race Brian, who'd been Jo's team-mate in the JW Porsche team, wanted to go to the funeral in Switzerland. I get a 2am phone call from the Dorchester: 'Ganley, fly to California and drive the P167 at Riverside.' I was going to Jo's funeral too, but I asked myself, 'What would Jo have done? He'd have gone racing.' So I flew to LA.

"That was a special weekend. I was third in the race, and at a pre-race party Jackie Oliver said, 'There's a beautiful red-haired lady over there who wants to talk to you.' So I went over to the beautiful red-haired lady, and in due course I married her." This was Judy Kondratieff, a successful sports car racer: Sebring class winner and SCCA regional champion. She and Howden were inseparable soulmates for 37 years, until her sad death from ovarian cancer in 2007.

"For 1972 Big Lou had Marlboro sponsorship and decided to run an A team and a B team. The A team was Jean-Pierre Beltoise, Peter Gethin and me, and the B team was for local heroes and drivers who could pay. They'd run up to five BRMs in a race. Jean-Pierre had a weak arm from an old injury, and they had to take a lot of castor off the BRM. But at Monaco he scored a great win: in the rain the steering was lighter, and he didn't get so fatigued. I was fourth at the Nürburgring. I loved that place, even though it did bite me two years later. My favourite tracks were old Nürburgring, old Spa and Monaco, then the Österreichring.

"In 1972 I did Le Mans for Matra. That was a fantastic team. We tested at Ricard, running through the night, and it kept breaking down. But eventually we managed 20 hours, then 24, and finally we kept it going for 27 hours. In the race the 670s were driven by Graham Hill/Henri Pescarolo, Amon/Beltoise, and François Cevert and me. Chris never got in his car – it lasted one hour – but Graham and Pesca won and we were second. François was a really wonderful guy. I was shocked when he was killed in 1973. You develop a shell when you're racing: even when your own team-mates die, you compartmentalise and carry on. But when you share a car in a long-distance race you really work together, you have a bond. That's even harder.

"For 1973 Big Lou was giving me the royal treatment, offering me the Team No 1. I said to him, 'What about Beltoise? What about Gethin?' 'Never mind about them, I want you to be the team leader.' But Ronnie Peterson, who knew the Italian interpreter Big Lou was using, tipped me off that he'd offered the same deal to Clay Regazzoni. There were too many shifting goal posts. There'd been some talk of joining Chris at Matra, but they withdrew from F1. March looked a possibility, but I fell out of that equation. The next best game in town seemed to be Frank Williams and the Iso Marlboro.

"At the time Frank was desperately trying to keep his show on the road. He didn't have enough sponsorship to start with, now he had half of not enough. I tried very hard to take Tony Southgate with me from BRM, but Tony knew Frank didn't have enough budget, and he was wooed by Don Nichols at Shadow. I tried to get Mike Pilbeam from BRM, but with Tony's departure he'd just been made chief designer. So Frank got John Clark from March, and employed three fabricators known collectively as the Flowerpot Men. The car overheated and the fuel system didn't work. But I got stuck in and by Monaco we were getting somewhere, and I qualified it on the fifth row. Then all the changes I'd made got taken off. In Canada there was chaos when they tried to use the pace car for the first time in a Grand Prix, followed by a confusion of pitstops, and the official lap charts blew up. At first they reckoned I'd won: that evening they decided I was sixth. Actually I'm pretty sure I was third.

"Since 1972 I'd been building my own F1 car, a monocoque with ground-effects and pull-rod suspension. I was going to run it for myself. »»»



Howden still has the parts of his own F1 car, which almost became the F1 Tiga when he ran the marque with Tim Schenken, below



I had two DFVs, transporter, all the equipment, and I'd started on a second chassis. When Marlboro were unhappy with how the Iso was going I said, 'Pay me what I've put into my F1 car and give it to Frank.' But it didn't happen. Frank said, 'I'm not having you taking over my team', which wasn't what I was trying to do.

"I had a two-year contract with Frank, but at the end of 1973 we'd rather fallen out with each other. There were some money problems, and there didn't seem to be a willing buyer or a willing seller between us. A March drive was available, and I felt comfortable with Robin [Herd] and Max [Mosley], they'd used me for testing quite a bit. I did Argentina and Brazil, then Vittorio Brambilla came along with Beta Tools money, and I was out. But I did do a full sports car season with the JW Mirage team, usually paired with Derek Bell. The Ferraris and Matras were fastest that year, but we were second at Spa – I was with Vern Schuppan that time – and fourth at Watkins Glen.

"Then I had a mysterious phone call from an oriental gentleman asking to speak to Mister Ganrey. I thought it was Tim Schenken winding me up, but this guy said he represented a new Japanese F1 team called Maki, plenty of financial backing, four chassis and eight engines. 'Very nice,' I said. 'Who's the other driver?' 'Oh no, Mister Ganrey, all for you.' It turned out they did have four chassis, but only one engine. And no premises, so I had to rent them some space I had. The cars didn't even comply with the F1 rules, the bodywork was all wrong, and I had to get them to change it. We went testing and testing and testing, pounding round Silverstone and Goodwood. I'd come in and say, 'Let's try stiffer springs on the back', or 'Let's try a couple more degrees on the rear wing.' Then I'd go out again: no difference. I started watching the mechanics in my mirrors, and they were ignoring me. In the end I blew my top, and then they followed all my suggestions – moved the radiators back, made a proper airbox, cleaned up the airflow around the rear wing. First race was to be the British GP, but Thursday's final session was almost over when the Maki transporter rolled into the Brands paddock. On Friday we did a time which on Thursday would have got us in the race, but by then the others had improved. So DNQ.

"I gave them another lecture, and two weeks later at the Nürburgring the Maki was at the head of the line, all warmed up, ready for first practice on Friday. About a kilometre into my first lap, after the fast downhill right-hander, the rear suspension broke. The car turned into the guardrail and the front disintegrated, leaving my legs sticking out for the rest of the accident while it took another whack at the barrier. When it stopped there was fuel spraying everywhere. Somehow I got myself out and to the side of the road. Both my legs and one ankle were broken, but the real damage was to my feet because all the little bones were fragmented.

"In the race Mike Hailwood had his big shunt, so we both ended up in the Krankenhaus. This is when I learned to appreciate Big Lou. He got a helicopter to land outside the hospital, flew Mike and me to Cologne, persuaded British Airways to take two stretchers on a scheduled flight, met us at Heathrow, got us to St Thomas' Hospital and laid on the great Mr Urquart – the surgeon who'd looked after Stirling Moss and John Surtees after their big accidents. Urquart's technique for rebuilding bone was, if you can stand the pain you should walk on it. In 16 days I was hobbling around St Thomas'. But it was nine months before I raced again, ironically at the Nürburgring, driving a Loos Mirage in the 1000Kms with Tim Schenken. I still couldn't push the brake pedal properly, but we were leading until we had to make an extra fuel stop at the end. One of the works Alfas beat us by 29sec after nearly six hours' racing.

> "The front of the car disintegrated, leaving my legs sticking out"

"At the end of 1975 somebody asked Schenken to invest in a project to build Formula Fords. He showed me the proposal, and I said, 'This looks rather good. Why don't we do it ourselves?' That was the start of Tiga – the name came from TIm and GAnley. At first it was just me and Tim and Martin Reid. When we outgrew my shop we took over the old Fittipaldi place in Reading. We built Formula Fords and Sports 2000s, Formula Atlantics, C Sports for America, two Can-Am cars, 33 Group Cs, some Formula Ks for Mexico. By 1986 we'd delivered over 400 cars, but I was working much too hard, seven days a week, and it was time to sell up. But I'm very happy I did Tiga. There are still a lot of the cars out there.

"We nearly resurrected my F1 car as the Tiga F1. In 1977 F&S Properties were sponsoring Boy Hayje and Mikko Kozarowitzky in RAM Marches and failing to qualify everywhere, and they talked to us about our car. But they ran out of money and it didn't happen. I've still got the F1, broken down into little bits and stored. One day before I die, perhaps I'll put it all together.

"After Tiga I was elected onto the board of the BRDC, and became a director of Silverstone Circuits and Silverstone Estates as well. When John Fitzpatrick left in 1998 they asked me to be club secretary. I didn't do that for long, because Judy was diagnosed with cancer, but when I resigned from the boards they did me the great honour of making me a vice-president."

All of which is a long way from Hamilton, writing race reports for local papers. Through succeeding stages of his long career Howden earned respect as mechanic, engineer, racer, development tester and designer. "I've been very lucky. I never won a Grand Prix, so my schoolboy dream didn't all quite happen. But a lot of it really did come true."

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F1, Champ Car, GTs, historics – if you need a driver in a hurry, Roberto Moreno has always been ready to give it everything. And he's still got the fire...

BY ROB WIDDOWS

In America they called him 'super-sub'. Super he may be, but he is so much more than a substitute.

When Roberto Pupo Moreno left his home in Brazil he was still a teenager and had never raced a car. His mother promised to keep his room exactly as he left it. Her boy could come home any time he liked. And that was what spurred him on as he trudged around the UK tracks with his Formula Ford, unable to speak English and shivering through his first winter. He would make it work; he was going to make his living from motor racing.

And that he has most certainly achieved. Formula Ford champion in 1980, Formula 3000 champion in 1988, a Grand Prix driver at Benetton in 1990 and a Champ Car winner in 2000. But the headlines don't even begin to tell a remarkable story of guts, God-given talent and cheeky charm.

"Hey, you know what," Roberto exclaims, putting his arm around me, "I've been so lucky, made a good living from racing cars, and that's all I ever wanted to do. OK, when I first came to England I nearly went home again. It was cold and I couldn't speak the English. But Nelson Piquet was my saviour, my mentor, and he got his manager Greg Siddle ('Peewee' to his mates) to sort me out. In that first year, 1979, I travelled from race to race, towing my Formula Ford Royale and sleeping in the car – it was tough but I learnt so much – and Ralph Firman at Van Diemen started to take an interest in me."

We are sitting in a café in London. Moreno is a bundle of restless energy, the story rattling out of him as he reels back 31 years to that breakthrough Formula Ford title. He's already charmed the waitress as the anecdotes and tales stream onto the tape in that familiar, expressive South American accent.

A RIGHT ROYALE BEGINNING

"Where it really started getting good was at Silverstone, on the Club circuit, and again it was thanks to Nelson. He told me 'focus on the straightline speed, forget the corners, just make sure nobody can live with you on the straights'. So I modified the car, narrowed the track, got it down to the weight limit and lowered everything I could. I got lighter wheels from a scrapyard that made the track narrower, used a motorcycle battery to save weight, cut the ends off all the bolts to save more weight, lowered the rollbar – that's not allowed any more – and I put the car on pole. Then the scrutineers were all over it like ants, locking and sealing everything, which was fine by me because it was all legal.

"When Royale designer Pat Symonds saw it he said, 'Hey Roberto, what have you done to my car? You've chopped off the rear bodywork. That was all designed for the airflow to the carburettor and then down over the back of the car. And the wheels, they're so ugly.' Anyway, I'd been working at the Ralt factory to make some money and I told Pat I'd never seen an F3 or F2 car there that had an engine cover.

"I went out, won the race, and Ralph Firman called me and said 'you can drive my works car any time you want'." He pauses, tears in his eyes. "And... well, that day changed my career. It was the start of something big for me. You know, Royale owner Alan Cornock gave Pat Symonds a hard time after the race, telling him they didn't need to keep spending money on rear bodywork!"

He drags himself back from that day at Silverstone, where life suddenly got much better.

"It was incredible," he smiles, "but I couldn't drive for Ralph until I sold the Royale and paid all my bills, so I kept going as I was while Peewee did a deal with Ralph for 1980 which involved me driving a van for the Van Diemen factory during the week, and racing a works car at weekends. That year we won the British championship, the Formula Ford Festival and came second in the European championship, and all this got me a testing contract with Lotus because Peter Warr had seen me win the Festival. They paid me £10,000 and without that I'd have been back in Brazil mending motorcycles, which is where I had started."

The Lotus contract, however, proved to be a double-edged sword, almost putting an end to what was now a promising career.

THE LITTLE GLOBETROTTER

"Jeez, yes," he says, looking very serious now. "Peter Warr put me in the Formula 1 car in 1982, standing in for Nigel Mansell at Zandvoort without any testing, and I wasn't fit enough to deal with the downforce of those cars. It was bad, I didn't qualify. But the Lotus contract was all I had to live on while I looked for an F3 drive. Then along came Barron Racing, which needed a driver for their Ralt F3 because they'd fallen out with Michael Bleekemolen, and Ron Tauranac put my name forward. I'd been a cleaner at the Ralt factory in 1979 and Ron had been impressed with my results in Formula Ford. Anyway, I got the drive with Barron even though I crashed the car at the end of my first test with them. I won some races, though, and already I was a substitute driver – which later became a theme of my career."

So began a long, hard slog to Formula 3000, with Moreno finally becoming champion in 1988. In between times he travelled back and forth to Brazil, searching for money and ➤➤➤

racing Formula Atlantic in America. Piquet, always in the background, helped out when times got tough. The failure at Zandvoort in '82 had been a major setback, but an F2 drive with Ralt saved the day.

"I won the first race at Silverstone in 1984 and Ron [Tauranac] was furious," he laughs, "because he wanted Mike Thackwell to win races to pay him back for helping Jonathan Palmer the previous year. Boy, I was so frustrated, I was crying. From then on I had to give way to Thackwell. I knew I could have won, and I was ready for F1."

But Moreno didn't go to F1, not until 1987 with AGS, though he'd had an offer from Toleman that fell through. So instead he went to Japan where Honda paid him to do F2 again with a Ralt. He'd become a globetrotter, racing the Indycar road races for Rick Galles in America, F2 in Japan and some F3000 for Barron with mechanics on loan from Tyrrell… Yup, Moreno is a survivor. By 1987 he was back in England and Tauranac had signed him up for a full season of F3000.

Reliability let them down, but soon his luck would change. Briefly, at least.

BENETTON… AND ON

It had been seven years since Roberto had won the Formula Ford championship. By rights, he should have been firmly ensconced in F1. Then after a roller-coaster ride that included a brief tenure at AGS came another big break, and thanks to more support from friends including Piquet and Adrian Reynard, he was back in F3000 with a shot at the title.

"We had no money, my wife was pregnant, but I had to make this work," he says. "So I went to Bicester and began persuading Adrian and Rick Gorne to do me a deal on a car. I knew I could get a drive with Ron Salt at Bromley if I could get hold of a car and engine, so I called Nelson, asked him if he'd guarantee me some money, which he did, and then I sat down with Adrian and Rick. I just had to persuade them because Gary Anderson had gone to Bromley and without a car to run there was no job for him and no job for me. That's how it was. I was desperate, I was in tears, I didn't even know how to pay for my rental car to Bicester, but eventually I managed to talk Rick into a deal. I told him if he lent me the car I'd pay him for it at the end of the season… and I told him I had a guarantee from Nelson. So I got the car. Not only that, but if I did win the championship then I wouldn't have to pay for it – can you believe I did that? And Rick agreed? Incredible.

"I had no engine for this car but I went to see John Nicholson and he lent me a Cosworth ➤➤➤



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11

[1] Moreno didn't get to test Lotus before F1 debut – and failed to qualify at Zandvoort '82 [2] Breakthrough came in 1980, when Roberto won Formula Ford title in Van Diemen [3] 1991 included brief spell at Jordan [4] The Brazilian's perseverance paid off when he claimed F3000 championship in '88 [5] Moreno lost Benetton seat to Schumacher in '91, but was happy to have made it to a top GP team [6] Ron Tauranac nominated Roberto for F3 Barron drive [7] Clashing with Eddie Cheever's Arrows at Estoril in '89 [8] Rare F1 outing in '87 aboard AGS (14) at Adelaide resulted in sixth place [9] Andrea Moda was prone to overheating [10] Roberto was second to old friend Piquet on Benetton debut [11] Emotional Moreno took first CART win at Cleveland in 2000 [Previous page] Champ Car success at Vancouver in '01

LAT & MotorSport Images

because he was so keen to get into F3000 and perhaps win some races. And we did – we won the third race at Pau, the fourth at Silverstone and then at Monza where, after the race, Marco Piccinini from Ferrari gave me his card and asked me to call him.

"So now I was leading the Formula 3000 championship and I had an invitation to test John Barnard's new semi-automatic gearbox for Ferrari. Bob Warren lent me the money to fly to Monaco to see Marco, and he offered me a three-year testing contract. I could only think what happened with Lotus and how that set me back, and I turned him down. I wanted to be a race driver, not an F1 test driver.

"So then Marco offered me the testing plus he got John Hogan to sponsor my F3000, plus a seat with Coloni before joining a secret new 'Ferrari Formula 1 junior team'. Wow! Then Mr Ferrari died, Fiat cancelled all these plans, and Cesare Fiorio came in and scrapped all the schemes set down by Piccinini. Wow! So it was back to F3000 where I won the title, this time being able to win as I pleased without having to play second fiddle to a team-mate like I did with Mike Thackwell, and then in 1989 I went to Coloni. That fell apart when Fiorio pulled the plug, so I went to Eurobrun in 1990 and that was hopeless as they had no money. So I was out of a drive again for '91. Story of my life, I think.



"I'm still quick and pretty fit. And, of course, I know how to set up a racing car"

"Very late in the 1990 season I went to see John Barnard, who wanted me to sit in his mock-up of the new Benetton and help his engineers sort out the positions of switches, gear lever, that kind of thing. By the time I got there John had heard about Alessandro Nannini's helicopter accident [in which he almost lost an arm] and he'd just put the phone down from Michael Andretti and Andrea de Cesaris – and Briatore was pushing him to find a driver. He looked at me and said 'we need a driver for the race in Japan – can you do it?' I was speechless, didn't know what to say, but by luck I'd been the first driver to call him before he heard about Nannini's terrible accident.

"So I told Eurobrun and it turned out they'd decided to stop racing before the end of the year. They put it in writing, by fax, and I was now a Benetton driver. Incredible. But that is how my career went along – up, down, then another opportunity. Anyway, I did a seat fitting, had my overalls made and went to Japan as team-mate to Nelson Piquet."

Moreno finished second at Suzuka to his old friend, even though he was barely fit enough to drive the high-downforce car. But the following year, at Monza, everything was up in the air. Again. Mercedes-Benz wanted to put Michael Schumacher in the Benetton and it was an offer the team could not refuse.

"You know," Moreno says with a shrug, a smile and another flurry of his indefatigable enthusiasm and energy, "I don't look back on that as a negative thing, honestly I do not. OK, I don't want to talk about the whole thing in detail, but the way I saw it was that I'd been Nelson's team-mate at Benetton, I'd driven well, raced well, and I'd made it to a top Grand Prix team. OK, it was suddenly over, but there would be another opportunity for me, there always is. I never had this big thing about being World Champion, I just wanted to have a career, make a living from racing cars, and I did that – every day – until I retired, whether it was in F3000, F2, Indycar, F1, Champ Car or whatever it was. I only see the positive side – if I hadn't been at Benetton I would never have had a podium in F1. There are no negatives. The deal with Schumacher had to be done. I could see that."

A remarkable man, Roberto Moreno. Whatever happens, he bounces back. And this time the bounce took him to the Ford touring car team in Italy, and then to Andrea Moda.

COMING OFF THE BENCH

"You know what," he laughs, "in qualifying at Monaco I put that car into 14th place in the first 10 minutes, and when I came in the whole pitlane came out of their garages and cheered me. But that car could only do four laps before it overheated, so of course we never made the grid for the race. But I'll always remember that afternoon in Monaco, an incredible few laps. I could have developed that car but the team was really not very good at all."

Putting F1 behind him – apart from a brief return in 1995 – Moreno went to America where he carved a successful career in Champ Car, notably standing in for Christian Fittipaldi at Newman-Haas and then in his own right as a 'super-sub'. "Yeah, right, I mean that's the story of my career – 'turning things around'. The driving was the easy bit, getting the deals was the tough part." Any time a team needed a replacement driver it was Moreno's door that got the knock, delivering him a continuous stream of results and podiums.

"I have no regrets," he says. "I would have my career all over again. Except maybe the shunt at Indianapolis on Carburation Day. To avoid a spinning car at Turn 4 I had to go into the pits at 200mph, and I hit everything that stood in my way, including two cars and the wall. I had to turn left because Indycars don't really want to turn right. I actually arrived in my own pit but the car had no wheels by this time and when the mechanics pulled me out I was completely unhurt. At one point I went underneath a car on its stands… My car was just sliding along the ground without any wheels, and every time I opened my eyes I saw a mechanic running away from all this. And, you know, I never hit a single person." By this stage he is laughing at this extraordinary memory of the worst accident he ever had.

BACK IN THE FOLD

In 2003 Moreno retired to a comfortable life at his new family home in Florida. But now he is restless again. This year, aged 52, he has raced a Mini in a historic event at Oulton Park and has plans for more.

"I just want to drive again, and historics are so much fun," he tells me. "Also, to go back to Oulton was great, a place I remember well from Formula Ford. I plan to do more racing, possibly in GT2, and some coaching for historic drivers who have no experience of the bigger, more powerful cars. I am already involved with coaching two young Brazilians – Pedro Nunes in GP3 and Lucas Foresti in F3 – so I am busy again, which is nice. I am not an old man; I'm still quick and pretty fit. And, of course, having been a mechanic and driver I know how to set up a racing car."

Roberto Moreno will be warmly welcomed back into the fold. This thoroughly charming and determined little Brazilian will always have a place in the hearts of racing enthusiasts, especially those of us who recall his early exploits in England. Seems a long time ago. But welcome back, Roberto.

1953 MASERATI A6GCS

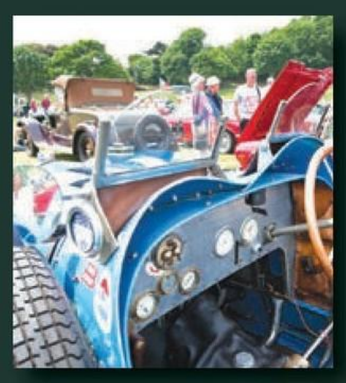
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Quick to impress

There's only one way to truly appreciate Mercedes-Benz's new GT3 racer – on track at full speed. It bodes well for the future...

BY ANDREW FRANKEL



For a car manufacturer that has been at it longer than any other, Mercedes-Benz has done remarkably little racing as a stand-alone constructor. Take its Formula 1 activities: active pre-war, then nothing bar two years in the 1950s until 2010. Purpose-built Mercedes sports cars are only a little less rare.

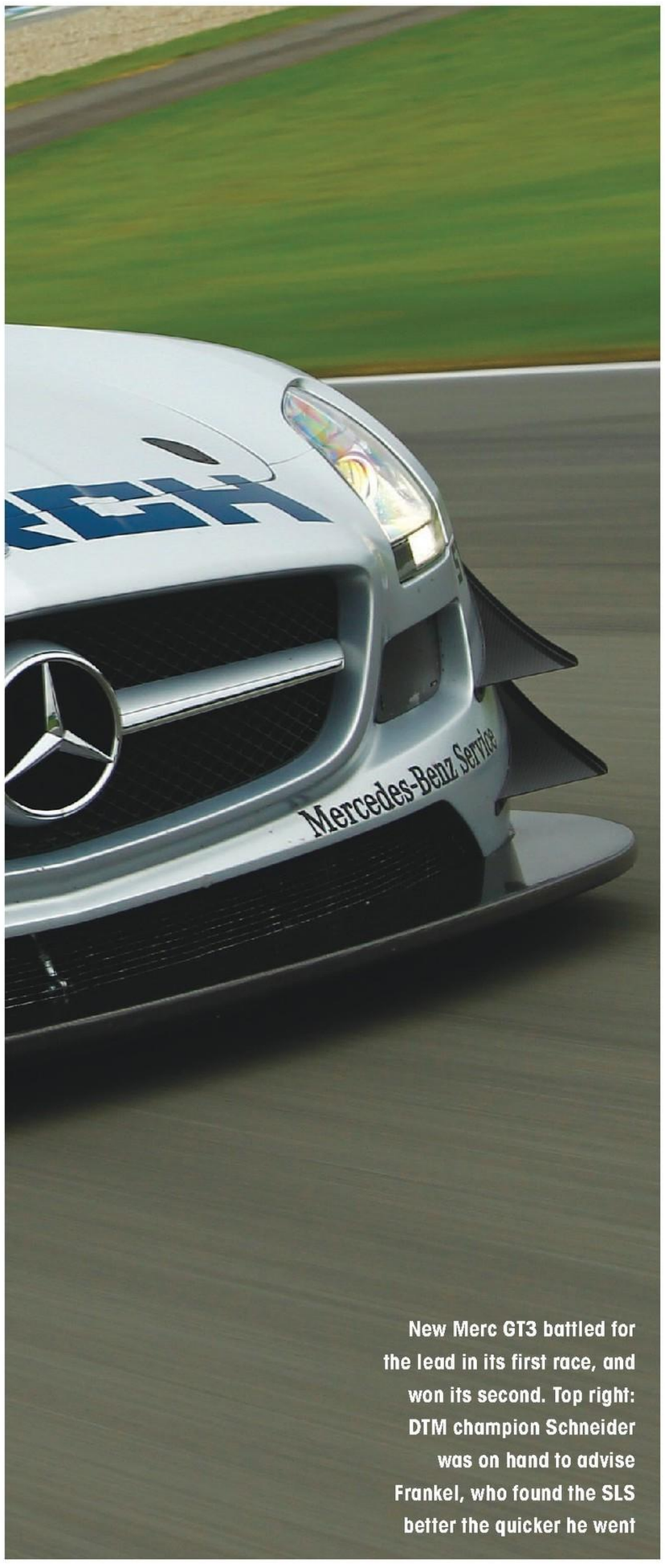
This, however, seems likely to change and you're looking at the reason why. This SLS AMG GT3 is Mercedes' first home-grown sports racing car to be made available to customers, and judging by the form shown to date, it seems unlikely to struggle for buyers in this gloriously resurgent form of the sport.

Motor Sport was invited to a private test at Hockenheim to see what all the fuss was about.

