

MOTORSPORT NEWS

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX
FULL REPORT INSIDE

MARCH 19 2014 ■ EVERY WEDNESDAY £3.00



THE FUTURE OF THE WRC

SPECIAL REPORT
RALLYING'S TOP FLIGHT ANALYSED

P26

British racer fired up by strong start to the season

BUTTON



MCLAREN CAN TAKE ON MERCEDES

By Rob Ladbrook

Jenson Button says that his McLaren team can take on the pace-setting Mercedes F1 squad this year after a storming start to the season in Australia.

McLaren failed to take a podium finish after a disastrous 2013 season, but rookie sensation Kevin Magnussen and team-mate Button claimed second and third place in Melbourne.

The result means that McLaren now leads the constructors' championship.

Button says the form will motivate the team to take on Mercedes. Nico Rosberg (*below*) dominated the race for the German firm.

"We can be very proud of the job we did in Australia," said Button. "Mercedes are the stand-out team in terms of pace, so they have to be our target."

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo finished second on the road, but was later disqualified due to a fuel flow irregularity.

McLaren's return to form, p2-3
Red Bull to fight exclusion, p8



FORMULA ONE

PLUS ROSBERG WINS AFTER HAMILTON'S ENGINE WOES P4



WEC **PORSCHE'S**
LE MANS RACER
TECH FOCUS ON HYBRID RACER P22



RETRO **HERBERT'S HEROICS**
HOW BRIT DESPITE INJURY P24



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IN THIS ISSUE

"We know our fuel limits were legal"


P8


MENU RETURNS TO BTCC ACTION

P10

VOLKSWAGEN'S 2015 POLO UNDERWAY


P16


PORSCHE UNDER THE SKIN OF REVOLUTIONARY 919 HYBRID RACER

P22

WHEN HERBERT MADE HIS F1 MARK


P24

Australian Grand Prix report
Historic race and rally news
Insight: Porsche 919 Hybrid
Retro: Herbert's F1 debut
Insight: The state of the WRC
West Cork Rally report
Rally reports
Karting round-up

4 Sporting Scene round-up
15 Letters/Comment/What's On
22 Classified
24 Wanted: One missing cylinder. We know it's here somewhere... Apply!
26 Mercedes AMG F1.
28
29
31



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FOR MOTORSPORT NEWS STAFF CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE SEE P35

British star says his team is ready to

By Rob Ladbrook

Jenson Button believes that McLaren will be boosted by its double podium finish in last weekend's turbulent Australian Grand Prix, and has predicted it can close to gap to the flying Mercedes team.

A sensational second place on his debut for rookie racer Kevin Magnussen and Button's fightback through the field to third highlighted a stark upswing in form for the Woking squad, which failed to score a single podium place during the 2013 campaign. Both drivers were bumped up a place in the results after Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo was disqualified from second place (see page eight).

The result means that McLaren-Mercedes tops the Constructors' Championship for the first time since China in 2012. Despite the strong first outing, McLaren's MP4-29 wasn't the fastest car in the field, with Magnussen racing home 26 seconds behind dominant race winner Nico Rosberg's Mercedes.

Button said the team was encouraged by the result, but said there was more pace to come. "This is a really good feeling, it's been a long time since we've led the Constructors' Championship," said the 34-year-old. "I think we can be very proud of the job we did today, but our nature is to always want more and at the moment we seem capable of fighting every team on the grid apart from one [Mercedes].

"Mercedes are the standout team in terms of pace, so they have to be our target. We have new parts coming for the car for [the next race in] Malaysia that should bring us closer to the outright pace. I don't think we expected this, second and third was actually beyond our expectations coming here. But this is a superb start and great reward for the hard work everyone has put in to get us back on track. We can build on this."

Reliability matters

McLaren's biggest strength in Melbourne turned out to be the reliability of its Mercedes-powered MP4-29 machine.

The team looked strong during pre-season testing, completing the fourth highest mileage of any outfit, and was one of just five teams to get both of its cars to the flag in an event strewn with mechanical problems.

Button admitted that the team struggled with its car, but pointed out that the turnaround showed its ability to recover. Button qualified a lowly 11th after losing his final flying lap in Q2 to yellow flags caused by Kimi Räikkönen's crash. McLaren used its pit stop strategy to vault Button back up the order, pitting first under a mid-race safety car period.

"The guys did a great job this weekend turning the car around and with the race strategy," added Button. "The car's balance wasn't quite right in traffic, I had understeer when I was behind people, but in

clean air we found a good balance. We came here with a car that we weren't happy with but we turned it around.

"The strategy was also perfect and the guys put me in the right places at the right time. We made an early call and I dived into the pits at the last second before the safety car boards came out, which earned me some places. Then I didn't have to save fuel in the final stint so I could push and the car felt great. Sadly there wasn't enough in the tyres for me to catch Kevin, who drove superbly."

Dream debut

Magnussen's debut second place makes him one of the most successful Formula One rookies in history.

The 21-year-old from Roskilde, Denmark, was McLaren's first rookie since Lewis Hamilton in 2007 and replicated his achievement of finishing third on the road in Melbourne. But following Ricciardo's dismissal, Magnussen's second place makes him the first rookie to finish as runner-up in their maiden race since Jacques Villeneuve finished second at the same track for the Williams-Renault in 1996. Magnussen also became the first Danish driver to stand on an F1 podium.

"It's just a dream, I can't find the words to describe how it feels," said Magnussen, who had qualified fourth. "It's not a win, but it definitely feels like one considering where the team has come from. After last year, the whole team really wanted to come back this year and we've done that.

"We came here with a car we weren't overly happy with, but we made good changes and the car was better than we have been at any point so far. We now need to keep improving, it's about learning as much as we can from this race and carrying it over to Malaysia. I have to keep my feet on the ground because there's no guarantee we'll be fast at Sepang. It's a very different circuit but this result has given us much hope for the season ahead."

Magnussen was also quick to acknowledge the faith the team had shown in him. "It's a big risk bringing a rookie into F1, whatever position you are in, but for a top team like McLaren it's a huge gamble," he added. "They listened to me and helped make me ready to be here. This is the best day of my life but I have to keep working harder to try and aim for even better days."

McLaren racing director Eric Boullier added: "Kevin's drive was one of the finest performances for an F1 rookie in living memory. Despite his youth and inexperience, he drove like a man who'd notched up 100 grands prix already. He was aggressive but still very mature in some ways, managing pressure over the weekend.

"It's clear that we have a lot of work to do in order to close the performance gap between ours and the fastest car. Malaysia is our next challenge, and we'll be ready for it."

Button's tribute

Button dedicated his race to the memory of his father, John Button, who passed away in January.

Button said: "It's been a tough weekend, but I've had so much support from the paddock. Everyone in the team has worn pink shirt badges. He'll have a smile on his face looking down and knowing everybody's talking about him."



Button was pleased with MP4-29

Hamilton's heartbreak

Lewis Hamilton is adamant that he can bounce back from retirement in the Australian Grand Prix and get his world title ambitions back on track.

Hamilton went into the weekend as the favourite for both the victory in Australia and the world championship after the strong pre-season performance of his Mercedes AMG F1 Team. Hamilton snatched pole but was the third retirement of the event after just two laps when his Mercedes power unit developed an early misfire. Team-mate Nico Rosberg went on to dominate the race.

Hamilton said that he wasn't concerned by the retirement, and believes the team will return to form in Malaysia.

"I'm disappointed with my own race, especially when I think about all the hard work that's gone in back at the factories," he said.

"My start didn't feel good at all and I had a lot less power when pulling away, so it was immediately clear that something was wrong. We only had five cylinders firing and while I wanted to keep going we had to play safe and save the engine.

"It's tough, but it is only a hiccup. We've achieved a huge amount just to get here, be at the front and be so competitive. We will bounce back and we will learn from this. There's still a very long way to go in the season."

Mercedes head Toto Wolff added: "It was a day of light and shadow for us. Nico did a great job and it's clear that the car has performance. But we were disappointed to lose Lewis so early. He had done everything right until that point and it was a situation beyond his control.

"We know that reliability will be crucial this season and we will work hard to rectify things like this for Malaysia and beyond."



Lewis's car failed

rejoin F1's top echelon

MCLAREN

COMES OUT FIGHTING



Briton has high ambitions



Magnussen claimed second

POINTS

F1 Constructors' Championship		
POS	TEAM	PTS
1	McLaren-Mercedes	33
2	Mercedes	25
3	Ferrari	18
4	Williams-Mercedes	10
5	Force India-Mercedes	9
6	Toro Rosso-Renault	6

McLaren is top of the 2014 constructors' points table

WHAT EFFECT DID THE NEW RULES HAVE?

Power units

The cars sounded vastly different in Australia. Due to the reduced capacity engines and mandated exhaust exits, they are much quieter. The hybrid systems can also be heard 'screaming' under braking as they harvest energy. Team radio is clearer. The new units also have more torque, which was an issue for some drivers. Cars slide around a lot more and an over-eager stamp on the throttle causes the rear to step out.

Fuel regulations

Not hugely noticeable during the early stages, but drastically so in the latter part of races. Teams can now adjust their fuel flow rate to manage how much power-electrical energy mixture they require at specific points during the race. Drivers such as Jenson Button could go full pelt late on as they saved fuel early in the event. It did bring the biggest moment of controversy however as Daniel Ricciardo

was excluded from second place when his RB10 was found to have exceeded the 100kg per hour fuel flow limit. It's a rule designed to make the sport more environmentally friendly but it is unlikely to prove popular with fans.

Tyres

The 2014 Pirelli tyres are harder wearing due to the extra torque and weight of the car. They lasted much longer in Melbourne.

Drivers could push beyond the initial graining phase and regain grip.

Qualifying format

The FIA rubber-stamped the new qualifying format in time for Melbourne. Q2 is now shorter with two extra minutes added for Q3. Teams are also given a 'free' set of tyres for Q3 to encourage them to run and start the race on their Q2 set. Teams not in Q3 will get a 'free' set of soft tyres for the race.

Rookies

The grid in Melbourne boasted three rookie drivers. Kevin Magnussen was the star, taking third on the road and then second after Ricciardo's exclusion. Daniil Kvyat impressed for Toro Rosso, taking ninth place and establishing a new record for youngest points scorer in F1 history. Swede Marcus Ericsson only completed 29 laps in his Caterham before retiring with fuel pressure problems.

AUSTRALIAN GP REPORT



BY TONY
DODGINS

As his team-mate Lewis Hamilton stuttered, Nico Rosberg was left to romp to an untroubled win

ROSBERG GOES FOR A QUIET WALK IN THE PARK



It was an easy victory for Nico



Rosberg had pace to spare on his way to Aussie GP win

Can I do anything to help with reliability?" Nico Rosberg asked on the radio. "No, we are completely happy," Mercedes replied. "Just keep it off the kerbs."

Rosberg didn't need to use them. He was cruising. With team-mate and pole man Lewis Hamilton out of the Australian GP after just two laps, Rosberg opened up a 24s lead in the 41 laps that separated an early race safety car from the chequered flag. It was that easy.

The Mercedes form was as testing had predicted it would be. Worrying for the three-pointed star's rivals was that Rosberg reckoned that fuel conservation hadn't been an issue. He'd been able to drive normally.

That was not the case for Daniel Ricciardo, who made a stunning Red Bull debut and finished second on the road. He was right there in every qualifying session, started from the front row and proved that reports of Red Bull's demise had been grossly exaggerated. In the first race distance that Red Bull had achieved in 2014, the team's new signing beat everyone except the dominant Rosberg. But, Christian Horner said, despite a reduced race distance following an aborted start, plus a safety car, they'd still had to conserve fuel. Then, a couple of hours after the race, came the news that the team had exceeded the maximum allowed fuel flow of 100kg per hour. At around midnight, after Australia had celebrated a first ever world championship GP podium by one of its own, Ricciardo's exclusion was confirmed.

It was a bitter blow to the likeable 24-year-old from Perth, who lost his 18 points on a day when Sebastian Vettel completed just three laps before retiring with a power unit problem. Red Bull, meanwhile, has served notice of appeal.

It promoted to second Kevin Magnussen, another hero of the hour. On his F1 debut the 21-year-old qualified fourth in tricky mixed conditions, usually the preserve of McLaren team-mate Jenson Button. Then he brought the new MP4-29 home a couple of seconds behind Ricciardo, whom he pressured all afternoon, to become the first Dane to mount an F1 podium. Button finished a further 3.25s further back, the two-three finish putting McLaren on top of the constructors' points. On this evidence though, the team's tenure of such a lofty height is likely to be short-lived.

Qualifying

Despite all the pre-race certainty that power units would dictate the order as F1 entered its hybrid Brave New World in Melbourne, qualifying was all about a good old shower of rain.

By the end of practice we knew that Renault had made steps towards addressing its testing issues and that the Red Bull RB10 was not going to be far from the pace. Even so, we didn't expect one on the front row. That, though, is what we got with Ricciardo a likely pole man in his first race as a Red Bull driver before Hamilton knocked him off top spot by 0.3s with the last flying lap of Q3.

It was Hamilton's 32nd pole, putting him level with Nigel Mansell and one behind the record number by a British driver, Jim Clark.

Ricciardo had already topped Q1 as a few spots of rain began to fall, a couple of tenths up on Magnussen's McLaren.

"It had to go wrong for Vettel somewhere – and it did"
World champion suffers heartbreak, p7



ROUND 08

Photos: LAT

But then came shades of 2013 – when qualifying was postponed until Sunday because of heavy rain. This time it wasn't quite so bad, intermediates the tyre of choice for a Q2 session that began without the Marussias of Max Chilton and Jules Bianchi, Esteban Gutiérrez's Sauber, Marcus Ericsson's Caterham and the Lotuses of Romain Grosjean and Pastor Maldonado. The Enstone cars had a nightmare weekend, paying for their reduced pre-season running.

As last year, it was Rosberg who looked quick and assured on the intermediate Pirellis but Ricciardo was right there again, just 0.03s adrift and half a second quicker than third place man Fernando Alonso. Hamilton, Magnussen, Nico Hülkenberg, Jean-Eric Vergne, Valtteri Bottas, Felipe Massa and Toro Rosso rookie Daniil Kvyat, impressively, comprised the remainder of those progressing to the season's first Q3 shoot-out.

There were some significant names among those who didn't make the cut. Jenson Button, three times a winner at Albert Park, was unlucky. Quickest after his first run in Q2, his second attempt was spoiled by yellow flags at Turn Three when Kimi Räikkönen let the Ferrari get away from him on an 'in' lap. Button was only bumped out of Q3 by Kvyat's Toro Rosso in the dying seconds.

And four-time world champion Vettel could only manage 12th, a software issue preventing his Renault V6 from running cleanly. It was the first time since Belgium 2012 that Seb had failed to make it to Q3.

In the intervening gap before Q3 (two minutes longer this year which, added to the availability of another set of tyres, is aimed at ensuring everyone gets two runs), the rain came down harder and tyre choice was a tough call.

Pirelli's full wets are new this year, designed to be closer to the intermediate, and so it proved, even if Pirelli itself was surprised at quite how close they were in the prevailing conditions.

Hamilton did his last-gasp pole on full wets, Ricciardo was second on intermediates, with Rosberg 0.05s slower on wets. Magnussen's McLaren was 0.15s down on wets, to knock Alonso's similarly-shod Ferrari down to fifth.

Vergne, always impressive on a wet surface, put his Toro Rosso sixth on the intermediate, separated from rookie team-mate Kvyat by 0.5s and Nico Hülkenberg's Force India, both also on intermediates. Then came the Williams pair, Massa and Bottas, who were disappointed not to be further up.

The FW36s looked impressive in practice and were third and sixth in Q1 before the rain came. Then they found it difficult to generate heat on the intermediate rubber, however, and Bottas suffered a further knock when a new gearbox meant a five-place penalty.

Race

There was trepidation about the first start of 2014. Practice starts had been attempted with varying degrees of success but suggestions that some would have to take the start from the pit lane for safety reasons proved wide of the mark.



Kamui Kobayashi smashed in to the back of Felipe Massa at the first turn

We did have one aborted start, when Max Chilton's Marussia suffered an engine kill problem on the grid and had to be pushed back into the pit lane to join team-mate Jules Bianchi, who suffered another version of the same issue on the installation lap and missed the first six laps of the race as the team righted it. Grosjean also elected to start from the pit lane after Lotus made a myriad of changes to the car in *parc fermé*.

Ricciardo also had a scare on the installation lap when he found his turbo ineffective. He came back through the pits for a reset, which did the trick, and he got away well enough to charge down the inside of Hamilton into Turn One, which he exited in second place, behind Rosberg.

Nico had made a fabulous getaway and immediately swooped past Hamilton. "Nico's start was fantastic but the rest of us were pretty average, I'd say," was Ricciardo's verdict. In Hamilton's case, there was an explanation – the Merc running on only five cylinders. Had Lewis had full power Magnussen, who had an enormous tank-slapper off the grid in front of Alonso, would not have been able to blast round the outside of the Mercedes between T10-11, something which, before you knew about Lewis's affliction, made you blink very heavily!

Further back, Massa was deeply unimpressed when the returning Kamui Kobayashi's Caterham cannoned into the back of the Williams and took the pair of them out at Turn One. Felipe initially made some remarks about Grosjean being banned for such ineptitude but presentation of Caterham telemetry confirmed a brake issue and absolved Kamui, with no further action taken.

Rosberg was 6.5s clear by the end of lap ten and Ricciardo's radio message was revealing: "Forget the Merc," he said, "But how's my pace compared to the rest?"

"You're the second quickest car out there, with Bottas running a similar pace as you," was the answer.

Indeed, it was the young Finn providing much of the early lap action. From 15th on the grid he was tenth by the end of the opening lap and up a further two places when he passed Kvyat at Turn Seven and Mercedes retired Hamilton. By this time we'd also lost Vettel.

"Come on guys, this is ridiculous, I've got no power!" was the irate message from Vettel as he ran 15th before the team stopped him with a power unit problem.

By lap five, Bottas was up to seventh after disposing of Vergne's Toro Rosso and right under Räikkönen's gearbox. From the beginning of the weekend Alonso's Ferrari always had the typically hussled busy body language typical of any car driven by Fernando, but Kimi seemed to be struggling and lacking in confidence. He locked up repeatedly into Turn Nine, which was easy to do if the calibration of the brake-

by-wire system and the front tyre temperature were not in accord, but Kimi was managing to defend from his countryman and attributed his struggles more to front graining than to brake issues.

Bottas, frustration no doubt growing, finally got on the power a little early out of Turn Ten and brushed the wall with the right rear, breaking the rim and giving himself a puncture. The tyre threw the tread, which came to rest in the middle of the circuit, and we had a safety car that, ironically, helped Valtteri back into the game. Button took advantage to pick up places by dint of swerving into the pit lane in the nick of time.

The official Mercedes duly wiped out Rosberg's eight-second advantage but as soon as it disappeared after four laps, Nico took just another eight laps to re-establish it.

"It looked," said Red Bull's Christian Horner, "as if he had a second a lap in his pocket and it is hard to know precisely how hard he was going."

Did he have any idea where that margin was coming from? "Well, we can see from our data that we are losing about a second on the straights." Ricciardo and Vettel were 17th and 18th through the speed trap in qualifying, 7mph down on Bottas's Mercedes-powered Williams. And it's unlikely to be Red Bull's aerodynamics at fault...

Red Bull, of course, is using a different power unit to Mercedes but McLaren is not. If you were looking for headlines you could say that Ron Dennis is back and McLaren is back on top of the constructors' championship. If you're a realist, you will look at the result and see that, with the same power unit, the McLarens lost the best part of half a minute to Rosberg.

Clearly there is work to be done, but that should not detract from a truly fabulous debut by Magnussen.

Alonso, never a man to give up, finally got the Ferrari to the line fifth, which became fourth after Ricciardo's misfortune. Unable to find a way past Hülkenberg's Force India, Fernando achieved it by dint of a later final stop.

Bottas continued to be the man to watch in the second half of the race. He took advantage of another Räikkönen lock-up and got rid of Hülkenberg with the help of DRS with six laps to go.

Räikkönen got the second Ferrari home eighth, demoting Vergne when the Frenchman pulled off a great save to keep his Toro Rosso on the circuit after dropping the left rear onto the grass. The Frenchman and team-mate Kvyat completed the top ten finishers.

Proving F1's propensity to deliver when the chips are down, the first race of the new technology dawn had 14 classified finishers, confounding those who predicted there wouldn't be a full quota of point-scorers.

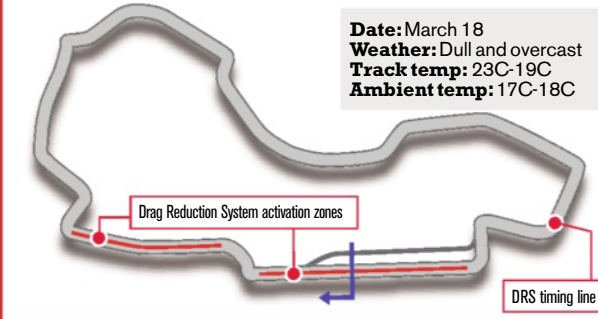
For the moment though, as expected, they are all chasing Mercedes. ■

RACE FACTS

Results © 2014 Formula One Administration Ltd



AUSTRALIA
Circuit: Albert Park, Melbourne Laps: 57
Race distance: 191.110 miles Lap: 3.295 miles
Lap record: Michael Schumacher 2004 – 1m 24.125s
2013 winner: Kimi Räikkönen



TYRE CHOICE

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RESULTS

FIA Formula One World Championship, round 1/19

POS	DRIVERS	NAT	CAR-ENGINE	TIME
1	Nico Rosberg	GER	Mercedes GP	+1h 32m 58.710s
DN	Daniel Ricciardo	AUS	Red Bull-Renault	+24.525s
2	Kevin Magnussen	DEN	McLaren-Mercedes	+26.777s
3	Jenson Button	GBR	McLaren-Mercedes	+30.027s
4	Fernando Alonso	ESP	Ferrari	+35.284s
5	Valtteri Bottas	FIN	Williams-Mercedes	+47.639s
6	Nico Hülkenberg	GER	Force India-Mercedes	+50.718s
7	Kimi Räikkönen	FIN	Ferrari	+57.675s
8	Jean Eric Vergne	FRA	Scuderia Toro Rosso-Renault	+1m 00.441s
9	Daniil Kvyat	RUS	Scuderia Toro Rosso-Renault	+1m 03.585s
10	Sergio Pérez	MEX	Force India-Mercedes	+1m 25.916s
11	Adrian Sutil	GER	Sauber-Ferrari	+1 lap
12	Esteban Gutiérrez	MEX	Sauber-Ferrari	+1 lap
13	Max Chilton	GBR	Marussia-Ferrari	+2 laps
NC	Jules Bianchi	FRA	Marussia-Ferrari	+8 laps
R	Romain Grosjean	FRA	Lotus-Renault	L43/hybrid failure
R	Pastor Maldonado	VEN	Lotus-Renault	L29/hybrid failure
R	Marcus Ericsson	SWE	Caterham-Renault	L27/oil pressure
R	Sebastian Vettel	GER	Red Bull-Renault	L3/power unit
R	Lewis Hamilton	GBR	Mercedes GP	L2/engine
R	Felipe Massa	BRA	Williams-Mercedes	L1/accident
R	Kamui Kobayashi	JPN	Caterham-Renault	L1/accident

Winner's average speed: 121.21mph Lap leaders: 1-57 Rosberg

FASTEST LAP | NICO ROSBERG: 1M 32.478S

ON LAP 19 (AVERAGE SPEED: 128.279MPH)

QUALIFYING

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m 44.231s
2	Ricciardo	1m 44.548s
3	Rosberg	1m 44.595s
4	Magnussen	1m 45.745s
5	Alonso	1m 45.819s
6	Vergne	1m 45.864s
7	Hülkenberg	1m 46.030s
8	Kvyat	1m 47.360s
9	Massa	1m 48.079s
10	Button	1m 44.437s
11	Räikkönen	1m 44.494s

POS	DRIVER	TIME
12	Vettel	1m 44.668s
13	Sutil	1m 45.655s
14	Kobayashi	1m 45.867s
15	Bottas	1m 48.147s*
16	Pérez	1m 47.293s
17	Chilton	1m 34.293s
18	Bianchi	1m 34.794s
19	Ericsson	1m 35.157s
20	Grosjean	1m 36.993
21	Maldonado	no time
22	Gutiérrez	1m 35.117s*

*Five-place grid penalty for gearbox change

Bottas was one of the star men



CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS		
POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Nico Rosberg	25
2	Kevin Magnussen	18
3	Jenson Button	15
4	Fernando Alonso	12
5	Valtteri Bottas	10
6	Nico Hülkenberg	8
7	Kimi Räikkönen	6
8	Jean-Eric Vergne	4
9	Daniil Kvyat	2
10	Sergio Pérez	1

CONSTRUCTORS		
POS	CONSTRUCTOR	PTS
1	McLaren-Mercedes	33
2	Mercedes AMG F1	25
3	Scuderia Ferrari	18
4	Williams F1	10
5	Sahara Force India	9
6	Scuderia Toro Rosso	6
7	Sauber F1	0
8	Marussia F1	0
9	Red Bull Racing	0
10	Lotus F1 Team	0



Ricciardo was second on the road

NEXT RACE

Can Lewis Hamilton start to claw back the gap to Nico Rosberg at Sepang?

MALAYSIAN GRAND PRIX
MARCH 30

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DRIVER ANALYSIS



BY TONY DODGINS

ROUND



Our man gives his no-nonsense views on the grand prix grid

SEBASTIAN VETTEL RED BULL

After nine on the bounce it had to go wrong somewhere. And did. Vettel was hit by engine software issues from the beginning and there was little he could do about it. Frustration was betrayed by early radio call but it's something he might have to get used to.



6/10

FERNANDO ALONSO FERRARI

"We saw lots of Ferrari boxes so, new parts?" he was asked on Thursday. "No. Food I think..." he muttered, with his best Dick Dastardly face. Almost took full-time ownership of fifth grid slot in 2013 and that's where he started. More frustration?



