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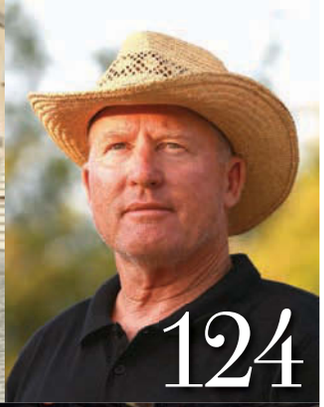

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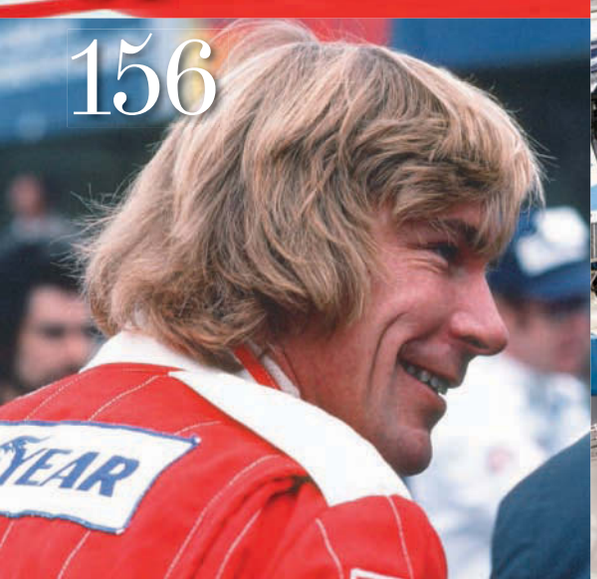

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VOLUME 93 / NUMBER 7

FEATURES

REGULARS

I SIT DOWN TO WRITE THIS JUST after hearing the terrible news that Nicky Hayden has died. We've run out of time this month for an obituary, but this issue cannot close without a few words about the 'Kentucky Kid'. You may have guessed that I'm a fan, and this news hurts.

There were a number of things to like about Nicky. He was expressive with a motorcycle – artistic even. He drew shapes with it, twisted it, turned it, bossed it – all in the pursuit of speed. A dirt tracker, Nicky knew how to carve performance out of a bike – any bike. But he wasn't wild; his run to his sole MotoGP championship was measured and mature. For some the edge is something to explore infrequently; so comfortable was Nicky at the edge that he could sustain it longer than others – and rack up the points.

His 2006 world championship year demonstrated another side to Nicky that I'll never forget. When his team-mate Dani Pedrosa inexplicably took him out of the Portuguese GP at a crucial stage in the season, Nicky tore off his crash helmet and looked for all the world like he was going to hook Dani clean over the Armco. Instead, his face shredded with emotion, capillaries bursting at the surface, Hayden punched nothing but insults at the sheepish Spaniard. Nicky's restraint spoke volumes.

He became firm friends with Valentino Rossi – something few team-mates have done. Sure, Nicky couldn't generally match Rossi's pace and that made him less of an irritant than Lorenzo was in recent years, but Rossi's romantic view of riding dovetailed beautifully with Nicky's. They were easy riders. Their love of motorcycling telegraphed with every black line that emerged from the RCV211V – of which there were many. I'm convinced that the very best drivers and riders reach the peak not solely through talent and determination, but also fed by the energy of a deep joy of operating the machine. Nicky did. Valentino does. Lewis does. Michael did. Good company to keep.

Rest in peace #69.

❖

IT MAY COME AS NO SURPRISE that, having come from the world of modern motoring magazines, I've experienced my share of PR pampering. I've been on private jets, hobnobbed with celebs and flown around the world to drive exotics. I'm pretty ambivalent to it all, embarrassed even, but it was a job and somebody had to do it…

NICK TROTT
EDITOR
@NickTrott27

I held a racing licence too – back in 2004. My then editor wanted me to write about the British VW Cup series – a highly competitive, sub-touring car category – and sure enough I was handed a couple of Golfs and a Polo in which to tug around (eight entries, two DNFs, one crash, highest 10th). A polite commentator would say my performances were average.

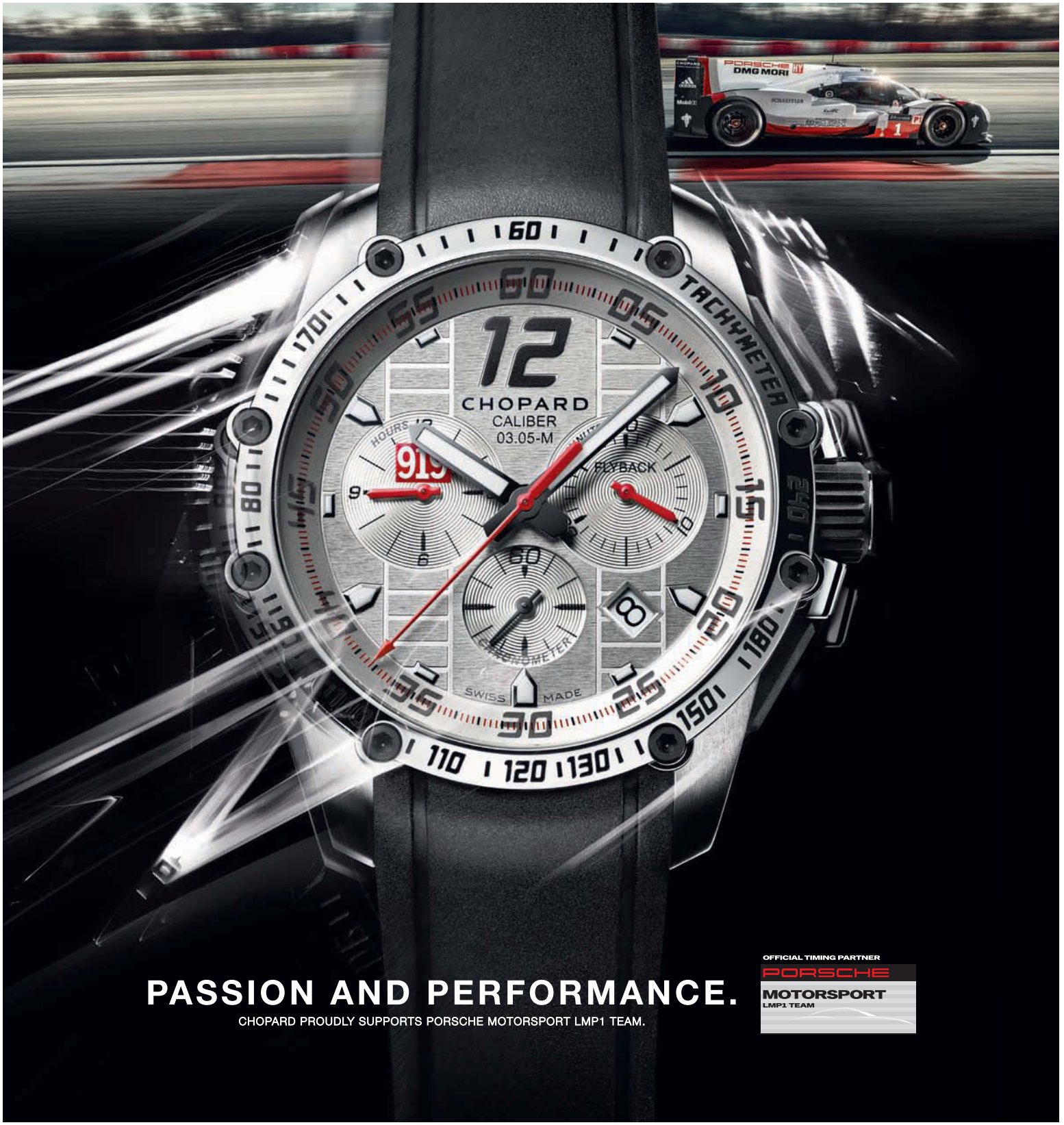
During this period, the burden on my wallet was precisely… £0. Indeed, absurdly, I was paid to race in all eight events, if you consider my writing fee. How odd that I've earned more money from racing than some F1 drivers over the years. Since I adore motor racing, I always felt a fraud for this. For all my passion for the sport, I'd never stuck my hand in my wallet and gone racing. Until now.

Yes, this year myself and online editor Ed Foster will be sharing his lovely ex-works MGB in a number of races, predominantly the Equipe GTS series (www.equipegts.uk). Ed was looking for a team-mate, I was looking for a race in historics and the planets thus aligned. Naturally I didn't look at costs and fees when I initially agreed – but I am now that the bank account is starting to dry up. My wife seems to have noticed, too, which is doubly worrying.

However, something strange is happening. No matter how hard the financials look, I find more ways to justify the season ahead. I adore the distraction and the theatre of preparing for a race. I've even enjoyed the paperwork and form filling.

Talking to John at Equipe GTS about the series feels like I've opened the door to a new group of comrades, and the time I spent with some extraordinarily passionate marshals at Silverstone recently – in order to gain another

HONDA



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LAT

signature on my licence – was simply fantastic. And I thought I loved racing…

I can honestly say that while I've been reporting on motoring and racing for many years, I've never quite felt the buzz for it as I do now. You'll be able to read about our adventures in racing over the coming months on all of *Motor Sport*'s platforms – from print to web to app. Will the appeal fade? Will I run out of money? Will Ed and I fall out?

Stay tuned!

SEE PAGE 164
SUBSCRIBE!
FOR MORE DETAILS

❖

I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE SOME new members of the team this month. A belated welcome to Lyndon McNeil – *Motor Sport*'s new staff photographer – who joined recently, plus a big hello to *Motor Sport*'s first filmmaker, Hamish McAllister. In this image and video-hungry age, both appointments will undoubtedly keep *Motor Sport* at the front line of race reporting for many years. Also, we've launched a new gallery function on our website and Hamish will be producing short- and long-form films for the site and our YouTube channel. In summary, I'm promising more in-depth content across all of our platforms in the coming months. To stay in touch, your best bet is to subscribe to our newsletter or follow us on social media.

Finally, don't forget to seek out the *Motor Sport* 'issue commentary' podcasts (see the website for more). We produce these monthly to give you a 'companion' tour of each issue – and to offer a behind-the-scenes view into how we construct more than 200 pages of content. The best way to listen is to pour yourself a nice drink, find a quiet corner, grab your copy and then listen as we narrate the issue. You'll even hear from newbie Lyndon about the photographic challenges (of which there are many, or so he tells us) and art editor Damon Cogman – who will reveal some, but not all, of the tricks of the design trade. Ⓜ

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

We celebrate the 50th anniversary of the original European F2

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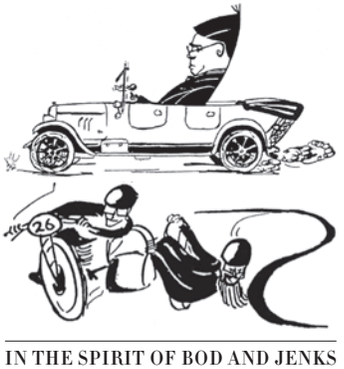

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JOHNNIE WALKER

LAT

THE MOTOR SPORT MONTH

IN PICTURES

MAY 18, 2017

Indy 500 practice

INDIANAPOLIS, USA

America's most famous race will be run by the time this issue reaches the shops, but temporary F1 refugee Fernando Alonso created a favourable impression during the build-up to his first Indy 500. The Spaniard lapped quickly in testing and went on to qualify fifth in his McLaren-Honda-Andretti Dallara. For a detailed event analysis, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com.

RALLY PORTUGAL, FAFE STAGE, MAY 18
"Who will jump the farthest?" A fair question. Quentin Gilbert rises to the challenge – quite literally so – but the Frenchman was then unable to retrieve his Skoda Fabia from its nose-dive and ended up rolling into retirement.

GRAND PALAIS, PARIS, APRIL 24
Crews prepare for the latest running of Peter Auto's annual classic, which took them from the French capital to Biarritz via Le Mans, St Malo, Albi, Toulouse and Pau-Arnos. Andrew Smith/ James Cottingham won in their Ford GT40.

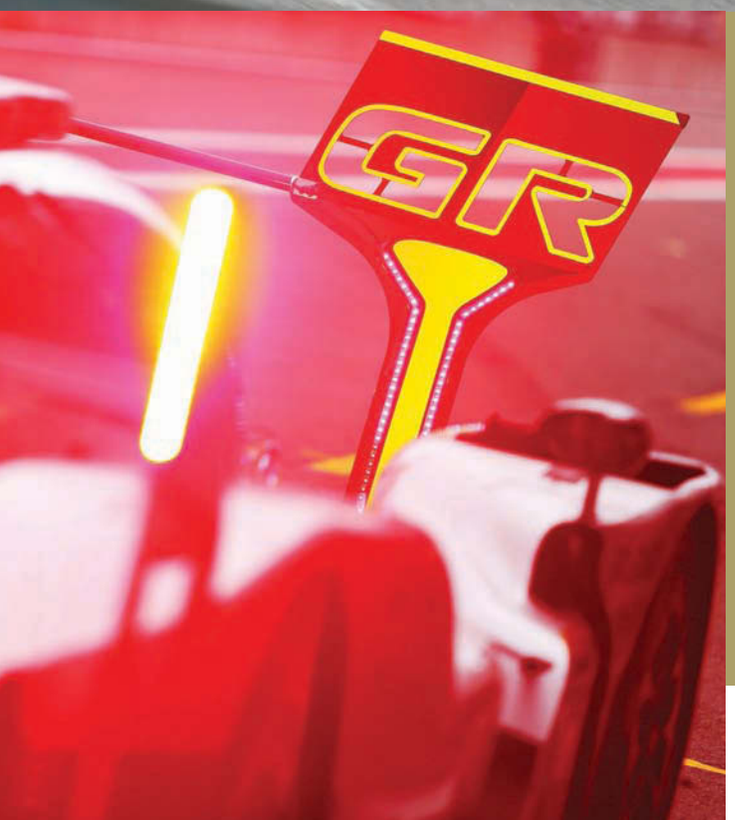
PAU, FRANCE, MAY 21
Maximilian Günther (Prema Dallara F317) won two of the three FIA Formula 3 races through the streets of the south-western French city, ending the weekend two points adrift of championship co-leaders Joel Eriksson and Lando Norris. Next stop? The Hungaroring, Budapest.

SPA CLASSIC, BELGIUM, MAY 21
Sunshine and heat in the Ardennes: the 1979 Porsche 935 K3 of Henrik Lundberg heads up towards Raidillon during one of the Classic Endurance Racing events. He retired after five of the 22 laps. Yves Scemama (Toj SC304) won overall, while Franco Meiners (Lancia Beta Montecarlo) took the GT class spoils.

THE MOTOR SPORT MONTH

IN PICTURES

PHILLIP ISLAND, AUSTRALIA, APRIL 21-23
James Courtney pictured during the third round of this year's Australia Supercars series. Fabian Coulthard and Chaz Mostert took the two race victories.



SPA 6 HOURS, BELGIUM, MAY 6
Pit stop for the Gazoo Racing Toyota team during the second round of this year's World Endurance Championship. It scored a 1-2, courtesy of Anthony Davidson/Kazuki Nakajima/ Sébastien Buemi and Mike Conway/Kamui Kobayashi.

PARIS, FRANCE, MAY 18
Promotional shot ahead of the second Paris ePrix, which Sébastien Buemi won for the Renault e.dams team to extend his points lead.

LAUSITZ, GERMANY, MAY 20-21
The DTM field streams away at the start of the first of the weekend's two races. As at Hockenheim, Lucas Auer (Mercedes) and Jamie Green (Audi) scored a win apiece.

LAT, TOYOTA GAZOO RACING, P.P.ANNY/FOTORISSIMA, FIA F3 & PETER AUTO

The world's fastest gamer

McLaren hopes to uncover the stars of tomorrow through virtual racing – but will they cut it in the real world? | BY GARY WATKINS

McLAREN'S OFFER OF A ROLE AS a Formula 1 simulator driver to the winner of a new e-sports gaming competition might smack of marketing puff, but it appears to be a real attempt to find a worthy addition to the team's race programme.

The competition, known as the World's Fastest Gamer, has been launched by McLaren in association with Logitech G, a sponsor of the team and a supplier of gaming accessories, racewear company Sparco and the givemesport.com website. The first winner of the competition will be chosen from 10 top gamers at the McLaren Technology Centre in September.

"This is a hugely exciting opportunity, not only within the gaming industry, but for everyone at McLaren and in motor sport in general," said McLaren boss Zak Brown. "We've long witnessed the growth of online sports gaming and, right now, the parallels between the real and the virtual worlds have never been closer. The winner will genuinely be a key part of our team at McLaren."

Darren Cox, the architect of Nissan's GT Academy gamer-to-racer scheme, has helped put the new competition together and claimed that the skill set of a top gamer should translate to a modern F1 simulator.

"The way online gamers talk about their set-ups would shame some drivers in the junior formulae," he said. "It is not a very big jump to think that someone who is good at gaming could be a help to McLaren in their simulator programme."

HOW IT WILL WORK

Cox described World's Fastest Gamer as a "champion of champions" that will bring together the top e-sports competitors from various platforms, such as rFactor and iRacing, for the finals in September.

"Six of the 10 will be chosen from existing platforms by a panel and a further four from events that we will be organising through the summer," he explained. "The finals won't be so much a run-off as a job interview."

The competition will run for multiple seasons, said Cox. He explained that in future years the selection process would become more structured, with the winners of chosen championships proceeding to the finals.

CAN IT PROVIDE A WORTHY SIMULATOR DRIVER?

That is the aim of the competition, according to Cox. He believes that advances in gaming has brought it closer to real simulation.

"It was only a minute ago that F1 teams were using rFactor as the basis of their simulators," he said. "Now it is freely available and useable on a high-end PC costing a couple of grand."

Aston Martin factory driver Darren Turner, who leads Base Performance Simulators in Banbury, sees no reason why a gamer couldn't make a good simulator driver. But he stresses that there would need to be a period of education, in the same way as GT Academy winners had to build up to racing at an international level.

"There's no doubt that you could find

someone from the gaming world who could do a good job at driving the simulator," he said. "But they are only going to be of any use to McLaren if they can give the feedback the engineers require. When they are gaming, they set up the car themselves, but in the F1 simulator programmes that's the engineer's job.

"There will have to be a process of education to enable them to learn more about set-up and to understand how an F1 simulator programme operates, so that they can give the engineering staff valuable feedback. But you could potentially find someone who is the perfect simulator driver because there is such a big pond of people to dip into."

McLaren is aware of the challenges it will be facing, according to vehicle dynamics and driver development engineer Alice Rowlands, who will be working with the gamer.

"I expect a top gamer to be fast in our simulator," she said. "However, being fast is only the first step towards becoming a successful and valuable test driver. I imagine we will draw on our previous experience developing young drivers when working with the competition winner. The difference will be that they probably won't have driven a real single-seater car, so I'd be looking for an opportunity to get them some time in a real car, even if it were much lower performance than an F1 car."

COULD GAMING BE AN ALTERNATIVE TO KARTING?

It could be argued that the best of the 21 GT Academy winners so far have already proved that gaming is as good a grounding in racing as more traditional routes. Lucas Ordoñez and Jann Mardenborough are now fully fledged professional racing drivers with Nissan factory contracts, while Wolfgang Reip gave the scheme additional credence when he was picked up by Bentley in 2016, admittedly on a one-year deal.

Laurence Wiltshire, project director of the GT Academy, believes that e-sports will eventually create more professional drivers competing near the top of motor sport through sheer weight of numbers.

"The premise on which the GT Academy works is by having a huge funnel into which you pour up to a million people playing Gran Turismo on their PlayStations around the world," he explained. "It's a good enough game that it acts as a filter to give you winners who have good raw skills and persistence, the kind of attributes you want in a racing driver.

"A fraction of the number of people taking up gaming each year begin real motor sport whether in karting or cars. In the non-virtual world, the filter isn't only skill of the driver. It's financial because it is not only the drivers with talent who move towards the pinnacle. The real world involves a much smaller sample and an unfair system."

"Participation rates are rising as new simulators start up. Many of them don't just do birthday parties and corporate events, they put on proper race meetings. These are the new karting circuits."

"It is not a very big jump to think that someone who is good at gaming could be a help to McLaren in their simulator programme"
Darren Cox

BOOSTING POPULARITY

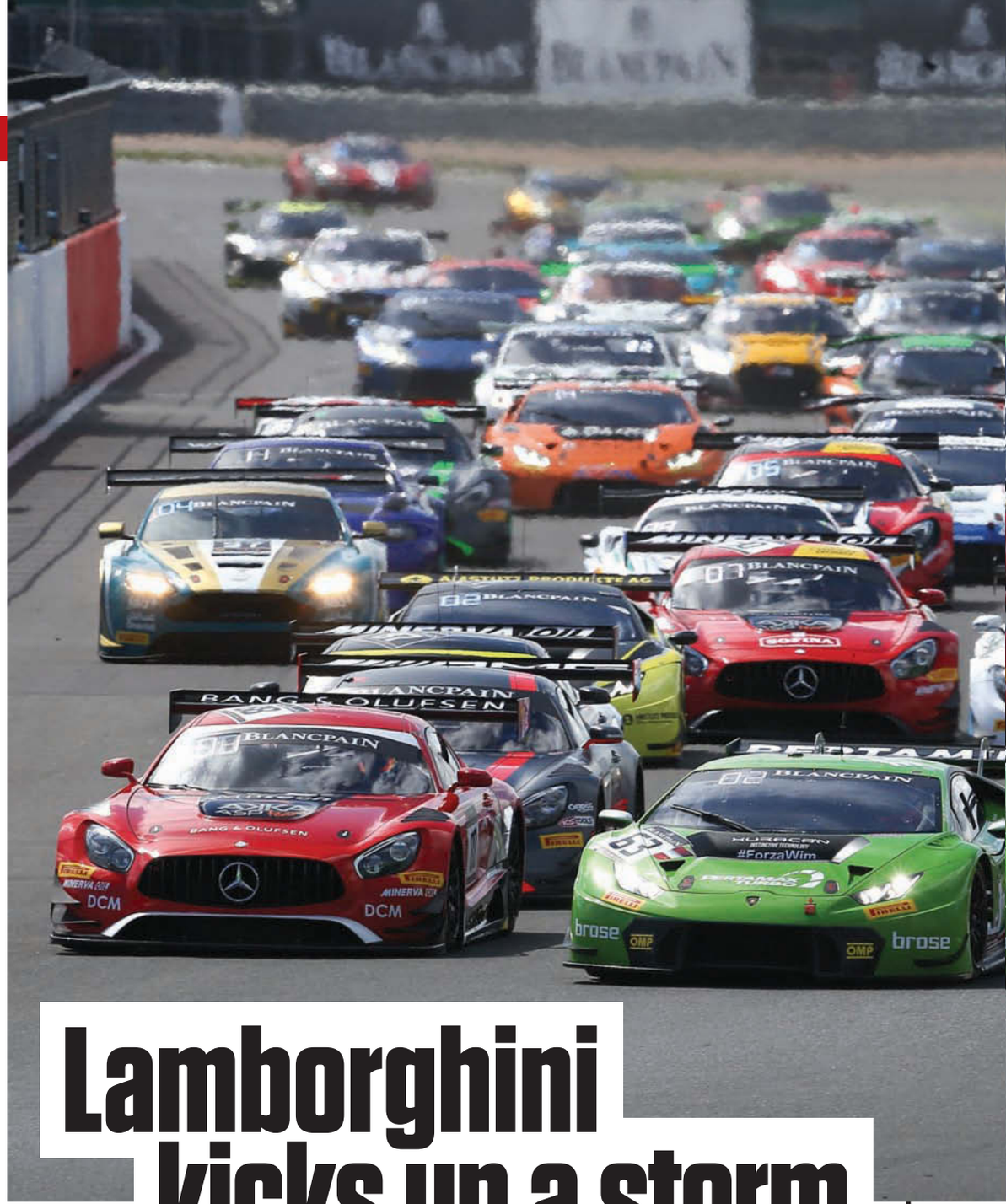
Cox points out that there have been studies into the growth of the fanbase of Major League Soccer in the USA, which suggest that new supporters first become engaged in the sport through gaming.

"Research shows that the reason why the MSL has increased in popularity so quickly is through people playing FIFA on their PlayStation or Xbox," he explained. "They start off playing the game, then they watch a match on TV and finally they kick a football. For previous generations it was the other way around.

"When I was a kid I was dragged to Brands Hatch and Oulton Park and playing a computer game came much later. Now kids start gaming and that fires their passion in motor sport."

Wiltshire offered a similar opinion.

"The key benefit of gaming to motor sport will be that it will get more people involved," he said. "The more people who get a taste of it through e-sports, the more who will go on to race for real. Some might not be able afford to and will go on to be involved just as fans or in other ways such as marshalling. It can only benefit the sport as a whole."



Lamborghini kicks up a storm

Blancpain GT series poised for another close season, despite Huracán drivers' early pace | BY GARY WATKINS

AUSTRIA'S GRASSER LAMBORGHINI team is on a roll in the Blancpain GT Series (BGTS). Victory in the Silverstone round of the championship's Endurance Cup segment in May was its fourth win in a row in 2017.

Grasser began its run at the opening enduro of the season, the Monza 3 Hours at the end of April, with a dominant victory for the Lamborghini Huracán GT3 shared by factory drivers Mirko Bortolotti, Christian Engelhart and Andrea Caldarelli. It followed up with a pair of victories in the two one-hour sprint races at Brands Hatch with the same #63 car shared by Bortolotti and Engelhart.

Victory number four was a close-run thing at Silverstone. The winning margin at Monza had been 30sec; this time the Bortolotti/Engelhart/Caldarelli Huracán crossed the line just three tenths to the good.

The six-second advantage that Bortolotti had built up during the opening stint was wiped out by a safety car at the end of the first hour. Caldarelli and then Engelhart would battle hard with a pair of Mercedes-AMG GT3s for the remainder of the three hours.

Grasser and Lamborghini appear to have a handle on the latest Pirelli tyre specification introduced for the BGTS this season. Also significant is a switch to a high-profile front tyre that has turned the Huracán into a car that's quick over one lap but also consistent over a stint.

SPENGLER JOINS THE PARTY

Former DTM champion Bruno Spengler is the latest in a line of high-profile drivers to be called up for the Spa 24 Hours, showpiece round of the BGTS. The Canadian, DTM king in 2012, has been brought into Rowe Racing's line-up to drive one of its factory-supported BMW M6 GT3s in the Belgian enduro on July 29/30.

"GT cars are not touring cars; they are way too expensive to play at touring car racing"

Spengler began a four-race stint with the team at Silverstone and will complete the remainder of the endurance events with the team as part of a sports car programme that also encompassed the Nürburgring 24 Hours at the end of May and selected long-distance rounds of the IMSA SportsCar Championship with the Rahal team in North America.

"It's going to be a busy and interesting year for me," said Spengler. "I get to compete in the 24-hour races at the Nürburgring and Spa for the first time and I'll be doing 18 races in total.

"It's good to have another programme, but I'm not finished with the DTM. I'm only 33."

DRIVING STANDARDS CLAMPDOWN

A new zero-tolerance policy on driver contact was introduced at Silverstone, following a spate of accidents during the opening rounds of the BGTS. The clampdown on driving infringements resulted in no fewer than 17 penalties

Grasser's winning Huracán leads a packed field into Copse at the start of the Silverstone enduro in May

over the course of the race.

"The series has become too aggressive," said series boss Stéphane Ratel, also the architect of the GT3 category. "GT cars are not touring cars; they are way too expensive to play at touring car racing.

"From now on any contact will result in a penalty and the severity will be graduated according to the consequences of the contact. If you hit a car and it goes off the track and comes back on, you get a drive-through, but if it hits the wall, you get a stop-go."

PORSCHE BACK TO SPA?

Porsche could make a return to the Spa 24 Hours with a factory-supported car, or at least that's Stéphane Ratel's hope.

Ratel explained that the German manufacturer is evaluating support for a team running a 911 RSR and loaning out a trio of factory drivers for the big race. It would be the first time that Porsche has mounted a works campaign at Spa since 2013.

"Last year we had 63 cars and 10 different manufacturers on the grid, and people were asking how we could improve," he said. "My response was that I wanted factory-supported cars from Ferrari and Porsche. We have Ferrari [with an AF Corse-run entry with a driver roster including Giancarlo Fisichella], so now I want Porsche.

"I know that they are looking. What I don't know is which team it would be or whether it would be with one or two cars."

BENTLEY ROCKS ON

Bentley drivers Seb Morris and Rick Parfitt Jr have made a strong start in their bid to improve on their third-place finish in last year's British GT Championship. The duo followed up on fourth and fifth positions in the opening meeting at Oulton Park with a victory at Rockingham aboard their Team Parker Racing Continental GT3.

Morris and Parfitt Jr came out on top in a controversial two-hour race on the Rockingham 'roval' at the end of April. They finished second on the road behind the Spirit of Race Ferrari 488 GT3 shared by Matt Griffin and Duncan Cameron, but were handed victory when the Ferrari was given a post-race penalty after it had been erroneously waved past the safety car.

•

The factory M-Sport Bentley squad notched up a podium in the opening BGTS round, the Sprint Cup event at Misano. Steven Kane and Vincent Abril finished second in the full-points main race after finishing fourth in the qualifying event.

The British squad, which has developed the Continental for racing, notched up top-six finishes with Andy Soucek, Maxime Soulet and Vincent Abril in the opening two BGTS enduros. They finished fifth at Silverstone in May after jumping from 22nd position into the top six during the first round of routine stops.

•

Former Caterham Formula 1 academy driver Weiron Tan kicked off his sports car career with a top-six finish in the China GT Championship round at Goldenport in May. The Malaysian driver and Andrew Kim came back to take fifth place aboard their Absolute-run Continental after an early spin.

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Sue Darbyshire gets back behind the wheel of her Morgan after horror crash

BY PAUL LAWRENCE

EIGHT MONTHS AFTER BEING injured when her three-wheeled Morgan rolled during a race at Mallory Park, one of Britain's top female historic racers has returned to the track in her rebuilt car.

Sue Darbyshire was thrown from the Morgan last August, when she lost control on oil dropped at the fast plunge through Devils Elbow. The car spun into the gravel and flipped over. "I was knocked about quite a bit, cracked both knees and the car was completely wrecked," she said. "I had a crack on the head and was bruised and battered. We think I cracked both knees as I was thrown out."

The 54-year-old says she was particularly bothered by the fact that her racing leathers were wrecked as the medical crews carefully cut them away to assess her injuries.

Undeterred by the accident, the Warwickshire-based driver says she was determined to return to competition as soon as possible and following a shakedown run at the VSCC Silverstone meeting in April, she went to the Isle of Man to compete on the three closed-road hillclimbs that make up the Manx Classic.

■ **Two Shelsley Walsh stages will start the action on the Roger Albert Clark Rally on Friday November 10. It is believed to be the first time in the venue's 112-year history that it has hosted a rally special stage – and it will also be the first time that Shelsley has been used competitively downhill. The opening stage will run from the usual hill start to the finish and the second will begin at the top and run in reverse.**

Racing 90-year-old three-wheelers has never been for the faint of heart but Darbyshire's return to action has nonetheless provoked admiration from colleagues. She maintains that her biggest fear since the accident has been whether she would have time to get the car back together: damage to the 1929 Morgan Super Aero was extensive and included a bent chassis, a cracked gearbox and an engine damaged by ingesting gravel.

"It has taken us all winter to fix it. It was a massive job, all the woodwork on the car was wrecked too," she says. "And I've also had to get new racing leathers."

Darbyshire is renowned as one of Britain's leading Morgan three-wheeler exponents and was a motorcycle sidecar racer for 20 years before switching to the Morgan.

DENNISRUSHTON

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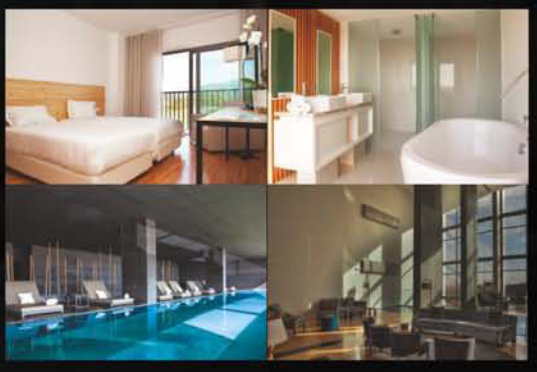

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JAKOB EBREY/SILVERSTONE

An inspector calls

LIKE NAUGHTY SCHOOLBOYS scrambling to take advantage of a no-questions-asked amnesty on the return of contraband, historic racers have quietly been un-modifying their cars for the 2017 season.

The rush comes after one of the most influential historic racing promoters announced plans to inspect engines to ensure no competitors had gained an unfair advantage.

Duncan Wiltshire, who runs four historic race series under his Motor Racing Legends brand – the Historic Touring Car Challenge (above), the Woodcote Trophy for pre '56 sports cars, the Stirling Moss Trophy for pre '61 sports-racing cars and the Pre-War Sports Car Series – announced in January that cars would go through a test process prior to racing. Before they gain approval, MSA scrutineers remove the cylinder head, measure bore and stroke and then seal the bottom end of the engine.

Since the announcement it has emerged that there has been a spike in demand for new crankshafts for one particular model of period touring car. Running illegal crankshafts is a way of increasing the capacity of an engine by up to around 10 per cent within the original engine cylinders and block.

Oversized engines in historic racing is a problem that has rumbled on for some time and it was a subject that troubled Wiltshire. "I thought long and hard before going ahead with this, as it was quite a dramatic action," admits Wiltshire, who announced the initiative at the Legends awards dinner in mid-January. "I got a big cheer from the room and that was a massive relief."

BRDC Rising Star Chris Middlehurst, 22, raced a 57-year-old Lotus 18 Grand Prix car to victory at the VSCC Silverstone meeting. The former McLaren/*Autosport* Young Driver finalist and Formula Renault champion raced the ex-Jim Hall car of Charles McCabe in the pair of HGPCA races and won the first before gearbox problems later struck.

Notice was clearly taken of the new initiative. "This year is completely voluntary and it will be mandatory from next year. I don't believe we've lost any competitors because of this process."

Four months into the engine certification process, Wiltshire is very pleased with progress. "In a year or two it will become a natural process and I think it is inevitable that other organisers will follow. No one has said we shouldn't be doing it."

Blast from the past

SIX DECADES SINCE ITS LAST RACE, a unique Turner Formula 2 car from 1952 is back in action this season.

Jack Turner was best known for building small sports cars and up to 700 were built through until 1965, when ill-health brought production to an end. In the early 1950s he also built some racing cars and financial backer John Webb commissioned a 1500cc F2 car for the 1952 season.

It was raced, albeit without much success, by Webb and Jack Fairman in 1953 and Ron Flockhart in 1954, but its last race appears to have been in August '54. It was later bought by Jack Perkins and probably used in speed events before being laid up for many years. More recently, Adrian Field-Lucas inherited the car from Perkins' widow and resolved to get it back on track.

The car (below) has been restored to race-ready trim by Ian Nuthall's IN Racing team. "The engine is based on the Lea Francis 1500 and Turner himself cast the head in aluminium with twin plug ignition," says Nuthall. "It's like an A-Type Connaught engine.

"The whole car is a nice, basic design. Turner was very friendly with John Tojeiro and they did some things together. So the chassis is a bit like an AC and a Tojeiro and I think it was probably Tojeiro's design. Most of it is fairly basic, as all cars were at the time.

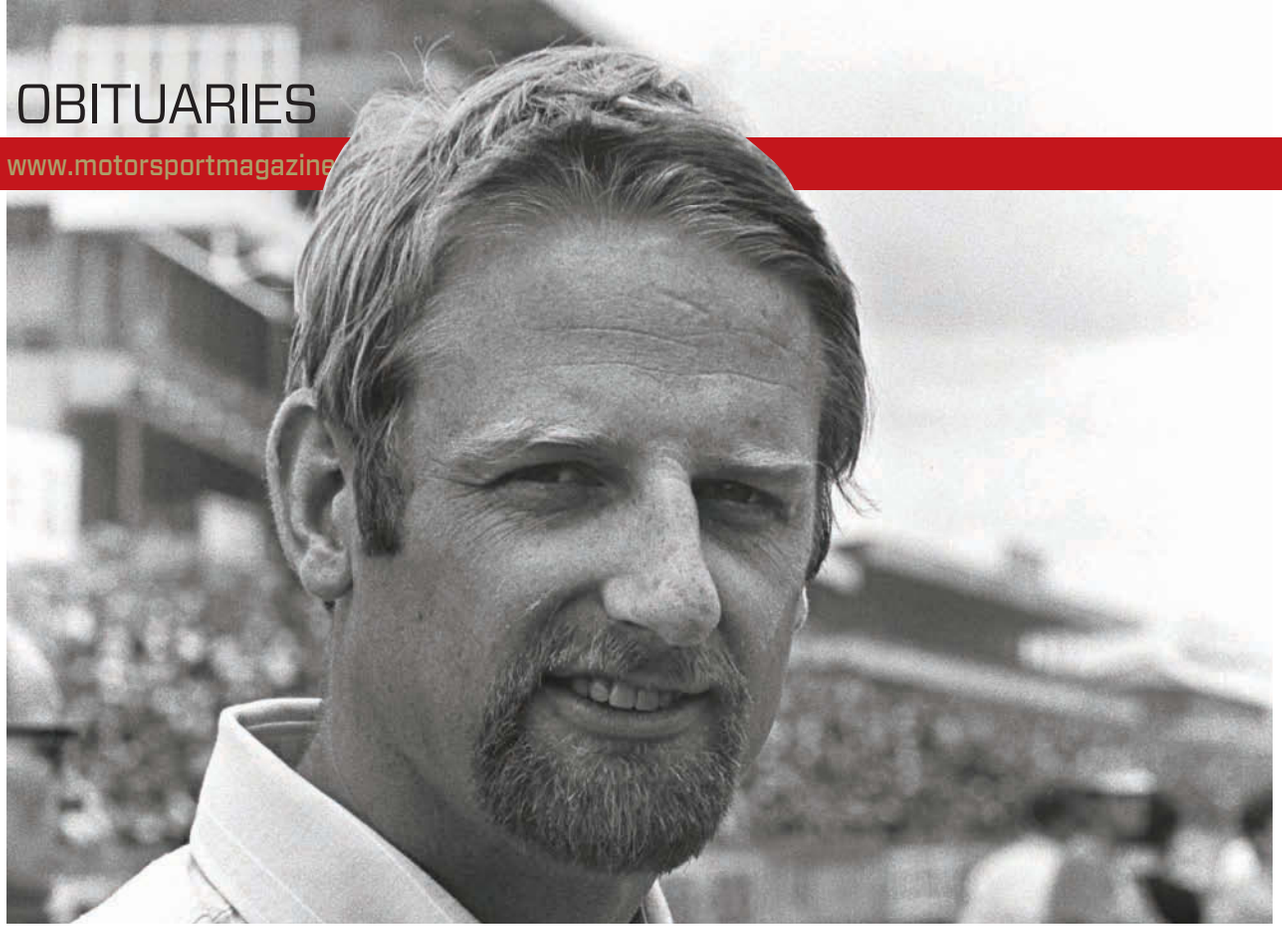
"It still has the original engine. We've just gone through the car to make it work from a racing point of view. It needed quite a few bits and bobs that had corroded. It's a beautiful little car."

Thrill of the chase

MORE THAN 50 TOURING CARS from 30 years of the BTCC will form a showpiece double-header at this July's Silverstone Classic. In a new twist, the pair of races will feature split grids.

First away will be about 25 Super Touring cars of the 1990s and, half a minute later, a similar number of Group 1 and Gp A cars will be released. Gianfranco Brancatelli will be on the grid in the Eggenberger RS500 he took to victory in the 1989 Spa 24 Hours.

PAUL LAWRENCE



Sir John Whitmore

BRITISH MOTOR racing has lost one of its most distinguished competitors with the passing of Sir John Whitmore. He died on April 28, aged 79.

Commencing his career as plain John Whitmore (he was a hereditary baronet who became 'Sir' in 1962, following his father's death), he notched up numerous successes in Lotus sports cars – so much so that Colin Chapman offered him a factory drive at Le Mans. Sharing an Elite with Jim Clark in 1959, he finished 10th overall and second in class in the first of five appearances at the Sarthe.

He raced in Formula Junior in 1960 before switching to saloons and sports cars – although best known for his tin-top exploits, he also raced Ford GT40s and Shelby Cobras with distinction.

In 1961 he became fourth winner of the British Saloon Car Championship, taking his Don Moore-prepared Mini to four class wins and finishing nine points clear of closest rival Mike Parkes (Jaguar Mk2). He was second in the 1963 BSCC, at the wheel of a works Mini, then spent three seasons in the European Touring Car Championship at the wheel of an Alan Mann Racing Lotus Cortina. He won the title in 1965 and placed third in both 1964 and '66.

That would be his final full season, though he did return to the track in historic motor sport in the late 1980s and also went on to compete in the Goodwood Revival.

After calling time on his racing career, Whitmore studied psychology and became a performance coach working with both sports associations and businesses.

Timo Mäkinen

One of rallying's original flying Finns, Timo Mäkinen has died at the age of 79. Well known in the UK for winning the RAC Rally three times in succession, from 1973 to 1975, his glittering CV also included four victories on the 1000 Lakes, three titles in Finland's domestic rally championship and a dominant win on the 1965 Monte Carlo Rally, when he and Paul Easter finished more than 20 minutes clear of rivals in their works Mini.

He scored his last major victory in 1976, winning the Ivory Coast Rally for Peugeot, but continued to compete occasionally into the early 1980s. He made his final world championship start in 1994, when he drove a Mini on the Monte.

Tim Parnell

The son of pre-war racer Reg, Tim Parnell died in April. He competed in Formula Junior and entered four F1 world championship races, recording his only finish in the 1961 Italian GP at Monza. After his father died in 1964, Tim focused on running Reg Parnell Racing and it is as a team manager that he is best remembered. Piers Courage scored RPR's best F1 result, taking fourth place in the 1968 Italian GP, but the team closed the following year and Parnell moved to BRM.

Bob Walklett

One of four brothers who founded Ginetta Cars, Bob Walklett has died aged 91. In the 1960s Ginetta became a successful road and racing car manufacturer. As managing director Bob oversaw production of the G4 and G12 models, which became a popular choice with racers at all levels, though he considered the sport to be a risky area and guided the firm towards road car designs such as the Imp-powered G15. He retired in 1989, when the firm was sold.

John Young

We regret to record the death of John Young, who raced MGs and Healeys in the 1950s before going on to achieve notable results in an F2 Connaught. He also co-drove Maurice Charles's Jaguar D-type at Le Mans in 1958 – although the car retired before Young's first scheduled race stint – and took part in the 1956 Monte Carlo Rally, sharing a Ford Anglia with Roy Salvadori and John Coombs.

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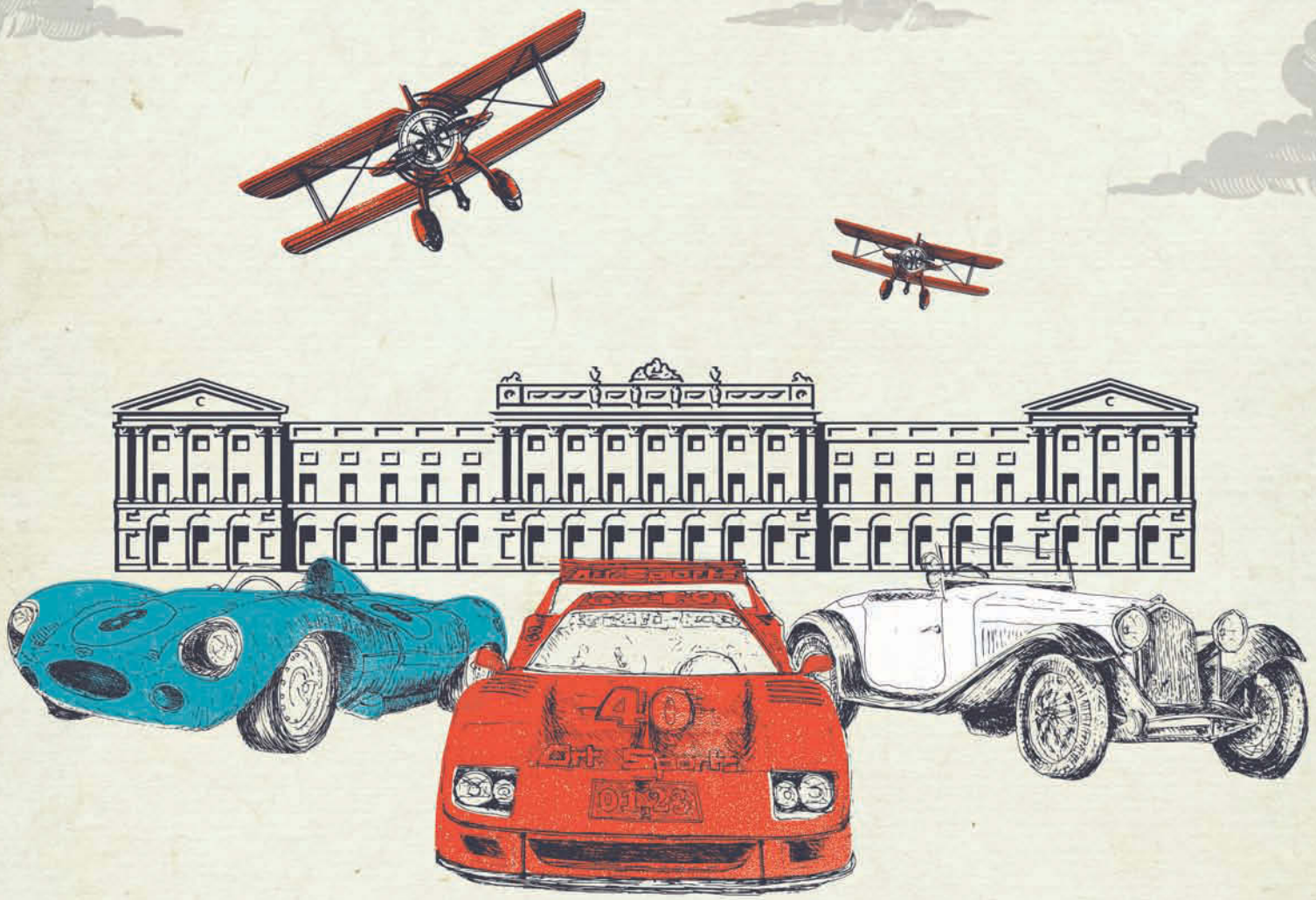

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Old master flying high

Double world champion Carlos Sainz turned up to watch Rally Portugal – and take on a Peugeot 208 R5 | BY ANTHONY PEACOCK

RALLY PORTUGAL HAD SOME PLEASING statistical symmetry. Not only was the event 50 years old, but Sébastien Ogier scored his fifth win there (equalling Markku Alén's record for the highest number of victories in Portugal) and 40th career success. Alén's last Portuguese win had come 30 years earlier.

That event marked another significant milestone, because the 1987 Rally Portugal also heralded Carlos Sainz's World Rally Championship debut. And the Spaniard went on to do what only Ogier has done since: win his very first stage in the top class of car at the time. For Sainz, it was a Group A Ford Sierra on the Estoril stage, which made use of Portugal's F1 track. For Ogier, it was a Citroën C4 WRC on an icy Rally Great Britain in 2008.

Another thing both have in common is Malcolm Wilson's M-Sport. Sainz drove for Wilson after his two championships and the M-Sport boss famously poached Ogier for this season after VW pulled out of the championship. In Portugal, Wilson compared Ogier's approach to that of Sainz; just about the highest praise that can be given to any driver, not least because Sainz was renowned for his work ethic and attitude towards testing.

> "As long as I am competitive and passionate, I will carry on. You always know when it's time to stop."

Sainz was there to watch – and publicly admire – Ogier's latest win, as a few days before, the two-time champion celebrated the 30th anniversary of his debut with a special drive through Fafe, Portugal's most famous stage. Manufacturer contracts being what they are, Sainz (who drives for Peugeot on the Dakar Rally) was at the wheel of a 208 T16 R5 – the stepping-stone category to the top World Rally Car class, where Peugeot isn't currently represented.

But although it hasn't yet been proven – and it would be fascinating to do a proper test – even R5 cars are likely to be faster over a complex gravel stage than the old Group A or even Group B cars.

Fafe was run as a televised stage on Sunday and quite a few drivers came to grief. If you have time to kill on YouTube, look up Quentin Gilbert's accident. His Skoda performed the automotive equivalent of a face plant, while it's impossible to explain how Citroën driver Khalid Al Qassimi's got away with his spectacular landing – one hell of a save.

It's the suspension technology that has come on most compared to Sainz's early days – especially dampers. As previous-generation dampers were never able to cope with the sort of loads that they can handle now, teams had no choice but to run very stiff springs, which had a knock-on effect on handling. That's a big reason why today's cars – even in the WRC2 class, like the Peugeot – are a lot quicker than their ancestors, as well as being considerably easier to drive.

In fact, most things were a lot harder back then. "When I first came to Rally Portugal, the country was very different: there were no big highways and places weren't clearly marked," remembers Sainz. "Just getting to the stages was a big navigational challenge. It wasn't just the drivers having a more difficult job."

Unfortunately, after that stellar first stage in Estoril, things didn't go quite so well for the Spanish legend: the Sierra's dampers overheated, then it lost a wheel and finally the turbo broke. Sainz had to wait until 1991 (and 1995) to win in Portugal. But he'd answered an important question.

"Before I started that rally, I had absolutely no idea about how I would perform," Sainz recalls. "I believed I had a certain talent, but you never know until you measure it against the best. What's sure is that I never expected then to have the career that I did. But of course, I dreamed of it... and dreaming is free!"

For Sainz, the dream is still alive at the age of 55, as next year the plan is for him to take part in the Dakar Rally once more, aiming to repeat his 2010 win.

"I feel I am still competitive there, and for as long as I am competitive and passionate, I will carry on," he says. "You always know when it's time to stop. I chose to quit my WRC career with Citroën at the end of 2004, but actually, I already had a contract for 2005 with them."

Nonetheless, Sainz was called up for a handful of rallies in 2005 to replace the wayward François Duval, who was being 'rested' by the team. And so Sainz definitively finished his World Rally Championship career with a podium on the Acropolis: the same event on which he had taken his first win, 15 years earlier in 1990.

Being a perfectionist, Carlos appreciates statistical symmetry, too.

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Go Further

Nürburgring's 90th anniversary

The Green Hell welcomes its 10th decade with a special Eifelrennen event on June 16-18 – an unfortunate clash with the Le Mans 24 Hours. Those choosing the Eifel mountains over north-western France will be rewarded with a grid of about 180 GT and sports saloons from 1947 to 1993 contesting a three-hour showpiece, 90 years to the day since Rudolf Caracciola won the circuit's first car race in 1927.

Pre-war leviathans will venture out onto the full circuit to mark Caracciola's victory, DTM cars will return to the 'Ring for the German Touring Car Classics race and the HSCC is taking across its Formula 2 grid – but only onto the modern GP circuit. Other highlights are almost too numerous to mention, but include historic 'bikes, an Uhlenhaut Trophy for Mercedes 300 SLs, Formula Juniors and much else.

HEVENINGHAM HALL CONCOURS D'ÉLÉGANCE

HEVENINGHAM HALL, JULY 8-9

Held in the bucolic grounds of one of Suffolk's finest Georgian mansions, this concours d'élégance is now in its second year. As well as 50 cars – including a Ferrari LaFerrari, McLaren P1 GTR and F1 GTR – it will play host to an array of vintage aircraft for the first time. The concurrent aviation concours has been created to celebrate engineering greatness.

CHATEAU IMPNEY HILLCLIMB

DROITWICH SPA, JULY 8-9

It is 50 years since motor sport originally ceased at this Worcestershire manor house. Chateau Impney's revived hillclimb is an evolving gem on the historic calendar and this year's event should be as eclectic as the previous two. The only class yet confirmed is for pre-1940 cars of 1100cc, but a Chaparral Mk2, a Ford 23T Bucket dragster and Group B cars are promised, too...

