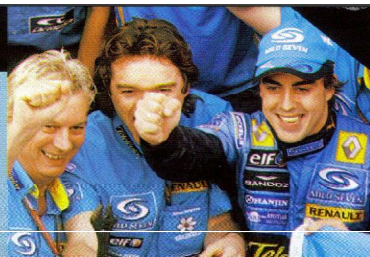


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Alonso crowned despite Schumi's last mega drive

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Fast? Yes. Furious? Sometimes.
One thing is certain: he won't
play it like Schumi did

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CAN FERRARI HANDLE RÄIKKÖNEN?

The Schumi/Ferrari axis has finally been broken, and in comes Kimi Räikkönen – hoping to fill the biggest boots of all



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Note to Ferrari: Kimi ain't Schumi

So, in the end, it was only seven – world drivers' championships, that is. Because, although he gave it his all, even Michael Schumacher, still at his breathtaking best in his very last grand prix, wasn't able to stop Fernando Alonso from taking his second straight title at bumpy Interlagos.

Both men drove magnificently all year. And if Alonso was never tempted to replicate the unsporting antics of Schumacher at Monaco, where his parking infringement caused the term 'Rascasse-gate' to pass into F1 folklore, then neither did he inspire the remarkable outpouring of emotion that the man they call Schumi stirred in his Ferrari crew.

Next year that same Ferrari crew will be asked to bend their devotion in the direction of a very different man: Kimi Räikkönen. No, they'll probably never love him as they've loved Schumi; Kimi is too inscrutable for that. But love him – or, at least, warm to him with ardour enough to give him the emotional space in which he can be his moodily brilliant self – is what they should even now be working out how to do.

If they solve that conundrum, Kimi will reward them with world championships – his other-worldly genius for conjuring astonishing speed at the conjunction of hot asphalt and tortured rubber will see to that. But it's vital that they appreciate, now, that they must adapt themselves to Kimi's ways, rather than vice versa. If they expect Kimi to hug and high-five them after every victory – or work until midnight at Fiorano during inter-race tests, or, other than drive *über-fast*, do any of the other things that Michael did so well for so long – he'll withdraw his soul to that secret place only he knows about, get stuck into the Finlandia,

and emerge every fortnight in order to out-perform Felipe Massa. But do no more.

Over to you, Messrs Montezemolo, Todt, Domenicali *et al...*

Treat Kimi with great care, says the Bish. Don't force him into a preordained template



Matt Bishop

MATT BISHOP
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Contributors

Alastair Caldwell

Back in the 1960s, Alastair – a good Kiwi bloke – became Bruce McLaren's mechanic, then team manager following Bruce's death. He was there for James Hunt in 1976, and helped us prepare our memoir of Fuji that year (see p80)

Maurice Hamilton

Over the season, Mo's Moments have been sharp and colourful complements to our race reports (see p112-126), and his scene-setting previews have made sure that readers' sense of anticipation has always been nicely tweaked

Tom Clarkson

One-time GP editor of this parish, Tom now tries to keep control of a frantic freelance life – and this month checks out the Fuji circuit, which will stage the Japanese GP in 2007 (p74), and meets the 1961 world champ, Phil Hill (p94)

Dom Taylor

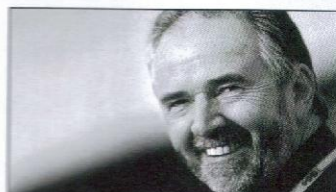
It was an experience like no other – Dom mixed with the masses at Suzuka 2006 and was blown away by the excess of it all (p70); he has also sampled a few YouTube web favourites (p56), and lists Schumi's greatest drives (p48)

Andy Earl

More of a chequered flag than a checkered career – photographer Andy was once James Hunt's mechanic, and is a mean (Jag E-type) racer himself. And that's his Kimi shot – with Photoshop'd face-paint effect – on our cover

Glenn Dunbar

The season is over, so snapper Glenn can relax and enjoy his current passion, a sports bike. But he also had a good time in the slow lane with Frank Williams in a Ye Olde English Shanghai suburb called Thames Town (p66)



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Championship parade

Chinese chequers, Chinese burns

Jubilant Schumi draws equal with a wretched Fernando in the points table at Shanghai, when Ferrari played a blinder and Renault/Alonso got their tyre choice wrong at their final pit stop

Circuit Shanghai, China

Time/date 3.41pm, Sunday October 1

Photographer Steven Tee/LAT

Kit Canon EOS 1Ds MkII,
300mm lens, 1/160 at F2.8



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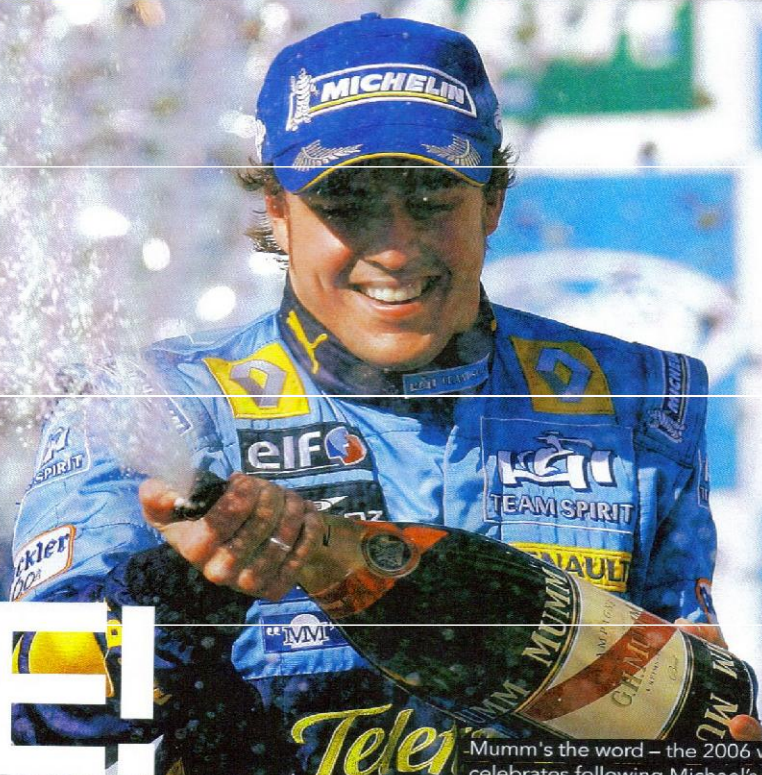
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Megastars swap-around delayed
Kimi Räikkönen and Fernando Alonso won't test for their new teams (Ferrari and McLaren) until New Year. Renault need to keep the champ on PR duty until then, so McLaren, in turn, retain Kimi

TOTAL ANALYSIS WORLD TITLE BATTLE

IT'S MINE!



Mumm's the word – the 2006 world champion celebrates following Michael's failed challenge

As the twists and turns of fortune favoured first Alonso, then Schumacher, then Alonso, the 2006 season became the cliffhanger that F1 deserved

So, in the end, the 2006 world drivers' championship, which had swung first this way, then that since battle was first joined on Friday March 10 in Bahrain, was finally decided on Saturday October 21 in Brazil. For, when Michael Schumacher's Ferrari 248 dramatically slowed only

seconds into the final top-10 qualifying shoot-out – and Fernando Alonso qualified fourth – the mission facing Schumacher became, for all practical purposes, impossible. He had been the victim of a fuel pressure problem that could not be rectified in time for him to set a time (so forcing him to accept a default-option P10 on the next day's grid).