I like the third category of GT racing. The cars are still demonstrably based on road-going product and tend to come with price tags less than half that of their illustrious GT2 sisters (though at €334,000 – or £289,500 – before tax the SLS is hardly cheap), yet are sufficiently modified relative to the GT4 mob to be considered racing cars in their own right rather than race-prepped road cars. The SLS, for instance, weighs 300kg less than the road car, has predominately carbon-fibre body panels, a carbon safety cell, a Hewland race gearbox and over 260kg of downforce at just 125mph.

Interestingly, in some regards it might be considered the inferior of its street-legal counterpart: the regs require it to have smaller wheels, steel brakes and, thanks to its engine restrictor, slightly less power too.

My guide for the day is five-time DTM champion and sports car legend Bernd Schneider, who has done much of the development work for the car. I sit in the airy



New Merc GT3 battled for the lead in its first race, and won its second. Top right: DTM champion Schneider was on hand to advise Frankel, who found the SLS better the quicker he went

cockpit while he shows me around, car suspended on its air-jacks as mechanics fuss and fret over it like a mother sending a child to a new school.

In truth, there is not much to explain. It has a clutch but you use it only to set the car rolling. Cleverly, not only is the steering adjustable for rake and reach, the whole pedal box slides too, allowing drivers of different shapes and sizes to use the same seating position. It can be set up for left- or right-foot braking. I'm shown only how to engage neutral and work the radio before it crackles into life to tell me I'm free to go. Thoughtfully Mercedes has provided Porsche Carrera Cup champion Thomas Jaeger in another SLS GT3 for me to follow – I'd not been here for a while and could barely remember which way the track went.

The 6.2-litre V8 blasts into life. Internally it is no different to the road car, but unsilenced its popping and banging sounds likes fireworks going off in your helmet. It has around 550bhp which in a car weighing about the same as a Ford Focus is enough to capture and retain your attention.

We do perhaps six laps. The car feels fun but strangely unsettled. Up ahead Jaeger is going quite rapidly but I'm slightly irritated by the SLS's eagerness to run wide into corners and break loose at the back on the way out. This nervousness is a characteristic which the road-going SLS is well known to exhibit on race tracks, but I had expected Schneider and friends to have been able to exorcise it from the race car.





Back in the pits and slightly nonplussed, I explain as much to Schneider. He doesn't need to say anything as I can read the furrows in his brow well enough. He goes and talks technical to some people on the pitwall before leaning into Jaeger's car once more. Then the crew chief is on the horn: time to go again.

Within a lap I knew what had gone wrong. In their understandable eagerness to preserve the machinery, a pace had been set that, while apparently quick, was far too slow for the car. This time Jaeger was flying, using bits of track he had not been near before. It should have been far more difficult to keep up with him, but it wasn't. The car's tyres and brakes needed the energy now being put into them, the suspension the loadings it was now experiencing, the wings the air now flowing over them. Like all the best racing cars, it only felt right being driven flat out.

"Like all the best racing cars, it only felt right being driven flat out"

And now the Mercedes was brilliant. The closest rival I have driven is Aston Martin's V12, 6-litre DBRS9, a car that was never less than tricky and truculent no matter how you drove it. By contrast the SLS was forgiving, indulgent and outstandingly quick.

Why? Simply because Mercedes-Benz doesn't go racing to make up the numbers. It thinks not only how to make the car fast, but how to make it easy for customers, many of whom will be middle-aged amateurs like me, not seasoned professionals like Schneider. It's blinding over the kerbs, impeccably balanced at high speed, and if you do over-egg it at the exit and find your view of the track ahead best afforded through the Perspex side window, really rather accommodating as well.

All it cannot do is disguise its weight – not so much what there is, as where it is. This is a car with a very large engine at one end and a big gearbox at the other (albeit a massive 40 per cent lighter than the one in the road car), and it doesn't turn in to or accelerate away from corners with the agility and traction of a mid-engine car. Then again, for a car destined to spend much time long-distance racing, its less aggressive responses are just as likely to be welcomed as scorned.

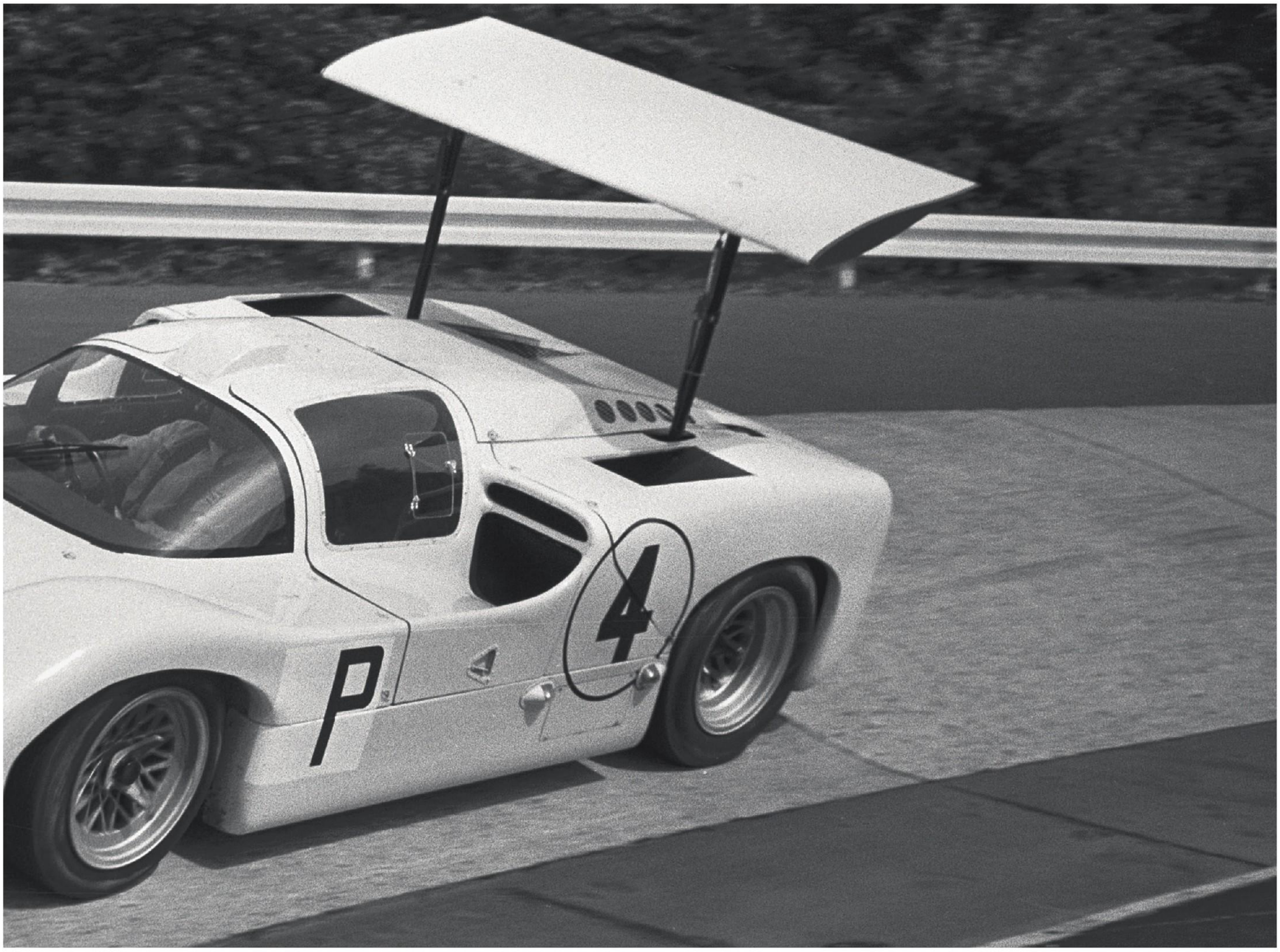
Back in the pits it's my face that needs no further explanation as Schneider's brow relaxes. I've driven GT3 cars that were quick but awkward like the Aston, and others that were lovely in all regards save the rather important requirement of being able to post a decent lap time (the GT3 Jaguar XKR in particular), but none capable of proving so fast and friendly at once.

In its first race at the end of last year, the SLS took on the assorted Porsches, Audis and Corvettes that make up the cream of this kind of racing and qualified third out of a field of over 200 at the old Nürburgring. It retired after a first-lap altercation while trying to take the lead. The next one it won outright.

By the time you read this it will have undergone full FIA homologation and will be embarking on its first full season, and if it's not a success I'll eat my laptop. Clearly the car is fast, and having ended up on the podium on its first 24-hour outing in Dubai in January, reliable too. But I think it has further appeal: even by GT3 standards it's a fabulous-looking car and if I was rich enough to consider one but had also to bear sponsorship in mind, I think its speed and looks plus the impeccable reputation and brand values of Mercedes-Benz might be just what I needed to clinch a deal.

Mercedes hopes to sell 20 SLSs to European teams this year before trying its luck in the US. My bet is that with a car like this, it's going to find itself very lucky indeed. Ⓜ

An AMERICAN



ABROAD

Texan Jim Hall twice made waves in Europe – first in a promising but short-lived F1 career, then as a team owner in sports cars with his innovative Chaparrals

BY GORDON KIRBY

If there is one thing that Jim Hall is renowned for, it's his revolutionary Chaparral Can-Am cars. For the best part of a decade, between 1963-70, a mind-blowing series of Chaparrals rewrote the book on closed-wheel sports car design, just as Colin Chapman's Lotuses revolutionised Formula 1. And like Chapman, Hall was a quick driver – but he went further, not only racing his own creations with great success, but also managing a Grand Prix career in parallel. In the end it was a terrible leg-breaking accident in the Can-Am round at Las Vegas in 1968 which ended his driving exploits.

An oil man from the bleak expanses of western Texas – Midland, to be exact – Hall graduated from the California Institute of »»»

All images LAT

Technology (CalTech) with an engineering degree and made good money to pursue his passion for fast cars. With his friend Hap Sharp he founded Chaparral, and built Rattlesnake Raceway, a two-mile test track on a windswept Texan plain outside the factory shop.

Hall's first race was in 1954 aboard his brother's Austin-Healey. He ran a Corvette occasionally while he was at college in California, but began competing seriously in 1959 in a pair of 'Birdcage' Maseratis and a Ferrari Monza. Two years later Hall and Sharp raced the first Chaparral – a front-engined Chevrolet-powered car much like a Scarab, built by Troutman and Barnes. For the next two years Hall and Sharp ran a pair of Chaparral 1s, with Jim claiming third in the 1961 Los Angeles Times GP at Riverside behind a pair of Cooper Monacos driven by no less than Jack Brabham and Bruce McLaren. Hall went one better in the following year's Times GP, beaten only by Roger Penske's Zerex/Cooper Special. Then there were victories in the 1962 Elkhart Lake sports car race in June and with Sharp in that September's 500-mile race at the same track.

Hall also ventured trackside in a brace of Lotuses, contesting the United States Grands Prix of 1960-62 as well as a selection of SCCA and USAC Formula Libre races. He finished seventh on his F1 debut at Riverside in the 1960 GP aboard his own Lotus 18, and won a USAC event at Indianapolis Raceway Park in '62 with the same car.

That led to Hall buying a Lotus 21 from Jack Brabham to race at Watkins Glen in 1962, but engine trouble kept him from starting. In the first Mexican GP – a non-championship race that year – he finished fourth behind Trevor Taylor/Jim Clark, Brabham and Innes Ireland. "I had quite a good run," Jim recalls. "The car handled well and the engine ran good. After that Ken Gregory called and asked if I was interested in doing a Formula 1 season."

Gregory, of course, was team manager of British Racing Partnership (BRP), which had run one car in 1962 – a Lotus 24 for Innes Ireland. At the time Hall and Sharp were embroiled in the design and construction of Chaparral 2, which they planned to race late in '63. The new Chaparral-Chevy was a mid-engined car with a bonded plastic monocoque chassis, automatic transmission and a sleek shape that would evolve rapidly over the coming years. The car occupied plenty of Hall's time and would define his career, but Jim couldn't turn down the chance to try F1. "There was a bit of soul-searching because we'd already started the Chaparral 2 and had a plan to develop those cars for Can-Am-type racing. But I finally decided that if I had a shot at F1, why not? So I said yes."

After doing Sebring in March 1963 with Sharp and one of the old Chaparral 1s, Hall moved to England with his wife Sandy for most of the rest of that year. They found a house in Surbiton near their friends Bruce and Patty McLaren, and about a 40-minute drive from BRP in Chelsea. The team had built its own monocoque car for Ireland to race in '63, while Hall drove a year-old tubeframe Lotus 24. At well over six feet, Jim didn't have an easy time fitting into those little 1.5-litre cars.

"I stuck out of the car a long way and had a hard time getting comfortable in it," he says. "We had to put an extra piece of windshield on and I'm not sure the rollbar was really adequate. Luckily, I didn't test it. The other thing was my feet were pretty close to the radiator and we didn't have the airflow out of it sealed up well enough to keep the heat off my feet. That gave me a problem. I had some blisters that I shouldn't have had, and I was pretty irritated about it, because it's distracting."

> "Bruce and I could have a hell of a race and then go to dinner and talk about it"

Hall struggled with a lack of torque from his carburetted BRM engines. "I did the best I could but I didn't have a particularly good car," he explains. "The engine didn't have much bottom-end power. I couldn't get it to run very good off slow corners, so I felt like I was at a disadvantage. Innes had fuel injection and I didn't realise how big an advantage that was until the race in Austria."

Jim's usual engine wasn't ready for the non-championship Austrian GP in September on the old Zeltweg airfield circuit, "So I got to run a fuel-injected engine there and I put it on the front row, which was fun. Brabham and I were on the front row and Innes was on row two. I understood after that race that there was quite a bit of difference in the way the injected engine ran on the bottom end."

Hall's best results came in the British and German Grands Prix. "I did have two reasonable finishes – a fifth at the Nürburgring and sixth at Silverstone – so I got some points and it was a really good experience. But it was trying in some ways. It rained during a few of the races. When you're having to learn all the circuits with no testing that made it hard. I was able to qualify at all the Grands Prix, I got that part done. It was good for me to see F1 from the inside and to recognise that those guys were just human like I was.

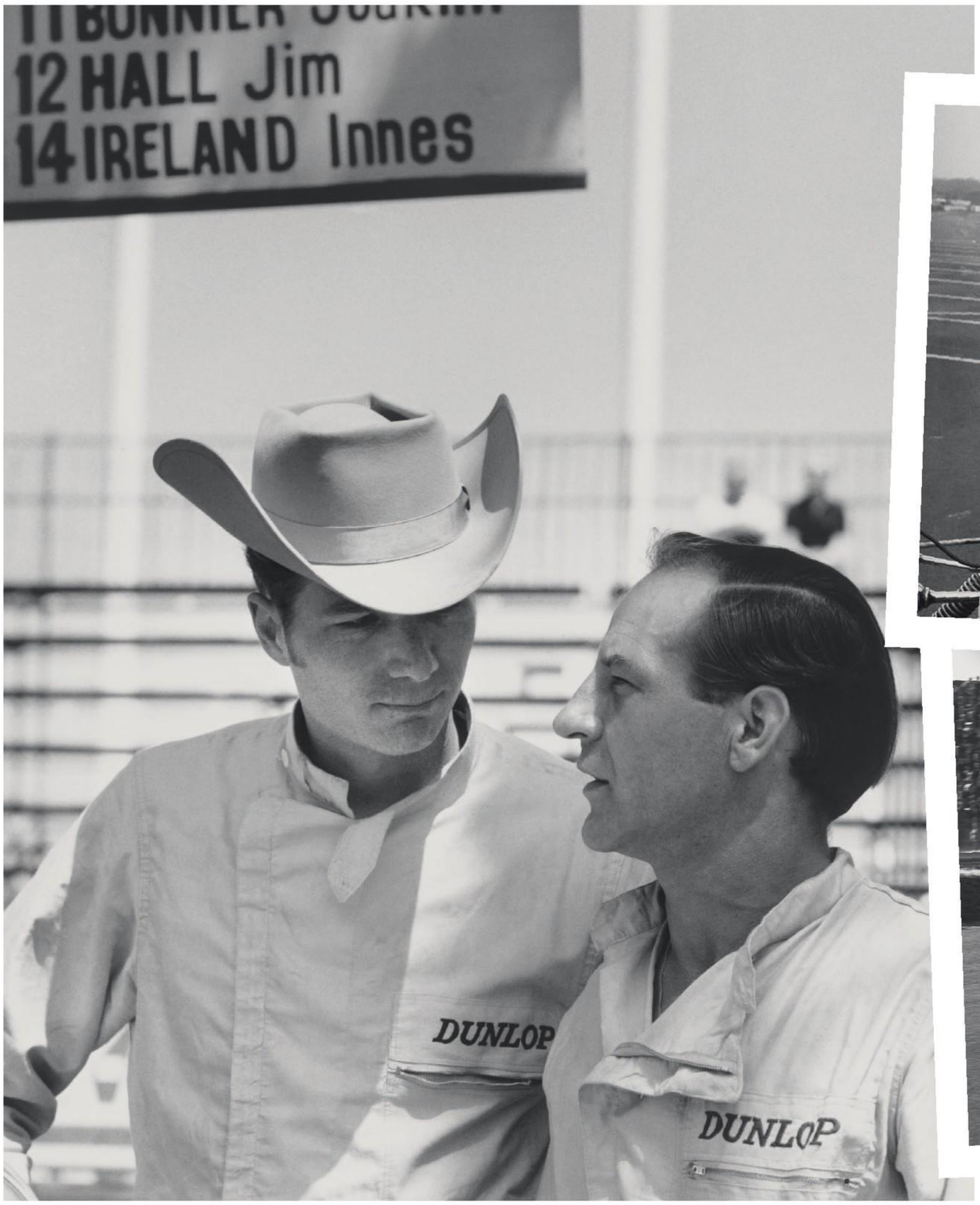
"Of course I got to know Bruce [McLaren], which was a wonderful thing because over the years we became really good friends. Sandy and me and Bruce and Patty palled around a lot that year. Bruce and I could have a hell of a race and then go out to dinner and talk about it and say, 'Your car is kind of crappy through this corner'."

Hall had similar respect for BRP team leader Ireland. "He was a real character, a wonderful guy. I really liked Innes, he was a real gentleman. I remember one day he really made friends with Sandy. We were at Reims and I was out running and it started to rain. Sandy climbed up on the pitwall, concerned that I hadn't come around, when a *gendarme* reached up and grabbed her. Innes was standing there and he just grabbed the *gendarme* and threw him off the pitwall. He said, 'Don't you ever touch a woman like that again!' It was the right thing to do and Sandy just thought it was the greatest thing because the *gendarme* had handled her improperly.

"Innes was fast and he was helpful to me. That was back in the days when the experienced guys would be your mentors. He was fun for us and he could be as wild as a March hare, too."

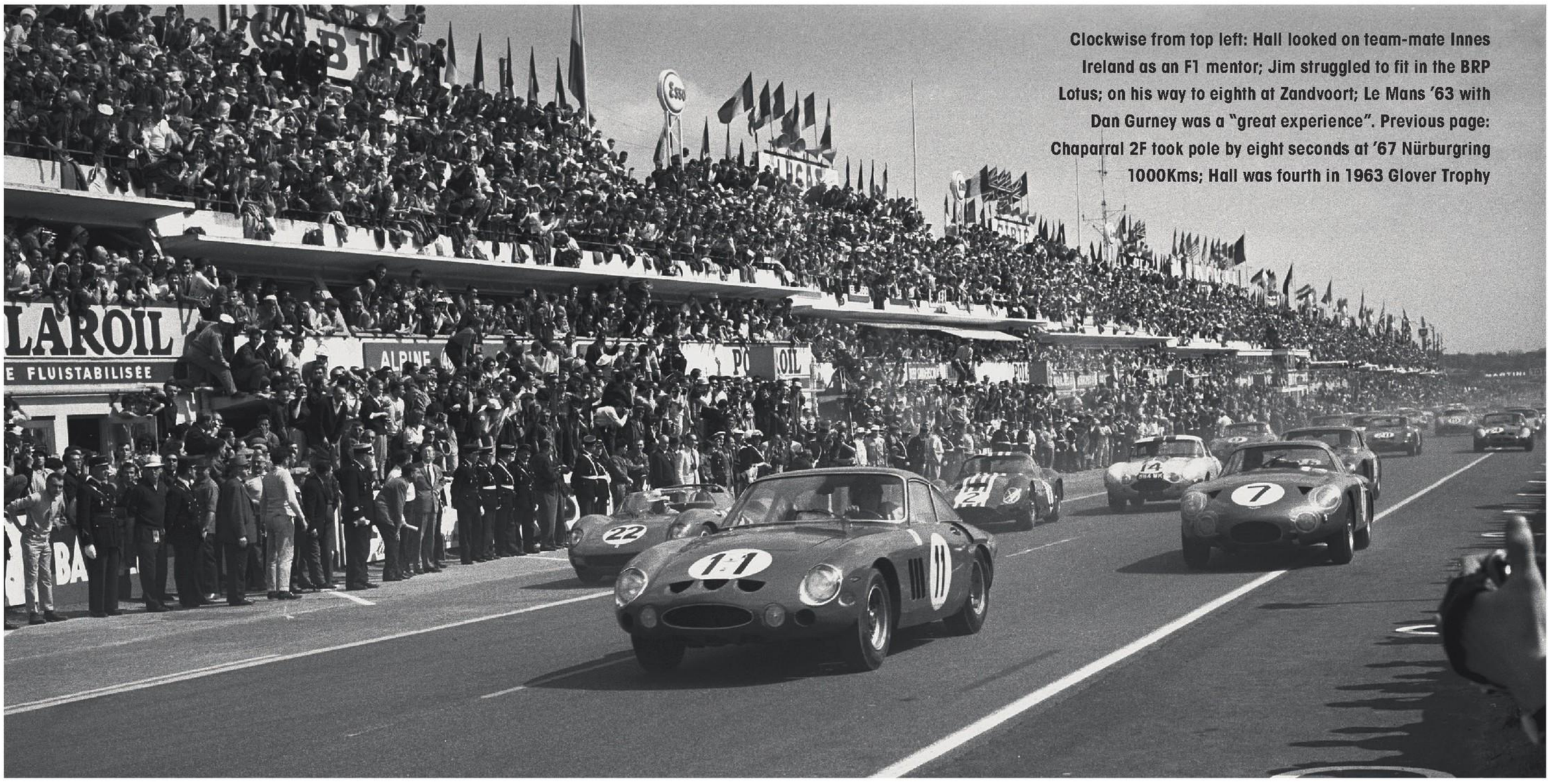
Hall's worst accident came at Spa, where he crashed amid a thunderstorm. "I was very fortunate," he recalls. "Of course, us Texans are familiar with thunderstorms. I saw it building and coming towards me. It was just spattering with a little rain when I first came by there, but it's a long lap and next time around I could see that it was definitely raining, so I thought I'd better be pretty damn cautious when I went over the top of the hill and started down the straightaway toward Burnenville. I stuck it in fifth gear and kind of cruised, but when I hit the water it was just a downpour, and bam!