COMING ATTRACTIONS

From Brno to Hell and back, an array of sporting treats

JUNE 2017

3-4	**Hillclimb**	British Racing Green, Shelsley Walsh
4	**MotoGP**	Italian Grand Prix, Autodromo del Mugello
8-11	**WRC**	Rally Italy, Alghero, Sardinia
9-11	**World Rallycross**	Norway, Hell
9-11	**Masters**	Grand Prix du Canada, Montréal
10-11	**Formula E**	Berlin ePrix, Germany
9-11	**Formula 1**	Canadian Grand Prix, Montréal
11	**MotoGP**	Catalonian Grand Prix, Barcelona
16-18	**Masters**	Varac Vintage Grand Prix, Mosport, Canada
17-18	**WEC**	Le Mans 24 Hours
17-18	**HSCC**	Historic Wolds Trophy, Cadwell Park
17-18	**HSCC**	Nürburgring Classic, Germany
17-18	**MGCC**	MG Live,Silverstone
23-25	**WTCC**	Race of Portugal, Vila Real
23-25	**Formula 1**	Azerbaijan Grand Prix, Baku
24	**Hillclimb**	Midsummer Speed Festival, Prescott
25	**MotoGP**	Dutch Grand Prix, Assen
29-2	**Festival of Speed**	Goodwood
29 -2	**WRC**	Rally Poland, Mikolajki
30-2	**World Rallycross**	Sweden, Holjes Motorstadion
30-2	**HSCC**	Monza Historic, Italy

JULY 2017

30-2	**MotoGP**	German Grand Prix, Sachsenring
1-2	**HSCC**	Legends of Brands Hatch Superprix, Brands Hatch
1-2	**Masters**	GP De France Historique, Magny-Cours
1-2	**Hillclimb**	Vintage & Post Vintage Thoroughbreds, Shelsley Walsh
7-9	**Formula 1**	Austrian Grand Prix, Red Bull Ring
14-16	**Formula 1**	British Grand Prix, Silverstone
15	**Hillclimb**	Bugatti Festival, Prescott
16	**WEC**	6 Hours of Nürburgring, Nürburgring
14-16	**WTCC**	Race of Argentina, Circuito Termas de Río Hondo
15-16	**Formula E**	New York ePrix, New York
21-23	**Masters**	The Hawk, Road America
22-23	**Hillclimb**	Classic Nostalgia, Shelsley Walsh
27-30	**WRC**	Rally Finland, Jyväskylä
28-30	**Formula 1**	Hungarian Grand Prix, Hungaroring
28-30	**Masters**	Silverstone Classic, Silverstone
29-30	**Formula E**	Montreal ePrix, Montréal

AUGUST 2017

4-6	**WRX**	World RX of Canada, Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières
4-6	**MotoGP**	Czech Grand Prix, Automotodrom Brno
5-6	**HSCC**	Croft Nostalgia Festival, Croft
11-13	**Masters**	Oldtimer Grand Prix, Nürburgring
11-13	**MotoGP**	Austrian Grand Prix, Spielberg
12-13	**Hillclimb**	Shelsley Walsh – Championship Challenge
17-20	**WRC**	Rally Germany, Bostalsee
25-27	**Formula 1**	Belgian Grand Prix, Spa-Francorchamps

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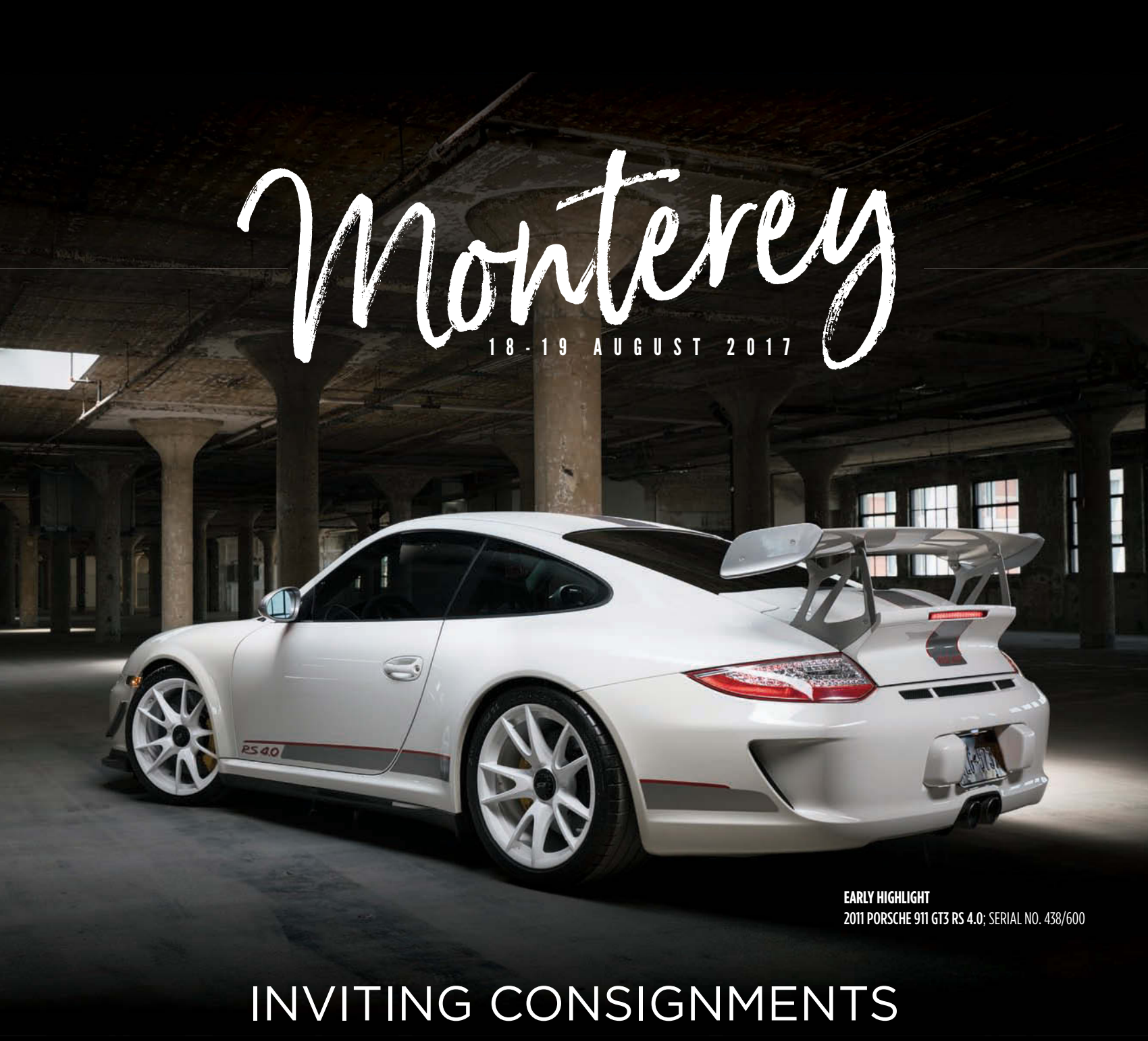

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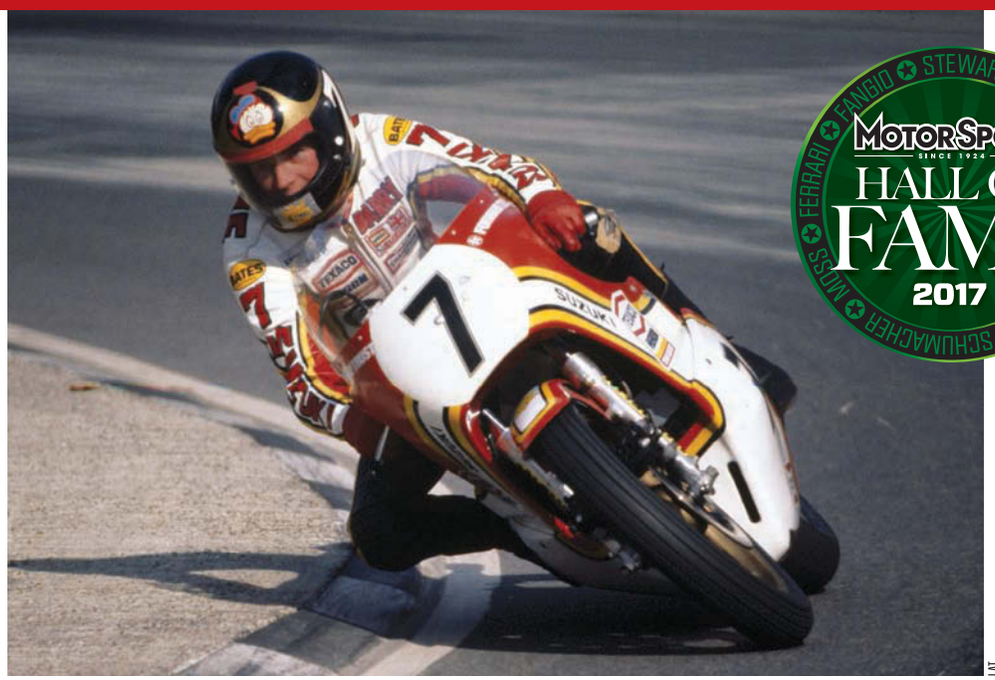
LAT

SHEENE SUZUKI TO STAR IN HoF DEMO

Barry Sheene's 1976 world championship-winning Texaco-Heron Suzuki RG500 will be in action at the Hall of Fame awards evening on June 7.

The famous bike will be ridden up the Royal Automobile Club's Captain's Drive ahead of the main awards ceremony and dinner. It will be joined on static display by the 1977 Suzuki on which Sheene retained his world championship. Both have recently been restored and serve as an excellent tribute to the great Londoner.

Other active exhibits include an ex-John Surtees MV Agusta, demonstrated by baker-turned-amateur racer Paul Hollywood, and a McLaren F2 that Piers Courage drove to victory in the Tasman Series. In addition, John Watson will drive a Chevrolet Camaro Z28 in the livery of Penske Racing (for whom the popular Ulsterman drove in Formula 1).

LATEST GUEST LIST ADDITIONS

The latest names to join the Hall of Fame guest list include nine-time Le Mans winner Tom Kristensen, Murray Walker, three-time Indy 500 king Dario Franchitti and Sebring 12 Hours-winning brother Marino, Cosworth co-founder Mike Costin, Grand Prix winner John Watson, Le Mans runner-up and Formula 1 racer Howden Ganley and James Hunt's son Freddie.

THE SHORTLISTS

In case you needed a reminder, the Formula 1 final three features Mike Costin & Keith Duckworth, Gilles Villeneuve and Nigel Mansell. The sports car hopefuls are Phil Hill, Brian Redman and Pedro Rodríguez. From the world of two wheels, you voted for Joey Dunlop, Mike Hailwood and Barry Sheene, while the Americans in contention are Mark Donohue, AJ Foyt and Roger Penske. The winners will be announced during the event on Wednesday June 7.

To book tickets for the auction preview drinks or the awards dinner, visit

www.motorsportmagazine.com/hof

HoF INDUCTEE 2016

DATABASE *snapshot*

Valentino Rossi

We do try to adhere to our 'retirees only' rule but we simply couldn't overlook Valentino Rossi in 2016. Widely regarded as the greatest rider of all time, he's nearly 40 and still at the front of the MotoGP field. Hopefuls come and go, but there's been one yardstick for the past 16 years.

PREMIER CLASS CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES

2001	**Nastro Azzurro Honda, 500cc** 325 points, 11 wins
2002	**Repsol Honda, MotoGP** 355 points, 11 wins
2003	**Gauloises Yamaha Team, MotoGP** 357 points, 9 wins
2004	**Gauloises Yamaha Team, MotoGP** 304 points, 9 wins
2005	**Gauloises Yamaha Team, MotoGP** 367 points, 11 wins
2008	**Fiat Yamaha, MotoGP** 373 points, 9 wins
2009	**Fiat Yamaha, MotoGP** 306 points, 6 wins

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F1 FRONTLINE *with*

Mark Hughes

>>RED BULL'S BATTLES >>RUSSIA AND SPAIN REVIEW

TWO-WAY TUSSLE

F1 2017 continues to be a fight between two teams: Ferrari and Mercedes. Valtteri Bottas and Lewis Hamilton took the spoils in Russia and Spain – the former scoring his first GP win – but Sebastian Vettel (pictured with Hamilton) was second each time to maintain his points advantage.

HERE'S A DIFFICULT ONE, GIVEN the current humdinger of a battle between Ferrari and Mercedes: is it fundamentally wrong for one competitor to help another be more competitive?

It's a topical question because as part of the FIA 'convergence process' regarding F1 power units, Mercedes is about to give unofficial technical help to Honda. Furthermore, it was strongly rumoured back in 2014 that it had aided Ferrari in better understanding some of the challenges in getting the most from the complex hybrid motors with their thermal and kinetic energy recapture. Obviously this is a hugely sensitive area, especially for any manufacturer receiving the help. It potentially presents a credibility problem for the sport too, as there is a general assumption that participants are all-out trying to beat each other. Is that fundamental principle being over-ridden for the sake of the show?

Essentially the Mercedes High Performance Powertrain group did far too good a job, committed more deeply, prepared more thoroughly than anyone else for what was an incredibly complex new technology right at the auto industry's cutting edge. Fresh off the back of the close-to-parity 'frozen spec' naturally aspirated V8s, it was always expected that the new engine formula for 2014 onwards, incorporating a new technology, would spread the field. What was not appreciated at the time was by just how much and how long it would take the others to catch up.

Ferrari was back in the game, generally competitive, by 2015 and Renault by 2016. Honda, entering a year after the formula's introduction but probably still a year too early for its own understanding, began with a flawed concept. For year three (this season) it has introduced two key technologies that were on the Mercedes from the start, but is suffering considerable difficulties in making them work. At a recent meeting with the engine manufacturers the FIA reported that it was satisfied that three of the four engines were within 0.3sec per lap of each other – the loose terms laid out last year by the governing body for the convergence process. Simultaneous with that were specific limits set on certain key component weights and dimensions and on inlet temperature, all this in exchange for abolishing the development token system.

Red Bull's Christian Horner – who has always been fundamentally opposed to the hybrid formula – argued at the meeting that by their numbers, the current Renault motor was more than 0.3sec adrift of the current Mercedes, that it was more like 0.5sec. He was deeply disappointed that the FIA saw no reason to take further action on equalising the performance of the top three for the time being. For the longer term Liberty's Ross Brawn is putting his technical group onto more fully researching how the power units compare, as his group is more fully resourced than the FIA's. Meantime the fourth manufacturer – Honda – will get some back-door assistance. No one will admit this publicly, but that is what is happening.

LAT

STRAIGHT *talk*

Why winning teams are being compelled to help weaker rivals

At Barcelona's FIA press conference Mercedes AMG boss Toto Wolff was asked about the Honda assistance. It was clearly a very awkward question for him. "At this stage I wouldn't want to comment," he said. So he wasn't denying it? "I'm not commenting."

At this point, Force India's Bob Fernley, a Mercedes customer said: "As a team that's not only paid for its engines but contributed to the development of them, I would certainly be very negative towards sharing that technology with another team [McLaren] that is a competitor of ours."

Right there is one of the key problems of the process and it was evident that Wolff realised that Fernley's comments now put him in an even more awkward position. As the question was followed up, Wolff adapted his stance by saying, "We are not doing anything for Honda. That is the current status quo. So, unless that situation changes, I don't want to contribute to rumours out there that are false and I think are damaging for Honda and create hardened standpoints from teams or from other stakeholders. We'll see what happens." That was quite a nuanced position – that they were not doing anything *at the moment*. It wasn't an untruth, just a diplomatic way of covering a very awkward position.

Formula 1 is enjoying a vintage battle up front and it's an unpopular thing to be looking up its skirts to see how it all works, what it looks like where show meets sport. But the essential awkwardness has been created by this engine formula being just too difficult and cutting edge.

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GRAND PRIX NOTEBOOK

RUSSIA & SPAIN

"I'VE NO IDEA," ANSWERED RED BULL'S CHRISTIAN HORNER at the Russian Grand Prix when asked how much quicker the Adrian Newey-revised RB13, set for introduction at the Spanish race two weeks later, would be. "I just know that Adrian has been like a man on a mission ever since the second [pre-season] Barcelona test, like he'd drawn a line under the [original] car and set off doing this one. I don't know how fast it's going to be, he's not really been available to ask! I've never seen him so focused. I know how expensive it's going to be though."

It needed to be significantly faster, for in Sochi the original car had just qualified 1.6sec adrift of pole – a similar deficit to that it had suffered in all the events so far. It was nowhere near the Ferrari/Mercedes pace, albeit a long way clear of the Force India/Williams-led group behind. At Sochi, after Daniel Ricciardo left the fray early with his rear brakes ablaze, Max Verstappen had finished fifth in what he described as the "loneliest race of my career", the Mercs and Ferraris long gone out of sight ahead, the Force Indias not even in his mirrors behind. He kept himself amused, he said, by watching the lead battle on the big screens. It was a close battle too, with Sebastian Vettel's pole-setting Ferrari chasing down Valtteri Bottas's fast-starting Mercedes in the final stint, as Kimi Räikkönen and Lewis Hamilton – each suffering cooling issues in the hot conditions – were cast in support roles some way behind. Despite flat-spotting his front tyres with 15 laps to go, Bottas managed to hang on for his maiden Grand Prix victory at the 81st attempt, albeit just his fourth race in a front-running car.

Just like the previous three races, it had been all about the Ferrari-Mercedes battle. Red Bull was doing no more than providing some blue and yellow and a bit of noise. The RB13 was proving the least competitive Red Bull since the team's breakthrough season of 2009. Whether stationary or in action, it just did not much look like a Red Bull. Stationary, its plain contours around the sensitive area between the front wheels and barge boards contrasted starkly with the multi-vaned sophistication of the Ferrari and, especially, the Mercedes. The Milton Keynes design team's response to the new dimensional and aerodynamic requirements of the 2017 regs was low drag, but the evidence suggested that Mercedes and Ferrari had researched a better basic concept.

Horner is adamant that the tighter pre-season FIA ruling about the hydraulic actuation of suspensions did not unduly compromise the car, but had simply closed off an avenue of future development they were working on. The governing body had effectively banned an extra rear link that would have allowed the car to stall its underbody aerodynamics very effectively to boost straightline speed without losing downforce through the turns. It had been tried but discarded for the time being on the grounds of its weight, something that is at a particular premium this year with the bigger, beefier cars and tyres. Newey, however, does allow the Ferrari-initiated suspension ruling has played a part, but it's far from the dominant reason. No, the RB13 was just not a great car. It had not been well-born.

Horner confirmed in Spain that there had been correlation issues with the team's simulation tools as it has tried to understand the car. "We've needed to work out which tools are working in which areas," he said in Barcelona. "Because the 2017 cars are physically bigger it's brought to light problems that were not apparent before." Several teams have reported that the swirls around the bigger tyres have behaved quite differently to what was expected and modelled.

"[Ferrari and Mercedes] just have more downforce at the rear [than us]," said Ricciardo in Sochi. "They are just carrying a bit more grip in the rear and that's where all the lap time is in these cars." Both he and Verstappen were also complaining about the car's narrow set-up window, of getting the front and rear to work simultaneously. Ricciardo, at perhaps a crucial point in his career, was placing a lot of importance on the Spain upgrade.

ALL IMAGES RED BULL

"ADRIAN HAS BEEN LIKE A MAN ON A MISSION, LIKE HE'D DRAWN A LINE UNDER THE FIRST CAR. I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO FOCUSED"

Red Bull hoped an Adrian Newey-inspired upgrade pre-Spain would bring it into closer competition with Ferrari and Mercedes

"I'll use the word hope rather than expect. I hope for a bit of a bullet: something fast. We want to be in a three-way fight with Ferrari and Mercedes. So, that's what I would hope for: something that puts us in that fight. I look back to last year and I think here in qualifying we were more than 1.5sec off pole, and then we went to Barcelona and we were about half a second off pole and we made some gains, and obviously in Monaco we were quick. It's a time of year when we should start to see these updates take place and some performance on the car..."

For his part, Newey was playing down the Spain upgrade, saying it was just his initial response to the car's disappointing form. Pressed further, he gave the distinct impression that he'd had very little to do with the RB13's conception, that he'd fed into the team's technical group rather than led the project. He'd been busy doing other things. He didn't specify what they were but generally he's had much more to do with the Aston Martin Valkyrie supercar than the RB13 F1 car. Then there were his personal racing projects – the Lightweight E-type, the GT40 – and also that of his son Harrison, contesting the Euro F3 championship. He had not even taken a serious eagle-eyed look at the new F1 regulations until just before Australia.

In Spain, Horner confirmed that there was a step change between Newey's involvement in the original car and that of the updated one, saying: "He was involved about 50 per cent of his time in the background of this car. But since that Barcelona test he's been very involved."

WORD *on the* BEAT

The cockpit 'shield' has replaced the halo as the FIA's preferred method of cockpit protection from 2018. The FIA presented the system to the drivers in China. It's due to be run in some practice sessions this year, just as the halo was in 2016.

A recent meeting regarding convergence of engine performance concluded that – as required by the FIA a year ago – three of the four engines are within an estimated 0.3sec of a lap of each other and so no immediate changes will be made. This was despite Red Bull's Christian Horner strongly questioning whether the convergence stipulations had been met. However, Honda is set to receive help from Mercedes as part of the convergence ideal. Liberty's technical and sporting boss Ross Brawn has initiated a more thorough study of exactly how the four current engines compare with a view to requesting the FIA consider further tweaks if deemed desirable.

It was confirmed in Sochi that Sauber will be powered by Honda from 2018.

Robert Kubica tested a GP3 single-seater at Franciacorta in April. This Italian circuit features two particularly tight turns that require a lot of steering lock. It did not apparently present

a problem for his injured arm... Kubica followed this up with a Formula E test at Donington Park. His recent withdrawal from his planned LMP1 drive because of dissatisfaction with the team is said to have stirred up his single-seater ambitions once more. An F1 comeback six years on? Kubica is 32 years old.

Long Beach city council has commissioned consultants KPMG to compare the feasibility of the current Indycar race with a return to F1 for the Long Beach Grand Prix, from 2019. The race's founder Chris Pook is behind the move for F1 cars to return to the California streets for the first time since 1983. The plan involves buying extra land to lengthen the current track.

A recent Christian Horner suggestion that Renault and Mercedes should emulate their joint road car engine programme by badging the current F1 Mercedes power unit with a Renault Sport badge has not, apparently, been taken up by the French manufacturer. Nor presumably by the AMG Mercedes F1 team...

With Force India co-owner Vijay Mallya facing extradition procedures from the UK to face charges in India relating to his business dealings, there has been speculation that the team might be about to undergo an

ownership change – and with it a name change to Brabham. David Brabham's 'Team Brabham' project has the long-term aim of returning the family name to F1, but does not currently have the funding required to buy the Silverstone-based team. At the Spanish GP former Brabham owner Bernie Ecclestone suggested he was considering getting involved and even made quips that he'd been in touch with former Brabham sponsor Parmalat (which went bust in 2013 but is now a subsidiary of a French company). Ironically, Parmalat founder and the man behind its Brabham sponsorship of the '80s, Calisto Tanzi, is now in jail for his business dealings.

"I HOPE FOR A BIT OF A BULLET: SOMETHING FAST. WE WANT TO BE IN A THREE-WAY FIGHT WITH FERRARI AND MERCEDES"

The effectiveness of an F1 car is never down to just one man. But that's probably slightly less true at Red Bull than elsewhere – especially at a time of new regulations, when it becomes more about original concepts, less about fine-honing well-established ones. That's one area where Newey has always been brilliant. But at the very time that particular skill could have been put to best use his workload focus seems to have been elsewhere. So, is this a management failing? Should he have been directed differently? If he was just a normal employee, perhaps. But Newey isn't someone who can be managed in that way.

Red Bull is not a strategic team, has always operated much more on the hoof than other big teams (which is arguably why it's not got a great relationship with its engine partner). Mark Webber used to describe it as 'just a big F3 team' and that was its strength, back in the days when the V8 engine regs had given everyone power parity. There has never been the sort of formal organisational structures that used to get in Newey's way at McLaren and so Red Bull became renowned as the smartest, fastest-reacting team around, with the quickest turnaround of development parts, the cleverest interpretation of regulations etc, tightly managed by Horner without the sort of formal multi-discipline layers that had evolved elsewhere as F1 expanded. It was that freewheeling informality that had so appealed to the creative genius that is Newey and which had allowed Horner to entice him away in the first place. But with the multiple titles achieved and F1's evolution into an engine formula since 2014, Newey has made no secret of how he has sometimes struggled for motivation.

There was a moment when he was seriously tempted to cash in his reputation and accept the big bucks and challenge of the Ferrari gig. They'd got as far as drawing up the contract in 2014 before he ultimately shied away from signing it. One of the carrots Horner had offered in an effort to keep him was the novelty of a supercar project. That eventually became the Aston Valkyrie. So maybe the RB13's plainness has been the deferred price of keeping Newey.

So what turned up in Barcelona? The barge boards were reshaped, the front suspension tweaked to allow a greater degree of rake. Although the sidepods appeared unchanged, the resiting of radiators within had allowed an improved internal flow. It was all aimed at getting the air flowing over the front at low speeds but still giving decent flow to the rear. It wasn't the radical redrawing some had expected and it wasn't the 'bullet' Ricciardo had hoped for, but Verstappen qualified within 0.6sec of Hamilton's pole position Mercedes and was positive in his assessment. "It's got better balance through the corners and we have a wider window in getting both the front and rear to work. We're still down on ultimate downforce I think, but we're going in the right direction now."

Six-tenths adrift around a track where Horner believes the Renault engine is about 0.5sec down. The FIA disagrees and had recently confirmed it was satisfied that three of the four engines were – as requested last year – within 0.3sec of each other and that no changes under the convergence process are about to be initiated.

This was not news that went down well with Horner at the time but here he was encouraged by the 'Newey' updates. "We feel we have brought about 0.4sec to the car, and it has given us a good direction which we can further delve into and some pretty interesting data and information." Newey was very much in evidence and listening carefully to the drivers' feedback. He was satisfied that their comments generally reflected the improvements he'd been trying for. "The changes here have just pulled the car together a little more, joined up the front and the back a little better," continued Verstappen.

Ricciardo was struggling, 0.4sec adrift of his team-mate – almost all of the deficit incurred through the slow final sector. There are the first hints this year of an undercurrent of dissatisfaction from Ricciardo as the team seems inevitably to be gravitating towards Verstappen. Nothing solid or definable yet, but there. Was it beginning to effect his performance? Horner was asked in the Friday press conference whether his driver line-up would be unchanged in 2018 and he replied, "Absolutely.

They are both under contract." But there are believed to be conditional points in Ricciardo's contract that might yet allow him to go elsewhere and rumours continue to link him with Ferrari, Mercedes and Renault.

Verstappen was out a few seconds after the start in Barcelona, with broken front suspension after Turn One contact with Räikkönen as they failed to get through there three-abreast with Bottas. Vettel took the lead and sprinted away, Hamilton gave chase – and Ricciardo was back in fourth, falling ever-further behind Bottas but pulling away from the Force Indias. Same as it ever was… When Bottas's engine failed mid-distance, Ricciardo was promoted to the final podium place, but was 75sec behind the winner Hamilton, who'd triumphed over Vettel thanks to an opportunely timed virtual safety car, a stunning out-lap and some help from Bottas in delaying Vettel after the Ferrari's first tyre stop.

"It's not as bad as the 75s makes it look," said Horner. "Max went out early for one thing and, for another, once it was clear Daniel wasn't in a position to race anyone we turned his engine down. Also it looks like there was an issue with how we were working the tyres."

The reduced qualifying margin had given hope – and it was much the same margin as in 2016 after which Ricciardo took pole at Monaco – but Barcelona race day seemed to confirm that F1 2017 is a two-team race.

Rd 4 RUSSIA, APRIL 30 2017

				RACE DISTANCE
1	VALTTERI BOTTAS	Mercedes W08	1hr 28min 08.743sec	
2	SEBASTIAN VETTEL	Ferrari SF70H	1hr 28min 09.360sec	52 laps
3	KIMI RÄIKKÖNEN	Ferrari SF70H	1hr 28min 19.743sec	192.459 miles

FASTEST LAP KIMI RÄIKKONEN Ferrari SF70H 1min 36.844sec

POLE POSITION SEBASTIAN VETTEL Ferrari SF70H 1min 33.194sec

Rd 5 SPAIN, MAY 14 2017

				RACE DISTANCE
1	LEWIS HAMILTON	Mercedes W08	1hr 35min 56.497sec	
2	SEBASTIAN VETTEL	Ferrari SF70H	1hr 35min 59.987sec	66 laps
3	DANIEL RICCIARDO	Red Bull RB13	1hr 37min 12.317sec	190.825 miles

FASTEST LAP LEWIS HAMILTON Mercedes W08 1min 23.593sec

POLE POSITION LEWIS HAMILTON Mercedes W08 1min 19.149sec

TURN 1, BARCELONA

Trackside view

"The sensory picture as the latest generation of aerodynamically-enhanced cars brake from 200mph for Barcelona's Turn One beyond the 50-metre board is extraordinary enough in itself. The idea that a human is controlling this projectile and voluntarily leaving an apparent destiny with oblivion until it looks impossibly late – too late to save himself – draws an emotionally powerful response.

Then, seeing the car just grab hold of the scenery and slow it down in little more than a second, firing off multiple machine gun-like downshifts as it does so, provokes wonder. And then you remember that this is the magic that can be conjured from having three times the weight of the car pressing down upon the tyres, inducing them to grip more, allowing them to transfer the braking energy from carbon pads hydraulically pressured against carbon discs.

But it's more than just that. There's the beauty of the scene, an asphalt uphill S scribbled across a canvas of green and sky blue in this Catalonian Pyrenees valley. Strapped tight into the missile, the driver's perception of the scene will be radically different but even he, in the very first forays, will feel the dissonance between self-preservation and competitive necessity induced by that 200mph approach to a tiny braking zone.

By the next lap it will already be routine, programmed into his actions as he exists now in a different world to the observer. The concept of 'naïve realism' is concerned with the contradiction between reality and our internal perception of it, informed by our rationalisation. It's hard to work out whether the driver (in making the extraordinary routine) or the observer is naïve. Either way, the beauty is real."

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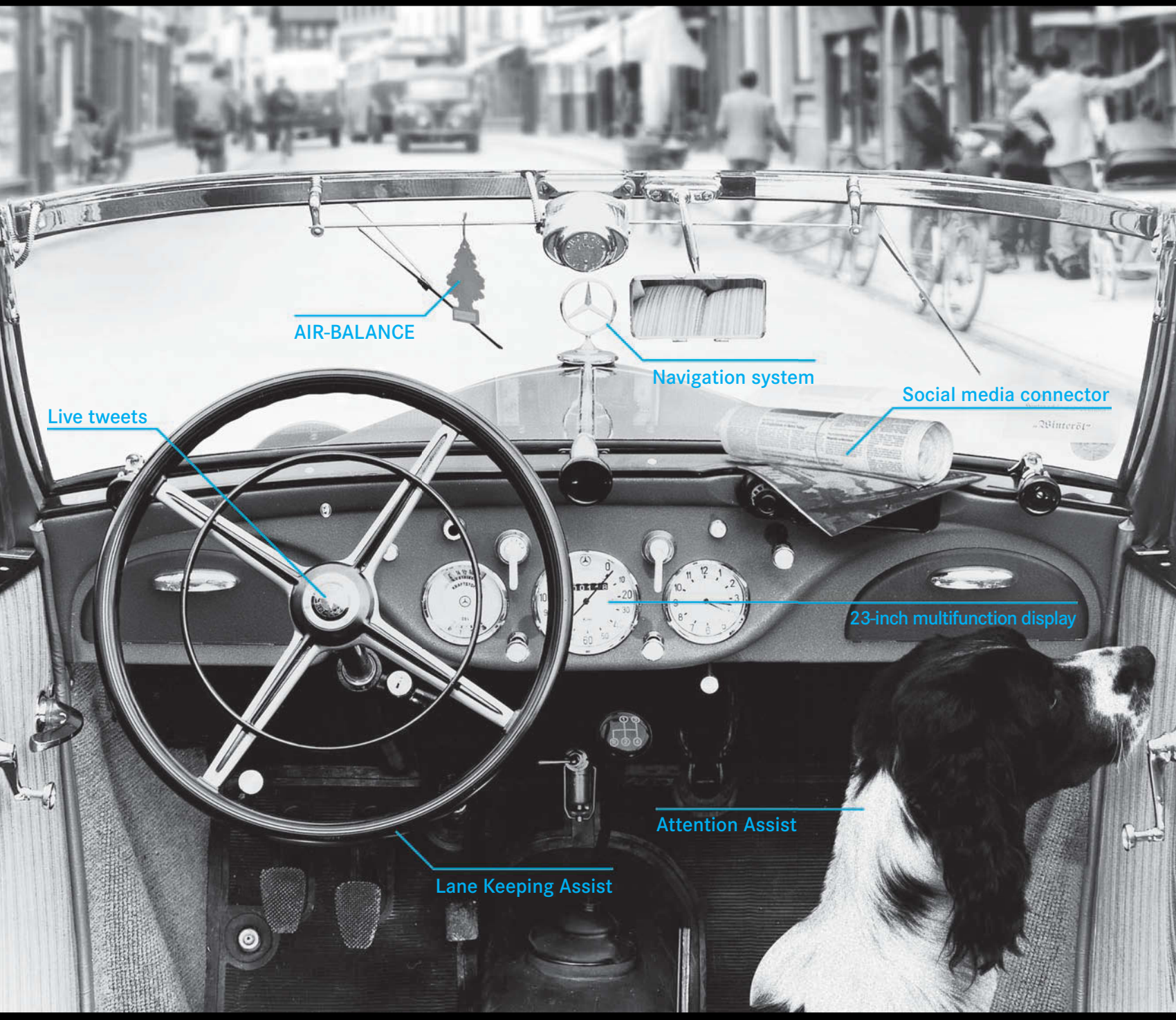

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PETER AUTO

The Meaden/Tromans Lola T70 and Read/Lavaggi Ferrari 512M lead the "mind-blowing rush" down the Imola pit straight. Right, action from Jarama

ONE OF THE MANY UPSIDES OF RACING old cars in the UK and Europe is that you sometimes get to do so at old circuits. Much like the machinery, they are throwbacks to another era. Typically charming, unique in character and almost always old-school in their provision for run-off (Goodwood being the prime example), they are a totally different experience from modern circuits.

Part of that is of course due to safety considerations, but modern circuits are also designed for an altogether grippier breed of car: machines that are quick in different places to those conceived and raced before slicks and wings changed the sport.

It's this that accounts for their differing rhythm. One born of classical curves with varying radii that suit cars with more grunt than grip, balanced by high-speed straights and some tight, technical corners to create additional overtaking opportunities.

Dijon-Prenois is a perfect example – a compact, looping fairground ride of twists and turns, linked by a humdinger of a last corner that feeds onto a long, long straight. In the age of Balance of Performance it's hard to imagine a 1.6-litre, 180bhp Lotus Elan and a 4.7-litre, 400+bhp Shelby Cobra setting similar times anywhere, yet Dijon creates its own kind of parity. And having driven the circuit in both those cars I know that it doesn't come at the expense of fun in either.

Last season I visited two circuits I'd never raced at before: Jarama, Spain and Imola, Italy. Actually I'd never even been to Jarama before, and only visited Imola once; at a Lamborghini driver training day (I was there as a journalist, not an owner!) just a few years after the bleak San Marino GP weekend in which Roland Ratzenberger and Ayrton Senna lost their lives.

Both these circuits are in the most unlikely locations: Jarama sandwiched in a sliver of wasteland between the main motorway out of Madrid and a gated community of houses; Imola in tranquil parkland slap bang in the middle of town.

Jarama was designed in the mid-1960s (before the advent of slicks

PETER AUTO

and true downforce) by John Hugenholtz, who also penned Suzuka and Zandvoort. Opened in 1967 it hosted nine World Championship Grands Prix. The last in 1981 is remembered for Gilles Villeneuve holding back potentially faster rivals in his cumbersome, Ferrari 126CK, the Scuderia's first turbo Grand Prix car. In the heyday of ground effects, it's no wonder Villeneuve created a roadblock around the tight and narrow track to take what would be his final victory. But in cars with only mechanical grip it's a fantastic place to race – the long straight and uphill climb allowing big bangers (I was in a Mk3B Lola T70) to romp away, only for the more agile cars to hunt them down in the twisty sections. I loved it, despite losing out to Martin O'Connell's lighter 2.0-litre Chevron B19.

Imola has a very different atmosphere – as regal and tranquil as Jarama is scrubby and urban – but a similar blend of extreme speed, technical turns and unforgiving confines present a sizeable challenge. After the season-opener at Jarama I was looking forward to ending the season with another new (old) circuit, but feared the T70 would feel several sizes too big.

With a championship title in the balance (we had to win the race to take Peter Auto's Classic Endurance Racing 1 title) I was certain the repeated braking efforts into tight chicanes would once more leave the big V8 Lola easy prey for the light and nimble 2.0-litre Chevrons and Lolas.

What I hadn't reckoned on was just how fast Imola is. Nor how the uphill drags from the Tosa hairpin towards the blind, cresting left at Piratella, then again from Acque Minerali to the Variante Alta, would play to the Lola T70's supreme through-the-gears stonk.

It's not often you'll hear a driver say the straight is their favourite part of any lap, but the rush down Imola's start-finish straight is mind-blowing. At least it is in a T70. But then far from a Mistral-spec ramrod it's actually a long, flat-out series of eyes-on-stalks kinks that funnel between concrete walls, before plunging you into leafy parkland and the braking area for Tamburello.

In qualifying with the help of a useful tailwind the T70 was just clipping the limiter in fifth (top) gear before hitting the brakes. That's near as dammit 170mph. As I sit here typing that seems like absolute madness, yet I know it to be one of the single most vivid and addictive impressions of speed I've ever experienced in a racing car.

Ironically we have the much-maligned circuit designer Hermann Tilke to thank for reinstating at least some of Imola's speed, for it was he who removed the Variante Bassa chicane in a 2007 revamp aimed at helping Imola regaining F1 status.

Another grand old Italian circuit is Monza. It's also an odd one. Much changed since its steeply banked turns were abandoned, it remains the grandaddy of power circuits. As such it really should be pretty dull with anything less than 400bhp under your right foot, but because its layout is quite unlike anything you'd see today you have to drive it differently to do well.

I fondly recall a U2TC (pre-66 under 2-litre touring cars) race a few years back when Jackie Oliver taught me a Monza slipstreaming lesson. Each lap I'd grab every opportunity to scrabble past his BMW 1800 TiSA in my Lotus Cortina. Often locking a front wheel on the way in, running wide on the way out and generally over-driving.

Lap after lap I'd fight my way in front, only to see him coming at me like a freight train on the approach to the Parabolica. I simply couldn't shake him. Sometimes if I was behind him out of the Ascari Chicane he'd give me a chance into the famous 180-deg final corner. Naturally I'd oblige – with another puff of tyre smoke – only for him to get a much cleaner run through Parabolica and come drafting by me on the long drag to the start-finish line, just as the Cortina ran out of revs. He'd even wave on the way by.

As you can imagine this became increasingly infuriating until finally the penny dropped, at which point I found the whole pantomime really rather amusing. I knew he was playing with me, but still couldn't stop myself from racing him at all the wrong bits of the circuit. A fact evidenced by square front tyres, melted rears, smoking brakes and buzzed brain.

It's not often you get the chance to be taught a lesson by one of the best and most versatile drivers of a generation (*the* generation if you ask me), yet this was mine. And all thanks to Monza. To add insult to injury, once he saw I was a spent force he got bored and drove away from me. School dismissed!

If there's one thing that separates historic and modern racing it's the memorable and individual characters of the old cars. So maybe it stands to reason the one thing that makes driving them even better is racing on classic and equally characterful circuits.

Add a wily septuagenarian driver to the mix and you have something that's impossible to beat. M

> "THAT'S NEAR AS DAMMIT 170MPH. AS I SIT TYPING THAT SEEMS MADNESS"

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Richard Williams

LAT

BANG IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SUMMER OF Love, Dan Gurney enjoyed the biggest week of his life. As the hippies gathered in Haight Ashbury, the 36-year-old Korean war veteran won a remarkable double: the Le Mans 24 Hours and the Belgian Grand Prix, a week apart. The first victory came at the wheel of a Ford Mk IV shared with AJ Foyt, which you can read more about on page 102. The second made him the first driver from the United States to win a world championship Formula 1 race in a car – the beautiful Eagle-Weslake – built and entered by his own team.

For my friend Graham Ashmore and me, Gurney's great week in 1967 had begun on a Friday evening when we boarded a night flight to France chartered by Page & Moy, a travel agency pioneering low-cost package trips to foreign races. Taking off from the grass runway at Lympne airport in Kent, a DC3 carried us across the Channel to Beauvais, where we boarded a coach for the journey to Le Mans and a parking space somewhere on the infield, within walking distance of the paddock.

Graham and I had bought tickets for the Balcon & Enceinte des Ravitaillments, at 70 francs (then about £7) apiece. Beneath us, 54 cars representing 15 marques lined up in the traditional manner along the pits, waiting for their drivers to take position on the opposite side of the road. We were directly above the two sleek new Lola T70 Mk III coupés, big white arrowheads painted on their dark green noses. As 4pm arrived, the crowd hushed and we could hear the patter of the drivers' feet as they sprinted across the asphalt before the engines burst into life and the field shot off in a confusion of colour and noise.

First away was the pale blue Ford Mk II of Ronnie Bucknum, the former Honda F1 driver, with the white NART Ferrari P3/4 of Pedro Rodríguez on his tail. Looming behind them as they roared away was Gurney in the cherry-red Mk IV, entered by Carroll Shelby with factory backing. Slower off the mark were the two bewinged Chaparral 2F coupés and the trio of works Ferrari P4s.

In the light of Fernando Alonso's recently expressed desire to add Le Mans and the Indy 500 to his list of victories, it's interesting to note that, as well as those already mentioned, many other pukka F1 pilots – past, present and future – were to be found among the 108 drivers at the Circuit de la Sarthe that year: Bruce McLaren, Mario Andretti, John Surtees, Jacky Ickx, Chris Amon, Denis Hulme, Jochen Rindt, Piers Courage, Dickie Attwood, Willy Mairesse, Jo Siffert, Johnny Servoz-Gavin, Lodovico Scarfiotti, Mike Spence and more.

Surtees's Lola retired only three laps into the race, with a broken piston. Two British tiddlers, Jem Marsh's Mini-Marcos and Roger Nathan's Imp-powered Costin-Nathan, disappeared before nightfall. We wandered up to the Dunlop Bridge, through the Esses and down to Tertre Rouge as the light dimmed, past the fairground and the striptease bars, savouring the spectacle. An hour before dawn three of the Fords would be eliminated in a single accident after Andretti's Mk IV locked a brake and hit the bank at the Esses.

For those on the pits balcony in the early morning, the highlight was the chance to watch the Chaparral mechanics slaving for three hours to change the entire transmission on Phil Hill's car, only for it to break again an hour later. Gurney and Foyt – who had won the Indy 500 for the third time a fortnight earlier – took the lead in the second hour and held it securely to the finish, a couple of laps ahead of the P4 of Scarfiotti and Mike Parkes.

When the race was over the coach took us to Paris, where we spent four nights in a Montmartre hotel. As a couple of lads from Nottingham, we were impressed by the parade of elegant streetwalkers on the nearby Place Pigalle and by the price of a Scotch and Coke – the equivalent of 25 bob, five times what we'd have paid at home – in a discothèque on the Rue Balzac, off the Champs-Elysées, where we danced with impossibly cool French girls to Aretha Franklin's *Respect*.

At the weekend the coach took us the 400km to Spa in time to watch final practice on the magnificent 14km circuit. The main attractions were supposed to be the new Lotus 49-DFVs of Jim Clark, the winner at Zandvoort a fortnight earlier, and Graham Hill. But on Sunday afternoon Hill's battery went flat on the grid and Clark, after leading from pole, pitted twice to replace broken spark plugs and could finish only sixth. Gurney swept home to a historic win in the V12-powered Eagle, ahead of Jackie Stewart's H16 BRM and Chris Amon in one of a trio of Ferrari 312s.

From our vantage point above Eau Rouge we had looked across the valley and seen the cloud of dust that signalled the end of Mike Parkes's F1 career after his Ferrari hit a patch of oil at Blanchimont on the first lap, leaving him with severe leg injuries. Just one more indelible memory from a crowded week – but none of them quite as precious as those the double winner took home to California.

"Gurney swept home to a historic win in the V12-powered Eagle, ahead of Jackie Stewart's H16 BRM and Chris Amon in one of a trio of Ferrari 312s"

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Mat Oxley

Rem Fowler pictured with his Norton on the Isle of Man in 1907

IOM TT

THERE HAS BEEN GREAT EXCITEMENT IN THE motor sport world following the news that race events can be staged on public roads. However, it's worth remembering that the Isle of Man TT, first staged 110 years ago this summer, would never have existed without the British government's longstanding refusal to allow such riotous behaviour on the mainland.

The Light Locomotives Act of 1896 and the Motor Car Act of 1903 were strict, forbidding speeds exceeding 12mph and then 20mph. Who was to blame? The British establishment of horse-loving "motor-phobic cranks".

Ireland and the IoM had their own legislatures, so could make their own laws. The 1903 Gordon Bennett car race was held in Ireland and in 1904 the Isle of Man passed a bill to allow road racing, in this case for the Gordon Bennett international elimination trials.

This was made possible by the island's Lieutenant-Governor Lord Raglan, a motoring enthusiast and the son of the man largely responsible for sending several hundred British cavalrymen to their deaths in the Charge of the Light Brigade during the Crimean War. Raglan's hope was to extend the island's holiday season in the brand-new seaside resort of Douglas, built to lure factory workers from the Midlands for their first 'overseas' holiday.

The Isle of Man's first motorcycle race took place on May 31, 1905, to choose Britain's team for the Coupe Internationale racing event, staged on the continent. Britain contested the Coupe Internationale on three occasions and was beaten every time. Suspecting their rivals of skulduggery, the Brits decided to organise their own international motorcycle races on the Isle of Man in the summer of 1907.

Britain's Anglophile team manager, the Marquis de Mouzilly de St Mars, had an exotic trophy made for the occasion, based on the existing car TT prize that featured Mercury, the Roman god of financial gain, travellers and luck, and the guide of souls to the underworld. The same trophy is still awarded to the winner of the Senior TT, this year staged on June 9.

The inaugural Isle of Man TT was staged on May 28, 1907, over a 15.5-mile course between Peel, Ballacraine and Kirk Michael. The roads were little more than cart tracks.

The greatest challenge for the mostly single-speed machines was the steep climb up Creg Willeys hill out of the Glen Helen section. Some riders resorted to pedal assistance, while others jumped off and pushed.

Victors in the twin-cylinder class were Rem Fowler and Norton, both competing in their first race. Fowler rode James Lansdowne Norton's latest machine, a beast of a thing powered by a direct-drive, five-horsepower Peugeot v-twin; no clutch or gearbox. At that time the French were the kings of internal combustion technology, but Pa Norton didn't want his customers to know he was using a foreign engine, so he had the PF logo (for Peugeot Frères) erased from its crankcases.

"Fowler completed the 10 laps in 4hrs 21mins, at 36.2mph and 87mpg. He also set the fastest lap, at 43mph"

Fowler completed the 10 laps in 4hrs 21mins, at 36.2mph and 87mpg. He also set fastest lap, at 43mph, but finished 13min behind single-cylinder winner Charlie Collier, after losing time due to punctures, oiled spark plugs and at least one near-death experience.

"As I approached the Devil's Elbow between Kirk Michael and Peel I saw clouds of black smoke on the hill ahead," Fowler later recalled. "As I rounded the bend there was a machine, well alight, with flaming oil and petrol all over the road. I had to make up my mind instantly – obey the violent flag-waving of the Boy Scout on duty, or take a chance and dash through it. Realising that I had a good chance of winning I decided to make a dash. The Boy Scout and others only just got out of the way as I vanished into the flames. The burning machine was hidden in flames and smoke; however I managed to dodge it and got through okay. All I felt was the hot blast."

Most riders of that era wore little protection: perhaps a thick overcoat, flat cap and goggles, the last of which did more than protect eyes from the dust. Most Manx roads were unpaved, so during TT week they were sprayed with calcium chloride solution to suppress dust.

"The track was dusty in dry weather, slippery in the wet and had plenty of loose stones," said Jack Marshall, who finished second to Collier in the singles category, on a Triumph. "In an attempt to damp down the dust, officials sprayed the course with an acid solution that was supposed to keep things moist. The acid got to our clothes and in a couple of days they looked as though the rats had been at them."

This procedure had another downside: calcium chloride is painful to the eyes and skin, a real problem for riders who had their faces cut or goggles smashed by flying stones.

Collier, creator of the Matchless marque and already a veteran racer, averaged 38.5mph and 94.5mpg on his pedal-assisted Matchless-JAP. "To climb Creg Willeys hill required vigorous pedalling, but that was not a problem for me because in my younger days I was crowned Woolwich cycling club champion," said Collier.

Pedals were banned from TT machines the following year.

STAR LOT @ MOSSGREEN

1977 HOLDEN TORANA A9X
{ Mossgreen, Sydney, May 28 }

Built for Indy racers Johnny Rutherford and Janet Guthrie to share at Bathurst in 1977, then raced with success by Bob Morris's team. John Fitzpatrick drove it in the '78 Bathurst event while four wins in 1979 brought Morris the Australian Touring Car title ahead of Peter Brock and the works Holdens. 5-litre 400hp V8; still in '79 livery. A piece of Australian racing history. Estimate: A$850,000-1m

UNDER THE HAMMER

Key highlights at classic and racing auctions from around the world

Barons

@ SANDOWN PARK, UK APRIL 22

1970 Alfa Romeo 1750 GTV Series 1
Rare example of the original Mkl, including early Recaro seats. Sold for £11,550

1976 Rolls Royce Corniche
Luxury V8-engined convertible. Sold for £35,750

Auctions America

@ AUBURN, USA MAY 11

2012 HPD ARX-03
ALMS LMP2 championship winner in 2012. Sold for $110,000

AUTOMOBILIA
SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS

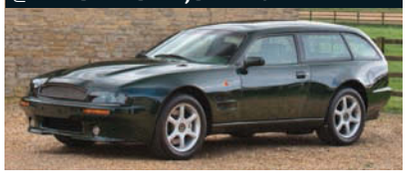
Pair of leather Bentley trunks
Sold for £936

Aston Martin chassis plate
Sold for £312

2008 Toyota NASCAR Cup
Originally campaigned by the NASCAR Sprint Cup Red Bull Racing Team. Sold for $35,200

Bonhams

@ NEWPORT PAGNELL, UK MAY 13



1996 Aston Martin V8 Sportsman Shooting Brake
One of only three examples built by Aston Martin based on the Virage. Sold for £337,500

1960 Aston Martin DB4 4.5-litre Lightweight Competition Saloon
2008 AMOC and Intermarque Championship class winner. Sold for £236,700

@ SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, BELGIUM MAY 21

1979/1981 Porsche 911 Type 935 Gp5
Competed in the 1999/2000 Swedish GTR Championship. 1 of 3 built by DP Motorsport. Estimate: £350-430,000

1970 Volvo 'Amazon' 122S
Works-built rally car with competition history and eligible for historic rallies. Sold for: £21,847

Silverstone Auctions

@ SILVERSTONE, UK MAY 13

1972 Alfa Romeo GT Junior
Historic racer since 1996; multiple Italian hillclimb winner. Sold for £16,875

1993 Lancia Delta Integrale Evo2
Honest example with plenty of history. Sold for £41,063

1990 BMW M3
The original and inspiring E30 four-cylinder model. Sold for £52,875

Mecum

@ INDIANAPOLIS, USA MAY 16

1965 Ford Mustang
The first hardtop Mustang to receive a serial number: no 00002. Estimate: $450-650,000

Coys

@ WESTMINSTER, UK MAY 18

1966 Ferrari 275 GTB/4
First 275 GTB/4 produced, unveiled at 1966 Paris Motor Show. Estimate: £2-2,500,000

1963 Fiat 750 Vignale

Attractive coachwork on nimble Fiat underpinnings. Estimate: £10-12,000

Historics at Brooklands

@ ASCOT RACECOURSE, UK MAY 20

1972 Citroën SM

First registered in the UK and still being used for long-haul European road trips. Sold for: £20,160

1959 MGA Roadster

Mint condition following a full recommission. In Iris Blue with black leather interior. Repatriated to the UK from Arizona in 2011. Sold for: £31,360

1972 BMW 3.0 CSL Lightweight Coupé

Rare original homologation special in need of full restoration, but all parts with the car. Sold for: £53,760

1947 Rover P2 sports tourer

Based on a Rover 12 chassis. Stored in a garage for 50 years and used only lightly since being restored to working order 10 years ago. Sold for: £12,880

RM Sotheby's

@ VILLA ERBA, ITALY MAY 27

1930 Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 Gran Sport

Fourth-series chassis with Carrozzeria Sport spider bodywork; competition history. Estimate: €2.2-2.6m

2016 McLaren P1 GTR

Super-spec version of Woking hybrid hypercar, converted for road use; just short of 1000bhp. Estimate: €3.2-3.6m

1948 Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport

Original one-off convertible coachwork by Franay. Estimate: €1.2-1.5m

1959 W R E Maserati

Second of three examples raced in the early 1960s, original Maserati engine. Estimate: €750-950,000

AUCTION CALENDAR

JUNE

2 RUSSO & STEELE
Newport Beach, USA

4 BONHAMS
Greenwich, UK

6 H&H
Woodcote Park, UK

10 CCA
Leamington, UK

13 BARONS
Sandown Park

16 MECUM
Portland, USA

17 MOTOSTALGIA
Indianapolis, USA

18 ARTCURIAL
Paris, France

24 AUCTIONS AMERICA
Santa Monica, USA

30 BONHAMS
Goodwood, UK

JULY

2 ARTCURIAL
Monaco

8 HISTORICS AT BROOKLANDS
Brooklands, UK

18 BARONS,
Sandown Park, UK

20 MECUM
Denver, USA

26 H&H
Duxford, UK

27 SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS
Silverstone, UK

29 RM SOTHEBYS
Michigan, USA

29 SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS
Silverstone, UK

AUGUST

3 MECUM
Harrisburg, USA

16 MECUM
Monterey, USA

17 RUSSO & STEELE
Monterey, USA

18 RM SOTHEBYS
Monterey, UK

18 GOODING
Pebble Beach, US

31 AUCTIONS AMERICA
Auburn, USA

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DREAM GARAGE

MORGAN AERO 8

There can't be another car maker that tries to confuse the history books as much as Morgan. Brand-new cars that look 60 years old; the return of an obsolete light car concept for cash-strapped drivers but now snapped up by style-conscious enthusiasts; a state-of-the-art bonded aluminium supercar dressed in clothes cut from Thirties cloth. But the tiny Malvern manufacturer isn't chasing the retro bandwagon – Morgan has been making the 4/4 continuously since the Fifties, the Three Wheeler is a reintroduction of an old favourite, while the Aero 8 couldn't be taken for anything other than a Malvern maverick even if you tore the winged medallion off its nose.

Waiting lists may have waned since the heady days when the firm would warn you your new-born would be off to big school before your car arrived at the door, but a new product range with some radical offerings is bringing a whole new clutch of buyers and wafting a breath of cool over our oldest manufacturer.

Today's customers come from wildly different tribes: the guy who wants the new all-electric EV3 – a three-wheeler with a gaping grille and a bonnet full of batteries – isn't going to the same parties as the lady who has always wanted a traditional old-school Morgan with sweeping wings and creaking sidescreens.

Not that the car on offer at London Morgan is old by any yardstick except mayflies – it's a 2016 Aero 8, which combines modern creature comforts and design twists with instantly recognisable old world charm.

In fact it is part of Morgan's genius that it has managed to evolve its vehicles so subtly over the years that, despite the arrival of modernity on a technical level, they have never lost their sepia-tinged look.

Powered by a BMW-sourced 4.8-litre V8 (giving it a top speed of 170mph) this Aero 8 comes with a list of extras that wouldn't look out of place on a mass-produced modern hatchback and belie its Edwardian looks: satellite navigation, paddle-shift gearbox, power steering, alloy wheels, air-conditioning, electric windows, cruise control, airbags, alarm and remote central locking. It has done just 2,500 miles.

There is a price to be paid for all this, however. Morgan has recently been moving its vehicles upmarket and this Aero 8 has a price tag nudging six figures. And there is nothing old-fashioned at all about that.