Nonetheless, he approached the next day's assignment with phenomenal verve, driving at dazzling speed after his lap-eight puncture, and demonstrating to anyone who might be doubting it that, indisputably, he was retiring at the very top of his game. His lap-68 pass on Kimi Räikkönen, who fought tooth-and-nail to keep him back, will warm

2006 SEASON REVIEW

It was the walkover that became a Ferrari bounce back, that became a cliffhanger, that became victory for Renault. What a treat

BAHRAIN Round 1
Alonso 1st 10pts
Schumacher 2nd 8pts



Ferrari boldly return from 2005 doldrums with pole, but Alonso judges strategy to perfection, tussling with Schumi all afternoon before nipping ahead with inches to spare after the final stop

Alonso Champ pts 10
Schumacher Champ pts 8



MALAYSIA Round 2
Alonso 2nd 8pts
Schumacher 6th 3pts



Engine problems and flexi-wing furore swamp Ferrari's weekend. Alonso suffers from heavy fuel load in quali to start seventh, but rallies to second in race. Michael charges from 14th to sixth

Alonso Champ pts 18
Schumacher Champ pts 11



AUSTRALIA Round 3
Alonso 1st 10pts
Schumacher DNF 0pts



Cool and overcast conditions cause tyre chaos, allowing Alonso to cruise to a win. Schumi slithers around in a gripless Ferrari before pushing too hard and smashing into pit wall

Alonso Champ pts 28
Schumacher Champ pts 11

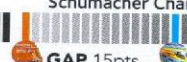


SAN MARINO Round 4
Alonso 2nd 8pts
Schumacher 1st 10pts



Ferrari strike back. Michael grabs pole and fends off Alonso in the race. Desperate, Renault try to outwit Ross Brawn and pit before Michael – they fail and finish second

Alonso Champ pts 36
Schumacher Champ pts 21



BETTER F1 TV FOR YOU

Ron: "Pay-per-view could kill F1 telly"
McLaren boss Ron Dennis has warned against F1 adopting pay-per-view TV. A Finnish channel will run the service in 2007, but Dennis says: "It could see our audience severely drop off"



Häkkinen was in at the Finnish
Mika Häkkinen was at Interlagos to watch his mate Kimi and bid Michael adieu. "I don't think another driver will be able to beat his achievements for a long time, maybe ever," he said

the memories of those who saw it for the rest of their lives.

Even prior to Interlagos qualifying, Schumacher's task had been daunting enough: he had *had* to win, and Alonso had *had* to fail to score. Such an outcome would have increased Michael's points total to 126, the same as Alonso's, but he (Schumacher) would have been champion by virtue of his eight wins to Alonso's seven. In the end, their final points totals were 134 (Alonso) and 121 (Schumacher).

AND THE CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP?

That went to Renault, too, by 206 points to Ferrari's 201. Prior to the Brazilian race, Ferrari trailed the Anglo-French outfit by nine points (186 against 195), which meant that only a strong performance by Schumacher and team-mate Felipe Massa, combined with a weak one by Alonso and team-mate Giancarlo Fisichella, would do the trick. In the end, Renault's 11 points put them home safe.

WHAT ABOUT THE SUPPORTING CAST?

Undoubtedly, Alonso and Schumacher were the stars of the season. In truth, no one else came close. Yes, Felipe Massa sometimes outpaced his august stablemate, and won impressively in Turkey and Brazil, but in the end the points differential between him and Schumacher, a substantial 41, told the story pretty eloquently. It bespoke the

difference between talent and genius.

But if Schumacher beat Massa fair and square, then Alonso ran rings round Fisichella – for the second year running. Yes, Giancarlo won well in Malaysia (just as he won well in Australia last year), but then, as he did in 2005, he faded. The thirds and fourths kept coming, but the wins did not. He ended up 62 points adrift of Alonso in the drivers' championship – a chasm.

Alonso had only one bad weekend, and that was in the US. There he qualified a lacklustre fifth, unable to get on terms with the pace of Fisichella (P3), and both drivers finished in the positions they started from.

But, other than at Indy, Alonso made Fisichella's trademark neatness, fluency and class seem panicky and even, sometimes, downright slow.

Kimi Räikkönen appeared to give up mid-season, his self-imposed target being merely to beat his team-mate(s). That he did easily, ending the F1 career of Juan Pablo Montoya in July, and serially trouncing Pedro de la Rosa thereafter. But McLaren failed to win a grand prix all year – their first barren season since 1996.

Jenson Button had a mediocre first half of the year... but an excellent last half-dozen races. His win in Hungary was, of course, the highlight of his season; but his tremendous points-scoring form from then on in (35 points in the season's last six grands prix, compared with 34 scored by Alonso, 32 by Schumacher, 30 by Massa and 23 by Fisichella) augurs well for Honda's world championship aspirations next year.

DID SCHUMI DESERVE TO BE CHAMPION?

If Indy was Alonso's one black mark – because no one other than the employees of the FIA and Ferrari felt his various penalties were anything other than daft, whatever Max Mosley says about them – then undoubtedly Schumacher's was Monaco. Or, to be precise, Rascasse-gate.

That was a professional foul of extraordinary audacity, and ultimately it was foolish, too. Why? Because it – 'it' being his parking on the racing line in order to block the track and prevent faster drivers (including Alonso) behind from beating his qualifying time – didn't work; it caused him to be penalised into starting the race from P22. Even so, his storming run to fifth place, during which he clocked fastest lap by a mile, was mesmerisingly committed.

But in Hungary, where he ended up eighth when third had been his on a plate, Schumacher was at it again – 'it' being failing to allow points-at-all-costs discretion to be the better part of win-at-any-cost valour. Why did he not resist the impulse to shove his way into a tight chicane, wheel to wheel, with a man as desperate to impress as



We had a superb car and I could have lapped everybody if I hadn't had the problem. But for me it didn't work out. I'd have loved to finish on the podium in my last race. To sum up my F1 career: it was intense, but I loved it
Michael Schumacher



I need some time to let this second championship sink in. I'm 25 years old and have won two championships, which is fantastic. After five years with Renault, this is the best way for the relationship to finish
Fernando Alonso

EUROPE Round 5
Alonso 2nd 8pts
Schumacher 1st 10pts



As tyre superiority switches from track to track, Fernando grabs pole and leads early on, but Michael's pace is relentless. He overpowers Alonso at the final stops to win

Alonso Champ pts 44
Schumacher Champ pts 31

SPAIN Round 6
Alonso 1st 10pts
Schumacher 2nd 8pts



Buoyed by his home crowd, Alonso thumps the opposition. Michael loses ground behind Fisichella in the opening stint and is unable to get back on terms with Fernando

Alonso Champ pts 54
Schumacher Champ pts 39

MONACO Round 7
Alonso 1st 10pts
Schumacher 5th 4pts



Michael's infamous quali gaffe relegates him to a pit-lane start. But he scythes through the field for fifth. Alonso is harried by Räikkönen before he blows up. A lucky win for the champ

Alonso Champ pts 64
Schumacher Champ pts 43

GREAT BRITAIN Round 8
Alonso 1st 10pts
Schumacher 2nd 8pts



Renault flex their muscles around the unseasonably balmy Silverstone. Michael spends too long chasing Kimi to reel in Alonso, but grabs another runner-up spot

Alonso Champ pts 74
Schumacher Champ pts 51

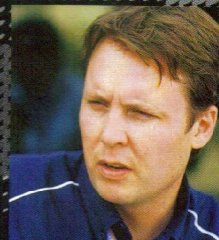
CANADA Round 9
Alonso 1st 10pts
Schumacher 2nd 8pts



Another easy afternoon for Alonso as the entire grid struggles with tyres. The rubber littering the track makes running treacherous – and allows Michael to vault Kimi to grab second

Alonso Champ pts 84
Schumacher Champ pts 59





Sam Michael cut out of his race role
Williams's tech boss Sam Michael will become less hands-on at races as the team restructure following an abysmal 2006. The aero dept has been boosted and Michael now has a factory focus



Final race, final grid – Michael prepares for his final start, this time from 10th following a fuel glitch

de la Rosa? Why did he not see the bigger picture and settle for six points?