"The car got waterborne and started spinning, so I put my foot on the brake to see if I could lock it up and keep it going down the road. I went around once, maybe twice, and it came around pointing in what I thought ➤➤➤









Clockwise from top left: Hall looked on team-mate Innes Ireland as an F1 mentor; Jim struggled to fit in the BRP Lotus; on his way to eighth at Zandvoort; Le Mans '63 with Dan Gurney was a "great experience". Previous page: Chaparral 2F took pole by eight seconds at '67 Nürburgring 1000Kms; Hall was fourth in 1963 Glover Trophy

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PORSCHE 997 / TURBO / C4S / C2S / C2

2008/09 - PORSCHE 997 TURBO COUPE MANUAL 2009 MODEL (GT SILVER METALLIC) 11,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior 'Sport Chrono Pack' (PCM/PSM/PASM/Touch Screen Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE Sports Suspension Sport Mode Xenon Headlights USB & IPOD Connection Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Turbo Alloys (OPC Service History)

2007 - PORSCHE 997 TURBO COUPE MANUAL (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 25,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior 'Sport Chrono Pack' (PCM/PSM/PASM/PCCB/Sat Nav/Tel. Module) BOSE Tracker Short Shifter Sunroof Sports/Electric/Memory Seats Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Turbo Alloy (OPC Service History)

2006 - PORSCHE 997 TURBO COUPE TIPTRONIC S (GT SILVER METALLIC) 22,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior 'Sport Chrono Pack' (PCM/PSM/PASM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE 6CD-Changer Cruise Control Sunroof Heated/Electric/Memory Seats Multifunction Steering Wheel Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Turbo Alloys (OPC Service History)

2010 - PORSCHE 997 C4S COUPE PDK (GEN II) (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 4,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior 'Sport Chrono Plus' (PCM/Voice Control/PSM/PASM/Touch Screen Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE I-Pod 6CD-Changer Sunroof Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Sport-Design Alloys (OPC Service History)

2006 - PORSCHE 997 C4S COUPE MANUAL (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 13,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior 'Sport Chrono Pack' (PCM/PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) Sport Suspension Sport Mode White Dials CD-Changer Parking Assist Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Sport Alloys (OPC Service History)

2007 - PORSCHE 997 C2S CABRIOLET MANUAL (ARCTIC SILVER METALLIC) 20,000 MILES.
Navy Leather Interior Navy Roof (PCM/PSM/PASM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE DVD Player/6CD-Changer Sports/Electric Seats Park Assist Multi-Function-Steering-Wheel Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Sport-Design Alloys (OPC Service History)

2006 - PORSCHE 997 C2S CABRIOLET MANUAL (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 27,000 MILES.
Full Black Leather Interior 'Sport Chrono Pack' (PCM/PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE 6CD Changer Heated/Sports Seats Rear Park Assistance Crested Headrests Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Carrera S Alloys (OPC Service History)

2005 - PORSCHE 997 C2S CABRIOLET MANUAL (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 65,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior 'Sport Chrono Pack' (PCM/PSM/PASM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE DVD/6CD-Changer Heated/Electric/Memory Seats Cruise Control Multi-function Steering Wheel Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Sport-Design Alloys (OPC Service History)

2006 - PORSCHE 997 C2S COUPE TIPTRONIC S (ARCTIC SILVER METALLIC) 34,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PCM/PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE CD-Changer Computer Sport Suspension Sports/Electric/ Memory Seats Park Assist Rear Wiper Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Classic Alloys (OPC Service History)

2005/6 - PORSCHE 997 C2S COUPE TIPTRONIC S (ARCTIC SILVER METALLIC) 20,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PCM/PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE CD-Changer Sports Exhaust Sports Suspension Sports/Heated Seats Parking Assistance Multifunction Steering Wheel Sunroof Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Carrera S Alloys (OPC Service History)

2005 - PORSCHE 997 C2S COUPE MANUAL (ARCTIC SILVER METALLIC) 31,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PCM/PSM/PASM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE DVD/6CD-Changer Short Shifter White Dials Sports Exhaust Airbag Deactivation Electric Seats/Sunroof Rear Park Assist Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Carrera Alloys (OPC Service History)

PORSCHE 996 / GT3 / GT2 / TURBO / C4S / C2 / C4

2003 - PORSCHE 996 GT2 COUPE MANUAL (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 31,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PCCB) Aluminum Pack GT2 Bucket Sports Seats Climate Control Xenon Headlights 18" Porsche GT2 Light-Weight Alloy Wheels (OPC Service History)

2002 - PORSCHE 996 GT2 COUPE MANUAL (POLAR SILVER METALLIC) 25,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PCCB/Sat Nav) CD Player Aluminum Pack Bucket Sports Seats Recent Service & New Tyres Park Assistance Climate Control Xenon Headlights 18" GT2 Light Weight Alloy Wheels (OPC Service History)

2003 - PORSCHE 996 TURBO COUPE TIPTRONIC – AERO KIT (MIDNIGHT BLUE METALLIC) 43,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PSM) BOSE Porsche Crested Headrests Rear Wiper CD Player Sports Seats Sunroof Alcantara Headlining Headlights Electric Sunroof Climate Control Xenon Headlights 18" Turbo Alloys (OPC Service History)

2001/2 - PORSCHE 996 TURBO COUPE MANUAL (MERIDIEN SILVER METALLIC) 44,000 MILES.
Mid Grey Leather Interior (PCM/PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE CD-Changer Sunroof White Dials Computer Climate Control Xenon Headlights 18" Turbo Alloys (OPC Service History)

2001 - PORSCHE 996 TURBO COUPE TIPTRONIC (ARCTIC SILVER METALLIC) 40,000 MILES.
Mid Grey Leather Interior (PCM/PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) Electric Memory Seats Electric Sunroof Climate Control Xenon Headlights 18" Turbo Alloys (OPC Service History)

2005 - PORSCHE 996 C4S COUPE TIPTRONIC S(MIDNIGHT BLUE METALLIC) 48,000 MILES.
Metropole Blue Leather Interior (PCM/PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE 6CD-Changer Switchable Sports Exhaust Aluminium Int.Trim/Threshold-Plates Electric/Heated/ Memory Seats Climate Control Xenon Headlights 18" Porsche Techno Alloys (OPC Service History)

2002 - PORSCHE 996 TARGA TIPTRONIC (SEAL GREY METALLIC) 74,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) BOSE CD-Changer Crested Headrests Full Carbon Pack Cruise Control Sports/Electric Seats Climate Control Xenon Headlights 18" GT3 Split-Rim Alloys (OPC Service History)

2002/3 - PORSCHE 996 C2 CABRIOLET MANUAL (MIDNIGHT BLUE METALLIC) 47,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PSM/Sat Nav/Tel.Module) Kenwood Stereo With MP3 & DVD Player Stereo Pack Sports/Heated Seats Aluminum Pack Uprated Radio System & CD-Changer Climate Control 18" Turbo Alloys (OPC Service History)

2002/3 - PORSCHE 996 C2 COUPE MANUAL (ARCTIC SILVER METALLIC) 46,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PSM) Porsche Radio with CD Player Heated Seats Rear Wiper Park Assistance Climate Control 18" Carrera Alloy Wheels (OPC Service History)

PORSCHE 993 / TURBO / C2S / C4S / C2 / C4 / TARGA

1997 - PORSCHE 993 TURBO COUPE MANUAL (FOREST GREEN METALLIC) 29,000 MILES.
Cashmere Leather Interior Full Carbon Fibre Pack Rear Roof Spoiler White Dials Electric Sunroof/Seats Sports Seats Rear Wiper Lightweight Pedals Stainless Steel Kick-Plates Turbo Red Calipers Climate Control 18" Split Rim Multi Spoke Alloys (OPC Service History)

1995 - PORSCHE 993 TURBO COUPE MANUAL (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 51,000 MILES.
Grey Leather Interior On-Board Computer Electric Sunroof/Seats Sports Seats Rear Wiper Uprated Sony CD Radio Nokia Digital Sound System Sports Seats Turbo Red Calipers Full Climate Control 18" Alloy Wheels (OPC Service History)

1996 - PORSCHE 993 TURBO COUPE MANUAL(MIDNIGHT BLUE METALLIC) 67,000 MILES.
Classic Grey Leather Interior Rear Roof Spoiler Electric Sunroof/Seats Sports Seats Rear Wiper Uprated Sony Stereo/CD Player Turbo Red Calipers Full Climate Control 18" Porsche Turbo Alloy Wheels (OPC Service History)

1996 - PORSCHE 993 C4S COUPE MANUAL (IRIS BLUE METALLIC) 59,000 MILES.
Marble Grey Leather Interior with Blue Dash Sunroof On Board Computer Electric Seats Sony Radio & CD-Changer Electric Windows/Mirrors Rear Wiper Porsche Climate Control 18" Turbo Alloys (OPC Service History)

1996 - PORSCHE 993 C2 TARGA TIPTRONIC S (MIDNIGHT BLUE METALLIC) 68,000 MILES.
Klassik Grey Leather Interior Uprated Blaupunkt DAB/CD Player Rear Windscreen Wiper Immobiliser Electric Targa-Top Roof Electric Windows/Mirrors Electric Seats Climate Control 17" Porsche Alloy Wheels (OPC Service History)

1995 - PORSCHE 993 C2 COUPE MANUAL (RS-SPEC) (MIDNIGHT BLUE METALLIC) 58,000 MILES.
Marble Grey Leather Sports Seats Sunroof CD Radio RS Specification Onboard Computer Electric Windows/Mirrors/ Sunroof Sports Seats Rear Wiper Climate Control New 18" Porsche Turbo Alloy Wheels & Tyres (OPC Service History)

1995 - PORSCHE 993 C2 COUPE TIPTRONIC (SLATE GRAY METALLIC) 81,000 MILES.
Slate Gray Metallic Full Black Leather Interior On Board Computer Electric Windows/ Mirrors/Sunroof Climate Control 18" Porsche Turbo Alloy Wheels (OPC & Specialist Service History)

1994 - PORSCHE 993 C2 CABRIOLET TIPTRONIC (RIVIERA BLUE) 82,000 MILES.
Metropole Blue Leather Interior Electric Windows/Mirrors/Hood Turbo Rear Spoiler & RS Front Spoiler (Original Spoilers & Bumper Included Also Painted Riviera Blue) Climate Control 16" Porsche Carrera Alloy Wheels (OPC & Specialist Service History)

1988 - PORSCHE 911 CARRERA 3.2 COUPE MANUAL (GRAND-PRIX WHITE) 88,000 MILES.
Navy Leather Interior/White Piping Sports/Electric Seats Pioneer Stereo & CD-Changer Rear Wiper Sunroof Porsche Fuchs 16" Alloy Wheels (OPC & Specialist Service History)

PORSCHE BOXSTER Model Types 2.5 / 2.7 / 3.2 S

2008 - PORSCHE BOXSTER 'S' 3.4 MANUAL SPORT EDITION 300 (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 12,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior 2 Owners From New White Dials Heated/Sports Seats Porsche Radio & CD Changer 19" Porsche Sport Alloys (OPC Service History)

2007 - PORSCHE BOXSTER S MANUAL (BASALT BLACK METALLIC) 3,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (PCM) (PSM) (Sat Nav) (Telephone Module) BOSE CD Player I-POD Connection Electric/Heated Seats White Dials Passenger Air-Bag Deactivation Climate Control Xenon Headlights 19" Carrera S Alloys (OPC Service History)

FERRARI Models from 1970 +

2004 - FERRARI 360 SPIDER F1 (TOUR-DE-FRANCE BLUE METALLIC) 16,000 MILES.
Sabbia Leather Interior Aluminium Brake Calipers Pack Daytona Seats Full Ferrari Service History Major Service Just Carried Out All Original Keys & Alarm Fobs Present All Original Manuals Present Tracker 18" Ferrari Alloys (Full Ferrari Main Dealer Service History)

1998 - FERRARI 550 MARANELLO COUPE MANUAL (SILVER METALLIC) 53,000 MILES.
Full Leather Interior Satellite Navigation with DVD ASR Sports Mode Electric Seats Upgraded Radio & 6 CD-Changer Climate Control (Full Ferrari Main Dealer Service History)

1995 - FERRARI F355 SPIDER MANUAL (GIALLO MODENA YELLOW) 26,000 MILES.
Full Black Leather Interior Electric Sports Seats Climate Control Sports Suspension 18" Ferrari Alloys (Full Ferrari Main Dealer Service History)

1976 - FERRARI 308 GT4 COUPE MANUAL (ROSSO RED) 84,000 MILES.
Rosso Red Cream Leather with Red Carpet Electric Mirrors Electric Windows 16" Ferrari Alloys (Full Ferrari Main Dealer Service History)

1972 - FERRARI DINO 246 GT (WHITE-ORIGINAL PAINT) 38,000 MILES.
One Owner over the last 35 years One of approximately 400 RHD cars only manufactured by Ferrari Black Leather Interior Electric Windows (Complete Service History)

1967 - FERRARI 275 GTB/4 MANUAL LHD (ARGENTO SILVER METALLIC) 59,000 MILES.
Full Black Leather Interior Detailed Restoration History Full History Original Build Sheets/Sales Invoice/Tool Kit/Wallet/Hand Books Numerous Concourse & Awards Winner Engine Rebuilt By Ferrari In Johannesburg 26,000 KMS Ago Comprehensive photos showing The Repaint & Work Done By Ferrari Exceptional Condition Throughout

CLASSICS

1991 - AC COBRA LIGHTWEIGHT (BLACK METALLIC) 5,000 MILES.
1 of 26 RHD Lightweights Black Leather Black Metallic Coachwork with White Stripes Full Black Leather Interior Full Weather Equipment Absolutely Stunning Condition Very Rare With Approximately ONLY 28 Vehicles Manufactured.

1991 - AC COBRA LIGHTWEIGHT (SPEED YELLOW) 9,000 MILES.
Black Leather, 1 of 26, RHD, Lightweight's, Previously Owned By Rod Stewart 1st Class Specification Previously Owned By Rod Stewart 9,000 Miles Yellow Coachwork With White Stripes Full Black Leather Trim Full Weather Equipment Side Exhausts AC/Shelby Alloy Wheels Blue Printed Engine Roll Bar Many Extras

1974 - JAGUAR E - TYPE V12 OPEN TWO SEATER MANUAL (BLACK METALLIC)
Full Black Leather Interior Royal Blue Mohair Hood 5.3 Litre V12 Engine Convertible Full Body-Off Restoration Convertible Metallic Black Full Black Leather Interior Royal Blue Mohair Hood 5.3 Litre V12 Engine Manual Transmission Convertible Full Body-Off Restoration

1969 - JAGUAR E-TYPE 4.2 FIXED HEAD COUPE MANUAL (SERIES 2) (BRITISH RACING GREEN) 16,000 MILES.
4.2 Litre Series 2 British Racing Green Coachwork Light Green Leather Interior Wood Rim Steering Wheel 15" Wire Spoke Alloy Wheels Superb Recent Ground-Up Restoration. Stunning Condition

1962 - JAGUAR 3.8 MARK II SALOON AUTOMATIC LHD (BLACK) 16,478 MILES.
Automatic Black Coachwork Red Leather Interior Power Assisted Steering Wire Wheels. Recent Restoration To Virtually Concours Standard

1936 - BENTLEY 41/4 PILLARLESS COUPE (MIDNIGHT BLUE)
Grey Leather Gurney Nutting Coachwork 1 Owner 40 Years Extensive History A True Classic Completely Original Throughout & Has Been Exhibited At Luois Vuitton Concours D'Elegance In Paris 2003. Full Mid-Grey Leather Interior Sunroof Produced By Gurney Nutting Chassis # 25HM Engine Number F8BA Completely Original Throughout

1964 - PORSCHE 356 SC COUPE LHD (SIGNAL RED)
1600cc Signal Red Coachwork Soft Beige Leather Interior Left Hand Drive 4 Speed Manual. Recent Restoration To Concours Standard Eligible For Many European Events

OTHER VEHICLES

2006 - MINI COOPER S (WORKS GP) MANUAL (THUNDER BLUE METALLIC) 32,000 MILES.
Recaro Black Leather Interior 6-Speed-Manual Mini Works Spoiler/Body Addenda/Limited Slip Differential Recaro Heated Seats Multifunction Steering Wheel CD Changer Climate Control Xenon Headlights GP 18" Alloy Wheels (Full Mini Service History)

2002 - MINI COOPER S 1.6 MANUAL (SILVER METALLIC) 33,000 MILES.
Black Leather Interior (Sat Nav/Tel.Module) Multifunction Steering Wheel On-Board Computer CD Radio Xenon Headlights Sunroof Rear Park Assist Rear Wiper 17" Mini Alloys (Full Mini Service History)

1996 - ALFA ROMEO 146 2.0 TI 5DR MANUAL (RED)
Red Coachwork 5 Door Hatchback ABS Electric Mirrors/Windows Power Assisted Steering. Folding Rear Seats Immobiliser Sports Seats Body Coloured Bumpers Steering Wheel Reach Adjustment Alloy Wheels

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established 1952



Post-F1, Hall returned to Chaparral, whose 2D won '66 Nürburgring 1000Kms with Phil Hill and Jo Bonnier

was the right direction. I thought if I took my foot off the brake I might be able to drive it out of there, but it caught an edge and shot off the road to the left near the corner."

This was before the days of guardrails and run-off areas, and Hall's car slewed into a stack of firewood and a pair of large oil drums next to a house where the resident was sitting on his porch, watching the race. "I took all four wheels off the car on these 55-gallon drums and knocked all the firewood out of the way. The wood was stacked about three or four feet above my head. Amazingly, I didn't get hit by any of it and was just sitting upright on the ground in what was left of the car without any wheels on it."

The Burnenville burgher helped Jim climb out of the wreckage. "I felt around to see if there was any blood or broken bones and this guy rapped me on the shoulder, shook me and said, 'Do you want a beer?' He helped me out of the car and I went and sat on his porch. His house was right on the road, and I drank a couple of beers with him until the race was over.

"Nobody knew what was going on because there were no radios or communication systems in those days. I think three or four cars left the road on that lap and nobody knew what had happened until the end of the race when the guys got in their lorry and came around looking for us. Sandy was with them and she figured I was dead or hurt bad, and there I was drinking beer with this guy. She damn near killed me because she didn't know what was going on. That was the worst accident I had over there and I didn't get injured. I was really lucky."

Le Mans followed the next weekend where Hall was invited to drive a 4.1-litre NART Ferrari 330LM coupé with Dan Gurney. The experienced Gurney started the race and got the car into the top six before Hall took over, keeping with the leaders until a little after 1am when the rear axle failed. Jim pushed the car to the pits but to no avail. "I always had a lot of respect for Dan's ability and I was really pleased to run with him. It wasn't very exciting at the end, but it was a great experience with Dan."

> "It was exciting to learn all those turns at the Nürburgring"

In August, prior to the German Grand Prix, Hall spent the best part of a week learning the Nürburgring in his Mini-Cooper. "You could drive around the track for one Deutschmark. Sandy would find a sunny spot on the side of a hill and have a book to read, and I'd make laps until I got hungry. We'd go get a sandwich at the hotel and then come back, and I'd do laps for a couple more hours or as long as I could stand it. I did that for several days until I thought I had a darn good idea of where the road went. I worked at it hard."

Official practice went well, Jim putting in many laps before going on to enjoy his best race of the year. "I didn't qualify as well as at some of the other tracks because I think it's just more difficult. But I did learn it pretty much by the time the race started, and I stayed out of trouble and picked up some places and ended up with a good finish. It was an exciting place to go and learn all those turns."

Hall's last F1 race was in Mexico, where he finished eighth. "After Watkins Glen BRP ran out of money and didn't go to South Africa which was the last race. We did the Mexican GP and that was the end of it. Ken Gregory had been talking about not having enough money, they didn't have any sponsorship that year."

There were no offers from any other teams for 1964, and by now the Chaparral 2 was ready to race in the sports car rounds at Riverside, Laguna Seca and Kent near Seattle. Formula 1 had come and gone for Hall. "I was excited about the Chaparral. I thought we had a really good plan and I enjoyed life more in the United States than in England or Europe. There I was, a kid from the American southwest who had run maybe three races where it rained, and I was over there trying to learn how to be one of the top race drivers in the world at places where it rains most of the time.

"It was a tough year, plus there was the realisation that nobody walked up to me and said, 'God, Hall! You did so good we'd sure like you to drive for us.' BRP was underfinanced and they weren't sure what they were going to do, so I just felt like the right thing for me to do was to get busting on the Chaparral project and get it finished."

Hall gave the first Chaparral 2 its debut in the LA Times GP at Riverside in October, taking pole and running away with the race before an electrical problem intervened. In 1964 Hall and his Chaparral swept the United States

Road Racing Championship, winning four races with Sharp adding a fifth. The pair kicked off '65 by winning the Sebring 12 Hours, then dominated the USRRC again with Hall winning six races and Sharp two. They also combined to win Elkhart Lake's 500-mile race, and overall scored 16 wins from 21 races.

"By '65 the Chaparral was good and reliable, and I pretty much had the measure of everybody. I wouldn't trade it for anything. I learned an awful lot and we accomplished a lot. People ask why we were successful and I say because we worked hard at it. We tried to learn and not make the same mistake too many times. It was a great time in my life. It was fun too, because there were always some differences of opinion, and a small team like ours was really tight-knit. In those days we could have a major impact on the sport with just a few guys. Nowadays these teams have I don't know how many engineers and management people.

"We were a little isolated down where we lived, and I was fortunate to find some good guys who were loyal and stayed with us. Troy Rogers, Franz Weis and Gary Knutson were a pretty tight bunch for a while and I don't think that happens so much anymore. The teams are so big and people get offers to go someplace else and there's a lot more money in it, and that makes a lot of difference."

> "There was a lot of camaraderie. It was an enjoyable time"

In 1966 Hall's focus fell on the new Can-Am series, but the Chaparral team also raced in Europe from '66-67, running the long-distance sports car races. Sharp managed the sports car team from Opel's test facility in Austria, while Hall spent most of his time driving, testing and managing the Can-Am team, stretching the pair's small operation to the maximum. Still, Phil Hill and Jo Bonnier won the 1966 Nürburgring 1000Kms aboard a Chaparral 2D, and Hill and Mike Spence drove a winged 2F to victory in the 1967 Brands Hatch Six Hours.

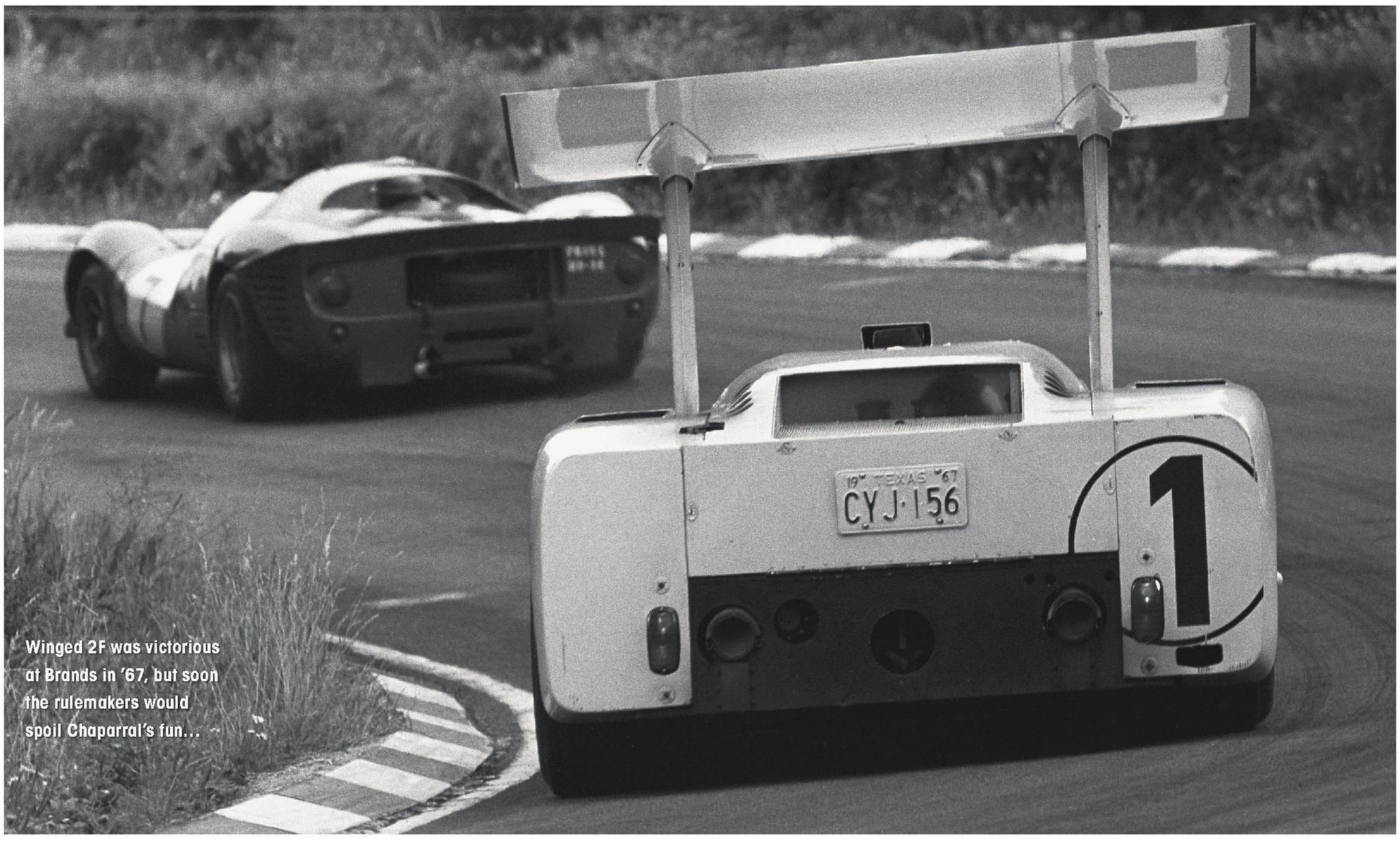
"We tried to do more than we could, really," admits Hall. "I think that that did bring our finishing performance down, which was too bad. We were lucky to have had some good success, particularly at the Nürburgring. I'm real proud of that.

"We struggled a lot in '67 because the transaxle was just not up to the big-block Chevy. We were way behind. We had to get a bigger bearing into the transaxle and there wasn't one available to fit. The cars were plenty quick, and I think we had the rest of it pretty well figured out. We had enough tyre, we had enough brake. The car was pretty effective but we just couldn't keep them going."

Of course at the end of that year, following much success for the Ford and Chaparral teams, the FIA cut the engine limit to five litres. That brought an end to both sports car teams. "We would have continued for sure if they hadn't changed the rules," says Hall. "We put a pretty big investment into it, and Hap was sincere about it. He really wanted to do that series."

It's interesting that the '60s spawned so many top drivers like McLaren, Brabham, Surtees, Gurney and Hall who were also car builders and development engineers – an era long gone from top-level motor racing. Hall remembers his rivals as friends who were eminently fair but tough competitors. "They were all guys you could stick a wheel right up next to, or vice versa, and you'd have no concern that they would take you out. Totally different than today. Dan, Bruce, John Surtees and Jack Brabham were fabulous people. So were guys like Phil [Hill] and Jimmy Clark. You respected them for the way they treated you as a human being. There was a lot of competition, a lot of camaraderie. It was a very enjoyable time."

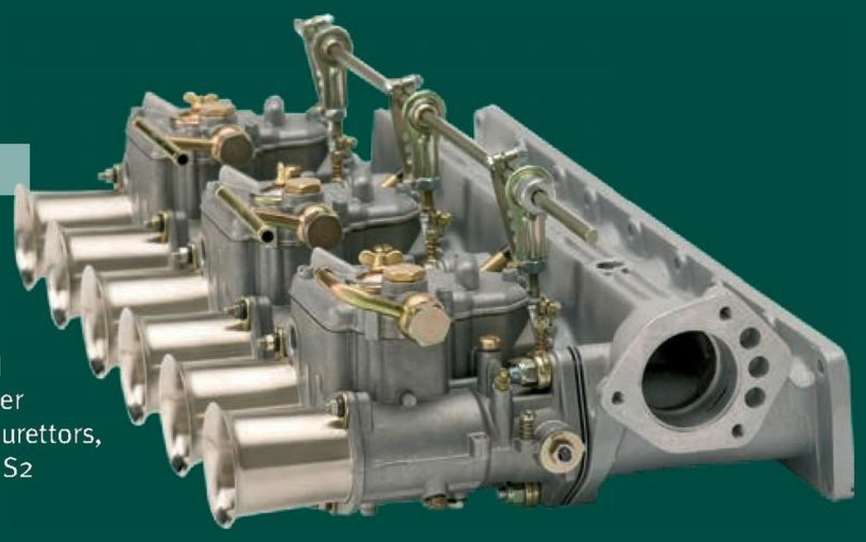
Let's not forget that following the Chaparral era Hall went on to win three consecutive American F5000 titles as a partner with Carl Haas in Haas/Hall Racing, with Brian Redman driving. Hall also won two Indy 500s as a team owner with Al Unser in a Lola in 1978, and with Johnny Rutherford driving the Pennzoil Chaparral 2K in 1980. Four years later Hall retired, but Pennzoil brought him back to run an Indycar team in the early '90s, first for John Andretti and then Gil de Ferran, who scored his first Indycar win with Hall's team at Laguna Seca in 1995. In many ways, Jim Hall is one of racing's true giants.