FACTFILE

YEAR 2016

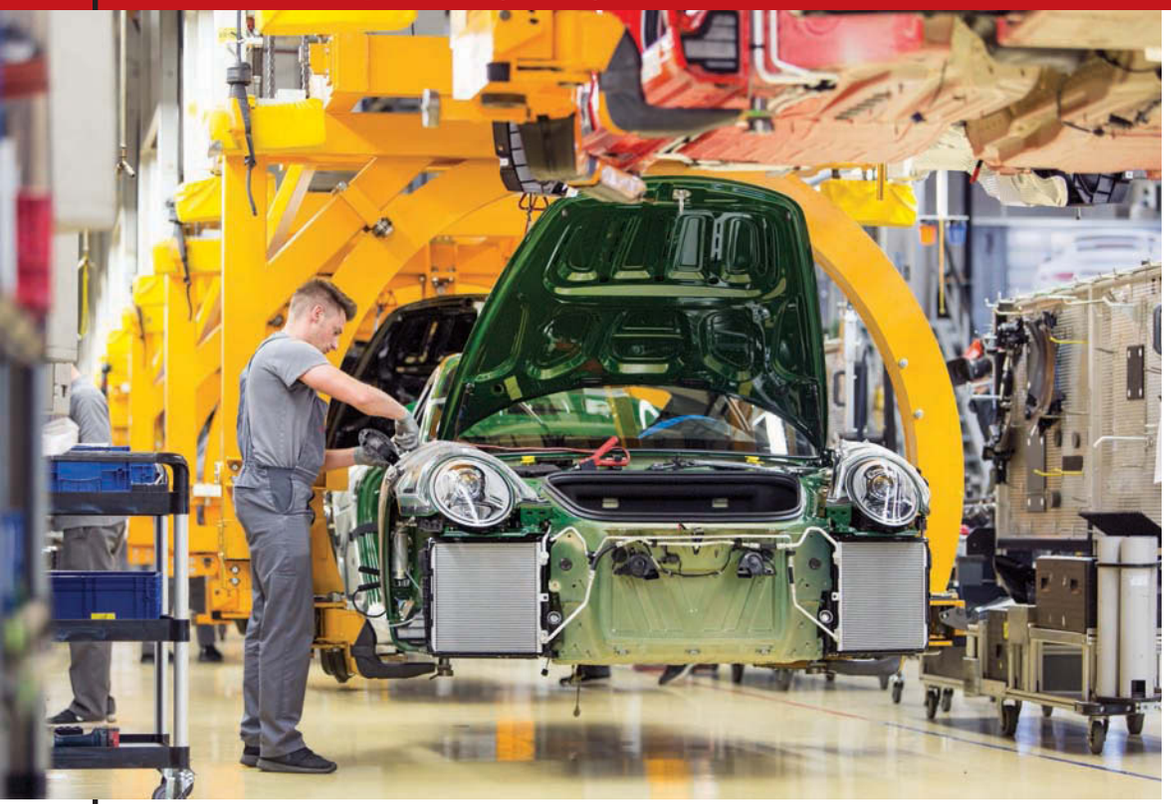
ENGINE
4.8 litres, V8, 367bhp

TRANSMISSION
6-speed semi-automatic

SUSPENSION
front & rear: inboard coil springs over Koni shock absorbers

TOP SPEED 170mph

PRICE £93,290



911 hits seven figures

Porsche talisman reaches production landmark | BY ANDREW FRANKEL

IT'S TAKEN MORE THAN HALF A century, but the one millionth Porsche 911 has rolled off the production line in Zuffenhausen. Painted in Irish green like one of 82 original 901s that were produced before the 0 turned to a 1, it is a mechanically standard Carrera S with a 414bhp, 3-litre twin turbo engine.

Fittingly it is not just the colour that relates back to the early days: like the first, the millionth car is a rear-drive coupé, has a manual gearbox and a wooden steering wheel. Other nods to its heritage include elegant instrument needles, a plaque and houndstooth upholstery. The car is going on a world tour before being retained by Porsche and retired to the museum.

In the last 54 years, the 911 has been the one constant in Porsche's transformation from being a tiny manufacturer to the most profitable car company on earth. In sales terms today, the 911 is relatively small beer for Porsche, accounting for fewer than 32,500 of nearly 238,000 cars the company delivered in 2016. Despite being available in myriad configurations including coupé, cabriolet and Targa, with two- or four-wheel drive, as a flagship Turbo or track-honed GT3, all 911s combined are now outsold three to one by the Macan SUV.

"In sales terms today, the 911 is relatively small beer for Porsche, accounting for fewer than 32,500 of nearly 238,000 cars the company delivered in 2016."

Even so, Porsche is probably right when it insists the 911 remains "the most strategically important" car in its range. Its history is unparalleled in automotive production, its position as the most enduring, iconic sporting car there has been apparently unassailable.

Not only has it been a constant presence on the road for as long as most people can remember (only the Corvette has a longer track record of continuous production), on track it has not only won every important sports car race there is, including the Sebring 12 Hours, Daytona 24 Hours and, in 935 guise, the Le Mans 24 Hours, it has also clocked up more than 30,000 victories in other races around the world, a record unapproached by any other car. And although it was not the first turbocharged road car, it was the first to use the technology successfully on an enduring basis.

The next landmark in the future of the 911 is the apparently imminent arrival of the new GT2 RS, the first time that nameplate has been used since 2010. Speculation about the new car is rife: it is rumoured that when it is unveiled this summer it will come boasting a 700bhp version of the current 911 Turbo S's flat-six, easily eclipsing the 620bhp of its already ferociously fast predecessor. Expect Porsche to have focused very hard not just on the provision of straight-line speed but also aerodynamic downforce: the car's body is expected to use similar aerodynamic architecture to 2015's GT3 RS but to move the game substantially forward. Compared with the last GT2 RS, the new car is certain to adopt Porsche's four-wheel-steering system though, despite its power output, four-wheel drive appears still to be off the menu.

One question Porsche is sure to be asked more than most is the car's Nürburgring lap time and this is interesting, not least because the (relatively) aerodynamically uncluttered new GT3 has posted a 7min 12.7sec, more than 5sec faster than the old GT2 RS. If the new car really does have 200bhp more than the 500hp GT3 and a serious amount of downforce, there will be disappointment if the car cannot go a second a mile quicker, which is all that's required for it to join the exclusive sub-7min club. To date and among fully homologated production road cars it has just three members with declared times: the Lamborghini Huracán Performante, Lamborghini Aventador SV and Porsche's own hypercar, the 918 Spyder. Will the GT2 RS beat the 918's 6min 57sec? I'd be more surprised if it did not.

One very careful owner

IN OTHER 911 NEWS, BY THE TIME you read this a 1993 964-series 911 RSR will have gone under the gavel at RM Sothebys biennial sale at Villa Erba on the shores of Lake Como. So what? Well RSRs of this generation were rare, with just 51 built, but of these just two were constructed fully trimmed for road use and this is one of them. But the real reason RM has slapped a €2 million estimate in its windscreen is that other than the 10 kilometres required for its pre-delivery inspection, it has literally never turned a wheel and remains wrapped in its original Cosmoline wax coating. Equipped with a startlingly red interior, the RSR is presented in time-warp condition. The only pity? Unless its new owner doesn't mind shedding huge chunks of its value the moment he or she takes it up the road, it's likely to remain a static exhibit for the rest of time.

Demand for cars dips

UK CAR SALES TOOK A FRIGHTFUL pasting in April, thanks to new VED (Vehicle Excise Duty) regulations that came into force at the beginning of the month. Overall sales were down almost 20 per cent on the same month last year, with sales of diesel-powered cars being hit by 27 per cent. These numbers come after a record March for the industry, thanks not only to the usual surge in registrations for those wanting the latest plate, but also those wishing to avoid the rise in duty.

That said, diesel-powered cars fractionally increased their market share compared to the previous month while sales of hybrids fell as they were among the most affected by the changes. Even so, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders expects a drop of 5 per cent in total annual car sales this year relative to 2016.

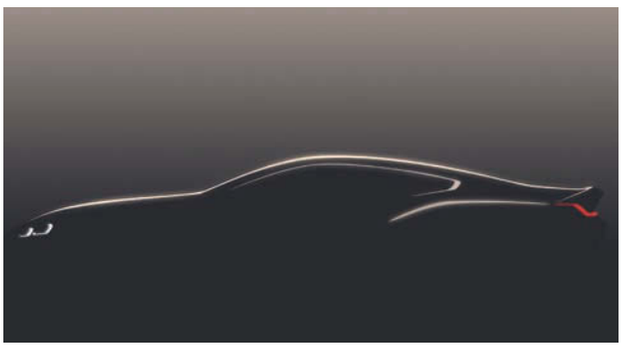
The new 310bhp Honda Civic Type-R has broken the Nürburgring lap record for a front-wheel-drive car. I mention this now only because in negotiating the track in 7min 43.8sec, this hatchback has now gone faster than did a Pagani Zonda S or a Jaguar XJ220. Moreover, had the car been entered for the last 1000Km World Sports Car Championship round at the Nordschleife in 1983, it would have qualified 12th – putting it in the front third of the field ahead of, among others, a Lancia LC2 Group C car. Where is this mad battle for Nürburgring bragging rights going to end? In the wall, I very much suspect.

BMW 8-series returns

BMW HAS RELEASED A TEASER image of its new 8-series coupé, the first time the number has been used since the previous two-door coupé of the same name ceased production in 1999. It is likely to be shown in production form at the Frankfurt show in September before going on sale next year.

Details are not exactly thick on the ground, but a lot can be deduced. The car is likely to be positioned as a far more spacious and luxurious product than the old 8-series, and therefore provide a direct rival for the Mercedes-Benz S-class coupé that dominates the market place. The car is almost certain to be based on the same platform as the well-received new 7-series, and use its multi-material construction comprising structural steel, aluminium and carbon-fibre.

The teaser suggests a two-door, but BMW has developed a habit of spinning four-door cars off the back of new coupe programmes so don't rule it out. A convertible is a racing certainty. So what possibility, then, of an ultra-powerful M8? Last time around BMW developed the car but opted not to put it on sale. Spurred on by thoughts of nicking sales from everything from the Mercedes-AMG S63 to the new Bentley Continental GT, I expect BMW will be less shy about giving it the M treatment.



More new old Listers

THE LISTER MOTOR COMPANY IS to build 10 road-legal continuation versions of the original 1957 'Knobbly' Lister. These follow on from the 10 full race versions that have already been announced. It is the first new road-going Lister since the short-lived Storm of the early 1990s, a car conceived when the name belonged to someone else.

The new street-legal Knobbly has been modified in many respects in order to allow it to pass the British Individual Vehicle Approval tests required before the car can be registered for use on the public road. It comes with twin roll hoops, a collapsible steering column, a ratchet handbrake and road-compliant

lighting. There is a choice of Jaguar twin-cam engines: you can have either a fairly standard 4.2-litre motor which promises to be tractable and well behaved, or you can have the full Crosthwaite & Gardiner dry-sumped 3.8-litre race motor, similar in size and specification to that used by Archie Scott Brown back in the Knobbly's 1958 heyday. The bad news is that the hot engine adds £70,000 to the list price, raising it from £225,000 to £295,000.

Lister says this is just the start of its road car ambitions and an out-and-out supercar has been mooted in the past. In the meantime we wait to see whether the company will recreate the original Lister-Jaguar from which the Knobbly was born, the car in which Scott Brown won 11 of his 14 races in 1957.

www.motorsportmagazine.com/author/andrew-frankel

McLAREN 720S

Its performance is otherworldly, which means you'll struggle to make full use of it in the real world | BY ANDREW FRANKEL

FACTFILE
£218,020

ENGINE
4.0 litres, 8 cylinders, turbocharged

POWER
710bhp@7500rpm

TORQUE
568lb ft@5500rpm

TRANSMISSION
seven-speed paddle shift, rear-wheel drive

WEIGHT
1419kg approx

POWER TO WEIGHT
500bhp per tonne

0-62MPH 2.8sec
TOP SPEED 212mph
RANGE 26.4mpg
CO_2 249g/km

WHEN YOU SLAM shut that extraordinary door for the last time, walk away, have a little sit down, a glass of water and give yourself time to think, it is not the technology lurking within the McLaren 720S that will first come back to you. Nor is it the car's appearance. Nor, I am afraid to say, is it the handling. It is the performance.

The way the 720S gets up and goes dominates everything. On a racetrack it is merely utterly exhilarating; on the road it can be anything from awe-inspiring via rather intimidating to really quite frustrating when you can't use it all, which is almost always. But whatever the feelings it elicits upon whichever stretch of road you are trying to drive quickly, it is those concerning just how fast it is that will be standing front and centre. At least at first.

This should not be a surprise. With a twin-turbo engine expanded to 4.0 litres, it has not only 710bhp at its disposal but, because the engine is not just larger but longer in the stroke, a massive slug of additional mid-range torque.

It will reach 62mph in 2.8sec, but McLaren provides a 0-124mph (200kph) time as well. It covers this in 7.8sec and you'll only get a clear idea of just how rapid this is when you consider that, if my fag packet calculations are correct, that's about two seconds faster than the daddy of all supercars, the McLaren F1. Two seconds. At this level, that's a lifetime. Ah, some will say, that's not a fair comparison because the 720S has launch control and seamless shifting. So put it another way: it's only half a second slower than a Porsche 918 Spyder that has all the electronic trickery plus the simply enormous advantage of four-wheel drive and, therefore, no traction issues at all.

HSCC

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HSCC

BrandsHatch

Roman roads didn't wholly suit the 720S. Below, on track the 720S proved "as stable and accurate in the quick stuff" as Frankel has known a car to be

But while the 720S is expensive by any normal standard, a million pound hypercar it is not. It costs £218,020 and sits plumb in the middle of the McLaren range, the core of the 'Super' series, with the 'Sports' series cars like the 570S below and the 'Ultimate' P1 and forthcoming BP23 above.

It's so quick it would be easy to be overwhelmed and miss the less obvious facets of its character, which would be a shame. While even those owners who would choose to use all the 720S's performance (and I bet there are not many) will find themselves severely limited by their environment, these other aspects can be experienced at all times.

McLaren says the 720S is the replacement for the 650S supercar but, in fact, it has made the car not just considerably quicker, it has substantially repositioned it too. The aim was to create something closer in character to the limited-edition 675LT, which by McLaren's own admission is a car intended for use as much or more on track than road. The advantage of this approach is that it puts more clear conceptual air between it and the more affordable Sports Series car than a mere power hike could manage on its own; this is important when even the performance of McLaren's cheapest car, the 540C, is more than sufficient to summon shrieks from your passenger and needs to be used in public very sparingly indeed.

But this change of character brings problems, too. McLaren has worked hard to make the 720S even more civilised than its predecessor: those dihedral doors make it a little easier to climb in and out – though I'd stop short of calling it actually easy – while inside there is a new level of all-round visibility for a mid-engined supercar. The controls are familiar if somewhat rearranged, but easy to understand and operate and of a much higher perceived quality. But when you tug a paddle and ease forward, the magic carpet ride of the 650S is notable only by its absence. Indeed, at town speeds you might call the car's suspension settings rather challenging, or at least that was the impression gained on the admittedly diabolical road surfaces available on the Rome-based launch.

And by the time you've become a trifle irritated by the scarcely sonorous sound of the V8 at low revs – louder and less smooth to these ears than the 3.8-litre unit it replaces – you would have good reason to wonder if McLaren has not sacrificed too much civility at the altar of largely unusable speed.

Then you go somewhere the roads are quieter, somewhere you can at least rub away at the surface of what this car can do. This is the moment you realise the 720S is not all about its engine. This is when you notice the unimpeachable rigidity of a structure once more made from carbon, but as a cage rather than a tub. Your fingers start to read the messages fed back from the still hydraulically assisted and perfectly weighted and geared steering. You begin to appreciate a suspension system that is not merely interlinked as before, but has a dozen more sensors to allow it not only to read the driver, but the road too. You get into a flow, barely able to believe the dampers' ability to maintain the car's ride height over the most shocking undulations, camber and surface changes and you realise this is probably the most capable standard production road car you've driven.

And that's before you get to the track. We went to Vallelunga, a circuit I recall chiefly as the place where in 1973 Matra ended the reign of the Ferrari 312PB, which had won every race it entered in 1972. Here the 720S put on a display I shall not quickly forget. It was playful

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Locals discuss McLaren suspension dynamics, above. The cabin offers new levels of visibility for a mid-engined supercar while the materials are of a higher quality, left

in the slow corners, as stable and accurate in the quick stuff as I've known a road car to be and, of course, simply explosive down the straights. I would say a Ferrari 488GTB makes a better noise and is even easier to drive on the limit and therefore yet more entertaining, but my gut says that if you put a stopwatch on them, Maranello's car would be seconds adrift.

Is that important? And is it important that I would not be even slightly surprised to learn the 720S could lap faster than a P1?

Well, when you feel that pulverising thrust or are pinned to your side bolsters by the 1.5g lateral force it will generate, of course it's important because such experiences are thrilling.

But so too are they rare. The truth is that, on the public road, I'd be just as quick in a 570S because the performance advantage of the 720S is unusable in such conditions. The 570S is a more attractive car to these eyes and it costs £73,000 less. But that's a journalist's perspective and if supercars stopped selling just because their potential could no longer be exploited, the breed would have died out 30 years ago with the Ferrari F40. Customers want the power and simply to know it's there is enough to them, even if it's never or rarely used.

All such issues aside, there's no question that the 720S moves the game on. I'd like it to be more user-friendly around town and to sound and look better than it does, but for those who can actually afford such a car and are wondering whether or not to buy one, such issues will pale next to the one essential truth it brings: for the very first time, genuine hypercar capability has been brought to the standard supercar classes. And for that, McLaren is to be applauded.

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LAND ROVER DISCOVERY

Much better than before, though a little family heritage has been lost

DRIVING THE NEW Discovery is like meeting a school friend you've not seen for years. But he's no longer the jeans and T-shirt guy he was before. He's dressed in those brand-new tweeds worn by town people who think that's what country folk actually wear, and he's sporting a rather natty cravat. You'd only be slightly surprised to see him whip a monocle or pocket watch out of his waistcoat.

Your instinct is to make your excuses and leave, but your curiosity is stronger. So you stay and chat, and gradually realise that behind that veneer of acquired refinement lies the same old fellow who was once your mate, but now he knows a lot more, has accomplished a lot more and is capable of talking with great eloquence, and no longer just about beer and women. You get along terribly well and on the way home you're berated by your internal monologue for being so swift to judge.

So I'll say it now: the new Discovery is an outstanding car. I'd have it over a new Audi Q7, Volvo XC90, BMW X5 and everything else in the class save the Range Rover Sport. The improvements in build quality, performance, handling, ride and refinement are so enormous as to make further comparison to the old Discovery effectively redundant. I understand it remains extraordinary off-road, and as useful a place to sling children and their mates as has yet been conceived in the automotive domain.

I dislike few things about the car: the rear styling is awful, the little drop-down ledge that replaces the proper split tailgate is no substitute at all and the information, entertainment and navigation systems are well behind those of its rivals, despite being new and likely therefore to be around for a while.

That's not much on the debit side and it's overwhelmed by everything the new Discovery does so well.

But a part of me still wishes the transformation was not quite so complete. In the week that I had it, I don't think I once thought of it as a Land Rover. To me it's a more affordable, practical Range Rover and who but an arch contrarian could argue with that? But I miss that rugged chunkiness. However much better it is as a car, it is commensurately less clearly identifiable as a Land Rover.

What am I complaining about? Those who buy the new Discovery for its sleek sophistication will far outnumber those who turn away because it no longer feels authentically Land Rover. Indeed, they'll probably be glad. The company has made the right decision and I acknowledge that being even slightly sad about that puts me in a small minority.

But it does make me wonder what a Land Rover is today, other than the company that makes a wide range of SUVs in different shapes and sizes yet all looking more or less alike, based as they are on a single styling theme. So while I congratulate Land Rover on the excellent Discovery, I do so in the hope that when the new Defender arrives it shows that Land Rover has not entirely forgotten where it came from.

Discovery TD6 HSE

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TRANSMISSION
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WEIGHT
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POWER TO WEIGHT
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ECONOMY 39.2mpg
CO_2 189g/km

Three of the best

In June's edition Mark Hughes wrote about Fernando Alonso hoping to complete the Triple Crown of motor racing by winning the Monaco Grand Prix, Indianapolis 500 and Le Mans 24 Hours. Recently I have read two other journalists who cited the same three events.

I thought the Triple Crown used to be regarded as the Indianapolis 500, Le Mans 24 Hours and the world championship for drivers. Graham Hill is the only racer to have done it either way, but I was unaware that the Triple Crown's constituent parts had changed.
Mark Shore, High Wycombe, Bucks

Over time the phrase has been used unofficially to bracket Le Mans, Indy and either Monaco or the F1 world championship. It has also been used in Indycar racing (for the 500-mile races at Indy/Pocono/Ontario, Indy/Pocono/Michigan, Indy/Pocono/Fontana) and elsewhere.

Right man, wrong car

Thanks to Doug Nye for his piece on Al Unser Sr's 1987 Indianapolis 500 win. I was there for that one and the story of the winning Indycar borrowed from a hotel lobby was a staple of the week. Two points, though.

Firstly, there was a reference to Al's 1978 win in Jim Hall's Chaparral. That one was actually in Hall's Lola – Johnny Rutherford scored Chaparral's Indy win in 1980.

Although your *Crowning Glory* headline was perhaps appropriate, I would assert that this more appropriately describes Al Sr's achievement of being the only driver ever to win all three major 500-mile Indycar races – Indianapolis, Ontario and Pocono – during the same season. Through sheer luck, 1978 was the only year in whch I saw all three 500s live and it turned out truly to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience.
Norman E Gaines Jr, New York, USA

Been there, done that

With all this talk about Fernando Alonso going to do the Indy 500 and chasing the Triple Crown, I'm not sure whether people at McLaren realise that their company has already won Indy 500s, Le Mans, a few Monaco Grands Prix and several world championships – quite some achievement for a constructor and I am surprised more hasn't been made of the fact.
Julian Nowell, Walton on Thames, Surrey

Greatest lapse...

I could not believe that your 'greatest laps' feature in the June edition omitted to mention Jochen Rindt at Monaco, 1970. On the final lap of the race he beat the pole time by 0.8sec to win in a three-year-old car.

A lapse of judgement on your part, I feel, though I would still like to thank you for a wonderful magazine that I have enjoyed for several decades.
Michael Barrow, Hove, Sussex

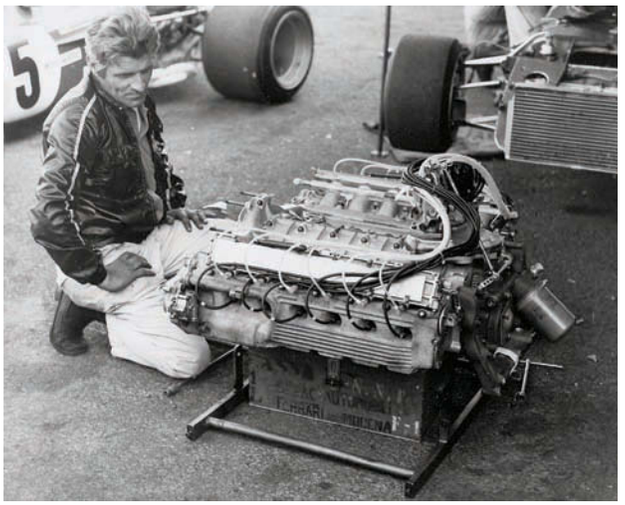
Year of the Cat

In enjoyed June's article about great racing laps, but was disappointed to see no mention of any of Martin Brundle's 78 racing laps in the Jaguar XJR-14 during the 1991 World Sports Car Championship race at Silverstone. Coasting into the pits at the end of lap one with a broken throttle cable, he went from dead last to finish third and set fastest lap. I watched him overtaking through Becketts complex, sometimes going three abreast!
Steve Taylor, Dalbeattie, Scotland.

A fitting tribute

I was chuffed to see the images of my good friend Dick Lees in Private View (May 2017). Dick and I first met on Okinawa in the US Air Force in 1966, me from Florida and he from Iowa. We quickly discovered we shared the same interests in motor racing. For the next 47 years and regardless of where we lived, we shared them over the phone, through mails or in person until his passing in 2013.

The narrative about Dick's time in England was very interesting as I shared many of those moments with him. We visited the Lola factory together in Huntingdon – and I bought an MGB GT (I still have it 43 years later) from Syd Beer, as Dick did. And, of course, we both enjoyed the words and photographs of Manney, Cahier and Dick's hero, Jenks.



Private View captured the essence of Dick as the photos were mostly of people – he was an avid fan who came out to enjoy a motor race and he loved chatting to people.

Thanks for remembering and paying tribute to Dick through his images. He would be very pleased and proud they were shared with his fellow fans—the readers of his favorite motor racing magazine. I've enclosed one of my favorite images taken by Dick. It's well-known Ferrari mechanic Giulio Borsari contemplating his task of installing a 3-litre flat-12 engine in a Ferrari 312 B2 at the 1971 British Grand Prix at Silverstone.
Jeff Allison, Ken-Caryl Valley, Colorado

Blyton: business as usual

I would like to thank Simon Arron for his kind comments about Blyton Park in your June issue. Could I also take this opportunity to reassure readers, a good number of whom come testing on our asphalt circuit, that despite the change of ownership it is very much business as usual with us.

New proprietor Lawrence Tomlinson has done amazing things in the 10 years he has owned Ginetta and his drive and enthusiasm are absolutely in tune with the ethos of Blyton Park.

Our big sprint weekend of the year, featuring a round of the British championship and therefore some seriously quick single-seaters, is on July 8/9. The "young lad with the clipboard" will be pleased to see Simon again and I can commend this very busy weekend to any readers who might want to see

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Richard Usher, Blyton Park, Lincs

The sound of music

I enjoyed reading Dickie Meaden's *Racing Lines* feature (June 2017) . While I have more than a passing interest in historic cars, it's not just the racing, handling or the look that appeals to me. I hadn't fully appreciated how much the noise remains a draw.

It occurred to me during the Donington Historic Festival, specifically in the race for pre-1973 sports cars. They just sounded so wonderfully brutal. Having followed many forms of motorsport on and off since the mid '60s, I do find modern racing visually interesting but aurally sterile.

I'm also missing the drifting odour of Castrol R, but that's another subject.
Martin Cooper, Bramcote Hills, Nottingham

Orchestral manoeuvres

I so enjoyed seeing Valtteri Bottas take his first Grand Prix win and the close finish at Sochi. Conversely, it was truly horrible to have Putin on the broadcast, jabbering backstage about how great it is to have full hotels full.

But why on earth, with so much money being thrown around and a supposed emphasis on making the F1 fan experience great, are the national anthems rendered with recorded music? Imagine the drama of a full band.
Rob Hayes, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Attention to detail

What a beautiful photo you chose to accompany Paul Fearnley's words on Fangio's 1957 conquest of the Nürburgring.

It was a practice shot, though. On the day '2529' wore the yellow upper nose-band of Argentina and the maestro a different shirt from his extensive collection of Suixtils.
John Kerruish, Folkingham, Lincs

This isn't the modern world

Thank you for a fascinating article on the Toyota simulator lap of the Nürburgring – maybe you should have let Sabine Schmitz have a go! The hardware is impressive but the real magic is in the software and algorithms. Computer simulations of lap times go back a surprising number of years.

The first I am aware of is Ford's use of a computer to calculate lap speeds at Indianapolis in 1963. They predicted 150mph for the Lotus 29 Ford V8 running on gasoline. On the third day of running Gurney achieved 150.501mph.

In 1971 the Watkins Glen circuit was extended from 2.30 to 3.377 miles. Cornell University Aeronautical Department assisted the planners by using a computer simulation to design the circuit for a theoretical F1 lap time of 100 seconds. This assumed a "perfect" driver taking the scientifically best line. They possibly overestimated the lateral g loads F1 cars could achieve, but then tyre development was coming on apace. Jackie Stewart took pole with 1min 42.642secs, a 2.642 per cent error. Not bad for a 1971 computer.
Peter O'Donnell, Epsom, Surrey

Wolfgang Amadeus Senna...

Thank you very much for your article about the "out-of-body experiences" of racing drivers. As a professional classical musician my colleagues and friends often find my passion for motor racing a bit weird, but here is the crossover. Performers can have similar experiences, made possible by their complete mastery of their craft and provoked by the stress of live performance.

Surprisingly, this can also happen to composers. Stories of Mozart writing works in full orchestral score without the slightest correction are legion. "Need an overture for Don Giovanni tomorrow? Give me that bit of paper, and I'll write it down on this billiard table." Handel was the same. He was often accused of stealing bits from other composers, but it seems he sometimes needed their ideas as triggers. But then the music would flow out in a seamless stream of creation – Messiah in three weeks was slow by his standards..

These moments of creative fantasy, when pure instinct takes over, were described by an English writer Charles Butler as early as 1636: the composer is "transported by some musical fury, so that he himself scarcely knoweth what he doth, nor can presently give a reason for his doing".

There's nothing new under the sun.
Graham O'Reilly, Aulnay-sous-Bois, France M

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Rudolf Uhlenhaut

Father of the Mercedes 300SL

Wolfgang Scheller & Thomas Pollak

As architect of the Mercedes W125 and W154 Grand Prix racers, as well as the 300SL referenced in the title (and the two-off SLR coupés tested by *Motor Sport* in March 2014), Uhlenhaut needs little introduction here.

The publisher proclaims this to be the "first comprehensive" biography of the gifted Anglo-German, as fine a driver as he was an engineer, but in essence it feels more like an extended photographic essay. There are some interesting images, many previously unpublished, but while the story is well told the whole feels a little light for something that costs almost 70 quid

So, priced like a Mercedes, but perhaps closer in specification to a Hillman Minx. ***SA***

Published by Dalton Watson
ISBN: 978-3-95843-150-8, £69

Barry Sheene

The Official Photographic Celebration

Rick Broadbent

There are other Sheene books on the market, but this is the first to include material culled from his family's archive, so a great many of the images have not previously been seen.

The wait has been worthwhile, though. The photos span his career's entirety and snaps of a young Sheene drip with period charm. Those from his later life – particularly shots of his participation at Goodwood Revival meetings – are a poignant reminder that he was taken far too soon, aged just 52. It seems barely plausible that 14 years have passed since.

There's nothing in here that qualifies as fresh information – but that doesn't stop it being fresh. ***SA***

Published by Bloomsbury
ISBN: 978-1-4729-4458-0, £20

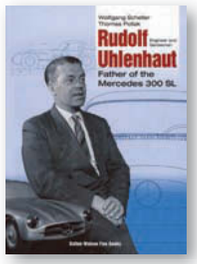
Jaguar XK120

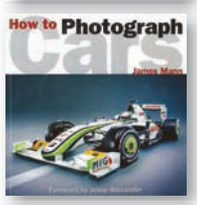
The remarkable history of JWK 651

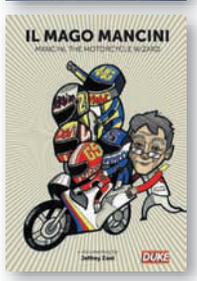
Chas Parker & Philip Porter

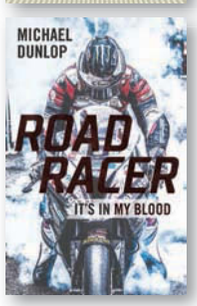
In this series Porter Press spotlights an individual car with historic interest but, rather than the weighty tomes of the Great Cars series, these are smaller, cheaper and in some ways more engaging. This time we learn about JWK 651, one of the six alloy-bodied XK120s that Jaguar prepared for competition in 1950. Although NUB 120 is undoubtedly the most famous of these, JWK – with the Mille Miglia, Le Mans and a Montlhéry 24-hour record on its CV – is a strong candidate, and its busy history from Leslie Johnstone's days onwards is all here, amplified with sidebars on results and relevant people plus Jaguar's spec sheet showing just how modified these cars were. It's very readable and nicely presented, and if there seem to be a lot of recent shots of JWK at Goodwood, gems like a grainy shot of the car travelling to Le Mans in 1950 with race numbers and suitcase strapped on top are fine compensation. ***GC***

Published by Porter Press
ISBN: 978-1-907085-56-7, £30









How to Photograph Cars

James Mann

Tricky blighters, cars. You grab a photo and it's only afterwards you realise there's a tree growing out of the roof, or blazing sun on chrome has turned it into a flarepath.

Mann's manual leads you around such schoolboy errors and on to the practicalities of planning, framing and capturing your subject. I've seen a thousand car shoots, and yet seeing all the pitfalls and prep advice written down reminds me what a specialised area it is.

Starting from equipment and basic techniques, Mann works through prepping a car for the shoot (even up the seats, move the mirrors, dump the sunglasses...), through details, statics and action, and on to groups of cars – which can be a nightmare of compositional manouevring.

After covering extras such as clamp-on tripods he concludes with studio techniques and how to tackle a magazine shoot. Learn it all and your name could be in these pages. ***GC***

Published by Autofocus
ISBN: 978-0-9956246-0-3, £19.99

Il Mago Mancini

Mancini, the Motorcycle Wizard

Jefferey Zani

If you were tasked to name the brightest Italian MotoGP riders of recent memory, chances are Guido Mancini has mentored them.

This hour-long documentary tells his story, bringing together many of his protégés including Loris Capirossi, Valentino Rossi and Andrea Dovizioso. Persuading contemporary drivers and riders to appear in your film is no mean feat, but such has been Mancini's impact on their fledgling careers that many obliged.

As for the unique little Mancini, he began as a test rider for a small manufacturer before riding competitively and creating his own bikes, which made him a reputation as one of the country's best.

That reputation brought bright young riders to his still-busy workshop to learn the basics, some to become the best in the world.

You sense a real bond between him and his riders: Rossi – a banana thief, it transpires – calls Mancini a "mythological figure, teaching young riders how to ride". Coming from the greatest of all time it's some testimonial. The film is independent, which sometimes shows (the English subtitles, for example, are amusingly ungrammatical) but it's a well told tale of a colourful bike racing character. ***JP***

Distributed by Duke Video
https://shop.motorsportmagazine.com, £14.99

Road Racer

It's In My Blood

Michael Dunlop

The Dunlop name is carved into motorcycle racing legend, and Michael was born into Irish road-racing royalty. First came uncle Joey, followed soon after by dad Robert. Older brother William came next and finally Michael made his way into the family wheeltracks.

Joey raced his way to a record-breaking 26 wins on the legendary Isle of Man course along with 24 Ulster GPs plus many other victories and podiums around the globe. Joey's younger brother Robert, also a multiple TT winner and road racing star, provided the inspiration for his sons William and Michael to follow their dad and uncle into the dangerous world of road racing.

That same danger is a constant presence throughout the book, as both Joey and Robert were killed in accidents at road-racing events. William and Michael were both in the same practice session that claimed their dad on the North West 200. Michael was one of the first on the scene of his dad's accident and held his hand as he slipped away. Not that that stopped him and William racing (and winning) a few days later. Made of strong stuff, these Dunlops.

His riding style has always been to race with his heart, and that has reaped reward by clocking up 13 TT wins since 2007. His strong emotions come out in this book time and again. Every word in this autobiography you feel has been said directly by Michael. It's a book that delves deep into the heart and passion of someone who loves doing what they do best, even if it means occasionally coming face to face with the darkest side of the sport. The direct style of his delivery isn't for everyone, but it does convey the character of a man who wants just one thing – to go road racing. ***DC***

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Timing is everything

Precision

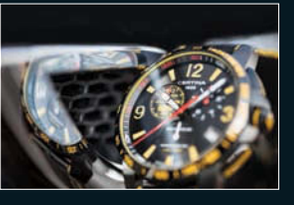
The close ties between horology and motor sport

WORKING ON THE MOON
Tales of the unexpected: new Bulova inspired by a 1970s space mission

MILLE MIGLIA TRIBUTE
Chopard's love of Italy's celebrated road race

ENDURING PARTNERSHIPS
How Malcolm Campbell united Rolex and Daytona

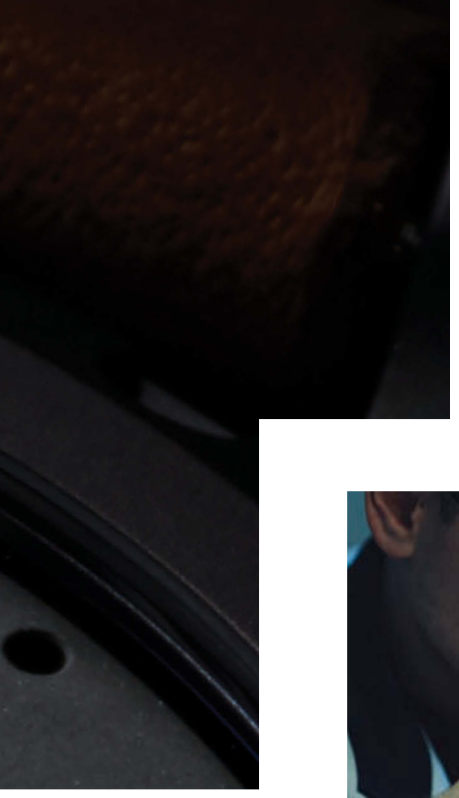
AUCTION STATIONS
Why vintage watch values are continuing to rise



MODERN TAKE ON THE 1950s
The latest from WRC timekeeper Certina

Discover the new breed of watchmaker...

christopherward.co.uk



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English heart

Christopher Ward

MODERN TRADITION

CUTTING-EDGE WATCHES THAT HONOUR THE PAST

ORIS

The Chronoris was popular in the 1970s, a stylish watch that was powered by Oris's first in-house chronograph. The Chronoris has been reborn as a time-and-date only watch that pays tribute to its ancestor's styling. A distinctive feature is the inner bezel, operated by a second crown at 4 o'clock. This allows the wearer to time elapsed hours, minutes or seconds by aligning the bezel's orange marker with the appropriate hand. It is powered by an automatic movement and available on a fabric or leather strap, or a steel bracelet. From £1450 ***www.oris.ch***

FEARS

The original Fears Watch Company was founded in Bristol in 1846 and operated successfully for more than a century before the business was closed in the 1950s. Last year the brand was revived by the original owner's great-great-great grandson. The first watch to come from the new iteration of the company is named Redcliff after the street in Bristol where the original company was founded. Designed in England, the watches are made in Switzerland and powered by a Ronda quartz movement. Fears Redcliff Date £650 ***www.fearswatches.com***

HALDA

The mechanical watch has fought a valiant battle over the last 40 or so years. During the 1970s pretty much everyone was convinced that new technology was going to render it obsolete in what the Swiss still refer to in solemn tones as the Quartz Crisis. But not only did the mechanical watch survive, it thrived. People want mechanical watches because there is a visceral fascination in this tiny, intricate machine that can run for a lifetime powered by nothing more than the movement of your hand.

But much as you may love mechanical, there are certain times when electronic is the only option. A scuba diver, for example, may choose to wear a handsome mechanical diving watch on one wrist, but on the other wrist he will wear a little computer that tells him how deep he has gone and when it is time to head back to the boat.

The Swedish company Halda has brought out a watch for racing drivers that aims for the best of both worlds by combining electronics and mechanics in one package. The Race Pilot Trackmaster is two watches in one, where you choose between two interchangeable heads that can be clicked pleasingly in and out of the steel case holder on your strap. One is the race module, a military-grade GPS unit that provides full race data such as lap times, average speeds and lateral G-force; the other is a handsome automatic-winding watch with a movement provided by the Swiss brand Zenith. The Halda Race Pilot Trackmaster £12,200 ***www.haldasweden.com***

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WORKING ON THE MOON

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Bulova's Moon Watch has a high-performance quartz movement, super-luminous hands, anti-reflective glass and a tachymeter scale in a stainless-steel case that is water resistant to 50 metres. It comes with two interchangeable straps with a nubuck leather patch that commemorates the date of the Apollo 15 mission. £489
www.bulova.com

WHEN COMMANDER Dave Scott went to the moon onboard Apollo 15 in 1971 he took two wristwatches: his NASA-issued Omega Speedmaster; and his own personal watch, a prototype electronic chronograph made by the US company Bulova.

When Scott's standard-issue watch stopped working, he was left with the Bulova, which he took with him as he explored the moon's surface. This made it the first privately owned watch to go to the moon, and also the first watch to take a ride in the Lunar Rover, where it provided Scott with vital time checks during his journeys around the moon's surface on what was his third and final space mission.

Other watches that went to the moon remained the property of NASA, meaning they never went on sale, nor are they likely to – unless for some reason the US government finds itself needing to sell off the family silver to raise money. The Bulova, however, remained Scott's property, until it was put up for auction in 2015. Given its historical backstory, the watch was expected to achieve a healthy hammer price, but nobody quite predicted that it would sell for a whopping $1.6million.

With that sole example sold to the highest bidder, Bulova has provided an opportunity for those of less stratospheric means to get hold of the next best thing. The Bulova Moon Watch is a recreation of Scott's watch, a re-edition made using modern techniques and materials.

Bulova, which was founded in New York in 1875, became an early pioneer of electronic watches in the 20th century and continues to push the technology further today. The new Moon Watch is powered by a high-frequency quartz movement. This high frequency provides much greater accuracy than standard quartz watches – to within a few seconds a year, rather than a few seconds per month. It also allows the chronograph hand to sweep smoothly, rather than ticking out the seconds like most quartz watches.

CERTINA

SWISS WATCHES SINCE 1888

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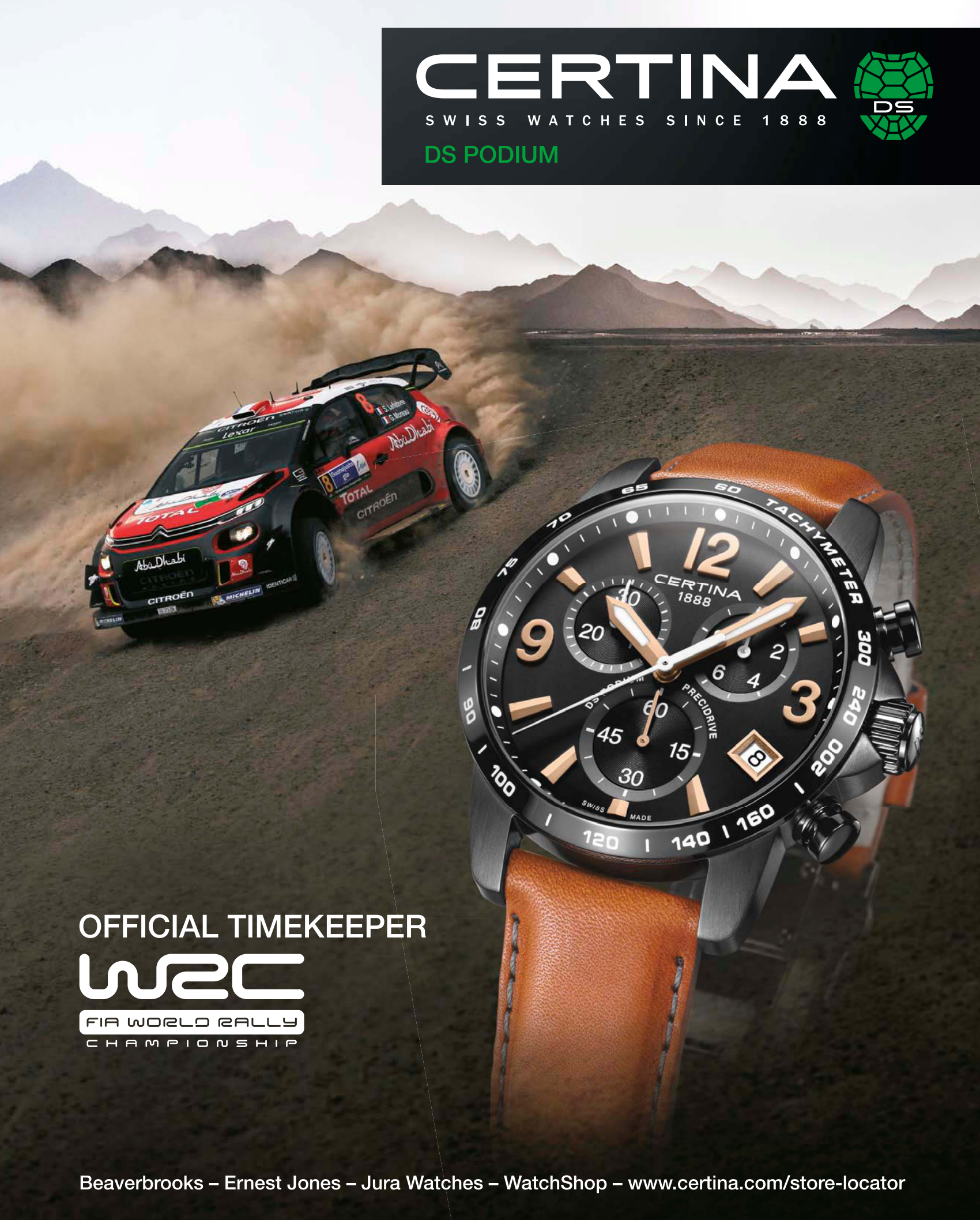

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Beaverbrooks – Ernest Jones – Jura Watches – WatchShop – www.certina.com/store-locator

CHOPARD

A QUESTION OF TIMING...

...OR HOW TO HONOUR THE MILLE MIGLIA

Above, Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph has a 42mm stainless-steel case, glare-proof sapphire crystal with exhibition case-back displaying the automatic-winding mechanical movement. Comes on a black rubber tyre-tread strap. Water resistant to 50 metres. £4040

Right, Mille Miglia Classic XL 90th Anniversary Limited Edition has a 46mm rose-gold case, glare-proof sapphire crystal and a case-back engraved with the Mille Miglia logo and an exhibition crystal that displays the hand-wound, in-house L.U.C movement and a brown Barenia calfskin strap. Water resistant to 50 metres. Limited edition of 90 pieces. £32,110 *www.chopard.com*

CHOPARD HAS BEEN THE official sponsor of the Mille Miglia since 1988, and the Swiss brand is so deeply involved with the event that it is hard to imagine one without the other. This is in large part down to the personal enthusiasm of Chopard's car-crazy co-president Karl-Friedrich Scheufele, who runs the company along with his sister Caroline.

Karl-Friedrich is a regular participant in the event, often sharing a ride with old friend and Le Mans legend Jacky Ickx. It is no surprise that Chopard is joining in with the celebrations of Mille Miglia's 90th birthday this year. Chopard's Mille Miglia watches have long been a staple of the Swiss brand's line-up, with watches presented to participants in the rally.

This year alongside the Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph there is a limited-edition celebration watch. The 90th Anniversary Limited Edition is the first Mille Miglia watch to have a hand-wound, in-house movement made in Chopard's L.U.C manufacture – a bit like the racing division of Chopard, where the brand's top-end haute horlogerie watches are made.

As well being driven by the top-grade engine, the 90th Anniversary model benefits from some upgraded bodywork, with a case made from 18-carat rose gold and an open case-back that allows the hand-finished movement to be admired at will. In addition to the Mille Miglia insignia on the dial and engravings on the back, there are touches that nod towards the watch's automotive inspirations, like piston-inspired chronograph pushers, the petrol-cap crown and the dashboard-style elapsed-time subdials.

There is also a tachymeter scale, the perfect tool for measuring speed over a set distance – fitting for the Mille Miglia Storica of the modern era, where precise timing has taken precedence over absolute speed.

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ROLEX

CAMPBELL'S LEGACY

HOW A SPEED-RECORD LEGEND UNITED ROLEX AND DAYTONA

Oyster Perpetual Cosmograph Daytona in 18ct white gold and 18ct yellow gold, with Oysterflex bracelet and Cerachrom bezel. £20,200/£21,050
www.rolex.com

AS AN EARLY EXAMPLE OF celebrity endorsement, it was pretty hard to beat. In 1935 Sir Malcolm Campbell sent a telegram to Rolex that simply said: "Rolex watch worn yesterday during record attempt and still going splendidly notwithstanding rough usage received."

Campbell broke the land-speed record nine times between 1924 and 1935, and from 1930 he drove his Bluebirds with a Rolex Oyster on his wrist. Five of Campbell's records were set on the sand at Daytona Beach, Florida. Although Campbell's final, 301mph record was set at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah, he had helped Rolex forge a relationship with Daytona Beach that continues today.

When Utah took over as the venue for land-speed record attempts, motor sport at Daytona Beach took off in a different direction, with stock cars racing around a four-mile oval, with sand on one side and a narrow road on the other. This laid the ground for the birth of NASCAR at Daytona in 1948. In the mid-1950s, with the sand deteriorating, William France Sr, the founder of NASCAR, laid ambitious plans for a permanent circuit, which became the Daytona International Speedway (it opened in 1959).

France Sr was a fan of both Campbell and Rolex, and in the early 1960s he named the Swiss watch brand as the official watch of the Speedway. In 1962 the circuit hosted the first edition of the Daytona Continental, a three-hour sports car race that would subsequently become the 24 Hours of Daytona, later renamed the Rolex 24 at Daytona.

The year after the launch of the Daytona Continental, Rolex brought out what was to become one of its most famous watches. The Cosmograph was a steel-cased chronograph designed for racing drivers, with subdials in contrasting colours to make elapsed time more legible, and a tachymeter scale around the bezel to allow average speed across a driven mile to be easily calculated.

Not long after the Cosmograph was launched the word Daytona began to appear on the dial of certain models and before long it was written on all of them, to the point that the watch is referred to simply as the Daytona. The watch very quickly gained a loyal following, with Paul Newman a famous fan. The particular version of the watch that the actor-turned-racing-driver wore has now become highly prized by collectors, with "Paul Newman" Daytonas fetching eye-watering prices whenever they come up for sale.

As Rolex's association with motor sport has grown, so the Daytona has evolved over the years. At first the movement was hand-wound and provided by an external supplier; in 1988 it was fitted with a modified El Primero automatic-winding movement; since 2000 it has been powered by an automatic-winding movement that is made completely in-house.

The Daytona continues to be a very popular model for Rolex, with new versions released this year to great acclaim from journalists and buyers alike – and of course they continue to benefit from endorsements by celebrities who have long since retired to the great raceways in the sky.

The BR V2-94 Black Steel houses added complication within its 41mm steel case in the form of a chronograph function. The running seconds tick around the small dial at 3 o'clock, while the chronograph uses the central hand for seconds and the small dial at 9 o'clock is a 30-minute counter. Around the bezel is a tachymeter scale, which can be used to calculate speed over the distance of one mile. Fitted with high-quality Swiss mechanical movements. £3350-£3600

BELL & ROSS

THE PILOT'S WATCH WITH WIDE APPEAL

FOUR DESIGN PRINCIPLES HAVE SERVED BELL & ROSS WELL

The shape of Bell & Ross
The round dial on a square case is still the best-known layout for a Bell & Ross watch, as seen on this BR 01-92 Carbon. It features a sizeable 46mm satin-brushed steel case housing a self-winding mechanical movement. £3100
www.bellross.com

BELL & ROSS HAS A HABIT of referring to its watches as 'instruments' and the company ethos is explained by four stated design principles: legibility, functionality, reliability and precision. That all sounds quite serious, as does the fact that Bell & Ross has supplied watches to bomb disposal teams, French air force pilots and specialist police squadrons. But happily, through the pursuit of rigorous functionality, Bell & Ross has also discovered its own unique style that has won many admirers beyond its professional buyers.

The most recognisable Bell & Ross design is the round dial over a square case – as seen in the BR 01-92 Carbon (see left). This shape has been around for most of the company's 25-year history and has become synonymous with the brand. The shape was inspired by aircraft cockpit instruments and this BR 01 series of watches is designed to be worn by pilots, or anyone else who wants a big, no-nonsense watch that is readable with the quickest of glances.

But even before the BR 01 became the company calling card, Bell & Ross brought out its Vintage series of round-cased watches based on pilots' watches from the 1940s. This year the series has been updated with three new watches – two three-handers and one chronograph. The Vintage collection may look markedly different to the other watches the company offers, but with the same high-quality Swiss mechanical movements and clearly legible dials, they still conform strictly to the Bell & Ross design principles. Which instrument most takes your fancy is just a matter of personal style.

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SWEDEN

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Daily Hundred

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Watches in the Heritage collection are inspired by Tudor diving watches from the 1950s. New for this year is the Tudor Heritage Black Bay 41. It has a slim steel case that is 41mm in diameter, fitted with an automatic winding movement and water-resistant to 200 metres. It is available on a steel bracelet (£2000) or a leather strap (£1790). Both come with an additional NATO-style fabric strap.

"FOR SOME YEARS NOW, I HAVE BEEN considering the idea of making a watch that our agents could sell at a more modest price than our Rolex watches, and yet one that would attain the standard of dependability for which Rolex is famous. I decided to form a separate company, with the object of making and marketing this new watch. It is called the Tudor watch company."

That quote from the Rolex founder Hans Wilsdorf laid out a very clear plan for the creation of Tudor: it was to be a sister brand to Rolex that was more affordable, without sacrificing any of Rolex's hard-won and well-deserved reputation for high quality.

While the plan may have been clear, as mission statements go it did not sound particularly exciting. But the reality of Tudor is very

TUDOR

TUDOR: LONG MAY IT REIGN

ROLEX'S SISTER BRAND HAS A FINE HERITAGE ALL ITS OWN

different, as it is a brand that has refused to live in its big sister's shadow and in the last few years in particular has become one of the most talked-about watch brands around.

From the start, Wilsdorf was committed to making Tudor an innovative brand in its own right. The first watches appeared in 1932, but it was after the war that Tudor really got into its stride. The Tudor Oyster Prince was marketed in the early '50s under the slogan 'Jarred Beyond Belief' in a campaign that explained how the watch had kept on ticking perfectly after it was subjected to such indignities as being worn during the prolonged operation of a pneumatic drill and ridden roughly for 1,000 miles by a motorcycle racer.

Tudor worked with the French navy while developing the diving watches that went on to cement its name. This led to the development of crown guards to prevent them being knocked and letting water in. Tudor even beat Rolex in producing the first Submariner that was water-resistant to 200 metres.

In recent years, early Tudors have become very collectible as interest in pioneering watches from this period has increased. In 2010 Tudor launched its Heritage collection, which borrows heavily from the back catalogue but benefits from all the technological advancements of recent years. These Heritage watches have been a huge success for the company, winning many new admirers who see Tudor as an exciting brand making some of the best-looking watches money can buy. The fact that they sell for a relatively affordable price is a bonus.