DID THE FIA TRY TO GIVE SCHUMI A GOODBYE PREZZY?

Paddock gossips, many in senior positions in teams other than Ferrari, insist that Ferrari, and Schumacher in particular, were unfairly advantaged by the FIA all year. Indeed, some took to referring to the governing body always as "Ferrari International Assistance".

In the FIA's defence, the Monaco stewards punished Schumacher severely (but fittingly) for Rascasse-gate – but the Monza stewards' assiduousness in penalising Alonso for allegedly impeding Massa in qualifying, even though Fernando's Renault and Felipe's Ferrari had never been closer than 93m apart on the 'offending' lap, was surprising. Equally, the FIA's determination to reverse their own stewards' decision to allow Renault to continue to use their mass dampers (after McLaren had questioned their legality at

Magny-Cours), in their own Court of Appeal, left F1 insiders and fans dumbfounded.

HOW MUCH DID THE ENSUING BAN HURT RENAULT?

The team's race engineers reckoned the mass damper was worth a couple of tenths per lap – on a Renault, at least, because six other teams had tried and failed to make them work. But, more than that, the ban distracted everyone at Enstone. And, as ever when people are distracted, things began to go wrong. It cannot be a coincidence that, having won six grands prix in March, April, May and June, Alonso failed to win a single one in July, August or September. And it was during those months that Schumacher was consequently able to claw back what had once been a yawning 25-point gap to Alonso.

WHAT ABOUT THE TYRE WAR?

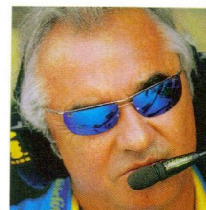
In no season previous to this one has ambient temperature been so critical to tyre

performance, in the dry at least, and the reason for that was that both Bridgestone and Michelin were pushing tyre development harder than ever. In other words, the operational margins were tiny.

As a result, never before has the performance of one company's tyre, relative to its rival, fluctuated so wildly race to race. At Barcelona, for example, the Michelin was the only tyre to be on, the Bridgestone nowhere. At Indianapolis, it was precisely the other way round. And in the wet, where Bridgestone once reigned supreme, Michelin were significantly ahead. Yet on a drying track, the Bridgestone was quicker.

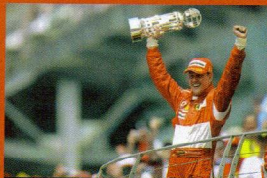
AND WHAT OF ALONSO?

Alonso's championship, his second in a row, despite being widely and rightly hailed as a stupendous feat, was somehow lost in the ballyhoo that surrounded Michael's last race. "I thought this might happen," said Pat Symonds, Renault's executive director of engineering, sipping champagne in the Renault hospitality area after the race. "I've been more nervous this weekend than I've been on any



It was an incredible fight with Ferrari, but we did the job and deserved these titles. There were many ups and downs, but we never backed down. We made fewer mistakes and Fernando made fewer mistakes than Michael
Flavio Briatore

USA Round 10
Alonso 5th 4pts
Schumacher 1st 10pts



Ferrari finally turn the tables – Michael is in control all day and leads home a dominant red one-two. By contrast, Alonso never looks on the pace, wallowing to a gripless fifth position

Alonso Champ pts 88
Schumacher Champ pts 69

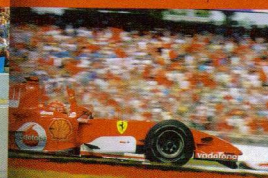
FRANCE Round 11
Alonso 2nd 8pts
Schumacher 1st 10pts



With Ferrari on a roll and locking out the front row, Schumacher cruises to his second victory in a row. Alonso, meanwhile, drives an inspired two-stopper to move ahead of Massa in the final laps

Alonso Champ pts 96
Schumacher Champ pts 79

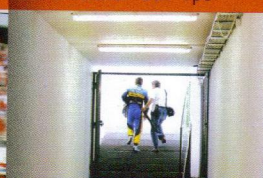
GERMANY Round 12
Alonso 5th 4pts
Schumacher 1st 10pts



As a precaution, Renault remove their contested mass damper – which prompts a devastating drop in performance. Alonso limps in fifth while Michael wins in front of his home crowd

Alonso Champ pts 100
Schumacher Champ pts 89

HUNGARY Round 13
Alonso DNF 0pts
Schumacher 8th 1pt



Budapest's first-ever wet race is chaotic. Grid penalties for both title rivals are soon shaken off – but a loose wheel-nut robs Alonso of the win. Michael lucks a point after a messy race

Alonso Champ pts 100
Schumacher Champ pts 90

TURKEY Round 14
Alonso 2nd 8pts
Schumacher 3rd 6pts



Quali error and early Safety Car nobble Michael's race after he is forced to queue behind team-mate Massa in the pits. Alonso resists pressure to finish second

Alonso Champ pts 108
Schumacher Champ pts 96

GAP 19pts

GAP 17pts

GAP 11pts

GAP 10pts

GAP 12pts



São Paulo heavies target F1 staffers

Security at Interlagos was hot after four hooded Paulistas fired on a car full of Toyota PR personnel. No one was hurt. Jenson used a bullet-proof car while Schumi and Flavio hired bodyguards



Now there will be no excuse

Next season, a new GPS marshalling system will enable Race Control to issue flag signals via cockpit lights. F1 Racing hopes GPS could also be used to run a live track graphic on TV

THE HIGHEST HIGHS AND THE LOWEST LOWS OF 2006

Formula 1 can be the cruelest of sports. It's been a see-sawing season for Fernando Alonso and Michael Schumacher. And while both title protagonists generally drove impeccably, this world championship was won – and lost – by the fluctuations in form that robbed one driver of a haul of points while rewarding the other. The following are their highs and lows...