Winged 2F was victorious at Brands in '67, but soon the rulemakers would spoil Chaparral's fun...

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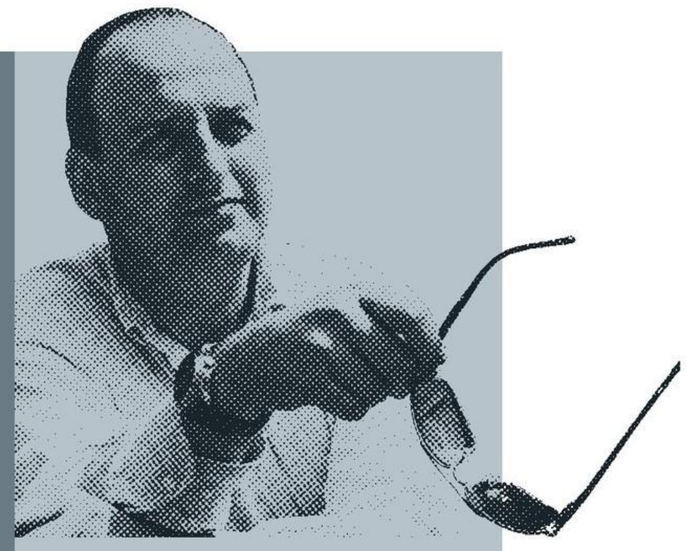
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Road cars



by Andrew Frankel

Found myself wanting to throw things at the television this morning when a campaigner from Brake, the self-styled road safety charity, was on the news crowing about Oxfordshire's decision to turn its speed cameras on again, despite the absence of proof that the rise in accidents and injuries since they had been turned off was anything more than coincidental.

In fact I expect it's not, though the evidence cited that average speeds had risen past cameras the public knew no longer to be operating was one of the more blinding glimpses of the bleeding obvious to have been broadcast of late.

But they miss the point entirely. Campaigning for speed cameras (or 'cameras for the community' as Brake nauseatingly puts it) is Elastoplast politics. With the ever-widening use of portable navigation systems – not to mention local knowledge – people know where the cameras are, slow down before them and speed up as soon as they are past.



Shutterstock

This may indeed prevent a few accidents if the cameras are genuinely sited in areas where there are real problems, rather than just past the 30mph board where the police know it can make most money. What it won't do is educate people not to drive dangerously in the first place. Charities like Brake are fond of screaming 'Speed kills' because as a phrase it's short, unambiguous and impactful. The fact that it's simply not true appears to be neither here nor there. Speed never killed anyone, only its inappropriate use.

This is not semantics. If you went driving with most professional road testers as they assessed a bunch of supercars on the public road, you would be amazed not only by how fast they went at times, but also how slowly. Through towns and villages, past schools and sports grounds, you'll find no more saintly bunch. But we're lucky: it's what we do, the one thing we're meant to be reasonably good at.

Understandably others need some help. Yet teenagers are spilt onto our roads by a system that thinks it's OK for them to take charge of a tonne of metal capable of travelling at over 100mph without training them to drive at night, in the rain or even on a motorway. And then, once these hormone-laden youngsters have made it through their entirely inadequate driving test, they can spend the next half-century forgetting what little they've learned and picking up as many bad habits as they like. And what do we get? A mono-dimensional Brake banging on about speed cameras.

What we need is road safety education in the classroom from the moment children go to secondary school. We need a test that actually tests, and then far bigger incentives for people to seek re-training at regular intervals throughout their lives on the road.

So much of the bad and dangerous driving that takes place on our roads is not the result of hooligan or criminal behaviour, but a simple lack of rigour on the part of the person behind the wheel, a direct result of a lack of relevant education.

Bad driving is not a disease, it is merely a symptom. And until we decide prevention is better than cure, I'm going to continue to want to throw things at my television.

Fascinating chats with Ferrari engineers at the launch of the FF. As all appear to have been to the Francis Urquhart school of media management, extracting concrete information from them is not easy, but I did manage to elicit sufficient along the lines of 'you might think that but I couldn't possibly comment' to be able to say the following about the replacement for the 599GTB with reasonable confidence.

The car will be unveiled next year and will continue to be architecturally conventional, that is to say it will be a two-seat, rear-drive sports car with a V12 engine in its nose and its gearbox between the rear wheels. You could have said the same about the Daytona in 1968. Moreover while rivals from Lamborghini, McLaren, Pagani and so on have all embraced structural carbon fibre, the new 599 will continue to campaign the cause of aluminium, both for its body and spaceframe.

The engine will be a further development of the 651bhp, direct-injection V12 used in the FF, with an output almost certain to top 700bhp. Bear in mind that without direct injection, this engine has already given 880bhp in the Enzo-based FXX Evoluzione track car. The car will also be slightly but significantly lighter than the 599GTB. It is almost certain not to use the FF's all-wheel-drive hardware even though Ferrari has made it clear it's intended for use in more than one car: expect to find it in the next generation of California.

And as for the next Enzo, Ferrari will admit only to working actively on the car. However, one engineer did venture that the world was a very different place to that which greeted the Enzo and that this was a challenge to which Ferrari would be rising. If it doesn't make an Enzo look like a moped, I'll be surprised.



No one appears interested in my one-man campaign to rid the world of the soft-roader. These hateful devices that try to combine elements of conventional cars and off-roaders and end up ruining two perfectly serviceable concepts are spreading out of control.

Porsche has said it's going to build one called the Cajun to fit in with its similarly spicily entitled Cayenne big sister, though rumours (started by me) of a hot version called the Scotch Bonnet are sadly wide of the mark. Jaguar is eyeing up the concept closely, Alfa has all but committed to making one, and now I understand that Maserati has one up its sleeve too.

It's so depressing. These fashionable trinkets are bought by people wishing to stand out from the crowd without realising that if everyone does that, all you get is a taller crowd. They ignore not the argument but the simple physical fact that these higher, heavier cars will always be slower and more wasteful than conventional alternatives in an age where we're meant to be building cars that are more efficient than ever.

Sooner or later they'll fall from grace and, like flares and kipper ties, people will wonder what on earth it was that persuaded them to buy one in the first place. But not soon enough for me.

But most galling of all is the Land Rover Evoque (above). This is the ultimate soft-road fashion accessory – the anti-Defender if you like, the antithesis of honest-to-goodness, hose-out-the-interior Land Rover authenticity. You don't have to buy it with four-wheel drive, and when I recently spent a day being introduced to the car at an engineering level, I received a presentation all about its 17-speaker Meridian sound system.

And then I was taken out to the test track and, for a few minutes, got to drive it. To my total horror I thought it utterly brilliant. Space precludes further details now, but if you can bear with me, I'll tell you why next month.

MY MOTORING MONTH



Jeff Bloxham

THE LITTLE SPIDER THAT COULD HAVE SPARED SKODA

GOODWOOD'S ANNUAL PRESS day for the Festival of Speed is famously bigger than the original Festival. I always arrive in the hope of being dropped into something interesting for a run up the hill. No disappointments this year when I was ushered towards a sleek '50s sports car which, to my great surprise, turned out to be a Skoda.

Shamed as I am to admit it, I knew nothing about this pretty little spider but was told it had been designed for Le Mans and just three were built in 1958, of which two survive. Stuck behind the Iron Curtain competing successfully at local level when it should have been on the big stage, it made it to France when intrepidly driven out of captivity from Czechoslovakia to the UK, where it's since stayed.

Beneath that pretty shape lies a tubular steel chassis that looks large and heavy for such a small car, but what caught my eye was its 1100cc engine. With twin cams, twin sparks and twin carbs it must have been state-of-the-art for its class in the era.

Shovelled aboard (onlookers said it looked like a pedal car with all 6ft 4in of me at its helm) I was shown how to start it and left to my own devices. You can't divine the true character of a car based on under a minute at full chat, but I found the engine produces enough steam to provide unlikely performance even with me and a similarly large passenger on board, aided by a crisp rear-mounted five-speed dog-leg transmission which is more than you might find in a Testa Rossa of the same age. It seemed to handle nicely, steering accurately and free of body roll. But it's as well I tried the brakes before the start otherwise I might have become the infamous Molecomb corner's latest victim. Even by the standards expected of 1950s drums, it barely stopped at all.

What a shame this Skoda never had the competition history its talents deserved. If it had done as well as its specification suggests, it might have led to other things and a rather different view of the company in later years. Who knows, it might have even saved Skoda some or all of those jokes.



REAL FUN IN A 911 AND THURGOOD'S HISTORIC SERIES

BEST DRIVE OF THE YEAR SO far came not in some slice of exotica but my old 911, a 1981 SC that someone once lovingly turned into a fairly credible RS replica, while mildly modifying its 3-litre engine. The destination was Silverstone and the media launch of Julius Thurgood's Historic Racing Drivers' Club.

It's about 120 miles from home, through the Cotswolds, and if you leave at 6am on a Saturday you can have that part of England pretty much to yourself. Keep to the yellow roads, respect village speed limits and you can do what you like without fear of cameras, traffic or dirty looks.

The good news is that Thurgood has all but filled his grids for his inaugural race meeting at Brands, which will have run by the time you read this. In an age where too many historic racers take themselves a bit too seriously, his idea of fun-loving, affordable, grassroots racing is just what's needed. Overwhelmingly, we're a bunch of middle-aged men looking for some weekend recreation in the company of like-minded individuals. We should fix photos of our greying, paunchy selves to the dashboard to remind us who's doing the driving.



WORTH SPLASHING OUT FOR ASTON'S LATEST EFFORT

ASTON MARTIN'S ATTEMPTS to wring ever more models from the same platform have now resulted in the Vantage S which, if looks were the only guide, seems a poor excuse for slapping over £10,000 on the price of the standard car.

What, then, is your £102,500 buying? Well, there's another 10bhp made meaningful only by being coupled to a 30kg drop in weight. There are bigger brakes, revised suspension, fatter tyres, quicker steering, and, significantly, a new seven-speed Graziano paddle-shift gearbox.

It seems even better value when you drive it. I slithered around the Ascari Race Resort where it felt so much more taut, responsive and communicative than the standard car, with no compromise to comfort or civility.

I was also amazed by the way that its tyres withstood the punishment. Ten years ago if you drove a 1600kg car with this kind of power as hard and as long as you liked, you'd need specialist rubber. No longer: the Aston came on standard Bridgestones and, according to its engineers, so long as they're scrubbed when new, they'll put up with as much punishment as you can reasonably chuck at them.



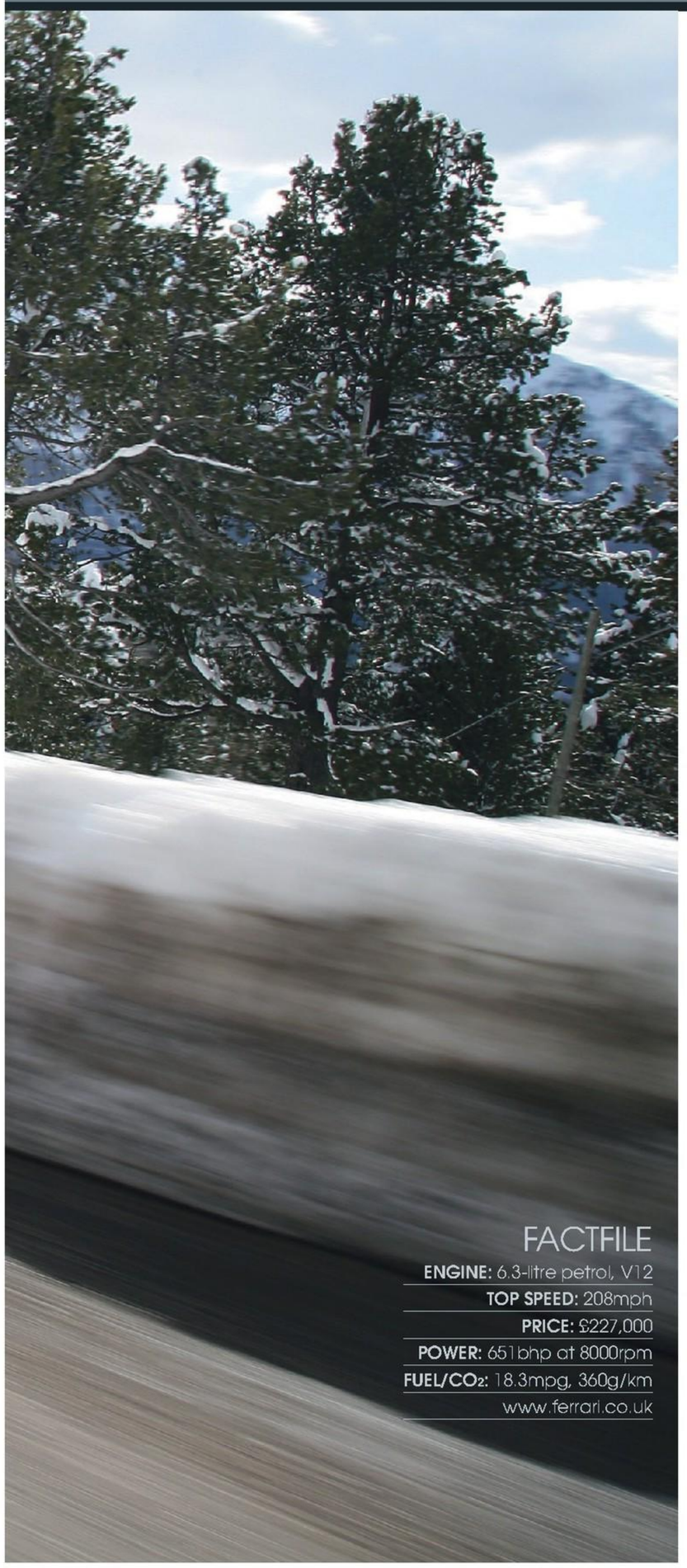
FERRARI FF

Ferrari may be experiencing patchy form on the track at the moment, but you have to look back to the early 1970s and the era of the 365GTB/4 and Dino 246GT to find an age when its road products were more assured than they are now. The 458 is outstanding and the 599 destined to be remembered as one of Ferrari's finest from any era.

By all objective measurements, Ferrari has excelled itself once again with its new FF or Ferrari Four, the number denoting both the number of adults it will comfortably carry and that – uniquely among its brethren – it directs its immense power to all four wheels.

Ferrari has always been less sure of itself building 2+2s than their purer, simpler, easier two-seat companions. There have been good ones – the gorgeous and still criminally underrated 365GTC/4 being one, the now cheap 456GT another. But so too have many failed to live up to Ferrari's usually supersonic standards: the whole 365GT series up to and including the 412i was dull and the 308GT/4 was comically cramped, while the most recent, the 612 Scaglietti, lacked both visual and dynamic charm.

The FF, however, sets out a step ahead of all its stablemates by offering the kind of genuine technical innovation you rarely see on a Ferrari. By taking advantage of the fact that all of the FF's motor lies behind the front wheel line, an all-wheel-drive system has been designed with no direct mechanical connection between the front and rear axles, nor any between the left and right front wheels. That means no centre or front differentials, nor any shaft taking drive from the transaxle gearbox at the back to the front. Instead a second, two-speed gearbox is mounted at the front of the engine with two clutches, taking up to 30 per cent of the drive to the front wheels in whatever proportion is required. The system is not only more efficient, it's 45kg lighter than a standard arrangement.



FACTFILE

ENGINE: 6.3-litre petrol, V12
TOP SPEED: 208mph
PRICE: £227,000
POWER: 651bhp at 8000rpm
FUEL/CO2: 18.3mpg, 360g/km
www.ferrari.co.uk

So while the FF remains rear-drive most of the time, the moment sensors detect an imminent loss of traction, the transmission at the front is engaged. It uses the lower of its two ratios while the car is in first or second, the higher for third and fourth, and carefully controlled slipping of the clutches (designed to last the lifetime of the car) to equalise the speed between the front and rear axles. In fifth gear or above the FF is rear-drive only.

Ferrari probably didn't need to helicopter a couple of FF's 7500ft up a Dolomite and hack an ice-track out of the snow to prove how well this system works, but I'm glad it did. On standard winter tyres the FF offered such ➤➤➤



New VXR8 much improved, but the price has soared

VAUXHALL VXR8

I ALWAYS LOVED THE IDEA of the Vauxhall VXR8 (or Monaro as it was called in two-door form). Of course neither was a Vauxhall at all, but a rebadged Holden, although this in no way compromised the promise of a large V8 powering a substantial yet simple saloon. There was something old school and honest about the proposition, not to mention the prospect of an adventure at every roundabout.

But the cars themselves disappointed. While others in the media found fun and thrills aplenty, the couple I drove felt slow, flabby and imprecise. At around £35,000 they were cheap, but deservedly so.

So I didn't get too excited by this new VXR8 despite its exterior styling changes and enhanced leather interior, nor even by the 425bhp of its fourth-generation 6.2-litre LS3 Chevrolet V8 power plant. This engine, despite its piston configuration and pushrod valve actuation, is merely inspired by the original and much-famed small block – in engineering terms they are unrelated. But at least the drive would be good: Geneva to Wales in a day.

But Vauxhall – or should I say Holden – has worked hard on the chassis side too, fitting magnetic dampers which respond to electronic impulses to change their response up to 1000 times a second. And it was a more taut yet better riding VXR8 that nosed its way from Switzerland into France.

I am a poor shadow of my once fearless self when it comes to cop-dodging on French autoroutes, at least during daylight hours. I lost big the last three times I played, so now I was content to park the VXR's cruise control at something within sight of legality and sit back to watch the world go by. And very nice it was too: the cabin remains an ergonomic joke, but if all you're going to do is sit there and watch several hundred miles flow under your wheels, it offers a remarkably quiet, civilised and comfortable vantage point. I was impressed.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 6.2-litre V8
TOP SPEED: 155mph (limited)
PRICE: £49,500
POWER: 425bhp at 4600rpm
FUEL/CO2: 20.9mpg, 320g/km
www.vauxhall.co.uk

But not half as impressed as when I got it over the Severn Bridge a mere 11 hours after leaving Geneva, including tunnel time. The V8 sounds as good as ever, but now the once horrid six-speed gearbox has had much of its mushiness removed, and the same is true of the chassis. Where once cracks appeared in its composure if you drove much beyond six-tenths, now you could drive as fast as seemed sensible in public and it would stay poised, progressive and incisive all the way. My delight at getting home was actually tinged with slight sadness that the journey was over.

Does this make it a car I can at last recommend? Sadly not. Because the biggest change to this VXR8 has nothing to do with mechanics or cosmetics, but the price. What was £35,000 two years ago is now £49,500 and in their entirety the upgrades do not come close to warranting the extra. Another five grand and you're into BMW M3 and Mercedes C63 AMG territory and far out of Holden's depth. A shame to have finally fixed the car after so long, only to provide the customer with an even bigger reason not to buy it.



FF has its merits, but busy steering wheel (right) is not one of them



outstanding traction you had constantly to remind yourself that it provided no such advantage in the braking department.

Back on firmer terra, I howled off around the mountains to find out more. The FF is almost exactly the same size and weight as a 612 but does a better job of disguising it because it's far more precise. Almost certainly this is a function of Ferrari's multi-link rear suspension, eschewing the beloved double wishbones that have featured on all its genuinely independent rear ends save the California. Because the new system offers greater control and a greater breadth of tuning possibilities, Ferrari has been able to be much more aggressive with spring and damper rates as well as tyre sidewall stiffness without compromising ride quality. All clever stuff.

But it pales somewhat next to its engine and transmission. Anyone who suggested Ferrari no longer makes the best motors in the world would emerge from the FF begging forgiveness. Although based on the unit used by the Enzo and 599GTB, its direct injection, all-new internals and even a new block mean this V12 can be considered an effectively new unit. It displaces 6.3 litres and, says Ferrari, develops 660 horsepower – or, put another way, exactly double the output of the 5-litre flat-12 used by the Boxer at the time of its death in 1984. And even if you're mean enough to quote in brake horsepower, 651bhp at 8000rpm is an epic output by almost any standard.

It runs through a seven-speed double-clutch





Getrag gearbox and while I will always lament Ferrari's decision to abandon three-pedal transmissions, if I have to have paddles, this is what I would choose.

The combined effect is mesmerising. If that noise were the last you ever heard, you'd arrive at the gates with your ears ringing, mouth stretched into an insane grin. In and out of the tunnels that pepper this part of the world, it's a dangerously addictive drug. As peak torque is developed right up at 6000rpm and because this is a normally aspirated engine producing



Ferrari took FF 7500ft up a Dolomite to show off all-wheel-drive system – and it was worth it!

well over 100bhp per litre, you might imagine it needs to be worked hard before it will give its best. In fact it's one of the most flexible supercar engines ever built, responsive from as little as 2000rpm, properly getting down to business at 3000rpm and at apparently maximum attack at 4000rpm, less than half its 8300rpm capability.

This is a car I could praise endlessly. The engine is loud only when you want it to be, otherwise it fits the FF's Grand Touring brief to perfection. It rides well enough and it really does have more room in the back than either a Bentley Continental GT or Aston Rapide, despite the latter's extra doors.

So you might think it a paragon of virtue. But it's not. Indeed the FF is flawed, and more so than you'd hope or expect of an all-purpose GT costing £227,000.

For all its capability, the chassis lacks the charm of the powertrain. The steering has been made too quick in an attempt to artificially induce a sense of agility into a car weighing 1880kg. As for the four-wheel-drive system, it's great at providing traction in extremis, less impressive at maintaining the same chassis balance from corner entry to exit. It's beautifully neutral on a trailing throttle, but inclined to understeer under power even if you turn off all the electronics.

In addition I found the TFT instruments unbecoming to a car most customers will option up to over £250,000. And Ferrari's insistence on cramming as many functions as possible onto the steering wheel just makes its customers look like sad, wannabe racing drivers. The reason Formula 1 cars have such crowded wheels is because they don't have dashboards and there's nowhere else for these controls to be sited. In a massive GT with vast expanses of facia, this could hardly be further from the case. Letting form rule function in an area as critical as this does nothing to dispel the impression that the car is aimed at those who care more about how they look than how it drives.

The trick with the FF is not to think what else that money could buy, such as a long-wheelbase Mercedes S-class limousine, a Porsche 911 GT3 and a Range Rover. Those who can afford an FF will probably have these cars or their equivalents already. Instead they will buy it because they want not only a Ferrari, but one they can use in all conditions. And they won't be disappointed. The FF is an outstanding GT with a landmark engine and a very clever means of putting its power on the Tarmac, snow or whatever surface you're on.

That it lacks the charm of the 599 or the thrill of the 458 is to be expected: this is a Grand Tourer, after all. And one I liked very much. Who knows, with slower steering, better balance and a sensible steering wheel, I might even have loved it.



Sorry Fiesta lady, but diesel XF's secrets lay beyond the camouflage...

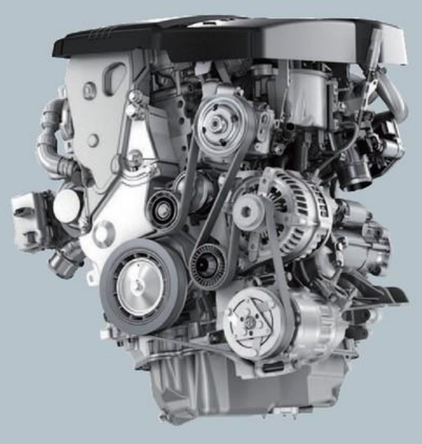
JAGUAR XF 2.2D

IT'S ALWAYS GOOD FUN to head out in a car covered in camouflage, if a little dangerous. In the usually mistaken belief that there's big money in scoop photography, people resort to all sorts of suicidal manoeuvres to get a better look at your car. So congratulations to the woman in the yellow Fiesta who managed to drive, photograph, smoke and talk into a telephone while killing neither herself nor the cyclists she had to swerve around to catch up with me.

Visually, and sadly for her, the focus of her undivided attention was the 2012 Jaguar XF which is so mildly updated from the back, most would struggle to spot the difference. She would have needed to spot the fact that, unlike any other XF, it has a single tailpipe to grasp its true significance.

It means that what she's looking at is a Jaguar with not only a four-cylinder engine – the first to be fitted to any Jaguar of this size – but also a new eight-speed gearbox. The 2.2-litre diesel comes from Ford, the transmission from ZF and together they make this the most fuel-efficient Jaguar in history, at some 52.3mpg to be precise. It's an indication of how far this technology has come in recent years to note that it uses less fuel even than the 2-litre diesel Jaguar X-type of 2003 despite offering almost 50 per cent more power and carrying 200 extra kilos.

In adapting the engine to a longitudinal installation and improving its refinement, Jaguar has replaced over 70 per cent of its components, but you're still never going to mistake it for a six-cylinder motor. While performance is competitive, at maximum extension it is acceptably refined but no more than that. Happily, and thanks to both its seventh and eighth ratios being genuinely overdriven, it cruises capably and quietly at more everyday speeds, sufficient to perform the role of relaxed Jaguar tourer with confidence if not quite absolute conviction.