The Tudor Heritage Black Bay Bronze has a 43mm bronze case fitted with a unidirectional diving bezel. It is powered by an in-house automatic movement, has a matt-brown dial and comes on an aged leather strap as well as being supplied with an alternative NATO-style fabric strap. £2730
www.tudorwatch.com

IMAGE: Mark Small @thehistoryb0y

REDCLIFF DATE £650

FEARS

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THE HEIGHTS OF GOOD TASTE

VINTAGE WATCH VALUES ARE RISING – AND THEN SOME

IN THIS ERA OF ADVANCED technologies, where consumer products become obsolete within months, people are attracted to the enduring aspect of fine mechanical watches, which are built to last an eternity. The community of educated watch collectors continues to grow thanks to the rise of social media, influential blogs and specialist watch magazines. With their increasing coverage of watch auctions, more and more people are discovering the long-term value and appeal of collectible watches.

1973 Heuer Autavia with 'Exotic' dial

The Patek Philippe reference 1518 perpetual calendar chronograph sold for $11m in November, making it the most expensive wristwatch ever bought at auction

1958 Omega Seamaster

Rolex "Bao Dai" Reference 6062. Having belonged to the last Emperor of Vietnam, Bao Dai, it is one of the most valuable and prestigious Rolexes ever made.

People want things money can't easily buy, and finding exceptional vintage watches, preserved in great condition, is especially difficult. As a result, for the highest quality vintage watches, there is a relative shortage of supply. We simply can't find enough to satisfy demand, with Phillips Auction House having to reject up 70 per cent of the watches proposed to us due to the level of mediocrity on the market.

Looking forward, it is rare vintage watches with history and provenance that we feel will continue to perform strongly. Stainless steel sports watches, especially chronographs and diving watches, remain highly sought after. We are also finding growing interest in yellow gold and factory gem-set sports watches by brands like Rolex, Patek Philippe, and Audemars Piguet. We are also seeing increasing demand for more accessible brands such as Omega, Heuer and Breitling, as collectors discover their high quality and great value. With the growing interest in Heuer watches, we're eagerly anticipating our November sale The Crosthwaite & Gavin Collection of Heuer Chronographs.

The upcoming season follows what was a historic year for collectible watches, with many record-breaking results achieved. We were thrilled in November to sell the first wristwatch to break through the $10 million mark at auction with the legendary stainless steel Patek Philippe reference 1518 perpetual calendar chronograph. Although some might feel prices have reached their peak, we think that the market for vintage watches remains healthy and strong and that there is plenty of room for future growth.

Paul Boutros, Phillips, www.phillips.com

CRAFTSMANSHIP – DESIGN – HERITAGE

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CERTINA

HIGH ACHIEVER

INFUSED WITH RACING SPIRIT... AND PROVEN IN THE HIMALAYAS

THE SWISS WATCH BRAND CERTINA HAS been associated with many sports over the years. It has been into sailing, hockey and boxing – the company is justifiably proud of a mid-1970s picture of Muhammad Ali showing off his new Certina. But the principle sporting endeavour that Certina straps itself to is motor sport.

Following involvements with bike racing and Formula 1, Certina has been the official timekeeper for the World Rally Championship since 2013 and is also partnered with the ADAC GT Masters series. It is the GT Masters that was the inspiration for the watch pictured on this page, the DS Podium Chronograph Lap Timer – Racing Edition.

The new watch, with its chronometer-certified quartz movement and split-lap chronograph, is described by Certina as a "zero-compromise timepiece". This explains the philosophy of the brand that lives by the motto 'Reliability, Precision and Innovation'.

The company was founded in the Swiss town of Grenchen in 1888 under the name Grana, before becoming Certina in the 1930s. From the beginning it was known for innovation, getting in early on the transfer of watches from pocket to wrist, and also making a mechanical digital watch as early as 1936.

In the 1950s Certina developed its DS, or Double Security, system, for its line of shock- and water-resistant watches. Those DS watches ended up earning their stripes when they survived all the tough conditions of pressure, temperature and altitude endured on a Swiss expedition to the Himalayas.

Certina DS Podium Chronograph Lap Timer – Racing Edition is a COSC-certified chronometer with a Swiss-made Precidrive quartz movement. £575
www.certina.com

WATCH BEYOND

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TAG HEUER

AUTAVIA

One of the most talked about watch releases of the year, the Autavia is a modern interpretation of a classic watch, brought out following a poll of TAG Heuer fans to see which piece from the back catalogue they would like to see revived. The original 1966 Autavia – famously worn by the F1 champ Jochen Rindt – went on to become a collectors' favourite. The modern version has a 42mm stainless-steel case and chronograph with classic black-on-white "reverse panda" subdials. The Autavia is available on a brown leather strap (£3900) or a polished steel bracelet (£4000)

www.tagheuer.com

HUBLOT

TECHFRAME FERRARI 70 YEARS TOURBILLON CHRONOGRAPH

For Ferrari's 70th birthday, its brand partner Hublot has produced an entirely new watch. This is no rebranded special edition, but a completely fresh piece that was, the company says "designed by Ferrari, crafted by Hublot". The lattice-structured case, offering greater strength with lighter weight, was designed at Maranello under the leadership of Ferrari design chief Flavio Manzoni. Within the lightweight frame beats the heart of a brand new hand-wound movement with tourbillon and chronograph. £114,000

www.hublot.com

RICHARD MILLE

RM 50-03 F1 TOURBILLON

The F1 is the first piece to emerge from Richard Mille's partnership with McLaren. Despite being a very complicated mechanical watch, with a tourbillon and a split-second chronograph, the use of a proprietary graphene composite called Graph TPT – developed in conjunction with McLaren – the F1 weighs in at just 40g. A lightweight watch from a heavyweight watchmaker that manages to nudge the million-pound mark. £996,500

www.richardmille.com

BULGARI

OCTO FINISSIMO

It is quite a thing to behold, this latest record breaker from Bulgari. It is the slimmest self-winding watch on the market, with a case thickness of just 5.15mm, within which there is movement just 2.23mm thick. It comes after Bulgari set records for the thinnest tourbillon watch in 2014 and the thinnest minute-repeater last year. The ultra-thin movement is powered by a micro-rotor made out of platinum to give the maximum weight from the smallest size. The Octo Finissimo has a titanium case and bracelet and is waterproof to 30 metres. £11,300.

www.bulgari.com

AUDEMARS PIGUET

AUDEMARS PIGUET ROYAL OAK CHRONOGRAPH

When the first Royal Oak was introduced in 1972, it was such an audacious design that initially sales were not good. The world was just not ready for a big chunky steel sports watch from a grand-old company like Audemars Piguet. But in time the Royal Oak – with a case inspired by a diver's helmet, complete with screws – became a classic and designer Gérald Genta would later describe it as his masterpiece. Countless iterations of the watch have been produced, and among the new versions this year is a chronograph with a pink-gold case and a brown alligator-leather strap. £30,800

www.audemarspiguet.com

PATEK PHILIPPE

5960/1A-010

When you add more complications to a watch, like an annual calendar or a chronograph, you add many more moving parts to the movement. But you also decrease the amount of dial-space available for the various functions to be displayed. With some watchmakers this can lead to clutter. But Patek Philippe did not get where it is today by allowing its watches to suffer from anything so vulgar as clutter. The ingenious use of space on this 5960 sees the chronograph 12-hour and 60-minute counters displayed below the centre of the dial, leaving plenty of space for the annual calendar above. A clever design, beautifully executed. £37,040

www.patek.com

CARTIER

ROTONDE DE CARTIER MINUTE REPEATER MYSTERIOUS DOUBLE TOURBILLON

The Mysterious Double Tourbillon is a patented Cartier invention introduced in 2013. It consists of a tourbillon that "floats" on a one-minute rotation within a sapphire disk which itself rotates once every five minutes. As if that isn't enough complication, this watch also contains the highest of high complications – a minute-repeater, which on-demand sounds out the time with a series of tiny but perfectly tuned gongs. This has a hand-wound movement and a 45mm titanium case. £POA

www.cartier.com

BREITLING

SUPEROCEAN HERITAGE II

The Superocean diving watch was first launched in 1957 and went on to become one of Breitling's most successful lines. For the watch's 60th birthday, Breitling has unveiled a new range of Superoceans which all come with a new ultra-hard steel bezel. The new automatic-winding watches come in a range of colours, with steel cases that are either 42mm or 46mm in diameter, £3990.

www.breitling.com

JAEGER-LECOULTRE

MASTER CONTROL CHRONOGRAPH

Recent pieces from Jaeger-LeCoultre's classically styled Master collection have been some of the most understatedly beautiful watches released in recent years. The Master line was the first watch, when first released 25 years ago, to benefit from Jaeger-LeCoultre's "1000 Hours Control" – a radical series of testing over a six-week period. This extreme quality control was subsequently extended to all Jaeger-LeCoultre watches. The Master Control Chronograph has a 40mm steel case and an in-house, automatic movement. £6,700

www.jaeger-lecoultre.com

CHRISTOPHER WARD

C1 MORGAN 3 WHEELER CHRONOMETER

Last year the British brand Christopher Ward announced a partnership with Morgan, and now produces three watches, each taking inspiration from either the Morgan Classic, the Aero or the 3 Wheeler. Each watch is powered by a hand-wound, Swiss-made movement that is certified to chronometer standard. The collection was designed by Christopher Ward's Adrian Buchmann in collaboration with Morgan chief designer Jonathan Wells, £2250

www.christopherward.co.uk

FARER

AUTOMATIC GMT

The young British brand Farer has earned widespread praise since launching its first range of automatic watches last year. New for this year is Farer's first GMT watch, which comes with an additional time zone. Designed in the UK, the watch is fitted with a Swiss automatic movement housed in a 39.5mm stainless steel case and visible through the exhibition caseback, £1175

www.farer.com

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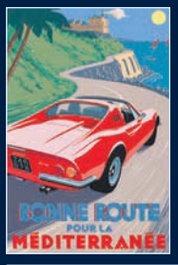

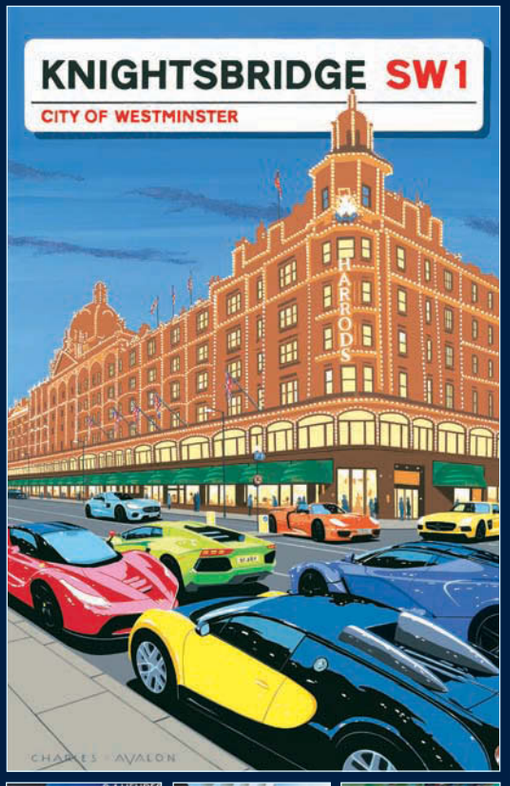

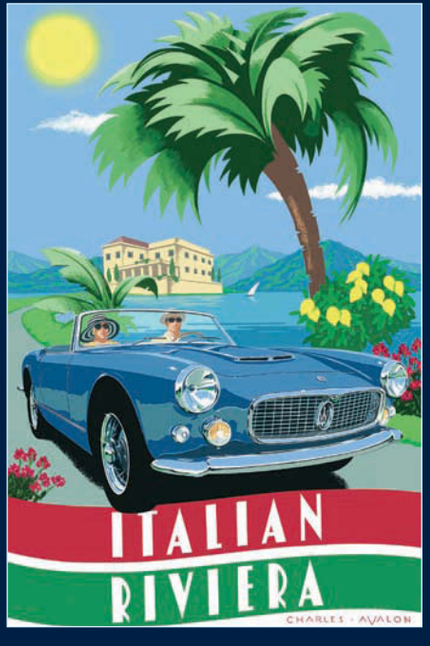

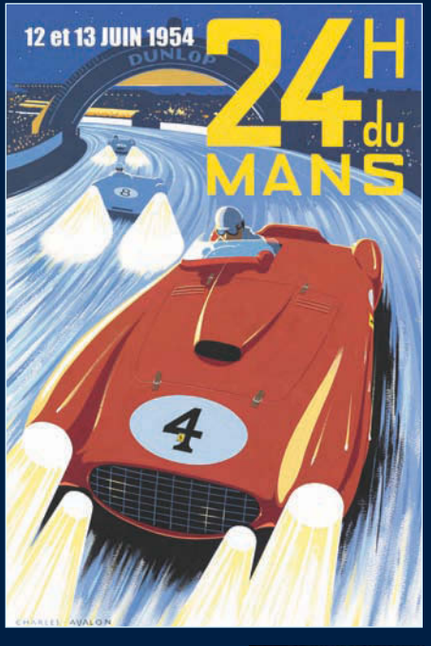

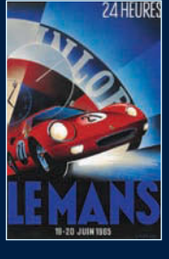

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MEISTERSINGER
NEOPLUS

This German brand MeisterSinger is best known as the maker of handsome, one-handed watches. Telling time by hour-hand alone is a nod back to the days when early clocks – and before that sundials – made do without a minute hand. And with the MeisterSinger's clear dial and five-minute markings, you can tell the time accurately enough. But the idea is that, by choosing a watch like this, you are taking a more relaxed approach to time and worrying less about the passing minutes. The NeoPlus is powered by an automatic Swiss movement, £1195
www.meistersinger.com

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www.deakinandfrancis.co.uk

ZENITH
CHRONOMASTER HERITAGE 146 CHRONOGRAPH

This new chronograph is a reinterpretation of a vintage Zenith design. The open caseback shows a beautiful modern development of Zenith's El Primero movement, the pioneering self-winding chronograph that cemented the company's relationship in 1969. It has a 38mm stainless-steel case and the sunray-patterned dial has a central chronograph hand with a 30-minute counter at 3 o'clock, £5,500.
www.zenith-watches.com

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A fantasy drive in

FORD'S FERRARI BEATER

Racing a GT40 is the stuff of boyhood dreams for many; putting it on pole at Spa with a Formula 1 star as co-driver is something else completely

writer DICKIE MEADEN | **photographer** JAYSON FONG


CIRCUIT DE SPA
FRANCORCHAMPS
CIRCUIT DE SPA
FRANCORCHAMPS
pepsi MAX

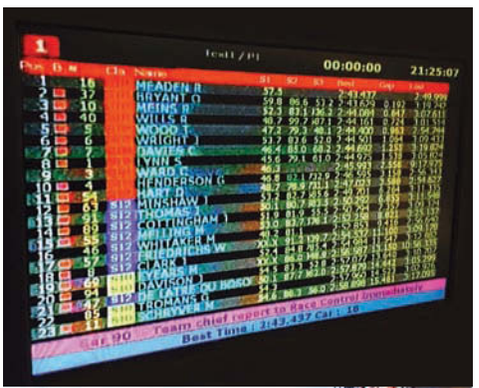
Where's Barilla? Berger and Meaden pose with their GT40. Right, Meaden tops the times and, below, much ado about Gerhard

It's one of those moments that happens in a flash, but plays out before you in agonising slow motion. I'm accelerating hard out of Stavelot on the run towards Blanchimont on my first stab at a qualifying lap for the Spa Six Hours. With well over a hundred cars entered traffic is always an problem, but I've managed to hustle my way round two thirds of the lap without any major losses of momentum. Now, almost within sight of the lap's end, the gap I've committed to at more than 130mph is closing fast. Too fast. So this is what it's like to race a GT40...

The story of this particular GT40 begins not in the sixties, but in 1982 with renowned GT40 expert Bryan Wingfield. Armed with a cache of original parts from the 1965 build programme, Wingfield set about assembling a completely authentic recreation for Richard Eyre to take historic racing, but it soon became clear that a period-correct GT40 wouldn't be competitive under the somewhat relaxed historic racing regulations of the day. Instead the car was road registered, using the chassis number GT40 P/1000W and given an age-related registration – NWC 165C – by the DVLA in Swansea.

If you're a student of GT40 history you'll know GT40 P/1000 is the identity of the ill-fated Comstock Racing GT40, which was destroyed in an accident that tragically claimed the life of its driver, Bob McLean, during the 1966 Sebring 12 Hours. It's one of the more grisly episodes in GT40 racing history, but there was logic to Wingfield's choice of chassis number, despite the fact it contained no parts from the original: with the fate of the first car so well documented there could be no ambiguity over the identity of his 'new' car. Just to make sure, Wingfield added a 'W' to the end of the chassis number.

P/1000W then passed through a number of hands in the UK and Europe before Wingfield bought the car back in late 1996, again with the intention of preparing it for racing. However, projects for other GT40-owning clients meant he was never able to dedicate time to completing his own car, which led to the present owners acquiring the car from him in 2011. In early 2015 they consigned it to celebrated GT40 preparer, Paul Lanzante, for a nut-and-bolt restoration with the intention of racing it in the 2016 Spa Six Hours.



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I ENTER THE STORY MIDWAY THROUGH the restoration process, when the owner offers me a seat in the car for the Spa Six Hours. I distinctly recall the mix of excitement and trepidation on receiving the invitation, as I knew from first-hand experience just how intense the Six Hours is. I also knew how quick and scary the GT40s looked as they scythed through slower traffic. Of course I said 'yes' in a heartbeat, but privately I wondered if I'd bitten off a little more than I could chew.

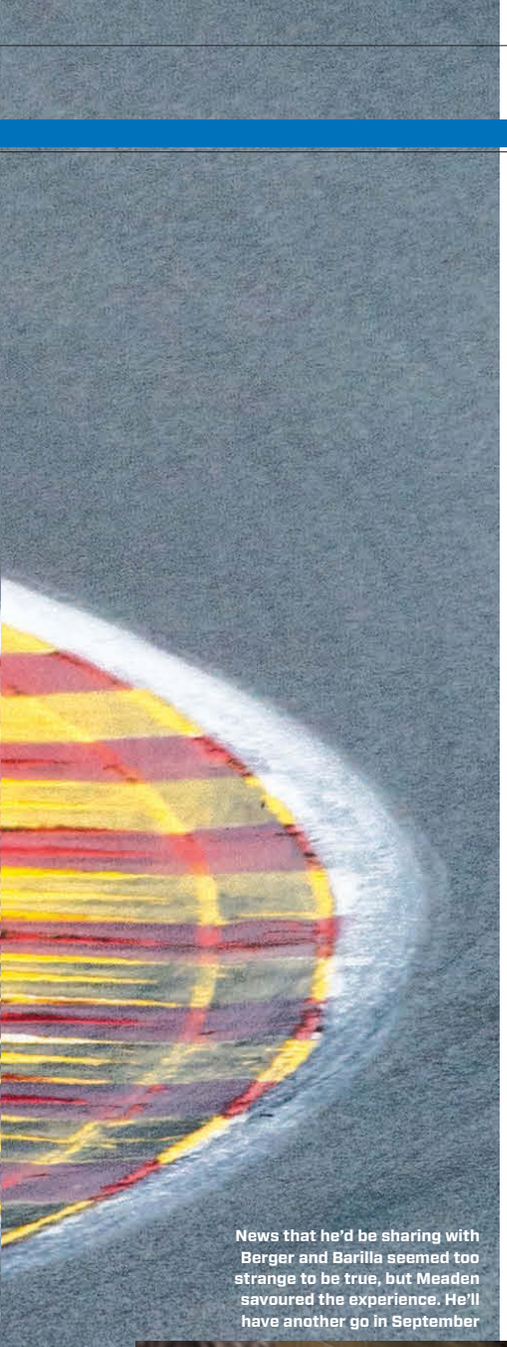
As P/1000W gets closer to being ready for its first shakedown, the project takes a surreal twist when Lanzante announces he's got another driver sorted: an Austrian mate of his by the name of Gerhard Berger. You may have heard of him. When Berger subsequently enlists his buddy – former Minardi F1 driver and 1985 Le Mans winner Paolo Barilla – as the third driver, I begin to wonder whether the whole thing is an elaborate practical joke at my expense.

Like you I've read endlessly about the GT40. How it was conceived to beat Enzo Ferrari's red cars at Le Mans after he snubbed Ford's buy-out. How it was designed by Lola founder, Eric Broadley. How it stood just 40 inches high. How after some humiliating failures it ultimately succeeded to become one of the all-time greats of endurance racing. Icon is an over-used word, but if any racing car deserves the accolade it's the GT40.

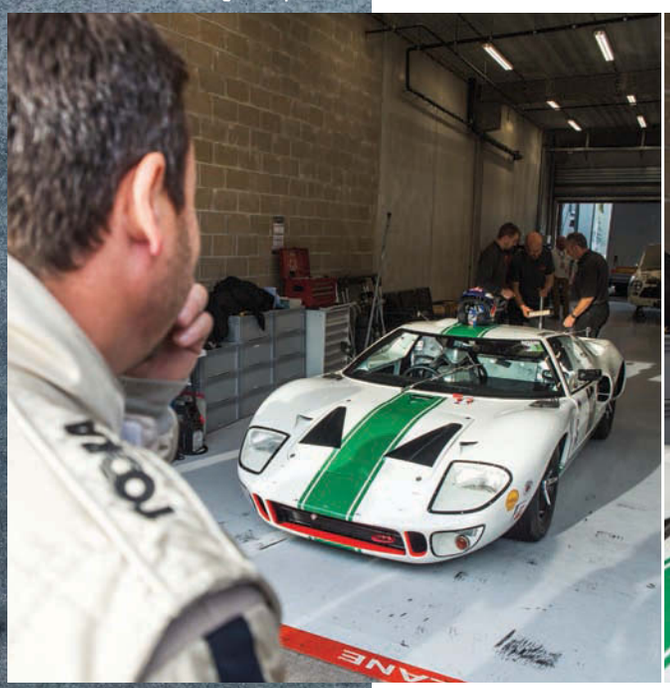
During the last few months of the restoration I sit in the part-built car a few times to get the seat and steering wheel positions right. I then drive it in a couple of shakedown tests at Goodwood and Blyton, but the first time I see the finished car in the garage at Spa is spine-tingling. It looks fabulous in its Comstock Racing colours, and when Lanzante's boys tilt the engine cover back before firing up the unsilenced 4.7-litre (or 289cu in dollars and cents) V8 to get some heat into its bones, the noise it makes is every bit as special. My mouth still goes dry at the thought of it.

Everything about the GT40 is an event. Just walking up to it is a reminder of its snake's belly stature. Then you pull on the latch and swing open the door and half the roof comes with it! To get in you shimmy your way between the door top and B-pillar before stepping onto the seat and lowering yourself in until your feet find the pedals. You can't help

"THE MIRROR GIVES A SENSE OF WHAT'S BEHIND, BUT WHAT'S BEHIND YOU IN A GT40 TENDS TO STAY BEHIND YOU. UNLESS IT'S ANOTHER GT40"



News that he'd be sharing with Berger and Barilla seemed too strange to be true, but Meaden savoured the experience. He'll have another go in September



but duck as the scythe-like door closes above your head, but still it clatters across the shell of your crash helmet. And this with a bubble in the door top to try and give Gerhard some extra headroom. It could have done with being a GT45.

You feel a bit hunched and claustrophobic, but once you're in and settled with the harness pulled down tight it's surprisingly comfortable. There's plenty of elbow room with space to work the wheel and the right-hand gearshift sits atop the sill, like a proper racing car. It's a synchro five-speed 'box with a dog-leg first, so the shift is surprisingly sweet, though the one thing everyone tells you about GT40s is how weak the gearboxes are.

The cockpit is fantastic and highly distinctive, thanks mainly to that extensive array of switches and dials stretching across the width of the dash. The view is panoramic and hugely evocative, the tops of the wheel arches rising like cheekbones on a beautiful face. The rear-view mirror gives you a reasonable sense of what's behind – largely that snorting Ford V8 – but what's behind you in a GT40 tends to stay behind you. Unless it's another GT40.

The Spa Six Hours is open to pre-66 cars, which means only early GT40 Mk1s are eligible (ours qualifies through using original parts). They have to run narrow rear wheels (hence the slightly undernourished stance) shod with treaded historic rubber, just like other cars on the grid. Because of the GT40's achievements and the fact it was a purpose-designed racer, I'd always expected the driving experience to be aggressive and physical, just like its looks and soundtrack. I'd overlooked the fact the GT40 was also a road car, albeit a wild one, so even in race trim it's supple, delicate and straightforward to drive. Suprisingly modern, actually.

❖

DRIVING ANYTHING AT SPA IS SPECIAL, but the GT40 feels born to the task. Wide and smooth with fast, flowing corners, this majestic circuit lets the Ford hit its stride. When it comes to engine set-up for GT40s, Lanzante is a firm believer in torque over peak power. It's a wise approach, for not only is it torque that punches you out of the corners, but an engine that delivers generous low- and mid-range shove fosters a more relaxed driving style – something underlined by the modest 6500rpm rev limiter.

The motor feels fabulous. Ultra-crisp thottle response with real slug of torque, there are no hiccoughs or holes in its delivery. It spins freely too, so it's easy to butt into the limiter if you're not quick enough with the upshifts. At first you keep one eye on the tacho, but eventually you dial your ears into the tone of the motor as it gets to 6000rpm, which gives you time to snick up into the next gear. The shift itself is light and smooth and makes a satisfying noise akin to a guillotine slicing through thick sheets of paper. The downside? It's all too easy to rush, and if you snap the lever through the gate a bit too keenly it beats the synchro and catches with a short, sharp graunch. Better to calm yourself down and drive with a bit of mechanical sympathy, as you would a fast road car.

Calmness and smoothness are also key to the steering, as grip is ultimately in short supply. You soon learn to float the GT40 into, through and out of corners with positive but measured inputs that don't immediately over-work the tyres. Apart from the Bus Stop and La Source, the GT40 never requires more than half a turn of steering (which is perfectly weighted), though you also learn that once you've got the nose turned in this could just as easily be of the opposite lock variety, even through the quick stuff such as Pouhon and even Blanchimont.

That sounds scary, and doubtless is in the rain, but in dry conditions the GT40 is communicative and progressive, so you're always ready to settle the tail with steering and throttle. It's a delicious feeling when you've got the car in the palms of your hands, nicely balanced and driving through the corner with no more than a quarter turn of opposite lock and steadily pouring on the power. It's handsome reward for a patient approach.

Like most cars of the period, these early GT40s are rather keener on going than they are on stopping. On the Kemmel Straight it pulls the best part of 160mph before Les Combes, so braking is another exercise in judgment and self-control. Especially if the car's fat with fuel.

You can go out and hammer them for a few laps and they'll take it without too much complaint, but then the heat builds up and they rapidly begin to wilt. Better to be gentle – not quite employing the lift-and-coast techniques used by today's LMP1 drivers to save fuel – but squeezing into the pedal rather than stamping

on it, then allowing the car to roll nicely into the corner.

This technique also has the advantage of giving yourself more time for downshifts. Seasoned GT40 hands told me if you use too much engine braking you'll risk stressing the gearbox. One said if you feel the rear wheels begin to lock even for a moment, you can pretty much guarantee the 'box will fail a few laps later. Best not fall into the trap of over-driving, but that's easier said than done, especially when you're about to head out into the maelstrom of qualifying. Which brings us neatly back to that 130mph needle-threading incident...

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I'M CLOSING FAST ON A SHELBY Mustang, which as bad luck would have it is catching another car – a slow white something-or-other I can't identify. I was a terrible maths student, but weirdly if you stick me in a racing car I'm pretty good at calculating tangent vectors. From where I'm sitting, so long as everyone sticks to their line there'll be plenty of room for all of us and, crucially, no need to lift.

The Shelby Mustang keeps its side of the bargain and remains steadfastly to the right. The white thing appears to be staying left but, for no apparent reason and at point-blank range, then veers directly into my path. In more of a flinch than a steering input I jink right, wincing as I do so in full expectation of loud, expensive and potentially painful contact. I don't think I shut my eyes, but I definitely breathed in as though it would somehow suck in the flanks of the GT40. It must have done something, for by some miracle the inevitable collision never happens.

The hair-raising incident lasts less than a second, but its enough time to feel a flood of unbridled relief and then get straight back on it. The remainder of the lap doesn't seem that dramatic, even slithering by a Ferrari 250 SWB through Blanchimont and almost outbraking myself into the Bus Stop. Still it's a relief to get across the line and a time in the bag.

I pit on the very next lap. To my immense surprise Paul swings the big door open and tells me we're on provisional pole. I climb out and head into the garage for a good-to-be-alive chocolate bar and a nerve-settling mug of tea. I'm pleased with the lap, but absolutely convinced it will be beaten.

For a while I studiously avoid the timing screens, but as the session progresses the time stays top. Gerhard heads out for a run and is on for a time that could improve, but then he drops it into the Bus Stop and loses a second. I go out again, but it's getting dark and there is clearly some oil down. It makes no sense to hammer the car, so Paolo does his mandatory three laps to qualify then we park it and wait. As the session ends #16 remains at the top of the screen. We're on pole for the Spa Six Hours!

I'm driving a few other cars during the weekend, so I have some welcome distractions. In fact it's not until we're stood on the grid next to the GT40 that the scale of what we've achieved – and what's still left to do – hits me.

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THERE'S A SCRUM OF PHOTOGRAPHERS swarming around the car, or rather around Gerhard, who's already strapped in. Elsewhere an apparently endless throng of drivers and team personnel stretches back up the hill as far as I can see. Up until now it's just felt like a bit of an adventure. Now, with the GT40 plonked firmly on pole, a bone fide F1 legend doing the first stint, 10 GT40s hoping to beat us and a further 96 cars snaking back up the hill and all the way back to the Bus Stop, it suddenly feels a bit bloody serious.

A siren slices through the hubbub. It's a signal for everyone to clear the grid. We all file down the hill towards a break in the endurance pit lane wall. The place is mobbed but I'm lost in my thoughts. To be honest I wish I was starting, for although I'd be nervous as hell, at least the release would come in the next few minutes. As it stands I've got two hours to sit and stew before I can take over from Gerhard.

The start is a tumult of noise and colour. The pack of 11 unsilenced GT40s sounds ferocious, howling and barking as they hammer down the hill towards Eau Rouge and Raidillon. Unsurprisingly Gerhard has the bit between his teeth and has managed to get the jump on the other GT40s. We know it doesn't mean much to be leading with just under six hours remaining, but much like the first few laps of the Le Mans 24 Hours, there's something uniquely intense about watching the first few laps of a long race. More so if it's a race you'll be joining in a matter of hours and your car happens to be leading.

In the raw excitement of those opening laps I manage to forget myself and the slightly nauseous fizz in the pit of my stomach abates. But only until I get back to our pit garage, at which point the long, uncomfortable wait continues. I sip some water while eyeing the beer fridge; the contents of which I fully intend to enjoy in the last few hours of the race as Paulo (hopefully) brings the GT40 home.

And then, just 53 minutes into the race I catch a garbled commentary sound bite: Gerhard's off at Les Combes. For an agonising few moments we don't know any details. Then we see some images of the car up against the barriers, white nose smeared with orange paint from the tyre wall, right-hand headlight cover shattered and right-hand front wheel toppled into the arch. We don't know the cause, but suspect front suspension failure. What we do know is we're out of the race.

We also know Gerhard's out of the car and fine, which is absolutely the main thing. But once that crucial fact is established you're left with nothing but emptiness where once you were filled with energy, focus and flashes of hope for what we might achieve. Paul Lanzante – a man of many words, most of them unfit for publication – sums the situation up in typically spicy fashion. I make myself useful by procuring us consolatory beers.

When the low-loader arrives with Gerhard in the front and the GT40 on the back, it's clear the right-front suspension was indeed the cause of our retirement. If it had to fail I'm glad it did so at Les Combes and not Blanchimont or the top of Eau Rouge. Gerhard – possibly the only man to rival Lanzante's extensive lexicon of profanities – gives his own pithy assessment, but looks surprisingly sanguine. That's racing.

While we retreat to the pit garage to drink more beer the Six Hours battle rages on. It's hard to stay excited about a race you're no longer in, but the visceral drama of seeing and hearing wrung-out GT40s, E-types, Cobras, Mustangs and all manner of other competitive Sixties metal pounding around in pursuit of one another is impossible to ignore. I don't think there's a more spectacular race in all of historic motorsport.

None tougher, either.

Even for old cars prepared to the highest modern standards. With less than two hours gone two more GT40s retire, with others encountering issues that drop them out of winning contention. Still such is their pace compared to the rest of the field that the six surviving GT40s finish resolutely in the top 10, with a trio of the famously low-slung Fords locking-out the podium.

The race might have been bitter-sweet, but driving a GT40 at Spa is an experience I'll never forget. I'm thrilled to add it's an experience I'll get to repeat this September, as P/1000W is set to return for another crack at the Six Hours.

This time I'm hoping the beers can wait.

All good things come to an end. Pre-race hopes were wiped out by front suspension failure that pitched Berger into the tyre wall – as evidenced by scuffs

FORD'S FORGOTTEN FLYER

How a little-known enthusiast engineered an unlikely return to GT racing for a disinterested blue oval

writer JACK PHILLIPS

THERE'S AN OFTEN-overlooked footnote in Ford's supposed 50-year absence from Le Mans, one that came out of Switzerland and is tinged with tragedy. The story starts in 2005 when the Ford GT40 was reimagined as the 'GT', having been revealed in concept form three years earlier to celebrate the marque's centenary. Three inches taller than the original, Ford resisted the GT43 moniker and again took aim at Ferrari: "Little kids – and big ones – dream about Ferraris, not 360 Modenas," said Ford's then-president Steve Lyons. "We want people to dream about the Ford GT and put the emphasis on the Ford brand."

The new car brought with it a fresh focus on Ford's GT40 and Le Mans heritage, but no race car was forthcoming from Motor City – despite the obvious marketing benefits of such a programme. As far as Ford was concerned, the GT would be a road car only.

Step forward Martin Bartek, a Swiss businessman and racing enthusiast, who took it upon himself to develop racing versions of the car. To do that he formed Matech Concepts and started first developing a GT3 GT before moving on to a GT1.

"Ford wasn't involved at all," says Bas Leinders, who with Marc VDS Racing was Bartek's first customer and shared a degree of the development work. "He [Bartek] tried to push Ford to get involved but they weren't interested in promoting the GT, it was all about the Mustang at that point for them. That was a sore point for Martin. He invested a lot of money in it and it wasn't easy to generate more. He probably wasn't getting enough from the sponsors and he ran into money troubles."

Despite the lack of funds, the project had its successes. The GT3 version won its class in the 2009 Spa 24 Hours. Finishing runner-up a year later, the GT bowed out with pole in 2011 but couldn't convert that into victory. It was certifiably the best GT3 car in the world in 2008, when Matech secured the FIA GT3 Championship for teams.

The GT1 came close to doing the unthinkable in 2010 by winning its class at Le Mans. Matech led for the first nine hours, running 1-2 with VDS in the opening stages until Leinders crashed heavily out of second place. The team had two laps in hand at one point, but engine failure put paid to what could have been victory and another place in the history books: the final GT1 class win at Le Mans. The Ford GT can also lay some claim in helping revive the career of Formula 1's most highly rated: Romain Grosjean. The Frenchman stepped back into sports cars to re-establish his career after a difficult seven races for Renault F1. He made history, too, winning the first-ever FIA GT1 World Championship round at Abu Dhabi in 2010 alongside Thomas Mutsch.

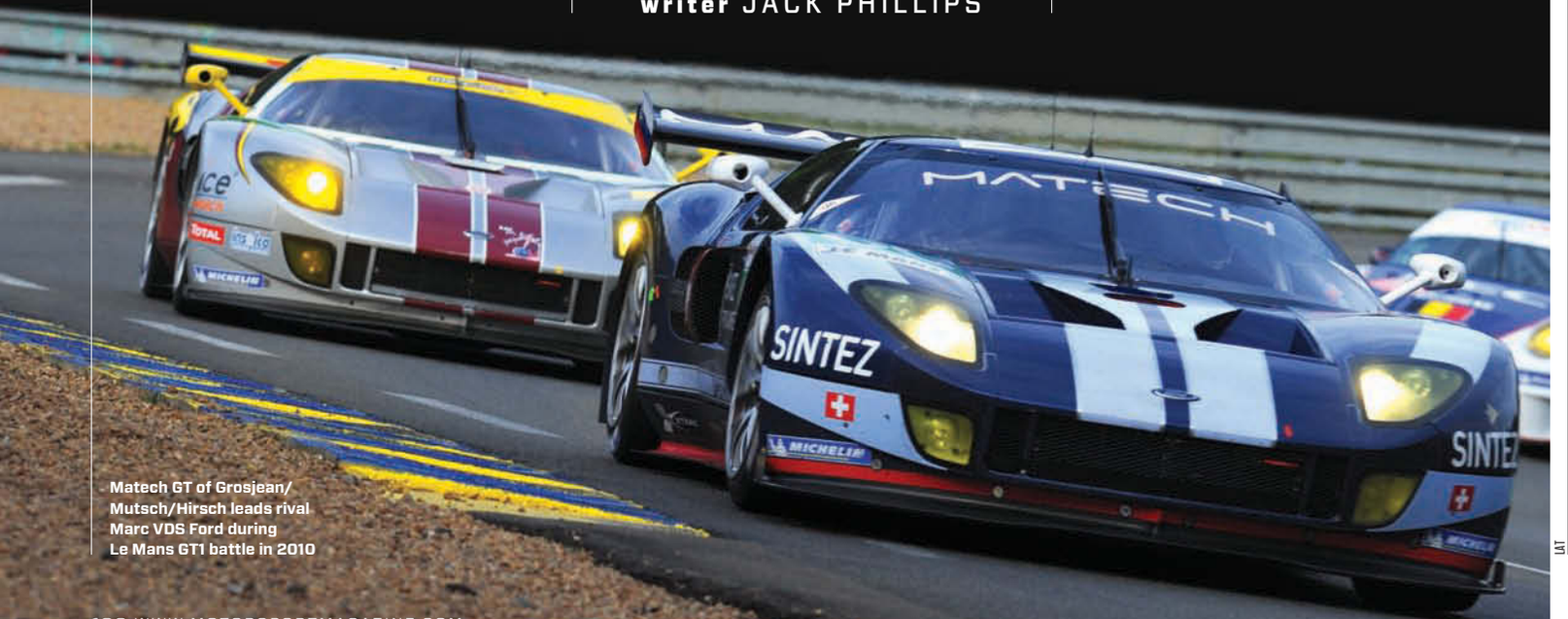
"Romain drove for Matech," Leinders says, "Maxime Martin, Fred Makowiecki and Richard Westbrook were among those that drove for us at VDS. So there were some really good drivers, it was very ambitious and the results were there. With a little more backing it could have been even better."

Despite the reputation that comes with American muscle car racers, being behind the wheel was rewarding. "It was a really nice car to drive," Leinders says. " It wasn't the easiest and some of the drivers struggled. We had some good results that first year, although we from time to time were a little unlucky with reliability problems. In general, it was actually quite good.

"The car warranted Ford's involvement," adds Leinders. "The later GT1 was a big, big progression. It had carbon brakes, bigger tyres, the suspension was a bit harder and it had good aero."

Sadly its true potential was never to be seen: Bartek died in 2011 aged just 44, bringing a sad end to a the project that had come so close to succeeding against the odds. "He got into racing for fun and step by step became a constructor," says Leinders. "Maybe he underestimated it, the impact of the money and the effort that it needed.

"Maybe if we had won then Ford would have got involved. But there are so many 'what ifs' in racing."



Matech GT of Grosjean/ Mutsch/Hirsch leads rival Marc VDS Ford during Le Mans GT1 battle in 2010

LAT

DK Engineering

Ferrari 575 GTC Evoluzione

In 2003 Ferrari commissioned the 575 GTC programme and with it the first (and last) Ferrari sanctioned V12 GT Competition car since the "Daytona Competizione" was born. Just 12 factory supplied 575 GTCs were built. The cars were built to FIA GT1 Specifications and enjoyed success across Europe including at Le Mans. This example is one of just four cars upgraded to full and superior "Evo" Specification in period. First run in late 2004 at the official FIA GT Championship test at Spa (driven by Salo and Babini) it was the fastest car present. It then raced successfully in the 2005 Italian GT championship and a selection of International FIA GT rounds. Red Book Classiche Certified and presented in its 2005 Bahrain livery; a rare piece of Ferrari Motorsport history that in the recent wake of GT1 appreciation presents an exciting opportunity. **Eligible to be raced in the exciting new Masters "Le Mans Legends" series, the Endurance Legends & the Peter Auto GT1 events. £POA**

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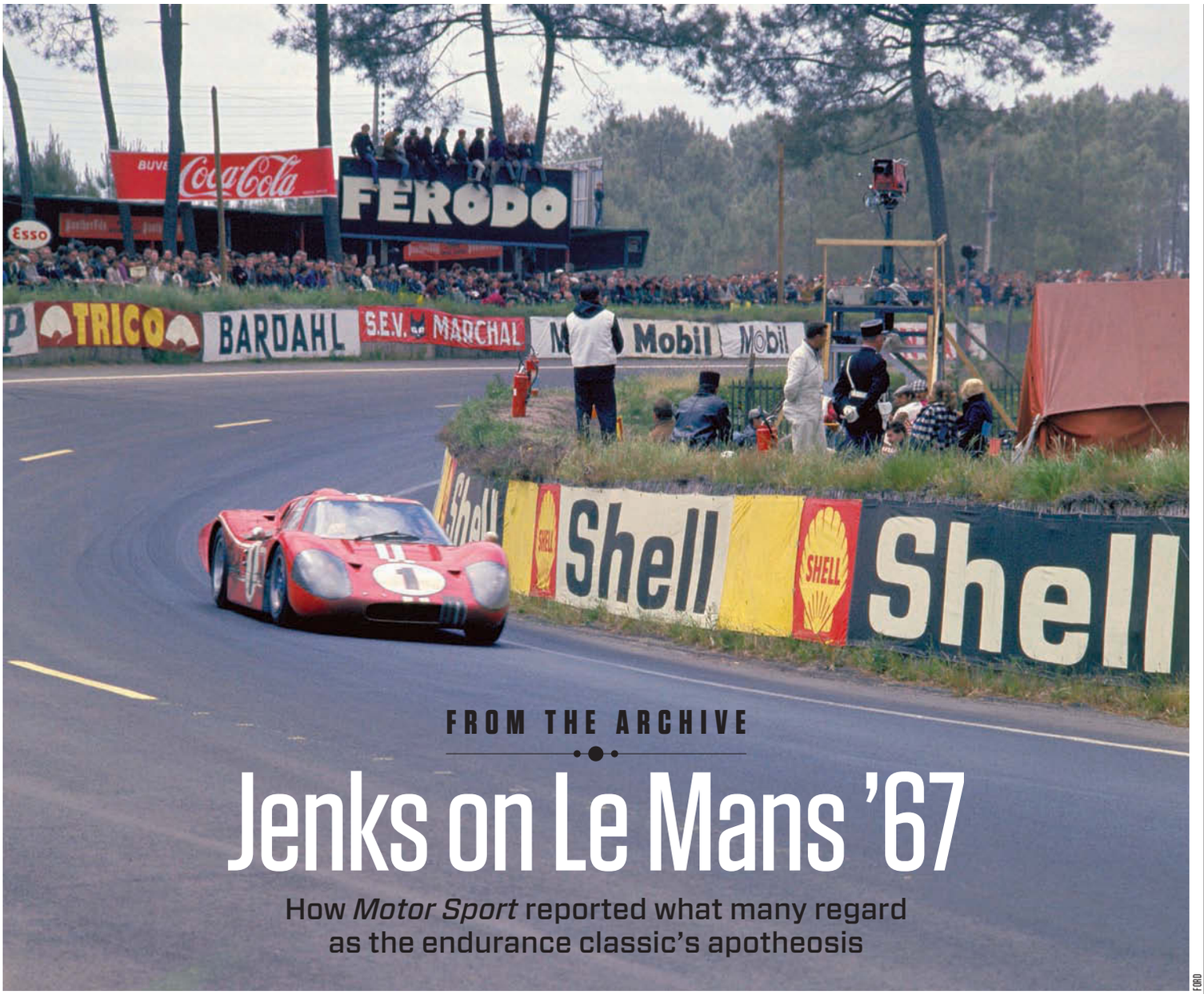


FROM THE ARCHIVE

Jenks on Le Mans '67

How *Motor Sport* reported what many regard as the endurance classic's apotheosis

AFTER THE USUAL PROBLEMS ARISING FROM SCRUTINEERING, such as insufficient rear vision in the mirrors on the Fords, too much petrol in the tanks of the Lolas, bodywork too narrow about the wheels on the Mirage, windscreen too shallow on the Marcos, all the competitors tackled practice on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, lap times deciding the order of lining up for the classic start. Phil Hill set the ball rolling in a big way with the Chaparral on both evenings, recording 3min 27.4sec on the first night and 3min 24.7sec on the second with no bother at all. It was not until after dark on Thursday that McLaren beat the Chaparral with 3min 24.4sec – 147mph average (in the dark). The other Fords could not match this and the Ferraris were a long way away. Practice was not without trouble as the Mark IV Fords were suffering broken windscreens and there was a lot of high pressure panic between Corning Glass in Detroit and Le Mans. Ferrari had a lot of work to do when a slow car moved out in front of Klass and he crashed number 19 330 P4, but it was all repaired in time for the race. Conditions were very good when 54 cars lined up for the start, the 55th being ruled out at the last moment as it was found that it had not done sufficient laps to qualify, this being a GTB Ferrari in the GT class.

4pm Although Rodríguez is first to move, Bucknum shot off into the lead in a Mark II Ford. Gardner pursued him until he lost a balance weight and stopped for a wheel change, leaving Gurney and McLaren in pursuit. Hulme has been delayed at the pits with a sticking throttle. Surtees retires the Lola-Aston Martin after three laps!

5pm Bucknum still leads. Spence has carved his way through from 13th to fourth in the Chaparral. The first Ferrari was sixth and then the Fords needed fuel, which let the Chaparral into the lead. Bianchi had collected a stone through the windscreen of his Ford and the leaders were lapping at well under 3min 30sec. Salmon's GT40 caught fire after refuelling,

when braking for Mulsanne. Bucknum had a water joint split, stopped for welding. Gurney leads. Hulme has lap record at 3min 23.6sec but was to go even faster. Bucknum had to creep round without water, after repair job. Hawkins takes over. Hulme lost time in the pits after an excursion into the sand.

6pm Both Mirages have been in the pits with engine trouble. The Fords are running for little over an hour on a tankful. The Gurney/Foyt Ford leads from the Hill/Spence Chaparral, Bianchi/Andretti and McLaren/Donohue, then three P4 Ferraris.

7pm I go to Mulsanne corner. Foyt is in the leading car and cornering well. Rindt and Siffert in the 907 Porsches look as if they are in a GP and are having fun. Hope Hanstein cannot see this. The leaders are still lapping at 3min 30sec and the Chaparral is pressing hard. The second Matra is out of the running as Jaussaud did not close the door properly at the start. It bent in the wind and will not stay shut.

8pm The Andretti Ford is second and pressing the leader. This is a Holman versus Shelby match and the pace is very fast. The Ruby/Hulme Ford is having trouble stopping and twice goes up escape road. Muller goes by in the P3/P4 with smoke pouring from engine. He does not return.

9pm The Fords are really racing among themselves and are leaving everyone behind.

10pm The Andretti Ford has been delayed by gearchange troubles, which drops it behind the Ferraris. In the pits everyone is groping in the dark or trying to see by 25 Watt bulbs! Amon tries to limp to pits on a flat tyre and it cuts fuel lines and sets car alight. Amon is OK.

11pm Due to pit stops Parkes/Scarfiotti Ferrari is briefly second. The second Chaparral is out with starter and battery trouble. The first has lost control of its 'wing' – it is staying in the braking position, losing 12-15mph off top speed. Race average is just under 140mph. Ruby has Ford in sand for good.

12pm A fine clear night but awfully cold. Gurney/Foyt lead by just on a lap from McLaren/Donohue, with Parkes/Scarfiotti just half a lap ahead of Andretti/Bianchi. Ford, Ford, Ferrari, Ford. The leading Porsche is now 10th; Rindt blew his engine up.

1am What a lot of important people have gone to bed! I always think about it but never do as there is too much going on. Gurney/Foyt now have a healthy lead, but McLaren/Donohue, Andretti/Bianchi and Parkes/Scarfiotti are all on same lap and not far apart.

2am There is no mist but it is cold. The race seems to have settled down, if you can call an average of 137mph in the dark 'settled'. Now is the time to get some sleep, but something exciting is sure to happen. The NART Ferrari P3/P4 has gone out, covered in oil from the breathers, piston rings probably. The Bucknum/Hawkins Ford is having clutch slip.

3am All seems well, so now for a five-minute sleep in the Ferodo pit. Oh no! Yellow danger lights are flashing. Schlesser walks by explaining how there was nothing to do but to ram the bank with the Ford France Mark IV. Seems Andretti had a brake lock going into the Esses and crashed into the bank. McCluskey tried to avoid him and crashed into the opposite bank. Schlesser avoided both but crashed No 6. Fords all over the place. Everyone else tip-toes through the wreckage. No one hurt. McLaren in trouble at pits with clutch.

4am Gurney/Foyt are five laps ahead. Parkes/Scarfiotti second, the Chaparral third in spite of its fixed air brake. Dawn is breaking, and it's still cold, but dry. Seem to be only 37 cars left running. The McLaren/Donohue Ford is having more clutch adjustment taken up.

5am Fried eggs and coffee made me feel

FORD

"THE BIG RED FORD SOUNDS STRONG AND FOYT AND GURNEY HAVE MADE NO MISTAKES"

better. Go to pits. Spence arrives in Chaparral with smoke pouring from everywhere and a foul smell. Jim Hall and mechanic get underneath, oil is running out of transmission. A seal has broken. They start work but it means dismantling the whole of the back of the car and removing the gearbox and torque converter. Only two mechanics allowed to do the job. Hall reckons two hours at least. Ronnie Hoare's P3/P4 expires in a cloud of oil smoke, piston rings, like the other P3 Ferraris. The P4s are still running well.

6am The leading Ford is still five laps ahead. There is a Porsche up to sixth place now. The Chaparral is spread all over the pit area. Hope they remember where all the bits and pieces go.

7am The crowds are enormous. It is a fine day, but the cold wind is still blowing. Ford may be leading, but there are three healthy sounding Ferraris following and the remaining Fords are sick. Only nine hours of racing to run and the average is still around 137mph.

8am The little Austin Healey driven by Baker, which has been running regularly after some drama with its electrics, has a little accident and crumples its tail. It can still go on racing. Coffee with Goodyear this time.

9am After nearly three hours the Chaparral is back in the race, to great applause. It immediately laps at 3min 33sec and seems like new. There are 20 cars still running.

10am The leading Ford is easing off slightly and holding the pace of the Ferraris, who are virtually flat out. McLaren has the tail fly off his Ford and stops next time round to pick up the wreckage. The leading Ford has its joints taped up as a precaution at next fuel stop. The Chaparral retires. The transmission has broken, and after all that work. Ford mechanics are doing a marvellous repair job on the McLaren car, using leather belts and yards of masking tape to stick all the bits together. Klass walks in. His Ferrari's injection pump drive has sheared.

11am There are only 16 cars running now. The Mk II of Hawkins/Bucknum has broken its engine. This is the worst time at Le Mans. Those people who have been to bed all night are just too cheerful.

12am The big red Ford sounds strong and Foyt and Gurney have made no mistakes. Even if the Ferraris could push harder the Ford could easily match their speed. Porsches are now fifth, sixth and seventh – one of these days they are going to win at Le Mans.

1pm It is now just a question of survival. Usually by this time the leading cars are cruising, but this lot are still hammering on at 3min 40 sec-3 min45sec. All speed and distance records are being broken in a big way.

2pm There are now merely routine stops for fuel and driver changes, but Scarfiotti is feeling sick so Parkes goes on and on in the second-place Ferrari. The McLaren/Donohue Ford looks odd with its patchwork quilt bodywork.

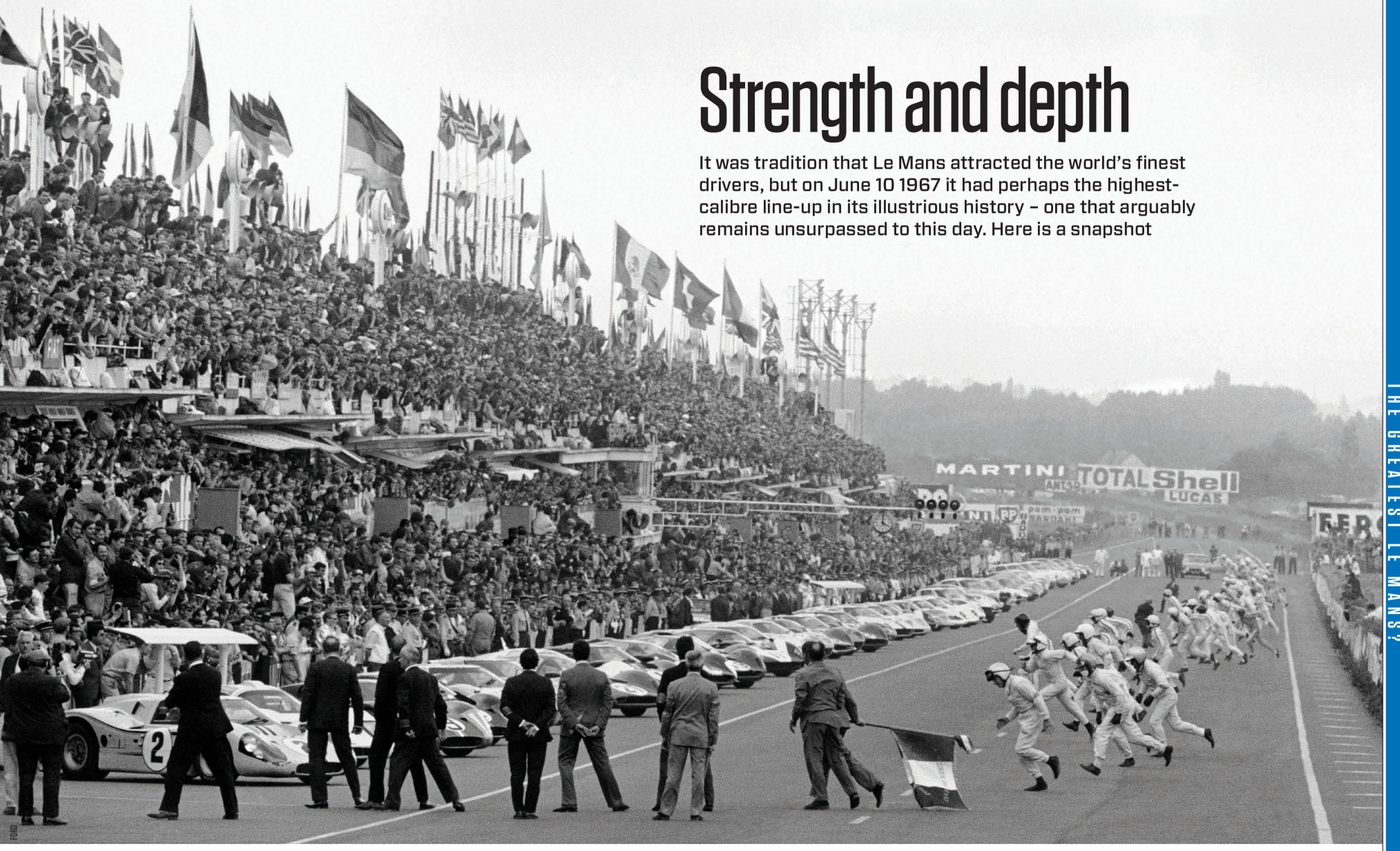
3pm The red Ford rumbles relentlessly on, with the two Ferraris screaming defiance. A group of Alpine-Renaults is as impressive as the Porsches for speed with reliability, and the battered Austin Healey is still running.