7/10

LEWIS HAMILTON MERCEDES GP

Did everything right to take pole but loss of a cylinder early in the race put him out. Won't have wanted to leave the curtain-raiser 25 points behind his team-mate when, as yet, there's nobody to get between them, but surely reliability will be swings and roundabouts in 2014



8/10

DANIEL RICCIARDO RED BULL

As good as it could have been! Didn't suffer Vettel's gremlins and showed that the Red Bull is a serious bit of kit. Fabulous qualifying, wet and dry, unflappably mature. A future headache for the world champion? Fuel-flow problem was a cruel blow.



10/10

KIMI RAIKKONEN FERRARI

Seemingly never happy with the set-up of the F14 T and was in Alonso's shadow all weekend. Hard to believe this was the man who won in Albert Park 12 months ago. Lock-up and understeer run-wides a feature throughout. It might take time, he reckons, but he'll get it sorted.



6/10

NICO ROSBERG MERCEDES GP

Put the family name back on top of the world championship for the first time since 1982 with his fourth win. Had to give best to Hamilton and Ricciardo in qualifying but start was ballistic. Slight early engine cutting and short mid-race tyre graining his only concerns. Completely controlled it.



9/10

ROMAIN GROSJEAN 6/10

LOTUS

Used to be excitable on the radio then praised for maturity throughout second half of 2013. He's regressed. "Nothing is solved!" he yelled at one point on Saturday. Lotus had a nightmare. If there was a positive it was 43 laps of data on Sunday and a quickest lap just over two seconds away.



PASTOR MALDONADO 6/10

LOTUS

You had to feel sorry for the Lotus boys. They break the curfew, do an all-nighter, leave the circuit at 0600hrs and get woken up by a two-seater Minardi doing circuit rides at 0700hrs... Pastor and PDVSA must be casting glances at Williams...



ADRIAN SUTIL 6/10

SAUBER

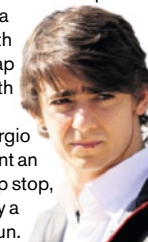
Had some power train problems in the opening stint. Planned a two-stop race but switched to a one-stopper after the early safety car. Put into words the grim reality for Sauber: "We were simply too slow." There is plenty of work to be done at Hinwil, clearly.



ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ 6/10

SAUBER

Struggled for straightline speed against the Mercedes runners (but, then again, who didn't?) but encouraged to at least see the chequered flag, albeit a lapped 13th after first-lap contact with the Force India of Sergio Pérez meant an opening lap stop, followed by a one-stop run.



JENSON BUTTON 8/10

McLAREN

Overshadowed by his team-mate Magnussen's headline-making but perhaps unfairly. Was his typical changing-conditions self to go top of the time sheet after first run in Q2, but then hamstrung by a yellow for Räikkönen on his second and missed Q3. That shaped his race, so eventual podium as good as it could have been.



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN 10/10

McLAREN

Looks like a star in the making after a debut that reminded you of Lewis Hamilton's. Second to Ricciardo in Q1 (Merces were on primes), fifth on intermediates in Q2 and fourth on wets in Q3. Didn't put a wheel wrong all race to be second after Ricciardo's exclusion. Superb showing.



JEAN-ERIC VERGNE 8/10

TORO ROSSO

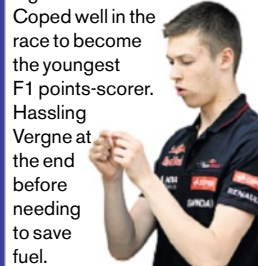
Although Kvyat took the headlines, Vergne was strong throughout. Just outside the top ten in Q1, his wet weather prowess came to the fore for seventh in Q2 and a fine sixth, 0.05s from Alonso in Q3. Struggled with the braking but got the car home within striking distance of Räikkönen's Ferrari.



DANIIL KYVAT 9/10

TORO ROSSO

Looked as if he had been born to it by getting through to Q3 in the tricky changing conditions and lining up eighth for his first GP start. Coped well in the race to become the youngest F1 points-scorer. Hassling Vergne at the end before needing to save fuel.



MARUSSIA MAX CHILTON 6/10

Caused the first start to be aborted when car cut out on the grid but a pit lane re-set allowed him into the race. Made up ground on Ericsson's Caterham and kept his finishing record right there by getting the MR03 to the line and at least gathering some data.

JULES BIANCHI 6/10

Like Chilton, suffered power unit control system problems at the start and lost six laps in the pits before joining the fray. Treated it as a test thereafter, experimenting with ways of maximising the power unit. Marussias showing more pace than Caterhams.

FELIPE MASSA 8/10

WILLIAMS MARTINI

After eight years at Ferrari, Massa says that he feels 'free' at Williams and both the car and power unit look like giving him the chance to enjoy himself and tackle the top men this season. Will have to wait until Malaysia though, after Kobayashi cannoned into him at Turn One.



VALTERRI BOTTAS 8/10

WILLIAMS MARTINI

Great to watch and would have scored higher but for the fact that a podium was probably on had it not been for the brush with the wall in Turn Nine. Disappointed not to get more out of it in qualifying but the intermediates proved tough to switch on. It seems as if he is set for a good year ahead.



CATERHAM F1 TEAM KAMUI KOBAYASHI 7/10

After reliability scuppered Friday, did a good job to get out of Q1 but it was all over by the first corner when he had a problem with the brakes and collected the luckless Massa. He said: "Not how I wanted my first race to go..."

MARCUS ERICSSON 6/10

Friday not the best start for the Swedish rookie. Qualified 0.88s from team-mate Kobayashi. Flat-spotted tyres early on but got 27 racing laps under his belt before the Caterham was halted by an oil pressure problem.



Daniil Kvyat became the youngest points scorer in history with his ninth in Melbourne, aged 19 years and 324 days. The record had been held by Sebastian Vettel, who was 19 years and 349 days old when he finished eighth in the 2007 US GP

SAHARA FORCE INDIA NICO HULKENBERG 8/10

A strong performance to run fourth early on after qualifying seventh. Fended off Alonso's Ferrari but found front tyre graining an issue and lost places to the Ferrari and Button's McLaren at the second round of stops.

SERGIO PEREZ 6/10

A quarter of a second from Hülkenberg in Q1 but didn't make it out of wet Q2. Contact with Gutiérrez's Sauber at Turn Three meant an early stop but helped by safety car. Trapped behind Sutil's Sauber but picked up final point.

RACING NEWS

F1 ROUND UP



Koba-bashi

Kamui Kobayashi earned the unwanted title of first accident of F1 2014 when he lost control under braking for turn one in Melbourne. The Caterham driver lost his rear brakes and locked up before sliding into both Kimi Räikkönen's Ferrari and Felipe Massa's Williams, taking the Brazilian out of the race entirely. Kobayashi escaped further penalty due to the incident being caused by a failure to the rear brakes...

Mass-ive penalty

...Felipe Massa, however, was less sympathetic. "I was really careful but Kamui is always trying to do starts like that," he blasted. "You cannot brake 50 metres on a start like that. I can't see much difference between that and Romain Grosjean's accident at Spa [2012] that got him banned for a race. He should get a hard penalty."

Merc's hoping

Mercedes head Toto Wolff has explained that the team asked Lewis Hamilton to try and continue the Australian GP hoping the engine issue would cure itself. Hamilton retired after two laps with a misfire. "We knew we had a problem but we were hoping the system might somehow reset," said Wolff. "He was unlucky because after a great pole he deserved a good race."

Sauber slumps

Monisha Kaltenborn says that Sauber has work to do this year to make its way up the grid after a quiet performance in Melbourne. Both Adrian Sutil and Esteban Gutiérrez finished out of the points in 11th and 12th, making Sauber the sole team to finish the race with both cars yet to score a point. "It was a positive start for the new era of F1, but not so much for us," she said. "We knew our performance wasn't where it should be so we just concentrated on getting both cars to the finish. We have a lot of work to do."

Hulk happy

Nico Hülkenberg says he was just happy to reach the finish in Melbourne. Hülkenberg failed to finish in 2010 and '12, and didn't start last year's event due to a chassis fault. "I was so happy to see the flag for the first time here," said the German, who took seventh. "It's a great result"



Ricciardo lost podium



Aussie racer was second on the road in home event

RED BULL: WE'LL FIGHT EXCLUSION

Ricciardo loses podium due to fuel flow violation

By Rob Ladbrook

Red Bull Racing head Christian Horner has hit out at the decision to exclude Daniel Ricciardo from second place in last Sunday's Australian Grand Prix.

Ricciardo became the first Australian to finish on the podium in his home race when he took second in Melbourne behind Nico Rosberg's Mercedes. His RB10 was investigated when its FIA fuel flow sensor showed it repeatedly exceeded the 100kg per hour fuel flow limit during the event.

After five hours of deliberation, Ricciardo was excluded from the results.

The fuel flow rate is measured by an FIA-provided sensor, which can be monitored live during the race. Officials told Red Bull

during the race that its fuel flow had been too high. Horner said the team's own calibrated system via the injectors showed the fuel rate was within the rules.

Horner said: "These meters that have been provided by the FIA have caused problems up and down the pitlane since testing. There have been discrepancies and they are unreliable - some cars may well have run without them in the race itself or have them failed in the race itself."

"We had a fuel flow sensor fitted to the car that we believed had an error. Based on our calculation on the fuel the injectors are providing to the engine, which is a calibrated piece of

Horner says car was legal

equipment and is consistently standard across the pitlane, there is no variance.

"They [race officials] informed us to turn the flow down, but we said we had serious concerns over the sensors. We believed in our reading, otherwise there was a situation where you are reducing significant amounts of power in the engine at a time when we believed we complied with the regulations."

Ricciardo left the track not knowing the outcome of the enquiry. He said: "We were on a high when we heard the news from the stewards. We will have to look at what happened and move on. But I can still be very proud of the way I drove."

Red Bull has stated that it will appeal the exclusion.

Vettel frustrated by a lack of power

Red Bull is investigating the cause of the power unit failure that ended Sebastian Vettel's run of consecutive race wins.

The world champion could have eclipsed Alberto Ascari's 13 consecutive wins from 1953-'54 with victory in Melbourne, but his RB10 retired after just five laps with a lack of power.

It marked the end of a frustrating weekend for Vettel, who qualified a lowly 13th after struggling with a software issue on the Renault Energy F1 Power Unit. He complained of a lack of power on the formation lap and grew more animated over the team radio as the race wore on before urging his team: "Do something, I have no power."

Vettel said after the race: "We don't know why we lost power, we don't understand the problem. At the start I had no [Kinetic ERS], so the battery wasn't giving me any power. After that the engine wasn't running properly and we lost a few cylinders."

"The problem is everything is linked together. When you lose one component it's only a matter of time until you stop."

"I have no doubt we can fix these issues, the big question is how soon. We're working hard in Milton Keynes [at the Red Bull factory] and at Renault, but we've obviously started on the back foot. But we've learned a lot too and Daniel [Ricciardo, team-mate] has shown that the car can be quick."



Vettel: a rare retirement



Alonso finished fourth in opener

Alonso: Ferrari must work fast to close the gap to Mercedes after struggling for Oz pace

Fernando Alonso has urged his Ferrari team to find performance from its F14 T before the next race in Malaysia or risk losing vital ground in the title race.

Alonso and team-mate Kimi Räikkönen struggled to match the Mercedes-powered machines for pace in Melbourne and lagged to fourth and seventh following Daniel Ricciardo's disqualification.

Alonso said the team had to act quickly to unlock speed from its new package. "We're not happy with the performance we showed

and we need to improve," he said. "I was not able to challenge the McLarens for the podium places and Kimi was stuck between two Toro Rossos, and he won here last year."

"It was just the first race so we cannot become crazy over what we saw here, we just know that we need to work and have to arrive in Malaysia in a better position."

"There are concerns, but the good news is we finished the race with both cars and more or less no problems. There are positives but we must improve the negatives."

Räikkönen suffered a difficult weekend in Melbourne. The Finn struggled to gain confidence with the braking system on the new car and also crashed on his in-lap during the second phase of qualifying. His fastest race lap was more than a second adrift of the best time that Alonso set.

"The brakes are fine," Räikkönen insisted despite several lock-ups during the race. "We grained the front tyre and had no grip. That's the main issue, but it's a combination of things. We'll just work until we fix it."

VOLKSWAGEN AIMING TO RUN 2015 POLO WRC THIS YEAR

PAGE 16

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'This is one of Porsche's most complex machines'
Germans return to Le Mans, p22



MASSA: WILLIAMS CAN SHINE IN 2014



Massa was taken out in an opening lap accident

Felipe Massa reckons that Williams can recover from its disappointing Australian Grand Prix to be the closest challenger to Mercedes.

Williams Martini Racing had a mixed race in Melbourne, with Valtteri Bottas fighting to fifth place and Massa being taken out at the first turn by the out of control Kamui Kobayashi.

The team was heavily fancied to make the podium, and could have had more from the event had Bottas not picked up a puncture when he ran wide out of Turn Ten and hit the wall, breaking his rear-right wheel.



Massa: Positive feeling

However the Finn's spirited battle back up the order showed the FW36's potential. When asked if Williams could fight with Mercedes at the front, Massa said: "It is not impossible. McLaren definitely had a good race, finished both cars in the points and are leading the Constructors' chase. But we have potential.

"Everything is possible this year. Looking at how we compared to others I would say, at the moment, Mercedes is faster. After them it's open and we are right there. I am happy with the car, to be honest. I'm

happy with the performance we have but there's a lot to improve. You are always thinking about the bad things with the car, and ours meant we lost some places in qualifying, but it was better in the race.

"This car has margins for improvement and I'm pushing the team really hard to go in that direction. I'm sure we'll only get faster and more competitive."

Bottas' fifth means Williams has already scored more points than it had during the entire 2013 campaign. He added: "I'm mad at myself for the mistake, but I need to learn from it. I was pushing too hard and went over the limit a bit. But it's great that as a team we are finally racing again."

Australian Grand Prix bosses want Formula One to turn up the noise

Australian Grand Prix organisers are unhappy about the sound of the new generation Formula One cars.

Last weekend's race in Melbourne drew widespread criticism concerning the lack of volume from the new V6 turbocharged power units. Speaking to local radio reporters, Australian Grand

Prix chief executive Andrew Westacott said he was angry that the event was lacking the right soundtrack.

"What was missing was the sexiness and the appeal of the noise," he said. "I was able to stand on the pit wall at the start of the race without ear plugs. Previously it'd shake your bones.

"We pay for a product and we have contracts in place, and we'll be looking at them very seriously."

Mercedes' Niki Lauda added: "Everybody wants to do something about it but you can't just change the exhausts. You'd have to redevelop the whole engine and the mapping. That'd be way too expensive."

Booth upbeat despite Marussia race drama

Marussia's technical issues in Australia masked the true pace of its new car, according to team head John Booth.

The Russian-backed British team showed promise in Melbourne but its race was setback after both its cars failed on the starting grid. First Max Chilton's MR03 cut out on the dummy grid before Jules Bianchi's refused to start for the second formation lap. Both cars started from the pits, with Chilton's restarting and staying on the lead lap. Bianchi was eight laps down at the end. Chilton finished 14th.

"We achieved our goal of a two-car finish, but our performance fell short," said Booth. "It was mostly the specific electrical issues put us on the back foot. We've now got mountains of data and we can optimise our package for Malaysia."



Russian Daniil Kvyat became a record-breaker in Melbourne

Tost praises Kvyat's points-paying drive

Toro Rosso head Franz Tost has praised F1 rookie Daniil Kvyat after he became the youngest driver to ever score a point in a world championship grand prix.

Russian racer Kvyat fought to ninth place in Melbourne and, at just 19 years 324 days old, overtook Sebastian Vettel as the youngest racer ever to score. Vettel was 19 years and 349 days old when he finished eighth in the 2007 United States GP.

Tost said: "I'm very happy for

Daniil. This is very promising and I'm convinced that this is the first in a long series of good results for him."

Kvyat added: "It was the longest race I've ever done. I am used to 35 minutes but this was one and a half hours. I finished all of my drink pretty early so the last half was physically quite tough. It's fantastic to finish my first grand prix with points. I had a fight with Jean-Eric [Vergne, team-mate] but I had to call it off to save fuel."

Lotus men pleased to bank more data

Romain Grosjean says Lotus learned more from its half-distance in the Australian Grand Prix than it did from its entire winter testing mileage.

Lotus managed to keep both of its E22s running until mid distance, with Grosjean completing 43 laps and Maldonado getting 29 in before both cars retired with a failure of the kinetic energy recovery system. The car was also beset with braking and handling issues.

The Enstone team skipped the first test in Jerez due to delays in readying the car.

Grosjean told NBC: "We have to see the positives, and 43 laps was useful for all of us, for the car for the engineers, for myself. It's bad to retire, but at least we got good data and we can move forward."

"We learnt more today than from all of the winter and it was the first time I could drive a car which was doing the same thing every corner. We've still got a long way to go, but you have seen the positives. The changes we did took us in the right direction."



Grosjean: Happy with outing

MIN'S EYES IN THE F1 Paddock

TONY DODGINS

"The Australian stunned us all with a front row"



You had to feel for Daniel Ricciardo. After a couple of years' relative anonymity he had flown into Melbourne to find his face on every billboard.

"It was a little bit embarrassing, actually..." he grinned. But he's going to need to get used to it.

Although comparisons with Sebastian Vettel are meaningless given the power unit problems that Seb endured almost throughout the Australian GP, Ricciardo stunned everyone by putting his car on the front row.

His race was even better and although there was nothing he could do about Nico Rosberg, his second place – and third for Kevin Magnussen – truly hinted at the dawn of a new era.

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner was massively impressed. Not so much by the speed – he knew about that – but by the total composure in the cockpit, the relaxed radio transmissions, the race management – and everything that went with it.

The crowd loved it. They cheered him to the rafters when he put the RB10 on the front row and his second place blew the metaphorical roof off the place. For the first time they had an Aussie on an Australian GP podium. Ricciardo, modest and polite, clearly enjoyed his moment.

But then it all fell apart. The reliability of the FIA's fuel flow devices (cars may not exceed a fuel flow rate of 100kg per hour) had caused concern in pre-season testing and continued to do so in Melbourne. The FIA's technical chief, Charlie Whiting, had already confirmed to the media on Thursday that there would be no tolerance given in this, the first race of the new-look F1. Go over, and you're out.

It didn't look good when an FIA communiqué from technical delegate Jo Bauer to the race stewards just before 20:20hrs on Sunday night revealed that car number three had "exceeded consistently the maximum allowed fuel flow." By midnight the stewards had completed their deliberations and Ricciardo was out.

Red Bull, it emerged, had been told during the race that the FIA believed their fuel flow rate was too high, but refused to turn it down because they believed the sensor was inaccurate and preferred to believe their own data from fuel injectors. They would, they said, be appealing the disqualification.

A few hours later, Ricciardo's downcast face on the front page of *The Herald Sun* greeted you for breakfast, under the headline: "Grand Farce."

Rules are rules, I know, but you did wonder, at a time when the future of the Australian GP, a great event, is in doubt beyond 2015. Here you had this engaging young guy capturing the imagination in a huge way. Had F1 just taken a 12-bore to its own feet? Would it not have been better, just this first time, to suppress Bauer's report and have a quiet chat behind closed doors before Malaysia?

AGREE/DISAGREE?
mn.letters@haymarket.com

RACING NEWS

Renault 5 champ to enter new Clio Cup

Former Renault 5 champion Mark Howard will rekindle his association with the marque for the first time in 21 years after entering the UK Clio Cup.

The 49-year-old claimed the second-tier Renault one-make series, the Harlow Group Renault 5 Turbo title, with the Mark Fish Motorsport squad in 1993 before focusing on family and his business commitments.

He returned to action in the 2011 VW Racing Cup and also took part in Radical races in 2012. Howard has purchased a new Mk4 Clio Cup machine from Daniel Rowbottom and will be reunited with Fish for an attack on the Masters Cup class.

"It's going to be interesting seeing if I still have the reactions and speed to match my competitiveness," Howard said.

"I can't wait to get out there and I'm looking forward to working with Mark again. It's a big challenge as it's a very long time since I won in the Renault 5 Turbo title. I'll be racing people who weren't even born when I won that title."

Clio star Rivett gets last minute return

Former Clio Cup champion Paul Rivett believes early wins will be vital this year after confirming his return to the championship.

The 35-year-old has been recruited as team manager and lead driver for the WDE Motorsport squad, which steps up from the Ford Fiesta series.

Rivett will test his new turbocharged Clio for the first time at Rockingham today (Wednesday) ahead of the opening round of the series at Brands Hatch next weekend.

"Only picking the car up and testing this week means there's a lot to try to achieve as I'm really behind the rest of the field," Rivett said. "But pressure makes me perform and I've not had enough of it in the past. I've wanted to step up into touring cars but if I'm not able to do that, managing a team is the next step in my career."

Rivett admitted he would be lucky to be fighting for wins at Brands Hatch but has targeted victories at the following rounds at Donington Park.

"I need to win a race within the first two weekends," he added. "Sponsor income depends on it. But I'll be much more prepared for Donington Park."

Rivett, who won the Renault Clio Cup title in 2002, 2004 and 2011, finished in third place in the points last season running with Stancombe Vehicle Engineering and took four race wins.

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Menu drove for three days at Croft in the new machine

MENU BUOYED BY FIRST BTCC TEST

Double champion enjoys maiden run in new Team BMR Passat CC

By Matt James

Former British touring car champion Alain Menu says that it will take him time to reach the front of the grid following his first test with Team BMR last week.

The Swiss racer handled the RML-built VW Passat CC for three days at Croft last week and says that the team needs to learn how to work together

before he can target big results.

Menu, 50, who lifted the crown for Renault in 1997 and for Ford in 2000, said: "We have got plenty of running in. As a team, we know we are not completely up to speed yet, so we have been focusing on learning how to work together and improve the car. The team seem like a really good bunch. It will take a little while before we are where we want to be performance-wise,

but for our first test, it has been promising – everything is going according to plan."

Menu will be one of seven champions on the grid the year and will be among 14 race winners on the entry. The full list was confirmed at the BTCC's media day at Donington Park yesterday (Tuesday).

"I'm excited to be back in the BTCC – racing is my life and what I love," said Menu. "It will

be a challenge and there are a lot of young drivers who I know will be quick and who will give me a run for my money. But the ambition is to fight at the front and win races.

"The goal is clearly to attain the same level as the likes of Triple Eight, Team Dynamics and WSR. It would be foolish to think we are there now, but there's no reason why we can't reach it in the fullness of time."

THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP



The Chip Ganassi Racing squad claimed victory at its first attempt in the Sebring 12 Hours in Florida last weekend. The Ganassi Riley-Ford EcoBoost DP shared by Scott Pruett, Memo Rojas and Marino Franchitti looked to be an outsider for victory after two spins in the final two hours. But an early stop before a safety car period gave Franchitti track position for the last 20 minutes. David Brabham finished second alongside Ryan Dalziel and Scott Sharp in their Extreme Speed Motorsports HPD ARX-03b LMP2 prototype, only 4.5s behind the winners...

Carl Edwards won the NASCAR Sprint Cup race at Bristol Motor Speedway. The twice-delayed race was incident-filled with Jimmie Johnson suffering a front tyre blow-out after losing his lead to Matt Kenseth before the red flags flew due to rain. The race turned in Carl Edwards' favour when he, along with Aric Almirola, Denny Hamlin and Ricky Stenhouse Jr stayed out as others pitted under the penultimate caution, to take the lead. Stenhouse and Almirola clashed for second, helping Edwards to pull away to victory... **Scott McLaughlin won the final V8 Supercars non-championship support race for the Australian GP in Melbourne. It was the maiden win for the Volvo S60...**



British Touring Car squad eBay Motors took the wraps off a new 2014 livery at a launch in Park Lane, London, last week. The car, which will be driven by Colin Turkington, Nick Foster and Rob Collard, has been heavily reworked over the winter with an uprated engine and a refined aerodynamics package



Rob Austin Racing will have new liveries for this season. The British Touring Car Championship squad will run Rob Austin himself and Hunter Abbott in its pair of Audi A4s. Austin's car will be backed by Exocet, the fuel additives firm, while Abbott's machine will carry branding from Alco-Sense, a breathalyser company

WE GET THE INSIDE INFORMATION ON PORSCHE'S NEW 919 HYBRID

PAGE 22

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"Drivers will all fight for the prize money"

New prize for Ford racers, below



Photos: Jakob Ebrey

PORSCHE STAR BUTCHER TO RACE BRITISH GT ASTON

Scot will run Aston Martin



Butcher: in Brit GT

Scottish sports car racer Rory Butcher will race in British GT in a Motorbase Aston Martin Vantage GT3 this season.

The 27-year-old finished third in last season's Porsche Carrera Cup GB with the Celtic Speed squad, taking three victories. He will partner experienced sports car racer John Hartshorne, 56. Former TVR Tuscan Challenge racer Hartshorne has competed in LMP2 machinery in the European Le Mans Series in recent seasons.

Butcher, 26 from Kirkcaldy, last raced in British GT back in 2010 with an ABG

Motorsport KTMX-Bow. He said the chance to move up to GT3 was well timed.

"It was time to move on from the Carrera Cup and I was close to a deal for the Porsche Supercup," Butcher said, "but I kept in touch with [Motorbase team principal] David Bartrum. GT3 is the next step up and British GT is such a great series. I tested the Aston in Portimão and loved it."

Butcher admitted this season will be a competitive step up. His maiden domestic test was due to take place at Snetterton today (Wednesday).

"There's more strategy involved at this level," he added, "and so it will be a steep learning curve but the plan is to build throughout the year to be fighting towards the sharp end in the second half of the season. British GT is very strong this year and has a big manufacturer interest. I eventually want to do big endurance races like Le Mans, Sebring and the Nürburgring so British GT is a good shop window."

Motorbase's second Aston is expected to be handled by former champion Michael Caine and Ahmad Al Harthy.