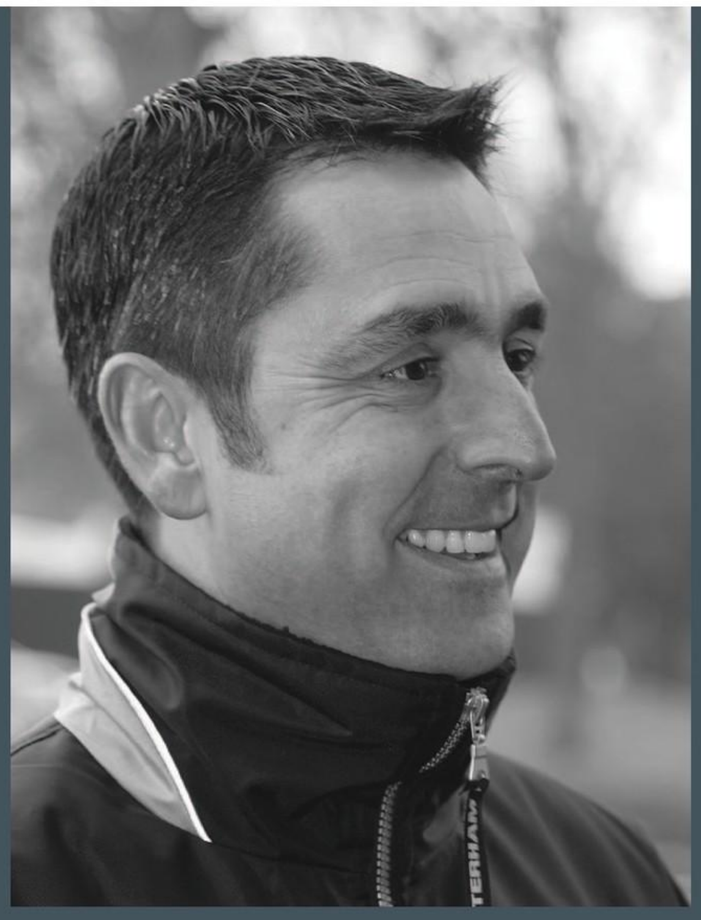
FACTFILE

ENGINE: 2.2-litre diesel, four cylinders
TOP SPEED: 140mph
PRICE: £30,500 approx
POWER: 188bhp at 3500rpm
FUEL/CO_2: 52.3mpg, 149g/km
www.jaguar.co.uk

And despite its modest power output, this XF is fun to drive. Indeed, if you care more about the way a car goes around a corner than along a straight, its light weight relative to its stablemates makes it the pick of the bunch.

Deliveries of the new XF begin in September, though in theory the order book is open now. Prices will start at just over £30,000 or slightly less than the Mercedes and BMW alternatives. That sounds about right to me.

TWENTY QUESTIONS



SUBJECT
ANSAR ALI
OCCUPATION
MANAGING DIRECTOR, CATERHAM CARS

What is your greatest achievement? Professionally, the success of Caterham Cars in recent years; personally, my family.

What is your biggest regret? Not coming to the help of a friend with whom I'd lost contact.

Whose work in the industry today do you admire most and why? Richard Parry-Jones for almost single-handedly turning around Ford's product development approach.

Who inspired you to join the industry and why? Lee Iacocca after I read his book, *Iacocca: an autobiography*.

What's the best advice you've been given? "You never know when you may need my help, so don't be too honest in your assessment of me!" – Sir Ian McAllister (CEO Ford Britain).

What's the biggest challenge you're facing in the next 12 months? Discretionary spend is on the squeeze, and the Japanese tsunami (Japan is our third-biggest market).

What car do you drive for fun? A Caterham Seven.

When did you last go for a drive for the sake of it? Where did you go? Last month, driving aimlessly in my BMW through the country lanes in south Norfolk where I live.

What's the best moment you've had in a car? Driving the Caterham Lambretta through the main gates of Buckingham Palace!

What was your first car? Mini Metro.

Did you pass your test first time? Yes!

How will most cars be powered in 30 years time? Hybrid power.

It's your last drive. One car, one road. Which and where? Aston DB4 S2 through the Maritime Alps just above Monaco/Ventimiglia.

What music do you listen to in the car? Everything except folk and country.

What's the best book about cars or car people you've ever read? *Issigonis: the official biography*.

Rumours persist of a new Caterham road car. When will we see it? Wait till I find the person spreading the rumours…

What kind of reception has the new Lola-Caterham SP300/R track car had? Much better than expected – honestly! Now we need to get the development car on track.

How many cars does Caterham build each year, and how many would you like to build? Last year was a record – just over 500 Sevens. If the rumours were true of a new road car then 750 feels about right.

How many interchangeable parts are there between a modern Caterham and an original Lotus 7? Very few parts used now survive from the Lotus, but the lineage is still clear.

How will Caterham respond to future environmental challenges? Would you build an affordable alternative to a Tesla? Caterham already produces a relatively fuel-efficient, low-emission, high-performance sports car – the Seven! Of course we watch industry developments and do not discount any technology at this stage.

AND THAT REMINDS ME…

Want to wind up Ferrari? Just bring a rival road car, real or imagined, to one of its launches

There are many ways to get into trouble as a motoring journalist. Crashing cars is common, but breaking embargoes, printing inaccuracies and tipping the mini-bar into your luggage (it happens) are tried and tested methods. Another is not playing by the book with Ferrari. Touchy hardly covers its response to journos going off-piste. Aussie Peter Robinson, arguably the most influential motoring writer of his generation, has been physically ejected from Maranello once and banned for life. Twice.

To say Ferrari likes to control situations is to say Oliver Reed liked the odd beer. And there's not much more likely to raise its hackles than journalists bringing rival cars to launches. At the FF event Porsche delivered a car to Ferrari's hotel near Cortina so I could drive it to Stuttgart the next morning. But it didn't stop Ferrari assuming skulduggery, even though this was a convertible sports car costing a third of its Grand Touring coupé. Quite why they thought I'd (a) seek to make such a comparison and (b) have the car delivered direct to Ferrari they didn't say.

Still, a few intrepid hacks have crept to Ferrari events in genuine rivals, waiting for a Ferrari-borne conspirator for a clandestine blast up the road in both.

Probably the most famed example of this is when Colin Goodwin (who has featured in this spot before) drove to the launch of the 360 Modena in a 911 Turbo. The cars met, photos were taken and all was well. Until they drew up at a junction with a busy road, Ferrari in front, Goodwin behind. The Ferrari driver saw a gap in the traffic and edged forward. Colin then gave the 400-plus bhp 911 the beans, just as the Ferrari braked.

The rest you can guess, with fairly catastrophic consequences for both cars. Usually when you crash, the moment you step away uninjured the worst is over. Not this time. I'd rather have wrestled an alligator than make that call.



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WITH ED FOSTER



GROVE, OXFORDSHIRE

AN AUDIENCE WITH GIAN PAOLO DALLARA

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Our thanks to the following for their help with this feature
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Marc Wright

In April I attended the annual Motorsport Industry Association dinner at WilliamsF1. Every year the MIA invites a motor sport personality who its CEO, Chris Aylett, will interview on stage after dinner. Last year it was ex-FIA president Max Mosley, this year it was the founder of Dallara Automobili Spa, Gian Paolo Dallara. As you can see, the guests are diverse – I don't think two people could be more diametrically opposed in terms of popularity.

Gian Paolo's company has achieved so much in the past 39 years that were an entire issue of *Motor Sport* dedicated to the Italian firm we'd still struggle to contain it all. Fifteen minutes into the interview and *Ingegnere* Dallara was still talking about his time at Ferrari, a company he joined in 1960 at the age of 24.

Soon, though, conversation turned to Formula 1 and Dallara's latest involvement in the top echelon of the sport with HRT. The Italian firm has had a lot of bad press through its involvement with the struggling team, and I was keen to find out what had really happened between HRT and the world's largest race car manufacturer. Dallara likes to get involved in F1 every so often as it "makes sure the company is operating at the highest level possible," according to Gian Paolo, but historically Dallara and F1 haven't been comfortable bedfellows.

Gian Paolo helped design the 1970 De Tomaso F1, which Frank Williams ran, but after Piers Courage's tragic death at Zandvoort the project fizzled out. Between 1988-92 Dallara made chassis for Scuderia Italia, but the

partnership delivered little in the way of results. Then came Honda – in 1998 the Japanese company commissioned Harvey Postlethwaite to design a car which Dallara built, but despite the RA099 being quick in winter testing before the start of the 1999 season, the project came to a sad end when Postlethwaite suffered a fatal heart attack and Honda re-entered as an engine supplier instead for BAR. There has certainly been a lot of misfortune with Dallara's F1 efforts over the years, but the problems with HRT are not simply down to luck...

"I believe that at the start of the project Campos Meta 1 [as the team was formerly known] underestimated the difficulties of finding sponsorship," Gian Paolo told the audience. "They didn't have sufficient funds available, so various parts did not arrive, and then a new director joined [the Spanish businessman José Ramón Carabante] who had just enough money to be able to finish the car. It was constantly 'stop and go'."





Dallara has long-term IndyCar deal. Above: Courage in the De Tomaso. Below: Bruno Senna said HRT Dallara chassis showed promise



LAT

When I talked to Bruno Senna, who drove for the re-named HRT team in 2010, at the end of last season he also hinted that it was the lack of funds that hampered the car and not the Dallara-built chassis. "The car wasn't developed after December 2009," he admitted. "There was so much performance in the chassis that could have been unlocked. The car was very efficient aerodynamically and slippery on the straights. Of course it lacked downforce, but with a bit more work we would have been faster than Lotus and Virgin." Things have seemingly gone from bad to worse for HRT since it split from Dallara – this year it failed to qualify for the season-opening Australian Grand Prix.

However, Dallara Automobili Spa is not the world's largest race car manufacturer based solely on its F1 exploits. It currently builds cars for the entire IndyCar, GP2, GP3 and World Series by Renault grids and caters for 90 per cent of the world's Formula 3 market. And that's just the single-seater cars for major championships. With this many series to supply you'd have thought Dallara would be happy to concentrate just on that. Not at all – the company has built a new state-of-the-art simulator at its Italian HQ and is also building a new American base with another simulator.

The new deal to supply the IndyCar Series runs from 2012-15 and this time the Italian firm has had to rethink its approach. Not only has the price of a chassis been pegged back to US$385,000 (£237,000) – a 45 per cent reduction on the current cars – but also part of the deal stipulates that 50 per cent of the work must be done in the USA. "We plan to produce the chassis in Italy as well as the nose, rear structure and various other parts," explained Gian Paolo. "But many components will be made at our new base in Speedway, Indiana, which we are building at the moment. It will be ready by the end of the year, but we've already started work, so we have actually rented some space nearby to house that. The cars will all be assembled over there and it's an exciting venture."

Dallara's second simulator will be built at this facility, and it's clear that Gian Paolo sees the potential of such technology. "It's a different world nowadays and I believe in the new simulators. We wanted to offer our customers a different dimension and the simulators will provide that by giving teams the chance to set up their cars and drivers to learn the circuits. It's not cheap, though, and between the new facility in America and the two new simulators we've invested roughly €18.4 million, which includes 60,000 man hours spent setting up the simulator in Italy.

"However, we made a bit of a mistake in the business plan and these types of customers aren't coming yet. At the moment we rely on other customers like the producers of components, road cars and manufacturers of hybrid cars. We've got 15 people working full time on the simulator, and although we aren't recovering the cost at the moment, we are able to sustain it. The most important thing is that it is a tool to improve ourselves."

Even at the age of 74, Gian Paolo still talks about the mistakes he's made, how he's learned from them and how that can help improve the company – "my life has been 74 years of mistakes," he claims. But it is surely this attitude that has helped shape Dallara as a company and position it at the very top of a short list of race car builders.

LONDON, UK

LOTUS EVORA S VERDICT

NEW ROAD CAR IS FIRST OF MANY EXPECTED FROM BRITISH MARQUE

HAVING WRITTEN ALL ABOUT Lotus's road car and racing plans in the March issue of *Motor Sport*, I was keen to get behind the wheel of the new Evora S to see how it matched up to the company's grand plans and promises.

The original version of this car – the Evora – was loved by much of the motoring press. But a few felt the car needed more power – something its great chassis could certainly handle. Soon enough the supercharged version arrived, and the Evora was turned from an accomplished two-seater sports car into a proper performance car.



The Evora S (above) is great to drive and anyone worried that the delights of Lotus handling will be diluted with this new breed can rest easy. It's quick, it sounds good and amazingly – for someone who's done 17,000 miles in a Mk1 Elise over the past two years – it is extremely comfortable.

It does come with a £58,995 price tag, however. Lotus wants to start selling cars for even more when it brings out the Esprit, Elan, Elite and Eterne, and the question really is whether the Evora S provides enough evidence that it can do this. Well, yes and no. The Evora S is a *huge* step up from what we're used to from Lotus, but still needs to improve. The leather-clad interior is comfortable, but some of the plastic surrounds and switches felt cheap and one came loose as I was driving.

Still, the Evora S is a desirable car. In fact, when I it parked on a London street two teenagers walked past, one saying: "One day, we'll be able to buy one of those." In all my time in the Elise I've never heard that. It seems Lotus is on the right track.



LONDON, UK

FROM GAMER TO **LE MANS RACER**

GT ACADEMY WINNER LUCAS ORDONEZ HAS LEFT HIS PLAYSTATION BEHIND…

THE GT ACADEMY WAS LAUNCHED in 2008 when Nissan and Sony Computer Entertainment Europe teamed up to find a PlayStation gamer they could morph into a fully-fledged racing driver.

Some 25,000 hopefuls submitted lap times and eventually two from each country/area went through to a five-day training camp at Silverstone, at the end of which student Lucas Ordoñez was announced as the winner. I must admit I was quite sceptical about it all… I mean, I can do a pretty good lap time on Grand Turismo 5, but put me on a track and I'm invariably rubbish.

The 'lap time' part of the competition for this year's event ran between March and April, depending on where you are in Europe, and I decided to have a go at the media shoot-out. Suffice to say that after 20 laps of practice I was still a staggering 37 seconds off the pace.

I had to eat my words still further when Ordoñez finished second in the LMP2 class at this year's Sebring 12 Hours aboard an ORECA Nissan. "It was an excellent result to start the season with," the former student told me. "The LMP cars are so different to what I've raced before (mostly GTs), but they are great to drive."

It's all very well being fast on a computer game, but if I drove on a real race circuit like I do on my PlayStation I'd probably be dead by now. "There was a steep learning curve after I won the GT Academy," Ordoñez admits. "With racing it's not all about going fast every lap, you need to work with the team and get the set-up right. I'm still learning a huge amount at every race meeting."

The Spanish driver is fulfilling a lifelong dream this year by competing in the Le Mans 24 Hours with the ORECA Nissan, still further rubbishing my theory that a gamer does not make a racer. "It's the top echelon of sports car racing," he said of the French classic. "It's the best race in the world. It's funny – every interview I did a few years ago the question was 'what's your dream?' My dream was to race at Le Mans. It's truly incredible that three years after winning the GT Academy I am doing the race."

That it is. Ordoñez may not be as experienced or accomplished as many other racing drivers on the grid at La Sarthe this June, but isn't it refreshing that there's another alternative way into motor sport? I certainly think so.



Ordoñez will make Le Mans debut in ORECA Nissan, above





LONDON, UK

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH **MOTOGP**

NEW BIKE GAME FAVOURS TECHNIQUE OVER RESULTS

A NEW MOTOGP PLAYSTATION and Xbox game has been brought out by Capcom. But while you can sit down and master the secret of car games quite easily, this two-wheeled adventure is another matter altogether.

If you're a bike racing fan you'll love it, because there's lots of focus on how you ride as well as where you finish. This means that if you try the age-old route of 'fastest lap, huge wipeout, fastest lap, huge wipeout' like I did, you won't progress far.

Well, it was worth a try, even if it meant me throwing my PlayStation controller at the TV on numerous occasions… M





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RM Auctions

Around the houses

NEWS FROM THE MAIN AUCTION HOUSES AROUND THE WORLD



– RM AUCTIONS –

The upcoming Villa d'Este sale in Italy on May 21 will include some extremely special racers and road cars. RM is determined to "showcase the best of the best" and the average value per car is almost €1 million (£885,500).

The latest batch of entries includes a very rare 1953 Ferrari 250MM Pinin Farina Berlinetta (above) which is expected to reach between £2.3-2.8m. Chassis number 0352 MM/0239 EU, one of 32 cars built, was raced in that year's Carrera Panamericana by privateer Efraín Ruiz Echeverría who steered the car to a top-10 finish.

Also in the sale is one of five prototype Ford GT roadsters. This 1965 car (top) was tested at that year's Le Mans trials and went on to compete as a works entry in the '65 Targa Florio. Piloted by Sir John Whitmore and Bob Bondurant, chassis number GT/111 ran as high as third before a major crash. The rebuilt car is expected to fetch £2.1-2.6m.

Other interesting lots include a 1937 Bugatti Type 57C (£2.9-3.8m), an award-winning 1937 Mercedes-Benz 540K cabriolet A (£1.1-1.6m), a 1938 Delahaye 135MS coupé (£840,000-1m), a 1939 Delahaye 135MS Grand Sport roadster (£778-906,000), a 1964 Alfa Romeo TZ1 with Le Mans, Tour de France and Targa Florio history (£420-508,000) and the 1970 Porsche 911S that Steve McQueen drove in the opening sequences of the *Le Mans* movie (POA).

RM is also selling a selection of cars from the Bertone museum in the Villa d'Este auction, including the 1967 Lamborghini Marzal prototype that was driven by Prince Rainier and Princess Grace at the start of the 1967 Monaco Grand Prix. The auction house expects the gavel to fall between £880,000 and 1.6m.

– SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS –

The new auction house's first sale, to be run during the Silverstone MotoGP round on June 11, is fast approaching. The company has already consigned a 2008 Ducati Desmosedici RR (race replica) which is expected to fetch £34-36,000 and a 1978 Heuer Silverstone chronograph, one of four that was purchased and engraved by Mike Hailwood. The watch has only ever had three owners, including 'Mike the Bike', and comes with a guide price of £4200-4600.

– BONHAMS –

The London-based auction house had a successful sale in Hendon on April 11. Two of the headline lots – a 1999 Ferrari F50 Barchetta with just 5444km on the clock and a 1985 Ferrari 288GTO Berlinetta – actually sold by private treaty before the sale for undisclosed amounts.

Besides the two Ferraris, some interesting early cars also sold well in the shape of a 1904 Swift 7hp four-seater (£45,500), a 1901 De Dion Bouton 4½hp Vis-à-Vis (£97,200), a 1902 Peugeot 6½hp Type 48 (£68,600) and a 1914 Rover 12hp Tourer (£45,500). Eighty per cent of the lots offered for sale found new homes and the auction raised over £2.25m.

– ARTCURIAL –

On June 13 Artcurial will hold its *Automobiles sur les Champs Elysées* sale featuring a 1968 Ferrari 275 GTB/4 (£440-620,000), a 1935 Hispano Suiza K6 cabriolet (£220-310,000), a 1931 Hispano Suiza J12 coupé (£90-175,000) and a 1928 Invicta 4½-litre (£130-220,000).

– COYS –

Thanks to some strong bidding at its Techno Classic sale on April 2 Coys made some good prices: for example, a 1996 Ferrari F50 for £303,000, a 1937 Jaguar SS100 (£208,000), a Mercedes 190E Group A rally car (£53,000) and a 1961 Aston Martin DB4 (£158,000).

Coys was busy preparing for its next sale at Ascot on May 14 as *Motor Sport* closed for press, but had confirmed a 1952 Frazer Nash Targa Florio that raced in the 1953 Sebring 12 Hours (£280-300,000), an ex-Exeter Trial 1931 Fraser Nash Boulogne (£110-130,000) and a 1956 Austin-Healey 100M (£40-45,000).

– H&H SALES LTD –

On April 13 H&H held its Classic Cars and Automobilia sale at the Pavilion Gardens, Buxton, and although a 1964 Ford Cortina Mk1 racer, a 1975 Triumph TR7 rally car and a 1959 Gemini Formula Junior failed to sell, a 1963 Aston Martin DB4 did go for £103,400. Ⓜ

FORTHCOMING AUCTIONS

APRIL 29-MAY 1 AUCTIONS AMERICA *Auburn Spring Collector Car Auction*, Auburn Auction Park, Indiana, USA Tel: 001 877 906 2437

MAY 2 SHANNONS *Sydney Autumn Classic*, St Leonards, New South Wales, Australia Tel: 0061 2 8019 4116

MAY 11 BRIGHTWELLS *Classic Cars and Motorcycles*, Leominster, Herefordshire Tel: 01568 611122

MAY 14 COYS *The Spirit of Motoring*, Ascot Racecourse Tel: 020 8614 7888

MAY 17-22 MECUM *Dana Mecum's Original Spring Classic Auction*, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis, USA Tel: 001 815 568 8888

MAY 21 RM AUCTIONS *Villa d'Este*, Spazio Villa Erba, Cernobbio, Como, Italy Tel: 001 519 352 4575

MAY 21 COYS *Legende et Passion*, Espace Fontvieille, Monte Carlo, Monaco Tel: 020 8614 7888

MAY 21/22 BARONS *Jaguar E-type 50th Anniversary*, Donington Park, Derbyshire Tel: 023 8066 8413

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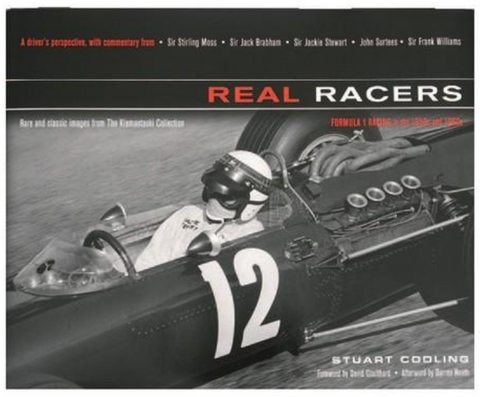
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Reviews





REAL RACERS

FORMULA 1 RACING IN THE 1950S AND 1960S

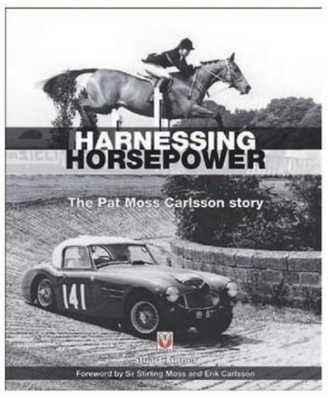
by Stuart Codling

The Klemantaski photo archive is a goldmine for our business (along with LAT, of course!), and this terrific book refines some of those gleaming nuggets into a beautifully-wrought display piece.

What's fresh is the structure: chapters focus on aspects of a race weekend such as `Arrival' – fascinating shots of transporters unloading, `Finish' – not always joyful, or `Concentration' – powerful close-ups of clenched knuckles and knitted brows. But while the pictures are impressive (and some breathtaking – a wide shot of the wall at AVUS showed me for the first time its terrifying height) they are lifted by first-hand comment, or quotations, by the men whose skills we're invited to admire. In 'Finesse' Surtees talks of being 'introduced' to a car; McLaren notes that Clark sticks his tongue out in concentration, while in 'Practice' Frank Williams recalls running a race team of a mere five men. The inevitable incidents are treated mostly tactfully in 'Crashes and Other Complications' – although a shot of Bandini's horrific fate is all the more shocking for being in colour.

Thankfully these striking photos are not cropped close, revealing all the historical context, while Codling's informative captions add weight. Fine reproduction and high quality make this a bargain and a pleasure to savour. **GC**

Published by Motorbooks, ISBN 978 0 7603 3891 9, £27.50



HARNESSING HORSEPOWER

THE PAT MOSS CARLSSON STORY

by Stuart Turner

Her brother's name is legendary, but Pat Moss Carlsson was just as remarkable a person. The book tells her life story, from great success as a young show jumper to a rallying career and outright victory on the infamous Liège-Rome-Liège. Strange to think the young Pat wasn't very interested in cars; luckily she soon developed a knack for competing on four wheels as well as four legs.

Author and former BMC team boss Stuart Turner knew Pat well and apologises for not being detached from his subject, but he shouldn't. His insight adds depth to a wonderful story, told with humour. His research into the equestrian world is also thorough. Worth every penny. **GR**

Published by Veloce Publishing, ISBN 978 1 845843 06 9, £24.99



JAGUAR E-TYPE

A CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE '60S ICON

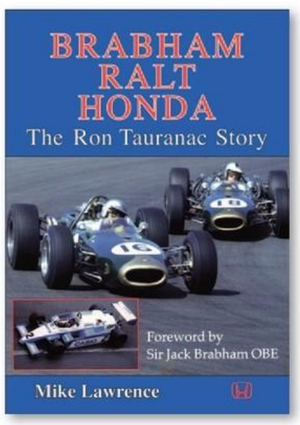
by Nigel Thorley

It was only a matter of time before a new history of the Jaguar E-type dropped through the *Motor Sport* letter box. The car celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, which I'm sure you've all noticed, and the world seems to have gone E-type mad.

Thankfully Thorley's work isn't a rushed job to get to the shops in time. It's clear, well structured and, most importantly, comprehensive.

It charts the story of the car from the first development models (how great would it have been if more E2As were built?), to the final long-bodied beauties to roll off the line. There's a 24-page section on the E-type in motor sport, which also looks at the famous lightweights. **EF**

Published by Haynes Publishing, ISBN 978 0 85733 064 2, £25.00



BRABHAM RALT HONDA

THE RON TAURANAC STORY

by Mike Lawrence

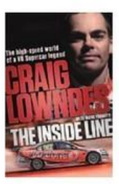
Ron Tauranac's reputation as a brilliant, sharp-tongued car designer is well known, but years passed before his story was told – and now it's being republished. We start with the Tauranac brothers' exploits with their self-built Ralts in Australia, prior to Ron's 1960 UK move to work on a car in secret with his friend Jack Brabham. A stream of successful racers followed, from Formula Juniors to F1 World Championship winners. It's a great insight into the life of one of motor racing's most important figures, focusing of course on his work with Brabham, Ralt and Honda.