4pm Gurney and Foyt give Mr Ford a 100 per cent American victory at record speed. Ferraris finished second and third sounding as healthy as ever, but just did not have the speed to challenge the Fords. For the French crowd it was not a popular win – they made it clear that they would like to have seen a Ferrari victory.

Denis Jenkinson was for many years Motor Sport*'s continental correspondent. The full version of this report is available in our website's archive, motorsportmagazine.com*

Strength and depth

It was tradition that Le Mans attracted the world's finest drivers, but on June 10 1967 it had perhaps the highest-calibre line-up in its illustrious history – one that arguably remains unsurpassed to this day. Here is a snapshot



FORD

STARTING GRID

Pole	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	15th
Bruce McLaren Mark Donohue	Mike Spence Phil Hill	Mario Andretti Lucien Bianchi	Denny Hulme Lloyd Ruby	Paul Hawkins Ronnie Bucknum	Frank Gardner Roger McCluskey	Lodovico Scarfiotti Mike Parkes	Pedro Rodríguez Giancarlo Baghetti	Dan Gurney AJ Foyt	Willy Mairesse Jean Beurlys	Günther Klass Peter Sutcliffe	Chris Amon Nino Vaccarella	John Surtees David Hobbs	Jo Schlesser Guy Ligier	Jacky Ickx Brian Muir
FORD MKIV	CHAPARRAL 2F	FORD MKIV	FORD MKIV	FORD GT40 MKII	FORD GT40 MKII	FERRARI 330 P4	FERRARI 412P	FORD MKIV	FERRARI 330 P4	FERRARI 330 P4	FERRARI 330 P3/4	LOLA T70	FORD GT40 MKII	MIRAGE M1

Also Richard Attwood, Piers Courage, Brian Redman, Mike Salmon, Jo Siffert, Hans Herrmann, Jochen Rindt, Gerhard Mitter, Jean-Pierre Beltoise, Johnny Servoz-Gavin, Henri Pescarolo, Jean-Pierre Jaussaud, Rolf Stommelen, Jochen Neerpasch, Bob Bondurant, Vic Elford, Patrick Depailler & Gérard Larrousse

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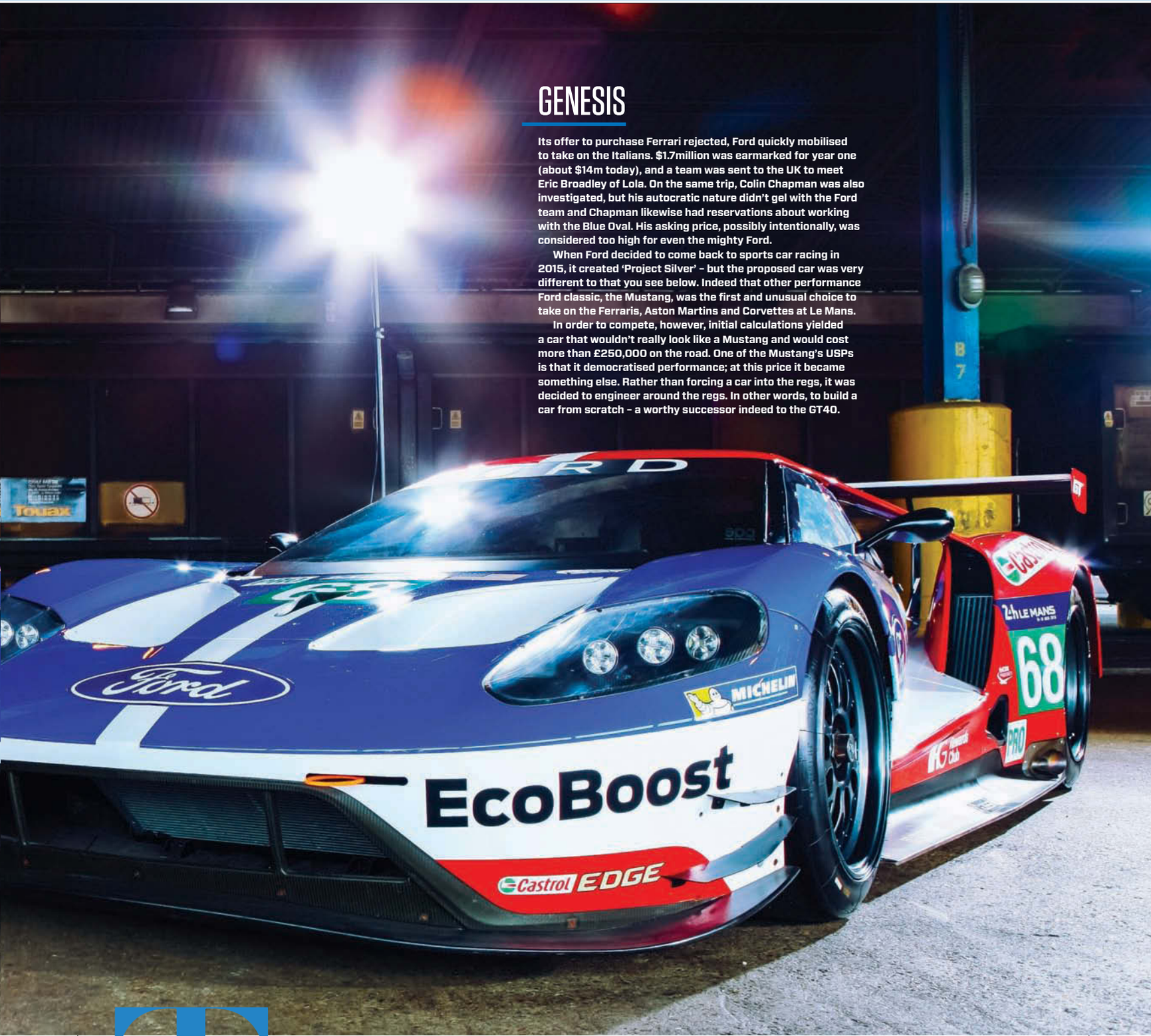
DEVIL IN THE DETAIL

The Ford GT40 was built to beat Ferrari. It succeeded. Its modern equivalent did the same 50 years later. What, if anything, do father and son have in common?

writer NICK TROTT | **photographer** LYNDON McNEIL



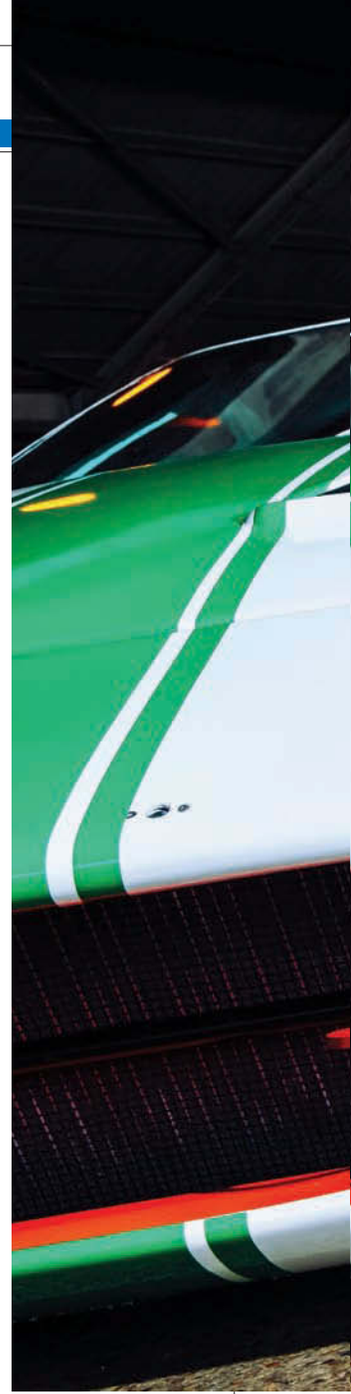
GENESIS

Its offer to purchase Ferrari rejected, Ford quickly mobilised to take on the Italians. $1.7million was earmarked for year one (about $14m today), and a team was sent to the UK to meet Eric Broadley of Lola. On the same trip, Colin Chapman was also investigated, but his autocratic nature didn't gel with the Ford team and Chapman likewise had reservations about working with the Blue Oval. His asking price, possibly intentionally, was considered too high for even the mighty Ford.

When Ford decided to come back to sports car racing in 2015, it created 'Project Silver' – but the proposed car was very different to that you see below. Indeed that other performance Ford classic, the Mustang, was the first and unusual choice to take on the Ferraris, Aston Martins and Corvettes at Le Mans.

In order to compete, however, initial calculations yielded a car that wouldn't really look like a Mustang and would cost more than £250,000 on the road. One of the Mustang's USPs is that it democratised performance; at this price it became something else. Rather than forcing a car into the regs, it was decided to engineer around the regs. In other words, to build a car from scratch – a worthy successor indeed to the GT40.

THE FORD GT AND GT40 SCORED THEIR RESPECTIVE FIRST Le Mans victories 50 years apart. In the decades between, man has been to the moon and invented the internet – but the essentials of GT race car design have remained remarkably similar. If you want to be fast, place a powerful, high-torque engine in the middle of a low-slung chassis, pay close attention to reliability and engineer the car to be as friendly to drive as possible. The difference, as they say, is in the detail. Over the next few pages we compare various technical features and reveal hitherto little-known facts about Ford's sensational sports cars.



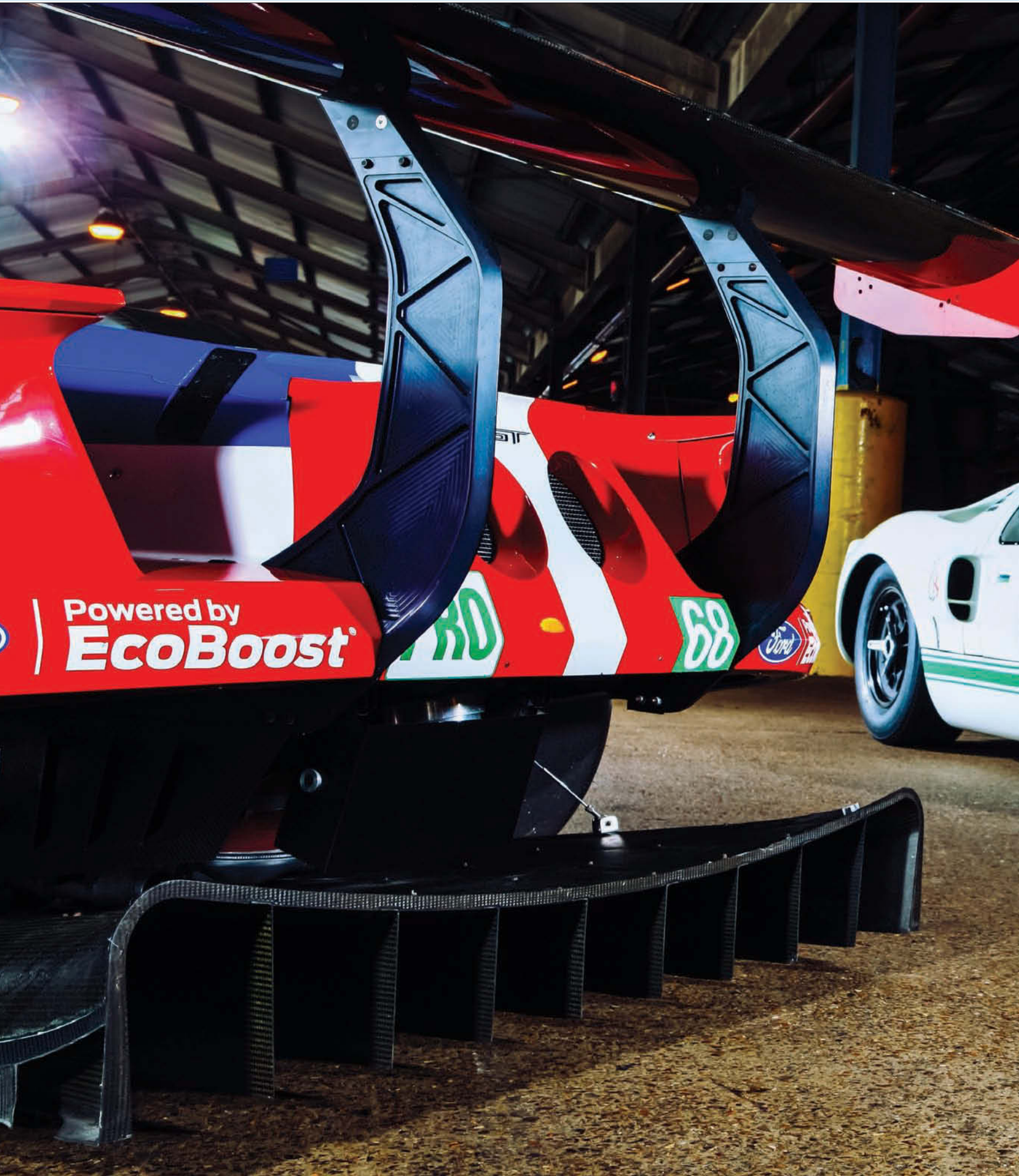
COCKPIT

Curiously, Ford put a fair amount into driver comfort with the GT40. Vents drew air from ahead of the cockpit, then exited through numerous circular grommets in the seats. Plus the seats had an adjustable lumber pad, operated by a hand pump. The carbon seats (left) in the GT40 raced by contributor Dickie Meaden and Gerhard Berger look like torture devices by comparison...

Modern race teams care little for driver comfort, but the rulemakers do. The latest Ford GT is required to have air-conditioning. A rear camera is also linked to a cabin-mounted screen to alert the driver to surrounding cars.

CHASSIS

The original GT40 was heavy. It used sheet steel instead of a more conventional aluminium monocoque chassis, with subframes bolted at either end. However, steel was easier and more cost-effective to productionise and later it allowed the big-block engine to be fitted without major reinforcements. Similarities with the GT? Erm, it also has subframes front and rear... and that's it. The GT is anchored in the middle by a carbon fibre cell, is 623mm longer than the GT40 and 226mm wider. At 1029mm (40.5inches) however, the older car is 81mm lower.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AERODYNAMICS

GT40 models were wind tunnel-tested at Dearborn, determining the positioning of air ducts and radiators and establishing the location of high- and low-pressure areas. Like the modern car (which received 400 hours in the windtunnel), considerable effort was put into airflow through the car – in particular beneath the nose, where air was fed to a radiator then exited via tow outlets on the bonnet area. This became a defining visual feature on not only the GT40, but the GTs of the early 2000s and the latest car.

Aerodynamically, the first Ford GT40 was alarmingly light on the nose, generating 1100lb of lift at 150mph. After two cars were wrecked at the first Le Mans test, the team placed a full-width spoiler across the rear – contrary to wind-tunnel data. It worked. The car was more stable, had less drag, and produced a higher top speed. In contrast the first time the new Ford GT was tested, the drivers reported the opposite – it had extreme front end grip and was very loose on the rear, sending the engineers back to their computer screens and the wind tunnel.

COMPUTING

During development, computers were employed to calculate wheel positioning in relation to suspension deflection – calculations that would have taken weeks for the human brain to sift. Think we're describing the latest car? We are. But we're also describing the original... Back in the '60s, Ford placed huge faith in computers, but soon learned that the results were only as accurate as the information that was fed in. The latest car 'existed' for more than 2000 hours in Computational Fluid Dynamic software before it reached the track, and in certain areas uses a manufacturing process that would have been dismissed as science fiction in the 1960s – 3D printing.

Peerless GT

Ford's Le Mans winner finally materialises without racing numbers on its flanks

writer ANDREW FRANKEL

WHATEVER ITS strengths and weaknesses – and it has plenty of both – the Ford GT is above all a curious kind of supercar and, as such, one that's hard to put into any kind of handy category. You could look at its power and weight figures, two seats, mid-engine configuration and track-orientated set-up and conclude it's a rival to the likes of the Ferrari 458 Speciale and McLaren 675LT. But it's really not like either or, indeed, any other supercar.

The reason for this is simple: it's not really a supercar at all. It's a racing car, conceived through clever exploitation of rules intended to produce racing versions of extant road cars. The GT is precisely the reverse: a racer wearing street-legal apparel. As a result, and to quote Dave Pericak, global director of Ford Performance and the father of the GT, if you removed the restrictions forced upon it by Balance of Performance regulations, the race version "would leave our rivals in its dust".

So like any racing car design hampered by normal road car requirements, it comes with a very narrow cockpit, a boot into which you'd struggle to fit a tin of biscuits, no stowage space on board, limited rearward visibility and next to none over the shoulder. And while it was the road version that was shown first in January 2015, it took two years for Ford to get around to delivering one to anyone whose surname

wasn't Ford, by which time the car's principal objective – winning its class at Le Mans – had long since been achieved.

Like the McLaren the GT has a carbon tub, but it also has carbon bodywork because, well, it's a racing car and customers were not squeamish about paying for such refinements. More than 6000 people wanted the 1000 examples Ford will build before the end of 2020, despite a list price quoted at "about £460,000" or more than double the going rate for the likes of the Ferrari 488GTB or McLaren's new 720S. And remember Ford has said only that these are all it will build for now: production has not been capped at that level.

The greatest criticism it has attracted from those who've not driven it is the fact it comes with a 3.5-litre V6 motor, a version of which is available in SUVs in the US. I wonder if those same people complain also that Aston Martin's glorious 6-litre V12 started life as two 3-litre V6 Ford Mondeo engines, or that the 16-cylinder engine in the Bugatti Veyron is, albeit distantly, related to an engine that was once in a VW Passat? I'm more interested in where it will take you than where it's come from and while, yes, of course I'd rather there was some monstrous 90-degree V8 in the back, that would get in the way of the aerodynamic package that's so important to this car's on-track performance.

It's not an easy car either to enter or exit if you're a large middle-aged man, but once behind a weirdly squared-off wheel plastered in buttons, the driving position is essentially sound. The seat base is fixed so both the wheel and pedals slide in and out to meet your extremities. There's a digital display that changes according to which one of five driving modes you've adopted, but for me the rev counter display along the top is almost completely obscured. Happily, there are change-up lights on the steering wheel.

The engine is loud at idle and becomes more so thereafter. It's not remotely sonorous but I rather liked its gruff voice. It's an honest, no-nonsense sound different from anything else out there and dripping in purpose. In this fastest of Fords, and perhaps because it's a Ford rather than a European exotic, it works well.

The steering is unexpectedly heavy, which I liked, and the ride quality astonishingly good. This is a car with full-race pushrod suspension and springing via coils and torsion bars at every corner, with the former being locked out when the car drops 50mm in track mode effectively to double the spring rate. It's a simpler route to much the same effect as that achieved by the McLaren P1 when it lowers itself. In providing the chassis with just the right level of compliance for a mountain road, or rock-solid body control on the racetrack, it is splendidly effective.

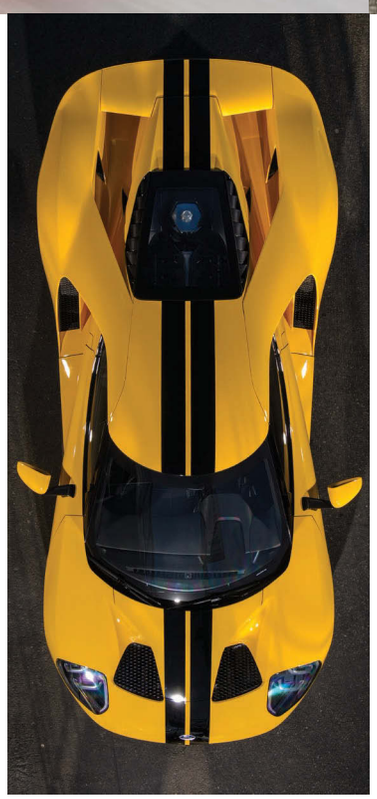
But just when you are starting to suspect you're about to witness something new, sublime and important in the road car arena, the GT

"THE ENGINE IS NOT REMOTELY SONOROUS BUT I RATHER LIKED ITS GRUFF VOICE. IT'S AN HONEST, NO-NONSENSE SOUND"

falters. Most shockingly, it doesn't feel that quick. That will seem an insane thing to say about a car with a claimed 0-60mph time of 2.8sec, but I can report only as I find. I drove the GT 48 hours after stepping out of a McLaren 720S and its straight-line performance, though obviously vivid, did not seem on a level that can, at times, seem genuinely unhinged. The engine is lethargic off-boost, as you might expect for a 3.5-litre motor producing 647bhp, and though the car is on song by 3000rpm, that's almost halfway to peak power at 6250rpm, just 350rpm after peak torque is reached. The surprising fact is that the GT, for all its carbon fibre, is actually quite a heavy car. Ford quotes a dry weight of 1385kg, but that's the 'competition pack' version that deletes the air-conditioning, adds a Perspex rear screen and such refinements as carbon- fibre wheels and a titanium exhaust. The pack is not available to UK customers and the standard car weighs about 1445kg. A standard McLaren 720S has an extra 60bhp-plus and is more than 120kg lighter.

On the road there are other problems, too: the carbon-ceramic brakes are mightily powerful and completely tireless, but on the road the pedal of the car I drove had too much servo and not enough feel. The steering does not communicate as volubly as I'd hoped for a hydraulic system attached to such a stiff and exotically suspended chassis. Adhesion levels are other-worldly on standard Michelin Pilot Cup 2 tyres, but there are times you sense it's

Unpromising on the road, the Ford GT comes alive on the track, where its competition blood finally shows up



finally about to understeer when in fact it's still got plenty of grip remaining.

In short the car felt as if its environment was preventing it from doing its best work, forcing it to adapt to circumstances that were clearly not those it would have chosen.

Thank heaven, then, for the Utah Motorsport Campus, a circuit outside Salt Lake City where I was allowed to run the GT in track mode and at the limit. And here it was simply superb. There's so much grip it takes you a while to trust that it will cling on to the circuit's many third- and fourth-gear curves. But it does. What's more, once you get proper loading into the suspension the feeling that was noticeable by its absence on the road turns up in force. It feels like a racing car so, just to experiment, I drove it like one, mashing the brakes and then staying on them deep into each turn. I expected it to protest, but it loved it. It'll do all the throttle adjustability stuff we look for in such a car, but it responds to the brutal approach better than any road car I can recall.

I'd only been allowed five laps, which isn't much to get really under the skin of such a fast, complex and different car on an unfamiliar circuit, but it was time enough, just, to understand how well it resists understeer and how quickly the back will move when it – or, more likely, its driver – runs out of talent. It slides quite rapidly but I didn't mind that: it wasn't that rather sickening slew you can get from mid-engined cars that are less well set up with insufficient rear roll stiffness, it's a linear flick requiring no more than an equal and opposite response to control. It's a deeply rewarding experience and I have no problem at all with the fact the Ford makes you work a little to get it.

In that time there was precious little I found in its track behaviour that I would change. I think the only observation I would make is that the suspension works so well in track mode, it could clearly handle even more power than it has. Something closer to 750bhp would really give it and its driver something to think about.

There are, then, two distinct ways of looking at the Ford GT. First is with the gimlet eye of the objective assessor. And wearing that mantle I must tell you that not only is it less fun to drive on the road than the latest and greatest mid-engined Ferraris and McLarens, the fact it lacks their cabin space, boot room and visibility seriously restricts the car's sphere of operation. Yes, it's vastly impressive on the track and that must count as a huge point in its favour, but while Ford insists it's quicker everywhere it has gone than the McLaren 675LT it's bought, I'd not say it's markedly more fun than that or, indeed, the 720S I drove at Vallelunga two days beforehand. All three are superb. But then at about £460,000 you could have a 720S and a 488GTB plus change in the bank. On that basis, it is hard to make its case.

The other way is far easier. This car is a stand-alone product with a competition pedigree the others can't touch, however exotic their badges might be. Their racers are converted road cars, the Ford GT is the reverse. People often talk about cars being 'racing cars for the road' and it's an old, lazy cliché except that, in this case, it happens to be true. And that makes it unique. It also taps directly into a racing heritage half a century old, back to a time when Fords that looked not dissimilar came to dominate Le Mans, humbling Ferrari in the process.

The good news is that there is no wrong answer. The money being asked sounds crazy for the car being offered, but those who pay it are also buying into an image and attitude you'll not find however many European exotics you drive. Does that make it worth it? To me, no, but I'm as far removed from the target customer as a pit pony is from a racehorse: it's not me Ford has to convince. And I don't blame those who fall in love with the idea of owning a Ford GT and have sufficient wherewithal to make the dream come true. In fact I envy them. A diamond is still a diamond, however flawed and expensive it might be. M

"Talent? That's not enough. They need to be desperate."

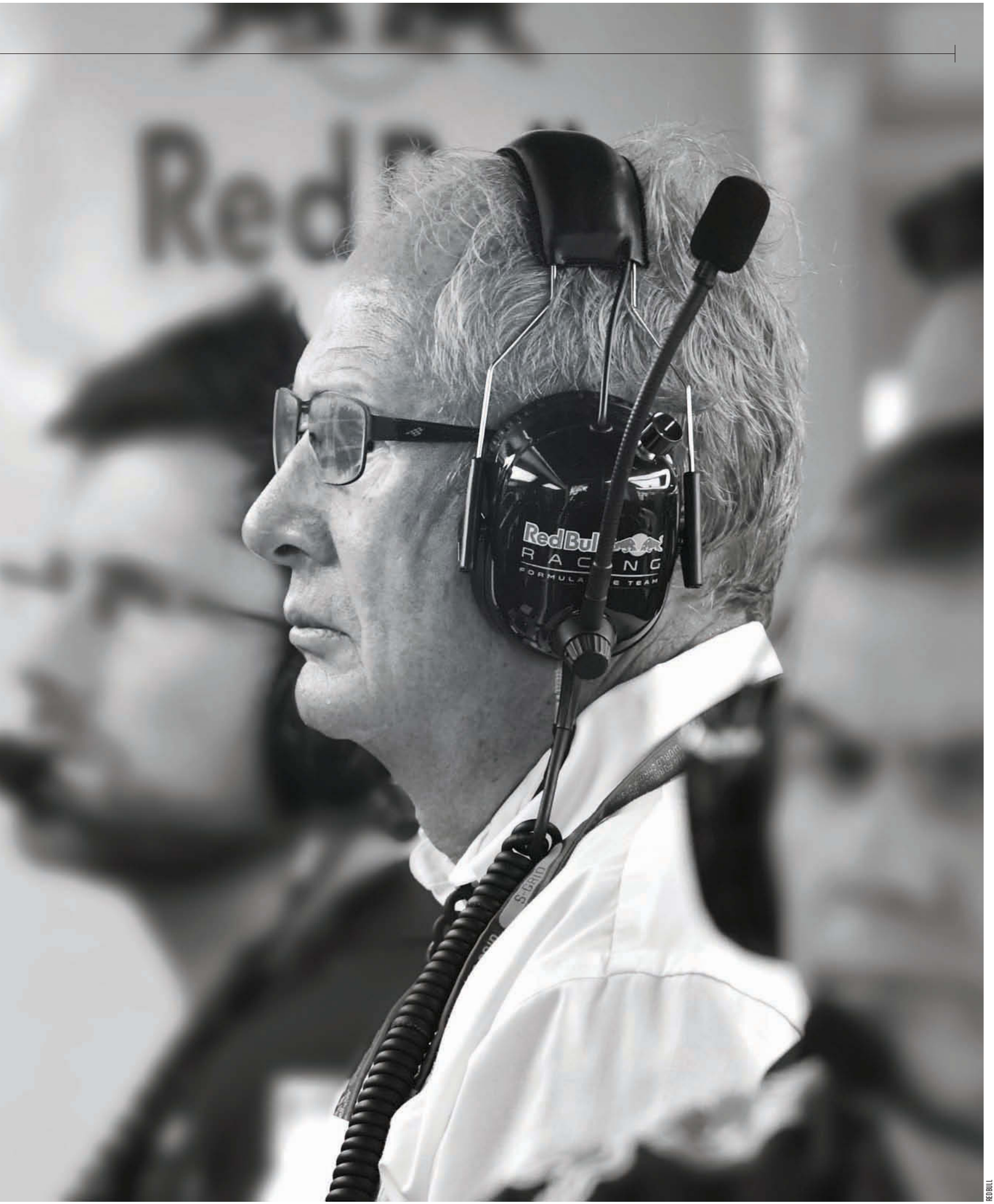
Dr Helmut Marko, the man behind Red Bull's ruthlessly efficient junior programme, explains what he looks for in young drivers

writer MARK HUGHES

THE PUBLIC PERSONA OF RED BULL'S 'DRIVER CHIEF WITHOUT portfolio' Dr Helmut Marko is very different from the man behind that mask. And he doesn't give a fig about that; part of him even finds it amusing that he's perceived as some malevolent ogre, co-conspiring with his friend, Red Bull's mysterious owner Dietrich Mateschitz, in the mountain lair that is the headquarters of the evil empire.

In reality he's just a crazy ex-racer every bit as in love with it all as when he and his school buddy Jochen Rindt were terrorising the rural roads around Graz, trying to see how fast a car could pull a sled before the rider of the sled fell off (about 45mph), or racing a VW Beetle against a Chevrolet with the driver of the latter not allowed to pass on the straights, but only into the corners. The Chevrolet belonged to Marko's parents and had been sneaked out of the garage without their knowledge in the dead of night.

Another snapshot: after a stunning performance in the '72 Targa Florio for Alfa Romeo, 28-year-old BRM F1 driver Marko has been given a try-out by the Ferrari sports car squad at his home circuit for the Österreichring 1000Kms. He finished second after leading, impressing them enough that at the following week's French Grand Prix he had in his briefcase an unsigned Ferrari contract for '73 for both sports cars and F1. In the race he was running in a strong fifth place when a stone flicked up from Ronnie Peterson's March cost him his left eye.



REDBULL

Marko signed Vettel as a 16-year-old. By the time he was 26, the German would have four world titles to his name

And just like that, a potentially fantastic racing career was brutally extinguished. "When you are racing you are very small minded; it's the only world that exists. Then suddenly I was out of it and looking around. I did some other business – real estate and so on – and then I got offers from Ford and Renault to look after their Formula Ford and Mexico series. It was quite interesting, I always got to run it my way, not in the chain of command. That doesn't work with me. I had my freedom and a budget." Starting as he meant to go on, then…

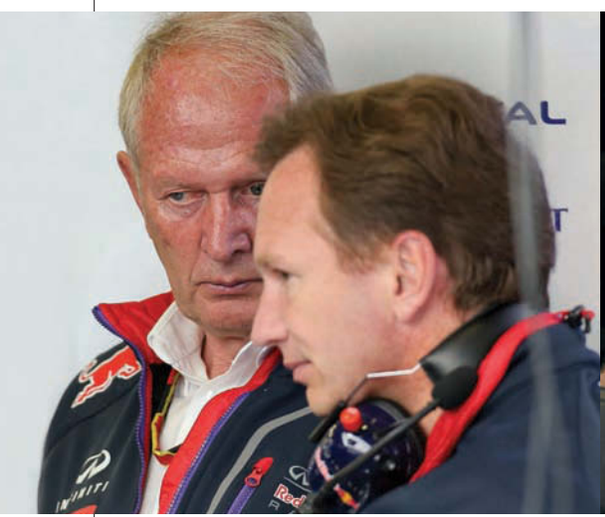
❖

HIS EARLY FORAYS WERE WITH YOUNG Austrian talent – Helmuth Koinigg, Marcus Höttinger, Hans-Georg Bürger (sadly all killed racing) and Gerhard Berger. "It wasn't driver management as such, just drivers I had sympathy with and seeing what stupid mistakes they were making." From there, into running his own team in F3 and F3000 (latterly backed by Red Bull) and finally selling up to Christian Horner, combining the Red Bull backing with that. Marko would never fit into a conventional organisational hierarchy. He's retained the fierce independence of his youth and even within such an informal organisation as Red Bull, he has no official position and doesn't report to anyone, not even his friend Mateschitz. But he is the man responsible for who gets on, who stays on and who gets taken off the conveyor belt of young talent that is the Red Bull junior driver scheme. As such he's been instrumental in spotting Sebastian Vettel, Daniel Ricciardo, Max Verstappen and Carlos Sainz. And responsible for the termination in F1 of Jean-Eric Vergne, Sébastien Buemi, Tonio Liuzzi, Jaime Alguersuari and others. So what is it he looks for?

"Talent, obviously. But that isn't enough. I'm looking for guys that really desperately want it. In my day it was sleeping in the car, not arriving to an F3 race in your father's helicopter. I recall Helmuth Koinigg [Marko's first protégé, killed in the 1974 American Grand Prix] fighting like hell to do it against parental opposition. They were pharmacists so for them motor racing was something unserious. It was a personal engagement, a personal will to do it. Austria is a small country and support then was minimal, so you had to want it really desperately. So I'm looking for that kind of desire. It's a different world now but I want drivers who want it very, very much. We have two at Red Bull like that with Ricciardo and Max – 'I want to be in the car, I want to beat everyone.' I would say that on the present F1 grid that maybe only half the drivers have this approach.

"But yes he has to be quick and have the car control. We took a Dutch driver [Richard Verschoor] last year, and that was purely from watching him in the support race at Sochi, when he won the race by overtaking on the outside with a completely unexpected manoeuvre. So just this one special move in this case. After that he won the Dutch and Italian F4 championships with us. I talk with the drivers, try to find out how eager they are. Are they smart? Are they aware? There are drivers well progressed on programmes elsewhere and you ask them what's the weight of your car? Dunno. What's the power? Don't know… In the simulator with an engineer all day and I say the name of the engineer and the driver says 'Who?' If you are working half a day with the guy and you don't remember his name....

"When I was helping Gerhard Berger and he was at McLaren alongside Senna, he became paranoid that Senna was getting better equipment and at Suzuka I was timing them through the Esses and Berger was faster there. He very often was on Friday. Then at lunch time Senna came to see me and said, 'Where am I losing against Berger?' He had this overall picture of what was going on and I think you need this to be a very great driver. Senna would build up this picture then put it all together and everyone would say it was a talent of a different



Marko with Red Bull linchpins Christian Horner and, right, Dietrich Mateschitz

"WE TOOK A DRIVER PURELY FROM WATCHING HIM AT SOCHI, WHEN HE WON THE RACE BY OVERTAKING ON THE OUTSIDE"

level. But it wasn't. It was a very high level. But there were others like Berger who had a similar talent, but not the same ability. It's just an intellectual capacity. A combination of everything. That's why I try in a personal discussion to find out about what the intellectual capacity is when the helmet is on.

"Another good example is Mark Webber – with whom I now have a good relationship; we shook hands and had a good talk – but he never could overtake properly because he didn't have the concept in his head. There were days when he could be unbelievably fast. At the Nürburgring Vettel could never get anywhere near him and he won there even with a drive-through. In sector three in Barcelona, there was no way Vettel could compete with him and on fast corners on his day he was just unbelievable, faster than Seb. But he never could put the whole thing together for a championship. Thay stupid crash in Korea. He was ahead of Alonso. But he was bothered that Seb was in front, which didn't matter."

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DESIRE, TALENT, SMARTNESS. IT WAS once a good summary of the young Marko making his way in the sport (very much against parental wishes). At the Formula Vee support race to the 1969 German Grand Prix on the Nordschleife, he won by running his only rival – a young Niki Lauda – onto the grass near the end. They are firm friends now, but weren't on that day. "Yes," Marko smiles. "Well, Niki took over my BRM drive and then later got the Ferrari drive that I would have had, too. So yes he basically took over my career." Does he still remind Lauda about that? "Sometimes!"

Talking to Marko it becomes very clear what a debt Austrian motor racing owes his old school buddy Rindt and how much that influence pervades current F1. There would likely have been no Red Bull in F1 without him, maybe no Bernie Ecclestone either. It was a young Mateschitz's visit to a hillclimb as a casual spectator and his getting a picture signed by Rindt that ignited his passion. "Jochen made everything possible," says Marko, "the Österreichring, the whole racing movement in the country. He was unstoppable. We were both thrown out of school in Graz because we were too difficult to control and sent to a boarding school. At the summer holidays we were not in the best of moods and said, 'No we don't go home, we go to the Nürburgring.' He had a car because his parents had left him a spice mill and he was the only son. We slept on the grass and woke up to the sounds of F1 engines practising. Jochen said immediately, 'That's what I want to do,' but for me it was like they were from the moon and it seemed impossible and I went on studying. He went on racing after high school with the money he was able to use. My

parents said, 'No way are you getting a penny for racing.' I finished my studies [in law] and with money I had made from working went to Sweden for two months, bought a Formula Vee, paid my way with prize money and won the championship then sold the car at a profit."

He was an operator off the track and made very smart deals, as befitting a law graduate. Well educated and socially at ease, even today he's a patron of the arts and enjoys painting. He was in fact a very *cultured* tearaway. Did young Marko have the sort of stuff that 2017 Marko looks for in a driver? "The speed was OK but I didn't pay enough attention to the technical side and I was physically nowhere near doing Monaco on the limit for the whole distance. So I would say I took it too easy on myself. So maybe that's why I'm so tough on the youngsters; I know what I threw away. There was no data system so no one could see what you were really doing. A very popular reason for retirement at that time was a claimed stuck throttle. Or if you crashed and got out and saw the tyre was now flat you thought, 'Good, I'll say it was a puncture'."

Not that's he's a fan of data-logging and telemetry. "No, I think it's all wrong. The driver should be the factor that makes the difference. You had to find out yourself as a driver where to go quick. But nowadays Verstappen is told Ricciardo is braking five metres later in T1 and Ricciardo is told in T9 Verstappen is a bit slower in, but comes out faster. So they are educated to go to the absolute limit. It starts in the junior categories. Right from the start you have to be smart and hard-working, looking at the data all the time and you have an advantage if you can use it in the right way. In 2-litre Renault we have three drivers. Two of them arrived one hour before qualifying, the other was there much earlier looking at the data and he was the fastest one. But is that really what we want to see? I think it should really be drastically reduced."

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BUT THAT'S HOW RACING IS NOW AND the Red Bull juniors have to excel at it regardless. One young guy who made a major impression on Marko immediately was a 16-year-old Sebastian Vettel, having his first race as a Red Bull driver in Formula BMW. Marko's craggy face cracks into a broad grin at the memory. "This kid with a brace and whiskers. He was officially our first driver in the new junior team we'd just established. He'd finished first or second in the first race, I don't remember. He was driving for this very experienced German team owner but he was saying to him: 'This is not right, we need to do this better' etc. That struck me. We almost didn't sign him because Old Vettel [Sebastian's father] had signed commitments everywhere! He won 18 of the 20 races that year and was unhappy he hadn't won the other two. He leaves nothing on the plate. Even now on the plane home he'll be making notes all the time. It's a very special approach, leaving nothing to chance. He's unique in this paddock for that."

Marko celebrates with Max Verstappen after the Dutch teenager's victory in Spain 2016

SUTTON

"ONCE THEY GET TO F1 AND HAVE A BAG CARRIER, THEY THINK THEY HAVE MADE IT"

Such professional behaviour sets the bar high for Red Bull juniors – and many have not lived up to it despite being possessed of the raw ability. "The problem with many of them is once they get to F1 and they have a bag carrier and a PR lady, they think they have made it. Actually the hard work should only just be beginning and the pressure is only just being applied now. Often they are surrounding themselves with the wrong people – Jean-Eric Vergne was an example. There can be a father in the background saying they don't get the right treatment. There is always a reason but you can't foresee what it will be when they are 14-15. They all had potential but there was always a reason – with the exception of Buemi who was wrong time, wrong place. If it was now I think he would have made it at Red Bull."

Which in a parallel universe would have left no room there for one of either Ricciardo or Verstappen. Marko firmly believes this is the strongest driver pairing in the pitlane. "They are a fantastic pair. Max jumps in the car and is immediately quick, no matter what, new circuit or whatever. In the rain he's in a class of his own, looking for where the grip is, and immediately he has a feeling of the limit. Nearly everyone else has to find it, he is immediately on it. Ricciardo is quiet, smiling but in the car look at his overtakes. Ambush. His mascot is the honeybear — it's very dangerous but sweet looking. He isn't scared of anything. Senna was never as relaxed as Ricciardo and that for me – to be so competitive but enjoy life – is amazing. Max is similar but there is more tension there.

"Max is a driver I had the longest discussion with ever. We were watching him and talking. He came down to see me. He has a supermarket sponsor. I asked him about the supermarket and he knew how many people it employed, where its headquarters were, how many outlets it had. I had an advantage because I'd researched it before. By contrast, once we signed an American driver [Scott Speed] and when he told me he was going from Graz to Munich I said he should stop at Salzburg. 'Salzburg? What is Salzburg?' Mozart, I said. 'Mozart? What is this?' Unbelievable… If I was going to Red Bull to talk about a contract I'd make sure I knew all about the place.

"Max is not an intellectual, but was educated by watching with his father and by the internet. That helps if you can use your intellectual capacities in racing. The way he overtakes, he has that concept that Webber never had."

Inevitably, one day that pairing will be split up and the next on the conveyor will be given a try. Sainz? "The first time we put him in an F1 car [Silverstone test 2014] he was quicker than Vettel! That test was the only reason I put him in the Toro Rosso. If his head is free he can deliver. He's much better since we took Max into RBR. He's realised the clique around him doesn't make the decisions. It has to be him."

A tough task master, sure, but no evil ogre. M

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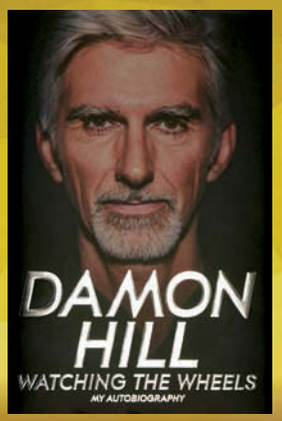

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{ LUNCH WITH }

KENNY ROBERTS

He might be the best bike racer of all time, but he's much more than that: 'King' Kenny worked tirelessly with car people to make his sport ever better

writer MAT OXLEY | **photographer** GOLD AND GOOSE

MOST RACE FANS would argue that Valentino Rossi, Giacomo Agostini or Mike Hailwood are the greatest motorcycle racers the world has ever seen. But the cognoscenti might disagree; some would suggest Kenny Roberts. The Californian won fewer Grands Prix than Rossi, Ago and Hailwood, but his range of achievements is much greater.

He began his world championship trail later than most, after winning two US Grand National titles, disputed on both asphalt and dirt. When he did hit Europe he hit it hard, unseating Barry Sheene to win the 500cc crown in his rookie season. Over the next two years he completed the title hat-trick. When he retired from racing he moved into team ownership, winning a further four world titles. And when he got bored of winning races with other people's bikes, he built his own.

No one in motorcycle racing has come close to matching those achievements, which is why people call him the 'King'. But Kenny has done much more. He revolutionised riding technique, using wheelspin to help steer the bike. Then he transformed GP racing by leading a riders' revolt that improved safety and helped riders earn better money. Later Team Roberts was the first motorcycle outfit to use Formula 1-derived technology, like data-logging and carbon brakes. In the early 1990s Roberts helped save the premier 500cc class – then on its last legs, with just 13 bikes on some grids – by convincing Yamaha to sell engines to European chassis builders. In the late 1990s Team Roberts became MotoGP's first F1-style constructor, engineering its own engines and chassis, employing John Barnard, Tom Walkinshaw Racing and others. The team's KR3 motorcycle was good enough to score the last two-stroke MotoGP pole position.

All in all, not a bad life's work for a cowboy from the farmlands of California, who's only got one testicle (the result of a motocross accident) and a bullet lodged in his left leg (the legacy of a hunting mishap).

Roberts is now 65 years old. He still shows up at the occasional GP, projecting that same powerful aura and telling the same bawdy

jokes. This is possibly the most remarkable thing about the man: he has achieved so much and yet is still the wild cowboy he always was.

And he really was a cowboy. Roberts was 12 and training Tennessee Walkers when he discovered the joys of multiple horsepower. "One day I go to feed the horses," says Roberts as we eat lunch in downtown Austin, Texas. "This guy says I should have a go on this minibike with a lawnmower engine. I said, 'No way.' So, he says I'm a baby, a chicken, so I ride the bike and it scares the shit out of me. I was lucky I didn't crash. Okay, so I had to have one.

"I built my first bike out of a bicycle; robbed an engine from one of my dad's lawnmowers. It had a lawnmower back tyre and a centrifugal clutch. You put it in gear by tightening the drive belt. It was a helluva thing to ride. I got a scar on my knee two inches wide from that. The front wheel was off a parachutist's motorcycle, Second World War. I didn't have a new tube for it so I put a bunch of rags in there.

"About that time my parents bought my older brother a used Honda 50 so he could go to summer school; so I had to have one too. We lived by a canal. I rode that thing up and down, up and down, only fell in the canal once. We traded that for a Tohatsu 50cc two-stroke, a racy-looking thing. It blew up, so this guy fixed it for me and when he saw me ride it, he said 'That kid needs to be on a racetrack.' He asked, 'You want to go to the races with me?' I said 'no' because I thought it'd be big guys with beards. We ended up going to the races at this old fairground down the street. They were just normal kids. I said, 'I can beat them guys.' That's how I started."

Ever since, Roberts's life has been devoted to figuring out how to make motorcycles go faster and how to ride them faster. "It's like a curse," he laughs as he carves his way through a juicy Texan steak. "The drive to make it better is still there. That's my interest as a human being: to make a better motorcycle."

THAT OBSESSION HAS BROUGHT HIM into contact with all kinds of people outside the motorcycle industry, especially car folk, because there's more money in cars, which means more technology. And Roberts has always wanted more technology, first when he was racing, then when he was running teams and most of all when he was building motorcycles, first the three-cylinder 500cc KR3 two-stroke, then the five-cylinder 990cc KR5 four-stroke.

Roberts hired John Barnard in 2003. "If I'd had more money John could've made some real improvements to racing motorcycles. He did some good things. A lot of the things you see on the latest MotoGP bikes are because of what John did when he was with us.

KENNY ROBERTS
CAREER IN BRIEF

Born: 31/12/51, Modesto, USA
1964 Rides a motorbike for the first time **1968** Results in local races bring offer of sponsorship **1969** Turns professional **1971** AMA Grand National Rookie of the Year **1974-75** AMA Grand National champion **1978** Becomes America's first 500cc world champion; Daytona 200 winner **1979-80** Completes world title hat-trick **1983** Final GP season **1983-84** Daytona 200 winner **1984** Sets up own GP team **2000** Son Kenny Jr wins world title **2007** Withdraws team from racing at the campaign's end

"Back in the day when I raced, I'd have one bike that was good and another that was no good, then we'd go to the next track and the second bike would be good and the first wouldn't be good. John was the first guy who said, 'You can't weld and bend; it's all got to be machined.' And that's why the MotoGP chassis you see now are machined, snapped together and welded. It's no longer bending materials, because heat changes everything."

Earlier Roberts got to know Mario Andretti and Paul Newman, who wanted him to race cars. "Mario always told me he was a frustrated motorcycle racer. I let him ride one of my team's Marlboro Yamaha 500s around Laguna Seca. I told him, 'Just don't gas it on the side of the tyres.' Afterwards he says, 'Man, I owe you so much, I've never driven or ridden anything that wants to leap out from underneath you at a quarter throttle.' He says, 'How do you come out of the corner on one of these things?' Well, it takes a lot of work.

"Newman called me when I stopped racing bikes; he wanted me to drive his Budweiser Can-Am car. A few years earlier I'd scared the shit out of him. I was testing Goodyear tyres at Riverside and we gave him permission to test some Ferrari sports car when I wasn't on the track. I was testing a TZ750 and it was wobbling so bad. Anyway, he pulls onto the track when I'm still going around. I passed him in fourth gear, probably doing one-fifty, inches from his bumper. He said, 'That's the dumbest thing I ever did, I could've killed you.' I said, 'Dude, I saw you coming onto the racetrack, I just wanted to scare you'."

ROBERTS DID RACE CARS FOR A WHILE. "Ford wanted me to race their GTP car, so I went to Mid-Ohio and tested it. But the money wasn't anything like I'd been earning in bikes and I wanted to be home, not racing. I'm not saying cars are easy because the breakaway point in a car is quite different to a bike. It sticks and it sticks and it sticks and then it's gone. But they never got my heart beating. When you race a motorcycle there are times you're thinking, 'If I don't pull this off, I'm dead.' And in a car I don't know if I'd ever feel that. I always say you never have to pick a haybale out of your ass when you're racing a car. On a bike, every crash hurts."

Roberts wasn't a big crasher – he rode too well for that. Like any great bike racer the cornerstones of his success were talent, intelligence, bravery and dedication. He turned pro when he was 18, riding his first professional dirt track race at San Francisco's Cow Palace in January 1969. A year later he started road racing, because he needed both dirt and asphalt skills to challenge for the USA's biggest prize, the Grand National.

"I grew up to be a dirt track racer, to ride that dirt track bike better than anyone else. Road racing I just did to get Grand National points. I never really considered myself a road racer. I'm probably still that way." Quite a statement for arguably the greatest road racer of all time.

Roberts won the 1973 and 1974 Grand National titles, riding Yamaha's plodding XS650 four-stroke on the dirt and its outrageous new TZ750 two-stroke on the asphalt.

Both bikes wore Yamaha USA's iconic yellow, black and white livery, derived from the two-stroke sound: like angry bees. It was a genius piece of visual branding. "Everything I had was yellow and black. When I was 19 or 20 I bought a Nissan 240Z and painted it yellow and black; the whole Yamaha deal." Roberts also owned a Ferrari 308 but not for long, "because I would only have wrecked it".

Pretty soon he was as quick on asphalt as he was on the dirt. He brought his oval skills to the racetracks and learned his asphalt skills by watching Europe's best road racers when

FRANCOIS BEAU, YAMAHA

1 Roberts honed his technique on America's dirt tracks during the early 1970s – and later transferred it to asphalt **2** Pictured in 1979, en route to his second 500cc world title **3** Sheene vs Roberts at Paul Ricard in the 1981 French GP, when they finished fourth and fifth respectively **4** Period cool: Roberts with rival Agostini and promotional Corvettes, Daytona 1975 **5** King Mk2: Roberts with son Kenny Jr at Rio in 2000

they visited the US, most significantly Jarno Saarinen who used a distinctive hang-off, knee-out riding technique.

"I started hanging off at Ontario Motor Speedway in 1972. The track had this horseshoe where I felt so uncomfortable, like I was going to crash. So I watched Jarno. He leaned off the bike with his knee out, so I leaned off and all of a sudden I didn't have that bad feeling.

"By the end of '73 I started sliding road bikes. I'd be in a foot and a half drift with my knee on the ground. People said 'You're the craziest sonofabitch I ever seen in my life and you're going to die'."

Roberts led the 1974 Daytona 200 on a TZ750 but didn't win the race until 1978, just weeks before he commenced his first Grand Prix campaign. He won the 200 – the world's biggest bike race at that time – on two further occasions, using an over-bored version of Yamaha's 500 GP bike. This motorcycle was bad enough to scare Roberts.

"That bike was a brute. Coming onto the banking it would spin the tyre in the first three gears. In them days, with the little-bitty tyres and the little-bitty forks, it was an experience trying to get that thing around Daytona. I remember the first time I rode it, the thing went sideways going over the start-finish line at one-eighty and I thought, what happened? It couldn't have done that! Next lap it went sideways again, so I came into the pits and I'm jumping up and down. I said to Kel [Carruthers, a former 250cc world champion and Roberts's chief mechanic throughout his road racing career], 'Hey, that thing's going sideways over the start-finish line.' Kel says, 'So? What do you want us to do about it?' 'But I was going completely sideways!' 'Okay,' says Kel, 'just shut the throttle off.' I was like, 'Shit.' So that's how I rode that thing: throttle on, throttle off."

Roberts' rookie world championship campaign of 1978 is the stuff of legend. What he did that year should not have been possible, which is why it's only been done once since, by Marc Márquez in 2013.

HE SHOWED UP IN EUROPE, KNOWING few of the tracks, using untested tyres, and with only one bike, because he was contracted to the American Yamaha importer, not to the factory. His 0W35K was a piston-port, inline-four, 500cc two-stroke; often unreliable and mostly unpredictable, with a precipitous delivery that overpowered the chassis and tyres.

"Everyone said it couldn't be done. Even Sheene said, 'Kenny's a good rider but the first year he's not going to be a threat, he's got to learn all the racetracks and all that stuff', so it was a big achievement for me to do all the tracks, take Goodyear, who had never been there, and win it."

On top of that he had to deal with some major culture shocks. "Wherever Kel went, I was in his draft, driving my motorhome with Patty, Chrissie and Kenny (his wife, daughter and eldest son). When we arrived at Hockenheim for a race it was dark and the only thing I knew about Germany was the war. At seven the next morning there was this screaming noise: 'Achtung Fahrerlager! Achtung Fahrerlager.' I said: 'Oh f**k, we're in the wrong goddam place and they're going to shoot us.' I ran out of the motorhome and was beating on Kel's door and he said, 'That means attention paddock, now go back to bed'."

Worse was to come: the old Spa road circuit. Roberts may have been used to picking haybales out of his backside, but stonewalls were something altogether different.