FERNANDO ALONSO



MICHAEL SCHUMACHER



THE BEST RACE

TURKEY On fading tyres, Fernando drove the last stint with Schumi's faster car breathing down his neck to finish second. The drive showcased Alonso's ability to stay calm when the stakes were immeasurably high

BRAZIL Indefatigable until the very end, neither a loss of fuel pressure in Q3 nor an early puncture – possibly caused by Fisi – could deter Michael in his final race. The pace he showed once back on track was immense

THE LAP OF THE GODS

MONZA Following repairs caused by an earlier puncture, Fernando's ballsy out-lap was fully committed, nailing the start line seconds before the chequer fell. His hot lap was even better, until the officials intervened

SHANGHAI In the wet of Q2, every car on Bridgestones was off the pace. Michael failed to crack the top 10 until his final, determined flier nailed ninth. In Q3, he went fast enough for sixth – Massa finished a lowly 13th

BRAIN FADE

HOCKENHEIM With the mass damper removed pending appeal, Alonso seemed all at sea, never able to adjust to his car's altered and nervy handling. Renault's pace was hurt and Fernando seemed psyched out

MONACO Messily parking his Ferrari on the exit of Rascasse was a trick that fooled no one – it cost him the respect of his fellow drivers and the disgust of many onlookers. Then the stewards sent him to the back

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY...

SHANGHAI A masterly pole position in drizzly conditions and a crushing early lead seemed to usher in Renault's return to form. But a change of tyres wrecked the handling and he finished second when he should have won

SUZUKA With a huge Bridgestone advantage, Schumi waltzed into the distance once Massa moved over. Perhaps the team gambled by squeezing too much from his V8, but win No8 was lost to an engine failure



In the heat of the moment, I feel disappointed. We would have liked Michael's career to end differently, but destiny had other plans. But our team has taken the most race wins and we were in the hunt for both titles to the end Jean Todt

race weekend since Adelaide 1994, and yet, nervous as I was, I always fancied that the world had eyes only for Michael. It's strange, but true: his last race was somehow bigger even than the world championship."

As for Alonso, he was his usual low-key self in victory – although he was unusually eloquent when describing in the post-race press conference the debt he owed his mates at Renault, with whom he achieved so much and for whom he had driven his last race.

But, even though he didn't make the

podium or, therefore, the post-race press conference, the day belonged to Michael. Yes, Fernando has now won two championships in a row, and yet the 2006 Brazilian GP was, and always will be, remembered for one thing only: it was the last time the man they called Schumi, love him or loathe him, strutted his stuff in a grand prix. Rarely has he strutted it more impressively. As such, it was a momentous, and stupendous, occasion.

Alan Henry column, p32 →
Max Mosley column, p34 →
Brazil GP report, p124 →

ITALY Round 15
Alonso DNF Opts
Schumacher 1st 10pts



Furious Alonso is relegated to 10th on the grid for 'impeding' Massa's quick lap. He is third when his Renault explodes. Michael cruises home to announce his retirement

Alonso Champ pts 108
Schumacher Champ pts 106



CHINA Round 16
Alonso 2nd 8pts
Schumacher 1st 10pts



Grey, greasy conditions look set to favour Renault, who had dominated quali. But a bad call on new tyres kills Alonso's hopes. Michael shows pure class to romp home first

Alonso Champ pts 116
Schumacher Champ pts 116



JAPAN Round 17
Alonso 1st 10pts
Schumacher DNF Opts



Ferrari look utterly dominant in qualifying but their advantage is reduced by Sunday. Alonso tigers past Massa but can't crack Michael – but then the Ferrari's engine pops

Alonso Champ pts 126
Schumacher Champ pts 116



BRAZIL Round 18
Alonso 2nd 8pts
Schumacher 4th 5pts



Despite a final bout of Renault nerves, Alonso's second place comes easily as Michael suffers a technical failure in quali and is hobbled in the race by a puncture

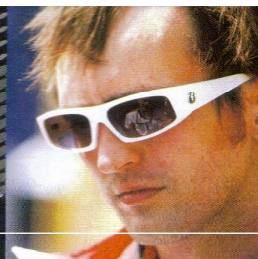
Alonso Champ pts 134
Schumacher Champ pts 121



ALONSO'S SECOND TITLE STATISTICS



Race wins 7
Podiums 14 (incl 7 wins)
Pole positions 6
Fastest laps 5
Laps led 463
Retirements 2



Montagny claims third seat at Toyota
Toyota have confirmed Frenchman Franck Montagny as their new test- and third-driver. Meanwhile, Williams have renewed their testing deal with Indian driver Narain Karthikeyan

WINNERS & SPINNERS

GOOD MONTH...



...for anyone with a passion for good old Italian politics, following news that Flavio Briatore is thinking of giving it a whirl. "Why not?" he asked.



...for Brazilian footy legend Pele, who finally got to lay his Brazil 2002 chequered-flag gaffe to rest, presenting Schumi with a special trophy for his final race



...for chirpy GP2 chappy Ernesto Viso, who made his F1 debut with Spyker in a wet test at Silverstone

BAD MONTH...

...for fans of classic circuits – Imola and Suzuka (right) won't feature on the 2007 F1 calendar, despite all those crossed fingers. But both could be back for 2008



...for F1 TV commentators: the new commentary boxes at an upgraded Spa have no windows. How much difference will that make, we wonder



...for Sakon Yamamoto, after notorious hard man Nick Heidfeld (right), enraged at being blocked in China, reduced him to tears. Shame you ranted at the wrong Super Aguri driver, Nick, cos it was Taku who ruined your race



PEACE IN OUR TIME

TESTING DEAL IS DONE

With the end of the tyre war, the need to spend endless and expensive time tyre-testing is over – so everyone's happy



The testing ceiling is now 18,640 miles and 300 sets of tyres; even Ferrari seem satisfied

FORMULA 1 HAS finally settled on a unanimous testing agreement – just as it has ceased to need one. The end of the Bridgestone/Michelin tyre war will naturally slash tyre testing as intense development becomes a thing of the past.

The new 'gentlemen's agreement' was signed by all 11 teams in Japan, and limits testing during the season to 30,000km (18,640 miles) and 300 sets of tyres. Pre-season, the limit is six three-day tests and eight three-day single-car tests; and there are two three-day tests post-season. Teams are also limited to 12 shake-downs and 12 aero runs.

Such unanimity is a positive step. Ferrari have refused to sign similar deals in the past when limits were based on numbers of days – unsurprising, given that they

own two private test tracks, Fiorano and Mugello, that they can use for reactive tests at short notice and low cost.

The new deal's mileage limit protects Ferrari's ability to use both tracks whenever they like during the season. They're almost certain not to need to exceed the testing limits given

that they were happy to agree similar limits even while the tyre war was ongoing. Furthermore, the new deal even allows each team to nominate two circuits as 'home' circuits, where a full day's out-of-season testing counts as only a half-day.

Science – the tyre war, p30

2007 CUSTOMER CARS

A row is brewing over customer chassis – particularly claims that both Red Bull-owned teams (Red Bull Racing and Scuderia Toro Rosso) will run near-identical Newey-designed cars in 2007.

If so, Toro Rosso may be breaking the rules, but there could be nothing to worry about. This year's Toro Rosso STR01 – a modified 2005 Red Bull RB1 – has gone uncontested and, under the current (albeit unofficial) judgement of the FIA, a chassis design is unique even if it differs in only a single inconsequential way from an otherwise identical design. Therefore, since one Red Bull team (probably RBR) will be running Renault engines in 2007, and the other (probably STR) Ferraris, the differing engine fittings may well, in the FIA's eyes, qualify each as a unique design.

However, if one or more rival team officially protests either car's legality – a strong possibility if the cars prove competitive – the FIA may have to clarify their stance.