Presentation is not the book's strong point, but the story takes precedence here – and is comprehensively told. Includes a foreword by Jack Brabham. **GR**

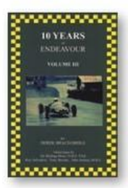
Published by Brooklands Books, ISBN 978 185520 923 7, £19.95



THE MAHARAJAS AND THEIR MAGNIFICENT MOTOR CARS Gautam Sen Great illustrated review of fine cars ordered by Indian princes, from limousines to coachbuilt wonders – plus a Rolls-Royce bus for a cricket team. **Published by Haynes Publishing, ISBN 978 0 85733 063 5, £40**



THE INSIDE LINE Craig Lowndes with Mark Fogarty "It's not an autobiography," Lowndes points out. However, it is an interesting look at the Aussie driver's world in V8 Supercars and his life outside the sport too. **Published by HarperCollins Publishers, Australia, ISBN 978 0 7333 2886 2, (AU)$35**



10 YEARS OF ENDEAVOUR VOLUME III Derek Bracegirdle Third volume of the Monoposto driver's memoirs of racing and the British club scene from the 1930s-60s, with much period flavour, plus firm views on the wider racing world to date. **Published by BBS Books, ISBN 978 1 903029 04 6, £11.99**

Porsche 908/03 Nurburgring 1000kms 1970



Porsche realised that their nimble 3-litre 908 was better suited to the twists and turns of the Nurburgring than the mighty 917 and two cars each were entrusted to to the Gulf Wyer and Salzburg teams who dominated practice and the race. Celebrate these great sports racing cars with these fine hand built miniatures created by one of England's top model makers, Marsh Models.

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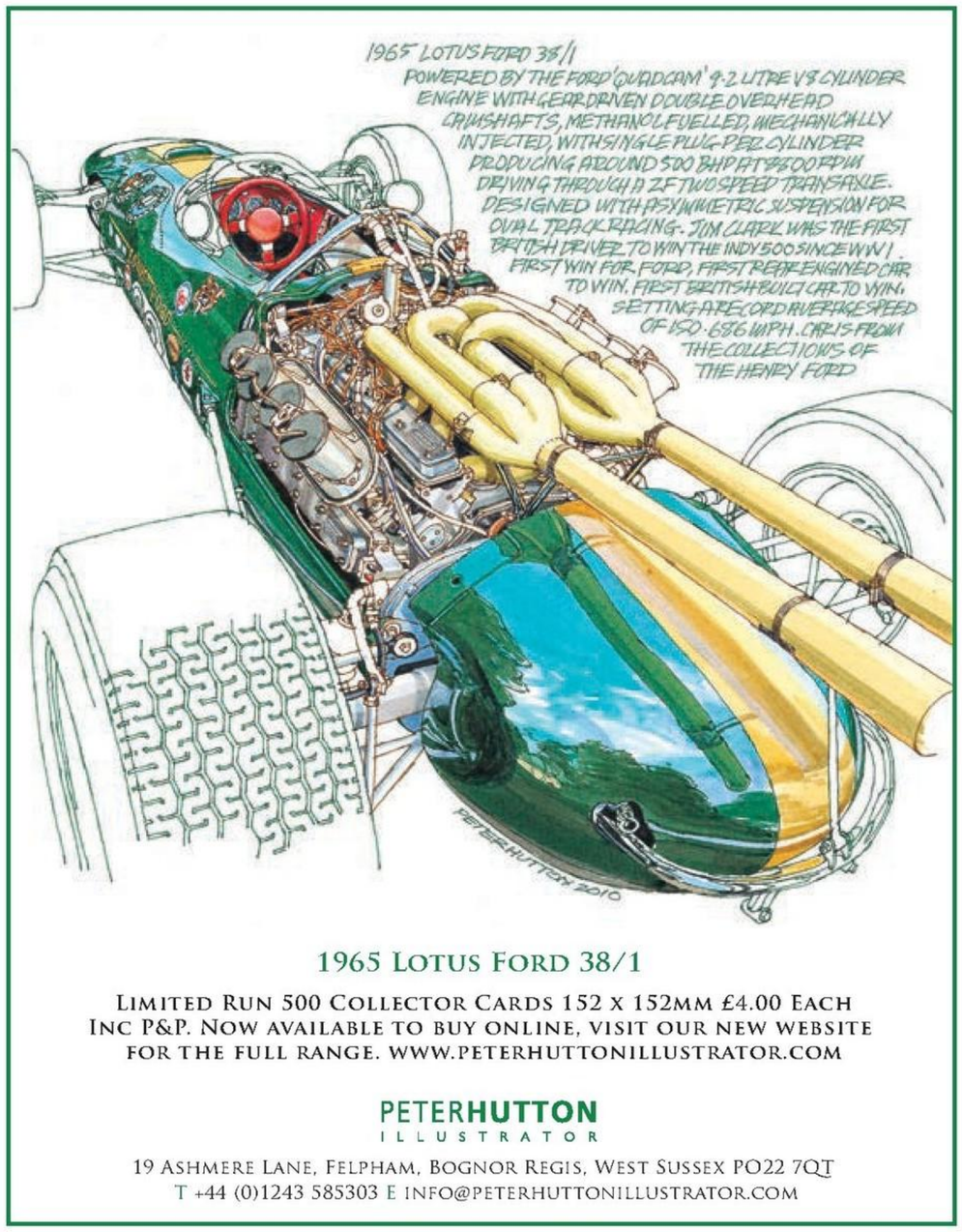
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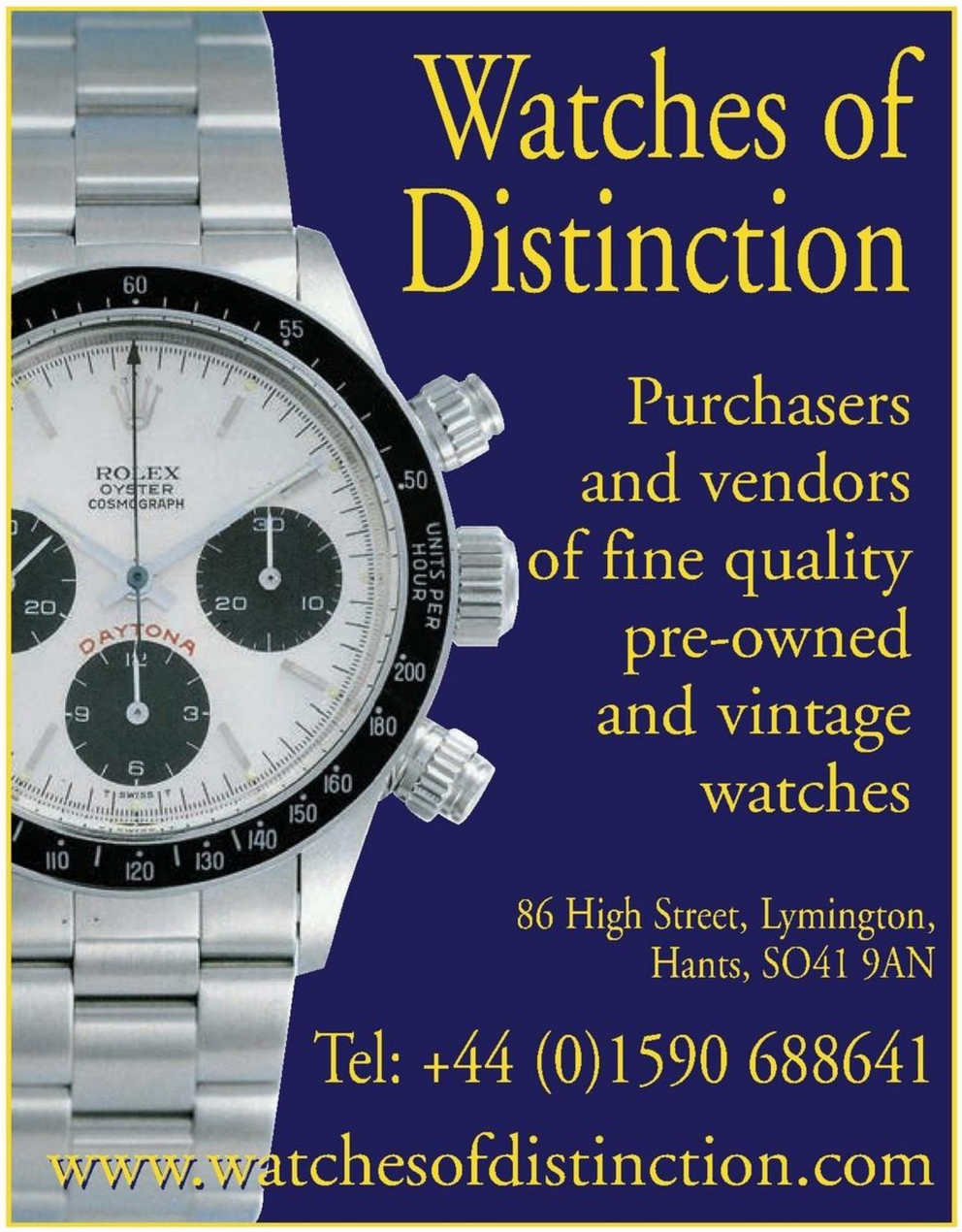


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YOU WERE THERE

We wouldn't recommend hitchhiking to a Grand Prix today, but it worked very well for one young fan and his friends in 1966...

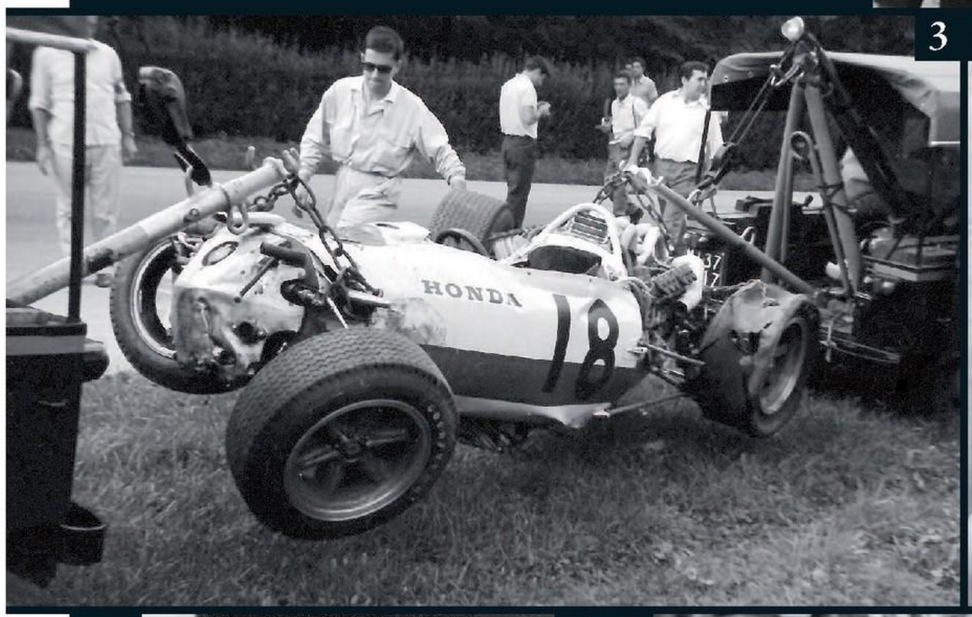
JOHN CUNNINGHAM

A 19-year-old John hitchhiked to Monza in 1966 for the Italian GP. "I didn't own a camera and borrowed my sister's – I still look back fondly to the pictures I took that day." So he should, with many a driver posing happily for him. {1} Dapper Tony Brooks was in town. {2} Denny Hulme (Brabham) hassled V12 Ferraris, but had to settle for third. {3} Richie Ginther's Honda hit trees at Curva Grande, but he escaped with minor injuries. {4} Phil Hill failed to qualify troublesome Eagle-Weslake {7}, while Chris Amon {5} was also left out of the race due to BRM woes. {6} Graham Hill's engine let go on lap one. {8} Jenks was kept enthralled as teams ran new cars. {9} Jack Brabham's eponymous car let him down, but he would go on to be champion for a third and final time.

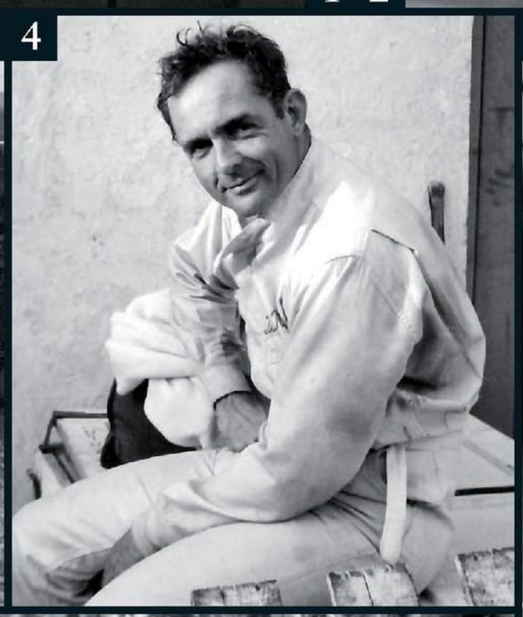




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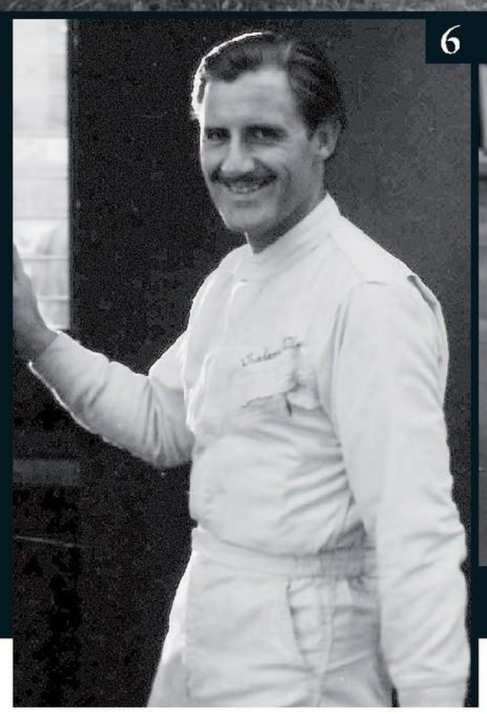


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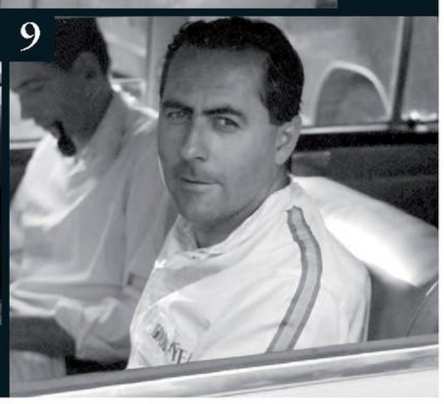


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HALL & HALL



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Can race as either a sports or GP car. Current owner since 1958.



1972 Lola T290 #HU2
A well known car driven By Jo Bonnier and finished in the correct Gitanes livery.



1979 Ferrari 512BB (Carburettor) LHD
Blue with tan hide, fitted luggage etc.



1973 Lola T292 BDG
Chris Craft / Crowne Racing and winner of the 1973 2 Litre Sports Car Championship. Perfect entry for the Martini Trophy etc.

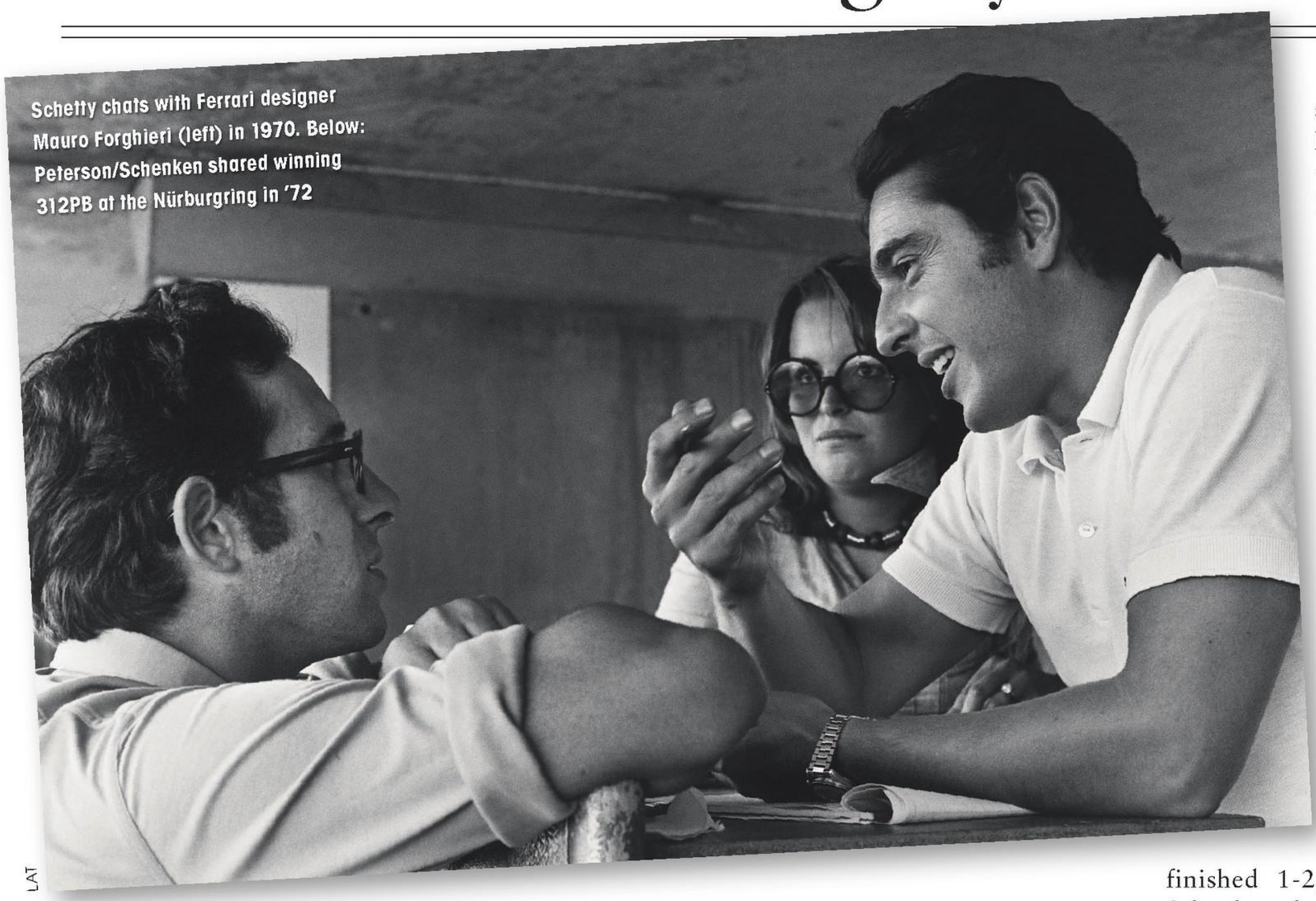
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Schetty chats with Ferrari designer Mauro Forghieri (left) in 1970. Below: Peterson/Schenken shared winning 312PB at the Nürburgring in '72

LAT

SWISS PRECISION AT THE SCUDERIA

Former driver Peter Schetty oversaw a glorious period for Ferrari in sports cars with its dominant 312PB

The 1972 sports-prototype season is recalled as a classic for Ferrari. Its works team of 3-litre, flat-12-engined 312PB cars just trampled roughshod over all opposition to monopolise the World Championship. In contrast, Maranello's Formula 1 team veered temperamentally between vulnerable and victorious. The new team manager, freshly retired Swiss driver Peter Schetty, welded the Scuderia into a weapon even more formidable than John Wyer's formerly dominant Gulf-JW organisation. Schetty's team was certainly more successful in 1972 than the Gulf-Fords or Porsches had ever been. The opposition might not have been as fierce, but Ferrari's preparation and direction gave its truly formidable driver team just the tools they wanted to do the job.

Schetty himself was a 30-year-old doctor of economics and social sciences, born in Basle. He was fluent in four languages and his final race for Ferrari had been at Watkins Glen in 1970 where he finished fifth with Jacky Ickx, whereupon Mr Ferrari offered him the post of team manager. Peter told me: "At that time I wasn't ready to retire, but I thought about it and accepted. I didn't have the right character to be one of the best drivers. While the stars would be braking at the 100-metre board, I'd be braking two metres before it, to give myself a margin of safety. That way I was never going to be one of the best..."

His sports car team direction paid off with a record 12 wins from 12 races. The 312PBs' season began at Buenos Aires – where the prototype car had been destroyed in Ignazio Giunti's fatal accident the year before. This time Ferrari finished 1-2, with Ronnie Peterson/Tim Schenken heading Clay Regazzoni/Brian Redman. At Daytona, Mario Andretti and Ickx drove the winning car – and again at Sebring, Brands Hatch and Watkins Glen. Jacky co-drove with Regga to win at Monza – in pouring rain – and with Brian at the Österreichring. The Lancastrian won at Spa with Merzario, and 'Little Art' won the Targa Florio with rally star Sandro Munari, then took both the non-championship races at Imola and – with Regazzoni – the Kyalami 9 Hours.

Peterson was challenging Jackie Stewart as being the standard-setter of the period, and he really enjoyed racing the Ferrari sports-prototypes. He had won the previous year's Watkins Glen Six Hours co-driving an Autodelta Alfa Romeo T33 with Andrea de Adamich. He thought that was a nice car – "good and strong" he said – but he rejected an Alfa offer for 1972 in favour of Ferrari simply because, "I looked at what Ickx and Regazzoni had been doing with their 312 against the 5-litre Porsche 917s and Ferrari 512s and thought that looked great. I never expected the Ferrari to be as reliable as the Alfa Romeo – just a helluva lot more fun!"

Which tells you all you need to know about the late, great Super Swede.

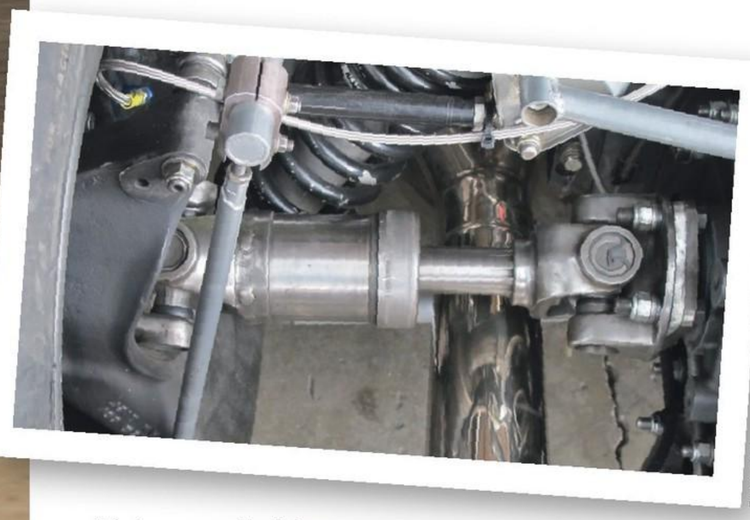


LAT



Dennis Gray

Hughes' M8F is not Revson's '71 winner. Trojan-built roller-splined driveshafts, right, are one giveaway



BritishRaceCar.com

Setting the record straight for Revson

There's been some fuss going on in the American world of 'vintage' Can-Am cars. Jennifer Revson – deeply concerned and very protective sister of the late Peter Revson – has been genuinely offended by one Scott Hughes claiming that his McLaren M8F is the actual car in which Peter won the 1971 Can-Am Championship – which it is not. Numerous old hands who know a bit about the big championship-dominating McLarens of 1967-71 – including a bunch of veteran mechanics (and yours truly) – have rather got out of our prams to dismiss these claims.

In fact, Peter's title-winning car passed through various hands, and vicissitudes, before being acquired by car wash magnate Dan Hanna. He narrowly survived a huge accident in the car which virtually demolished it. St Louis dealer Chuck Haines bought the wreck and rebuilt it in keeping with works Team McLaren practise – which differed in important detail from the Trojan-built customer Can-Am McLarens. The rebuilt car then passed to Peter Kaus's lamented Rosso Bianco Collection in Germany, and is now in Evert Louwman's fabulous Dutch motor museum, in The Hague. Importantly, it lives there alongside all that remains of Revvie's original 1971 chassis that was left unusable after Hanna's crash.

Setting the record straight has involved wide discussion of such arcane details as works rivet type and spacing where it differed from Trojan customer-tub production, differences in suspension pick-up materials, gearchange bracket design, squared-off or tapered sill tank bays, even monocoque skin thicknesses. Problem is that once those who know have declared their hand, then every darned faker in the business discovers how 'a works car' should be replicated.

So for some of us, divulging such minutiae becomes a real dilemma. Do you publish and be damned, as I guess I am conditioned to do, or keep schtum – and act superior while delivering judgement from among this 'brotherhood' of the well-informed?

In an old-car world in which FIA Technical Passport rules actually seem to encourage owners of iffy 'old' cars to adopt the finest go-faster mods which in period only ever appeared on very few individual chassis, many problems lie ahead.

Real racing cars have always been individuals, with their own characteristic features and peculiarities. Now, quite apart from optimistic owners – sometimes juiced-up by the ambitious claims of less-than-scrupulous sellers – bureaucracy is actually encouraging falsification. I don't see why we should either like it – or let the miscreants get away with it. And most of them know who they are…

Fangio – licenced to drive in the Falkland Islands

Thanks to an unusual chain of circumstances I found myself spending 20 hours on a Ministry of Defence flight recently, via Ascension Island, to the Falklands. If the Falkland Islands – as recovered from occupation in the conflict of 1982 – is not an unusual place for a motor racing scribbler to find himself, then Ascension Island certainly is. Today's MoD air bridge is operated in an effective and friendly manner by Air Seychelles because – we were told – it is particularly good at finding remote islands. Ascension, with nothing but a thousand miles or so of clear blue ocean in every direction, certainly ticks the 'remote' box.

Flights touch down there on an uphill runway which humpbacks between two abrupt volcanic hills. As the Boeing 767 decelerated over the brow it's quite a startling sight to see the russet rock faces of a virtual railway cutting zipping past each wingtip. Then it's turn around and backtrack to what passes for a terminal, with three crash wagons in attendance representing the UK, US and local island authorities. We're ushered out into 'The Cage' open-air compound while the big silver bird is replenished, then we're off for another sausage-and-bacon panini leg to Mount Pleasant, East Falkland. Over the next few days we're doing military/naturalist/specialist things over hill and dale, larking about in 110-inch Land Rovers and nattering to people on ships and sharp, pointy little aeroplanes.