Calado set for WEC drive with AF Corse

GP2 race winner James Calado is set to race for Ferrari in this season's FIA World Endurance Championship.

Calado finished third in last season's GP2 points with the ART GP squad. He is understood to be close to finalising a deal with the factory AF Corse team in the GTE Pro class after recently testing the Ferrari 458 Italia alongside fellow Brit and GP2 race winner Sam Bird at Vallelunga this month. Both are in contention for the vacant seat left open after Kamui Kobayashi returned to F1 with Caterham.

An announcement on the team's line-up is due this week.

JRM Nissan poised for a return to British GT

Nissan is gearing up for a factory effort in British GT this season with a reworked version of its GTR GT3.

British firm JRM is close to finalising a driver pairing to crew the twin turbo 3.8-litre V6 machine and an entry has been lodged for the opening event of the season at Oulton Park on Easter weekend. The GT3 will be run by customer team JMH, but will have full backing and support from JRM.

JRM last completed a full season of British GT in 2012 when it fought for the title with Alex Buncombe and Jann

Nissan GTR GT3: back to Brit GT



Mardenborough. It switched to the Blancpain Endurance Series last year and claimed the Pro-Am division title.

JRM's James Walters said: "British GT is unfinished business for us after coming so close to the title. We've got a silver-rated driver signed up and next week we'll hopefully conclude the deal for the second driver."

"We've done over 275,000km [170,000miles] of running with the GTR since its launch so it's capable of winning in the right hands."

JRM will also field cars in the Blancpain Sprint Series and German VLN endurance series this year.

Pass rivals, win cash: new Ford prize fund

Drivers in this year's MSA Formula Ford Championship of Great Britain can receive prize money for overtaking rivals.

A total prize pool of £30,000 is on offer this year, with £3000 up for grabs per weekend. Each race winner will receive cash, and the driver that gains the most places in the opening event of every weekend will also get a prize.

Championship manager Sam Roach said: "We wanted to ensure that as many drivers as possible got the chance to fight for the prize money and the first race awards will certainly liven up the competition."

"The second race of the weekend will also be of interest because it's a reversed grid so the winner will have to work hard for their share."

FORD'S PRIZE ALLOCATION

- £500 to the winner of the Scholarship Class in race one
- £500 to the driver that makes up the most places from their starting grid spot in race one
- £1000 to the outright winner of race two
- £1000 to the outright winner of race three

Rising star Russell to twin BRDC F4 bid with Renault ALPS campaign

BRDC F4 racer George Russell says racing with top European squad Prema Powerteam in the Formula Renault ALPS series



Russell: Lanan deal in F4

this season could lead to a future drive in Formula Three.

The 16-year-old will make his single-seater debut in F4 with Lanan Racing at Silverstone on April 26/27. The double European karting champion will dovetail his F4 commitments with racing for Prema alongside third-year ALPS racer Alex Bosak.

"We've been talking since the start of February," said Russell. "The calendars for F4 and ALPS don't clash so plans have worked out nicely."

Russell took part in his first tests with Prema at Monza in Italy last week, finishing almost half a second clear at the top of the collective times.

THE VOICE OF NATIONAL RACING

MATT JAMES

"When did the FIA become a promoter?"



The FIA set up a European F3 Championship

Governing body. Those are interesting words, and mean that a body is in place to govern. Quite simple really, isn't it?

There's very little opportunity to interpret that incorrectly. Although, right now, the FIA does seem to be moving away from what a 'governing body' should be doing, particularly when it comes to junior level single-seater racing.

The area that it has got spectacularly wrong is its desire to introduce a 'standardised' F4 throughout the world. I simply don't see the need for an FIA-sanctioned category at this level when perfectly good single-seater championships already exist.

Single-seater racing across the world develops at its own pace and to a format that each country considers appropriate. While I understand that developing nations might need a hand and be pointed in the right direction, letting that structure develop organically is the only way it can be a success. The United Kingdom is fortunate that it has a long history of motor racing, and an established path to the top that is driven by commercial necessity (as proven by Jonathan Palmer's F4 series). Most countries don't need to be beholden to the FIA at the nursery-slope level. They need to develop on their own.

By the FIA laying down dictates for the technology and the competition at this entry-point level, it is taking away the freedom of each national governing body. It potentially introduces barriers to entry due to the cost of meeting the demands.

I am not quite sure when the FIA became a promoter of championships either, rather than a governing body. The FIA becoming an organiser would be like the British governing body, the Motor Sports Association, deciding to create its own saloon car championship in the UK because it didn't think that the one out there was strong enough. That situation would never happen (with good reason) and nor should the F4 mandate.

Given that it is the brainchild of Gerhard Berger (a man who has been ensconced in an F1 bubble since 1985) it is likely to happen. The FIA has got form for this over recent seasons. Think about the FIA F3 championship, which basically hijacked existing (and valid) championships and created its own competition. Where was the need for that? Who was it that suddenly gave the FIA a mandate to create its own competitions? It is very much a grey area. The FIA needs to govern international sport and let the national bodies get on with the rest. It is what they are there for, after all.

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RACING NEWS

Experienced Aussie to boost Ford squad

MSA British Formula Ford squad SWB Motorsport will field experienced Australian racer Greg Holloway as part of a two-car line-up this season.

The Daventry-based outfit ran the only Sinter chassis in last season's series with a number of drivers drafted in after the exit of original signing Fred Martin-Dye.

Holloway, 28, has experience in the national Australian Formula Ford Championship and most recently claimed the Skip Barber Formula Winter Series title at Homestead in Miami, Florida in January. He will team up with James Webb, who raced in last season's Ginetta Junior Championship, finishing 15th in the points.

"Last season we were hampered by the late delivery of the car and bit-part drivers," said SWB boss Simon Baldry. "Greg tested the car at Blyton and Snetterton and preferred the Sinter compared to the Mygale chassis. His experience and feedback will help us develop the car. He will hit the ground running and I have high hopes. It will be more of a learning year for James."



Hamilton drove Civic in BTCC

Former BTCC racer in VW Cup Golf attack

Former British touring car racer Matt Hamilton will make a full-time return to the sport this year in the Volkswagen Racing Cup.

The 24-year-old from Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire will pilot a Golf GTi prepared by the THM Racing squad. The outfit ran Hamilton's BTCC campaign in a Honda Civic in 2009 and 2010.

Since his part-seasons in the BTCC, Hamilton had only tackled a limited number of Britcar races.

"I'm really excited to be back behind the wheel and it's fantastic to see how the team has developed over the last 18 months," he said. "The VW Racing Cup is looking great. There's nothing like a big and competitive field to bring the best out of a driver."

"There's some drivers I rate highly already signed up and a couple of past champions so we will have to hit the ground running in order to mount a serious challenge."

HUGHES AND FIRTH IN BRITISH GT BID

Rapid pairing join Trackspeed for title push in Porsche 997 GT3R



Trackspeed will run a pair of 997 GT3Rs in British GT

By Rob Ladbrook

Warren Hughes and Jody Firth will team up to fight for British GT Championship glory with Trackspeed this year – despite having to run with a weight penalty.

The two drivers, who won the SPEED Euroseries title together in 2011, will drive a Porsche 997 GT3R for the multiple title-winning squad.

Last year Hughes, 45, contested a part-campaign in British GT split between an M-Sport Audi R8 and latterly a WRT-tended car. Firth, 32, contested five races in a United Autosports McLaren MP4-12C GT3.

Due to British GT's driver grading system, they will carry a 75kg ballast penalty. Hughes said that the penalty



Hughes (l) and Firth will join top Trackspeed squad

wouldn't be a barrier to success.

"Everything about this deal fits together perfectly, and the only downside is the weight, but that won't be a deciding factor," he said. "[Fellow Porsche

squad] Motorbase ran with 75kg last year and were in the title fight until the final race and British GT has proven that it's not always the quickest car that wins the championship.

"Consistency is just as important as outright pace and I'm sure we'll have that on our side. Trackspeed knows the Porsche inside out and has been the top team in recent years so it's hugely exciting. Also being back together with Jody is great. We're a strong team and compliment each other."

Hughes and Firth shook down the new car at Snetterton last week. "The Porsche demands a different driving style but we both felt comfortable right away," Hughes added. "It's got great traction out of the corners and good straight-line speed so it's a real all-rounder. It should wear the weight well."

Trackspeed will also run a second 997 GT3R for returning pairing Jon Minshaw and Phil Keen. The pair were 14th in last year's points table.



RLR will field Craven's Ligier

Sportscar switch for F3 Cup champion

Reigning F3 Cup champion Alex Craven will switch to the European VdeV prototype sportscar series this year.

The 31-year-old will share a new Honda-powered Ligier JS53 CN car with seasoned sportscar racer Robbie Kerr and *Emmerdale* actor Kelvin Fletcher, who graduates from Porsche racing.

The trio's car will be run by British team RLR with assistance from students enrolled in the motorsport courses at the University of Bolton.

Craven said: "I'm really excited to be racing in Europe this year. Originally I was looking at doing the Euroformula Open [the rebranded F3 Open] but I couldn't get near the budget so sportscars were the best option."

"I did three races in the SPEED series alongside Robbie in 2011 and loved the style of racing. I've worked with Robbie since then and he's amazingly quick and so professional. I reckon he'll help myself and Kelvin adapt to the car very quickly."

New F3 category for older machines

British F3 organisers hope to boost grids this year by attracting older-spec cars to a new Cooper Cup class.

The new class, backed by series tyre supplier Cooper, will be open to drivers running pre-2008 chassis.

British F3 co-ordinator Benjamin Franassovici said: "We've been talking to teams about offering an appealing solution to teams and drivers with older cars and we believe this is a tempting proposition."

"It offers a new low-cost and rewarding entry point into F3. We have a seven-round calendar and four sets of prize tyres and an entry discount for 2015 as incentives."

The Cooper Cup will cost a reduced £7000 plus VAT to enter, with a set of tyres given as prizes to the points leader after the round at Silverstone in May and Brands Hatch in August. The points leader after Spa-Francorchamps in July will get two sets of tyres.

The class winner will also receive discounted entry into the National or top-flight International classes for 2015.



Reiter-built Corvette racer has a 7.9-litre V8 engine. Rorty...

German-built Camaro to run in GT3 class

German tuning firm Reiter Engineering gave its new SaReNi Camaro GT3 its first public shakedown in a Blancpain Endurance Series group test at Paul Ricard in France last week.

Long-term Lamborghini tuning firm Reiter has built the Camaro independently of Chevrolet and will run it in the full Blancpain series this year. It runs a 650bhp 7.9-litre V8 producing 800Nm of torque and has been FIA homologated for GT3. The car will

be manufactured in limited numbers and sold to customer teams. It costs £160,000 plus VAT.

Reiter has used input from seasoned drivers Peter Kox, Tomás Enge and Stefan Rosina, as well as factory Corvette ace Oliver Gavin, to develop the car.

The Camaro was inspired when Reiter head Hans Reiter saw a road-going version on holiday in America. The SaReNi moniker is formed from the first names of his three daughters.

MN ANALYSES THE STATE OF THE WRC

PAGE 26



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It's an Enigma: US racer in new F4 deal

Enigma Motorsport will run American Falco Wauer for its maiden full season in BRDC F4.

The 17-year-old, who finished 16th in last season's points with Team KBS, raced for Enigma during the two-round Winter Series at Snetterton and Brands Hatch last November, finishing fourth in the standings.

"Falco ran well in the Winter Series and after a season of getting used to British motor racing I would expect him to improve this year," Enigma boss Linton Stutely said. "Last season he focused more on his driving, and he is the last of the late brakings so does well at circuits such as Snetterton. We are waiting for the car to return after having winter modifications fitted and then get out testing."

Renault racer Stilp signs with 20Ten

Renault UK Clio Cup racer Jordan Stilp will return to this season's championship with established squad 20Ten Racing.

The Pottersbury-based racer finished 13th in the series last year and seventh in the Graduate Cup class with Westbourne Motorsport. The former Ma5da MX5 Championship race winner teams up with Josh Cook and Craig Milner to complete the 20Ten Racing line-up this season.

"Last year was quite trying for me," Stilp said. "I started off quite well and adapted quickly to the front-wheel drive. But from mid-season on I had a lot of problems with the car in general and the championship result wasn't what I was aiming for."

"I have been out testing in the new Clio with 20Ten and I've taken to it extremely well."

"The new car feels better to drive and I felt very confident with its handling. So it didn't take long to put in some good times."

Plans for the new Circuit of Wales motorsport facility in Blaenau Gwent have hit delays, with a report revealing that the track's developer is asking for a further £50 million of government investment.

The new £280 million track is due to be built at Ebbw Vale, north of Cardiff. But there have been concerns over the high level of public funding required for the project, which has been designed in part to bring jobs to the region. Construction work was slated to begin in December but has yet to get underway.

A report on the BBC Wales show *Week In, Week Out* found that the firm behind the plans, the Heads of the Valleys Development Company, has requested an additional £30 million from the Welsh Government, as well as £20 million from the Treasury, to underwrite the project. The Welsh government already granted £2m back in 2012 to help finalise the plans for the track.

The development company believes the new facility can generate up to 6000 jobs once built and contribute up to £50m to the Welsh economy. It has held talks with a number of large motorsport franchises, including MotoGP, but has yet to sign a deal to host.

Professor Garel Rhys, the chair of the Welsh Automotive

WELSH TRACK IN PUSH FOR FUNDS



New track will be built in deprived Ebbw Vale region



Carrick: track chief

Forum, told the programme: "The number increases expectations to an incredible height and you have to ask where are those jobs actually going to come from?"

"You need incredible multipliers to make that happen. I'm not optimistic or pessimistic, I'll simply believe it when I see it."

Heads of the Valleys

Development Company CEO Michael Carrick refused to disclose the current investment level, or the investors' identities, when asked by the programme. He said the plans had attracted the backing they needed to go forwards and the funding was "going through the processes."

Part of the delay has been caused by the plans to build the track on common land. To

legally do this the developer has to find an equal amount of land elsewhere and register it as common land as a trade-off.

A statement from the Circuit of Wales in reaction to the programme read: "We have been mindful not to over-promise on job estimates and the jobs are not confined just to the circuit but will spread across the area due to relocation of

automotive industry.

"We have worked hard to secure investment to underwrite this development. This is a new form of private/public partnership where the role of government is to enable and attract private capital. Investors are attracted by the social benefits the track will offer to one of the most deprived areas of the UK."



Leonard has raced in Carrera Cup since 2008 season

Irish Carrera Cup stalwart Leonard thrilled by Le Mans race outing

Porsche Carrera Cup stalwart Karl Leonard says the attraction of racing on the support package of this season's Le Mans 24 Hours was key to returning to the series this year with Team Parker Racing.

The 37-year-old Irishman first contested the Carrera Cup championship in 2008

and has always raced part campaigns since.

He competed in four races last year, finishing 11th in the points. Leonard already has experience of this year's new type-991 GT3 Cup racer after he took part in last season's Porsche Supercup weekend at Silverstone. He will chase the Pro-Am1 title this year.

"The race supporting the Le Mans 24 Hours is a big thing for me," he said.

"Having driven the type-991 car at Silverstone I think the championship will be very level this year. I hope to get closer to Michael Meadows."

Team head Stuart Parker added: "We've got high hopes for the Pro-Am1 title."

MONDELLO PARK: MPSC PATCH TYRE FORD FIESTA

MARCH 15/16

INSIDE LINE

The **Mondello GT** class was well supported but controversy reigned as Connaire Finn led early on only to lift, baulking Pat McBenett's Elise and allowing his own team-mate, Paul Monaghan, to blast by the pair to snatch the lead.

Monaghan, returning to the circuit after a 20-year gap, made no mistakes to take a fine win but Finn's tactics were robust, as he held back the Elise to take second place. In race two, McBenett got the head down and got away early, an incorrect tyre choice slowing him towards the end. The Ginetta duo hauled him in, but a rotation from Monaghan at the last corner put paid to his challenge and McBenett took the flag.

Dave O'Brien snatched **Touring Car** pole on the last lap of qualifying, but Erik Holstein snatched the lead off the line and held on for the win, despite O'Brien's best efforts. Race two, despite a reverse grid, was a carbon copy. Brian Fitzpatrick's

Seat Supercopa matched the BMWs on lap times, but took too long for the tyres to come up to temperature, by which time they were gone.

Colm Blackburn qualified on **Formula Vee** pole and, when Kevin Grogan spun out of an early lead, had it all to himself ahead of Ger Byrne and Steven Morrin.

In the **HRCA** race, Bernard Foley's BGT V8 valiantly held off David Kelly's Crosslé 9S before succumbing to the lighter machine mid race. Clive Brandon hung on for third.

Ken Fleming's Starlet took the **Future Classic** honours, just from race returnee Brendan Travers. Both, however, received penalties for beating the barrier time and Ian Thornton took the win.

Neville Smyth took the win in **FF1600** race one, after a mid-race stoppage. In race two, Stephen Daly took the honours once early challenger Sean Doyle went wide at the Esses, with Smyth taking second.

LILLIS POUNCES AS RABBITT BLUNDERS

With 56 entries for the first round of the Patch Tyre Equipment Fiesta Series, the action was always going to be frantic. Junior rallycross champion Sophie Byrne qualified on pole for the qualifying race with novice John McGovern alongside.

McGovern rocketed off the line to grab the lead while Byrne, with conditions now drier, fell back through the pack. Northern Irish visitor Richard Livingston despatched Byrne with a lairy move round the outside at turn three before closing in on the leader, and he took Graeme Colfer with him. McGovern was incredibly impressive though and held on, despite a mid-race safety car intervention, for an impressive win on his motor racing debut.

In the final, polesitter Liam Rabbitt, who had not raced for over 15 years, was still waiting for the national flag start when the lights went out and half the field swamped him into the first

corner. Sean Lillis grabbed the lead and made good his getaway, whilst chaos reigned in his wake. After a hectic first corner, it was JJ O'Riordan who emerged in second and he immediately came under pressure from 2013 champion John Denning. Despite contact, Denning was unable to find a way through and one almost sensed the relief when O'Riordan saw his team-mate Barry Hallion usurp Denning when yet another physical attack went awry mid-race.

With Lillis away up the road, and seemingly able to lap over a second a lap faster than the rest, the attention of onlookers stayed focused on the battle for second place.

O'Riordan drove superbly to hang on despite monster pressure for the duration.

At the flag then it was Lillis, from O'Riordan, Hallion, Denning, John Boland and Philip Lawless.

Leo Nulty

RESULTS

Fiestas: 1 John McGovern 11 laps in 15m 14.759s (49.76mph); 2 Richard Livingstone +1.478s; 3 Graeme Colfer; 4 Brendan Fitzgerald; 5 Pat Boland; 6 David Yamamoto. Fastest lap: Yamamoto 1m 15.089s (55.11mph) Pole position: Sophie Byrne. Starters: 28. **Race two:** 1 Sean Lillis 12 laps in 15m 26.073s (53.62mph); 2 JJ O'Riordan +10.737s; 3 Barry Hallion; 4 John Denning; 5 John Boland; 6 Philip Lawless. FL: Pat Boland 1m 15.697s (54.67mph). PP: Liam Rabbitt. S: 28.

FF1600: 1 Neville Smyth (Ray GR509) 11 laps in 10m 49.526s (70.08mph); 2 Niall Murray (Van Diemen LA10) +10.087s; 3 Andy O'Brien (Swift SC92); 4 Tom O'Connor (Van Diemen RF90); 5 Andrew Noble (Van Diemen JLD12K); 6 Ivor Mairs (Mondiale M84). FL: Murray 57.948s (71.41mph) PP: Murray. S: 9. **Race two:** 1 Stephen Daly (Ray GR11) 16 laps in 15m 46.373s (69.97mph); 2 Smyth +2.179s; 3 Murray; 4 Noel Dunne (Van Diemen RF00); 5 Sean Doyle (Van Diemen RF00); 6 Noble. FL: Murray 58.230s (71.07mph). PP: Murray. S: 9.

Formula Vee: 1 Colm Blackburn (Leystone) 10 laps in 13m 22.67s (51.56mph); 2 Ger Byrne (Sheane) +10.727s; 3 Stephen Morrin (Leystone); 4 Anthony Cross (Sheane); 5 Kevin Grogan (Leystone); 6 Mark Elliott (Leystone). FL: Grogan 1m 11.356s (58.00mph) PP: Blackburn. S: 13.

Irish Touring Cars: 1 Erik Holstein (BMW) 15 laps in 15m 21.428s (67.37mph); 2 Dave O'Brien (BMW E46) +0.303s; 3 Brian Fitzpatrick (Leon);

4 Robert Savage (Integra); 5 Eoghan Fogarty (Integra); 6 Jason Hughes (Integra). FL: O'Brien 59.706s (69.31mph). PP: O'Brien. Classes: Holstein, Hughes. S: 10. **Race two:** 1 Holstein 15 laps in 15m 23.749s (67.20mph); 2 O'Brien +4.254s; 3 Fitzpatrick; 4 Brian Sexton (Altea); 5 Savage; 6 Fogarty. FL: O'Brien 59.613s (69.42mph). PP: Sexton. CW: Holstein, Hughes. S: 10.






GT: 1 Paul Monahan (Ginetta G50) 14 laps in 14m 59.774s (64.39mph); 2 Connaire Finn (G50) +1.193s; 3 Pat McBenett (Lotus Elise); 4 Bob Cameron (RT Supercar); 5 Martin Duffy (M3); 6 Stephen Maher (M3). FL: Finn 1m 01.800s (66.96mph). PP: McBenett. S: 12. **Race two:** 1 McBenett 15 laps in 15m 15.654s (67.79mph); 2 Monahan +7.843s; 3 Finn; 4 Cameron; 5 Pat O'Sullivan (911); 6 Maher. FL: Finn 58.958s (70.19mph). PP: McBenett. S: 12.

Historics: 1 David Kelly (Crosslé 9S) 14 laps in 15m 16.32s (63.23mph); 2 Bernard Foley (MGB) +12.221s; 3 Clive Brandon (Lotus 4); 4 Mark Russell (Jaguar E-type); 5 Wolfgang Schnitger (MG Midget); 6 Ed Cassidy (Sunbeam Tiger). FL: Kelly 1m 02.104s (66.64mph). PP: Foley. S: 10.

Future Classics: 1 Ian Thornton (Golf) 8 laps in 9m 24.48s (58.65mph); 2 Barry McHenry (Punto) +3.315s; 3 Ken Fleming (Starlet); 4 Michael Clune (205); 5 Aidan Byrne (Golf); 6 Gary Graham (205). FL: Brendan Travers (Punto) 1m 08.921s (60.04mph). PP: Fleming. S: 14.



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HISTORICS

'A strong grid is expected for FISCAR'
VSCC's Spring Start, below

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com and Paul Lawrence



IN BRIEF

Big classic F1 grid
The FIA Masters Historic Formula One Championship has attracted a 29-car entry for the Catalan Classic Festival at Barcelona on April 4-6. Reigning Post-78 champion Greg Thornton heads the entry in his ex-Nigel Mansell Lotus 92/5 against 2013 runner-up Ian Simmonds (Tyrrell 012) while former GP Masters champion Richard Barber will run his new-for-2014 Williams FW08C.

R.A.C. coverage
Olly Dickinson has taken over the production of TV coverage for the R.A.C. Rally Championship following the sad death of David Winstanley. Dickinson will handle all production and will present the programmes, while BTCC commentator David Addison will return to a rallying role to handle the event narrative.

Canned Heat is on
Canned Heat and Bonnie Tyler will be star attractions on the live music stage at the Silverstone Classic (July 25-27). Also performing will be tribute bands to Aerosmith and the Eagles.

Brooklands 212
The Ferrari 212 F1 raced by Dorino Serafini to second place at the 1951 Syracuse Grand Prix in Sicily will be a star attraction at the Italian Car Day at Brooklands on Saturday May 3. The car features a 2500cc V12 engine.



Jones leads Welsh points

Welsh leaders
After two rounds of the Welsh Historic Rally Championship, Triumph TR7 V8 crew Peter Jones and Graham Joseph hold a narrow overall lead. Lying second is Ford Escort Mk1 crew Simon Pickering and Colin Jenkins. The nine-round championship continues on Rally North Wales on 5 April before the single-venue Lawrence Landfill Stages at Dale in May.

Surtees guests
John Surtees will be the guest of honour at this year's Donington Historic Festival. To mark the 50th anniversary of his 1964 world title with Ferrari, Surtees will be holding autograph sessions on Sunday and Monday (May 4/5). It will raise funds for the Henry Surtees Foundation.

Len May
The Formula Junior community is saddened by the death of New Zealand driver Len May, who died while racing his Cooper T56 at Hampton Downs. He appeared to suffer a medical emergency before hitting the tyre wall. Len and wife Stephanie survived the Christchurch earthquake in 2011.

VSCC celebration
The VSCC's Silverstone Spring Start meeting (April 12/13) will again celebrate the life of pre- and post-war racing icon George Abecassis. A strong grid is expected for a 30-minute FISCAR race for sports and GT cars from 1946 to 1956, particularly Aston Martin DB2/3/3S and HWMs.

DOWN THE PUB WITH

CHRIS RIXON

Age: 50 Lives: Suffolk
Co-driver in David Kirby's Escort Mk1

He first saw rallying in Africa

"I was always into rallying as I grew up on the Isle of Man in the days of Tony Pond. But I was born in Africa, so the first rally I ever watched was the Safari. Then we went to Port Erin on the Isle of Man and I always wanted to go rallying. I was also into bikes, but they are crazy."

He started in a Lada

"We moved to England when I was 17 and five years later I saw that Frank Richer at the local garage was into rallying. So I wandered in and told him I wanted to go rallying in the Lada Challenge. He said 'come back on Monday and we'll have a chat'. So I went back and there was a Lada in the corner and he told me to get on with it. He'd bought me a £50 Lada."

The Lada led to a start in co-driving

"I prepared it all-in for £500 and did two years of the Lada Challenge in 1985 and '86. From then to the mid-90s I had various Alfa Romeos and Escorts and I also did some co-driving as well. Every time I ran out of money I went co-driving. I spent the last four or five seasons in Belgium doing the Flanders Challenge in a Citroën Saxo."