There's a chance that 2007's STR and Red Bull could be identical



FRIDAY
EVENT TICKET
WWW.SILVERSTONE.CO.UK



Paddock Suite
Grandstand: Roving
Seat: Roving

Testing takes over GP Fridays

Friday practice at '07 GPs will double as test days of two 90min sessions. Teams will be limited to two cars but may run third drivers. Engine failures on Fridays won't be subject to penalties



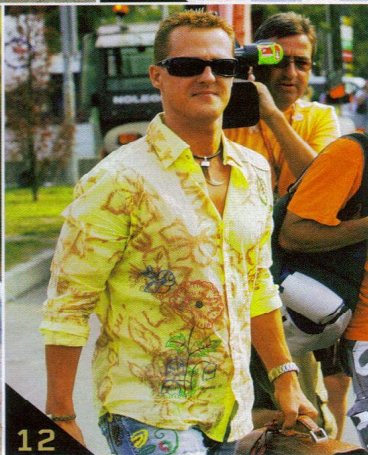
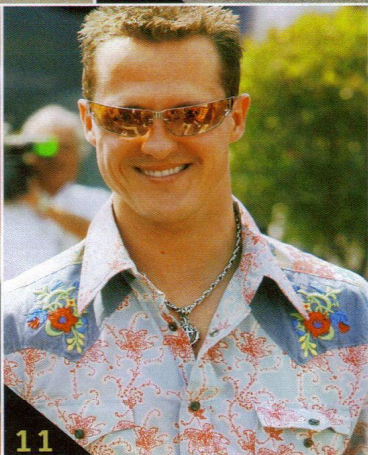
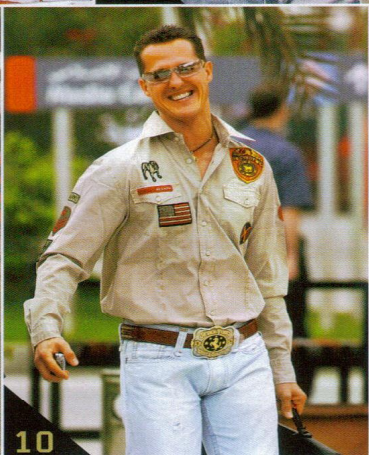
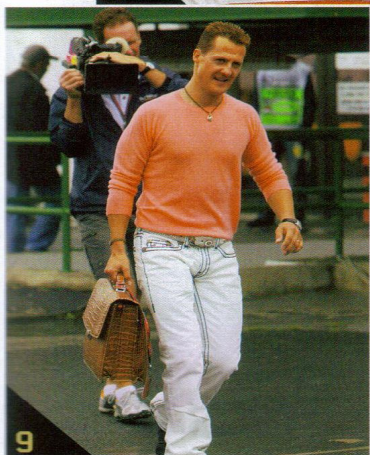
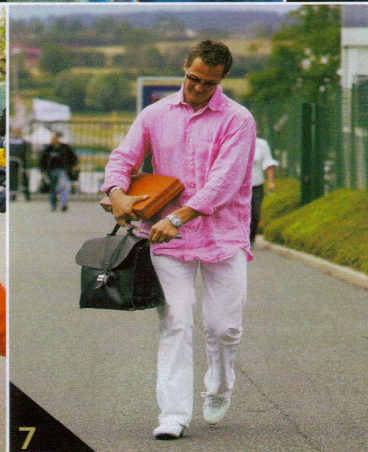
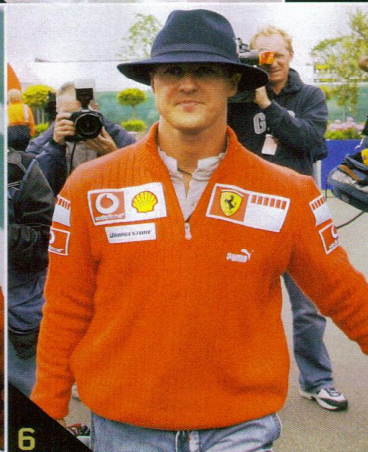
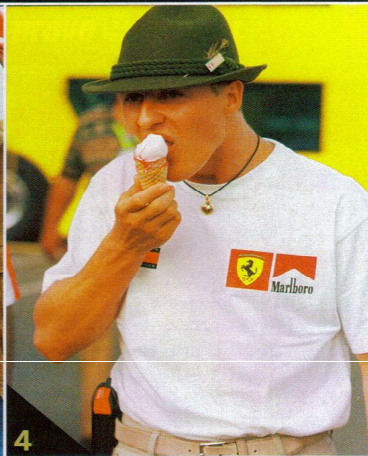
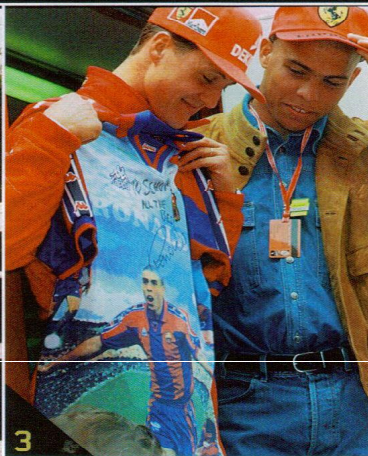
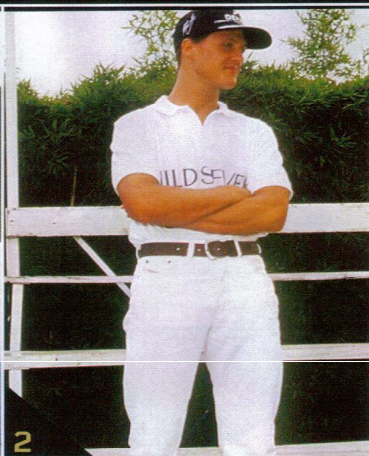
Winter test dates now pencilled in

Despite a disagreement between the teams and Bridgestone over F1's winter testing dates, the schedule is likely to be: Barcelona Nov 22-25, followed by Valencia and Jerez



PADDOCK SPY

A CASE FOR F1'S FASHION POLICE? MORE LIKE MISSION IMPOSSIBLE, EH, MICHAEL?



1 Adelaide 1994 Back in the Paleozoic era, when Michael had just nerfed Damon to win his first championship, it wasn't even compulsory to wear a school uniform at press conferences **2 Buenos Aires 1995** No, Michael, this may be Argentina, but the sport isn't polo **3 Barcelona 1997** Ronaldo fashion-tackles Schumi **4 A1-Ring 1998** Okay, it is Austria, but the hat's a fashion crime too far **5 Sepang 2000** Good hair day and win, win, win: race, drivers', constructors' **6 Silverstone 2005** Taking the Michael, are we, Michael? It's A1-Ring '98, only worse **7 Magny-Cours 2005** Pretty in pink... is so not you, dear boy **8 Indy 2005** Black would have been more suitable, surely? **9 Hungaroring 2006** They're not so pinko out east any more, but no one's told Michael **10 Bahrain 2006** Top Gun **11 Silverstone 2006** Roy Rogers meets Dolly Parton **12 Monza 2006** Green belter



READER PANEL

LET'S HEAR FROM YOU

F1 RACING HAS just set up the F1 Racing Reader Panel. Anyone can join, and it's free.