Getty Images

Fangio got about using a sporting licence from the Automobile Club Argentino without any problem…

In the midst of all this I regale my travelling companion with the strange tale of Juan Manuel Fangio, five-times World Champion, and his driving licence. Because, you see, he began driving in his native Argentina before a licence was necessary. He used to tell how he only got a licence for public road driving in 1961, when it was required for a trip to Brazil. Otherwise, throughout all his globetrotting, he only ever used his Automobile Club Argentino sporting licence. It seemed to be accepted everywhere.

But in April 1980, travelling with the then-chairman of the ACA, Dr Cesar C Carman, and his long-time protégé and ex-racing driver Juan Manuel Bordeu, The Old Man visited Port Stanley in the Falklands. He was well received at a time of relative rapprochement between Argentina and the UK – and he was issued with a Falkland Islands driving licence, No 1644. I wanted to check the local records to see if I could confirm the great man's story, and we hesitated outside the Stanley police station (trim and smartly painted today after taking a missile strike in '82…) but I wasn't allowed to. "I don't think that's making great use of our time," I was firmly told. So I didn't. But Fangio had a Falklands driving licence. Yet again, more detail than you ever wished to know?



Boddy, Jenks and the Calthorpe on their run to Exeter and back in 1959

THE CHRISTMAS LIGHT BRIGADE

Our Founder Editor was joined by members of the VSCC Light Car Section to recreate a festive cross-country dash

Among the Motor Cycle Club's prominent and exciting fixtures was its 'London to Exeter and Back' Run, which started in 1910 on December 26-27. Unlike the 'Land's End' or 'Edinburgh' the Exeter admitted solo motorcycles, sidecars, cyclecars and cars. The event was to commence in the evening and finish at the same place the following evening, covering a distance of 333 miles with two stops – one in Salisbury and one in Exeter. At first the only awards were Gold and Silver medals, but the Bronze medal started in 1922. On the first event they had 70 motorcycles, one cyclecar, a Morgan Runabout driven by H F S Morgan and one car, a Thames driven by C M Smith. They started at 7pm from the Bell Hotel in Hounslow and arrived back there by 6.40pm the next day. By 1912 the event was held on December 27-28 because it clashed with a Sunday.

I had much fun running my personal version of this historic Run, on Boxing Day. My idea was to repeat the routes of previous years.

In 1953 I had hoped to do this in my 1922 8hp Talbot-Darracq but it failed to even reach the start, due to a faulty coil. The next year – 1954 – I was accompanied by Gerry Crozier in his 1928 Trojan tourer and we used the 1922 MCC route card, as this was the first year in which the T-D could have been entered. We thought the whole thing jolly sound fun, so I made the suggestion to the VSCC Light Car Section for owners of the right kind of light cars to join me the following year.

Thus in 1955 some 17 appropriate cars driven by their sentimental owners followed me in my Talbot-Darracq from the Market Square in Staines to Exeter and back. We followed the 1922-24 route as closely as possible, except that our average speed was 24mph not 20mph and we finished at Hartley Wintney. I coped on side lamps, as the headlamps resulted in a dead 'short' and my fabric hood blew away before the first refuelling stop at The Phoenix. Unlike in the 1954 Run I failed on Salcombe and White Sheet Hills. Thirteen of the 17 starters finished the 307 miles – admittedly we did not have the bad roads, the mud, or the primitive tyres and tubes that the competitors of 33 years earlier had to contend with, but we had the same satisfaction of accomplishment.

The 'Replica Exeter' was not run in 1956 on account of petrol rationing, but in '57 Denis Jenkinson and I went as passengers in Derek Graham's 1929 Trojan over the 1922 route, with five other vintage light cars. I had a try at driving the Trojan but made an awful hash of braking and clutchless upward changes. I eventually got the hang of it and found it fascinating driving a distinctly unorthodox car.

In 1958 I took my recently acquired 1924 12/20 Calthorpe with 17 other vintage cars and used the 1924 route for the 'Boxing Night Informal'. I picked up *Motor Sport's* Continental Correspondent in Staines. We had a momentary panic when the petrol tank ran dry, then at Lobscombe Corner the carburettor leaked and on the home run we had magneto and other problems. Other than that we had a good run, including climbing all the hills successfully, albeit shedding my passenger on Salcombe Hill just before the top. At White Sheet Hill, an observed section in 1924, they had to drive the last 20 yards in 15 seconds to receive a gold medal. This year Tom Lush and John Nelms provided a restart test, which 10 cars completed in time, but four did not have enough power to complete successfully. Seven of the cars finished the 320 miles with us, the others turning off for home before reaching Staines.

In 1959 23 cars, seven of them those enormously powerful vintage cars and one non-vintage, elected to run the 1925/6 route. I again took my vintage Calthorpe, and with Jenks as

passenger/starter motor/navigator/engineer and wet-nurse, we climbed all the hills but only just managed 15sec at White Sheet Hill, compared to 7.8sec the previous year.

By 1960 I had 36 cars join me in this informal post-Christmas expedition and for a change I borrowed the Montagu Motor Museum's 1921 AC Anzani bulbous-back tourer. The AC proved not very comfortable but snug for the three occupants: Bob Warne, the museum's engineer, the Continental Correspondent and myself. Over distinctly slippery roads, with the AC boiling on the hills and having to change its batteries, we dropped behind, until between Honiton and Marlpit Hill where a freak fall of sleet had caused chaos. Various passengers had to walk down the hill to assist in sliding cars round and down, for them to find another way to Salcombe. Some others had another try, for instance a 9/20 Humber with deflated back tyres and rope round the driving wheels, eventually making it to the top. This year took a heavy toll on the cars mechanically but no expensive repairs were required and most of the drivers enjoyed the experience. The AC returned home in first and top gears only and eventually lost drive between the engine and back axle, so had to be abandoned, with the museum's engineer returning to Beaulieu in the Editorial Mini-Minor.

> "The event showed how well vintage light cars could cope with icy roads"

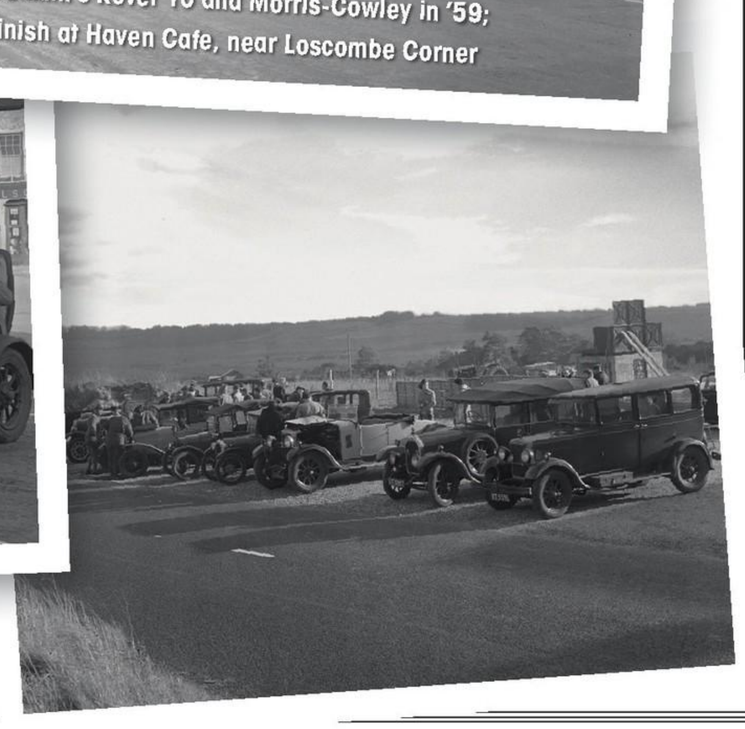
In 1961 we started correctly from the Slough Trading Estate using the 1926 route, and for the third time I employed my recently fettled 1924 Calthorpe. The number of enthusiasts taking part had come down to 28, including a good number of Austin Sevens and Mr Capewell's 1930 MG M-type, which had an accident and had to be abandoned. But the event showed how well vintage light cars could cope with icy roads, including the one-in-five descents. Out of the light cars that had started or joined in the event on route, only six failed to sign off. Luckily it was two days before the 'big freeze'.

In 1962 I did not organise an 'informal', as I was dubious about the RAC insisting on very detailed route cards for a privately organised competition (which it was not). Mr G Bailey in his 1927 Morris-Oxford saloon, accompanied by two other vintage cars and a modern Fiat 600, attempted the Run but only got to Honiton before deciding to turn back, due to the bad weather conditions.



Breakfast stop at Beaminster in 1960. Below (l-r): D L Franklin's Rover 10 and Morris-Cowley in '59; the finish at Haven Cafe, near Loscombe Corner





LAT

Blades of glory? WB's propeller mystery...

Being interested in aeronautical history as well as the motoring past, when I heard of an aeroplane propeller that was liable to be scrapped in Croydon I duly went to collect it with Denis Jenkinson and brought it back home in his truck.

It is a wooden four-bladed propeller which has a span of about 115 inches, and stamped around its hub are the words 'BE2C SINGLE SEATER L. P. 2422 + 6298 12. CYL. RAF 4'. On one of the blades is a coloured transfer in the shape of a shield with the words 'LANG PROPELLER Ltd. WEYBRIDGE' and on another of its blades are painted, in faded gold, some 32 names such as those of: 'G. Manlon 1st AM, H. Glover 3rd AM, B. Reid Stocker, T. Notley MM Serg. killed and G. Bock F. Serg'.

None of which is a great deal of help to me in clarifying its historical past. The history of this object is still obscure. In spite of my attempts and various other people putting in much research on such history to clarify this, no reference of this object to my knowledge has ever appeared.

I also have another aged propeller; this one is also wooden but much smaller, measuring 78 inches from tip to tip, and is only two-bladed. Stamped around its hub is 'HR A 11049 2/42'. Ⓜ



Is WB's four-blade propeller from a Bristol BE2c (also above)?

Aviation Images

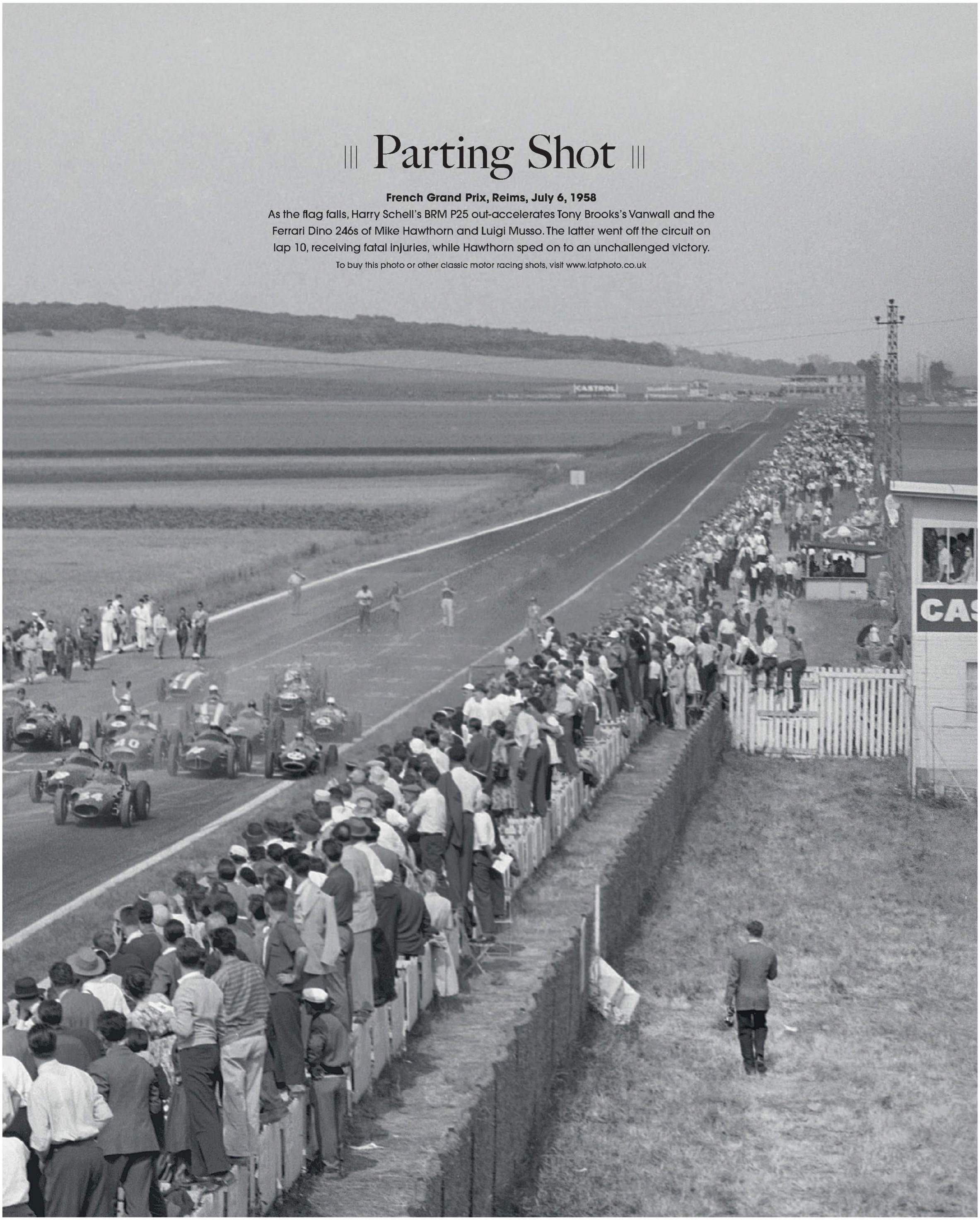

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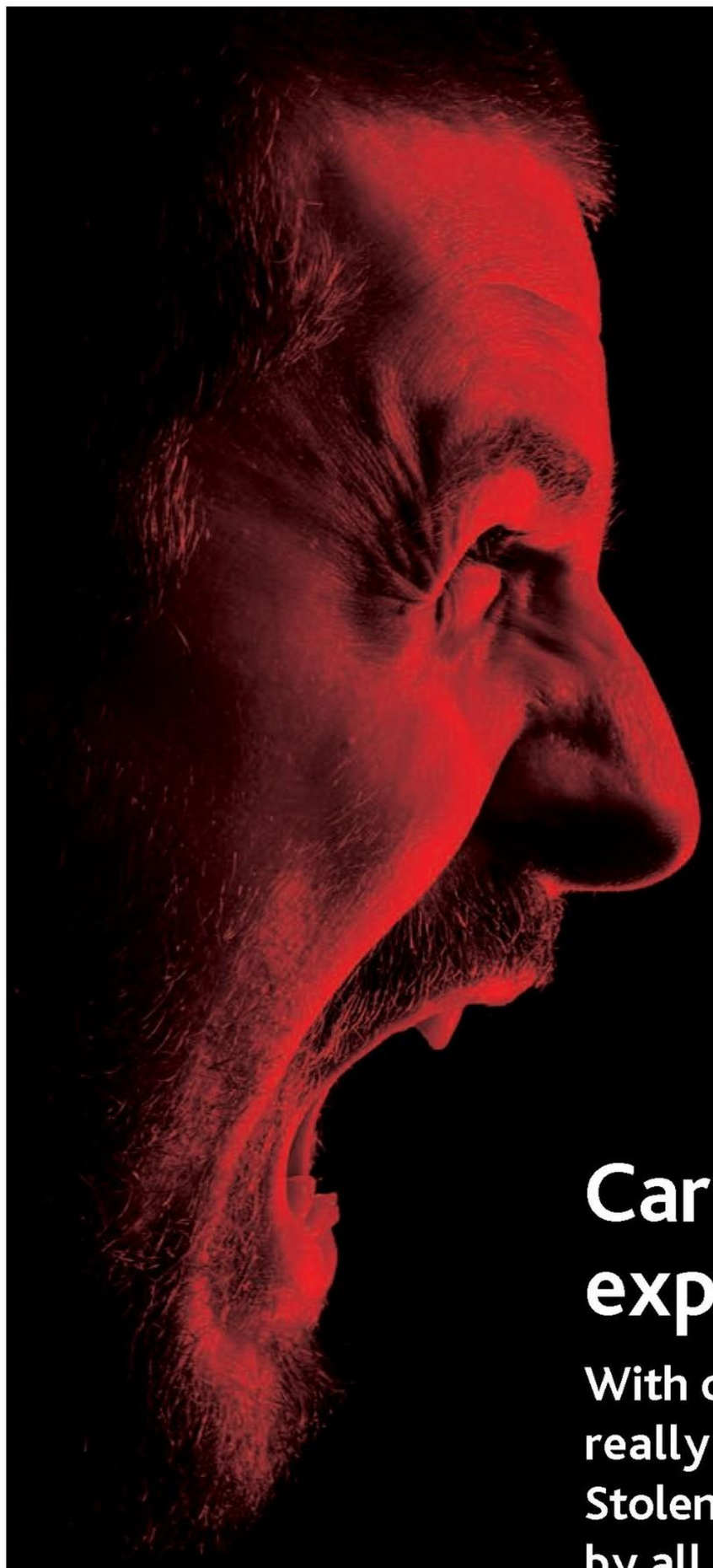
Parting Shot

French Grand Prix, Reims, July 6, 1958

As the flag falls, Harry Schell's BRM P25 out-accelerates Tony Brooks's Vanwall and the Ferrari Dino 246s of Mike Hawthorn and Luigi Musso. The latter went off the circuit on lap 10, receiving fatal injuries, while Hawthorn sped on to an unchallenged victory.

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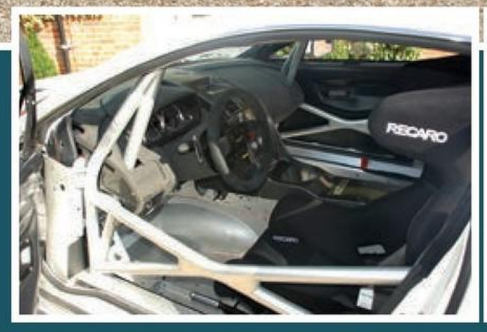
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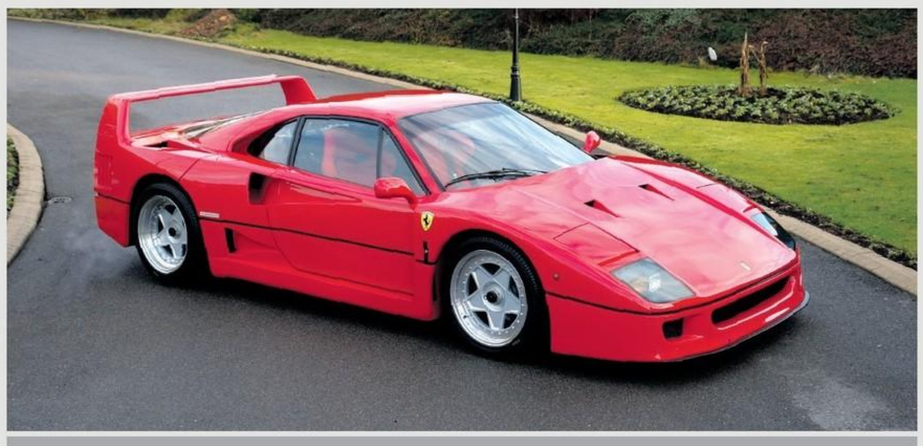
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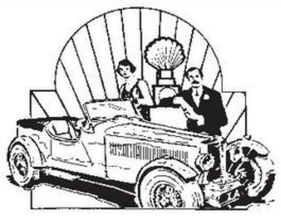
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1986 Finished in Arctic white with Navy Blue interior,hard and soft tops, auto, power, stereo system, full body kit, alloys, power windows, ABS, only 44,000 miles from new, with service history, absolutely stunning **£16,750**



Mercedes 560 SL Sports 1986
Left Hand Drive, finished in gleaming Signal Red with black hide interior, hard and soft tops, headrests, air bags, light up vanity mirrors, cd/stereo system, power mirrors, power windows, centre arm rest, air conditioning, climate control, cruise control, 18,000 miles, garaged from new, very difficult to repeat **£25,500**



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Mercedes 280 SL Sports 1969
Left Hand Drive, finished in Diamond white with cherry red hide interior, headrests, hard and soft tops, auto, power, air con, stereo system, two owners from new,this car is in amazing condition, pampered from new, looks like a one year old car and is totally superb. Also available in ivory white with dark brown hide interior **£49,750**



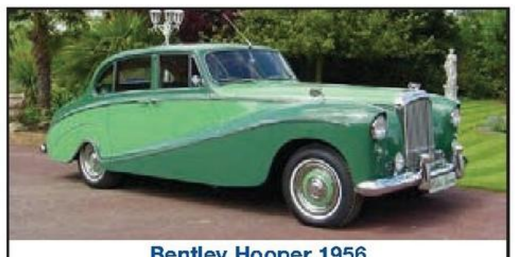
Aston Martin 2002 DB 7
Left hand drive Volante Vantage, Finished in Solway Silver with Cherry Red hide interior,and matching power top, Walnut veneers, overugs, touchtronic, power steering, power windows, sat nav, stereo, Cd, air con, Special Aston Larini exhaust system, only 10,000 miles from new with full Aston history,this car is just remarkable, never seen rain **£49,750**



Bentley Azure 1997 Model
Left Hand Drive finished in Silver Pearl with Black hide interior, to many extras to list, lambswool overugs, expensive stereo system, chrome wheels, anti theft device, Burr Walnut throughout, 52,000 miles, always garaged **£75,500**



1972 Rolls-Royce Phantom V1 State Limousine
Finished in Garnet over Antelope with Cherry hide interior to the front and West of England cloth to the rear, glass division, power windows, a/c, TV & video, cocktail bar, intercom, 12 stack CD player, Sundym glass, only 18,000 miles from new, 2 owners, lambswool overugs, occasional seats, show condition **£250,500**



Bentley Hooper 1956
Finished in gleaming two tone green with fine coach lines to compliment the coachwork, a matching green hide interior, with a glass like finish to walnut veneers, picnic tables to front and rear, power windows, original HMV radio, new tyres, matching thick pile lambswool overugs, only one former keeper, this very rare Bentley is ideal for showing with every possibility of winning, or for the pure pleasure of driving, possibly the finest in the world and a fine investment **£65,750**



Mercedes 280 SL 1969
Finished in champagne gold with superb interior, hard and soft tops, automatic, power steering, radio and stereo, cd and mini disc player, expensive alarm, 89,000 miles from new, good service history, garaged from new, absolutely stunning, probably the finest **£39,750**



1999 Bentley Continental SC Sedanca Coupe LHD
Finished in Silver Pearl with Stratos hide interior, 27,000 miles, matching lambswool overugs, this car has just about every possible extra, a very rare model with only seventy three ever produced, with its unique lift out glass roof, this stunning car has FBSH, garaged from new, a very famous owner, just magnificent .**£135,000**



Jaguar E Type 1973/4 Roadster
Jaguar E Type 1973/4 Roadster Finished in Old English White with black hide interior, manual transmission, power steering, chrome pressed wheels, only one owner from new, good history, original paperwork and handbook, totally original, very unique never seen rain **£69,750**

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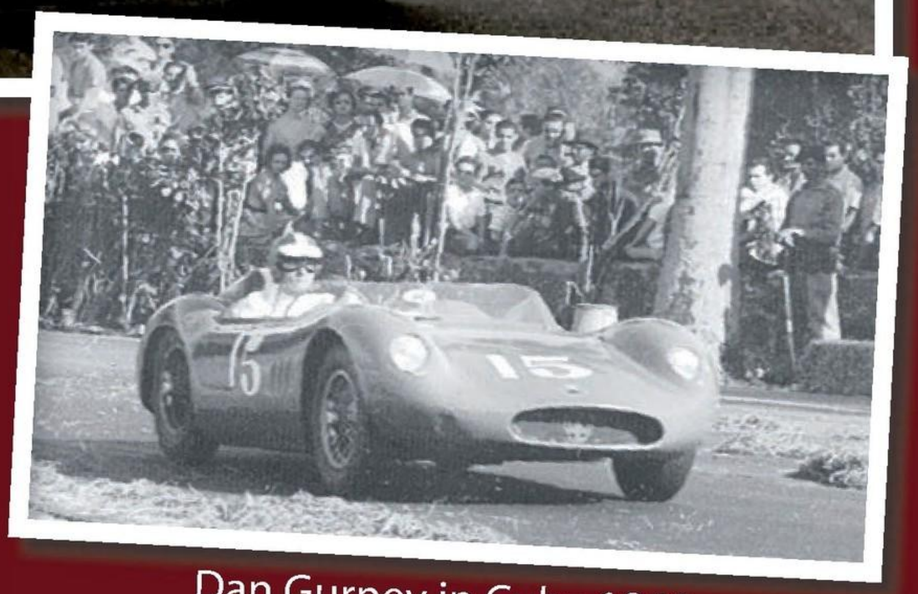
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1962 Cooper T 59 Formula Junior
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1933 – MG L1 MAGNA. Black with Green leather, Just 2,000 miles since total nut & bolt restoration **£59,995**



1997 – CATERHAM 7 1.6 40th ANNIVERSARY. Ruby Red/Silver Stripe with Black leather, 1 of just 67 40th Anniversary 7's produced, Full service history, A 2 owner example which has covered just 7,000 miles from new. . . . **£14,995**



1960 - AC ACE BRISTOL. Silver with Red leather, Just 4,000 miles since total nut & bolt photographic restoration **£139,995**



LIBRARY PHOTO

1934 - MG PA 2 SEATER (Restoration Project). Just 1 of 1,973 PA's produced, Carefully dismantled and stored, Complete with V5C log book, VSCC eligible **£14,995**