"Spa scared the shit out of me. The walls and guardrails were real close, it was raining, there were puddles. On the first lap Wil [Hartog, the race winner] came past, hit a puddle, his feet flew off the footpegs and he was gone. I was like 'Jesus, that guy's going to kill himself!' I was scared to death, I didn't know where I was going, couldn't see nothing. I was racing with Sheene, thinking 'This is so stupid.' The only reason I beat him was because he was more scared than I was. One time I was off the racetrack and sideways up against a wall, doing one-thirty. I got it straight, looked behind and Sheene's eyes were *that* big."

Roberts won the title, beating the 1976 and 1977 champion into second place. With a year's Grand Prix experience behind him, surely he would be unbeatable in 1979? Not quite. In February Roberts nearly died when he thumped into a guardrail at 90mph while testing Yamaha's new 0W45 at the factory's test track. He broke his back, a foot and a collarbone and ruptured his spleen.

"I remember laying there, going, 'I'm toast, I'm toast.' My back was numb. For three days I thought I was going to die. They wouldn't give me pain shots because it would slow the healing. Then they said, 'We're going to operate.' I said, 'No way, I'm going back to America.' They said, 'You won't make it.' Well then, I was dead because from what I was looking at they didn't have good medical facilities. I remember them putting the gas mask on me to put me out and thought. 'This is it, I'm not waking up.' I was very surprised when I did wake up."

These experiences got Roberts thinking about track safety and other matters. He started working on World Series, a breakaway championship that would bypass the blazer-wearing fogeys at the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme. Bernie Ecclestone took a serious interest in the project.

Meanwhile he had the 1979 FIM

Roberts (1) in 1975 with Yamaha team-mate Gene Romero, who won that season's Daytona 200

championship to win. Roberts missed the first race, returned for round two at the Salzburgring and left everyone trailing. He retained the title with another four victories, including Jarama, where the FIM-approved promoters had reduced the already risible start money.

When a Spanish dignitary handed Roberts the winner's trophy he refused the silverware. "No, you keep it," he said. "Maybe you can sell it. I understand you need the money."

Roberts has always been a rebel with a cause and here was a cause worth fighting for: safer racetracks, more money and better paddock conditions. Unfortunately his plans for World Series turned to dust. He returned to Europe in 1980, faster and angrier than ever. Roberts has always liked a drink and his victory celebrations at the season-opening Misano GP may never have been surpassed.

"I'd put so much into World Series: money, time and effort, meeting Bernie and all those people. So when we got back to racing at Misano I was ready to drink. After the race they were giving me champagne at the track and I rode to the hotel on the luggage rack on top of the car. The guys tried to get me off the roof but they couldn't.

FRANCOIS BEAU

"I ended up eating at the hotel, with Randy [Mamola, Suzuki's number one] and some other guys. There were these English journalists eating at a corner table. They'd really pissed me off because they'd tried to kill World Series. They wrote all the wrong stuff. I remember telling those guys, 'If you ever do that again, I'm not going to get a lawyer, I'm not going to sue you, I'm going to kick your ass.' Boy, were they nervous, they were shitting bricks.

"So we're in the hotel dining room and I shout to these journalists, 'Hey, do you guys want some champagne?' They go, 'Oh yeah, thanks, Kenny!' So I throw this bottle, it goes flying across the room and smashes against the wall. All of a sudden they were eating so fast, trying to get out of there. Then I say, 'You guys want some more champagne?' 'Oh no, no thanks Kenny!' I never got along with the British press; I wasn't diplomatic back then."

Later that evening Roberts was getting some fresh air on the restaurant's first-floor balcony when some paddock friends stopped below in their rentacar, on their way into town. They suggested he join them, so he did.

"Kenny jumped from the balcony onto the roof of our car, collapsing the roof down on top of us," recalls Kawasaki mechanic Stuart Shenton. "Then he insisted we drive through the town with him sitting there."

WORLD SERIES MAY HAVE FAILED BUT IT worked wonders, scaring the sport's governors into making major improvements.

"The old promoters and the FIM treated us like shit. It was just wrong, they had everybody by the balls. We got close enough to making World Series happen to scare them. After that it was like heaven. We turned it around from not being able to talk to the promoters about safety to being able to talk to them. And they increased prize money by 300 per cent and everyone knew what they were paying, so you didn't have to play with the promoter's balls to get 500 bucks more. The whole mafia thing went away. Now it's easy, the riders go talk to Carmelo (Ezpeleta, CEO of Dorna, the current MotoGP promoter) and it's fixed. Back then, Jesus Christ, it was a nightmare. A lot of people didn't know how big an achievement that was. I didn't do it for money, I had more to lose than anyone else. I did it because I thought it was right, because the sport needed it."

Roberts completed the 500cc world title hat-trick in 1980, riding a bike that was becoming increasingly inferior to Suzuki's RG500. He was the only non-Suzuki rider in the championship's top six. What made the difference was his riding style, evolved in the heat and dust of American dirt track. King Kenny's ultra-aggressive technique, loading up the rear tyre, then sliding the tyre to turn the bike onto a tighter line, leaving more room for acceleration, left his European rivals in a spin. It was years before they caught up.

Now Yamaha knew they had to give him a better bike. Piston-porting is the most basic way of getting fuel/air mix into a two-stroke engine and exhaust gases out. It uses the rise and fall of the piston to uncover and cover the inlet and exhaust ports, which restricts port timing. This wastes fresh fuel entering the cylinder and fails to fully eject the exhaust gases, thus squandering horsepower.

In 1981 Yamaha built an RG500 clone: a rotary-valve square four. The advantage of rotary-valve induction is that it allows engineers to play with port timing, opening the ports early or closing them late. The 0W54 made more power, but not the right kind of power, so whenever Roberts opened the throttle its impressive speed was frittered away on wheelspin. He won two races that year and the title went to Suzuki's Marco Lucchinelli.

So Yamaha started from scratch once again, building the 0W61, a rotary-valve V4 which used a complex system of gears to drive the rotary valves. The bike was a disaster. "That thing was so bad that Mike Maekawa [Yamaha's race chief] personally pushed the bikes into the crusher at the end of the season."

Yamaha made a better version for 1983. The engine was refined and the chassis featured one of the first aluminium beam frames. "When they started stiffening everything up, I could go faster and smoother for longer."

In 1983 Roberts fought one of the all-time greatest duels for the 500 crown, with compatriot Freddie Spencer. You could hardly imagine two more different Americans: King Kenny, the profane, hard-drinking cowboy, and Fast Freddie, the shy southern boy from the Bible belt. The pair raced neck and neck throughout that summer, Roberts on his 0W70, Spencer on Honda's first two-stroke GP bike, the sublime NS500. Each won six races, the title going down to the wire at Imola.

The pivotal moment of the championship came at the penultimate round in Sweden. As usual, Roberts and Spencer raced way ahead of the pack, counting down the laps. Spencer's three-cylinder NS was nimbler in the turns but slower on the straights, so he worked out a plan to slow Roberts onto Anderstorp's back straight. During the final laps he started

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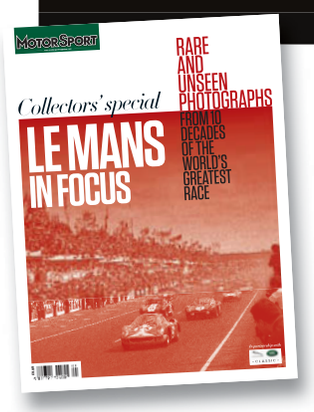

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showing Roberts his front wheel into the corner that led onto the straight, tricking his rival into using a defensive line as they contested the final lap. Meanwhile Spencer made sure he got a super exit, enough to get him level with Roberts, who ran off the track at the next corner. Spencer won the race and the title, by two points. Roberts is still angry about that one.

ROBERTS RETIRED AT THE END OF THAT season, so his Grand Prix career only lasted six years, against Agostini's 15 and Rossi's 22 (so far). "I started getting arm-pump in '82 and '83 and if that hadn't happened I probably would've carried on for another year or two. It just got to the point where I was worn out, I just didn't want to race any more. So I started a team, helping this young kid, Wayne Rainey.

"I didn't enjoy it like racing, but I always enjoyed the technical part: what made the motorcycle better, what made it worse. And I enjoyed working with the younger guys, watching them progress." Rainey commenced his 500 GP career in 1988 and went on to become another of the sport's greats. This was when Yamaha allowed King Kenny to start pushing forward with new technology.

"That was my quest. I'm just not a person who goes, 'Yeah, this is good enough.' It's never good enough. It's haunted me my whole frigging life. Nothing I can do about it."

During 1988 three new technologies appeared on the Team Roberts Yamaha YZR500s: carbon brakes, data-loggers and Öhlins 'upside-down' front forks. Most of these ideas came from King Kenny and his engineers Warren Willing and Mike Sinclair. Yamaha had nothing to do with any of them. And the money didn't come from Yamaha; it came from Lucky Strike and then Marlboro. "If I had told Yamaha, 'Hey, I want to run carbon brakes,' they'd have said, 'No, no, too early, too early'."

And Yamaha was very nearly right. Roberts fitted carbons to Rainey's bikes at the 1988 British GP. Rainey immediately loved the lighter rotors because they made his YZR500 steer quicker. The carbons also improved braking, but only once the rider had them up to temperature, a tricky job on a bike. That's why Rainey nearly crashed on the warm-up lap at Donington. In the race he cleared off to beat reigning champion Wayne Gardner by seven seconds.

It was Roberts's early adoption of data-logging that had the greatest effect on bike racing. He hired Tom O'Kane, a young electronics engineer straight out of university, to build a data-logger. O'Kane sourced a crash-test-dummy black box, with 326Kb of memory.

"Tom, Warren and Mike would sit there arguing all day about what sensors they needed and all that stuff. At the time we had the money to do this work. I could've just stuck the money in the bank, but making more money wasn't my interest; my interest was making a better bike."

"I WAS ALWAYS IN TROUBLE AT SCHOOL. WHEN I LEFT I COULDN'T READ OR WRITE"

Yamaha became less happy with Roberts messing with their bikes, but they put up with it. The team made its own cylinders, heads, pistons and exhausts, plus different chassis kit and the data-logging gear.

By 1990 the Roberts/Rainey combination was unbeatable. Rainey matched his mentor's achievement by winning three consecutive titles, a remarkable accomplishment in a golden era of racing when he was up against Kevin Schwantz, Mick Doohan, Eddie Lawson and Gardner.

"Me and Wayne just clicked. It was almost like we were related. I knew what he was going to say before he said it and vice versa. He was like a sponge, everything you told him would sink in and he always wanted to know more. He would store all that for when he was racing.

"And when he was down I was someone to talk to and lift him back up. And when he was too high I was somebody to say, 'Hey asshole, just back her down a bit!' "

In September 1993 Rainey was fighting for a fourth world title, trading blows with Schwantz, when he crashed at Misano and broke his back. He was paralysed from the chest down. Roberts was distraught. Still is. Many expected him to quit but he didn't. "I had a business going, 40 people working for me, so I couldn't just say I'm done. And I didn't want to stop, the team was part of my life."

Results crumbled, however: no one could replace Rainey. What Roberts needed was a new challenge. "With Yamaha it got to the point where I wanted to quit because I couldn't do it the way it needed to be done, so I said I'm going to build my own bike. Dumbest damn thing I ever did, but I wasn't interested in racing a Yamaha any more. I've got this disease which makes me want to do everything myself."

Roberts has always been rebellious. "I was always in trouble at school, when I was there. I have dyslexia, so when I left high school I couldn't read or write. When I was 19 and Yamaha threw my first contract in front of me, I was like, 'What do I do with this?' "

By the time he got to building his own motorcycles he was more accustomed to the business side of things. "Marlboro put 17 million dollars into the KR3 in its first season, 1997, then dropped it. If they'd stayed, we would've had the right motor in three years.

"When I told Bernie [Ecclestone] I was going to build the three-cylinder engine with TWR, he said, 'Don't do it, they're over-extended.' He told me to go with Hart, but by then TWR had done the drawings. It was a disaster. The KR3 never really panned out for a lot of reasons."

Roberts now had his HQ in Banbury, close to Britain's so-called F1 belt, but he had the second-generation KR3 engine done in

Japan. The engineers were retired Yamaha race chief Maekawa and retired Honda Racing Corporation chief Youichi Oguma, who had only recently been sworn enemies.

The Maekawa/Oguma engine was a huge improvement. Roberts had chosen a three-cylinder because of his experiences duelling with Spencer. Since then racetracks had got shorter and tighter, so a small, nimble motorcycle made a lot of sense against the heavier, more ungainly four-cylinder machines.

But then someone threw a curveball. Michelin released a new rear slick with a different profile that allowed riders of the four-cylinder bikes to get on the throttle earlier.

"The problem was, and always is, that something blindsides you. Michelin changed the rear tyre and we were done."

The final 2002 iteration of the KR3 was a thing of great beauty and very effective. However, it had to race against MotoGP's new 990cc four-strokes, including Honda's awesome RC211V. That didn't stop Jeremy McWilliams from putting the bike on pole at the 2002 Australian GP, despite giving away 50bhp.

Next Roberts built a four-stroke, with his own V5 engine. The machine was a masterpiece, but doomed to failure due to lack of budget.

"The bike I'm most proud of technically was the last V5 we made in 2004 with John Barnard. It was so nice, every piece was made just for that motorcycle."

In 2006 Roberts switched to Honda power, which took his eldest son, Kenny Junior, to within 0.178sec of victory in the Portuguese GP. Six years earlier KRJR had won the 500cc world title on a Suzuki RGV500 that had been largely engineered by Team Roberts, unbeknown to Suzuki management.

The money finally ran out at the end of 2007. Many of Roberts' staff had been with him since the 1980s. Most moved to rival MotoGP teams. The Banbury operation shut down, a huge blow for motorcycle racing, because this small, independent centre of innovation and excellence was unique in the sport.

Roberts went home to the States, where he still rides on the road, in between long motorhome trips to see old racing friends. And whenever he is on two wheels he finds it difficult to supress the urge. "One day this guy comes past, real close, on some sportbike. It was uncool. I said to myself, 'Nah, don't do it, you couldn't catch him anyway. He's gone. He's gone by now...' Mmmm, well, I could probably catch him if I wanted to. So I downshifted and took off. He was probably a mile ahead and I've seen him turn off, down a road I know. My thing is a pretty fast Harley, I've pegged the speedo a couple of times. When I catch him I get right on his ass and go (Kenny mimes pulling in the clutch and opening the throttle) 'raah, raaah!' The guy jumps up out the fairing, gathers it all up, then looks in his mirrors. I'm just sitting there. (Kenny pulls the same cheesy grin he gave the freaked-out 'sports' rider.) So he downshifts and goes, but I get right up behind him again and go 'raah, raaah!' (He does the big, cheesy grin again.) So the guy starts going even harder, until his bike is bouncing around, so I get right on his ass again and go 'raahh, raaah!' Then he starts running wide and overshooting, so he's gonna meet someone head on, so I thought I better stop it

"DIRT TRACK IS MORE BRUTAL BUT TEACHES YOU A LOT IN A VERY SHORT TIME"

and let him live because no way was he going to live. The poor guy obviously wasn't very good."

Roberts made his most memorable recent visit to a MotoGP event at Indianapolis in 2010, when he rode some demo laps at the Indy Mile dirt track, aboard one of the most malevolent race bikes ever to turn a wheel: Yamaha's TZ750 dirt tracker.

In 1975, Roberts's XS650 was outgunned on the dirt by the ubiquitous Harley Davidsons. This didn't stop him from regularly defeating them, but he did need more power, so someone had the bright idea of replacing the 70bhp four-stroke XS motor with a 120bhp engine taken from Yamaha's TZ750 road racer, which was already frightening riders on the asphalt, let alone the dirt. Madness, but worth a go.

Roberts rode the bike for the first time at the Indy Mile in 1975. "It freaked everybody out. We had it geared for 150mph and they put a cut-out switch on the handlebar to kill one cylinder, for when I needed more traction."

He won the night-time, floodlit race, drafting two Harleys out of the final turn and zinging past them to win by a foot. "To do what I did that night, that was a stupid thing to do, it was crazy. People still walk up to me and say, 'I was at the Indy Mile in 1975'."

Roberts rates that Indy win as the greatest of his career, but also the most frightening. So much so that dirt track's governors banned TZ750 engines from the ovals.

At Indy in 2010 he rode a restored TZ dirt tracker, watched by a sell-out crowd, including a dumbfounded Valentino Rossi. "I hadn't ridden a bike for at least a year, so I can tell you I had some sleepless nights," says Roberts, who didn't even practise before the demo. "I wanted people to see it full throttle and go 'Wow!' I didn't build my career the way I did to ride around waving to the crowd. Once I kicked into Turn One and got it sideways then I was okay. Obviously I can go sideways till I die..."

Dirt track is a much-diminished sport in its American heartland, but to Roberts it is still the purest form of motorcycle racing.

"Dirt track is more brutal than road racing but teaches you a lot in a very short period of time. The natural stuff comes out much quicker because you can make adjustments. Weight distribution means a lot, how you set it into the turn and what the suspension does and all that stuff. With a road racer you have all that but it's much more precise.

"When I was doing dirt track there was much more to figure out. Road racing was easier because the pavement hardly ever changed, whereas the dirt, from the qualifiers to the main event, would sometimes be completely different, so you'd have different tyres, different cuts on the tyres, different everything, so it was much more complicated. Road racing was easy, you just put on your leathers...

Although dirt track isn't what it used to be in the States, it's enjoying a revival in Europe, largely thanks to reigning MotoGP champion Márquez, who trains on the dirt every day, just like Roberts did. This explains the Spaniard's astonishing riding technique: happily allowing his Repsol Honda RC213V to kick and squirm beneath him, just like a dirt track bike.

"It's still useful to a road racer, even with traction control," says Roberts. "The more you know about what a bike does, especially when it's out of control, the better off you're going to be, no matter what, traction control or not."

By the end of our meal Roberts is looking distinctly rosy on the red wine. We've had a great chat, with much hilarity along the way. He saunters out of the Odd Duck restaurant, his gunslinger's swagger still perceptible, looking for a cab back to watch Márquez, Rossi and the rest do their thing in MotoGP. Tomorrow is a big day. King Kenny was named a MotoGP Legend years ago and now it's the turn of Kenny Jr. That's another of his endless list of achievements: he was MotoGP's first champion father of a champion son.

RICHARD PETTY

Known as 'The King', he retired 25 years ago but still holds many records

writer PETER HIGHAM

NASCAR LEGEND RICHARD Petty turns 80 on July 2. The son of three-time champion Lee Petty, 'The King' won 200 races plus two more as a relief driver during a career that spanned 1184 senior NASCAR starts and 35 years. Stock car racing's most famous driver remains instantly recognisable with his Stetson hat and shades.

Petty grew up around his father's race shop and he made his debut in 1958 aged 21. He appeared to have won at Atlanta's Lakewood Speedway the following season, only for his father successfully to protest the result. The 1959 Rookie of the Year, Petty's first victory came at Charlotte Fairgrounds in 1960 and he finished as championship runner-up in three of the next four seasons. He won the 1964 Daytona 500 (first of seven such victories) as he clinched the NASCAR title for the first time.

His 27 victories in 1967 included 10 in a row and led to a second championship. Petty recovered from a shoulder-breaking barrel-roll at Darlington in 1970 to beat James Hylton to the following year's Grand National title. He retained the newly named Winston Cup in 1972 as NASCAR ushered in the 'Modern Era'. Successive titles in 1974 and 1975 were followed by the famed finish to the 1976 Daytona 500. Petty and David Pearson crashed in the final turn of the race with Pearson just able to limp across the line. Petty won his seventh title in 1979, five years before scoring his 200th victory at Daytona with President Reagan watching on.

NASCAR WINS
200

7 NASCAR TITLES
1964, 1967, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1979

NASCAR STARTS
1184

FIRST RACE
JULY 18, 1958
JIM MIDEON 500 AT TORONTO'S CANADIAN EXPOSITION STADIUM

LAST RACE
NOVEMBER 15, 1992
HOOTER'S 500 AT ATLANTA MOTOR SPEEDWAY

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I AC	30 CAG	I DFA	I EHP	I FKW	I GFW	6 HJL	I LWP	I NHD	I0 PDR	I RHE	I SKU	TRT I	WDB 40
25 ACJ	I3 CAY	DFB I	I EHR	70 FLC	GGM I0	902 HK	9 MBG	I NHF	I PEX	300 RJ	94 SLA	9 TS	I WDC
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AFF 50	I CCK	969 DG	I EJO	8 FMT	I GKV	I8 HMM	MEC I	I NJN	PHG 7	I RLE	II SRJ	I TTP	I WFR
4I AFH	II CDT	66 DGA	8 EJR	3 FMW	I GLD	I00 HO	7I MEE	I NKW	5 PJV	RLG 20	I SRK	4 TWG	I WFT
I AFL	99 CEA	DGF I	I EJW	I FMY	4 GLE	HR I	MES 94	73 NL	9I PJW	I RLO	I STG	I00 TY	I WGK
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AHC II	4 CEJ	7 DHJ	6 ELJ	I FNC	I GMK	HSW 5	MFP 4	NMH 37	I PKD	70 RMS	TAA 50	I UY	I WHM
9 AHD	I CEK	I DHV	EMD 60	I FNJ	GMM I	I HTK	MFT I	NNF I	9 PKM	I RMY	30 TAJ	2 VAD	I WKK
9 AHH	CER 46	I DJN	I EMT	FNS I	99 GMS	I HUF	I MGG	I NNN	5 PKP	I RNC	I TBC	I VAF	7 WM
I ALG	I CKM	DLB I	I ENF	46 FP	GMW 3I	5 HV	MGM 77	I NPD	6 PLD	I RNJ	I TBL	VAJ I	WMR 87
93 ALW	7 CLE	DRE 24	EPA I	I FPN	GMY I	HVD I	23 MHW	9 NPM	I0 PLM	79 RNM	I TBN	I VAM	I WMT
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I AYG	CRJ II	E 67	5 ESG	I FWG	GPS 55	89 JCA	78 MPA	I NSJ	PPT I	3 RRW	7 TGD	I VDW	I WR
3 BCT	CSD 96	9 EAA	EST I	I FWJ	I GPV	JCG 88	MPC I	54 NSM	PPW 3	I RVG	I TGE	VE I	WRG I
BEK I	CSJ 9	8 EAP	I ETR	G 84	9 GRG	I JDJ	I MPN	I NSN	6 PSA	I RVR	I TGG	I VEB	WRR I
I BFF	I CTC	I EAS	I ETW	9 GAD	5 GRJ	99 JDL	I6 MRJ	I NSP	5 PSJ	2 RWF	THF I	I VED	I WSE
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I BHT	7 CU	I EBR	I EWG	57 GAN	I GY	I6 JDP	I MVN	I NTP	PTL I	I RYF	I THK	I VGS	WVM I
20 BJR	CVB 3I	EBT I	I EWK	GB 6	I GYG	I JDU	I MVS	I NVH	PWG 5	SCA 8	THW I	VHC I	I WWB
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I BWG	DCF I	I EFR	8 FJD	8 GFC	I HFO	5 JNC	NEZ I	3 PCF	7 RDA	SHG I	I TNL	VPL I	I YEB
88 BWP	I DDF	I EGE	I FJE	I GFE	HGA I	8 JND	I NFH	6 PCJ	I REO	SHJ 55	I TPN	VSB I	YEP I
BY I	7 DDG	EGV I	FJS 22	I GFF	HGR I	25 JPD	I NFP	I PDA	RFB 90	I SHW	TPR 2	I VSG	YGR I
C 5	DDL 98	I EHD	I FJT	GFN I	I HHC	59 JPJ	I NGF	6 PDK	I RFV	8 SJE	I05 TR	VU I	I YJS

JPS 23	I KDB	I KMW	LF 7	I LLG
8 JSE	I KDJ	I KNR	I LFE	I LLJ
I JSW	KDP 74	I KOE	I LFN	52 LN
53 JTD	KE I	KPN I	I LFO	LNA I
I JTE	KEA 9I	KRB I	LFS 64	LO I
88 JTF	KEC I	KRW I	I LGG	I LOD
I JTK	KEJ 76	KSE I	I LGJ	I LPE
JTT I	KFK I	KSJ 9	LGL I	LPL I
I JVG	I KFO	I KUF	LGS I	LPW I
JVL 83	3 KGC	I KUN	I LGW	2 LRD
48 JWD	I KHC	3I KV	2 LHB	3 LRJ
6 JWJ	I KHR	I LAT	I LHM	3 LRP
70 JY	I KHS	I LBN	LHP I	I LRT
I JYB	KJC 93	I LBR	I LHR	LSD 73
I JYK	KJE 52	I LBT	33 LJD	I LSN
KAA 97	I KJF	5 LDA	32 LJE	I LSV
KBB I	I KJV	3 LDF	8 LJJ	444 LTM
I KBE	I KJY	I LDK	LKN I	I LUJ
I KCL	I KKA	I LEP	7 LKP	900 LW
6 KDA	84 KL	LER 80	I LKR	I LWD

NAMES WORDS

ROG I	DI0 LLS	BAY 70N	579 EAT	WAN 35	DAY 50N	POT 7Y	PEE 3K	RUT 7H	EA03 RTH	BUS 7Y	MUII ERY	LAR 26E	G0A IS	KEE I3Y	P23 TTY	L3 GGE	BAN 70N	G0S 5IIP	F457 DOG
A8I0 DUN	BEH 4N	CAII DLE	CRO 570N	ECC I3S	FUR 83R	H4II COX	KEE I3R	L7II DON	MEH 74A	N3I MES	PIII UME	ROT 73N	T466 ART	VEE IIA
ACT 700R	B3I6 HER	CAII HAM	CRO 77Y	EDN 3Y	GAM 88IE	HAII SEN	KEE 93R	LYII NNE	M3II ORS	NER 7S	POL I06K	SAG 3E	TAII BOY	VEN 70N
ADR 2I4N	B3I TON	C42 SON	CI20 UCH	EDW 420S	G428 ETT	H428 OUR	K3II LEY	M46 KEY	M3I TON	NES 8I7T	POO IL	SI4I EEM	TAII EST	VI3 NUS
AFT I	BEN IIIE	C4I2 TON	CUR 2L	EDW IIN	GAR 26IA	H42I AND	KES 50N	M466 OTS	M3II VYN	N377 LES	POO I3Y	SAL IIIH	TAN II3R	VER 2I7Y
AGA 4R	B32 THA	C47 HAL	CUS 742D	EDY 7A	GAI2 NER	HAI2 LOW	KC5I REL	M44 GOR	MER 6IA	NEW 902T	POP 6E	S4II EER	T4 ROT	VI3 ENA
AGA 7A	BER 724M	C47 TON	CYR 2IL	EGO 5S	GAT 7E	HAR 22IS	KET 7IE	MAII ABY	MER 2IIL	NEW 550N	POS 3Y	SAII SOM	T422 ANT	W444 GER
AIII EEN	BES 70N	CAII SER	DAC 6K	ELC 606K	GI4 UGE	HAR 220D	KEY I	M4II ETT	MER 2I7T	NOB 8S	POU I76R	SAR 50N	TAS I33M	W8 GNR
AKE 2S	BI6 PEA	CHA 73R	DAII NTY	ELD 23D	G44 UNT	HAR 20P	KHA II0A	MAII ORY	MER 70N	NOE IIIE	POW I3Y	SII SSY	T47 LER	WAK 3IIN
ALL I50P	BLA IIK	CHI3 UNG	DAM I4N	LEK 72IC	GEA 4R	H45 HAM	KII4 NOM	M8I0 NEY	M32 VYN	NOO IIE	PRA 7T	SAII CES	T388 UTT	W4I DEN
ALT 74F	8I END	CHI3 FFF	D4 NBY	ELE IIA	G33 SON	HAY 35S	KII3 RAN	M4II TON	M355 AGE	NOR 233N	P205 SER	SAY 73D	TEE 5S	W44 LES
AMB 83R	8I0 UNT	CLA 42K	D4 NNO	FEII DER	GEII EVA	HEA 4L	KNE 3E	MAR 23K	MES 53R	NOR 770N	PUB 80Y	SCU 7T	T3II PLE	W4 LEY
AND 223J	BOII SER	CII4 UDE	D444 REN	3 VAN	GIII LEN	HEA 4P	KNO 6K	MAR 623T	MII6 HEL	NOW 3IL	PUD 5IE	SEA I2S	T333 NCH	WAII GUY
ANII GEL	BOII ZOS	CLE 6G	D42 LEY	EVE 237T	GIII HAM	H34 TER	K2I5 HAN	M42I ENA	M0C 6K	NUR 55E	PUM 4A	S36 KER	TE57 EYE	WAII LET
AP55 LEY	B00 555H	CLU 3R	DAR I2IN	EVE 250N	6I NN	HEA 7I3Y	LAM 8E	M42I ENE	M0O II3Y	ODD 80Y	PUI2 SER	SEL IIF	T3 STS	WAII YSX
A26 HER	BOR IIIS	COB 80ID	DAW 83R	EXA IIIS	GI AND	HEL 3IIE	LAM 832T	MAR 503N	M0O 23E	OLD 3R	PUI2 VES	S3II WYN	TII3 DOC	WAII SHE
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ASH II0K	BOW 473R	COL I42D	DI3 ARY	848 EYE	GLE 3W	HEN 27K	LAR 26E	MAR 27IN	M0O I2S	ORG I85	RAB 8IE	ME5I EXY	THI2 USH	WAM 29
L4 YRE	BOW 73R	COII LEY	DEL I3R	I FAG	GLO 2IIA	HES 73R	LAR 2K	MAS I3N	MOR 2I6E	ORI2 ELL	RAM 8IE	SHA 29E	TI32 NAN	WAII DAS
BA66 OTT	807 LE	COM 83R	DEL 772H	FAL 660N	GLO I2Y	HEW 37T	LAV 32Y	MAS 553Y	MOR 2IIS	OSM I4N	RAII DLE	SHE 423R	I TOE	WAN 35
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BAL I4D	BRA 2R	COII BOY	DIII VYA	FAN 770M	GLII YNN	HOII LER	LAY 606K	M47 TER	MOR 7T	PAI5 LEY	R47 NOR	SHII GUN	TON IIIE	W44 TCH
BAM 95	BRA 7Y	COII DON	DOII OPS	F42 LEY	GII OME	HON II3Y	L34 SED	MAX 73D	KMO 5S	PAR 2K	R342 DON	SHO 273N	TOP II4M	WAT 33R
BAII HAM	BRE 346H	600 MBS	DOII KEY	FAR 2R	GIO DLY	II OOK	LEA 5T	MAY 32S	MOS 70N	PAR 550N	REA 450N	SHU 7T	T0 AUT	W33 MAD
BAP 7I5E	BI2I DES	6 ORK	DOI2 MER	FAR 23IL	G60 LDS	HOR 5I3Y	LEE 350N	MAY 7S	MOU I7T	PAT 2I6A	I2 ENA	SI3 RRA	TOW 3IL	W34I THY
B428 OUR	BI2I DLE	CI0 RKE	DOI2 OTA	F47 GUY	GOU 2I3Y	HOU 6H	LEM II0N	MAY 570N	MOY 7A	PAT 73N	I REP	SLV 3R	TRA 6IIE	WEII RDO
I3 ARD	B2I GHT	COI2 SER	DOR 53T	FEII CEZ	GOW 32S	HOU 5I3Y	LEN I	M64I EER	MOY 2A	PAT 70N	REP 7IIE	SLA 7E	T247 NOR	WEL II4M
B42 DEN	82I LL	COS 57A	DO55 ETT	FER 22IS	PGR 33D	HOW 24T	LEN II0X	MCA 20IE	MUII ERY	PAT 7Y	RH04 DES	SLII RRY	TRE 3E	W3I SBY
BAR II4M	B2I5 TOL	COT 73R	DOU 5E	FI3I DEN	G23 ENE	HUII AND	LEO IIA	MCC 4I3E	MUR 224Y	PAV 3Y	RHO I7A	WSM I7H	TI23 VOR	WEI7 HAM
B4I2 ROW	BRU 70N	COT 77N	D6 WSE	FI66 GHT	G233 NER	HUII OCK	L35 TER	MCC I34N	MU5I ELL	PAW I3Y	RI02 DAN	SOL 3E	TI2 OLL	W357 LEY
B427 RAM	82 YCE	COU I70N	D24 PER	FLA 8	GI2 EER	JAN I63E	LI63 NCE	MCC 602D	MUS 550N	PAX 70N	ROA 6H	50I WAY	TRII PHY	WHA 7I3Y
B45 TOW	B27 DON	COU 9E	DRU 6E	FI0 REY	GRE 66G	JAN IIIA	LON 3R	M63 WEN	MUT I69	PEA 2T	RI00 AST	SOR 47A	TRO 77T	HWH I7E
BAT 77IE	B27 SON	COII PON	D27 DEN	FLII TES	GRE IIIG	JAV I3R	LON IIG	M6I EAN	MYII ERS	PEA 4T	ROB IIIA	SOR 23IL	T22 OUT	WI35 LAW
BAX 773R	BUD 6I3S	COW 3N	DUA 27E	OFII YNN	GI2I GGS	J47 ESH	LOR 3IIA	MCL I30D	MYII ARD	PEE 3K	ROE I	SPE I2S	TUG 3	WIII COX
BEA 73R	BUN 74N	CI0 YNE	DUG 94N	FOL 4N	GI20 VES	JAY 7IIE	LOR 377A	MCV 3Y	NAJ 4T	PEE 3T	ROG 64N	S74I NER	TUL I06H	WOII BLE
BEC 6K	BUR 2N	C24 FTY	DII KES	FOS 73R	GGU 35T	JEL II3Y	LOV 3I3Y	MEA 4H	NAL 50N	PEN 285	ROG I	S74I NES	TUI2 TLE	WOI2 TON
BEE 6H	BUS 5E	CRA IIIK	DUM 80S	FOX 70N	H46 KER	JES 73R	LOV 3IL	MED 4IS	NAR 6IIS	P60 PLE	RON 4ID	S74 MPS	TUR 70N	W2 ENN
B33 LEY	BUS 777Y	C24 VEN	DUI2 ANT	FRA 73R	H46 GER	JOII KER	LUV I3Y	MEE 3K	NU7 LOR	PER 6H	RON 50N	S7 OKE	T72 ONE	74 TES
BEE 2IE	BII XOM	CRII LLY	EAM 3S	F2 EER	H4I5 ALL	JUD 63E	LUC 6IE	MEE IIA	NEA IIIE	PER 3I2A	ROO II3Y	STO 22IE	ULL I4H	YEB 804H
BEE 350N	CAB IIE	NCR I5P	EAR 2L	F2I DAY	94 HAM	KAR IIIA	LUD I4M	MEE 2A	NEI3 DLE	P322 OTT	ROS 4A	S777 ORY	UTT II3Y	I YEH
B33 TON	CAI2 NSY	ACI2 OOK	EAR 3	FRII GAL	HAM 32R	K47 LEY	LYC 377T	MEE 5E	NEE I4N	PII6 HER	ROS 377A	57 OUT	VAL IIIE	YEL 85
BEG 27I	C4II ARD	C200 KES	34 RTH	FUN IIG	HAM 3S	K342 NEY	LYN 4S	MEE 50N	SPI2 ATT	ROS I YNS	S72 OUD	VAS IIE	YEU IIG

On the anniversary of a spectacular accident in his Lola T70 Spyder, Dutchman Michiel Smits returned to Goodwood to race it once again

writer SIMON ARRON | **photographer** LYNDON McNEIL



FEELS LIKE THE FIRST TIME

THE 2016 BRUCE McLAREN Trophy was less than a lap old when the drama unfolded – and at the time I was one of only two accredited media in the area. I had my camera trained on a group of Lolas and McLarens rumbling towards the apex at Woodcote, the brisk right-hander before the Goodwood chicane, when I became aware of something blue flashing across my viewfinder's top-left corner. It seemed to be travelling much more quickly than anything else and, more alarmingly, was doing so in the wrong direction. The subsequent thump resonates still.

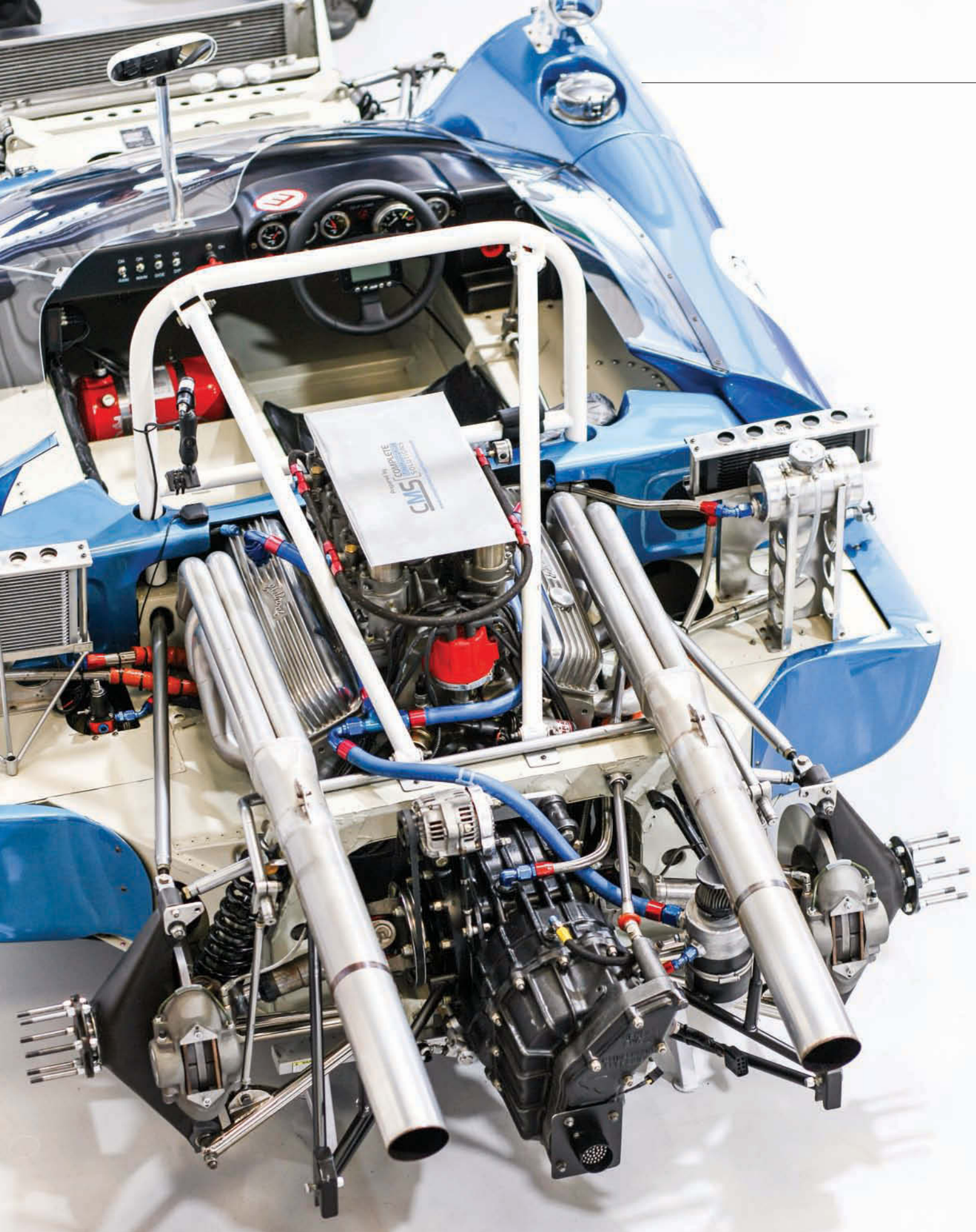
The Lola hit the tyre wall at unabated speed and I took just four images, putting my camera down as soon as the car pivoted towards me and the potential seriousness of the incident became apparent. The T70's front end was horribly twisted and it seemed inconceivable that anybody could have survived an abrupt deceleration of that kind, but Goodwood's tyre walls run deep and Michiel Smits escaped with serious concussion and fractures to six ribs and two vertebrae.

"It still seems amazing that I got away so relatively lightly," he says. "It was my first race in the car and also my first time at Goodwood, so all weekend my plan was just to play myself in gently and not do anything silly. But then I was hit on the head by debris from another car and unfortunately it happened on the Fordwater Straight, the fastest part of the circuit."

Rendered instantly unconscious by a panel that had flown from the T70 of Marc Devis, Smits was slumped at the wheel with his foot hard on the throttle.

"I don't remember anything at all," he says – to this day, his only vague recollection of the whole weekend is being on a northbound Eurotunnel train – "and my concussion lasted for about eight months."

Wilwood
Wilwood
CMS


CMS
COMPLETE
MOTORSPORTS
SOLUTIONS

Left, Jody Arch handles lathe duties for CMS, at a traditional workshop close to CMS HQ. Below, Smits in action at Goodwood

DREW GIBSON

DID HE FEEL ANY APPREHENSION?

"NOT AT ALL. I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO RECOLLECTION OF EVER HAVING BEEN TO GOODWOOD BEFORE"

THE RACE WAS DULY RED-FLAGGED and, back on the grid, Complete Motorsport Solutions (CMS) boss Philip Cheek was keeping an eye open for two of the many participating T70s. One, being driven by Nick Padmore, led at the time of the stoppage and was later declared winner of a truncated, two-lap race. The other was missing.

"Michiel took delivery of the Lola at Goodwood and we were due to take it away, having agreed a deal to prepare it for him," Cheek says. "It was obvious that something major had happened from the way the whole track fell silent, so while I kept an eye on Nick's car my wife Stephanie was running around trying to find out what was going on. We were eventually told that Michiel had been trapped in his car by one of his boots, where the throttle pedal had folded back, but once marshals had cut his laces they'd been able to release him and he actually walked to the air ambulance – though I've no idea how he managed that and neither has he. When we agreed to take the car back to our workshop for him, I hadn't anticipated taking it away in quite so many bits."

Once in hospital Smits remained under sedation for six days, but when he regained consciousness he soon began talking about getting back behind the T70's wheel – and specifically at Goodwood.

PRIOR TO FORMING CMS, CHEEK HAD worked in sports car racing – principally with LMP2 and GT2 teams – but had also been asked to run his future father-in-law Ian Simmonds's Tyrrell 012 in historic Formula 1 events. "I kept declining," he says. "I didn't want to do it because of the family connection, wondering how things would be if my relationship with his daughter ended. Ian was totally understanding and didn't push things any further. Then in 2012, when there was a historic F1 event supporting the British Grand Prix, he asked whether I fancied going to Silverstone. When I said 'yes', he replied, 'There's one condition – you have to run the car.' I'd never really looked at the Tyrrell before, so I went over it, made a few changes and we did the race. That became the basis for CMS – and I did subsequently marry his daughter."

The new operation started in a small unit on an industrial estate in Kimbolton, a stone's throw from the Cambridgeshire kart circuit of the same name, and last August moved a very short distance into larger premises with scope for expansion. "Ian had come across some real horror stories, in terms of preparation expenses spiralling out of control," Cheek says, "so from day one it has been our objective to provide customers with a clear idea of what things will cost and make sure there are no hidden nasties."

CMS will soon have its own fabrication facility ('in-house' presently means Jody Arch at JA Kit and Custom, a delightfully traditional machine shop a couple of miles down the road) and its full-time staff of four looks after cars for seven clients – including two T70 Spyders: the 'Padmore' Mk2 (SL71/48, ex-Team Surtees – the 1966 Can-Am title winner recently owned by Phil Hall but now in the hands of Michael Whitaker) and the Mk1 of Smits (SL70/12, originally sold to John Mecom Racing in America and driven by Walt Hansgen from the summer of '65). The latter was originally built up to replace Mecom's chassis SL70/3, which Hansgen had written off at Mosport Park, Canada.

Despite the ferocity of Smits's Goodwood misfortune, this latest rebuild was by no means as extensive as might be imagined.

"At first it was a huge shock to see the state the car was in,." Cheek says, "but as we started taking things apart we realised they weren't as bad as we'd first thought. It was a challenge,

but a good one. We checked every last nut and bolt, but managed to preserve quite a lot. It still has the rear subframe from the accident, albeit repaired. Bob Simpson from R&J Simpson in Tamworth took one look at the chassis and said, 'We can save the back end, but there's nothing we can do about the front' – so that's new from the fuel tanks forward. They did a brilliant job of stitching the two bits together

"The left-front corner had to be replaced, after bearing the brunt of the impact, but the other three corners all still feature the same parts. Everything was stripped down, crack-tested, repaired if necessary and put back. The front-right wishbones are from the accident, ditto the right-hand and rear bodywork sections. The only new body parts are the nose, the left-hand sidepod, the left-hand door and the screen. Everything else – including the dash, steering column and rack – are from the crashed car. We're not a company that throws stuff away for the sake of it, though we did have to replace the steering wheel – the previous one bent when it impacted against Michiel's ribs.

"The engine didn't require too much attention, either. With debris flying everywhere and the throttle wide open, quite a bit of stuff was ingested via the trumpets. It was checked over by HRS Developments in Holland, who look after the Chevy V8s in both of the T70s we run, but once it had been cleaned out it was fine."

Plans to take the Lola to last autumn's Goodwood Revival were eventually put on hold – "It would have been feasible to have the car ready," Cheek says, "but Michiel wasn't" – and in the end the full rebuild absorbed 42 working days. "We did the fibreglass repairs in-house, the body went to a paint shop, Jody did the fabrication, Bob Simpson sorted the chassis and I think it was a sensible project," Cheek says. "I won't go into details, but I think people would be surprised by how cost-effective the whole thing proved to be."

Smits was finally reunited with the car ahead of this year's Members' Meeting, where he finished 16th in the Surtees Trophy – despite a first-lap spin at, ironically, Woodcote. This time, the T70 nudged the tyres gently and he was able to continue.

"A braking problem materialised," Cheek says, "but we hadn't been able to run it for long enough beforehand for that to become apparent. The rear pistons had worked their way to an angle and not returned, so the brakes were constantly on – albeit only slightly. Every time he was off the power the thing was trying to spin, so he did a very good job to adapt and nurse the car to the end. We'd had high hopes of the weekend, but the problem was only going to become apparent once he'd completed a certain amount of running – and that happened to coincide with the start of the race. We had planned a couple of test days: the first went well, but the second was affected by fog and we managed only a few laps. If we'd been able to run more then, we'd have found and fixed the problem and the race might have been a different story."

❖

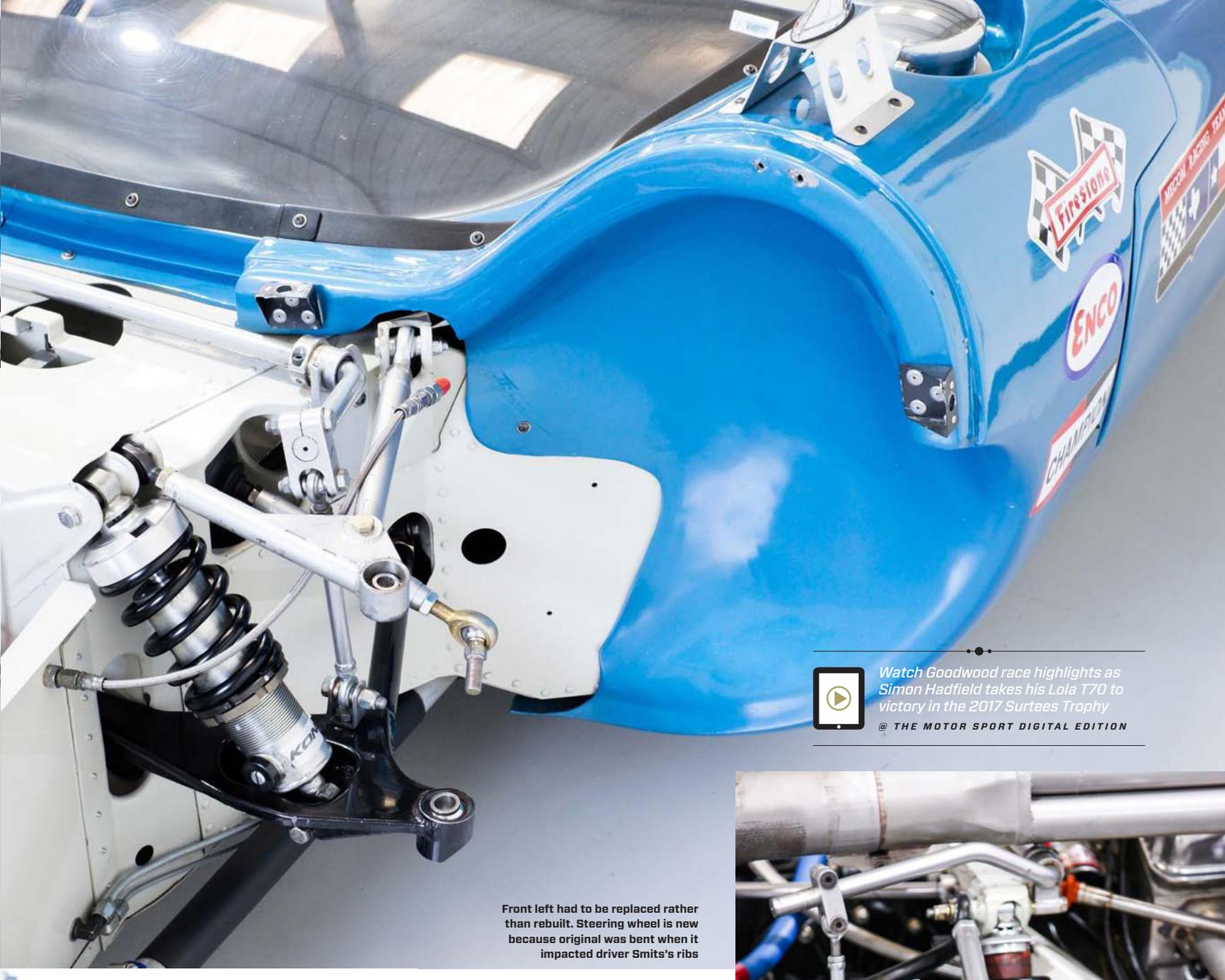
IN ADDITION TO THE T70S AND THE Tyrrell, CMS is fettling two other Lola sports-prototypes (T292 and T212), two Formula Juniors (one Cooper, one Envoy), an E-type Jaguar, a Lotus 47 and a March 782, but hopes to extend its racing commitments in the near future. Cheek has one eye on the recently announced Masters Le Mans Legends Series for 1995-2011 prototypes and GTs. "I'd like a prototype in the workshop," Cheek says, "especially if it was one I'd worked on previously. I think people will be asking £10,000 for a set of carbon discs and pads, which is madness, but you should be able to contest the series sensibly if you do your homework and choose the right car. A Lola B2K/40 would fit the bill, with its steel brakes, honeycomb chassis and so on.

"I love working on any car, old or new – the modern stuff is designed to be easier to maintain, but the preparation principles remain the same."

Smits? He'll be racing his T70 at selected events this summer – some of them in the UK – and also competing in a Shelby Mustang he has owned for a while.

Did he feel any apprehension as he strapped himself into the Lola and ventured out to practise at Goodwood one year on? "Not at all," he says, "because I had absolutely no recollection of ever having been there before." M

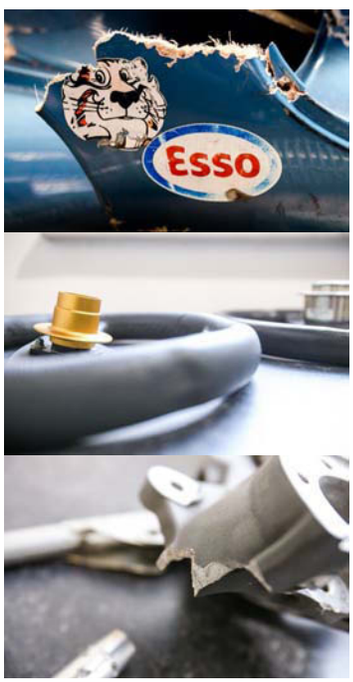
"THE LEFT-FRONT CORNER HAD TO BE REPLACED, BUT THE OTHER THREE ALL STILL FEATURE THE SAME PARTS"



Watch Goodwood race highlights as Simon Hadfield takes his Lola T70 to victory in the 2017 Surtees Trophy

@ THE MOTOR SPORT DIGITAL EDITION

Front left had to be replaced rather than rebuilt. Steering wheel is new because original was bent when it impacted driver Smits's ribs



MEET THE MAN BEHIND A MILLION BOYHOOD DREAMS

The Tamiya Plastic Model Company is universally recognised for its accurate scale replicas and has inspired countless car designers and racing fans

writer MARCUS NICHOLLS

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED in motor sport, then you probably have fond memories of Tamiya models. The Japanese company's radio-controlled and plastic car kits are most people's first experience of building a scale model vehicle – and often herald a lifetime's fascination with all things petrol-powered.

One well known Formula 1 designer has even admitted privately that, as a young lad, he would buy Tamiya F1 car kits and cut up the body parts to create new aerodynamic forms. This inspired him to become an engineer and he ended up creating some of the most successful designs in Grand Prix history. Tamiya, then, can be seen as a scale-model gateway drug to the world of hard-core motor sport.

Sure, there were others model manufacturers producing kits in the 1970s and '80s, but Tamiya's products offered something new; moulded plastic parts that fitted together without fighting back, plus accurately profiled bodyshells. Unlike rivals, Tamiya models just looked 'right' and much of that is down to the company's president for the past three decades, Mr Shunsaku Tamiya.

My first encounter with Mr Shunsaku Tamiya was in 1994, during my first visit to the Nuremberg Toy Fair, a vast annual trade show in Bavaria that encompasses all aspects of the toy and hobby industries, scale and RC modelling included.

Every year, the modelling magazine editors would make an annual pilgrimage to the event to gather editorial material for their respective titles and, as a lowly editorial assistant, at *Tamiya Model Magazine International* it was my first work-trip abroad. Business class? No, nor even economy; we drove from our Hertfordshire office to Nuremberg in the company Ford Mondeo estate.