Sign up and F1 Racing will email you from time to time to ask what you think about a topical issue, or to poll your opinion. First, visit our website www.f1racing.co.uk and click on the 'Join the F1 Racing Reader Panel' link. Five people who join before the end of November will be selected at random to win a copy each of the official Formula 1 2006 Season Review.



Stand out from the F1 crowd by joining the F1 Racing reader panel

McLAREN REVIVAL

MIKA MACCA RESURRECTED

A RARE EX-MIKA Häkkinen McLaren-Peugeot MP4/9 is the latest historic F1 car to be acquired by Cars International, who will be running it in 2007. It's the car in which Mika scored his second F1 podium (the day Ayrton Senna died, at Imola '94).

Go to www.carsinternational.com to find out more. And if you fancy something (fractionally) less racy you could perhaps try a Pagani Zonda. They sorted out one for our mega WurZ-Zonda-Monza feature this month.

WurZ drives Pagani, p100 →

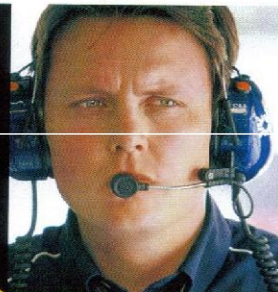


This MP4/9 had been in Peugeot's collection before being auctioned

WHEEL TO WHEEL

TECHIES
NOT TREKKIES

SAM v JAMES
MICHAEL KEY
WILLY WONKER SPYKER STRIKER



Q1 Who has won the most Monaco GPs?

A: Ayrton Senna – six

Senna – six?

I would guess either Schumacher or Senna. Umm... I'll say Senna. Six?

Q2 Who won the first British GP?

A: Giuseppe Farina, Silverstone 1950

Correct

Don't know. I was going to say... actually, I don't know who I was going to say

I don't know – Fangio?

Q3 Which five tracks have hosted the official US GP?

A: Watkins Glen, Indianapolis, Phoenix, Riverside, Sebring

Wrong

Watkins Glen, Detroit, Indianapolis, Phoenix and Long Beach?

Indy, Detroit, Phoenix, Vegas, Dallas? [On told answers] I should have got the Glen

Q4 Which world champs have won the fewest number of GPs?

A: Phil Hill and Mike Hawthorn with three each

More than half

Must be Rosberg. No? Hunt?

Damon Hill and Keke Rosberg?

Q5 How many races has Kimi Räikkönen won?

A: Nine (up to Japan 2006)

Wrong

Five? That's a guess

Er... dear oh dear... six?

Q6 Who was the oldest driver to win a grand prix?

A: Luigi Fagioli: 53 years and 22 days when he won the 1951 French GP

Wrong

Fangio? Not Farina again?

The oldest I can remember is Lauda, but you probably need to go back to the '50s

Q7 Michael Schumacher is a seven-time winner at which two tracks?

A: Montreal, Imola

Wrong

I can probably work it out. Not Melbourne. Imola must be one. Is the other Canada?

Montreal and Imola. [On being told he's right] Hooray, at last!

Q8 Which track has been on the calendar for all but one season?

A: Monza – it was dropped in 1980

Correct

Between Monza and Monaco. It's Monza. Yes!

I'm tempted to say Monaco, but I don't know when that started... I'll say Monza

Q9 How long was the original Nürburgring Nordschleife?

A: 14.167 miles in its original configuration

Correct

14 miles. You want decimal places? 14.6...?

I've got in my mind something like 12 miles – close?

Q10 How old is Bernie Ecclestone?

A: 76 (born October 28 1930)

We're feeling generous

72?

He's 70-something. Is he 72?

This month's result

Tidy but tame

Not exactly a high-tech performance from the lads – more V7 than V8

Wrong

Technophile
Winner 4.5/10



Technophobe
Loser 3/10



F1 Pass

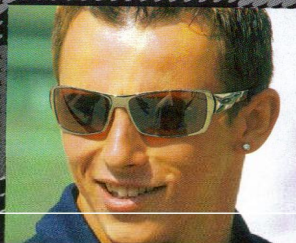
PARADE

NEWS

EXPOSÉ

BUSINESS

SCIENCE



Testing times for Klien and Glock

Life beyond Red Bull Racing has been tough for Christian Klien (left), but he now looks like closing in on Anthony Davidson's test seat at Honda. But, we hear, Timo Glock is also in the frame



Kimi jumps quickly from car to boat at Monaco 2006 when a likely win goes south

FERRARI FODDER

LOOKING BACK IN ANGER

In five seasons at McLaren, Kimi's talent has been squandered

KIMI GAVE McLaren five years, only to be dogged by poor reliability and disillusionment with car and team. Yes, there were highs – nine wins and 27 podiums – but also 26 serious technical failures in 103 starts (up to Brazil 2006). That's one in every four outings. It was one of the most painful driver/team relationships in F1 history. And how many race-destroying Ferrari failures did Schumi suffer in that same 2002-2006 period? Three – Bahrain '05, Malaysia '06 and Japan '06. No wonder those red overalls can't come soon enough for Kimi. So, here are the 22 failures that actually cost him world title points.

2002 – A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME

Malaysia: Third in early laps, but engine fails. (DNF, 4pts lost)
Brazil: Wheel rim cracks with four laps to go. (DNF, 3pts lost)
San Marino: Broken exhaust. (DNF, 2pts lost)
Spain: Rear-wing failure costs fourth place. (DNF, 3pts lost)
Austria: Merc engine lasts just five laps (DNF, 2pts lost)
Belgium: Qualifies on front row, but more engine woes kill chances. (DNF, 3pts lost)
Italy: P3 lost on lap 30 with a blown engine. (DNF, 4pts lost)
USA: V10 lets go on lap 50, P5 sacrificed. (DNF, 2pts lost)
TOTAL POINTS LOST: 23

Sixth in champ, would have been fourth if car reliable

2003 – TITLE GOES UP IN SMOKE

Europe: Kimi's only mechanical failure of the year, but it's costly. Certain win goes with expired V10. (DNF, 10pts lost)
TOTAL POINTS LOST: 10
Second in champ, 2pts adrift of Michael, but should have been champ with the MP4-17D

2004 – CHARACTER-BUILDING STUFF

Malaysia: Transmission failure running P3. (DNF, 6pts lost)
Europe: Running P2 until Merc lunches itself. (DNF, 8pts lost)

Monaco: Pneumatics failure costs podium. (DNF, 6pts lost)
Germany: Rear-wing failure on lap 9, safe P2. (DNF, 8pts lost)
Italy: Engine gremlins – net P6 lost. (DNF, 3pts lost)
TOTAL POINTS LOST: 31
Seventh in champ, should have been at least fourth

2005 – ANOTHER CHAMPIONSHIP LOST

San Marino: Pole, easy lead, driveshaft fails (DNF, 10pts lost)
France: Grid penalty for engine failure. Win would have been a formality. (P2, 2pts lost)
Britain: Another grid penalty, so win lost. (P3, 4pts lost)
Germany: Easy lead lost when hydraulics fail. (DNF, 10pts lost)
Italy: Another engine penalty clips his wings. (P4, 5pts lost)
TOTAL POINTS LOST: 31



Europe 2003 – the very moment that Räikkönen's title hopes expire

Alonso wins title by 21pts. Kimi had the pace to beat him, but not reliability

2006 – SAME OLD, SAME OLD

Bahrain: Rear-end failure spoils quali. Starts last, but McLaren had pace to win. (P3, 4pts lost)
Monaco: Engine failure costs likely win. (DNF, 10pts lost)
China: Throttle trouble costs probable win. (DNF, 10pts lost)
TOTAL POINTS LOST: 24
Would have put him third in the championship, instead of fifth

GRAND TOTAL POINTS LOST: 119
TOTAL WINS LOST: 9
TOTAL CHAMPIONSHIPS LOST: 2

Kimi could have emulated the Häkkinen glory days with two McLaren-Mercedes world titles. Instead he is left with only a sparse helping of race wins.