He's into scuba diving

"I'm a massively keen scuba diver. I try and get out to somewhere warm twice a year, places like the Maldives and the Red Sea. I think that might end up taking over from rallying. I'm up to 30 years of rallying and I said to David at the end of last year that I was stopping. Then we won the class on the Trackrod and I said 'one more year'. So this could be the last year."

He'd love to have an Escort Cosworth

"If someone offered me a nice spec Escort Cosworth for another crack in Belgium, I could easily be persuaded. I've never done a four-wheel-drive turbo. Once I'd gone to Belgium, it was the only place I ever wanted to drive. The atmosphere is fantastic."

He's in the taxi business

"I own a taxi company and business is taking up more and more of my time. That's another reason I don't have my own rally car. But I do love rallying and I love the crack of the R.A.C. Championship and the banter between the crews."



Rixon started out in Ladas



Mikkola won the World Cup Rally back in 1970

MIKKOLA TO ENTER FINAL MARATHON

World champion to compete alongside son from Sydney to London

By Paul Lawrence

Hannu Mikkola and his son Vesa will be the star entry on the 2014 Sydney to London Classic Marathon Rally.

The rallying legend will drive a Ford Escort Mk2 from the Historic Rally Sport team on the event, which begins in Sydney on April 12.

The 1983 World Rally Champion will head a select

27-car field into the month-long event with a route taking in 91 stages in eight countries. Mikkola, 71, said it could be his last marathon event.

On the last marathon rally to link London and Sydney – run in 2000 – Mikkola was co-driven by his elder son Juha. Now, younger son Vesa will partner. "It will be good to get my father back where he belongs, behind the wheel of a Ford Escort

RS1800 and driving on a marathon event once again," said Vesa.

While the cars competing in the full event are now en-route to Australia, entries are still being taken for the Dunlop European Trophy, which runs from Ankara to London and covers over 700 competitive miles in 58 special stages.

Starting on April 25, the European leg follows the same

route as the full event through to two days on the Epynt ranges on May 10/11 to provide the sting in the tail before finishing in London.

Other British entries for the full event include Sandy Dalgarno/Nick Starkey (Ford Escort) and Porsche 911 drivers David Royds and Simon Connolly. Each of the Porsches will have different co-drivers for Australia and Europe.

Famous Chevron set for Easter Revival

The ex-Peter Gethin Chevron B24 Formula 5000 will return to racing at the Thrupton Easter Revival meeting after a two-year rebuild.

The car was badly damaged in a workshop fire in 2012, but has had a full rebuild by Vin Malkie's team. Masters FIA Historic Formula One champion Greg Thornton will drive it at the Hampshire track.

In 1973, Gethin famously won the Race of Champions against the F1 cars with the Chevron. Now, Thornton will contest the Derek Bell Trophy races at Easter.

"Thrupton will be the re-launch for the Chevron," said Thornton. "The last time I was at Thrupton about five years ago I was in a Formula Ford."

British saloon car classics to be celebrated

The formative years of the British Touring Car Championship will be celebrated with a special race at the Donington Historic Festival on May 3.

The Historic Racing Drivers Club will form a grid of selected cars built between the late 1950s and early 1960s to replicate a British Saloon Car Championship event, which became the BTCC.

The race will be



Jaguar Mk2 was a BTCC founder

45-minutes long with a pit stop. It will cover the era of the Austin Westminster of Jack Sears and the Jaguar Mk1 of Tommy Sopwith, along with Ford Zephyrs, Austin A40s, Minis and Jaguar Mk2s.

"We want to illustrate the championship winners from the early years as well as the supporting class acts," said HRDC founder Julius Thurgood. Eligible cars include the Riley 1.5; MG Magnette; Borgward Isabella; Austin A35, Sunbeam Rapier, Ford Zodiac, MG 1100; Alfa Romeo Sprint GT and GTA, BMW 1800 and Ford Falcon.

Turatello seeks help from Surtees to rebuild ex-Schenken F2 racer

Italian racer Francesco Turatello plans to join Historic Formula Two this season with an ex-Tim Schenken Surtees TS15.

Chassis TS15/08 was raced by Schenken in 1974 and was then

sold for use in hillclimbing in Switzerland, where it contested around 150 events.

Turatello bought the car about 20 years ago and has finally decided to restore it for racing

once more. He has had help in the restoration process from John Surtees and will run a BMW M12 engine in the car. He hopes to join the series in time for the double-header at Spa in May.



The TS15 will run this year

RALLY NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com and Volkswagen



Demaison will refine the VW Polo R



VW has started work on a next generation WR Car

NEW POLO WRC SET TO COMPETE THIS YEAR

Upgraded car could appear in national events as German firm ramps up development

By David Evans

Volkswagen's 2015-spec Polo R WRC is up and running and could be competing before the end of this season.

The German team is looking to scale down testing of the current Polo while ramping up the mileage on the evolution of VW's vastly successful inaugural World Rally Car.

Volkswagen's development of its 2015 car is restricted by regulations which state that all of the testing of its new Polo has to fall within the team's allocated 42 days of running – which is why the car could break cover in sub-World Rally Championship competition before the end of the year.

National plans

VW driver Jari-Matti Latvala said he was keen to be competing in the car as soon as possible.

"It would be interesting to run

the car and I am very eager to have the chance to do a little national rally," said Latvala. "We have been talking about this and about the possibilities for which rallies we could do later this year. For me, doing a rally is a good test – you run different roads and this is really important. On the test you go up and down the same piece of road, you learn the stage and you could end up going a little bit the wrong way with the set-up. You definitely learn more on a rally. We don't know which rallies, but the thinking is for one gravel event and one asphalt event."

VW technical chief François-Xavier Demaison added: "Competing on smaller rallies – if we can find some where we don't have to have the car homologated – would not be part of the 42 days testing, which would help us."

Hyundai rivalry

Volkswagen's new Polo R WRC

is part of the existing homologation family – unlike Hyundai's 2015-specification i20 WRC, which is a brand new car and can be tested without restriction ahead of its debut next season.

Demaison admitted the Korean firm's strong start to the season had pushed him and the Hannover team even harder.

Talking about Hyundai, Demaison said: "From what they have done in six months, they have made a good car. I have been impressed with what they have done in quite a short time. So, if they have another year to work, then we have to be ready. This was our first version of the Polo, we just want to improve it. We have already made some work on the new car, but don't forget, what will be the '15 car was going to be the '14 car before the specification of the cars for this year was frozen. So we had already begun with some ideas."

Demaison wouldn't be drawn

on the precise nature of the changes he would be making to the new Polo, but admitted the car would include some external changes.

"From the outside," he said, "you will see a small difference. There is always something to improve, I'm always not happy with something. Look at our rear wing: it's the wing from the [Peugeot] 206 WRC!"

The specification for the current Polo R WRC is largely set for the rest of the season, with the teams only permitted one homologation joker on the chassis and engine this year – which is why Demaison's keen to start testing the new car soon. "We plan to do 40 per cent of our testing with this [current] car," he said, "and the rest of the time on the '15 Polo. We hope to reduce testing on the '14 car and concentrate on next year as the season goes on. The new homologations will come for January, the [2015] Polo is an evolution, it's not a revolution."

Technical chiefs push for gearbox rule

One big change Volkswagen is pushing for on its 2015 Polo R WRC is the reintroduction of a paddleshift gear change.

VW lobbied the WRC Commission meeting in Paris last week to push for a regulation change in time for next season. Volkswagen's technical manager François-Xavier Demaison said the change was being pushed by the German manufacturer's marketing department.

"We push for this because all of our cars are sold with DSG gearbox," said Demaison. "On pretty much all of Volkswagen's road cars, you have the option to shift the gears from the steering wheel, but not in the World Rally Championship."

Demaison added that dispensation for Robert Kubica to run a paddleshift on his Ford Fiesta RS WRC caused further confusion,



VW Polo R has a stick shift

but was clear he wasn't questioning Kubica's use of the system. "We know that he gets no advantage [Kubica's gearshift is slowed to the same speed as a manual shift], but it doesn't help when our marketing men say: 'But one car has it...'," said Demaison. "We have the hydraulic systems in the car, so the cost would not be a lot."

The Commission meeting sought clarification on details of the paddleshift, but it is widely expected to be granted for 2015.



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NEW CAR: PEUGEOT 208 T16 BREAKS COVER ON ITALIAN TARMAC

PAGE 19

'British Hillclimbing
may get new venues'
Closed road consultation, p32



Photos: mcklein

EXCLUSIVE

WRC PRESIDENT: SERIES MUST REINVENT ITSELF



Shorter rallies are better
for the fans to follow

World Rally Championship Commission president Carlos Barbosa has spoken exclusively with *Motorsport News* about his plans for the future of the series and the need for the WRC to reinvent itself.

Former Rally of Portugal chief Barbosa has told *MN* of his concerns for the WRC and specifically the difficulties individual events are facing.

"In the championship, we must think about things," he said. "We have many rally organisers facing problems with the costs of the sport. It's not like before. I remember when we had eight days for the Rally of Portugal – we had money coming from Port wine, TAP [Portugal's national airline] and the municipalities. But now the sponsorship has been cut by 50 per cent and this is something we have to think about for the format."

Rally format

"I prefer a two-day format. This costs the organiser less money and it's easier for the fans to follow. Many say the opposite, they say rallying is about adventure – we can discuss this now and see what is possible to make in two days and four days."

Barbosa accepted that certain events – such as Britain's own Rally GB – were contracted to be

competing in a country for four days, but added that there were ways around such deals. He said: "When this contract is made the organisers can say: 'Give me less money and we will stay less days.' This means less cost to the organiser for a smaller rally that's better for the fans. We need a rethink, the WRC needs to reinvent itself."

Going further

Barbosa added that he wasn't against endurance-style events, but said they were more likely outside of Europe.

"It's easier to find the roads outside of Europe," he said. "And the format of rallies we have depends on the country we are in. We can't have the same format in all countries; each rally can be different with one having 1000 kilometres [620 miles] of competition and one with less than 350 [217 miles]."

On the potential for furthering FIA president Jean Todt's stated aim to bring more longhaul rallies to the calendar, Barbosa said: "People talk about China and Brazil and we can go there – but who has the money to? Look at Mexico: there were 34 cars, but on the next round in Portugal already there are 85 because people can afford to go to Portugal."

"We can find some more [long-haul] rallies, but we need to find people who can run them. We have to find candidate rallies, but are there the people to organise them? Sometimes some people say: 'We have a [FIA] Regional event and we want to make a WRC round...' but it's almost impossible for

them to make the step to WRC from their Regional round."

Who are you?

As well as running Rally of Portugal, Barbosa is also the chairman of Paços de Ferreira, a first division football club in his homeland, and is well aware of the need to develop the personalities of drivers.

"It's so important that the public get to meet the drivers," he said. "If you go to the football then you will always know the face of Ronaldo. If you go to basketball, you know the face of the NBA. But in our sport, in the car they are always wearing the helmet and so the people know the name and the car and the number – but not the face. It's very important that all rally organisers make the chance to get fans close to the drivers."

Bring out the best

Another concern for Barbosa is the low level of World Rally Car entries most rallies receive.

One solution is to bring back World Rally Cars which are now out of homologation to run at the back of the field – in much the same way certain WRC rounds run a national event.

"There are many World Rally Cars in garages," said Barbosa, "we must improve the rules – because we are making rallies for between eight and ten cars. People like these cars and they like to watch them, but we must think about how important the privateers are and we must allow them to bring back the World Rally Cars from the garages."

Special feature: p26

So, two-day rallies then. Unless they're four days long. Or three.



Event organisers in the World Rally Championship are feeling more than a little confused. The WRC Promoter is telling them they have to start Thursday and finish on Sunday, but the WRC Commission president Carlos Barbosa is putting his weight behind a two-day format.

For those running rallies, this kind of mixed-message is not helpful – are event's supposed to align themselves with the commercial or sporting sides?

I fear we're becoming way too wrapped up in the formula. Personally, I think Barbosa's absolutely right for European rounds of the championship. A two-day format is the best option – and two days doesn't necessarily mean an easy ride. The Ypres Rally starts on Friday evening, and finishes on Saturday night: a 210-mile competitive route done in around 30 hours.

While I fully understand the potentially habit-forming benefits of universal timetabling in terms of television consumption, I wonder if we might be putting the cart before the horse. Wouldn't it be better to give freer reign to the rallies, allow them to develop and build in their own markets via whatever kind of itinerary works for them?

Once events are developed, the WRC Promoter would find much stronger foundations from which to build.

David Evans

VIEW FROM THE WORLD STAGE

JERRY WILLIAMS

"Østberg and Meeke can stop a VW walkover"



So who gets my vote as the bravest man in the WRC this year? Well, it's not a driver or co-driver, that's for sure.

No, it's Citroën team boss Yves Matton. Last year he was faced with a pairing that just wasn't working in the manner to which Citroën had become accustomed in the super-successful Loeb era.

Although Mikko Hirvonen was consistent, he and Dani Sordo took only two wins between them in two years. Third and fourth in the drivers' points and a vanishingly distant second in the manufacturers' is not good for the French team.

Matton tried to entice Thierry Neuville back, when that failed he took a deep plunge, clearing out and hiring Kris Meeke and Mads Østberg.



Østberg is growing

It hasn't quite worked yet but it's on the way. They're a fascinating pairing; both quick. Meeke, at 34, has a longer catalogue of experience but less immediate knowledge of WRC events. Østberg, 26, has much more recent running at the highest level but is only now becoming the finished article.

So far they've each racked up one third place plus several shunts. But I believe that both have the potential to win this year.

Meeke, especially, is in the classroom for the first third of the year. Yet after that Monte Carlo third place he ran easily in the Swedish top six and in Mexico he was fourth before an unlucky hit on stage eight. As for his second shunt, he was first on the road – a late decision that reportedly left co-driver Paul Nagle mighty annoyed – and whoever was in that position would have met the same rock. Live TV showed it plainly on the line.

Østberg's the same: Don't forget he held off a rampant Ogier for four stages on Mexico day one. That takes speed, guts and precision.

Their team chief remains properly supportive, saying in Mexico: "We knew our crews were relatively inexperienced. We've probably paid the price for that today but that takes nothing away from their potential. Once again Mads showed that he was capable of matching the best drivers. As regards Kris, obviously it was tough for him competing in such a difficult rally for the first time."

As he maintains, neither was hired for just 2014. And I reckon things are going a lot better than it might seem.

I've no doubt that Meeke and Østberg are the two most likely to stand in the way of a VW walkover this season. Just watch out for Meekananen after Argentina, when he's on rallies he knows better.

Mind you they're both fortunate that the admirable Matton is, in fact, a Belgian. A French-born boss would never have got away with hiring them!



China Rally was costly



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RALLY NEWS



Special livery for 50th Fiesta M-Sport celebrates the 50th Fiesta R5

M-Sport celebrated the delivery of its 50th Fiesta R5 with a special livery for Rashid Al Ketbi's car.

Despite the car only being homologated nine months ago, M-Sport has struggled to keep up with demand for the R5 with the 67th deposit already taken. On top of that, seven R5+ cars have also been sold.

"It's incredible," said M-Sport managing director Malcolm Wilson. "I'm delighted for everybody in the team – we've all worked very hard for this. What was really pleasing was the number of orders we'd taken before the car even turned a wheel – that was customers showing real faith in us. But now, to get past 50 and now looking towards 70 is fantastic."

In its nine months, the Fiesta R5 has won ten rallies outright, 27 class wins and two WRC2 victories. Cars have been delivered to 21 countries.

New running order rules from Portugal

Drivers returning to gravel rounds of the WRC will run at the front of the field following a decision taken at last week's WRC Commission meeting.

Hyundai driver Chris Atkinson was among those criticising the new running order format introduced for this year, with the Australian forced to sweep the Rally Mexico road clean for those drivers who had retired from the previous leg and returned under Rally 2 regulations.

MN's sources say the decision has been taken to alter the rules in time for Rally Portugal, with retired crews coming back and opening the road. The only potential problem with this rule change – which is still being worked on, according to the teams – is the potential affect on live television stages.

The team source said: "If we have the drivers running under SupeRally at the front, do we cover them on live TV if we only have a limited time? We could end up with a situation where we show the SupeRally driver, but not the leader. We don't want to play around with the powerstage order too much as this could potentially hand one team an advantage resulting in more points."

FLYING START FOR PEUGEOT 208 T16

Paolo Andreucci takes podium place in new R5 rally machine



The new 208 T16 scored a podium on Rally Il Ciocco

By David Evans

Paolo Andreucci says he is happy with the pace Peugeot's all-new 208 T16 showed to finish third on last weekend's Rally Il Ciocco in Italy.

The R5-spec car broke competitive cover following late homologation dramas, and posted four fastest times on its way to a podium in Tuscany.

Peugeot Italy driver Andreucci said: "I'm very

happy. Given that we only picked up the car on Tuesday morning, I'd say that to come third just a few days later is a great achievement. The only objective that we set ourselves was to concentrate on reliability and adapt ourselves as well as possible to the car, rather than go looking for pure performance. I'd say that we've succeeded, kilometre by kilometre and stage by stage."

Andreucci added that changes made to the car during

the event helped bring more speed from the T16: "On the first day, after midday service, we made changes to the set-up and managed to win a stage at the end of the day.

"Then, on the second day, it got even better: three stage wins out of a possible four. The next few weeks are going to be very useful to understand the car better and adapt it to the specific requirements of Italian rallies and Pirelli tyres, which once again showed themselves

to be very effective in all the conditions we encountered."

Peugeot Sport director Bruno Famin said: "It is a good result. First race and the first podium. The Italian team (Racing Lions) discovered the car. They didn't have technical problems and it is not easy to learn everything, so we are happy. It is a good thing for the future."

The car's next scheduled outing will be its gravel debut on the Acropolis Rally, in the hands of Irishman Craig Breen.



Kankkunen: one legend entry

World rally legends to take on modern heroes in Finland shoot-out

Markku Alén will lead an old boys return to rallying in July when his Legends team take on four of the WRC's fastest current drivers on the streets of Helsinki.

Rally Finland organisers are staging the Battle of Helsinki on Saturday, July 26 to raise awareness of the WRC round which follows a week later in the woods to the north of the capital.

The Legends are made up of Alén, Marcus Grönholm, Tommi Mäkinen and Juha Kankkunen, who hold ten world titles and 96

rally wins among them. They will face Jari-Matti Latvala, Sébastien Ogier, Thierry Neuville and Mads Østberg, all of whom will drive their regular World Rally Cars. The modern-day drivers have one title and 27 wins between them. The Legends will share their rivals' cars.

The event is being run to commemorate 20 years of Neste Oil sponsorship of the rally once known as the 1000 Lakes.

Neste Oils Sirpa Tuomi said: "It has been fantastic to see the great

reception the event has received from both today's leading rally teams and the legendary drivers who have agreed to take part. The city authorities are also excited, and they have offered us a unique location to stage it."

Rally Finland CEO Tiina Lehmomen added: "This is a great way to open the rally week, which peaks with the world championship rally in Jyväskylä. It shows off top-line rally competition in an interesting and compact environment to people."

Ingram makes late entry into 208 Cup

Chris Ingram made a surprise appearance on last weekend's Rally le Touquet in France, driving in the Peugeot 208 Cup.

The 19-year-old didn't test and was running with a new co-driver in Frenchman Gabin Moreau. Ingram's hopes of a top-five finish were ended when he rolled out of fifth on the seventh stage.

Despite that he still posted his first fastest class time on the final stage and finished sixth overall.

Ingram, who is contesting this year's FIA ERC Junior Championship, said: "The deal was really last-minute, but we're hoping to do the next round – Terre de Causses – as well. Apart from the roll, the rally was great and it was really good to work with Gabin for the first time."

Brit Neil Simpson won the S2000 class in his Skoda Fabia, taking seventh overall on his first pacenote event in 12 years. Julian Maurin won the event in a Ford Fiesta RS WRC.



Ingram impressed in 208 Cup

Korhonen warms up for ERC debut

MSA British Rally champion Jukka Korhonen finished 12th overall on last weekend's Rally Le Touquet as he practiced for the upcoming ERC season.

The Finn was driving the Autosport Technology-run Citroën DS3 R3 that he used to win the British title last year. The team will run him on a part-campaign in the European series.

"It's been a while since I've been in the car, Rally GB was the last rally we did," said Korhonen. "Le Touquet was like a pre-season test for us and we'll start our season proper on the Circuit of Ireland. This year is about experience, we're doing more Tarmac rounds and one gravel event in the ERC. We want to gain experience but we want to get results. Tarmac is the surface that I want to learn."

Last weekend's event was the fifth Tarmac rally Korhonen has competed on. He and co-driver Marko Salminen may enter a Tarmac round of the MSA British Rally Championship later in the year for extra mileage.

FIND OUT WHO STARRED IN THE WEST CORK RALLY

PAGE 28

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RALLY NEWS

IN BRIEF

Horiba fills up

The Horiba D'Isis Stages is just about full. The MIRA proving ground event runs on Saturday April 26. It will consist of more than 60 miles and eight stages with no laps and no split or merge junctions. The Quinton Motor Club is keen to build a reserve entry list ahead of the rally. Visit disis-stages.org.uk.

Ross Endurance

Regulations for the Ross Endurance Road Rally are now available. The event takes place on April 26/27 and has a 240-mile route. There are 45 miles of selectifs with 125 miles on public roads. The Saturday morning start is at the Ross Auction Centre near Ross-on-Wye. Visit rossmotorsports.co.uk for details.

Circuit of Kerry

A large number of overseas crews have shown an interest in the Fel's Point Hotel Circuit of Kerry, which is the second round of the Dunlop National Rally Championship. The 87-mile event will run on April 6 and the entry fee is 499 euros (£335). Defending National champion Declan Boyle has entered.

Pirelli star practice

Pirelli Star driver Dan McKenna, who will drive a Citroën DS3 R3 in this year's MSA British Rally Championship, will tackle the Midland Moto Stages in a Ford Escort Mk2 on March 31. The rally will be based in Roscommon Town in Ireland and it will include a shakedown stage.

Somerset ready

Burnham-on-Sea and Minehead Motor Clubs have received over 50 entries for the Betta Somerset Stages. The rally is the third in the REIS BTRDA Rally Series and runs on April 12. Among the confirmed entries is Ford Focus WRC driver Steve Petch and Mitsubishi Lancer E9 driver Luke Francis.

Plains entry open

Entries for the fourth round of the REIS BTRDA Rally Series, the Plains Rally, are open. The May 17 event will follow a similar route to recent years. Clerk of the course Graham Raeburn said: "Our big change for this year's event is returning to Dolgellau for the service area and including a stage in Pantperthog again."

Clubman rally

The Pirelli Richard Burns Foundation Rally will include a clubman option this year. A National B event will run on Saturday May 3 in the Kielder forest. Entry to the 27 stage mile rally costs £299. A Sunday run will take place over 32 miles and will cost £359. Competitors can enter both events for £559.

ARMSTRONG AIMS FOR BORDERS PUSH

Scottish charger wants to bounce back from Snowman retirement



Armstrong is aiming for a change of luck in Jedburgh

By James Bolton

Scottish driver Jock Armstrong is aiming to bounce back from a run of bad luck on the Brick and Steel Border Counties Rally this weekend.

The Subaru Impreza driver is on the back foot in the ARR Craib MSA Scottish Rally Championship chase, having retired from the Snowman

Rally season-opener last month. Armstrong wants to score well on Saturday's Jedburgh-based rally, but that will require a change in form.

"I've retired on the Border Counties for the past three seasons," said Armstrong. "I had an accident on the first stage last year and, as I was recovering, I got my wheels stuck on a culvert. I was watching the DVD of the

stages for this weekend and I realised I didn't know any of them. But I'm still confident we'll do well."

The Snowman Rally was Armstrong's first with Paula Swinscoe. "On the first stage we were competitive and we didn't do any daft manoeuvres but I felt something not quite right at the back," he said. "Out of service the rear differential was clunking and

it wasn't even switched on. On the start line it broke. If the car's going to break down I'd rather it did it early."

"I like the Border Counties, the stages are good to drive but there are frustrating chicanes. After you've had a non-finish, you're always on the back foot so we'll be pushing on. There's a couple of quick guys but that makes it even more satisfying when you win."



Butler has bought the ex-Hugh Hunter car for Asphalt outings

Butler gains confidence with Focus mileage

Ford Focus WRC driver Graham Butler says he's beginning to gain confidence in the ex-Hugh Hunter rally car.

Butler bought the Focus in May last year but suffered a string of retirements. That cost him seat time in the complex machine.

"It's been good to get miles in the car on recent rallies," said Butler. "I only did a couple of events last year but we've done Roskirk and

the Tour of Epynt already. The problem I have at the moment is that I keep stalling. I need to get myself into the starts and I've had the clutch re-shimmed to help. The car is brilliant though."

Butler, who's co-driven by Walter Ainsworth, has signed up for the REIS MSA Asphalt Rally Championship. He's also hoping to do another event on the Epynt Ranges and a rally at Otterburn.

Presenter search for top UK rallying show

The producers of the *Special Stage* rally TV show are searching for a new presenter.

The series has expanded with the addition of the *Special Stage Extra* programme. Around 50 shows will be produced this year and shown on MotorsTV.

"Special Stage is one of the highest profile motorsport TV brands in the UK," said presenter Paul Woodford. "We've managed to build that by having a close team of rally fanatics. We're looking for someone to fit in as part of that team."

The new presenter will take on a championship and will start by co-presenting at Rallyday at Castle Combe on September 20. Auditions will be held later in the year. To register interest email mail@specialstage.co.uk.

New Malcolm Wilson route is a success

Organisers of the Malcolm Wilson Rally say that the new route adopted for this year was a success.

The Cumbrian event was affected by the recent larch disease outbreak and that prompted a wide-ranging revision to the route compared to previous years.