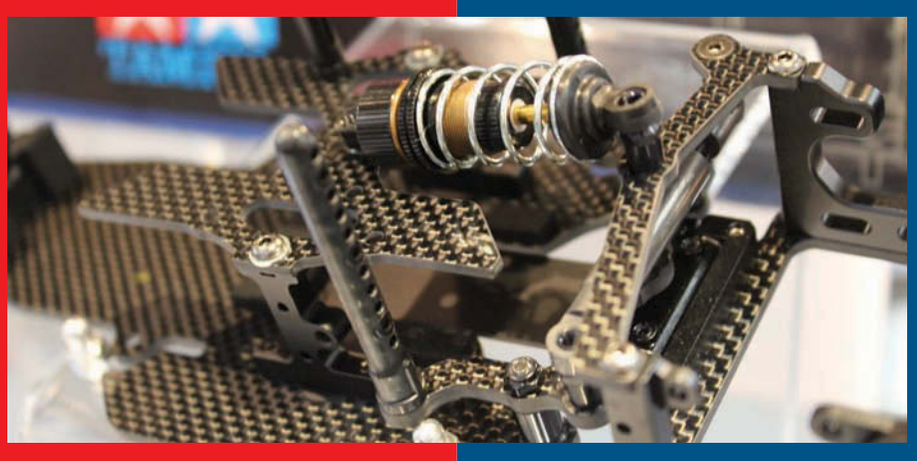
Back then, the Tamiya trade stand was smaller than it is now, but for me it still held the mystique of a temple, albeit one dedicated to scale modelling. All I can recall of meeting Mr S Tamiya was desperately trying not to make a fool of myself, shaking his hand while simultaneously bowing, a gesture not really expected of westerners, but I did it anyway.

The next year I was invited to Tamiya's HQ at Shizuoka City and this time I was far more confident. We spent much time talking about scale modelling and Mr Tamiya, Bud Voss (a friend and colleague of Shunsaku) and I managed to polish off a litre of Jim Beam in the top office, which overlooks Mt Fuji. Today as editor of that magazine, I still remember meeting Mr S Tamiya – a memory that will stay with me forever.

So what is it that makes Tamiya models so special? To understand it fully we first need a bit of history.

THE FAMILY-OWNED COMPANY WAS founded in 1946 and started out making wooden kits of battleships in the immediate post-war years. The company's home town of Shizuoka City, just over 100 miles south-west of Tokyo, was a centre for the timber industry and so there was a plentiful supply of high-grade Japanese cyprus, magnolia and katsura woods from which to make the kits.

In the late 1950s, with the increasing popularity of plastic model kits imported from the United States, the sales of wooden kits went into decline and Tamiya (then still run by Shunsaku's father, Yoshio) had no option but to convert to the new technology and start creating its own injection-moulded plastic models.



In 1960 the company's first polystyrene kit was released, the WW2 Imperial Japanese Navy battleship Musashi in 1:800. It was by no means a success, thanks to the simultaneous – and less expensive – release of exactly the same subject by rival Japanese manufacturer, Nichimo.

In an attempt to recoup some of the tooling costs of the failed Musashi project, a cheap and cheerful solution was needed and this resulted directly in Tamiya's first model car kits, the 'Baby Racers'. In reality, these were not actually Tamiya products at all; they were made from toy car moulds, borrowed by Tamiya as an expedient measure. The parts were marketed in attractive new packaging that echoed pop-art imagery and, to the huge relief of the company, sold in enormous numbers.

At the time of the Musashi's release, Shunsaku also commissioned his younger brother Masao, then a first year student at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, to create a new company logo. He drew up the 'Star Mark' that has endured to this day and become the most evocative and

Highlights from Tamiya's back catalogue include the 1:12 Honda RA273 and the firm's first radio-controlled model, a Vaillant-liveried Porsche 934 complete with battery quartet

prestigious emblem in the model industry.

Tamiya fully established itself as a plastic model company through the 1960s and '70s with a line of tanks and other military vehicle kits. The popular scale of 1:35 that now dominates this modelling subject came about purely by chance, when Tamiya's Panther tank kit – which was motorised and had to accommodate two type-B batteries – just happened to be one thirty-fifth the size of the real tank. The scale stuck, and now it is by far the most popular size for model military kits and figures.

One of the key things about these early years is the fact that it was Shunsaku who wrote to the museums, racing teams and manufacturers to arrange research visits. It was he who took the photos, measured up tanks, aircraft, racing cars, sketched the box art, drew the instructions, built the display models and sold to distributors at trade fairs. Mr Shunsaku Tamiya 'was' Tamiya.

Tamiya's true history with automotive scale models began in 1965 with the creation of its first slot car, the 1:24 Jaguar D-type. It was a highly developed design with a low centre of gravity (thanks to a beautiful brass chassis), ball-race bearings and coil-spring rear suspension. The Jaguar sold extremely well in Japan, but the slot car craze was already beginning to fade in the company's home market – partly because officials perceived slot racing to be on the same level as how we view amusement arcades today; slightly dubious places to hang out and morally questionable. Schools banned their young students from visiting slot race venues and the craze faded.

THE STORY COULD HAVE ENDED THERE but for the fact that Tamiya came to the attention of European modellers – and Formula 1 followers in particular – with the release in 1967 of the Honda RA273, in the large scale of 1:12.

The car had won the 1965 Mexican Grand Prix and Shunsaku wanted to celebrate its achievement: "The conventional wisdom in the world of F1 was that it took a minimum of 10 years from first participating in a race to winning one. Honda had reached the top in a mere year and a half. It was an unfeasibly brilliant achievement. This amazing performance was what inspired me to create a model of the Honda F1 car."

The main problem was not so much in the model's creation, but in having it sell well in Japan; in the mid-60s, the fanbase for F1 in Japan was in its infancy and the sport was barely reported in the domestic press. It was during one of Shunsaku's business trips to Britain that his mind was made up for him. On the insistence of the company's charismatic UK distributor Richard Kohnstam (remember the RIKO stickers on Tamiya kit boxes in the 1970s and '80s?), Tamiya went ahead with the project, on the basis that F1 was so popular in Europe that the kit would sell successfully with little effort.

At that time, Tamiya employed a 20-year-old petrolhead by the name of Kazuo Okabe as a designer – and it was he that Shunsaku entrusted with the Honda kit's development. The real car was about to be air-freighted to Monaco for the GP, so all of Tamiya's Honda research photos and measurements were carried out in a shipping warehouse at Tokyo's Haneda airport.

The result was a stunning model of this important machine and it still stands as an excellent replica that has sold well throughout its several re-issues over the years. The finished model measures 333mm long, 143mm wide and 70mm high. It comes with a fully detailed engine and has semi-pneumatic rubber tyres (invented by Tamiya for scale models) plus a seated driver figure.

Tamiya is world famous for its static scale models, of course, but there's a whole other side to the company: radio control. In 1976, Tamiya launched its very first RC car, the Vaillant-sponsored Porsche 934 Turbo, but it came

about in a slightly unorthodox manner. In the same year, Tamiya released one of its most iconic static model kits in the form of the 1:12 Porsche 934 RSR, in the fabulous orange Jägermeister livery. It was detailed inside and out and was highly accurate, a feat of scale authenticity achieved when Mr S Tamiya purchased a brand new 911 and took it apart, bolt by bolt, to measure the bodyshell.

"I made up my mind to buy a 911," he said later. "I was buying the car for reference, not for driving. Disassembly was my only aim. I deposited the 911 in the garage of my house and every part that could be dismantled, was dismantled."

The disassembly was rapid, but a Porsche dealer in Japan was called in to re-assemble the poor thing, much to his exasperation. This 911 now resides in the lobby museum at Tamiya HQ and is always popular with visitors.

INITIALLY THE 934 KIT DID NOT SELL well due its high price; so much time and effort had been put into the model's research and tooling that the costs had snowballed. Something had to be done to offset the outlay of creating the near-perfect bodyshell moulding. What can you do with an exquisitely detailed 1:12 Porsche bodyshell? Add radio controls, of course! Mr Tamiya had observed one of his employees (the now legendary RC car designer Fumito Taki) playing with RC models during his lunch breaks and presented him with the challenge of creating a radio-controlled Porsche 934 Turbo. The model used regular dry-cell batteries, which ran out after 10 or so minutes of running, so Tamiya developed rechargeable NiCad battery packs for the Porsche and subsequent models, which went on to become an industry standard for many years.

The 934 was a huge hit and launched Tamiya's radio-control ranges, which included such classics as the Sand Scorcher Baja Buggy, the first mass-market off-road RC car that every schoolboy of a certain vintage is likely to remember.

Against a backdrop of growing popularity of Formula 1 in Japan, thanks to the participation in the 1987 season of Satoru Nakajima and thus greatly increased TV coverage, Tamiya's F1 car releases also became ever more successful. In 1991 Tamiya began its sponsorship of Team Lotus, during a time of crisis for the team. It had lost a major sponsor, plus an engine supplier, and was in need of support; it couldn't even afford to ship its cars from England to America for one race, so Mr S Tamiya met this cost. Having had support from Tamiya, Team Lotus gained the backing of Japanese companies Hitachi and Shionogi and the team was viable once more. In an act of gratitude, team principal Peter Collins, a Tamiya model fan himself, stuck the company's logos on his cars.


Mr Tamiya in research mode with radio-control guru Glynn Pearson. Left, talking to Brabham-era Bernie Ecclestone and, right, with John Player Team Lotus chief Peter Warr

Naturally Tamiya has expanded over the years and now does much of its manufacture in a vast purpose-built factory on the island of Cebu in the Philippines, established in September 1994.

In Japan, branches of Tamiya's Plamodel Factory offer customers modelling facilities once their choice is made

But if you really want to get a flavour of the company, you need to travel to Japan. Here there is a series of factory outlet stores known as the Tamiya Plamodel Factory. At street level these sell Tamiya's kits, tools, paints, books and accessories, but in the basement you'll find something very different: for a small charge, you can rent a modelling table for a few hours and use it to build and paint the model you have just purchased from the shop upstairs.

The price includes a locker that allows you to store your kit in its box, plus the paints, airbrush and tools needed for its assembly and finishing. On my visits to Plamodel Factories in Tokyo, this didn't seem as lonely as it might sound; I saw fathers and mothers with their children, all building things together in a modelling pastiche of a family meal at a restaurant. It is typical Tamiya and typical of the company's charismatic boss. Shunsaku is now 83, but if his sprightly dancing at this year's Nuremberg Toy Fair is anything to go by, he's never lost a childlike wonder in his toys. M

Marcus Nicholls is editor of Tamiya Model Magazine, published in the UK and around the world: www.tamiyamodelmagazine.com

AN AUDIENCE WITH MR TAMIYA

At the 2017 Nuremberg Toy Fair, editor Nick Trott sat down with his hero Shunsaku Tamiya

AS AN INNOVATOR, MR TAMIYA SHOULD BE considered in the same league as Colin Chapman. As a businessman, he should be likened to Henry Ford. He is, in my mind, every bit as inspirational as these men.

Shunsaku Tamiya inspired a passion for cars in many people – me included. I remember my first kit – an F2 radio controlled car hand-me-down from a cousin. Such was it a perfect scale mimic of the real thing, and so beautiful was its engineering I couldn't understand why my older cousin would surrender it. Still, he's not getting back, I thought.

Slowly I collected Tamiya models. I drew Tamiya models – particularly the buggies. I covered my school text-books in pages from the beautifully printed Tamiya catalogues. I laughed at the rear wing slogans on said buggies ('Being Nuts Is Neat') and I would dream about owning the ultimate Tamiya radio controlled buggy – the Avante.

The Avante 4x4 was exquisite. It used a mid-mounted motor in a carbon-reinforced chassis. It had three differentials. It used tiny aluminium rose-joints. It was also beyond the realms of my pocket money so I saved, and saved, and saved. Then one day I had enough to buy one. I still remember the day I unboxed it; I could barely breathe.

When I became a motoring journalist I made it a mission to meet Mr Tamiya – to look him in the eye and say 'thank you'. Luckily enough, I did that 10 years ago at the Nuremberg Toy Fair. I didn't think I'd get the chance to meet him again but I'd heard a rumour that this year – the 50th year Tamiya has exhibited at the Toy Fair – would be the last Shunsaku would attend. I simply had to jump on a plane and try to speak to him again.

A broad grin envelops his face. He looks much younger than his 83 years. He tells me that he has no plans to stop travelling to the Toy Fair. "This is business for me, but my personal passion too. When I came here for the first time I was 32, quite a lot has changed since then. As I have been travelling since I was very young, I was fortunate to find out what to do to make a global business.

"It is a fact that a number of people have been using the PC game [in recent years], but the enjoyment of assembling something by hand is totally different from a PC game. Modelling something is analogue. By assembling our products, people can learn how a car is contrasted – why a stabiliser is needed, a differential, suspension. And the history too. For any kind of model, the story behind it is also very important. It is perhaps sad that children are not experiencing this.

"From a small child, I liked making models. When I was young the Condor visited Japan – and since then I loved aircraft. In 1967 I visited England and went to the Imperial War Museum to see the Mosquito. I have a, how do you say, romance for that aircraft. When I saw it, I thought that the engineering capability of my company then meant I couldn't make it. It was a dilemma; as the president of the company I loved the aircraft and I wanted to make it but we were not ready. Forty years later, we did."

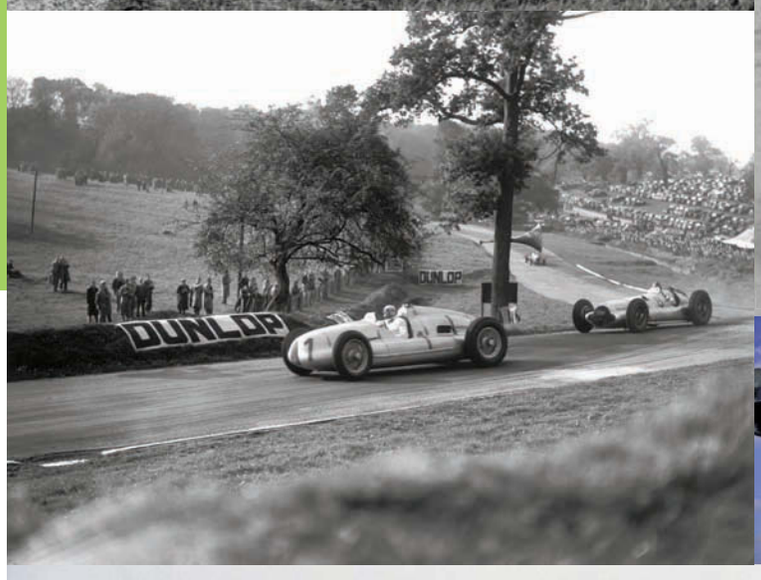
As Mr Tamiya speaks that final paragraph, something dawns on me. He's so much more than a Chapman-esque innovator or a great businessman; his respect for the subject also makes him an archivist – accurately preserving the history of mankind's greatest machines. Long may that continue.

With thanks to Anthony Shaw, Pete Binger, The Hobby Co (www.hobbyco.net) and Shunsaku Tamiya.

A TALK IN THE PARK

As Donington celebrates the ruby anniversary of its rebirth, we meet some of those who helped get it through good years and bad

writer GORDON CRUICKSHANK



Mike Thackwell leads away a 1984 Euro F2 round. Inset, re-opening meets programmes. Far left, the Park's pre-war apotheosis with Silver Arrows unleashed, which brought huge crowds, below. Bottom left, Wheatie's greatest day – top-hatted Tom with top dog Senna

LAT & SUTTON

FORTY YEARS. THAT IS the milestone Donington Park circuit celebrates this season. Early middle-age in human terms, yet in celebrating those four decades the revived Donington Park circuit is not only fitter than ever but flexing new-found muscles. It won't host another Formula 1 Grand Prix, but can and does host almost everything else – touring cars, superbikes, historics, trucks, not to mention music festivals – and seven hard years after a disastrous re-boot attempt the evidence of those depredations is gone; the place is smart, toned and verdant. You can almost feel Tom Wheatcroft beaming down over the park as the paddock fills with competitors, the stands with spectators.

"This is the first time we've had the entire infield open since 2010," says Christopher Tate, Donington's MD, watching the Historic Festival get going. "There's great viewing. Stand on the outside of Macleans and you can see a longer sequence of racetrack than anywhere else in Britain." He's proud of the circuit, and of the dedicated team who oil the invisible cogs that allow racing to happen and later I'll get to talk to a few.

Like Goodwood, the track now has a longer history since revival than in original guise. Between the wars it had a bare decade from the first unsurfaced motorcycle races of 1931 to extinction by events abroad. Yet those few years as Britain's foremost road-racing track finally drew the European racing troupe across the Channel and culminated in the two legendary Grands Prix of 1937 and '38 when Caracciola, Nuvolari, Rosemeyer, Lang and Seaman displayed the German cars' eye-watering performance to an amazed British crowd.

The significance of those two races was crucial, not just because it demonstrated how the lack of a suitable road circuit had let the UK drop out of Grand Prix endeavour; it also planted the seed that would grow into the track we have today. For a burly young local lad called Tom Wheatcroft watched those races, and never forgot them. Not that he swore then and there to restore and restart the track: war service and his subsequent house-building business occupied this driven man, but as his activities became immensely profitable – the post-war housing shortage was acute – Tom's intense love of Grand Prix racing meant he could reward himself with a historic racing car or two. Or more – by the late 1960s he had gathered about 30, and he needed somewhere to keep them.

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TODAY THE DONINGTON GRAND PRIX collection is world-famous, packed with Vanwalls, BRMs and the biggest spread of McLarens on public view as well as some thundering huge war machines, and in its crankshaft-plan building is one of the highlights of a visit to the track, as well as a valuable functions venue. It seems a natural home, yet it wasn't Wheatcroft's plan.

Given Wheatcroft's antler-locking tussles with planning officials over the years, it's amusing that the seed idea of buying Donington Park was gifted him by Leicestershire's planning chief. But in his autobiography *Thunder in the Park* that's who Tom said triggered it, when he was looking for somewhere to display his growing collection.

By now the one-time romantic parkland enclosing neo-Gothic Donington Hall had been left a wreck after the army's wartime requisition to store thousands of vehicles, and it was an albatross round owner Gillies Shields' neck. Various attempts to restart the moribund track had stagnated, especially after the death of Fred Craner, powerhouse of the circuit in its thriving years. Abandoned and decrepit as it was, few could see a viable future as a motor sport venue. Small businesses still occupied the army buildings while the tyre-churned remnants of a once rural landscape looked not so much a money pit as a cash crevasse.

Looking out over today's international racing circuit with its permanent stands, extensive

Redundant post-war army vehicles line the Melbourne Loop. Right, the old estate entrance, demolished to admit tank transporters

run-offs, hospitality suites and all the trappings of getting thousands of people parked, fed and watered, we're a long way from what Tom persuaded Shields to sell him for £100,000 in 1971. Tom's first intention was merely to preserve the track to run his cars on; his racing involvement concentrated on supporting promising drivers such as Derek Bell and his particular protégé Roger Williamson, tragically killed in 1973 to Tom's lasting distress.

The museum became a reality in 1973, but that track provoked tempting ideas. It also inspired early signs of a 'Donington family' loyalty that continues among the small crew that today runs the estate. Lobbying in support of Wheatcroft's goal, the Donington Park Racing Association Club was formed in 1973 and still continues, nowadays funding rescue equipment as well as running member track days, as club mainstay Brian Bennett points out. Brian has driven the fire vehicle at just about every meeting since 1984; it's a break from his day job – as one of the Donington maintenance crew. If it's been painted, Brian painted it, including the grid markers, and though 77 he remains devoted. "I enjoy everything I do here. It's my life," he says. "I love it." Luckily for domestic harmony, it's his wife Yvonne who runs DPRAC, and she too attends every race.

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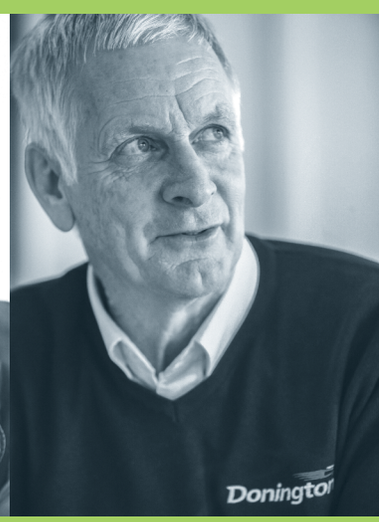
TOM'S BATTLES FOR THE REOPENING were legion: against Rolls-Royce who owned some of the site, the airport, the county council, locals, rival circuits and governing body the RAC MSA. But stubborn as any mule, and with the deep pockets that strengthen any argument, Wheatcroft prevailed. Finally in 1977 a gridful of motorbikes assembled to start the first race since a gloomy 1939. And the £1.2m task took far more than clearing and resurfacing, not to mention a public enquiry. The old track thought nothing of threading the needle of Starkey's Bridge (built in 1834, no overtaking, please), squeezing between Coppice's barn and farmhouse (ditto, if you don't mind), and skimming Redgate Lodge after a left turn from the famous Melbourne Loop, added in 1937 to boost lap length and the scene of those Silver Arrows salmon leaps. Wheatcroft's (inevitable, sensible) revisions eased the 'hairpin', skirted the abutment-shorn bridge, skipped the farmyard (now roughly the Museum car park, while the road past the Museum follows the pre-war track) and saddest of all sacrificed the plunge to the Loop – maybe the only planning battle from which Wheatie baled out. Short-circuiting that was the only brand-new section – the Wheatcroft Straight with its new pits (looking very like the terraced houses Tom's firm built) on the way to Redgate Lodge. Due to East Midlands Airport alongside two entire infield woods had by now disappeared, but this did open up those terrific views.

Still, what a remarkable 20,000 spectators saw on May 15 1977 for that opening bike meeting was very familiar – in the opening programme our own DSJ wrote, "While it is no longer a track through the woods, it is indisputably a park circuit and anyone who saw it when the Army moved out cannot help being filled with admiration for Tom Wheatcroft and the way he has transformed a rubbish dump into a pleasant parkland."

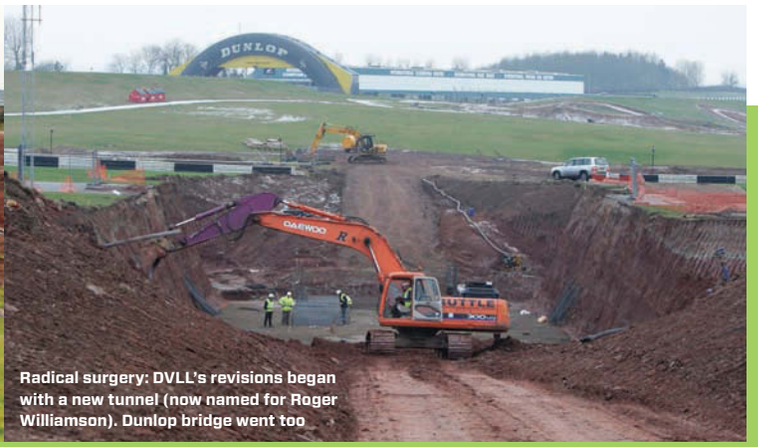
BRIAN BENNETT
FIRE MARSHAL

ALISON NICHOLLS
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



BOB COMMONS
ESTATES DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Such were the teeming queues that for speed Tom told staff to forget the posted £1.20 ticket price and just take a straight pound note. And – typical Tom, who didn't like a fuss – there was no grand opening. Pre-war Mercedes driver Hermann Lang attended an earlier press announcement, but on the day riders simply formed up, watched the flag and set off on the first lap of a new era. Just a fortnight later the first cars arrived – and the MSA rescinded the



Radical surgery: DVLL's revisions began with a new tunnel (now named for Roger Williamson). Dunlop bridge went too

track licence. It took Tom and a QC to quash a row about a footpath with mere hours to go, but Wheatcroft the human bulldozer was not to be denied. This time there was a ceremony, the informal sort that suited Tom: Gunnar Nilsson lapped the new track in his JPS Lotus 77, with an effervescent Wheatie perched on the sidepod, in his own version of paradise.

Watching this was volunteer marshal Diane Hardy – and she's barely missed a meeting since. Now she is chief incident officer in race control, despatching rescue and emergency vehicles, and she also marshals the marshals and runs training – "We can have 150 people here over the weekend. My role is to keep things moving," she says in a quick break during the Historic Festival, one of Donington's success stories. "I release cars from the assembly area, allocate facilities and manage incidents. A vehicle can't be moved from a gravel trap without my instruction, and if the clerk of the course calls a red flag, I put it into action."

On cue the man who gets those instructions arrives – Mick Avery runs the recovery crews and has pulled everyone you've ever heard of out of the gravel. Genial and talkative, he's been at this since 1978. "I reckon I've done 60,000 laps here. I know where we can tow, where we must lift. But it can be hard. Cameras stop you lifting by the roll bar and saloons now have carbon fibre round the roll cage. And Di is always on the radio wanting things moved on – people are losing track time."

"He says 'I need five minutes' and I say 'You've got three'," Di interjects. They're obviously completely in tune, trying to balance optimistic timetables against over-optimistic driving.

"Some people who put the timetable together don't realise the demands," says Di, while Tate adds another unseen side effect of errant drivers: "We've just put 20 tons of gravel back in the traps to replace what gets scooped up in rads and sidepods."

But in this lunch pause Mick has time for stories. "A famous German DTM driver crashed under the Dunlop Bridge and asked me what I thought about the car. I said I didn't have the words. He replied, 'I give you words. It's f***ed.' Thankfully he had lift eyes in the roof which I've been on about for years, and this season the touring cars all have to have them."

It's a specialised discipline: "I couldn't send a road recovery guy here," says Mick. And there's the unpleasant side, holding up blankets around an injured driver. "The buggers will take pictures," he says, feelingly. Among hero memories of dealing with Surtees, Sears and Hulme, Mick says "I love the guy with a Transit and a beat-up Mini. It's a joy to help a real enthusiast. They're our customers – we want to keep them. But some don't even say thanks – one American was so aggressive that when I dropped his car back to his pit I told the mechanic he was lucky I didn't punch him. Then four mechanics came out and I thought, 'I'm in trouble.' But they said 'We've had a whip-round. Here's £100 if you smack him in the mouth!'"

GARRY RANKIN
MUSEUM MANAGER

MICK AVERY
RECOVERY CREW

DIANE HARDY
CHIEF INCIDENT OFFICER

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WITH ITS SWEEPING CURVES, PLUNGES and rises and grass run-off with no Armco, Donington quickly became a favourite venue, particularly for bikes. Under Robert Fearnall's Two-Four Sports management the scope of the meetings expanded, with international F2, F3000 and motorcycle races, and once a new Melbourne Loop was laid out behind the paddock in 1987 a motorbike Grand Prix arrived, then World Superbikes. Eddie Lawson won that GP and great riders like Wayne Rainey, Kevin Schwantz, Mick Doohan and Valentino Rossi would likewise score at the Leicestershire circuit. In 1989 came the circuit's first FIA world championship race, for sports-prototypes, in

which silver (Sauber-) Mercedes returned to Donington 50 years on. The Germans were able to laugh at clinching the title under the nose of the replica Spitfire overlooking Craner Curves… According to *Motor Sport*, the event "was widely acclaimed, and stakes a powerful claim for the East Midlands track to hold a Formula 1 GP in the foreseeable future".

It took until 1993 for that dream to come true. Five times since 1983 the Grand Prix establishment had promised Wheatcroft a race, then backed out, but when finance collapsed for the proposed Autopolis event in Japan, as 'first reserve' on the F1 calendar Donington was unexpectedly granted the European GP.

ALAN GOW

"GUNNAR NILSSON LAPPED IN HIS LOTUS 77, WITH WHEATIE PERCHED ON THE SIDEPOD IN HIS OWN VERSION OF PARADISE"

Reams have been written about that April day: the deluge, the spray, Ayrton Senna's opening lap, sensational whether or not assisted by electronics, his victory over Damon Hill and pole-sitter Alain Prost. Di Hardy officiated, "But we were so busy I remember little. Except Tom sticking a car in the gravel." Eager to celebrate, Wheatie took out a Mercedes-Benz W154 – and Mick Avery had to recover his boss.

That day remains one of the great GP tales, but it remains unique. By the 1990s Donington's facilities were already borderline for ever-more demanding F1, and while the circus was happy to go there once to vindicate TW's mission, no one campaigned for a return.

Until 2007. We know now it wouldn't happen, but when Donington Ventures Leisure Ltd took over the lease with grand plans to bring back F1 with a Hermann Tilke redesign involving a new pits complex and an infield loop, a new era seemed imminent. FOM awarded DVLL the British GP rights, bulldozers attacked the track, the Dunlop Bridge came down – and then world finances slumped. Everything stalled.

Estates development manager Bob Commons is another long-term Donington figure. "Everyone believed it was going to happen. The track needed improving, and they would run the whole site" – the Wheatcrofts ran the estate but not the racing – "but I still winced when they dug into the track."

But unable to raise the money DVLL folded, laying off all staff and leaving ruin behind. Bob is tight-lipped about the people concerned. "The track was ripped up in 13 or 14 places – they said it was for the archeology. Then there was the infamous tunnel – very badly thought out." Built on the cheap, the tunnel failed to comply with racing requirements.

Tom died in the depths of all this and it was left to his son Kevin to step up. Lawsuits and legalities brought the estate back into Wheatcroft control in 2010, wrecked and bleak, but Kevin called up a handful of loyalists who'd been made redundant including Di Hardy, Bob Commons and museum manager Garry Rankin and appointed Alison Nicholls as chief operating officer. "We restarted with £500 in petty cash," Nicholls recalls. "The track was destroyed; it took major changes to get the licences back – rebuilding the tunnel, demolishing the Redgate pub for more run-off, [the frontage is in store just in case], piling 700,000 tons of material into the infield." Now Nicholls oversees race organisation from renewing licences to complying with the operating manuals for major visiting series.

Some £11m later and World Superbikes, BTCC and the Historic Festival prove that Donington is again not just open for business, but packed out. From this year under Jonathan Palmer's thriving MSV umbrella, the 650-acre site is busy almost every day with racing, testing, launches, even weddings; the Tarmac Lake, once home to the massive Donington market, echoes to Ferraris and Caterhams, the Heritage Loop to manufacturer promotions. But theirs is not a retail operation. "We have a venue hire team who subcontract areas for things like driver experience, skid training and functions," explains Nicholls. "We even had a new toothpaste launched in the Senna suite." There's now a serious off-road course, and of course the music festivals – first Monsters of Rock and now Download. "Don't forget Little Mix," says the urbane Tate, though it sounds from his tone as if he just might not be in that crowd. Erecting temporary stages and vast campsites, festival organisers take the site for a month, says a resigned Bob Commons. "We make it pretty, 70,000 people wreck it, we start again. It's a bit disheartening, but…"

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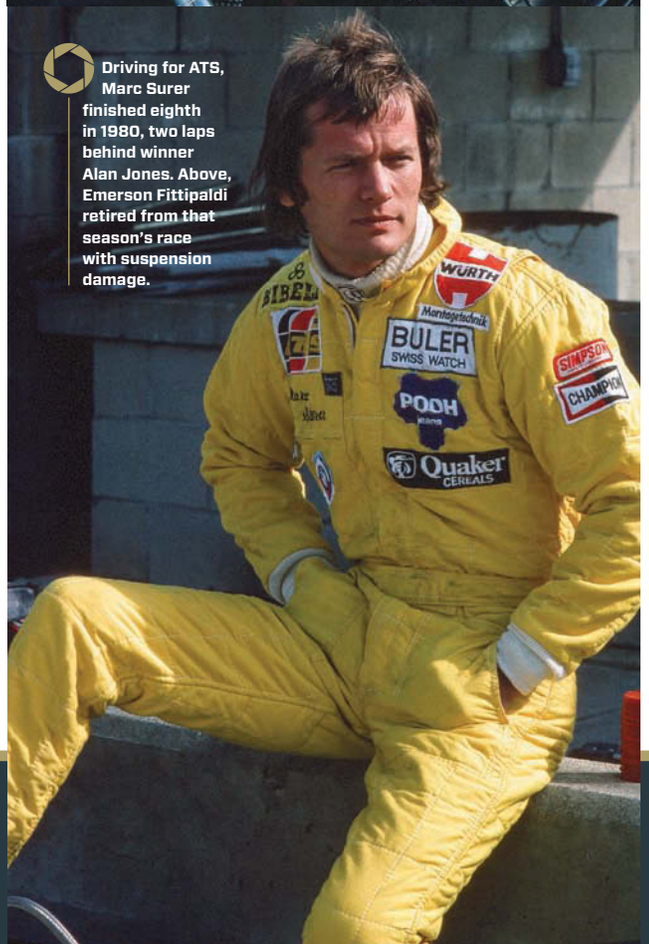
DONINGTON PUSHES THE ACCESS angle hard – it's by the M1, there's a new rail station nearby and it's the only UK track effectively with its own international airport. "I know people who fly in from Spain to test their cars," Tate says, "and we're close to 'motor sport valley'." In 2014 Donington became an international nexus with the building of the £5.7m Formula E development workshops and HQ, which Tate calls "a huge PR boost for us". But this has ended one dream, as Commons who supervised the construction reflects: "There was a plan to reconnect the Melbourne loop for 2019, but now the Formula E complex is in the way."

Most of us visit Donington Park for a particular event, whether a race, a skid training session or to stand in the dark as the amps get cranked up to 11; few of us are aware of the extent, the multiplicity, the mechanics of what goes on here. With its small team – only 25 full-timers – the Park has weathered devastating storms between balmy climes but now the sun seems to be out once more. And if you can hear a distant thunder even after the last race of the weekend finishes, it's probably Tom Wheatcroft, surrounded by his racing heroes, looking down and laughing his booming laugh.

Patrick Tambay is festooned with Marlboro logos, although this precedes his McLaren stint. It's from 1977, when a string of problems prevented him qualifying Theodore Racing's Ensign N177

The apparel of Gilles and Joann Villeneuve implies that it might have been quite cold in 1980. Despite having to drive Ferrari's uncompetitive 312 T5, Gilles looks happy enough... for now. He crashed on lap 50.

While Mario Andretti finished second to James Hunt in 1977, Lotus team-mate Gunnar Nilsson had a tough weekend. Brake problems ruined qualifying and the Swede retired from the race after a clash with Ronnie Peterson.



Driving for ATS, Marc Surer finished eighth in 1980, two laps behind winner Alan Jones. Above, Emerson Fittipaldi retired from that season's race with suspension damage.

PRIVATE VIEW

A 'YOU WERE THERE' SPECIAL

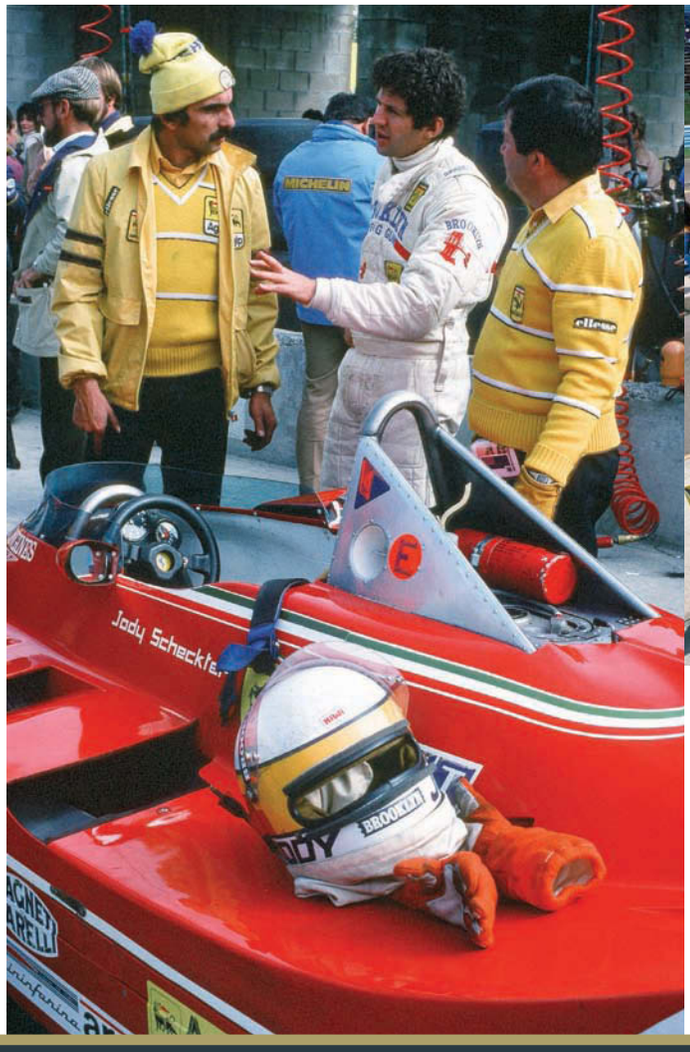
Autumn in upstate New York has always been a time to savour – particularly when the United States GP visited Watkins Glen

CUSTOMARILY IT TAKES ONLY A FEW minutes to stitch together the key elements of this feature. Images often arrive carefully packaged and eloquently captioned, complete with details of the photographic equipment used. Sometimes, though, the supplied information is a little less complete. The adjacent photographs arrived on a CD entitled simply 'Watkins Glen in the late 1970s', but the content was familiar enough. They were sent by John Payne of Alton, Virginia – and we're delighted that he took the trouble.

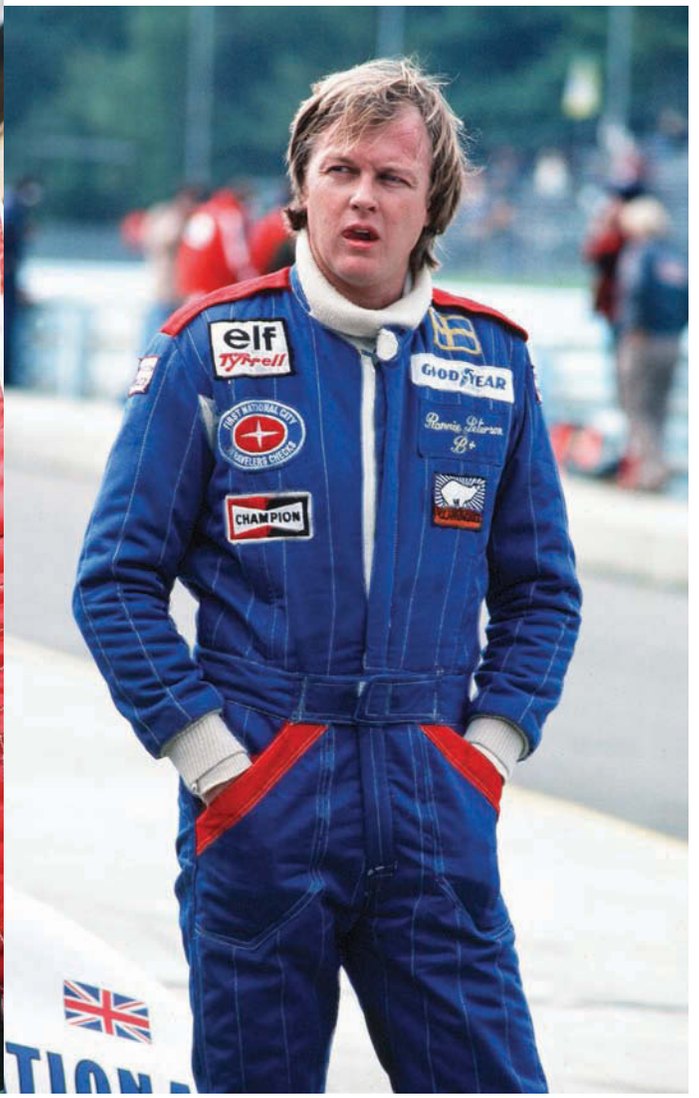
John submitted a blend of action, portraiture and atmosphere embracing Watkins Glen GPs from 1976 through to 1980, the 20th and final time that it was included on the Formula 1 world championship schedule. We don't know whether he had formal accreditation, but he certainly obtained good access.

The modern United States Grand Prix has a fine home at the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, but there is constant talk of the country taking on a second annual F1 fixture. Back in 1976 it had both Long Beach *and* Watkins Glen – a combination whose appeal will perhaps never be surpassed.

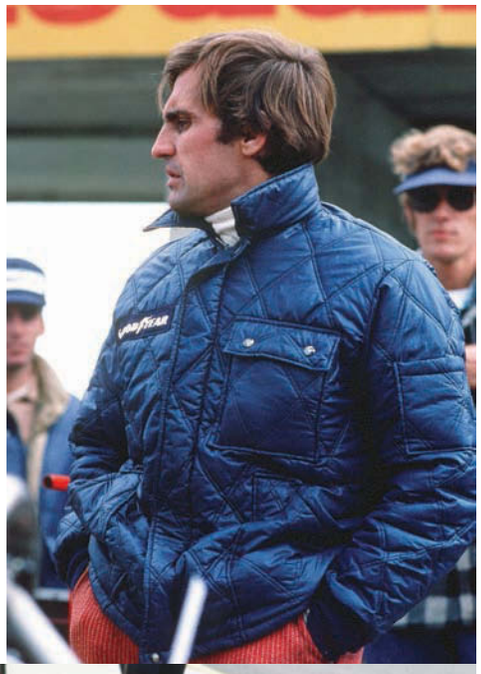
Left, Alan Jones concluded his successful 1980 season with victory at Watkins Glen. Right, Nelson Piquet ran strongly in the early stages that season, but slowed as his tyres faded and eventually spun off. Below left, Jody Scheckter finished 11th at the end of a difficult campaign. It was to be his last F1 race. Below, Renault and Brabham pit armoury.



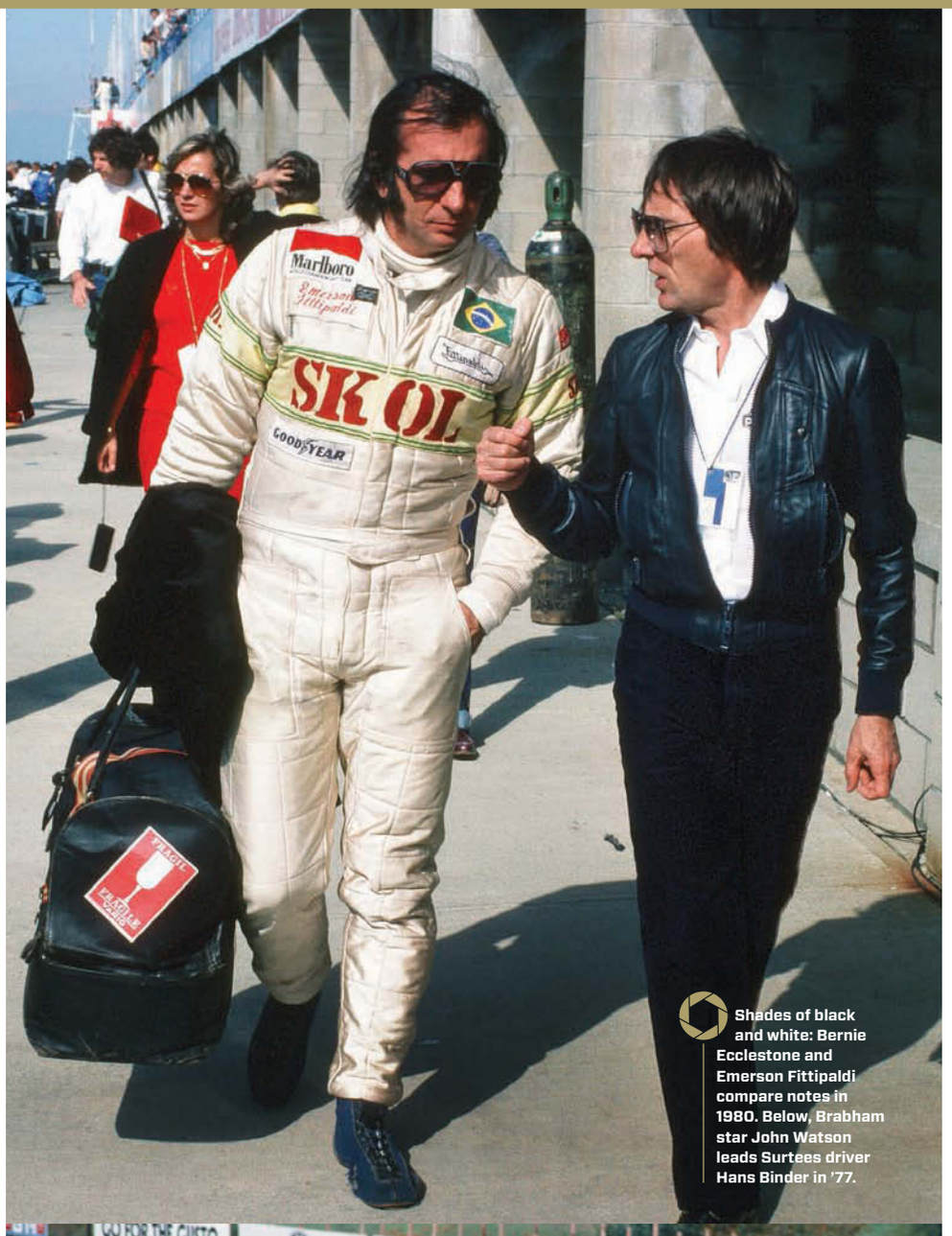
Left, the 1977 US GP would be Niki Lauda's last for Ferrari. Once he'd clinched the championship, he walked out and left a seat free for Gilles Villeneuve. Below, Ronnie Peterson had struggled with Tyrrell's six-wheeler and was tipped to be joining Lotus for 1978.



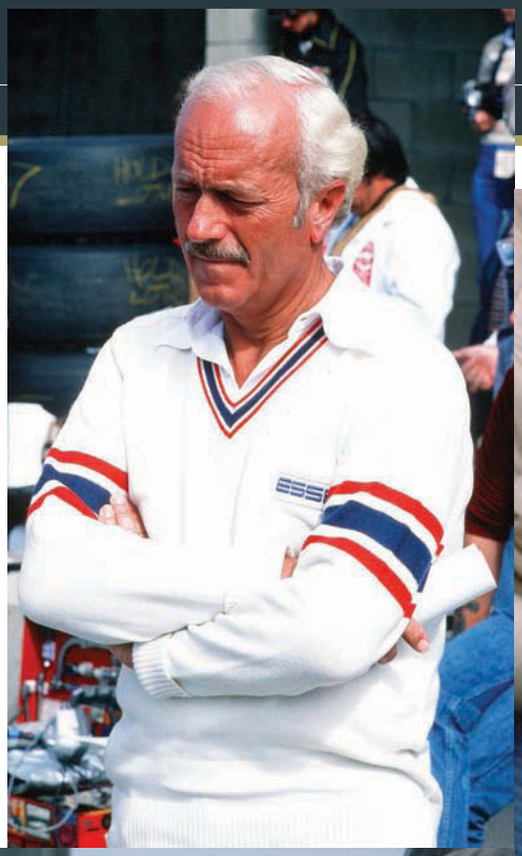
James Hunt being James Hunt in 1977. The winner attacks Niki Lauda with bubbly, the Austrian's fourth place having been enough to secure him a second world title, then helps himself to a kiss.



More from 1977. Top, Carlos Reutemann in traditionally moody posture prior to finishing sixth. Above, Mario Andretti was said to be unhappy to hear Ronnie Peterson might be joining Lotus.



Shades of black and white: Bernie Ecclestone and Emerson Fittipaldi compare notes in 1980. Below, Brabham star John Watson leads Surtees driver Hans Binder in '77.



Pit scenes from 1980, clockwise from left: Nelson Piquet prepares to venture out; Colin Chapman sports cricket-style Essex Lotus teamwear; Jacques Laffite puts pen to paper; Carlo Chiti was able to watch Bruno Giacomelli lead from pole for Alfa, but Andrea de Cesaris (background) crashed out. Above, Watkins Glen had a reputation for exuberant fans. This is from 1978.

Carlos Reutemann and autumnal hues, 1977. Below left, John Watson plus unloved McLaren M29. Below right, Frank Williams in 1980, the year of his team's first F1 world championship success.

Top, we're fairly sure the lady with the 'Lauda' placard is the same one kissed by Hunt on the podium. Above, we're equally sure that Bud Man had been drinking the stuff since the previous Tuesday...

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1976 Penske PC3 F1 Race Car

This Penske PC3 F1 race car was built in 1976 by Roger Penske, he only completed 1 year in F1, and this is chassis #1 of only 2 cars. This car was raced by famous Northern Irish driver John Watson during the 1976 F1 season. He achieved 5th in the South African Grand Prix, 7th at the Belgian Grand Prix and 10th at the Monaco Grand Prix. This PC3/001 is still being raced all over the world as it did in period, it has raced at the last 8 out of 10 current Monaco Historique Grand Prix's and has won in 2008 with Paul Edwards driving. It also came 6th in the wet at the Monaco Historique GP in 2012 with Chris Drake driving. Roger Penske is now 79 years old, yet still the driving force at Team Penske Racing. Important competitive car, well looked after, no expense spared, ready to race with Masters Etc, globally. **P.O.A.**

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ON THE ROAD WITH

SIMON ARRON

From Abu Dhabi to Zolder via Interlagos, Jerez and, obviously, Oulton Park. Where next..?

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Andy Dingley leads the Formula 600 field as flying dust makes a welcome return to the Ashley oval

ALL IMAGES SIMON ARRON

FLIGHT PATH IS THE RIGHT PATH

Ashley, Cheshire, April 30: After much of its 2016 season was washed out, the Leewood Motor Club is back on track

CASTLE MILL LANE. The name will resonate only if you grew up in a very particular part of Cheshire. I used to cycle there as a kid to frequent an open-air swimming pool that has long since disappeared, little imagining that motor sport of any kind might one day break out in the surrounding fields. But…

Formed in the 1970s as an amalgamation of the Lancs & Cheshire Autograss and Leesona-Holt Rally Clubs, Leewood created its Ashley racetrack in 2000, with the assistance of a friendly farmer, and has been there ever since (though the venue's existence somehow escaped me until recently). Time, then, to investigate. This would be my first Cheshire autograss since 1977, when I attended several events at Antrobus – once the rich reward at the end of a 14-mile bike ride, but now sadly buried beneath a golf course.

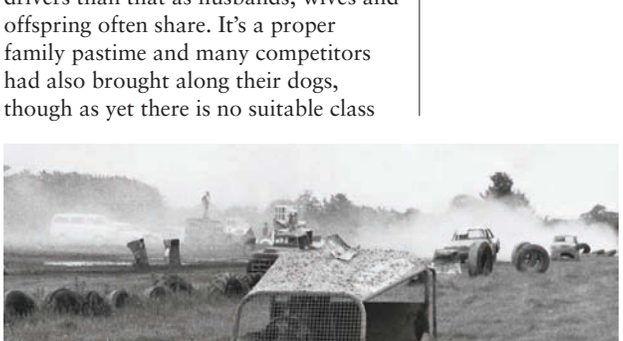
Competition began earlier in the day than anticipated, with a gold-wrapped Jaguar F-type taking on an Aston Martin Vantage through Hyde Park Corner and along Park Lane. The F-type was still leading, just, as they disappeared from view around

Marble Arch – the legitimisation of racing on public roads being taken slightly out of context. Things weren't a great deal calmer on the M40, with the recently announced increase in speeding fines deterring not a single Porsche Cayenne owner from what looked suspiciously like significant three-figure speeds. I eventually peeled away from this stream of constant velocity and took refuge on familiar B-roads, arriving at Ashley's only crossroads to find a small fluorescent 'motor racing' sign pointing to the left. This I knew to be false information: it transpired that one or two local dissenters turn the arrows around as a form of protest, though it's hard to imagine that there can be many valid complaints about extra noise as the track is more or less adjacent to one of Manchester Airport's increasingly busy runways.

The layout is a simple clockwise oval with better facilities than you might imagine – permanent loos, plus a mobile catering van in the classic tradition and a charmingly ramshackle race control hut. (As an aside, former World Touring Car Championship and BTCC racer Tom Boardman is a club alumnus.)

This being a low-key event, there was no formal entry list – it was just a matter of seeing who turned up on the day. In the end there were about 35 cars in various classes, but rather more drivers than that as husbands, wives and offspring often share. It's a proper family pastime and many competitors had also brought along their dogs, though as yet there is no suitable class for quadrupeds. This sense of community extends to many aspects of autograss, with some drivers abandoning competition at lunchtime and assuming marshalling duties during the afternoon.

Clockwise from above: Novas of John McGrady and David Mansfield were tied together every time they appeared; pastoral paddock; rustic efficiency; how Cheshire autograss used to look – Antrobus in 1977



Cars start in a single line abreast, up to eight at a time, though there was ample evidence that you need no more than two for a decent race. John McGrady and David Mansfield proved as much every time they ventured out in their remarkably equal Vauxhall Novas – an object lesson in fierce, clean rivalry. Action began at 11.00 and, with the entry being relatively small, was over shortly after 14.30, with everybody having ample time for several races. When 60 or more cars materialise, as is sometimes the case, meetings tend to run into the early evening.

Given that the venue was a swamp for much of 2016, leading to most fixtures being cancelled, it was ironic – though welcome – that winter drainage work had been so successful that on this occasion the circuit frequently needed to be watered to suppress the dust.

Relative brevity did nothing to dilute the spectacle and I'm fairly certain that Ashley must be one of the most surreal venues in sport: where else can you watch antique Nissan Micras and suchlike kicking trails of dirt towards an Emirates A380 on its final approach?

SONIC BOON

Oulton Park, April 17: Britain's loudest contemporary championship attracts an appreciative audience, but perhaps merits even greater acclaim

THE BRITISH TOURING CAR Championship continues to enjoy a higher profile – and its appeal is self-evident – but it remains a source of bafflement that the GT equivalent isn't perceived as being at least its equal. Even at a time when GT4 cars outnumber their more potent GT3 brethren, the cars have a presence unlike anything else in modern British motor racing. I know this isn't a privilege available to all, but to stand at Deer Leap as a Bentley Continental rumbles past about a metre from your left shoulder is equal parts delicacy and sensory overload.

There is evidence, though, that the series' appeal is growing. Perhaps the Easter Monday element was a factor, but by 9.00 there was talk of traffic stretching back more than a mile from the main entrance and folk queuing for an hour or so just to get in. The spectator banks were in parts absolutely rammed – despite the weather. The forecast predicted no rain all day, but there was little else for much of the morning.

Highlights included a wonderful performance by Jon Minshaw and Phil Keen in Barwell Motorsport's Lamborghini Huracán, who built such a lead that they appeared on course to finish the second race before their rivals were halfway through the first. They went on to win both at a canter. In the opener, the sight of early GT4 pace-setters Ciaran Haggerty/Sandy Mitchell (McLaren 570S) keeping pace with slower GT3s in the damp was entertaining, though subsequent problems denied the Scottish duo a class victory. One wonders what Ron Dennis would make of his 570S being monstered – and sometimes beaten by – Ginetta's G55 GT4, as it was in race two: perhaps he doesn't know.

Barrier damage on Saturday led to the start of the BRDC F3 Championship being put back until Monday, but when it finally got going Enaam Ahmed (Carlin) proved to be the class of the field and won all three races, the first of them after a close tussle with Lanan driver Toby Sowery (who ran wide through the Cascades gravel moments after surrendering the lead).