CAUGHT ON YOUR CAMERA

Spotted an F1 celebrity? We want your pics!

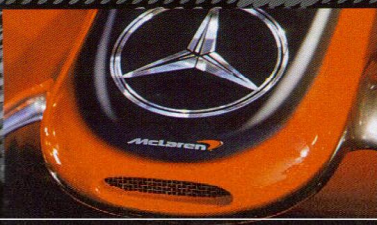
New boy at BMW-Sauber knuckles down to work



Sebastian Vettel
 Image: Georgi Spirov

Sebastian is in early head-scratching mode with this F1 lark, it seems. But, for sure, he'll catch on soon enough

So... you want to see your pics in print? Send your unusual or amusing images to: caughtonyourcamera@haynet.com, and leave the rest to us



Three-day handshake for Vodafone
McLaren love to push the boundaries of corporate excess – so to celebrate the birth of Vodafone McLaren-Merc they'll be throwing a three-day launch festival in Valencia, January 14–16



Webbo does it again for charity
Mark Webber's Tasmania Challenge fundraiser is on again, and Webbo will be joined by other sports heroes for the 372-mile run, cycle and kayak. See www.markwebberchallenge.com

F1 CURTAINS FOR COSSIE

COSWORTH RUNS OUT OF F1 ROAD

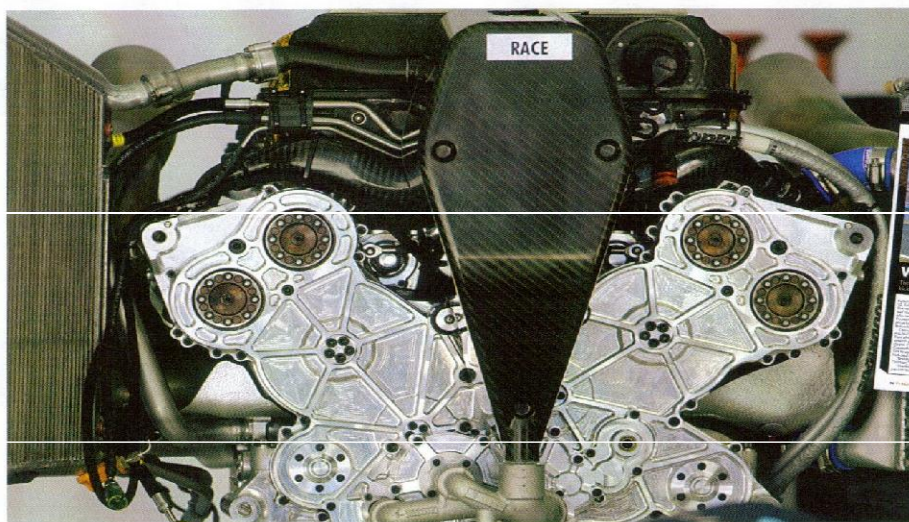
The three-year engine freeze and an untrendy brand have spelt disaster for the Cossie boys

COSWORTH EMPLOYEES did their thing at the Brazilian Grand Prix in commemorative T-shirts: "Cosworth don't do Formula 1 engines any more," they read, "but if they did... 39 seasons in Formula 1, 176 Grand Prix Wins, 13 Drivers' Championships, 10 Constructors' Championships, 1 Cosworth."

It was a poignant reminder of the loss to the sport of the last truly independent F1 engine maker, because Cosworth do not have an F1 customer for 2007.

The irony is that the FIA have spent recent years trumpeting their enthusiasm for small, independent manufacturers, but the 2007 engine homologation rules – which freeze V8 development until the end of 2009 – have had both a direct and an indirect effect on Cosworth's future. With no F1 customer, Cosworth have been forced to lay-off 60 per cent of their workforce – but an earlier round of technical redundancies was already in train owing to the engine freeze.

Two other engine builders, Renault and Ferrari, are also rumoured to be making staff cuts. However, both have been



F1 Racing predicted
Cosworth might be in trouble through no fault of their own

"Cosworth's canny engineers could become guns-for-hire in rival teams"

able to offset those cuts with a renewed drive into customer deals – made more attractive by their brand status as major manufacturers – so pushing Cosworth out of the market.

But the Cosworth name could survive in F1 into 2007 if plans

to refocus the firm as a high-tech consultancy are realised. Their collective technical know-how is immense, and there is a hope that their canny engineers could become consultant guns-for-hire within rival teams.

There is still a huge respect

for Cosworth in the paddock. Renault's Pat Symonds said: "I really can't understand how Cosworth managed to design, develop and supply their 2006 engine for so little money."

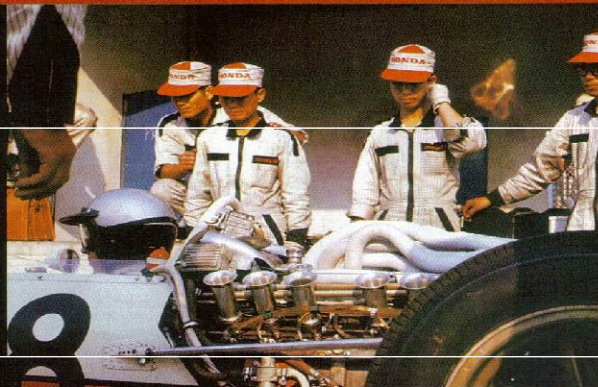
Bernard Ferguson, Cosworth's director of F1, said: "We're looking at diversifying into areas such as energy-recovery."

Cosworth still monopolise the US Champ Car series.

TRACK BACK

The more the detail of F1 technology changes, the more things actually stay the same...

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Pit garages 40 years on and it looks like the concept of ear-defenders still hasn't penetrated the skulls of all Honda staffers. But team outfits, if not decent aero, were obviously *de rigueur* in 1966, which wasn't true of many teams



LA RÉGIE'S TITLE FIGHT

SPONSOR-ING RENAULT

Did Bernie point Renault towards their Mild Seven replacement?

RENAULT AND Williams's new title-sponsorship deals with Dutch finance company ING and US telecoms giant AT&T respectively, confirm what *F1 Racing* has long predicted: there is plenty of sponsorship money for Formula 1 beyond tobacco.

However, the intriguing thing about the \$50 million Renault-ING deal is its genesis. As is often the case in F1, it might not be as straightforward as it seems and may well have benefited Bernie Ecclestone more than anyone else.

ING initially planned to enter F1 as principal Spyker sponsor. Indeed, Spyker's purchase of Midland (for \$106 million) may have been based on anticipated financial support from ING. Sources at Spyker, however, insist that they knew ING were going to Renault before the purchase was completed.

ING had already been wooed by both McLaren and Renault, but McLaren (who already have Vodafone lined up as title sponsors from 2007) were unable to offer as substantial a relationship as Renault.