"Thinking about next year, it really depends on the larch disease," said clerk of the course Kevin Savage. "They are harvesting affected crops and while that will be complete, the route we choose depends if they have to harvest other areas. So we're in the hands of the disease. There's a stage that we've not used for nearly 20

Down Ampney faces a final showdown

The organisers of the Corinium Stages say this is likely to be the final year the event runs at Down Ampney in Gloucester.

The venue is owned by the Co-operative Group, which is planning to put a biodigester at the site. "We've had a good entry for the rally," said clerk of the course Dave Boden. "We don't know much about the Co-op's plans. We thought we'd lose the venue this year due to the biodigester. That won't happen until July and all three rallies that take place at the venue are due to run before then. We've been on the look out for alternative venues."

The Corinium Stages runs on Saturday May 3. Regulations are available at cirencesterclub.com. The EMCOS club has confirmed its Red Dragon IT Stages, which runs at Down Ampney on May 24, will be the final rally to run at the venue.

Cole's co-driver's joy at first Epynt triumph

REISMSA Asphalt Rally champion Damian Cole's new co-driver says winning the Tour of Epynt was a dream start.

Ford Focus WRC driver Cole and Elliot Edmondson won the event by one second. "It was close," said Edmondson. "We knew the score going into the last stage and we decided to go as hard as we could. There was no other way around it."

"It was Damian's fifth Epynt win and my first. He said at the end of last year that he'd had five co-drivers last season and he wanted to run with just one this year because he felt it would make him quicker. Hopefully we'll have a lot more success."

The Asphalt series continues with the Manx National in May.



Route pleased rally entrants

years that we'd like to use so we hope that will be possible."

Savage added that finishing the rally at Rheged, rather than Cockerthorpe, also seemed to go down well with competitors: "It was a better place to do the presentations and people are half an hour closer to the motorway. We'll take some feedback and see what the competitors think."

FULL REPORT FROM THE WEST CORK RALLY

PAGE 28

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*"This is a pivotal
time for the WRC"*
WRC analysis, p26

Photo: Kevin Money



Middleton will rebuild his
Hyundai Coupé Kit Car



CHAMPION MIDDLETON PLOTS A BTRDA RETURN

Former REIS BTRDA Gold Star champion Graham Middleton is planning a return to the championship.

The Llandrindod Wells driver took the title in 2004 in his Hyundai Accent WRC. He is currently evaluating cars. "I'll get a World Rally Car or a four-wheel-drive kit car,"

said Middleton. "I definitely want to get out on gravel again. It will be a bit later in the year because I'm busy doing driver training at the moment. If I can find the right car I'll definitely do a couple of BTRDA rounds. There's a lot of Super 2000 cars available at sensible money."

Middleton is the only man to win the 'triple crown' of BTRDA titles, winning the Silver Star in 2007 and the 1400 title in 2009. He still competes occasionally in his Hyundai Coupé Kit Car, which he is aiming to rebuild. "It still has the original dampers and it's 16-years-old. We want to put

up-to-date dampers on it and I'm looking forward to seeing how it goes after that. I've got all the parts. I may take the car to Ireland when it's complete." Middleton coaches drivers around the world. "I'll be back into the Asia Pacific region soon to do more training," he said. "It's good fun."

Irish Tarmac driver takes to the woods

Irish Tarmac Rally Championship driver Donagh Kelly says will enter at least one forest rally before the end of the season in his Subaru Impreza WRC.

The car, which formerly belonged to Lurgan Park Rally winner Kevin Lynch, is being rebuilt and work on it should be finished before the summer. Kelly may enter the car into the Lakeland Stages.

"When I was doing the Northern Ireland Rally Championship I always seemed to do well in the Mitsubishi, especially against those in World Rally Cars," said the Donegal man. "I always fancied getting a car for the woods. One we have finished everything on the Impreza P2000 we will definitely enter one gravel rally. The car hasn't been rallied in quite some time. The engine and gearbox are still being looked at but it should go well in the woods."

Kelly, who drives a Ford Focus WRC in the ITRC, said he could also tackle April's Circuit of Ireland.



Whittock guided Camp to a victory on South Western Classic

Devon co-driver shows promise on Enduro

Devon co-driver Ross Whittock is maturing into a skilled rally navigator, according to his father.

Whittock won the South Western Classic Endurance Rally in an MG ZR alongside Freddy Camp recently.

"He has a cool head and that counted for a lot on the South Western because the route

was 400 miles long," said Ross's father Dave, who used to navigate for Per Eklund. "He was second in class on the Wydean Rally in February, which was his first stage rally, and this shows he's good on both notes and maps."

Whittock Jr will navigate Philip Harris on the Somerset Stages next month.

Moffett won't commit to full title defence

Dunlop National Rally Group N champion Josh Moffett says that he won't commit to the full year, despite winning the season-opening Mayo Stages.

Moffett and co-driver John Rowan recovered from an early spin to take maximum points after Josh's brother Sam retired on the fifth stage with engine trouble.

"We have signed up for the championship but right now we are going to take it round by round," said Rowan. "If we are in contention at the half-way point then we will continue. A win in Mayo was the perfect way to start the National championship so it looks as though we will be heading to the second round, the Circuit of Kerry, next month."

Fan friendly changes to Oulton Park rally

Organisers of the Neil Howard Stages are revamping the Oulton Park circuit-based rally.

The event will run on November 8 this year and plans are being made to make it better for spectators and competitors.

"We've got an additional two spectator super special stages, called the Graham Coffey Super Specials," said Bolton-le-Moors Car Club's Christopher Beamish. "Those stages will be around 1.2-miles in length each and one will be at night. That'll enhance the fan experience."

"The circuit operators have restored the original line of the track, which goes alongside the lake. We'll use this to open up a greater variation of stages and include a water splash."

The changes mean a route of ten stages and around 50-55 miles will make up the rally at the Cheshire venue. Last year's event had eight stages that totalled 47 miles. It was won by Graham Coffey, whose legal firm will back this year's rally.

Rally organisers added that a key part of the improved spectator experience will be the inclusion of a fair and, at the conclusion of the rally, a large firework display.

REVELLING IN HISTORIC RALLYING

PAUL LAWRENCE

**"Two classic
events clearly
hit the spot"**



The three or four weeks running up to a rally is a nervous time for organisers these days and over the opening weeks of 2014 a story has been unfolding that will not help organisers of gravel rallies rest easy at night.

The harsh facts are that entries on gravel rallies are generally down. By ten per cent and more in some cases and that's a tough outlook for this time of the year, for entry levels traditionally drop away as the season develops.

Speak to any event organiser and they will tell you that the entry level is everything. Ten cars under break-even is a massive financial blow to the organising club, while five cars over break-even means happy days all round. With break-even levels running at up to 100 cars, the traditional late rush of entries in the final two weeks makes for a nervous build up to the rally for the organising club.

Various reasons can be put forward for these tricky times. For sure, the new seat regulations have deterred some people from competing over the early season rallies. Entry fees that in some cases break the £600-mark for one day of gravel rallying have made it harder for the lower budget runners.

But it is not all doom and gloom, as some events have done well. It's all down to factors like an event's reputation, quality of stages, perceived value for money and championship line-up. All these factors impact directly on the bottom line for hard-pressed organisers. Interestingly, sealed-surface rallying seems to be doing rather better, with some events filling almost instantly.

Take a look at the wider sport, and there are some very different scenarios being played out and two classic events stand out as clearly hitting the spot in terms of competitor response.

In a couple of weeks, Philip Young's Endurance Rally Association will run the sixth Flying Scotsman, a three-day challenge for pre-war cars running from the Midlands to Scotland. The 100 available entries were snapped up months ago and there is a waiting list of hopefuls. Further ahead is the Rally of the Tests, which runs between Buxton and Bristol in October. With eight months to go, the entry list stands at 88 cars. With only 90 places available, it will probably be full by the time you read this.

An organiser of a gravel rally would give anything for a full entry these days, and to have the entry full many months before the rally is the stuff of fantasy. Yet, it does happen in the sport if the event is right and people really want to do it.

Let's hope that gravel rallying will soon return to rude health, not least for the good health of the hard-working event organisers.

AGREE/DISAGREE?
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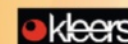
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INSIGHT: PORSCHE'S RETURN

PORSCHE'S

The famous German manufacturer is returning to La Sarthe



Work on the 919 started at the end of the 2011 season

HOW IT WORKS

TECH SPEC

Porsche 919 Hybrid

Monocoque: composite fibre construction with honeycomb aluminium core

Batteries: Lithium-ion batteries

Engine: two-litre 90 degree V4 with turbocharger

Engine Power: More than 500bhp

Engine Generator Unit: on front axle (generates more than 250bhp)

Drive: Rear-wheel drive, four-wheel drive via front axle KERS

Fuel tank: 66.9 litres

Transmission: hydraulically activated sequential seven-speed

Chassis: Front and rear multi-link pushrod independent wheel suspension

Brakes: hydraulic dual-circuit brake system, internally ventilated carbonfibre rear and front brake discs

Tyres: Michelin radials, front and rear six: 360/710-18

Minimum weight: 870kg

Height: 1050mm

Width: 1900mm

Length: 4650mm

BY JAMES ATTWOOD
EDITOR



Complex. That's the word that keeps coming up in discussions about the new Porsche 919 Hybrid sports car.

The Stuttgart firm describes its new LMP1 machine as the most complex race car it has ever built. It's hard to argue with that: Innovative new rules introduced for sportscar prototypes this year put the focus on maximising efficiency, on extracting the maximum possible performance from a finite resource.

To meet those rules Porsche, along with rivals Audi and Toyota, has had to create machines that blend traditional power systems with expansive hybrid energy recovery systems. The result? A sophisticated hybrid racing car that is, you guessed it, complicated.

That's a big challenge for Porsche. The manufacturer is the most successful in the history of the Le Mans 24 Hours, with 16 overall wins and 101 class successes. But the last of those overall wins came with Porsche's last top-level campaign, with the 911 GT1 back in 1998. That was 16 years ago, and the challenge of sportscar racing has changed fundamentally. That meant Porsche's storied sportscar history counted for nothing: The 919 Hybrid is a new car built by a new team in a new factory.

"The most difficult thing was that we started completely from scratch, a white piece of paper, no reference, no base car we

could build on," says Porsche LMP1 technical director Alexander Hitzinger. "We were learning basically from zero, and with an extremely complicated car."

A clean sheet

Porsche's management board decided it would return to top-flight sportscar racing in June 2011. That, in itself, wasn't the work of a moment: In 2009, Porsche was integrated into the Volkswagen Group. That made Porsche a stablemate of Audi, which has become the dominant force at Le Mans. Audi first tackled the race in 1999 – the year after Porsche's last works effort – and has notched up 12 wins in the intervening 15 years. Porsche's return meant the two brands being allowed to go head-to-head.

Once the decision to return was made, Porsche had to start from scratch. While it has an ongoing successful GT programme – it will continue to run a 911 RSR in the GT classes – the LMP1 project required an entirely new team. One of the first men hired for the project was Fritz Enzinger, in the role of vice president with responsibility for the LMP1 programme. Enzinger moved across from BMW, where he had worked on the Bavarian firm's 1999 Le Mans 24 Hours win and its F1 programme.

"I arrived at Porsche two months after the decision to return to Le Mans," he says. "Everything was new. There were no people, it was just a decision. In the following weeks we built facilities and workshops, a place for the simulator and all the other things."

Hitzinger moved over from Red Bull Racing, where he had been head of advanced technologies, in December 2011. He adds: "Before the announcement there had been only some work on the engine, but on a low

profile, let's say. Even after the announcement it started very slowly, because there were no regulations. It really started in earnest at the end of 2011."

Porsche's LMP1 project was built up in a new facility that now has more than 200 employees. Roughly half of the team have moved from other departments in Porsche, with the rest recruited from other motorsport programmes. Hitzinger leads the development department, which has been built up alongside a track operations department. That was another key element for Porsche: The 919 Hybrid is being entirely run in-house. That is a contrast to Audi, which joined forces with established team Team Joest when it entered sportscar racing.

"A very important decision was to have our own team, and the board decided that a works team was very important," says Enzinger. "It was a big step. Another big step was that the team ran as its own big department, I report directly to Wolfgang Hatz [Porsche board member in charge of research and development]."

Porsche has taken every step to gain the knowledge for the new campaign. A great example of that is its work on pit stops. "Every day at 1700hrs we make a pit stop,"

says Enzinger. "We started last year to find the group. We take one car – an LMP2 Porsche Spyder from 2008, and at 1700hrs we practice pit stops with the car for half-an-hour."

The fact the new project is a clean sheet of paper is shown in Porsche's decision to introduce a new type number – the 919 – to the car. While new, the number helps tie the machine to the heritage of the ultra-successful 917 prototype and to the firm's 918 road car, which makes use of similar hybrid technology as the racing machine.

New generation racer

Work on the 919 Hybrid started in anger once Le Mans organisers, the ACO and the FIA, settled on the new sportscar regulations for 2014. The rules place a premium on efficiency: Cars are given a set amount of fuel to use per lap, controlled by a fuel meter, which is dependent on the amount of recovered electrical energy a car can use. Porsche's 919 Hybrid will run in the 'Premiere' class, which allows an energy recovery capacity of eight megajoules. On one lap of the 8.469-mile Le Mans circuit, cars in that class will only be allowed 4.64 litres of fuel.

With the amount of fuel and electrical energy each car can use over a lap set, the key to success will be making the most efficient use of that power.

Porsche has taken a different approach to the new rules from rivals Audi and Toyota. While Audi will continue with its ultra-successful turbodiesels, the 919 Hybrid will be powered by a turbocharged two-litre V4 petrol engine – petrol was chosen because it fits the Porsche brand better – which will rev to 9000rpm. That will be supplemented by two energy recovery systems. One uses an

electric generator to recover the energy from exhaust gases. The second uses a turbine on the front axle, and converts kinetic energy recovered under braking to drive the front wheels, creating temporary wheel-drive. The energy recovered is used to charge the batteries to store the power from the flywheel system Porsche used on the experimental 911 GT3 Hybrid in the Nürburgring 24 Hours.

The most unusual aspect is that Porsche has used such a small capacity battery. "With the weight of the car a key challenge was to ensure maximum efficiency, and a smaller unit helps to offset the weight of the substantial energy recovery system," says Hitzinger. "You want a high volume-to-area ratio in the combustion chamber for thermodynamic efficiency. That basically leads you to a narrow cylinder, and using a V-engine is a structural part of the car. A V-engine couldn't be made structural without an additional spaceframe."

Hitzinger has spent most of his career working in Formula One, for Caterham, Toro Rosso and Red Bull. He was a switch to sportscars because of the freedom offered by the new rules. While the feature expanded energy recovery systems this year, the units are highly complex. The sportscar rules allow for a high degree of freedom. Hitzinger adds: "It makes sportscars more fun for me. I think so," he smiles. "For sportscar, we can do pretty much what we want in terms of the powertrain and chassis. We have no restrictions in terms of power – although it might be good to have

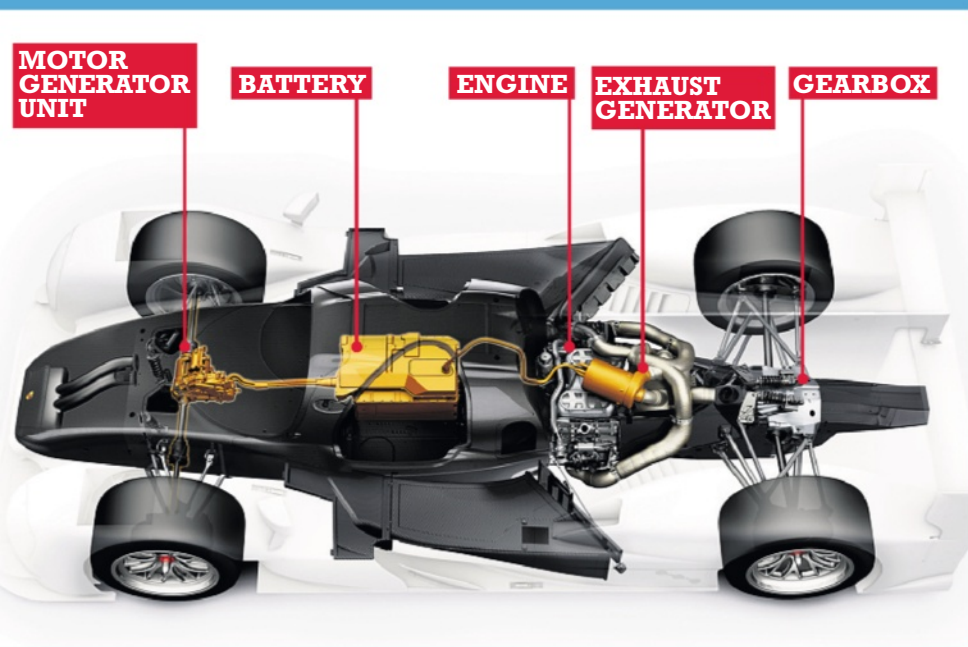
"It's been a steep learning curve"

Hitzinger



NEW BEGINNING

— and the pressure is on...



Porsche is aiming to finish on its Le Mans comeback

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Testing progress

The 919 Hybrid had its first test at Porsche's Weissach test track last June, the first of ten tests in 2013. But the early running wasn't problem free.

"The first test was difficult, due to a problem with a vibration from the engine," says Enzinger. "We had the same problem for the next five tests, and we had to make changes to the engine. We tested last December at Portimão in Portugal with the new engine, and everything was fine."

Hitzinger adds: "It has been a very steep learning curve, which is what you would expect when you start from scratch. It is not possible that everything works right out of the box. The important thing is that, as soon as you see something that is not working in the way you want it to, you react very quickly and decisively and change concepts where needed. That's what we have done, and are still doing. The car has evolved a lot from roll-out until now, and there's almost nothing left from the previous spec."

The testing programme has ramped up in 2014, with two long sessions at Bahrain in January and February. Recently, the 919 Hybrid ran in a test at Sebring in Florida, running on the same track as rival Audi's R18 e-tron quattro for the first time. The car's first race will be in the FIA World Endurance Championship opener at Silverstone on April 20, and the team will now begin to ramp up work on reliability and performance. It will aim to run two 30-hour tests, running two 919 Hybrids, at Paul Ricard in France.

The drivers

Porsche will run two cars this year, and has recruited six drivers from a wide range of areas. "We have two drivers in Romain

Dumas and Timo Bernhard who won Le Mans with Audi in 2010 [while being seconded from Porsche]. I think they were fixed," says Enzinger. "The next was Neel Jani. We had a lot of information and data about him.

"I have known Mark Webber a long time from BMW, and I talked with him and he said that when he was finished with F1 he would maybe go endurance racing. It was easy: We had two meetings with him, and after that it was clear.

"The fifth driver was Brendon Hartley. If you've seen *Rush*, he reminds me of James Hunt! He's a nice guy who is very fast. We know all his times from when he raced in LMP2. The final driver was [Porsche GT graduate] Marc Lieb. We gave him two or three tests, and then decided he was driver six. I think we have a good mix. We have a former F1 racer, guys who have won Le Mans, a newcomer in Brendon and people who have a lot of endurance experience."

Dumas and Bernhard shared a car at Audi, but have been split up at Porsche. That's a statement of intent: by splitting up its experienced drivers, the firm is trying to make each car as strong as possible. Bernhard will share with Webber and Hartley, Dumas with Jani and Lieb.

Expectations

Externally, at least, Porsche is keeping its ambitions in check this year. While the efficiency formula is new, Audi and Toyota do have a head start in terms of experience with their engine and hybrid systems. So while it's hard to fathom, Hitzinger insists that Porsche has to learn how to win.

"Everybody in our team wants to win," he says. "That's why we do this. I think we have

to be realistic about when we are going to win. You never know, anything can happen, but the probability that we will win in 2014 is low. We started from absolutely zero, and built up a team. It's still a tiny team.

"We want to finish races, because that's the way you learn, and we want to be competitive. It's finding the right balance between reliability and performance. It's a learning year, and then for me in 2015 it's a different story. Then we're in a different state, because then we're an established team and we have a base car we can build on. It will be infinitely easier than in 2014."

Hitzinger adds the team has already started identifying areas to improve for next season. "We have started on the 2015 development already and, I can see, it's a totally different story. We have a totally different starting point. It will be a new car, although we don't have to reinvent everything. You keep the things that you think are good and you can make better, and you change things where you can make a big improvement."

Still, it will be hard for many people not to assume that Porsche will be challenging for victory at Le Mans and in the WEC this year.

"People expect this," admits Enzinger: "Porsche's last win was in 1998, and 16 years later people expect we can win the race. But the target for the first year is to finish the race and be competitive."

Still, Enzinger admits that the prospect of winning Le Mans with Porsche is a tantalising prospect: "We had a meeting of our staff in the workshop last week, and we had one guy there who had won Le Mans with Peugeot, one who had won with Audi and me, who has won with BMW. But it means more when you win with Porsche. You can double it. It's such a long history." ■

TIMO BERNHARD

Age: 33 Lives: Germany

Q&A

What does it feel like to be a Porsche factory driver?

"It's unbelievable. This is my 15th year with Porsche. I came here as a Porsche Junior in 1999, and if someone told me I'd have to wait 15 years to get a shot at Le Mans in an LMP1 Porsche I'd have laughed. I can't wait!"

How much of a challenge are the cars to drive?

"There's so many buttons and pedals in the car. For a driver it's like a new era with the efficiency aspect, which is important for motorsport. It's not like in the past like in Formula Ford, where you had a gauge and a gear shift and a steering wheel. It's really dedicated. You need to have an overview to drive."

So it changes the way you drive?

"You have to understand the car in the first place, and your driving style changes because of that. With the efficiency

regulations, it requires a different technique to save fuel to be as quick as possible over a lap."

How is the 919 Hybrid progressing?

"We've developed the car a lot. It's like every test is a new phase, with new bits and pieces on the car. Every test is a good step, and the last two tests have been really, really good. We are testing to do more long runs to get the car reliable, and to do race runs."

You won Le Mans with Audi in 2010. Would it mean more with Porsche?

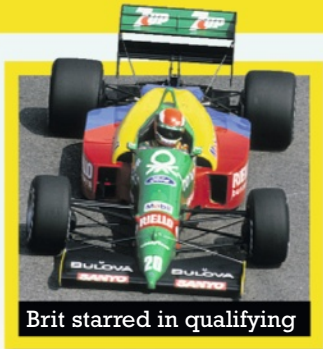
"To win Le Mans is absolutely amazing, and a tremendous feeling. I still can't put it into words: to win this race is very special. My heart is Porsche. Porsche gave me the chance to prove myself as a professional driver, so if I get a chance to win with Porsche in the future it will be a dream come true. It will be something very special."



RETRO: HERBERT'S F1 DEBUT

HERBERT

STARS AGAINST ALL ODDS



Brit starred in qualifying



Herbert had to prove fitness

The Brit battled injury to star in the 1989 Brazilian Grand Prix

BY MATT JAMES
DEPUTY EDITOR



Lewis Hamilton set the benchmark for debut performances in grand prix racing. Back in 2008, the then 22-year-old shocked the world with frontrunning pace. He finished on the podium on his very first weekend with the McLaren team in Australia, just 18.5 seconds behind winner Kimi Räikkönen.

If he'd have been those 18.5 seconds behind the winner of the 1989 Brazilian Grand Prix, Nigel Mansell, he wouldn't even have scored a point.

Twenty five years ago in Rio, Johnny Herbert made his maiden start in F1 and finished just over ten seconds behind Mansell. He got fourth in a headline-grabbing performance that kicked off his trail to F1 stardom.

But what made Herbert's story remarkable was the agonising recovery he had been through since breaking his legs in a huge F3000 crash at Brands Hatch. His feet and ankles were smashed and he was in bad shape. The race at Jacarepaguá was just 218 days later.

Herbert was a star and a huge talent. He was being feted by several GP teams as the best of the rising crop of stars. Things were starting to happen for him back in 1987, the year he won the British F3 Championship.

"[Benetton team manager] Peter Collins and Benetton itself gave a bit of money to Racing for Britain [the public fund that was supporting Herbert in F3]," remembers Herbert. "Peter was watching my progress and I was close to the title. Peter asked me to come and do this test in the F1 car. It was the end of the turbo era so I was going from 200bhp to 950-1000bhp. I had about five goes to pull the bloody thing away; the clutch was just so vicious! It was a switch.

"I got up to Paddock Hill Bend in second gear. I got to the exit of the corner

and I thought 'let's give this a squirt now and see what this thing has got'. I was only doing 60mph and it went 'brrrrrrr' and then all of a sudden wallop, the whistling sound got greater and bang, the thing was a rocket. I hit third gear, and again there was the punch in the back. Then I got on the brakes for Druids and the smile was from ear to ear. It was awesome. The rest of that day went well for me. I just felt completely at home. I remember coming through Clearways and you would be in second, then you would short shift through third, fourth, fifth and you would be at the marshals' post on the pit entry before you floored it in fifth. Then it took off and you'd be north of 180mph as you crossed the start-finish line. I loved the power and the grip you got with it and the stability that you got with the braking because of the downforce you had. I was in the top six overall somewhere. That suddenly put me on the F1 radar."

Herbert is being modest. He was actually third fastest behind Mansell and Ayrton Senna. He was ahead of F1 regulars Derek Warwick, Satoru Nakajima and also, crucially, regular Benetton F1 driver Thierry Boutsen.

Things were going swimmingly, but with no room in the top flight in 1988, Herbert opted for the Eddie Jordan Racing team in F3000 – also known as the Benetton Junior team. Herbert won the first round of the season on the team's (and Reynard's) debut in the category. There were more F1 chances that season, with an August Monza test for Lotus.

"In that Monza test, I was going faster than Nelson [Piquet, regular driver]," recalls Herbert. "I remember meeting one of the top Ferrari guys in the paddock at Monza just before I was leaving Monza to come to Brands Hatch for the F3000 race, he said that Enzo Ferrari wanted to meet me. So in F3000 I was with the Benetton Junior team, I had tested for Benetton in F1 and then Lotus and now I had Enzo wanting to meet me. And then I came to Brands for the F3000 race and Frank Williams was there. I was on pole and he wanted to watch me. Everything was going so

well... it seemed that I was the person everyone wanted to talk to."