The revised schedule was always going to put strain on the timetable, but MSVR did a sterling job trying to keep things on track, despite a few curve balls. The second GT race was stopped early after the Ian Loggie/Callum MacLeod Bentley savaged a) the Mercedes of Martin Short/Richard Neary and b) much of the Hill Top tyre wall, while the final Ginetta GT5 race had to be cancelled – not because of anything they had done, but following delays caused by a VW Golf vaulting the Druids guardrail during an earlier race.

There are some things for which one simply cannot legislate.

Enaam Ahmed (65) wrests the F3 lead from Toby Sowery. Below, Minshaw/ Keen Lambo won twice

ADAM PRIOTT

VARIETY CLUB

Thruxton, April 23: Tradition dictates that the Hants racing season should commence at Easter, but it was worth a slight wait

THERE HAD BEEN TIME ONLY TO relish a sausage baguette and a cup of coffee, but none to pore over the entry list. Ordinarily it might have been a surprise to find that the opening practice session of the day contained BMW M3s, Caterhams, a Porsche 911, a BMW bike-engined Citroën 2CV and an MG Magnette, but this was the Classic Sports Car Club – UK racing's master of diversity.

I caught only the second part of its two-day Thruxton extravaganza, but it was an illustration of how race meetings should be run in the modern age – slick, and consistently engaging.

You could argue that Chevrolet Camaros and Ford Capris belong in a category called 'proven' rather than 'future' classics, but it matters not. Most cars qualify for two or more series within the CSCC portfolio and it's just good to see cars of this type being put to competitive use.

There have been changes to Thruxton over the winter – a debris fence has been erected at the chicane exit, which will doubtless be an irritation to some, but the bewildering variety of chosen racing lines remains utterly beguiling, even when observed through wire.

John Spiers (TVR Griffith) won the one-hour Classic K race... by less than a second from the Paul Tooms/Julian Barter Lotus Elan, while 45 cars practised for the Swinging Sixties race, 42 started and Ray Barrow (Camaro) beat the TVR Tuscan of Jon Wolfe/David Thompson by 1.5sec after 40 minutes. And then there were three special saloon/modsports races – relatively low in number and high on unreliability, but if cartoonish Ford Anglias fail to raise a smile then you are probably watching the wrong sport.

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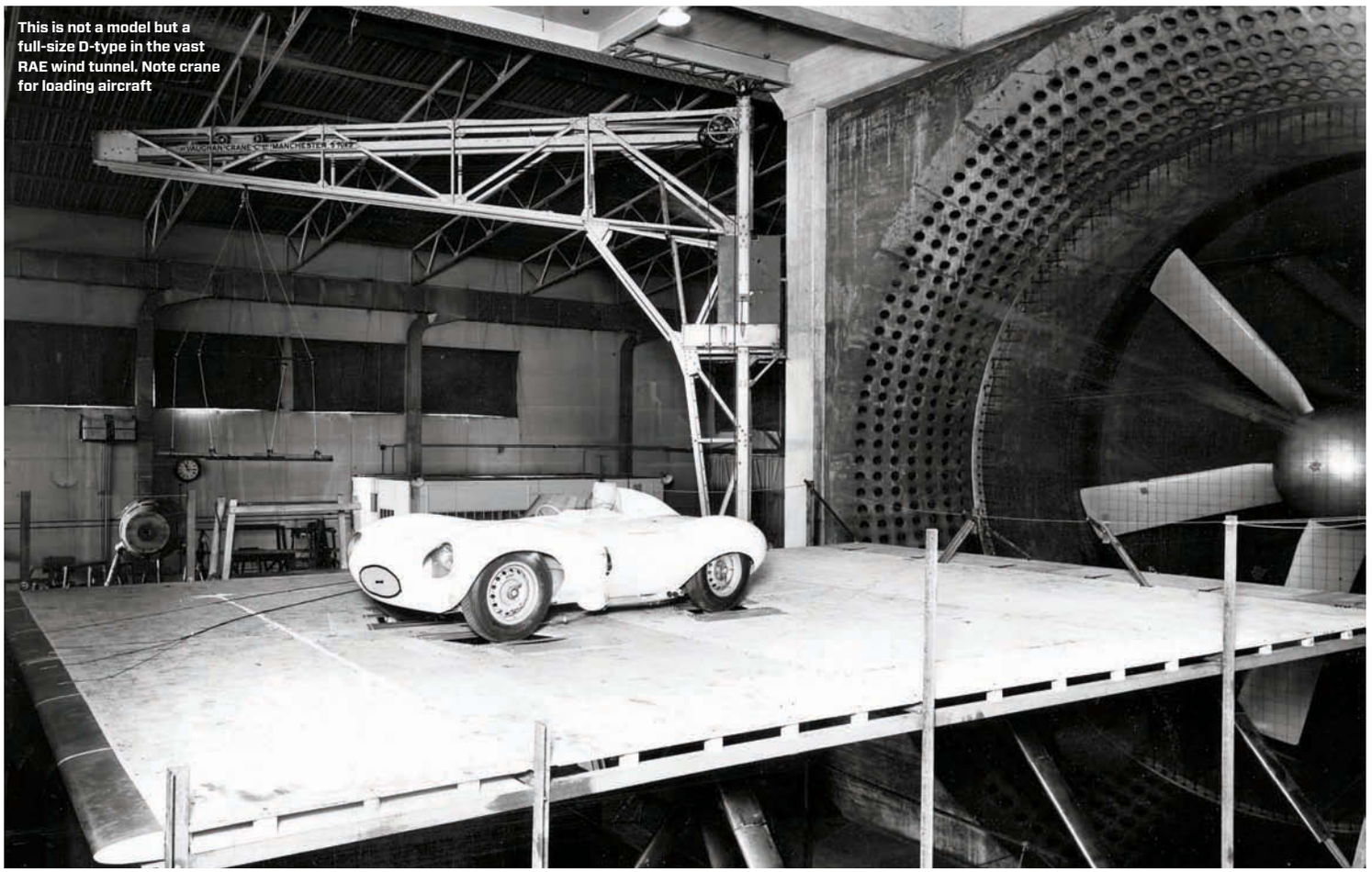


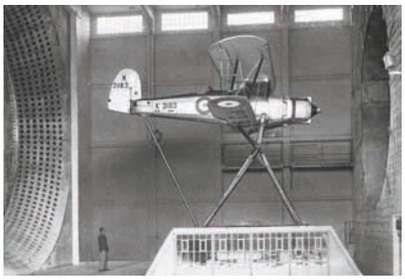
This is not a model but a full-size D-type in the vast RAE wind tunnel. Note crane for loading aircraft

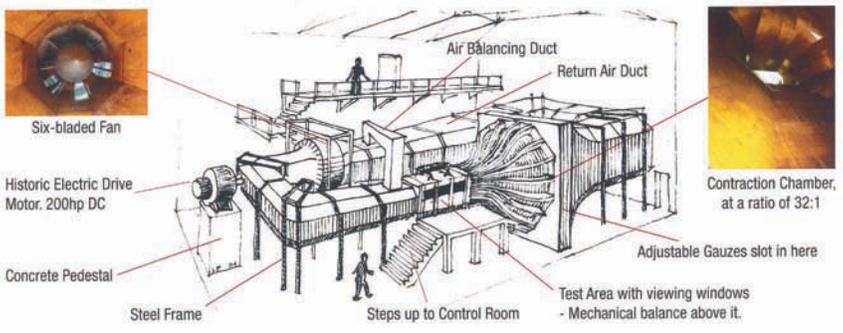
FAST AND CURIOUS

An aviation visit turns into another car-fest at a Farnborough museum

LIKE I SAID LAST MONTH, cars follow me everywhere. A visit to an aerospace museum turned into a car conversation the moment I arrived at FAST – Farnborough Air Sciences Trust. This is the museum for the Royal Aircraft Establishment whose history ran from canvas biplanes to Britain's space race and beyond, so I was expecting lots of aero science, but even before I got out of the car I'd met FAST trustee Richard Buckroyd and his Aston Martin and guess what – he's a member of Hants & Bucks MC, second home to this magazine's stalwarts Bill Boddy and Jenks, both of whom worked here at RAE during WWII. He gave me a personal tour with added automotive highlights.

Packed with beautifully crafted wind tunnel models, Concorde sections, bomb sights, balloon parts, satellites, ejector seats and all the various elements investigated at RAE through the 20th century when it was Britain's dead-secret high-IQ incubator for brilliant ideas (including carbon fibre, developed here), the museum is a fascinating overview of this world-leading outfit. There's even a Polaris missile warhead, making a bit of a contrast with the Cody biplane, a



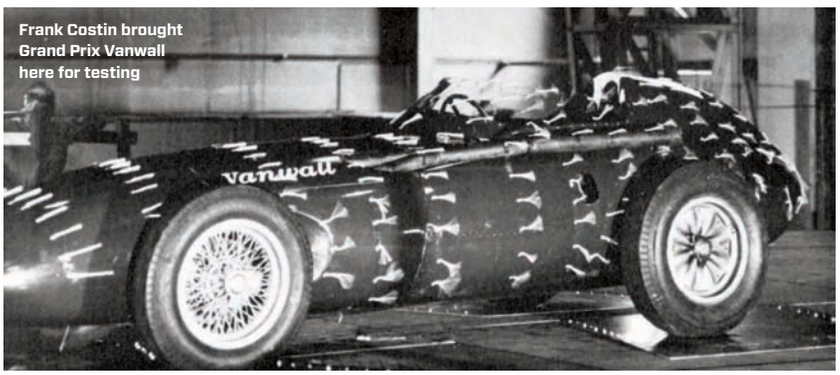


replica of the machine that began Farnborough's intimate links with British aviation. Outside stands an array of aircraft including Harrier, Hunter, Jaguar and a Trident flight deck. Yet Richard tells me the displays are only about 5 per cent of the records, drawings, models and components the trust holds from 110 years of RAE history.

Remarkably, they had a wind tunnel here in 1916. It's long gone, but two others remain, one of them built in 1946 and huge enough to take a full-sized Hurricane. Or a D-type Jaguar, for this was where Malcolm Sayer brought the Le Mans cars to confirm his open-air wool-tuft testing in the airflow of the thundering 30ft fan. Earlier, Frank Costin stuck his streamlined Vanwall in here and even as late as the 1990s Benetton came here for aero experiments before moving-floor tunnels became the norm. And as Farnborough Airport is now owned by TAG and used for business jets, many a driver and team principal drops in here, even Lewis Hamilton in his blood-red Bombardier.

RAE's two remaining wind tunnels are now listed historical artifacts; despite their period looks they were in use up until the 1990s

So far you can only visit the wind tunnels on special tours as they're detached from the museum (itself housed in the 1907 Balloon School building Bod and Jenks must have known well), but the trust wants to open up these Grade II-listed relics to the public. If you like things that go fast, and that's all of us, FAST is a good day out. And free! (But feel free to donate…) *www.airsciences.org.uk*



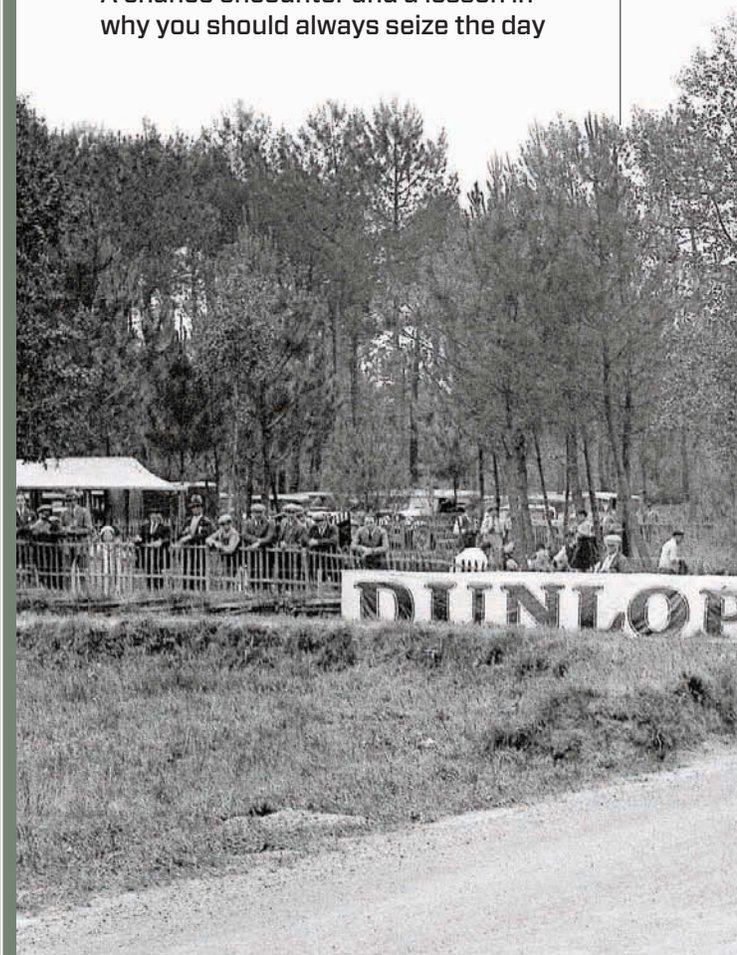
Frank Costin brought Grand Prix Vanwall here for testing

HANDLING SO MANY READER QUERIES I see a lot that say "my great uncle was a Brooklands racing driver…" Family legends frequently expand themselves over the years, and often a bit of investigation establishes that rather than being a hero of the Outer Circuit the chap in question once entered a concours at the Clubhouse. So when I arrived in Devon for a weekend house party during the 1980s and was introduced to a lady who said "you must meet my husband – he raced at Le Mans in 1930", my mental mode clicked into polite wariness. This lady was perhaps in her 50s then, so the chronology didn't add up. But then I met the husband, obviously much older, who said, "Oh yes, Brian Lewis and I finished third in a Talbot in 1930."

This cheery, tweed-clad figure was Hugh Eaton, who indeed shared a works Talbot 90 with the Hon Brian Lewis (later Lord Essendon to the confusion of many a researcher) to chase home the Speed Six Bentleys of Barnato/Kidston and Clement/Watney. He was very modest about it, waving it off as just one of the things one does in one's youth, though he did chuckle about the results sheet: the first six crews home that year were British, in five British cars plus Lord Howe's 6C 1750 Alfa

MEETING EATON

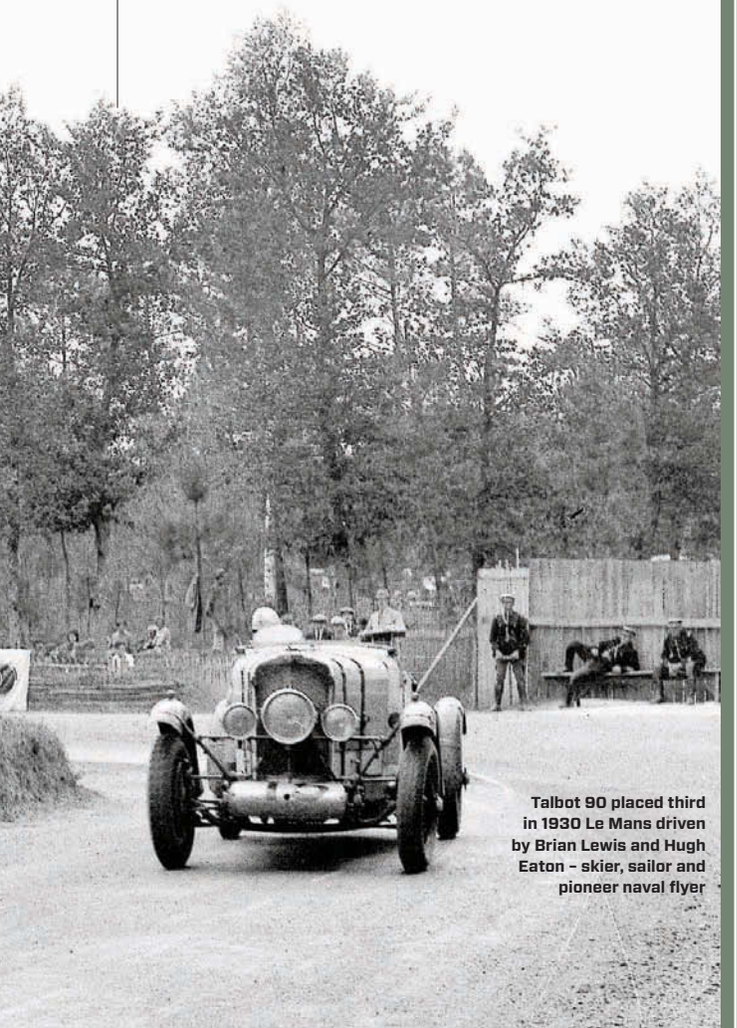
A chance encounter and a lesson in why you should always seize the day



Romeo, and the first French car in the list was driven by two ladies, Mademoiselles Mareuse and Siko in a Type 40 Bugatti. All of which, according to Eaton, was less than pleasing to the home establishment, not known for waving the feminist flag all those years ago.

It was a busy weekend and I didn't get the chance to ask Eaton much about his racing, but later I took Bill Boddy to the Eatons' London flat where WB did a short interview. Hugh's first wife Colleen was also a racer, one of George Eyston's 'Dancing Daughters' who raced a team of MG PA/Bs at the Sarthe in 1935, but the lady I met was his third wife Barbara who cheerfully denied any interest in cars.

Re-reading WB's story (December 1985 in the *Motor Sport* archive) I wish I could go back and resume the conversation: Eaton was not only a Brooklands regular in Aston Martin and GN cars and a round-the-world sailor, but had a pilot's licence before he could drive. He learned to fly in the RNAS in WWI and flew his own DH Gypsy Moth from home to The Track when racing. But what intrigues me now is that during WWI he was one of the Sopwith Camel pilots conducting experiments in launching aeroplanes from ships – and we're not talking aircraft carriers but makeshift ramps on cruisers, sometimes built atop the gun barrels. Amazing and heroic stuff. Why didn't I ask more questions?



Talbot 90 placed third in 1930 Le Mans driven by Brian Lewis and Hugh Eaton – skier, sailor and pioneer naval flyer

LAT

One-off Rolls was hand-built for a wealthy businessman

RARE ROLLS CHOICE

Tripping over a Silver Spirit that Crewe never knew

ON THE HUNT FOR A BMW 635CSi I found myself on the fringes of Redhill Aerodrome, where AutoContinental was advertising a red one. The BMW was standing out front, but I barely noticed it because behind I could see swooping razor-edged curves surmounted by the Spirit of Ecstasy. It was like no Rolls-Royce I'd ever seen, and at first I thought someone had grafted that Parthenon grille onto a concept car. Or perhaps it was a refugee from a film set – a supporting player in *Blade Runner* or Lady Penelope's courtesy car while FAB 1 is being serviced. But no, I soon learned that within the sweeping wings and glass bubble roof lurked a genuine 1987 Silver Spirit, currently sidelined with blown gaskets.

After inspecting the sci-fi coupé with its aluminium dash, LED door panels and rear-view TV monitor (rare back then), I did a bit of research.

The work of Indian designer Dilip Chhabria, it was assembled for a Dubai-based Indian businessman who clearly found everyday Royces too dull. After being stripped of all bodywork down to scuttle and wheelarches, it was clothed in this fantastical confection, all hand-beaten from steel: judging from the two-man effort to raise the bonnet the whole thing must weigh about the same as the Parthenon, yet it's very precisely built. Those stainless steel fillets are crisp, the knife-edge Perspex lights are machined from solid and the fishbowl glasshouse is an achievement in itself.

Chhabria went on to shape a gull-winged coupé from a 2005 Phantom that is worth Googling, but whatever you think of the styling there's no doubting the fit and finish – which is presumably why his Mumbai-based DC Design firm now has an unheralded niche in the motor business assembling one-off concept and prototype cars for other manufacturers. Even Aston Martin's V8 Vantage concept, designed in the UK initially by Ian Callum and revealed at the 2003 Detroit Motor Show, was hand-built in Mumbai on a cut-down DB7 platform long before any production prototypes were born at Gaydon.

I could only grab some rushed 'phone shots of the 'Scarlet Spirit', but you can make your own judgment about aesthetics. Incidentally, if you're wondering why there's a stripped Shadow behind, AutoContinental both breaks and mends R-Rs, and the proprietor is building all the running gear from a Bentley Turbo into a Shadow shell. That's a Q-car and a half. M

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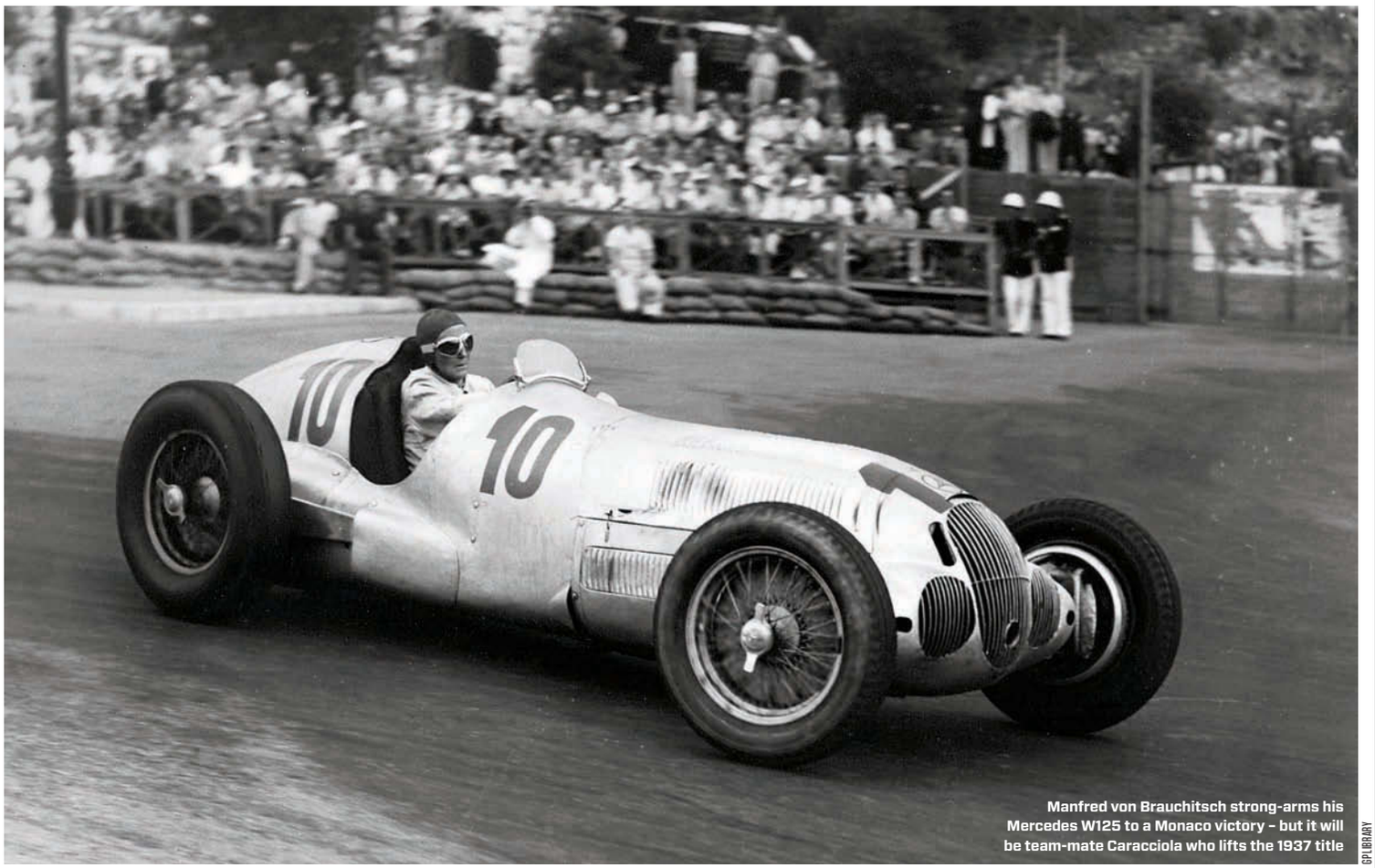
Our eminent historian dips into the past to uncover the fascinating, quirky and curious



Manfred von Brauchitsch strong-arms his Mercedes W125 to a Monaco victory – but it will be team-mate Caracciola who lifts the 1937 title

GP LIBRARY

ONE-SEASON WONDER

Smarting from defeat by Auto Union, the Daimler-Benz board invested in an all-new design

EIGHTY YEARS AGO – IN the early-summer of 1937 – the single-season racing car design that for 45 years would hold the record as being the world's most powerful Grand Prix car was beginning to make its mark.

Today almost all racing fans with any sense of history whatsoever will be familiar with the car. It was the Mercedes-Benz W125 – the rakishly-bodied, three-holes-up-front, single-seat 'Silver Arrow' with which the Daimler-Benz AG's works racing team was intent upon recovering the lost prestige of having been beaten to the previous year's European Championship by the rival rear-engined Auto Union equipe. Indeed, it's generally overlooked these days, but Mercedes-Benz was not just beaten by Auto Union in 1936 – once they realised they had a terrible problem with the revised W25 they were effectively dumped out of Grand Prix racing entirely for some months.

For 1937 they then built the W125 to the contemporary 750kg *maximum*-weight Grand Prix formula, which had initially been applied for the seasons of 1934-36 inclusive. That formula had itself been dreamed up by the administrators to counteract the

free-formula racing years of the early 1930s, when the world had been hamstrung commercially by the Great Depression, and race organisers in both Europe and the USA were simply thrilled skinny to hear from anyone willing to build and race single-seat, open-wheeler cars.

Through 1932-33 such 'freak' Grand Prix cars as the U16-engined Bugattis, the twin-six Alfa Romeo Tipo A and the stupendous coupled-crankshaft Sedici Cilindri (16-cylinder) Maserati V4 and V5 designs had been the machines that set new performance standards. So the rule makers of the time equated complexity, and weight, with unruly power. Against that background, therefore, the fix seemed simple. Limit weight, and engine capacity, complexity and power and speed would all be reined in at a stroke.

So governing body the AIACR – forerunner of the FIA – devised its 750kg Formula and applied it from 1934-36 inclusive. However, the gamekeepers of the AIACR were trying to control the collective ingenuity, brainpower, funding and political intent of Hitler's 'New Germany', and of its massively capable – and determined – motor industry giants.

They were, of course, Daimler-Benz AG with its Mercedes-Benz brand – and the go-ahead and ambitious new Auto Union combine.These two new powers waded into the Grand Prix racing scene in 1934 like riot police abseiling into a school-kids' graduation bash. Their stun grenades simply embodied the startling specifications of their brand-new 750kg Formula racing car designs – straight-eights for Mercedes-Benz and rear-engined V16s – all supercharged – devised by the Porsche Büro for Auto Union. They deployed German industry frontier technologies in the latest light alloys, all-independent suspensions and hydraulic brake systems. And both produced large-capacity high-powered GP cars which still slipped in – just – beneath that 750kg weight ceiling.

In effect the poachers' new ploy defeated the gamekeepers' new fence almost from the outset in 1934. Once the German newbies – described by an understandably grudging Enzo Ferrari as those 'TransAlpini' – achieved reliability their full superiority would dominate.

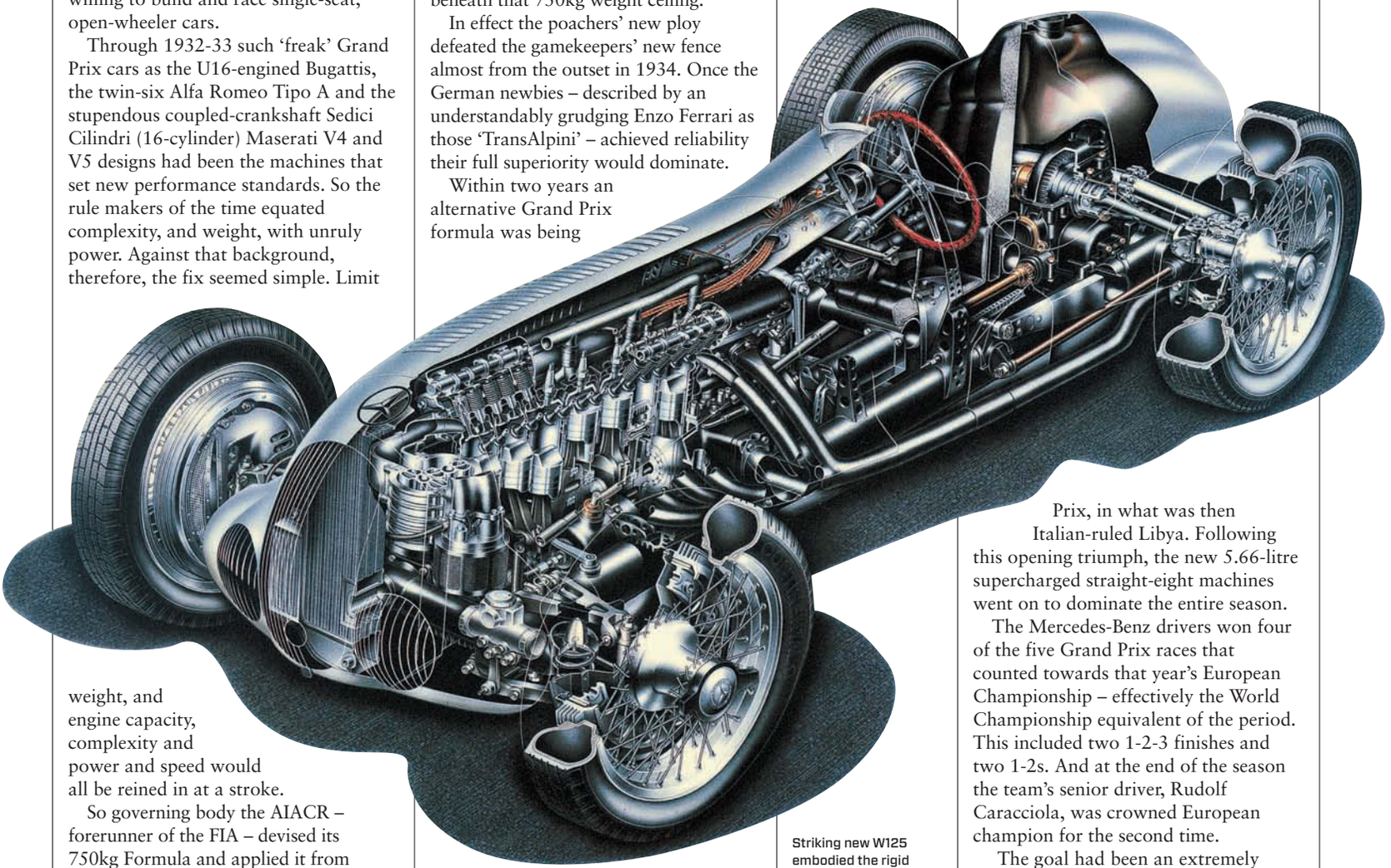
Within two years an alternative Grand Prix formula was being actively canvassed by the French-led AIACR for 1937-39 and maybe 1940 too. Any complacency about a maximum-weight formula limiting power and performance had long since been replaced by plans for sliding-scale engine capacity limitations, accompanied by minimum weight limits. But by the time new measures achieved consensus support – slashing supercharged engine capacity to 3000cc and unsupercharged capacity to 4.5 litres, with weight having to be above a minimum 800kg – it was too late for the contenders to comply for 1937.

For this reason the 750kg Formula was given a single-season extension instead. And it was for that single season, now 80 years ago, that the epochal Mercedes-Benz W125 Grand Prix Rennwagen emerged.

It was on May 9, 1937, that Mercedes-Benz promptly celebrated the new model's racing debut with immediate victory in the Tripoli Grand Prix, in what was then Italian-ruled Libya. Following this opening triumph, the new 5.66-litre supercharged straight-eight machines went on to dominate the entire season.

The Mercedes-Benz drivers won four of the five Grand Prix races that counted towards that year's European Championship – effectively the World Championship equivalent of the period. This included two 1-2-3 finishes and two 1-2s. And at the end of the season the team's senior driver, Rudolf Caracciola, was crowned European champion for the second time.

The goal had been an extremely ambitious one: to produce a brand-new Mercedes-Benz racing car within the space of just a few months in time for that 1937 season. The short-wheelbase 1936 car had proved desperately difficult to drive and was even considered unacceptably dangerous by its drivers. Newly appointed young development engineer Rudolf Uhlenhaut put many miles on one of the cars at the Nürburgring to assess its challenge himself. It had certainly proved unable to compete with its Auto Union rivals – and they, with their long rear-mounted engines and swing-axle rear suspension, were considered almost impossibly demanding to drive – unless your name was Bernd Rosemeyer, who won the championship that year. Uhlenhaut concluded that what



Striking new W125 embodied the rigid frame and softer suspension that Uhlenhaut deemed vital. And he was proved right

DAIMLER AG

Mercedes-Benz needed for 1937 was a more rigid chassis frame, revised suspension front and rear, and considerably more horsepower.

Serious design for 1937 actually commenced in August 1936. By September 9, 1936, engineer Josef Müller's chassis-concept team had decided to extend wheelbase from 2505 to 2798 millimetres. A new frame structure comprising oval-section tubes as twin longitudinal members interlinked by circular-section cross-members improved the frame's torsional stiffness compared with the preceding W25 by a claimed factor of 2.65.

Uhlenhaut led the charge in having the suspension feature long-travel, soft springing with improved damping to keep the wheels in better contact with planet earth. What is today regarded as conventional double-wishbone and coil spring independent front suspension and a de Dion rear suspension system with low roll-centre were adopted. Front and rear spring travel was increased by 50mm at the front to 140mm. Wind tunnel testing of the new body design saw the Cd – coefficient of drag – figure fall from 0.620 to 0.589.

The fact that the Daimler-Benz board cleared investment in an expensive engine revision for just this one final 750kg Formula season marked how much the defeat by upstart Auto Union had stung them.

Engine designer Georg Scheerer produced the M125 power unit for the W125 car – an eight-cylinder in-line supercharged engine, its pistons displacing 5660 cubic centimetres. Through that 1937 season the W125 cars would reach speeds in excess of 300kph – 186mph – with the enlarged new engine pounding out from 556-585bhp. Running in the most favourable conditions – on a Stuttgart dyno – an M125 engine's output was even higher at a maximum 646bhp.

Here was the power standard – not to be matched by another Grand Prix car until the 1.5-litre turbocharged era gained pace through 1981-82, 45 years later. The first of 11 W125 works cars built was finished in February 1937.

It would be Hermann Lang – the team's former engine specialist mechanic – who would win upon the car's debut at the Tripoli Grand Prix on May 9. It was his first ever Grand Prix victory – like Valtteri Bottas 80 years later at Sochi – and he achieved it at an average speed of 131.75mph. Yes, 80 years ago those guys were not kidding around…

FIELD 'PHONE OF DREAMS

Thoughts on a bygone fragment from the Le Mans 24 Hours

AS WE RUN UP TOWARDS THIS YEAR'S Le Mans 24 Hours, a little piece of Sarthe circuit history passed into the Revs Institute/Collier Collection museum in Florida a few weeks ago. It's not a super-significant piece of sporting memorabilia, but it's truly engaging nonetheless. It could be described as 'start-straight pits to Mulsanne Corner signalling pits field telephone No9', and it was removed from the old garage wall on the Monday morning after the 1990 Grand Prix d'Endurance.

The story of telephone '*numéro neuf*' is that remote pit-signalling had been considered prudent at Le Mans following the terrible disaster on the start/finish straight in 1955. The slowest point on the entire circuit was the right-angled Mulsanne Corner at the end of the eponymous back straight, so immediately after its apex a rudimentary row of shelters was set up on the infield verge, protected by an earth and wattle bank and connected to the main service pits by a wind-up field telephone system.

Renowned designer/stylist/aerodynamicist Peter Stevens was the man who walked off with the telephone in question, with – I would emphasise – the owner's approval. He was a prominent member of the Richard Lloyd Racing Team that in 1990 ran two Porsche 962s in the pink and white livery of Japanese sports clothing company Italya. The cars were No43, driven by Manuel Reuter, JJ Lehto, and James Weaver, and No44 for John Watson, Bruno Giacomelli and Allen Berg.

Peter recalls: "The telephones were installed on the Wednesday morning just before first practice. The signal crew would be given a number relating to a phone socket that was connected to the team pit by permanently laid wires. There was often a struggle to get the phones working properly before practice began. By the 1980s many teams had been experimenting with their own radio systems but reception was notoriously poor there.

"The old pit complex was due to be demolished on the Wednesday after that year's race and, over the years we had been going there I had taken a bit of a shine to those pit-wall telephones. We had become firm friends with Alain Bertault, the former journalist and driver who had for many years been vice-president of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, the Le Mans organiser. He'd been really good to us in the past and, when I asked what was to happen to the pit telephones once the demolition crew moved in, he said, 'They'll just be scrapped. Take one if you like – and don't forget to take the screws!' So I did."

After sitting for years in Peter's home office, he decided earlier this year that the phone would make an ideal item for Miles Collier's stupendous museum in Naples, Florida. And when we arrived there for this year's Connoisseurship Symposium, Pete duly made the presentation (left, Peter in stripes). Miles Collier is a quiet man at the best of times. If I was a medical man, I might describe him on this occasion as "Speechless – but conscious, ambulatory – and smiling." He was extremely chuffed at Pete's generous thought.

Bertault – who drove small-engined CD aerodynes at Le Mans from 1962-67, usually paired with André Guilhaudin – sadly died in 2016, but telephone No9 lives on… M

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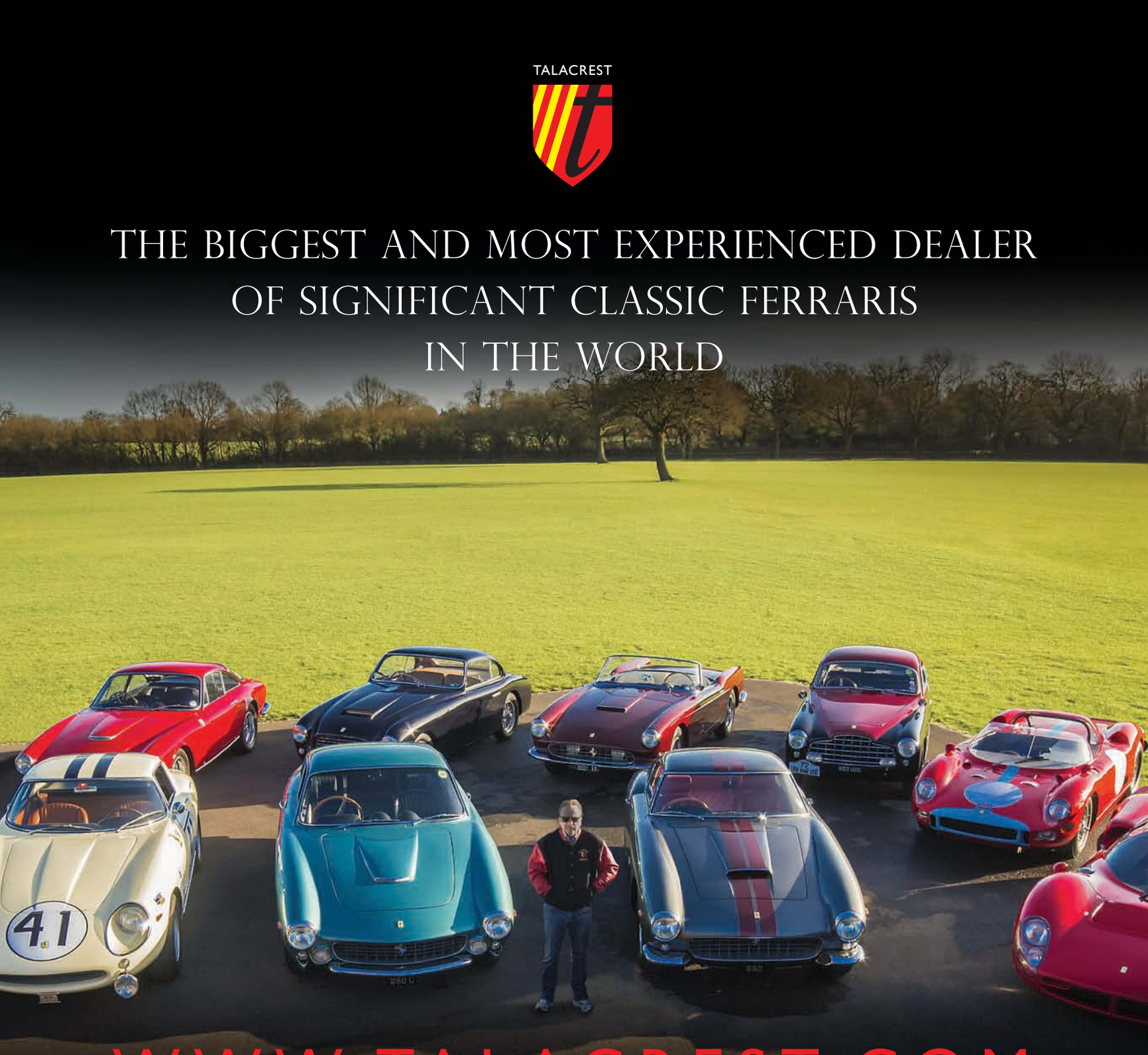

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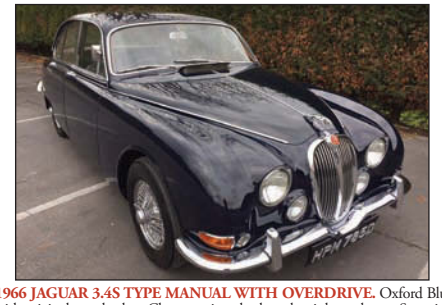

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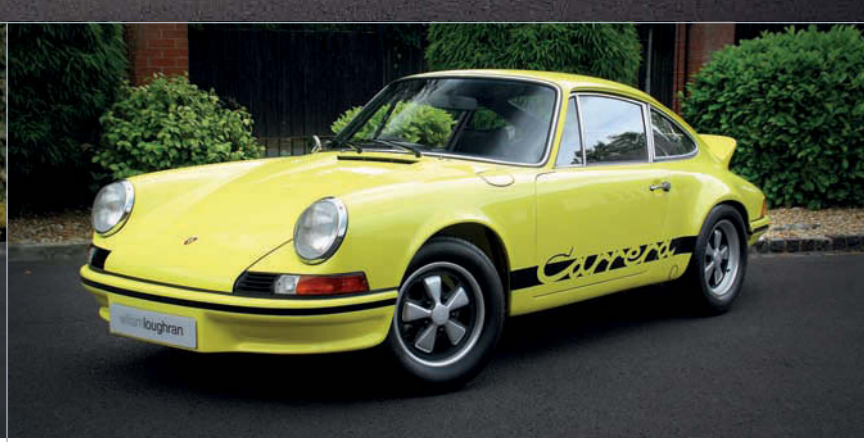

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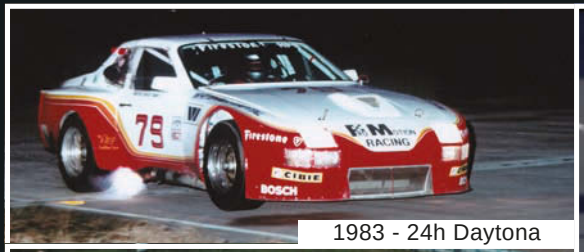

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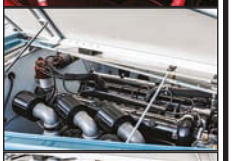

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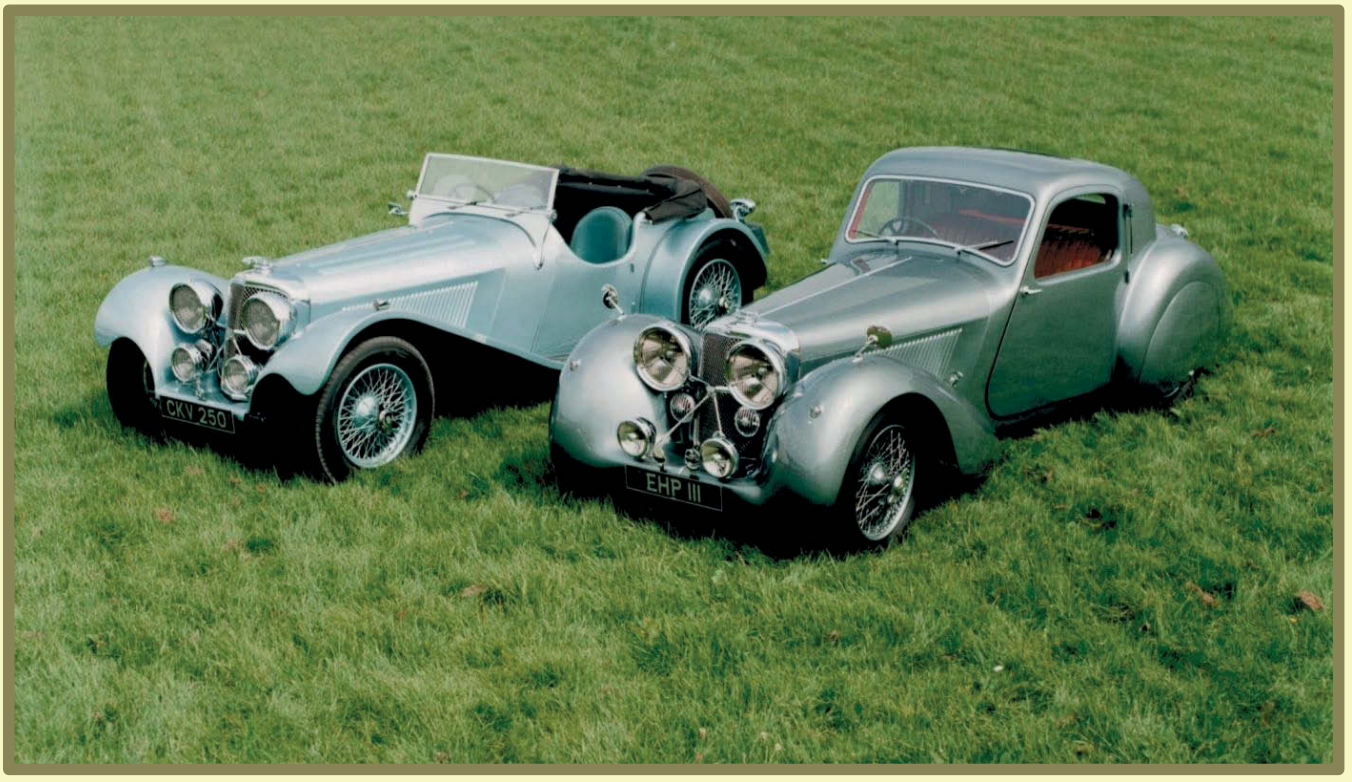

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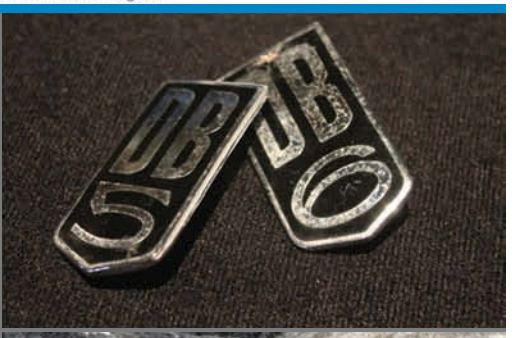

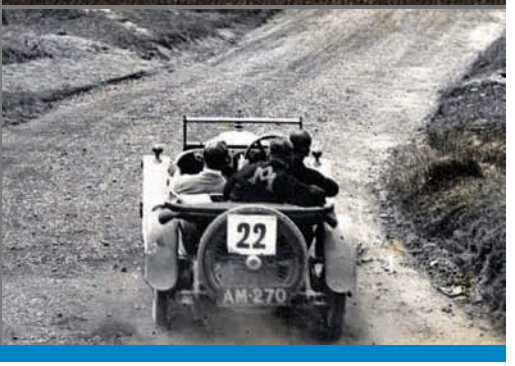

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JOD I7S £4,000

K
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K794 KAB £600
KCT 96I £2,000
KEN I7P £2,800
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35 KL £9,800
660 KO £4,800
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I KRL £19,000
8 KRL £6,800
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I000 L £14,000
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LLR 946 £1,300
LOS I0 £9,000
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R6 NOW £2,000
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55 OFB £4,500
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E5 OOO £5,500
F2 OOO £5,500
OOO IX £8,800
N5 OOO £5,000
Y7 OSH £1,800
I OTO £25,000
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I000 OW £20,000
7 OZ £80,000

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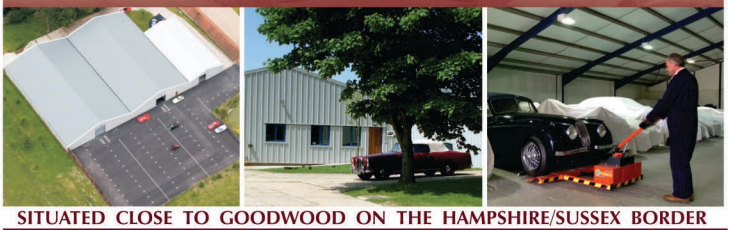

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1984

ZANDVOORT, HOLLAND

Ayrton Senna embraces cutting-edge technology – Dymo labels and chalk – while poring over practice times ahead of the Dutch Grand Prix. In his first year of Formula 1, the previous season's British F3 champion was about to create a stir by announcing that he was breaking his contract with Toleman in order to join Lotus in '85.

BRM P167

FINISH LINE WITH

HOWDEN GANLEY

Kiwi who competed in F1 from 1971 to 1974, twice finishing fourth for BRM. He was later co-founder of customer racing car manufacturer Tiga

When did you first read *Motor Sport?* In 1955 when it took eight weeks to get to New Zealand by ship • **Your day-to-day drive** Mercedes CLK and Volvo estate • **The best car you've owned** Audi Quattro - the rounded one, not the square boxy one • **The one you covet most** Lancia D50 and Aston Martin DBR1 • **One racing car, one circuit...** BRM P167 at the Nordschleife, preferably in the rain • **Whom do you most admire?** Bruce McLaren, my parents, my late wife Judy • **Your best friend** My late wife Judy, always • **Your best character trait** Determination, honesty, a sense of humour • **Most prized possession** Lotus Eleven, my first race car • **Your greatest extravagance** Collecting motor racing books • **Your favourite place in the world** New Zealand • **The perfect holiday destination** Golf courses of the Algarve • **Your restaurant recommendation** The Last Viceroy an Indian restaurant in Bourne End, Buckinghamshire • **The music you're listening to** La Passione by Chris Rea • **The movie you love** *Magnificent Seven* • **The last thing you read** *A Life of Innovation,* a biography of Sir Geoffrey de Havilland • **The best advice you've been given** Never give up and never boast

LOTUS ELEVEN

BRUCE McLAREN

LANCIA D50

ASTON MARTIN DBR1

MOUNT COOK, NEW ZEALAND

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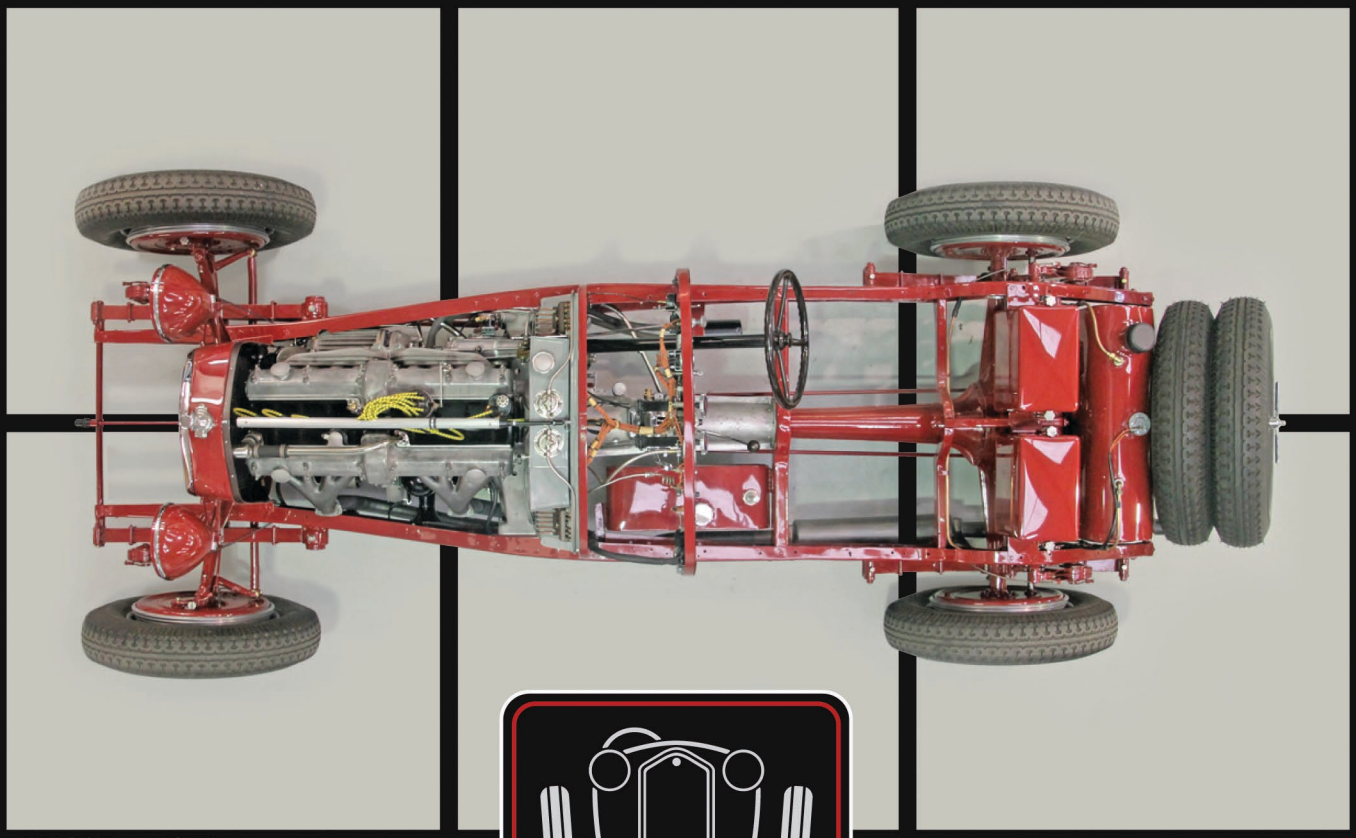

1931 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300

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