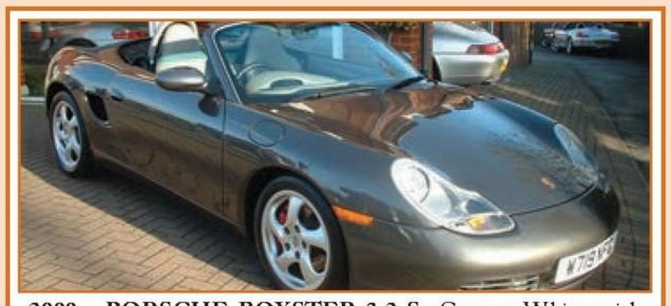


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1947 - MG TC (Restoration Project). Carefully dismantled and stored for the past 15 years by its previous owner of 35 years **£14,995**



1964 – AUSTIN HEALEY 3000 MKIII BJ8 (Works/ Competition Spec). British Racing Green with Red leather, Just 19,000 miles since total nut & bolt photographic restoration carried out by renowned Austin Healey specialist. . . . . **£POA**



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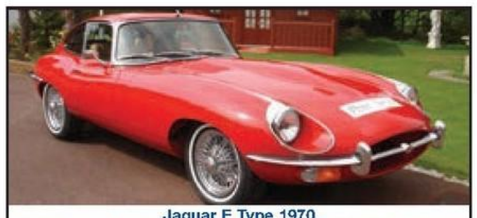
Bentley Arnage T Mulliner 2005
Level 2 Finished in Silver lake with Nautic Blue with contrasting Cotswold quilted seats and door inserts, walnut veneer to fascia and waist rails, with Bentley recessed badges, Le mans vent and Mulliner badges, sat nav, sunroof, quad exhaust, parktronic, many more extras, 27,000 miles, FSH, very high spec, this car is totally stunning **.£75,500**



Jaguar V12 E type Roadster 1974/5
Finished in Gleaming Old English White with Cherry Red hide interior, headrests, stereo system,overmats, sparkling chrome wire wheels, virtually one owner, only 21,000 miles from new, with original British Leyland service book with stamped up service history, hand book in original leather wallet, garaged from new, this E type is quite remarkable and totally superb ..... **.£125,500**



Jaguar E Type 1973/4 Roadster
Finished in Azure Blue with Tan hide interior, manual transmission, power steering, original radio,pressed chrome wheels, only 34,000 miles from new, lots of Mots and service history, original service book and handbook, superb original example ..... **.£66,750**



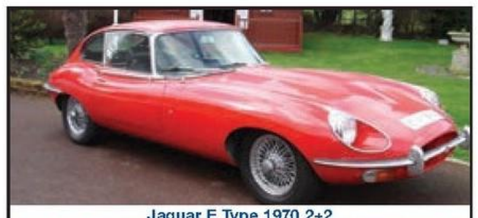
Jaguar E Type 1970
Series 11 FHC Finished in gleaming Signal Red with Tan hide interior, head rests,sparkling chrome wire wheels, stereo system, spare unused, well known car in the Jaguar world, this E Type is just incredible in condition, totally rebuilt every nut and bolt, by a top club member, only covered 2,000 miles since rebuild,l ots of bills, handbook in leather wallet, it would probably be impossible to find better, the ultimate E Type ..... **.£65,500**



Jaguar E type 4.2 1970 2+2
Finished in Brilliant Signal Red with Black hide interior, headrests, stereo, manual transmission, sparkling chrome wire wheels, only 2,500 miles since total nut and bolt restoration, carried out by one of England's top restorers (Colin Ford) featured in December 09 Jaguar World, can only be described as concourse and just remarkable..... **£47,750**



Jaguar E type 1972 V12 2+2
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Jaguar E Type 1970 2+2
Finished in Signal Red with Black hide interior,manual transmission, power steering, radio and stereo, headrests, chrome wire wheels, one previous owner, maintained by the last owner of thirty three years. Lots of old Mots and bills etc, always garaged, drives extremely well ..... **.£25,750**



Jaguar E type 1965 4.2 Series 1
Finished in Dark Blue with Burgundy hide interior, radio, sparkling chrome wire wheels, dark blue mohair hood and matching tonneau cover, this E type has only covered 28,000 miles from new, then restored to the ultimate condition, A complete hand built nut and bolt restoration, bringing this vehicle to a like new condition, total perfection, massive history file, only 400 miles since restoration, the closest you would get to a new car, this car is breath taking ..... **.£155,500**



Jaguar E type V12 Roadster 1973/4
Finished in Primrose yellow with superb Black hide interior, piped Primrose, headrests, stereo system, automatic transmission, power steering, sparkling chrome wire wheels, huge history file, only 32,000 miles from new, garaged from new, this car is in magnificent condition throughout **£85,750**



Jaguar E Type V12 1972 2+2
Finished in unmarked Silver Blue with Parchment hide interior, headrests, navy blue carpets, webasto sun roof, manual transmission, power steering, stereo system, sparkling chrome wire wheels, spare unused, only 4,000 miles since total nut and bolt professional restoration, concourse condition, any questions just ask, my answer will be like new, the best we have seen, never seen rain, always garaged, totally stunning ..... **.£65,750**



Jaguar V12 E Type 1971/2
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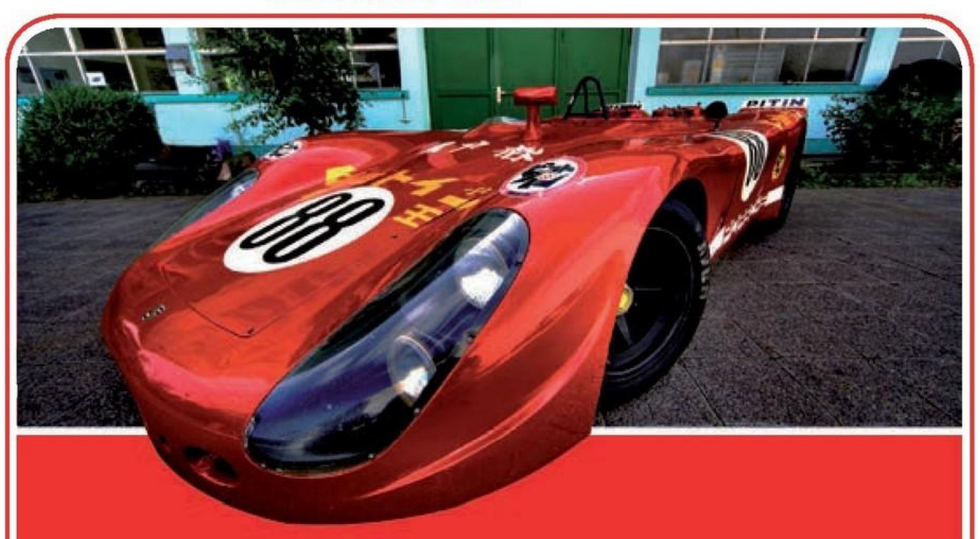
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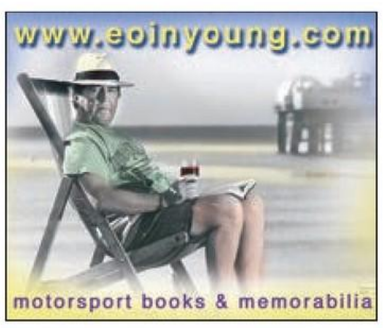
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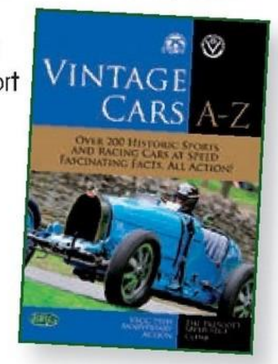
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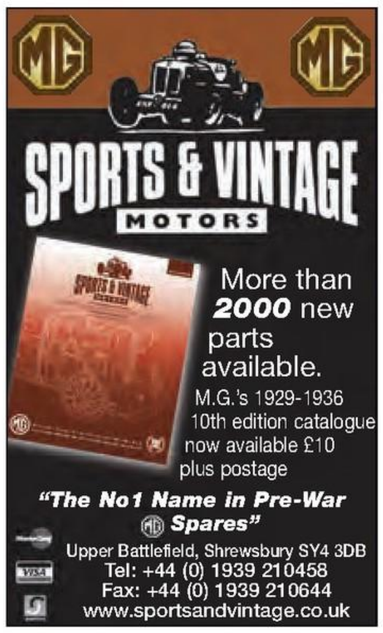
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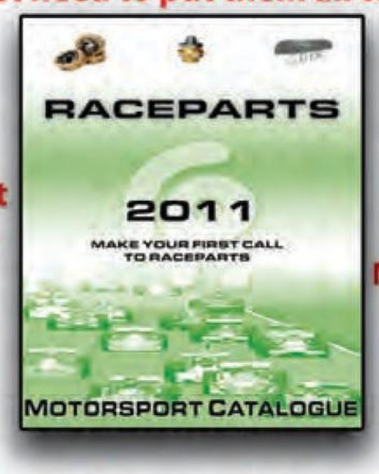
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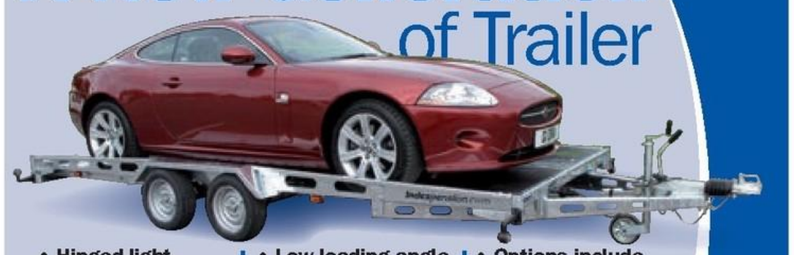
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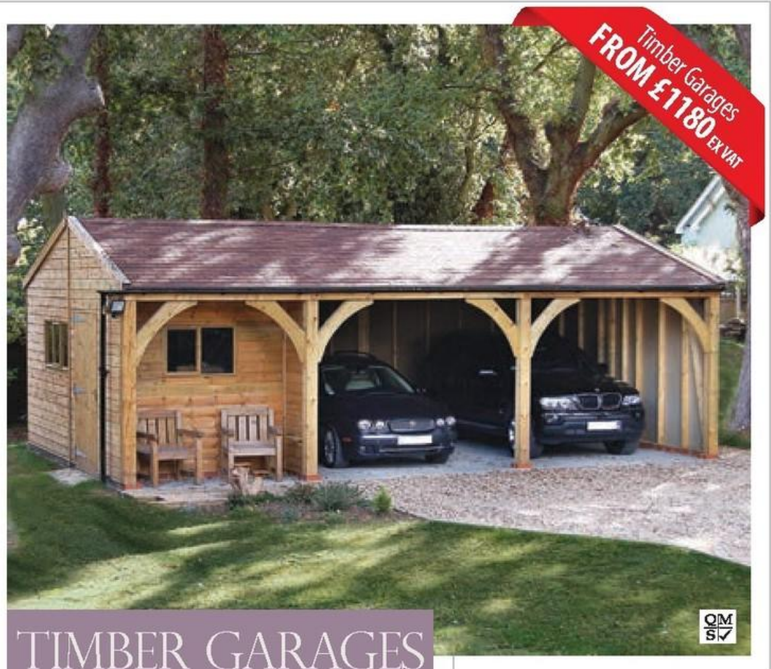


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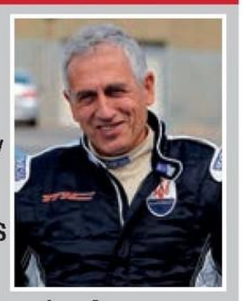
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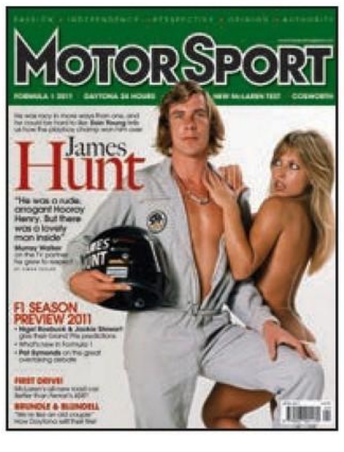
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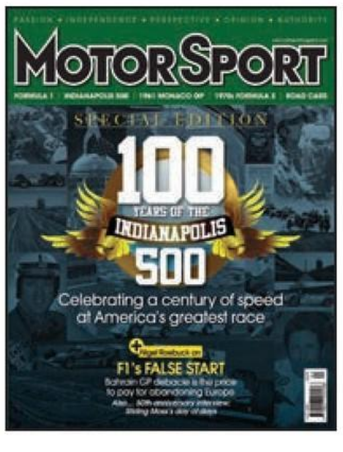
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P

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1927 Willys Whippet Roadster. Very old, very rare. In good condition. (Sounds a lot like me) Built in Canada but spent her life in Australia. Just had total engine (2.2 litre) rebuild. No rust and RHD. . . . . **Sell £15,000 or swop?**



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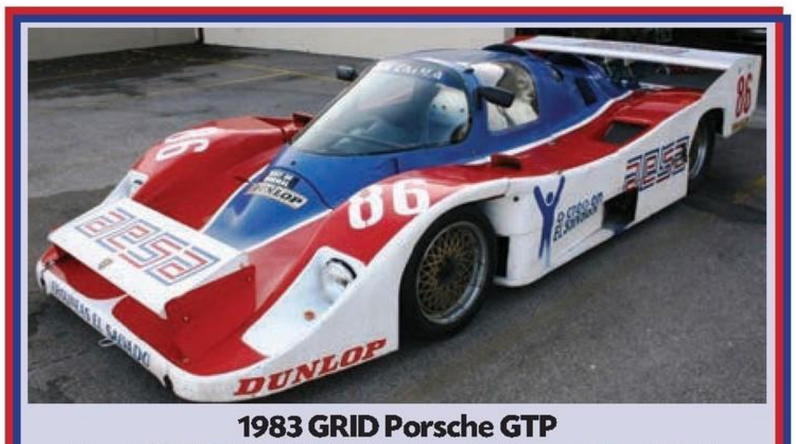
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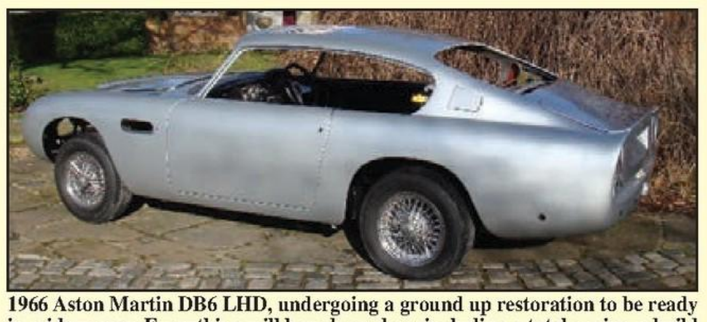
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1969 Aston Martin DB6 Volante. This car has been expertly converted from a saloon but is better to drive than an original with NO scuttle movement. The whole car which is finished in Gunmetal with Ocean green hide has been the subject of a complete rebuild and is in superb condition throughout. Around half the price of an original it is stunning value at only £185,000



1968 Aston Martin DB6 Saloon finished in Dubonnet Rosso with contrasting sand beige hide interior. The specification includes automatic transmission chrome wire wheels and PAS and the car has been the subject of a comprehensive restoration within the last 10 years. Very competitively priced ..... at £95,000



1966 Aston Martin DB6 LHD, undergoing a ground up restoration to be ready in midsummer. Everything will have been done including a total engine rebuild with upgrade to 4.2 + an unleaded conversion, full rebuild of the drive train, Back to metal repaint, new trim. New brakes wheels & tyres, etc, etc £150,000



1994 Bentley Continental "R" finished in Wildberry with contrasting Parchment and Burgundy hide interior with walnut cappings. This is a beautiful example with later style alloys and a full service history; it has covered only 41,000 miles and is perfect throughout. Competitively priced for one in this condition at £42,500



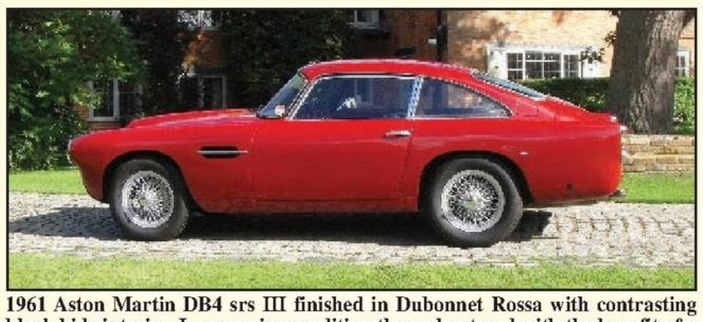
2003 Mercedes SL 55 AMG finished in Brilliant Silver with contrasting 2 tone pale grey hide interior and brushed aluminium fittings. Just 32,000 miles from new with a complete service history and fitted with every conceivable option including satellite navigation and panoramic roof. Wonderful Value at £25,950



1994 Bentley Continental "R" finished in Mason's Black with St James red hide interior with walnut cappings. This car is in excellent condition and has covered 116,000 miles and has a complete service history including £20,000 spent in the last 3 years, hence no future major expenditure expected £29,950



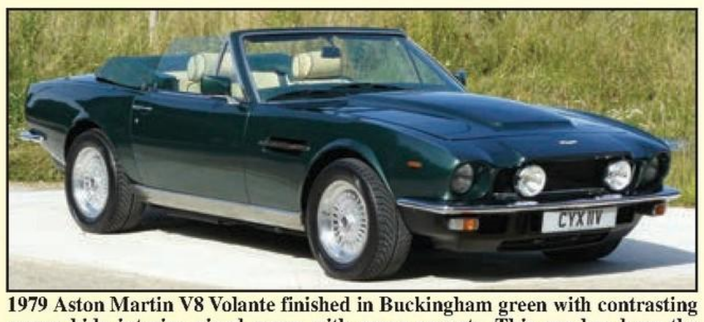
1996 Porsche 993 Cabriolet finished in Diamond black with black mohair electric hood and black hide interior. The car has covered 92,000 miles and has a comprehensive service history and the specification includes touchtronic transmission, wider cup alloys and electric heated seats £19,950



1961 Aston Martin DB4 srs III finished in Dubonnet Rossa with contrasting black hide interior. In very nice condition throughout and with the benefit of a comprehensive history with details of a recent full engine rebuild. Very nimble and great fun to drive, these cars are undoubtedly appreciating. Sensibly priced at £135,000



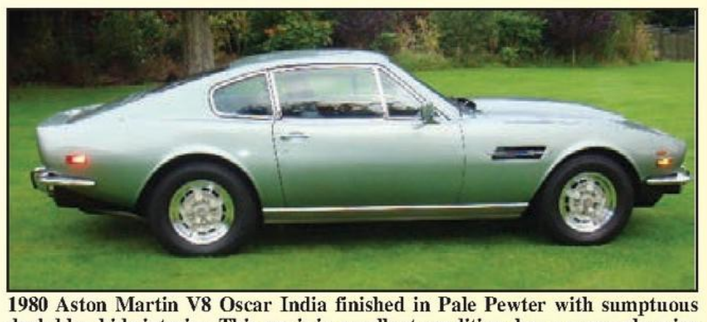
1961 Aston Martin DB4 Zagato recreation finished in Aston Racing Green with correct Zagato seats trimmed in black. All aluminium body and Aston Martin Chassis and Engine. With the originals now making millions, this is an excellent copy at a fraction of the cost £167,500



1979 Aston Martin V8 Volante finished in Buckingham green with contrasting cream hide interior piped green with green carpets. This car has been the subject of huge expenditure in the last 5 years including a new inner & outer sills, back to metal repaint and a complete re-trim. Now Perfect £69,950



1994 Aston Martin Virage Volante finished in Cairngorm grey with mushroom hide interior. These cars were £165,000 when new and were the flag ship of the Aston range; they now represent incredible value. Fitted with power hood, heated electric seats and air conditioning, they are a joy to drive and a pleasure to own £37,500



1980 Aston Martin V8 Oscar India finished in Pale Pewter with sumptuous dark blue hide interior. This car is in excellent condition, has a comprehensive service history and comes with the benefit of a recent suspension upgrade. It was supplied to the last two owners by us and has been regularly maintained £45,000



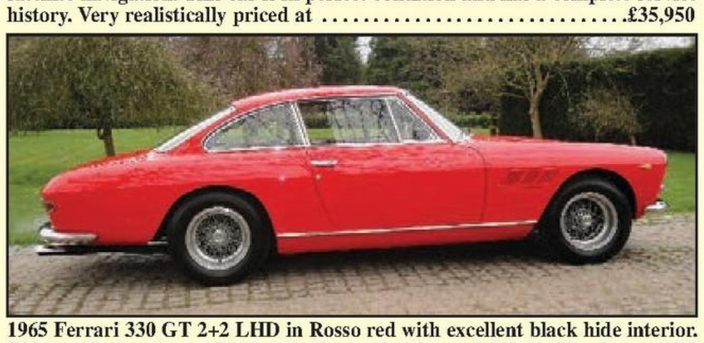
2004 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Keswick limited edition finished in Mason's black with black hide interior and brushed aluminium dash and door cappings and GT electric seats. Further spec includes red callipers, 19"alloys and satellite navigation. This car is in perfect condition and has a complete service history. Very realistically priced at £35,950



1999 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Volante in Aston Racing Green with forest green & Parchment hide interior. Fitted with electric hood, electric heated seats, and automatic transmission, it has covered only 73,000 miles and has a full service history and is realistically priced at £25,950



1997 Aston Martin DB7 Coupe finished in Mendip blue with Parchment and Pacific hide interior. This is a 56,000 mile car with a full service history and comes with all usual refinements, Excellent value at £19,950



1965 Ferrari 330 GT 2+2 LHD in Rosso red with excellent black hide interior. This is a first series car but late in the production and fitted with a 5 speed ZF gearbox. The car has spent the last 10 years in a Portuguese museum and has recently been serviced by Bob Houghton. Will undoubtedly rise in value £89,950



1962 MGA MkII roadster finished in old English white in contrasting black hide interior. The car is in nice but not perfect condition and drives extremely well. MkII's were fitted with a1622cc BMC "B" series engine with increased power output and improved cooling. Huge fun at £19,950



1973 Jaguar "E" type V12 roadster finished in Signal red with contrasting black hide interior and black mohair hood. Stored for the last 10 years, the car has just been fully re-commissioned and is now ready to be enjoyed. Beautiful throughout £55,000

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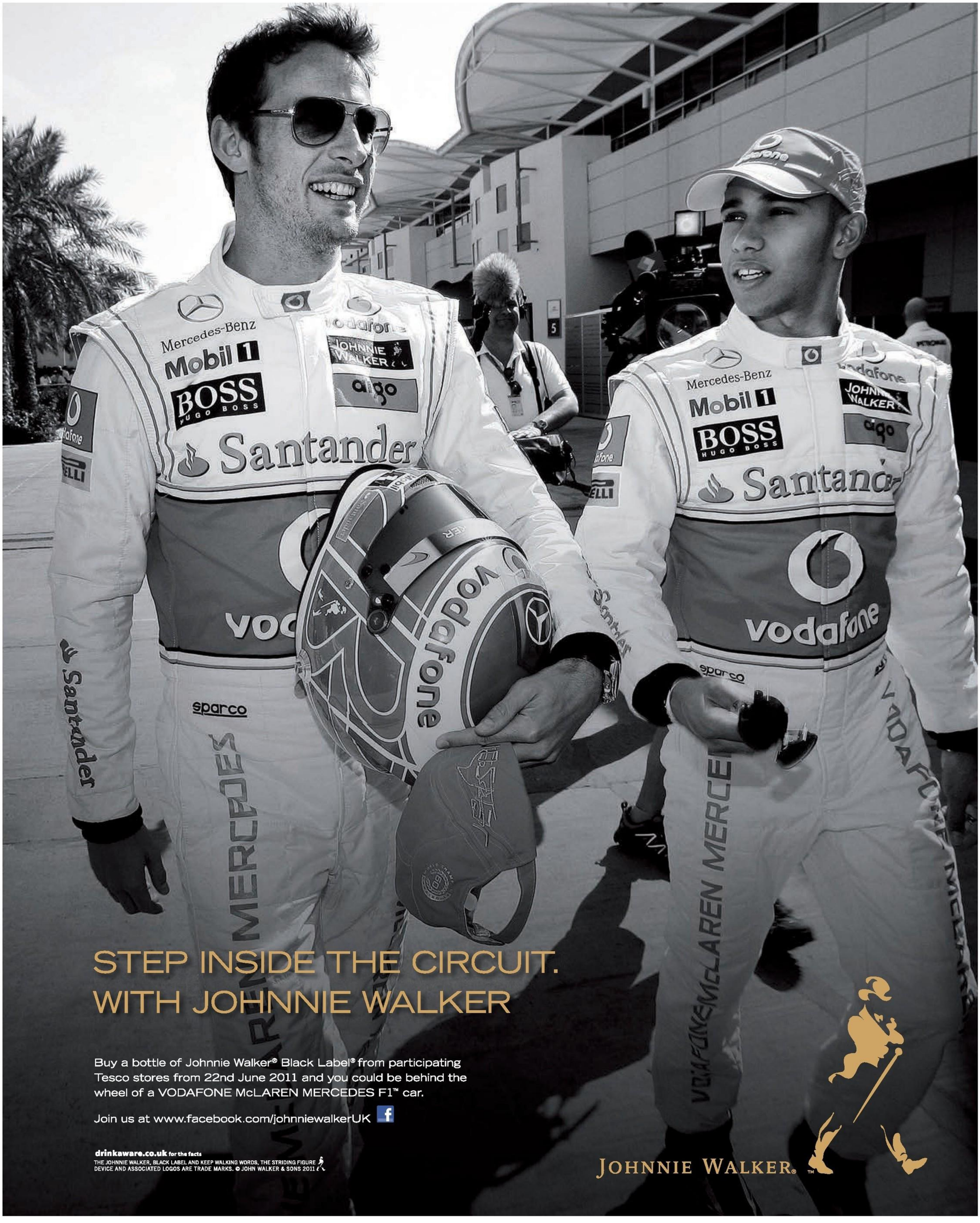
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