Then there was that fateful day at Brands Hatch on August 21. Despite Herbert's terrible injuries, Collins persuaded Benetton that they should keep faith with the young Essex racer. Just six weeks after the accident, Herbert received a phone call to tell him that yes, Benetton would take up its option on him.

"Peter used to phone me up nearly every day when I was in the hospital – this was before the option had been taken up," recalls Herbert. "The left foot was always in a bandage, because that was the one that was more-or-less severed off but the right one was always a bit free. The left foot initially wouldn't move at all, and then it would start to move about a millimetre. Peter would always ask 'are they moving?' I'd say yes, even though it was only a tiny amount. The doctors told me I would get pretty good movement back – they were wrong there – but they also told me I would never race again. If there was one thing I was going to do again, it was race."

But things were tough. The first test was on an airfield near the team's HQ at Witney in Oxfordshire. Herbert was still in a wheelchair and he remembers that he had to be lifted into the car. There was a test at Silverstone too, but he was still in considerable pain.

The F1 circus moved to Rio for the pre-opener test and there was still a feeling in Herbert's mind that some in the team had doubts over his ability to go the distance. "That pre-race Rio test ended up being a real examination for me," he remembers. "There was a point near the end of the test they said 'we are filling it up and you are doing a race distance'. I said 'no problem'. I just went around and around until the thing ran out of fuel. All the mechanics had left me to it – I think there was one guy on the pit wall giving me signals and that was it! They had all bet that I wouldn't get to the end, which I did, but it was a test from Flavio Briatore and Luciano Benetton just to see if I could do it. When I came back from the test, I had a meeting with Peter, Luciano

Essex racer was aided by fast nature of Rio circuit



Photos: LAT

Herbert battled to an incredible fourth place finish in the 1989 Brazilian GP

and Flavio. They were asking me 'can you drive?' I pointed out that I had done the race distance in the test and I was competitive – I wasn't going to say no, was I? But I do know that [substitute racer] Emanuele Pirro was at Rome airport ready to come out because I think they'd almost made the decision not to run me. Peter must have spoken to them to persuade them."

There were still demands coming from the Benetton top brass though – and a lot of it would have a direct effect on the level of pain that he would be in. Some of those edicts seemed a bit harsh, frankly.

"As I left for Rio, I was still on crutches," says Herbert. "I had only started to walk for the first time at the beginning of December. Then it came from Flavio that he didn't want me to have crutches in Rio. It was bad enough walking just having crutches but then to have nothing and to get from Heathrow to Rio was hard! I remember getting to Heathrow, checking in and I asked what gate it was, she said something like '97' – they didn't have buggies in those days..."

Herbert used a bike to help transport himself around the paddock in the sweltering heat and to protect those damaged legs and feet. But while the mobility around the venue was an issue, those problems disappeared when he got behind the wheel.

"In those days, qualifying was a lot different," says Herbert. "You would have one set of tyres, and you would go around at 10mph and keep out of the way and then go for it. They were one-lap wonders. I managed to get my head around that, but I was very fortunate. It was one of those things in life; I had my injuries but there was my opportunity and it could have gone so pear-shaped – which, in a way, it did later on because my injuries were getting worse because I didn't have time for rehab. But the Jacarepaguá circuit suited my injuries because there was one heavy braking zone into the hairpin. That meant the braking issue that I was having with my damaged feet didn't really stand out. I was able to get more from it in the high-speed corners where I didn't lose as

much time. But even so, you still had to knit it all together and that went from qualifying in to the race as well. I was so, so consistent. [Team-mate] Alessandro Nannini was the golden boy and I outqualified him in my first race."

The 190-mile race was 61 laps around the flowing course. It was a huge test of endurance in the heat and controlling a Ford DFR-propelled projectile was tough – particularly for someone still far from full fitness. How did Herbert, who was starting tenth, prepare?

He says: "Why I took so many I don't know, but I had ten Nurofen! I don't think ten does you any better than three. It seemed to be the thing to do. At that right-hander before the hairpin, the one where you had to brake hard, there was a massive bump. The cars were stiff in those days, when I came up to it, it would really jolt and my foot would hit the side of the monocoque. It hurt like hell. It was the left foot that was my bad foot. One lap, I relaxed my leg before the corner and the foot went 'WHACK!' I screamed in the car, but I had gone over that pain threshold – it never hurt anywhere near the same again. But every time I dipped the clutch, it hurt too. Every time I was shifting, it was hurting."

Herbert made a strong start and had an early stop on lap 12. As the others cycled through their stops, he ran as high as third. Herbert settled in fourth and was on the cusp of a podium finish – even though he was desperate for a drink...

"The bloody water bottle stopped working, and it was 106 degrees! I didn't have one sip, and that was pretty much hell. I had a cool cap and those things are incredible. It lasted for nearly the whole race. But with all of the adrenaline and the concentration and knowing I was in fourth allowed me to get through it."

"I remember Mauricio Gugelmin's March in front of me and then Alain Prost's McLaren having some trouble with his pit stops so we both caught him up towards the end. The only thing that went wrong during the race was that I got a pitboard saying two laps to go. So I really concentrated hard and put in a strong lap to position myself right on the

back of Mauricio and overtake in the tow down the back straight. I got there and was ready to pounce on the last lap and the chequered flag came out – they'd got it wrong. But for one more lap. When I got back in, Flavio and all of the top brass had already gone home."

The emotion at the chequered flag was huge – but still the pain was there to remind him just what a slog it had been.

"At the finish, I felt a bit better when I saw Mansell stumbling out of the car! It wasn't just me who was suffering. When I got to parc fermé, I took a long time to get out of the car. I remember standing up, and that hurt like hell. I was literally 400 yards from the paddock exit, and I was going 'ouch, ouch, ouch'. I think I must have taken about two hours to get there! My girlfriend Rebecca was there and Peter Collins. We all had a big hug and it was very emotional. It was unbelievable that everything had gone so well. I was within 11 seconds of being on the podium. Nigel should never have finished that race because the Ferrari had been so unreliable – Mansell robbed me of my podium! It was emotional and a relief, after everything, I proved I could do it. I was confused about how easy it was! It was something extraordinary that had never been seen in that degree in motorsport – apart from maybe Niki Lauda. It was a massive story."

The story had a sting in the tail. The pain Herbert was suffering would catch up with him. When he got to circuits that required heavier braking, he couldn't apply the necessary pressure to the pedals and the results dropped away.

"I look back on when I got rested [after six races] – which never came from a phone call from Flavio but from his secretary – and it was probably the right thing to do. I wasn't performing," he reflects. "I don't cry, I am not a very emotional guy, but I did cry then. It was something that I had worked so hard to achieve, and then it was taken away but underneath, I think I had the realisation that it wasn't the right time. The lucky thing was what happened in Rio, because everybody remembers it and that set me on the way." ■



Herbert used bike to ease pain of getting around paddock

SPECIAL INSIGHT: WRC

THE STATE OF

World rallying is making progress, but there are still plenty

Index finger on the scanner, my colleague fidgeted. Standing in front of the man with the US Department of Homeland Security badge on, he was a little apprehensive. One wrong answer and who knows where he'd end up.

So, he thought about this one carefully. "You're off to Mexico then?" says the uniformed one.

"Yes."

"Off for the rally?"

What? Do what? Off for the what?

Either this was some new deep-rooted investigation process or the World Rally Championship was on the up in America. Turned out to be the latter.

This is progress.

Much as Russia, China and the like are important to the future development of the WRC, cracking America would be massive. We're like The Beatles before *I Want to Hold Your Hand* was played for the first time Stateside in December, 1963.

Or are we?

Maybe comparing the WRC to the best-selling band in the history of time (more than 600 million record sales worldwide) is over-playing our hand. For the time being at least.

This is a pivotal time for the World Rally Championship. We're not so much at a crossroads, more a herringbone. And, as anybody with road rally experience will testify, they're not always the easiest to navigate...

things are looking up for the World Rally Championship. We've got two factory drivers in Kris Meeke and Elfyn Evans, we've still got the world's leading rally preparation firms in M-Sport and Prodrive, we've got the WRC back on television and we've got a round of the championship which isn't constantly looking over its shoulder.

Those are solid foundations that shouldn't be seen as the finished product. We're on BT Sport in the tens of thousands and edging nearer the half million mark on ITV4. That's great, but we need to push on from there.

Rally GB has come a very, very long way in a short space of time, but there's more to come. And while we're grateful to have Evans and Meeke, who's going to follow them? Let's not get caught out again like we did in the post-McRae and Burns era.

than they were, but there remains confusion and concern about the direction in which we're travelling.

Let's take rallies themselves as an example. When Jean Todt arrived as president of the FIA four years ago, he talked about wanting to put the endurance aspect back into the world championship. He was appalled at the nine-to-five element which had been brought in at the behest of the media-driven David Richards. So, Todt made it quite clear that he wanted to see rallies going back to the challenge they once were – within what's possible given the advance of health and safety.

And Todt remains a strong advocate of longer rallies going back to the likes of Africa. He certainly wants the world put back into the World championship.

Carlos Barbosa, the new WRC Commission president, has made plain his personal feelings that two-day rallies are the way forward (*see p17*). Barbosa is an intelligent, articulate man who, courtesy of his former role as president of the Rally of Portugal organising club, fully appreciates the fiscal implication of running a round of the championship.

Two-day events won't work for everybody. Wales, for example, wants Rally GB in the country and competing for four days. Barbosa's retort to this is simple... ask for less money from the sponsor and make a shorter rally. In principle, that works well for the greater good of the WRC. There's no denying it's cheaper to attend a two-day event than one running over three or four days, but it's hard and unrealistic to see Rally GB chief Andrew Coe returning any of the cheques heading his way from the Welsh Government.

Two days, three days, four days? Long stages, short stages? That's the heart of this particular point – nobody really knows. Event organisers are in the dark about what the FIA really wants from them. Worse still, there's a fear within the sport that it's becoming increasingly unattractive to go through the hassle of trying to second-guess the apparently whimsical desires of the governing body. Firm direction is needed.

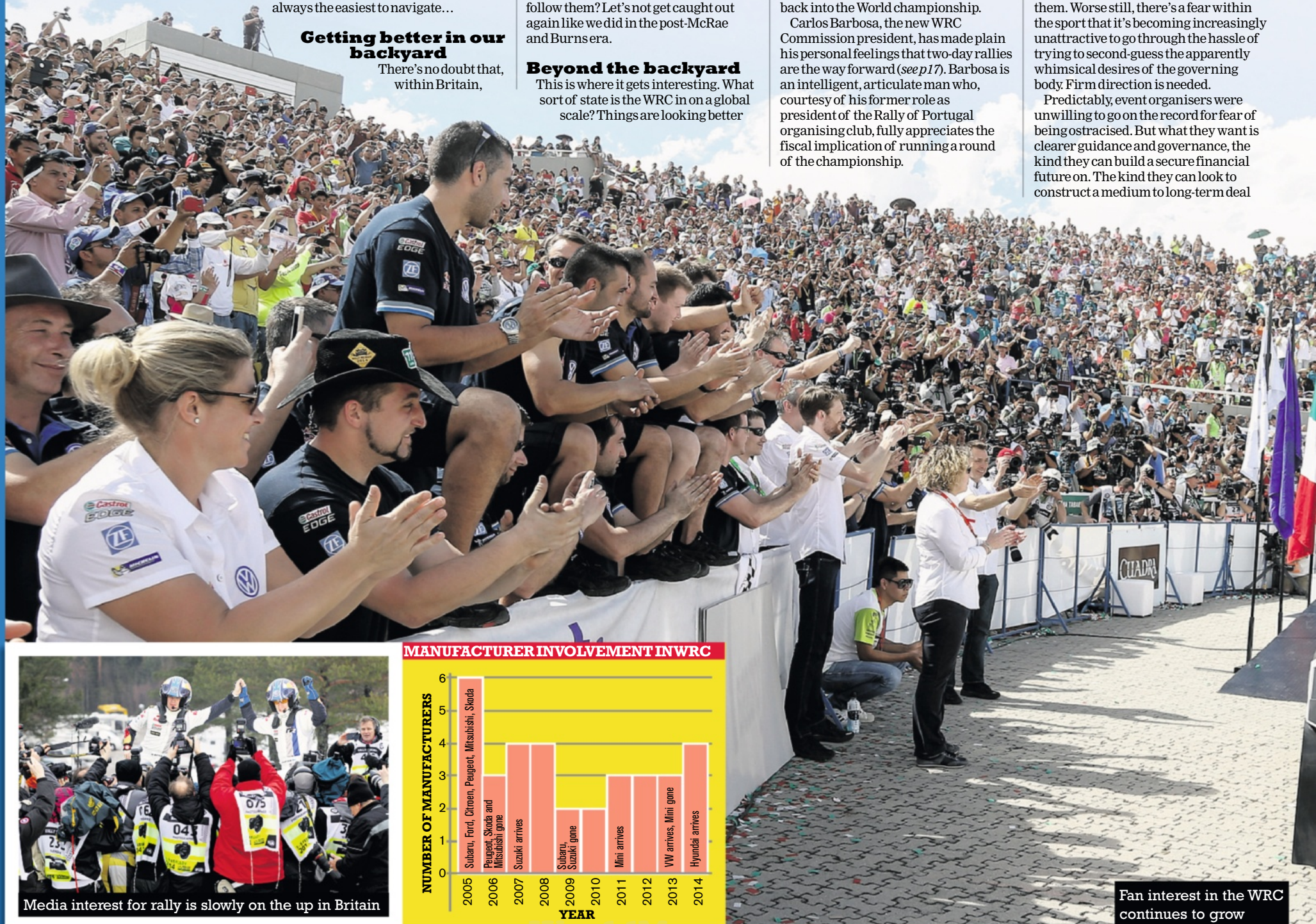
Predictably, event organisers were unwilling to go on the record for fear of being ostracised. But what they want is clearer guidance and governance, the kind they can build a secure financial future on. The kind they can look to construct a medium to long-term deal

Getting better in our backyard

There's no doubt that, within Britain,

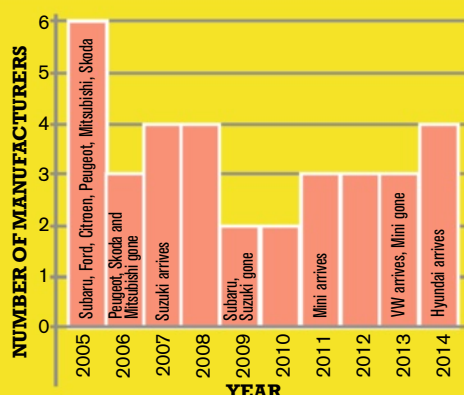
Beyond the backyard

This is where it gets interesting. What sort of state is the WRC in on a global scale? Things are looking better



Media interest for rally is slowly on the up in Britain

MANUFACTURER INVOLVEMENT IN WRC



Fan interest in the WRC continues to grow

MN ANALYSIS

Photos: Volkswagen and www.mcklein-imagedatabase.com

THE WRC

of outstanding issues. By David Evans

with the WRC promoter on the back of.

Whether you liked it or not, DR's cloverleaf ideal (personally, I didn't like it) for the championship worked and carried the sport into its most profitable and prosperous period ever.

And the world wanted a part of that. Mexico, Germany, Turkey, Japan, Norway and Ireland all signed up for the WRC while DR was at the wheel (worth noting we did lose the Safari in the same period). In Todt's first full season as president, the WRC ran four long-haul rallies, this year there are three.

Promotion politics

Emerging from its year's grace as the series newboys, WRC Promoter (the uninspired, yet official name for the collaboration between Red Bull Media House and Sportsman Media) has been faced with disquiet which had been bubbling away through last season.

Suddenly, there are fires to be fought on all fronts, be it handing the events with a bigger bill than expected as they pay for the timing and tracking or trying to negotiate the demands of the manufacturers. Those fires intensified as the WRC stakeholders were forced to reconsider preconceived hopes and ideas of the kind of vertical development and promotion expected from a Red Bull-related company.

The reality is that the promoter is here to do what all promoters do – promote and make money. And making

money out of the WRC is not easy when there's little value in the championship. Nowhere is this more obvious than in negotiations for television rights. In Britain, BT Sport was only interested in taking the coverage if there was a British driver involved. In Germany, Volkswagen propped up the commercial end to get the WRC into the mainstream. Compare that to a DR deal which left Channel 4 paying £20m over three years for the UK WRC rights in 2003. Right now, there are no £20m deals to be done.

Trouble is, raising the value of the championship requires significant levels of investment over the next five to ten years. And only when we have everything working in complete harmony from both the sporting and commercial aspects will we reach those investment levels.

We are getting there. Volkswagen, Hyundai and potentially Toyota coming to the party, where they have been joined by significant regional backing from the Middle East, shows that faith is being restored. But it's not going to happen overnight.

Crucial to that development is getting the WRC's message out to the wider world. And this is another area of concern and confusion. The WRC Promoter is investing heavily in the live television stage – which is fantastic news for watchers of a certain age. But, while terrestrial television remains the altar at which we worship, I'm afraid the WRC continues to restrict its growth. Yes, it's vital to be able to watch Sébastien Ogier doing his thing straight after *Countryfile* on a Sunday evening, but the youth of today consume their media quite differently.

The onset of Apple TV and the like make YouTube the Twitter-fed channel of choice over and above the Beeb, ITV or Sky. The promoter can talk in raptures about its shiny new website or a chunk of Facebook folk coming onboard, but driving demand for this series will take much more than that.

The future WR Car

The next significant date in the diary of all WRC fans is 2017 – the date when the next generation of World Rally Cars will be coming. This goes to the heart of what fans really want to talk about. All of the above, the political upheaval, the quarrels over telly, timing and timetables is interesting, but the cars are what get you and I out of the house and to the stages. Naturally, the crew play their part as well.

In the coming months, to help current and incoming manufacturers with the planning and production process, Barbosa will table technical regulation changes for 2017 and beyond. Given the sizeable shift in both the financial and environmental landscapes globally, it's not overstating the importance of these changes to say that the next few months will shape the future of the WRC.

What do we want from that future? According to Richards, we want a return to the Group B spectacle without the cost and safety implications. Fair enough. Having seen the interest in anything built in our sport between the years of 1983 and 1986, he's probably not wrong.

Big wings and big bangs are what we're after. But, most importantly,

we want everything to be cheaper.

Everybody's agreed on that. A current World Rally Car is wildly out of kilter with where it should be, cost-wise. And, what's worse, is that current cars are artificially expensive. Spend hundreds of thousands on a World Rally Car a decade ago and you could see where the money was going. You got titanium here, carbon-fibre there, tricky diffs, all manner of hydraulics and cutting-edge electronics. And now? You get a 1.6 engine with a blower; a six-speed sequential box and three diffs off the shelf. For about the same price. How does that work?

M-Sport has shown where the future lies and it lies beneath the letter R and number 5. The Fiesta R5 has flown off the Cocker mouth shelves because it's sensibly priced, but it offers significant performance and the speed differential between that and a World Rally Car will be invisible to the fans. Unless you think a half-second from apex to exit is worth spending 50 per cent more on a current WRC?

So, we want cars that cost half as much and are twice as exciting and noisy to watch. That can be done. Pre-planning, none of this should be a problem.

But what we need is clear, concise vision on the future. We don't want to get halfway there and have somebody say... let's make it naturally aspirated? Or let's go two-wheel drive. Both of those are perfectly plausible alternatives, but if they're going to be discussed, let's talk now. As the manufacturers say, they need to be starting development for an all-new 2017 car next year – so they need

to be planning the budget for it this year.

We seem to have uniform recognition of the need to drive costs down in terms of cars and rallies, but one area where we go in the opposite direction is tyres. The simplification of tyre regulations meant – excluding the Monte and Swedish – one pattern and two compounds for gravel and one pattern and one compound for asphalt. We've now got two compounds for asphalt and Michelin lobbying for a full wet tyre on safety grounds.

A few years ago, I talked to then FIA president Max Mosley about tyres in the WRC. He admitted to being both bemused and frustrated. Rallying makes a great deal out of its direct link and application to the regular road user. Indeed, the vast majority of events are fought out on the public roads.

"Tell me," said Mosley a few years ago, "when did you last change your tyres when it stopped raining?"

Drivers will always argue about the safety of the situation, but they remain the ultimate arbiters of their own well-being. And making the current tyre work better in the rain involves the simple task of cutting some of the grooves out through the shoulder to help disperse water. Job done. No need to cart thousands more tyres around the world.

What's become patently obvious in the World Rally Championship right now is the need for joined-up thinking and considered communication. Our sport is definitely back on an upward trend, but to improve its trajectory we need to find the right plan and we need the world to buy into it. And then we need to stick to it.

Who knows? Maybe 2017 will be the WRC's very own Beatles moment.

Then everybody will want to hold our hand. ■



British driver Elfyn Evans has boosted the sport in UK



Richards wants powerful cars



Group B cars were fast and noisy: and fans loved them

RALLY REPORTS

Photos: Martin Walsh

IN BRIEF

Carey's Group N glory

Honda Civic crew Stephen Carey/Breda O'Driscoll won Group N. Carey seemed off form on the opening day, his cause not helped by a faulty intercom. On day two he scythed through the field to take sixth overall. Alan Ring was the Gp N pre-event favourite but his Impreza had an engine-wiring loom problem and didn't make the start. Brian O'Keefe was then expected to feature but his Impreza's engine expired. Phillip Cross/JJ Cremin took second in Gp N with their Impreza.

O'Mahony on a charge

There were just nine entries in the Historic Rally. They started on stage four and ran through the first afternoon and most of the Sunday. Adrian Kermode/Maurice Beckett, in their Porsche, led by 14s at the overnight halt but James O'Mahony made a huge charge to win by two seconds. Co-driven by Kerrie Barry, O'Mahony was hampered initially when, along with most of the historic field, he had to accept a scratch time for the opening stage.

Coyne's woe on return

Former Tarmac champion John Coyne, who has not rallied for many years, was second in the Historic Rally after the opening stage. However, his Lotus Sunbeam, the same car with which he won the Tarmac title, had engine problems on stage two and was retired.

Gallagher's fortune

West Cork was for the first time a round of the Modified division of the Clonakilty Blackpudding Irish Tarmac Championship. James Stafford missed the opening round in Galway, but registered for this one and set the pace through the opening day from first round winner Declan Gallagher. Stafford's retirement meant Gallagher, who took maximum points on the opening round in Galway, earned another maximum to increase his points lead over Wesley Patterson.

Parpottas wins juniors

Alex Parpottas/Alex Kihurani made the trip from Wales worthwhile by winning the Junior category in their Fiesta R2. Parpottas had a major moment when he clipped the scenery with the rear of his Fiesta at a hairpin right, but otherwise had a good run. The Juniors competed over the Sunday stages only. Local crew Conor McCarthy/Dylan Coffey admitted to making a cautious start in their Civic but came through strongly to take second place, 19s behind Parpottas. James Bradley/Maria Kehoe made a strong start in their Mk2 Escort, but had to settle for third at the end.

O'Brien takes Rally 2

Mick O'Brien/Stephen Quin rejoined the rally on Sunday morning in their Focus WRC and won Rally 2 from Adrian Hetherington/Gary Nolan (Escort). Peter Desmond/Sorcha Kelly were third in their Corsa.

Stage is stopped

Stage 12, Sam's Cross, had to be stopped after just eight cars passed through because of an emergency call that a resident had been taken ill. A rally ambulance was deployed to the scene immediately. It then transpired that the person concerned was a driver who had retired from the rally, Gwyn Thomas, and who had rented a cottage on the road for a week. Thomas was taken to hospital in Cork City, where MN hopes that the Welshman will make a speedy and full recovery.

KELLY'S WEST CORK DEBUT IS A FLIER

Ford Focus man outruns his opposition on Tarmac. By **Brian Patterson**



Kelly had a clear run on the rally's second day

Donegal man Donagh Kelly, with Kevin Flanagan co-driving, made his first visit to the West Cork Rally a memorable one by taking the win in his Focus WRC.

Previous winner Denis Cronin, with Coleman Hurley co-driving, fought very hard for much of the rally to reel Kelly in, but the Impreza WRC crew had to settle for runner-up spot. Another crew from Donegal, Declan Gallagher/Ryan Moore, also on their first visit to the rally, took advantage of the retirement rate and they captured third in their Toyota Starlet.

The opening loop of three stages at Ring, Clogagh and Ballinascarthy consisted of 33 miles of fast, flowing asphalt roads. Beautiful sunny weather made the going even faster. Kelly opened up an immediate lead from Daragh O'Riordan, while Cronin made his usual cautious start and then set a fastest time in stage three. Just 14s covered the top three at first service.

Wexford man James Stafford took full advantage of the dry roads by powering his Darrian into fourth place, despite rear tyre overheating worries in stage three. Gallagher once again set a stunning pace to lie fifth overall in his Starlet. Clonakilty man Kevin Kelleher managed to squeeze into sixth despite his Subaru suffering a slipping clutch and then an errant turbo pipe in stage two.

Several of the other top drivers were in early trouble. Melvyn Evans' Subaru was sidelined with a broken driveshaft on the first stage. Owen Murphy's Lancer had a puncture on the opening stage and then overheated on the second, and he pulled out of the rally. Subsequently, a blown head gasket was diagnosed. Robert Barrable retired his

Fiesta R5 in stage two because of worries over the steering rack.

Stages four, five and six were a repeat of the opening loop. Kelly scored fastest times on two of them, while Cronin was quickest on the other one. The first day finished with the 3.3-mile Reenroe stage outside Clonakilty town.

The way the low evening sun was shining through the trees into the drivers' eyes made it very tricky. Kelly was fastest again, which meant a 26s advantage for the Focus man for day two. "I'm thoroughly enjoying the West Cork roads and I'm starting at last to drive the car the way I'm supposed to," he said. "That was to stop messing about. I must say, having the engineer from M-Sport with us this weekend has made a huge difference to the sharpness of the engine and the car."

Second-placed Cronin was hoping to find some harder compound Pirelli tyres for day two while third placed O'Riordan had found that his 1600cc turbo Fiesta was fully stretched trying to match the Imprezas, and Daragh was hoping the tighter Sunday stages would suit the car better.

Behind the leading three, James Stafford was in fourth with his Darrian, the Wexford man revelling in the dry conditions to lead the Modified division. Kelleher was fifth despite his Impreza leaking oil and seemingly down on power. Gallagher was sixth despite his Starlet slipping into a ditch for a few seconds on the second visit to the Ring stage. Declan suffered a damaged wrist in the incident. That Ring test had been extended this year to include a tight twisty section towards the finish and two of the Escort men, Adrian Hetherington and Pat Donegan were caught out on a mud-strewn tight left-hand corner.

Frank Kelly was giving a debut to a newly built Millington-engined Escort

in West Cork and he discovered at service after stage six that the throttle was only opening 80 per cent. Kelly held seventh at day's end, with the evergreen Phil Collins eighth and Wesley Patterson ninth, all in Escorts. Martin Donnelly who had flown home from his base in the USA to drive the McGeehan Motorsport Corolla WRC rounded off the top ten. Donnelly had a clear run through that opening day.

One WR Car missing from the overnight leaderboard was forestry champion Mick O'Brien's Focus. A leaking power steering pump had sprayed fluid on to the water pump belt, which started to slip. He pulled the car out of the rally at service after stage six to fix the problem and then rejoined under Rally 2 to test the car on the Sunday. Another overnight change was that Kelleher withdrew his Impreza WRC to save the newly rebuilt engine any further hardship. It was suspected that a compression ring was faulty.

The final day consisted of a loop of three stages, each done twice, making

up 60 miles. Weather conditions were dry, but not as warm as day one. Donagh Kelly had a particularly good run over the opening Sunday stage, Ardfield, taking eight seconds off Cronin and almost ten from O'Riordan. Cronin tried to retaliate on the second test, Sam's Cross, but spun and he ended a further 0.2s back from Kelly.

Cronin was fastest in the third stage of the loop, by four seconds, but it was too little, too late. Donagh Kelly really only had to stroke his Focus WRC home, which is exactly what he did. The main changes to the top ten on the final day were that Stafford retired his Darrian from fourth place with mechanical problems. Frank Kelly crashed his Escort into a chicane and retired from fifth. Donnelly put his Corolla WRC into a stage eight hedge and lost eighth position. Vincent McSweeney retired from tenth when his Civic developed an engine problem in stage ten. O'Riordan retired from third on the penultimate stage when his Fiesta WRC broke a driveshaft. ■

RESULTS

Clonakilty Blackpudding Tarmac Championship (Modified), round two of seven, West Cork Rally, March 15/16

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Donagh Kelly/Kevin Flanagan	Ford Focus WRC	1h 48m 7.7s
2	Denis Cronin/Coleman Hurley	Subaru Impreza WRC	+33.7s
3	Declan Gallagher/Ryan Moore	Toyota Starlet	+6m 12.8s
4	Phil Collins/Derek Brannigan	Ford Escort	+6m 59.3s
5	Wesley Patterson/Johnny Baird	Ford Escort	+7m 15.2s
6	Stephen Carey/Breda O'Driscoll	Honda Civic	+10m 22.2s
7	Gary Kiernan/Niall Tierney	Ford Escort	+10m 24.7s
8	Cal McCarthy/Eamonn Dullea	Honda Civic	+10m 30.4s
9	Andrew Mahon/Andrew Donoghue	Ford Escort	+10m 59.9s
10	Jason Ryan/Tadhg O'Sullivan	Toyota Starlet	+11m 18.4s

Classes: 2: Brian O'Mahony/Michele Gallwey (Civic); 3: Stephen Carey/Breda O'Driscoll (Civic); 4: Phillip Cross/JJ Cremin (Impreza); 5: Tony O'Driscoll/Anthony O'Driscoll (Peugeot 106); 6: Stephen Wright/Suzanne Wright (Peugeot 208 R2); 8: Donagh Kelly/Kevin Flanagan (Focus WRC); 9: Shane Stanley/Liam Foulhy (Civic); 10: Victor Beamish/Susan Beamish (Nova); 11F: Cal McCarthy/Eamonn Dullea (Civic); 11R: Andrew Mahon/Andrew Donoghue (Escort); 12: Chris Manning/Tim Sayer (Escort); 13: Declan Gallagher/Ryan Moore (Starlet); 14: Wesley Patterson/Johnny Baird (Escort); 15: Alan O'Riordan/James Jordan (Impreza); 20: Mark Nangle/Nollaig Breen (Impreza).

RALLY REPORTS



Ellis storms to glory after Taylor falters

Flying Fortress Stages

By Peter Scherer

Organiser: Dukeries MC **When:** March 16
Where: Grafton Underwood, Northants **Championships:** Rainworth Skoda EMAMC, Roadrunner/Phoenix Awards ANEMMC, Jelf Motorsport.com/Ward Construction AEMC **Stages:** eight **Starters:** 52

Johnnie Ellis and Dave Green took their Subaru Impreza to a 52 second victory after an entertaining duel with Alex Taylor and Mark Swallow.

The latter pair had to end their rally early. Their Subaru Forrester was able to continue after they broke a wheel after hitting a chicane, but they then succumbed to a broken gearbox.

The opening stage was cancelled after Steve and Brett Marriott's Impreza caught fire. But once underway it was Taylor that hit the front, two seconds up on Ellis, before the roles were reversed on stage three. Taylor not only hauled back Ellis's seven second lead, but was ahead after stage four, before retirement beckoned.

Rob Smith had son Jordy alongside in his Escort and the duo managed to hold off Gary Wayne/Tony Szubert (Impreza) for third until stage four, when an oil pipe burst and gave them a maximum.

After Taylor's retirement Wayne retained second, but had Ben Cressey/Tom Murphy's Impreza closing in the final stages. Last year's winners Alex Cannon/Ray Keith had been fifth best on the first stage, but their Impreza's gearbox expired on the next run.

Lee and Craig Burgess climbed from seventh, first time out in their new Impreza, to finish a strong fourth and with Gawaine Clark/Sean Bailey's Impreza retiring with overheating plugs, Andy Graham/Will Henry (Impreza) and William/Stuart Moore (Mitsubishi Lancer) completed the top six.

Tom Walster and Pete Shaw's Suzuki Swift took charge of Class One from the second stage, taking victory by well over four seconds from John Taylor/Jayne Edgington's Talbot Sunbeam, the class leaders on the opening run.

Chris Bellamy/Ashlie Thorpe's Citroën Saxo made a flying start in Class Two, but their 22s lead on the opening run became a second stage retirement and handed the lead to Mick Pickles/James Crosland (Proton Satria). From stage five Robert Dillon/Peter Weston (Honda Civic) led the way.

Despite a stage four maximum Rob Smith reclaimed Class Three on the penultimate stage after the Escort of rivals Stuart Ranby/Ian Bass retired on stage five. They were joined on the retirements list by Peugeot 205 GT crew Ross Wey/Liam Carfrae whose engine let go on stage seven.

Simon/Jordan Connolly Porsche 911 took Class Four spoils.

Results
1 Johnnie Ellis/Dave Green (Subaru Impreza) 51m 36s;
2 Gary Wayne/Tony Szubert (Subaru Impreza) +52s;
3 Ben Cressey/Tom Murphy (Subaru Impreza);
4 Lee Burgess/Craig Burgess (Subaru Impreza);
5 Andy Graham/Will Henry (Subaru Impreza);
6 William Moore/Stuart Moore (Mitsubishi Lancer);
7 Simon Belcher/Nigel Wetton (Subaru Impreza);
8 Tom Walster/Pete Shaw (Suzuki Swift);
9 John Tolson/Connor Tolson (Subaru Impreza);
10 Hugh Peat/Mick Sendall (Subaru Impreza). **Class winners:** 1: Walster/Shaw; 2: Robert Dillon/Peter Weston (Honda Civic); 3: Rob Smith/Jordy Smith (Ford Escort RS1800 Mk2); 4: Simon Connolly/Sara Connolly (Porsche 911).

McGarrity had stage one issues, but still took glory



McGrady Insurance Stages

By Michael Patterson

Organiser: Ballynahinch and District MC **When:** March 15 **Where:** Bishopscourt Motor Racing Circuit, County Down **Championships:** McGrady Insurance MSA NI Rally Championship **Starters:** 74 **Stages:** 14

Multiple Bishopscourt winner Derek McGarrity took another fine win at the venue on Saturday when he and co-driver James McKee dominated the McGrady Insurance Stages in their Mini JCW WRC.

Kevin Barrett was partnered by Leslie McGaffin and had one his best runs to date, taking second in his Subaru Impreza WRC S14 while Desi Henry rounded off the podium in his older Impreza WRC.

The Ballynahinch and District organised event was the opening round of the NI Rally Championships due to the new events rotational system coming into effect. The club had put a lot of effort into making the route as innovative as possible, and introduced a multiple stage format to keep competitors on their toes.

As the opening stage got underway, it became apparent that number one seed McGarrity was in trouble. His Mini WRC had gone into safe mode on the start line. McGarrity explained that he had failed to switch on a second fan as he was held on the line, and the ex-Dani Sordo machine spluttered around with a loss of more than 30 seconds. He wasn't the only one in trouble though. Derek McGeehan missed a split in his Mini WRC, and incurred a stage maximum for his mistake. Peadur Hurson

was another who dropped a lot of time when his Escort WRC stopped on stage.

Kevin Barrett was the pace setter over the opening test and looked to be leading from Emma McKinstry. But a timing problem becoming evident. Some crews were given times considerably faster than they had done. Equally, a lot had been given times that were considerably slower. As the rally moved on, McGarrity set about undoing his SS1 time loss. Fastest on SS2 and right on through to SS6, he was making inroads into his deficit. Behind the scenes, the timekeepers were working to try and fix the first stage time, but a solution could not be found and the stage was neutralised.

At a stroke, McGarrity was back into the lead, and now stood 12 seconds ahead of Barrett. Emma McKinstry was a strong third, but a delay at the start of SS7 meant the Banbridge lady started the stage with cold tyres and a big overshoot into the first corner cost nearly 30 seconds. She dropped to sixth. Derek McGeehan was another to benefit from the stage one scrapping and he jumped back up to fourth.

Desi Henry was into the top three after SS7 and was driving well despite gearbox problems plaguing him all day. Martin Cairns had a high-speed spin on SS7 and dropped back to seventh in his recently acquired Impreza WRC. McGarrity was very much in control now but a jammed gear linkage slowed him a little. Barrett made the most of it and went fastest on stage nine followed closely by Henry just 0.4s behind. Once the McGarrity Mini was

sorted, the multiple Northern Irish champion was free to cruise, extending his winning margin to 25s.

Former Irish Forestry champion Pat O'Connell dominated Gp N all day in his Lancer while Alistair Cochrane was in control of the two-wheel-drive fight for most of the day. David Armstrong had got close on a few stages but dropped back later on.

The most impressive drive of the day went to former Junior driver Kyle White in his Citroën C2 R2. He had a fantastic day-long battle with Stephen Smith in his Civic. White always seemed to have the edge and second in 2WD and Class Four spoils were just rewards for the Belfast teenager. William Creighton was co-driven by Liam Regan and was never challenged in the Junior 1000 Rally. His Citroën C1 finished 54s ahead of the impressively improving Michael McGarrity in his Micra.

Results

1 Derek McGarrity/James McKee (Mini WRC) 37m 13.9s;
2 Kevin Barrett/Lesley McGaffin (Subaru Impreza WRC) +25.0s;
3 Desi Henry/Liam Moynihan (Impreza WRC); 4 Derek McGeehan/Laurie Smyth (Mini WRC); 5 Alan Carmichael/Ivor Lamont (Mini WRC); 6 Emma McKinstry/Kenny Hull (Impreza); 7 Martin Cairns/Clare Gamble (Impreza); 8 George Robinson/Tommy Speers (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 9 Alistair Cochrane/Alexander Cochrane (Ford Escort); 10 Ray Brammer/Gary McElhinney (Subaru Impreza S8). **Classes:** 1: Neil Monaghan/Jamie Monaghan (Ford Fiesta); 2: Pat O'Connell/Mark Wiley (Lancer E9); 3: Jordan Hone/Paul Hone (Nissan Micra); 4: Kyle White/Alan Purdy (Citroën C2 R2); 5: John Gordon/Thomas Wedlock (Escort); 6: Alistair Cochrane/Alexander Cochrane (Escort); 7: David Armstrong/Paul Mulholland (Escort RS); 8: Henry/Moynihan; 9: McGarrity/McKee; 10: Malcolm Pedlow/Ivor Ferguson (BMW 2002); 11: Drew Wylie/Jay Colville (Ford Escort). **McGrady Insurance Junior 1000:** 1 William Creighton/Liam Regan (Citroën C1) 48m 8.6s; 2 Michael McGarrity/Steven Massey (Nissan Micra) +54.0s; 3 Philip White/Matthew Mason (Micra).

Photo: Roy Dempster



Owen leads all the way for Anglesey win

Lee Holland Memorial Stages

By Dave V Thomas

Organiser: Pendle DMC with Garstang and Preston MC **When:** March 16 **Where:** Anglesey Circuit **Championships:** ANWCC, ANCC, SD34, Junior F1000 **Starters:** 35 **Stages:** eight

Top seed Wil Owen took his second successive event victory. He and co-driver Rob Hopewell won by 33 seconds in their Millington Escort.

Mike Gilman and Iain Douglas (Escort Cosworth) took the runner-up spot by just six seconds from late entry Bertie Morton/Mark Walker, who were in a Ford Escort Mk2.

Owen led from the start, the damp track drying quickly for the eight testing stages that featured a higher number of splits and merges than usual.

With the top three from the big-engined class, fourth spot went to the leading Class C car, the Honda-engined Escort of Julian Jones/Mikey Herritts. They won by just over two minutes from the well-developed Focus of Robert Hughes/Kevin Butler. Novice crew Alwyn Haycock/Lucy Samuel (Nova) took third in class along with the Novice trophies and a place in the top ten overall.

Mathew Roberts and Sarah Hughes took their customary Class B award in their Saxo. They were just over three minutes up on the Fiesta R1 of Gus Greensmith/Adam Wilks, with local brothers Dylan and Iwan Parry third in their 206 and a further two minutes adrift.

As expected John Hardman, with Paul Jackson, won Class A in the very rapid Micra, which finished well inside the top ten. They were nearly four minutes ahead of Adam Booth/David Grainger (Nova) with Joshua Ross/Richard Mason (Micra) next up.

The one-litre class featured four Micra entries that all finished within four minutes of each other. They were led by ex-Junior F1000 driver Robert Kennedy/Abi Haycock, who was well ahead of Jonny Stockwell/Tom Hutchins with Cathy Sewart/Merv Williams taking third.

Sewart's usual Sunbeam-Lotus was being used by her partner Mike Taylor. He suffered tyre and brake issues and then head gasket failure in just three stages.

The Junior F1000 section had 13 starters and a clear win for top seeds William Creighton/Neil Colman in their Citroën C1. Will Butler/Yan Griffiths (Peugeot 107) finished over a minute behind with Harry Williams/Vince Mosley (C1) third. Sebastian Perez had the experience of Mark Higgins in the hot seat but a navigational error cost them their third place.

Results

1 Wil Owen/Rob Hopewell (Ford Escort Mk2) 45m 52s;
2 Mike Gilman/Iain Douglas (Ford Escort Cosworth) +33s;
3 Bertie Morton/Mark Walker (Ford Escort Mk2) +33s;
4 Julian Jones/Mikey Herritts (Ford Escort); 5 Oliver Davies/Ben Innes (Ford Escort Mk2); 6 Mathew Roberts/Sarah Hughes (Citroën Saxo); 7 Robert Hughes/Kevin Butler (Ford Focus); 8 John Hardman/Paul Jackson (Nissan Micra); 9 Ken Jones/Huw Williams (Mitsubishi Lancer); 10 Alwyn Haycock/Lucy Samuel (Vauxhall Nova). **Classes:** Owen/Hopewell, Jones/Herritts, Roberts/Hughes, Hardman/Jackson, Robert Kennedy/Abi Haycock (1.0 Nissan Micra). **Juniors:** 1 William Creighton/Neil Colman (Citroën C1) 54m 39s; 2 Will Butler/Yan Griffiths (Peugeot 107) +1m 12s; 3 Harry Williams/Vince Mosley (Citroën C1); 4 Charlie Barlow/Melanie Holmes (Nissan Micra); 5 Matthew Davies/Mark Crisp (Nissan Micra); 6 Ben Cross/George Morrison (Toyota Yaris); 7 Sebastian Perez/Mark Higgins (Nissan Micra); 8 Zac Hughes/Chris Evans (Citroën C1); 9 Tommi Meadows/Ian Oakey (Nissan Micra); 10 Luke Barker/Karen Phelps (Peugeot 107).

ROAD RALLY ROUND - UP

Ian 'Dude' Roberts/Gwawr Hughes took their first win of the year on a closely fought Moonbeam Rally.

Richard Jerman/Lowri Davies had built up a lead of 13 seconds as they approached the petrol halt, however a broken panhard rod then put them out of the rally.

Roberts/Hughes arrived at Petrol with a narrow lead of over top seeds Mark 'GT' Roberts/Steve Price. Both crews were to be slowed by mechanical problems in the second half. The winners lost all lighting briefly on a number of occasions.

Roberts/Price were doubtful that they would make the end of the rally as an engine mounting was breaking up. They did get there but were passed for second by Jonty and Nick Bloxham, who had lost time on the rough opening white. The top three crews were separated by little more than 30 seconds at the finish.

At Petrol four of the top five places were held by drivers from the Roberts clan. Gary Roberts/Max Freeman went on to finish in fifth but Wyn Roberts/Tom Pritchard retired with alternator failure.

Ian Mills

Results

Organiser: Telford Auto Club **When:** March 15/16 **Where:** Shropshire **Championships:** ANWCC, AWMCC **Route:** 120 miles **Starters:** 61
1 Ian 'Dude' Roberts/Gwawr Hughes (VW Golf GTI) 2m 58s;
2 Jonty Bloxham/Nick Bloxham (Peugeot 106 GTI) +30s;
3 Mark 'GT' Roberts/Steve Price (VW Golf GTI); 4 Nic Morris/Martin Phasey (Ford Escort); 5 Gary Roberts/Max Freeman (Peugeot 205 GTI); 6 Kev Bolver/Dylan Andrew (Ford Escort); 7 Phillip Jones/Clive Jones (Ford Escort); 8 Simon Harrison/Paul Holmberg (Subaru Impreza); 9 Peter Roberts/Richard Jackson (VW Golf GTI); 10 Dan Darkin/Nick Darkin (Vauxhall Nova). **Classes, Semi-Experts:** Richard Poole/Owen Morgan (Ford Sierra); **Novices:** Nick Skidmore/Chris Jones (Ford Escort Mexico).

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KARTING ROUND-UP

"The new F250 engines ran for the first time"
Superkarts hit the track, below



Photos: Kartpix.net

BRITISH KF JUNIOR FACING THE AXE AFTER LOW ENTRIES

Super One bosses blame the downfall of the KF engine for low grid numbers

By Russell Hayes

This season's revamped MSA British KF Junior Championship is set to be axed after a lack of entries, according to Super One chief John Hoyle.

In order to cut running costs, the KF Junior class had been set to use a pooled system of Vortex engines supplied by British Rotax champion Strawberry Racing. The engine is commonly used in the KF category across Europe. Ahead of next weekend's opening Super One MSA round at Sherington, Hoyle said entry numbers were only in single figures.

"We've not made a final decision but there are only seven or eight entries so far," Hoyle said. "But there are only five Brits competing in the class on the WSK calendar. I don't think it's the financial climate that is a main factor, the KF engine has



KF Junior has struggled to garner a worthwhile grid

just not worked. The CIK-FIA and manufacturers have tried to copy the Rotax formula but similar budgets are being spent now in Rotax. At the World KF Championship round at PFI last year, there were only 25 entries to the supporting KF Junior

International Super Cup—that's from around the world. The CIK has to learn from its mistakes and has to get the new KF engine right when it is released in 2016. We won't replace KF Junior with another class on the weekend timetable, we will

probably just give more track time to the other classes."

Hoyle said the MSA British Senior Championship, KZ1, has received positive entries ahead of its second year this season.

"With drivers such as Scott Allen and Dennis Gorman

moving into KZ1 this year, I'm happy with the gearbox class," he added. "The MSA series has never had massive entry numbers. Even the Formula A class many years ago only attracted 15 to 20 drivers when the economy was good."



Hoyle may call time on KF Junior

IN BRIEF

Clay entries open
Entries are now open for the second round of the Clay Pigeon Kart Club Championship on April 13. The meeting will also host the Formula Blue O Plate. Visit claypigeonkartclub.com for more information.

Half price racing
Dunkeswell Kart Club is offering half price entries for the IAME Cadet and MiniMax classes for its second meeting on March 30. All applicable drivers who enter online, pay the full race fee of £60, will be refunded half of the entry after the meeting. For more details or to enter online head to dunkeswellkartclub.co.uk.

Karting survey
The ABkC drivers' representative Andrew Rees-Reynolds is seeking driver feedback to help outline the future of the sport. An online survey has been published with questions relating to drivers' views on the current structure of British karting and the state of MSA-sanctioned racing. It can be viewed and completed at surveymonkey.com/s/GNGFLCR

Non-MSA at Llandow
South Wales Kart Centre will host the inaugural non-MSA IKR South Wales Race at Llandow this Sunday. Classes will be available for almost all karts and engines providing they meet basic class regulations. Entry is £40 per driver. A minimum total entry of 50 drivers applies. Call 01446 795568 for more information.

Super One guest drives to continue

Super One head John Hoyle says the continued offer of guest drives to local racers can increase grid numbers.

Drivers wishing to compete in the MSA British IAME Cadet or KZ1 championships, KGP Pro, TKM Extreme, Junior TKM or Junior Rotax Max Academy can take advantage of not paying a registration fee unless they participate in a further round.

Hoyle said the concept has helped the championship attract drivers who initially considered national racing as too expensive.

"The concept gives local drivers a taster as many think it's hard to compete," he said. "It helps them that they are driving at their local circuit so they have track knowledge and some take advantage by starting on pole position."

"A lot of the time it draws those drivers into the championship for future rounds and we plan on continuing to offer the guest driver opportunities."



Fewtrell says he feels ready to take the fight to Europe's best

Fewtrell warms up for European title tilts

European KF Junior ace Max Fewtrell says his strong start to the season can help him to win international titles this year.

The 14-year-old claimed second place in the Winter Cup in Lonato and followed that up by winning the recent final round of the WSK Champions Cup. He was second in the points behind team-mate Enaam Ahmed.

Ahead of this weekend's first round of the WSK Super Master Series at Sarno in Italy, Fewtrell said the experience gained from his maiden year of international racing last season has been a

major influence on his form.

"I'm definitely more prepared than this time last season," he said. "I'm training more and feel fitter. Along with the pre-season winter training, I feel I'm able challenge at a higher level."

Fewtrell said working with Ahmed, who has claimed two major European wins this year, is helping: "By working together, we're able to plan ahead of the finals. I'm gaining confidence by consistently challenging at the front so far and that will help me to go for European and World titles this season."

Superkart numbers set to grow after capacity test at Silverstone

British Superkart Association heads believe their successful test day at Silverstone last weekend will boost entries to the season opener at Oulton Park.

The test day hit the maximum 50 entries and so far 15 drivers have registered for the March 29 event in Cheshire. Last year's first event at Castle Combe had 33 entries.

Last Saturday's test was the first time the new F250 National class engines were shaken down.

A handful of drivers tested the THR and Viper units but the DEA alternative was unavailable in the final specification.

New BSA chairman John Dickinson said he hoped drivers were awaiting feedback from the test before deciding whether to enter the opening round.

"Past entry numbers have been high for the first round," Dickinson said, "but this year, with the new engines coming in, drivers seem to be more cautious. Many are waiting to hear how the units have performed. The test day was more about engine durability than actual performance."

Competition manager Ian Rushforth added: "If drivers

wanted to know what the engines are like, they should be out there testing against others.

"The new engines are only affecting the sharp end of the grid. We need a minimum of 30 drivers to financially break even and make it viable."

F250 racer Mark Stansfield was the sole driver to test this year's new Viper unit.

Stansfield raced on a Honda development engine for the second half of last season. "The Viper certainly is smoother," he said. "There's less vibration and it packs a punch."

Rotax DD2 won't run in the UK this season

Rotax DD2 racing will not run in this season's Super One series despite all efforts to revitalise the class.

The class last competed on a national level in 2009. Drivers have more recently favoured Senior Rotax and the 177 championships. DD2 does enjoy healthy grids in European Rotax competition. British Rotax ace Sean Babington is Euromax DD2

title favourite with Strawberry Racing this season.

"We've tried it in the past and it didn't have enough momentum to sustain itself to carry on," Super One co-ordinator John Hoyle said. "When nobody in the UK is running it at club level, it's always going to be tough to attract the entries. We put it out there for drivers to come back to enter but it's not been taken up."



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SPORTING SCENE ROUND-UP

Photos: Eddie Walder, mkpics.net and David DJ Jones

ROUND-UP

Craig MacWilliam joined the elite list of double **sporting trial** winners this season. He was six marks ahead of relative newcomer Jonathan Ralph at Ballybrew in County Wicklow. Alan Kilkenny was another mark down in third place, and was unable to add to his five victories so far. At the end of the first lap these three were covered by a single mark, but MacWilliam pulled clear on the second circuit. Ian MacWilliam shared the winning car with his brother to take Grade B in sixth overall, while the other grade wins went to Alec Watkins and Philip Hughes. There were 31 starters.

Gordon Moodie and Chris Burgoyne shared the **BriSCA F2** spoils at the Cowdenbeath Racewall on Saturday. Willie Draeger led the cars away when the final started but, almost immediately, Moodie dived inside Burgoyne before setting off after the leader. Just after half distance Moodie caught Draeger to take the lead and once there drove away for a comfortable win.

BriSCA F1 star Michael Scriven won both heats and the final at the **V8 Hotstox** meeting at the Pr1mo Northampton Raceway on Sunday. Phoebe Wainman finished second in the hard-hitting meeting. Tom Spencer was third, and he went on to win the Grand National finale.

RESULTS

Sporting Trial: Ballybrew

1 Craig MacWilliam (Erskine-Yamaha) 9 marks; 2 Jonathan Ralph (Suzuki) 15m; 3 Alan Kilkenny (Kilkenny-Yamaha) 16m; 4 Gordon Erskine (Erskine-Yamaha) 18m; 5 Morgan Evans (Honda) 20m; 6 Ian MacWilliam (Erskine-Yamaha) 22m; 7 Paul Needham (Erskine-Honda) 23m; 8 James Ralph (Suzuki) 23m; 9 Gordon Watkins (Watkins-Yamaha) 23m; 10 Ian Sweeney (Suzuki) 25m. Grade winners: Jonathan Ralph; Ian MacWilliam; Alec Watkins (Watkins-Yamaha) 34m; Philip Hughes (Sheane VW) 42m.

BriSCA F2: Cowdenbeath

Final: 1 Gordon Moodie; 2 Chris Burgoyne; 3 Liam Rennie; 4 Craig Wallace; 5 Robbie Dawson; 6 Marc Fortune; 7 Dennis Middleton; 8 Stevie Forster; 9 Willie Draeger; 10 Tam Melkie.

Tapscott to return in upgraded Vauxhall

Allan Tapscott, who won the first round of the BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship, has committed to racing in all rallycross events Britain this year.

The Devonshire ace will tackle the rest of the BTRDA series and the MSA British Championship too. "Three of the events this year are at Pembrey, which is my closest circuit," said the Vauxhall Corsa driver. "They're easy for me to get to, but I want to do all the events to support rallycross as a whole."

Tapscott said car improvements meant he should be competitive in both series. "We've worked so hard to get this car working," he explained. "I had a year out to develop it because we kept blowing up engines. We tried to build it with a standard engine but that didn't work. We have that sorted now, and we have adjusted the angle of the rear axle to help traction and it's worked."

"The next thing the car needs is a sequential gearbox, which will happen when I have the budget. I'm going to race as much as possible this year."

HAVE YOUR SAY

The Government consultation into closed roads motor sport runs until April 10. To take part, visit the Department for Culture, Media and Sport website (gov.uk/organisations/department-for-culture-media-sport) and look for the 'consultations' section. For details of suggested responses, visit the MSA website (msauk.org).



Will Hall would welcome more closed-road events

CLOSED-ROAD HILLCLIMB PUSH

British championship chiefs says legal change would boost sport

By James Bolton

Avon Tyres/TTC Group MSA British Hillclimb Championship chiefs say they would be keen to add more closed-road events to the calendar if the laws are changed in the UK.

The Government is running a consultation to consider allowing motorsport events to take place on closed public roads (MN, March 5).

The British Hillclimb series features three closed-road venues in Northern Ireland, Guernsey and Jersey, where the laws are different.

"They're all good venues and they have their own specific quirksiness," said British Hillclimb co-ordinator Jackie Wilson. "But they are more expensive for the competitors to visit because they're off-shore. This consultation could open up some opportunities."

Leading hillclimb competitor Will Hall added: "On closed-road events the surface is a bit rougher and more slippery," he said. "At Craigtlet in Belfast the road has quite a crown on it so you have to raise the car slightly. It's a good opportunity to revisit the calendar and maybe bring in new rounds."

BRITISH HILLCLIMB'S CLOSED ROAD VENUES

Craigtlet, Northern Ireland

August 2, 2014
The hillclimb at Craigtlet is to the east of Belfast and was first run in 1913. It's the only venue in Northern Ireland to have hosted a round of the MSA British Hillclimb Championship. It's organised by the Ulster Automobile Club

Bouley Bay, Jersey

July 17, 2014
Accessible by catamaran from Poole or Weymouth, this is a popular round of the British

Hillclimb Championship. It has been on the calendar since 1947. The climb is located on the north side of the island near the Waters Edge Hotel. It is organised by the Jersey Motor Cycle and Light Car Club

Val des Terres, Guernsey

July 19, 2014
The Monaco Grand Prix of hillclimbing. The 0.48-mile route begins at St Peter Port and climbs to the cliff top. It's organised by the Guernsey Motor Cycle and Car Club

Elvington to host UK speed record event

A new speed record event will be held at Elvington Airfield, near York, on May 17/18.

The Yorkshire Mile Speed Event is organised by the UK Timing Association and will offer competitors a chance to set records on the one-mile runway.

"This is the first event of its type and it could be a first step for drivers aiming to break world records," said a spokesman. "Contenders will have to go in both directions within an hour to set a recorded time. That will be averaged out between the two runs to find the final time. We'll have static displays of current projects and past record setting vehicles too."

Entries are now open with details at facebook.com/uktimingassociation.

Weaver: champ's advice helped Hot Rod form

National Hot Rod star Kym Weaver says the help of a former champion meant he was able to dominate the opening round of the season in Birmingham recently.

The Vauxhall Tigra driver won both of his heats and the final in the first race at the venue since the winter break.

"It means we're back up to third in the points," said Weaver. "We worked on the car over the winter and the changes made a difference. We looked at the suspension and I had some help from [former world champion] Malcolm Blackman and others. They pointed me in the right direction and suggested some things to try. If we make a few more changes and keep consistent then we should qualify for the World Final."



Weaver: Birmingham win

Weaver stayed sharp over the winter by competing in South Africa: "I was one of seven drivers to go. The races are on dirt so it's quite an experience. I ended up third in the championship and won Driver of the Tour too."

The next National Hot Rod round takes place at Ipswich on March 29.

Junior rallycross champ reshells Swift

Former Junior Rallycross champion Aiden Hills is re-shelling his car ahead of the MSA British Rallycross season.

The 18-year-old's Suzuki Swift was hit in the rear after he'd retired from the Rallycross Grand Prix at Croft late last season.

"We started building the new car last weekend," said his dad Darren. "Aiden was never really happy with the previous car and it was written off in the shunt so we're preparing a new 'shell. It's hit the budget a bit and it means we won't be racing it for a while. The only problem is it can take a while to get back to being sharp."

Darren Hills added that the car could be used in circuit events too: "Aiden will sit his ARDS test soon. The focus is more on rallycross but when the car is ready we'll look at getting it onto a circuit too."

IN BRIEF

Lynne in a spin
Reigning MSA British Hot Hatch champion John Lynne is weighing up his options of where to race in 2014. The Citroën Saxo driver won the Production category at the first round of the BTRDA Clubmans championship at Blyton recently.

Rapid Cooper

Multiple Autograss champion Phil Cooper debuted his new Class Ten machine at Nottingham recently. "I had gearbox and brake trouble in the heats," he said. "But the car feels great. It's been years since a car-engined special won Class Ten, the bike engines have dominated. We're using a Duratec to change that."

RX to grow

FIA World Rallycross organiser Martin Anayi says there are more big announcements to come ahead of the 2014 season: "We still have some drivers to announce their campaigns and we're working towards some interesting wildcard entrants at selected rounds this year." He added rounds could take place in Spain and Russia in future years.

BriSCA F1 benefits

BriSCA F1 driver Lee Fairhurst says the opening rounds of this year's series will be tricky for drivers: "We'll need to get to grips with new tyres and shock absorbers. In the first month of the season we'll be testing them. It's a good move because it's more affordable and should help to get more drivers into stock cars."

F2 World Final

Plans for the BriSCA F2 World Final at Cowdenbeath Racewall are beginning to take shape. The event takes place on September 12-14, with the consolation semi-final planned for the Friday night. The final will take place on the Saturday while heritage cars will make their first appearance in Scotland on Friday and Saturday.

RX tyre deal

The RallycrossRX series will have a single tyre supplier this year. Cooper has signed a three-year deal with the championship organisers. The firm has supplied competitors in the European series, which becomes the World championship this year, for decades.

Festival of Power

The Santa Pod Festival of Power will run on Friday April 18 until Sunday April 20. The Easter event will include the first round of the MSA British Drag Racing Championship, which is contested by 200mph Pro Mod machines. Funny Cars and Top Fuel Dragsters will also compete on the Northamptonshire drag strip, and there will be air displays and static displays. Tickets are from £19 per day, with under-16s entering for free.



Dragsters will be in action

"There are more exciting announcements to come"
FIA World Rallycross, below



Photo: Matt Bull

MILDENHALL TO FIGHT NOISE COMPENSATION



Circuit bosses will battle a Supreme Court order

TIMELINE OF TURMOIL

- April 2006**
First noise complaints are made from the stadium can't go over a certain limit except for on 12 days per year when it can reach 55 decibels. The stadium can only operate between 1000hrs and 1800hrs
- April 4, 2008**
Dave and Ronald Coventry buy the stadium, but had been involved in its activities since 1993
- January 2009**
Noise abatement works are completed at the stadium
- February 11, 2011**
The High Court says the owners of Mildenhall must pay £20,000 damages to the claimants. The owners of Mildenhall Stadium must also pay costs.
- February 27, 2012**
Court of Appeal overturns the verdict
- February 26, 2014**
Supreme Court upholds the original verdict. Details of the injunction and costs are yet to be finalised but compensation has to be paid

The operator of the Mildenhall circuit in Suffolk says he'll take his case to Parliament after the stadium was ordered to pay compensation and costs to a local resident that complained about noise from the stadium.

Dave Coventry, owner and operator of the venue since 1993, said the Supreme Court verdict

meant the stadium faced bankruptcy. He's now raising a public petition, with details to be announced at a later date.

"This verdict means anything that's noisy is at risk," said Coventry. "We'd had zero complaints in 30 years, we have the best neighbours and motorsport is part of the

character of the area. The stadium is next to RAF Mildenhall. They operate Ospreys there, the propeller-jet craft that tilts its wings. They're extremely noisy and there are thousands of flights per year.

"We've had a tremendous amount of public support and the Facebook page 'Save

Mildenhall Stadium' has 12,000 likes. We need the support of as many factions of motor sport as we can get."

Mildenhall owners erected an acoustic barrier after they received the initial complaint in 2006. The barrier cost £40,000 and satisfied the local council.

The Supreme Court's decision

was unanimous among the five law lords involved in the case.

The ruling could mean business owners can't defend themselves by arguing a venue was operating before the complainants moved to an area. They also can't rely on existing planning permission that allows a stadium to operate.

Photos: Steve Wilkinson

A SPRINT TO THE FINISH

SPRINT PREVIEW

The SBD Motorsport British Sprint Championship gets underway at Castle Combe on Saturday.

The series will have a new look this year as many of the competitors will be using new cars.

Frontrunner Terry Graves will drive an ex-Rob Turnbull Gould GR55.

The Cosworth HB V8-powered car replaces Graves' previous GR37. John Graham, who finished in the top ten in last year's series, has also switched to a Gould GR55. His version has a 2.65-litre NME V8 engine.

Grahame Harden made great strides with his Jedi Mk6 last year, and will continue to progress now he's swapped to a Dallara-Vauxhall. His aim will be to top the two-litre class. Chris Bennett has also moved into the two-litre section after selling his Formula Ford machine and swapping it for a FF2000 Van Diemen.

Mike Manning will return with his four-wheel-drive Ford Puma, which was tested by BTCC champion Andrew Jordan for *MN* last year.

Steve Wilkinson

CALENDAR

RND	DATE	VENUE
1	Mar 22	Castle Combe
2	Apr 21	Croft
3	May 10	Lydden Hill
4/5	May 17/18	Snetterton
6/7	May 31/June 1	Pembrey
8/9	Jun 7/8	Anglesey
10/11	Jul 19/20	Knockhill
12/13	Aug 9/10	Kirkistown
14/15	Oct 4/5	Anglesey



Calder says he is aiming for better results in 2014

Calder aims even higher with his reworked Gould for fresh British Sprint campaign

SBD Motorsport MSA British Sprint champion Colin Calder says there's more speed to come from his Gould-NME.

Calder won the title last year after securing nine wins in his 3.5-litre machine. His daughter Heather won the second Knockhill round in the same car.

"We're going to run the car a lot richer this year," said Colin. "It has a lot of aero grip so we're going to do some experimenting with the set-up to get the most out of it."

Heather completed a part-season last year but will do more rounds this term. "She's nipping at my heels," said

Colin. "We'll have to wait and see if she starts to beat me regularly, certainly last season went very well."

Calder added that Terry Graves was a title threat: "He should go very well in his GR55, the Cosworth HB that he has is a fast engine so that's a competitive package. Mike

Musson is a dark horse, he's getting a lot of power out of his car. It's good to see a lot of people out this year."

●The British Motor Sprint Association, headed by Paul Parker, will continue to run the MSA British Sprint Championship for the next five seasons.

SPORTING TRIALS

Waterhouse enjoys a clean afternoon

Sporting Trial: Stuart Butterfield

By Duncan Stephens

Organisers: Yorkshire Sports Car Club When: March 16 Where: Keighley Championships: BTRDA and NPTCC Starters: 28

Richard Waterhouse sprung a surprise by winning the Stuart Butterfield Trial, which was organised by Martin Grimwood and Yorkshire Sports Car Club.

Butterfield was a manufacturer of seven cars and a three-time BTRDA Gold Star champion.

The first championship running of the trial had dry conditions that necessitated tyre pressures of ten pounds-per-square-inch to try and slow the crews.

BTRDA sporting trials chairman Julian Fack went clean on the first round and had dropped only one point by lunch on the blustery countryside. Andrew Woodhead and NPTCC champion Simon Kingsley were ready to pounce and were ahead of Waterhouse, Peter McKinney and Neil McHardy.

Consistent drizzle during the afternoon made the bumpy ground extremely unforgiving and quickly dropped Fack back with a six and an eight during this next round of six hills. McKinney had a good round to move up the leaderboard but rear suspension failure ended his day with four hills left.

Waterhouse had a clean afternoon to win by a point from Andrew Woodhead and Ian Bell, who tied. Kingsley slipped back to fourth ahead of Richard Sharp, who finished fifth and won the novice class to end his first year in the sport on a high.

The top five places were all filled by different makes of car, while Fack slipped back to sixth place ahead of George Watson, who had dropped a costly eight during the second round, finishing eight points off the winner.

Pat Henson won the intermediate class and was top live axle finisher in eighth position in a field of 28 crews. Neil McHardy finished ninth ahead of Brian Thornton. Overall it was a challenging day where all competitors made errors.

The next round of the BTRDA series is the President's Trophy, which runs on Sunday near Langrish, Hampshire.

●There will be a sporting trials training day at Shelsley Walsh on April 4. See btrda.com for details.

Results
1 Richard Waterhouse (Sherpa Indy) 12 points; 2 Andrew Woodhead (Jedi) 13; 3 Ian Bell (Hamilton) 13; 4 Simon Kingsley (Crossle) 15; 5 Richard Sharp (Cartwright) 17; 6 Julian Fack (Crossle) 18; 7 George Watson (Hamilton) 20; 8 Pat Henson (Facksmile) 22; 9 Neil McHardy (Struggler) 25; 10 Brian Thornton (Kincarr) 28.

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

STAR LETTER

Evans is a real star

I was super-impressed by Elfyn Evans' fourth place in Rally Mexico (MN, March 12). What a star of the future he is turning out to be, and really good to read that Malcolm Wilson agrees.

Mexico seemed to be a real event of attrition, with lots of drivers having problems and incidents, and Evans just sailed through to pick up an outstanding result. At this rate, it surely won't be long until he is on the podium, and at the rate he is learning more will be possible soon after that.

Wilson is doing a great, great job of keeping Evans at a sensible rate of development, encouraging him to drive for solid finishes than to try and go too fast and crash. I'm looking forward to Rally GB this year, when Evans will know the stages and have a year of experience. Perhaps Wilson will let him off the leash, and we can see what he can do on home ground.

Simon Jones
Cardiff

MN SAYS...

Youngsters star in Oz

Teams that gambled on talent already reaping rewards

When Ferrari re-signed Kimi Räikkönen alongside Fernando Alonso for this year, it was, in part, because the team thought that having drivers with experience was key to success with the new 2014 F1 regulations. Didn't look that way in Australia...

Red Bull new boy Daniel Ricciardo thrilled the crowd with his first podium finish (until the stewards intervened), while Kevin Magnussen's (inherited) second was the best result for an F1 debutant in 18 years. Then there was Valtteri Bottas starting his second F1 season with a fine charge up the order and Daniil Kvyat – whose worthiness for a Toro Rosso drive was questioned by many pundits – becoming F1's youngest-ever points scorer. Experience? Overrated, clearly.

One race is an incomplete study, of course. But Australia showed that having talent and a fast car are the keys to success in F1. Invest in talent, and you will be rewarded.

James Attwood, Editor (Twitter: @AttersMNNews)



LETTERS

Praise where due

Has someone given Sebastian Vettel the No 2 car at Red Bull? Well done Daniel Ricciardo!

Mighty impressed with Magnussen, Bottas and the Hulk showing his class!

Dan Kendall
Via email

Talking about Kevin

What a drive by Kevin Magnussen in the Australian Grand Prix! His podium finish has shown that he is a real talent. He looked so calm on the podium too, as if he expected to be there.

It was also good to see McLaren back on form after a tough year. It is one of the best teams in F1, and let's hope Magnussen (or Jenson Button) can take the fight to Mercedes this year.

Simon Anderson
Via email

Notes on noise

It was clear from watching the Australian Grand Prix coverage that Martin Brundle isn't a fan of the noise this year's F1 cars were making. But I think he's missing a big point.

Most F1 fans around the world watch the races on television, and so they don't really hear the true sound of an F1 engine. The noise an engine makes is less of an issue than a lot of people think.

I actually quite liked the new F1 engine noise on TV. It was a bit flat, but it meant you could hear the driver on the throttle a bit more, along with other noises like tyre squeal and the crowd better.

Steve Taylor
Via email



Reader Brian Broad was impressed by Bottas' Australian drive



MN, March 12: F1 preview issue

Williams joy

Can I express how delighted I was with Williams' performance in the Australian GP last weekend.

It has been painful to watch the once-great squad suffer over recent seasons, but the switch to Mercedes has really paid off. It is a British institution, and needs to be at the front of the grid because it is full of 'real' racers. In Valtteri Bottas, it has a driver who is right in the Williams mould of no-nonsense chargers. He reminds me a bit of Alan Jones, and that is the Holy Grail that the team has always been searching for.

'Welcome Back, Williams', and as soon as you start winning races regularly, it will be 'Welcome Home'.

Brian Broad
Via email

A fine reward

Interesting column by Jerry Williams on Hayden Paddon, and

how he has managed to find the funding to climb through the World Rally Championship ranks (MN, March 19).

It was a great lesson to drivers that hard work can be repaid. What an inspiring tale.

It's also good to see Hyundai snapping up a young driver. While Thierry Neuville is still early in his career, the other Hyundai drivers are all more experienced. The firm is being clever by signing Paddon now. It will be repaid down the road, I'm sure.

Alister Davies
Via email

A moment ruined

What a shame that a great moment for Australian motorsport has been ruined by the FIA stewards.

As an Englishman, I normally want Australia to get beaten in all sports, but I couldn't help but be happy for Daniel Ricciardo after his podium last weekend. The crowd reaction was brilliant.

What a shame that he got kicked out due to what seems quite a confusing issue with the new rules. If Red Bull's car was illegal then it deserves a punishment, but it's a shame that a wonderful moment has been spoiled.

Perhaps taking NASCAR's approach, where the result is fixed after the race and rule violations are met with other penalties, might be a better solution here?

Wayne Richardson
Via email

A blow for Lewis

Lewis Hamilton must be fuming after Australia. He has had the fastest car since the first test, and he finished the race with no points due to an engine failure.

I know it's a long season, but this was a real opportunity missed. Red Bull are recovering from their problems faster than many people suggested, and I wonder how long Mercedes will have such a big pace advantage.

Nico Rosberg must be thrilled. I think banking points early in the season will be key to winning this year's title.

Andrew Baker
Via email

YOUR PICS



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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images



Alan Morgan headed to the Tour of Epynt to snap Darren and Sun Underwood's Nova



Malcolm Wilson Rally by Dave Cardwell



An off in Brands testing. By Gary Hill



Kit and Tim Leigh on the Malcolm Wilson Rally in their Fiesta R200. By Phill Andrews

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WHAT'S ON

LISTINGS

SATURDAY

■ **Jedburgh, Scottish Borders**
Rally: Brick and Steel Border Counties Rally Starts: 0831hrs Admission: TBA
Web: bordercountiesrally.co.uk
■ **Castle Combe Circuit, Wiltshire**
Sprint: MSA British Sprint Championship Starts: 0900hrs Admission: TBA
Web: britishprint.org
■ **Birmingham Wheels Raceway, Landor Street, Birmingham**
Oval Racing: Stock Rods, BriSCAF2, bangers Starts: 1830hrs Admission: adult £14, child £6
Web: spedeworth.com/incarace Contact: 01252 322920

SATURDAY/SUNDAY

■ **Donington Park, Leics**
Live TV meeting: Caterham Graduates, Pre '66/Pre '83 Touring Cars, Kumho BMW, Pre '93/Blue Oval Saloons, Classic Thunder/Pre '05 Saloons, MaX5, MGO, Classic FF1600 Starts: Saturday, racing from 1210hrs (qualifying from 0915hrs) Sunday, racing from 0945hrs (qualifying from

0915hrs) Admission: adult £15 Web: donington-park.co.uk Contact: 01332 810048
■ **McDermott's GAA Centre, Threemilehouse, County Monaghan**
Navigation Trial: County Monaghan MC Starts: 2100hrs Admission: free
Web: motorsportireland.com Contact: 00353 8636 27000

SUNDAY

■ **Weston Park, Shropshire**
Rally: AGBO Stages Rally Starts: 0812hrs Admission: TBA
Web: owenmotoringclub.com
■ **Wimbledon Stadium, Plough Lane, London**
Oval Racing: stock cars, rookie rods, superstox, bangers Starts: 1730hrs Admission: adult £15, child £7
Web: spedeworth.co.uk Contact: 01252 322920
■ **Hednesford Hills, Cannock**
Oval Racing: bangers, hot rods Starts: 1330hrs Admission: adult £14, £6 child Web: spedeworth.co.uk/incarace Contact: 01252 322920
■ **Belle Vue, Manchester**
Oval Racing: BriSCAF1, bangers

Starts: 1600hrs Admission: adult £17, child £7
Web: startrax.info Contact: 01484 844 088
■ **Arena Essex, Purfleet**
Oval Racing: bangers Starts: 1030hrs Admission: adult £14, child £7, under 5 free
Web: arena-essex-raceway.co.uk Contact: 01708 867728
■ **Langrish, Hampshire**
Sporting Trials: President's Trophy Trial Starts: 1030hrs Admission: free Web: btrda.com Contact: 02392 253732
■ **Bearsted, Kent**
Car Trial: Basil Elkington Starts: TBA Admission: free
Web: btrda.com Contact: 01474 873628
■ **Scarriff Quarry, Ballinacurra, County Cork**
4x4 Trial: Munster CC Starts: 1100hrs Admission: free
Web: motorsportireland.com Contact: 00353 86887 3295
■ **Barna Transport, Barna, County Limerick**
Autotest: Limerick MC Starts: 1200hrs Admission: free
Web: motorsportireland.com Contact: 00353 87918 0827

Details correct at time of press but please check with event organisers before travelling

TV GUIDE



The NASCAR Sprint Cup is racing on the west coast of America this week

In recent years, the first two Formula One races of the season have run back-to-back. But with a two-week gap between Australia and Malaysia this year, there's a hole in the schedule. Thankfully, Sky Sports F1 HD has more **Classic Races** to fill the gap. It's a random but good assortment. Pick from Japan 1988 (Thursday, 2100hrs-2145hrs), Brazil 2003 (Friday, 2100-2330), Hungary 1998 (Saturday, 2100-2300), Italy 1989 (Sunday, 2100-2130), Belgium

2000 (Monday, 2100-2300) and Brazil 1984 (Tuesday, 2100-2145). There's also plenty of club rallying on, with **REIS BTRDA Rally Series** action from the Malcolm Wilson Rally (Friday, 2100-2205, MotorsTV). There's also a separate show for the **Morris 1400 Championship** (Friday, 2305-2340, MotorsTV). You can also watch **REIS Asphalt Rally Championship** action from the Tour of Epynt (Friday, 2205-2305, MotorsTV).

LIVE TV

NASCAR Sprint Cup: California

■ Race: Sunday, 1830-2300, Premier Sports

NASCAR Nationwide Series: California

■ Race: Saturday, 2030-2340, MotorsTV

MotorsTV Raceday: Donington Park

■ Live Racing: Sunday, 1230-1755, MotorsTV

NEXT WEEK

OUT WEDNESDAY MARCH 26

BTCC SEASON PREVIEW

FULL GUIDE TO THE TIN-TOP SEASON



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 4) Grp4 MkII Escort 2.0 Pinto. Very straight alloy arched 5 linked shell atlas axle, 4spd Quaife, Gartrac adj front legs. Needs to be seen at £8995 (Will break phone for details.)
 5) Brian James Tiltbed twin axle trailer. Taken as p/x, will require some T.L.C. £750

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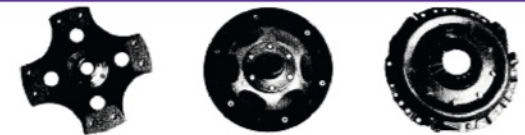
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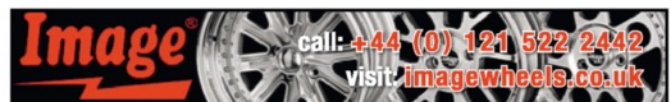
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