Even more compelling, Ecclestone would have been privy to ING's interest when he helped facilitate the Spyker/Midland deal. So is it beyond the bounds of possibility that he tipped off old chum Flavio Briatore to this jackpot – Renault badly needed a title sponsor once Mild Seven's cigarette millions had blown away – in return for a tasty finder's fee?

↓ SO, WHO ARE ING?



- Dutch finance company: banking, insurance and asset management
- Eleventh-largest company in the world, according to the 2006 Forbes Global 2000
- More than 115,000 employees in 50 countries

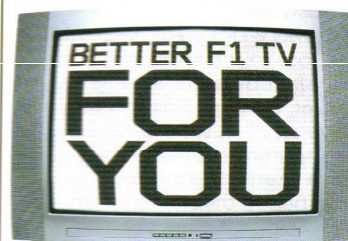


TIRED TELLY

WANTED: F1 TV LIKE THIS

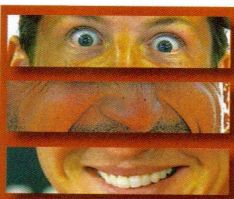
WHEN JUAN Pablo Montoya made his US stock car debut, few in the F1 community were prepared for the candid no-holds-barred TV access that would be granted to the Colombian and his Chip Ganassi crew.

See for yourselves – check out www.youtube.com



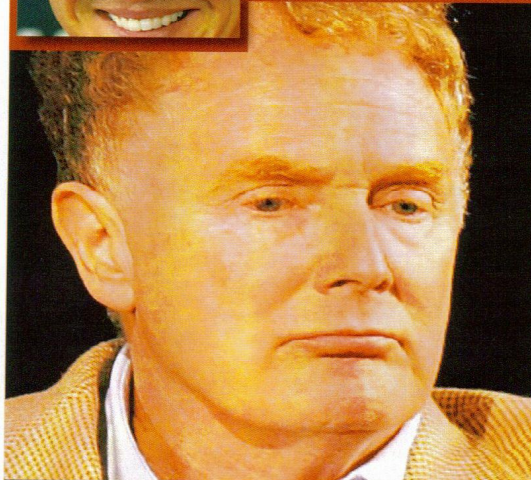
(keywords 'Montoya recap') to see just what F1 is missing by operating most pit-to-car radio communications off-air.

It's not as if F1 couldn't open up the airwaves, says Williams's technical boss, Sam Michael. "We could easily do what NASCAR do if the FIA and teams wrote a regulation that made us put all the radio out to air," he told *F1 Racing*. It's time, surely, for the FIA to get with it.

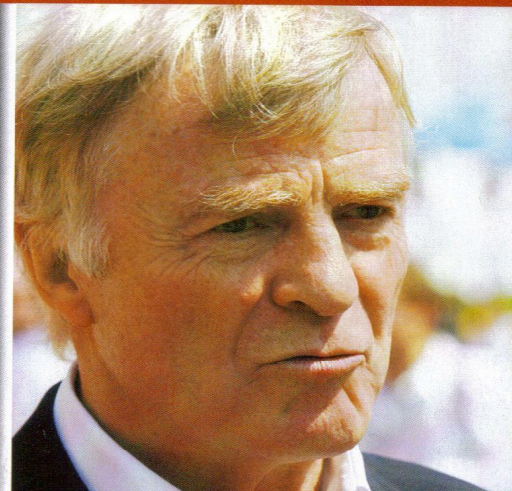


LOOKY-LIKEY NO 78

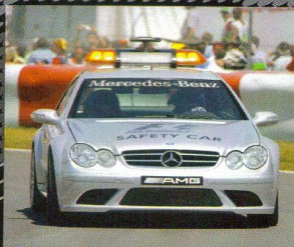
When the old ways just don't cut it any more, it takes a wham-bam thinker of genuine originality to show us that his way is the best way, the only way



DISCIPLE OF DIKTAT MAX MOSLEY



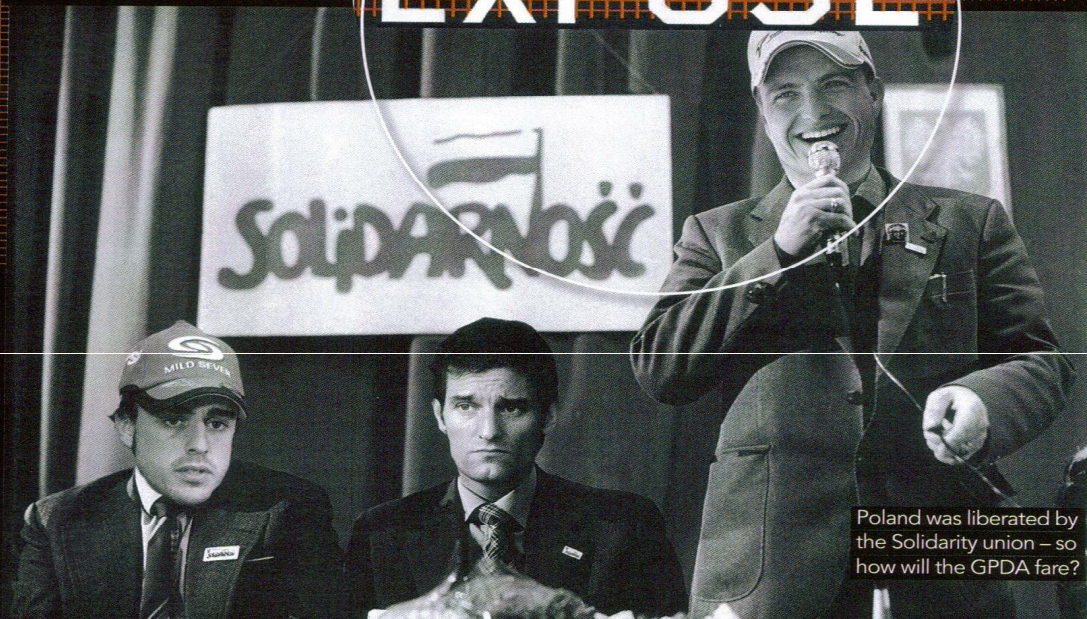
APOSTLE OF PUNK MALCOLM McLAREN



Backmarkers to overtake Safety Car

Following an FIA rethink, backmarkers will be waved past the Safety Car and allowed to rejoin the back of the field. The move follows an outcry over their behaviour at this year's Canadian GP

F1 EXPOSÉ



Poland was liberated by the Solidarity union – so how will the GPDA fare?

DRIVERS FEEL THEIR POWER

'REDS' UNDER THE FIA BED

Without Michael Schumacher to chair them, F1 drivers now feel more empowered to fight for the rights they believe are theirs

KARL MARX couldn't possibly have imagined that the workers, 'the proletariat', would ever rise to millionaire status. Yet the role of 'the workers' on F1's political landscape falls squarely on the drivers' shoulders.

Of course, that only applies when they're working together under the umbrella of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association – the nearest F1 will ever get to having a trade union. But the GPDA have become an increasingly vocal force over the past 18 months in their campaigns for increased safety measures at F1's circuits. And there are reasons to suspect that

they're in a position to become even more outspoken in 2007.

The GPDA's long-standing chairman, Michael Schumacher, has gone, and Fernando Alonso, Ralf Schumacher and Mark Webber have taken up the reins. And with them a new era has been ushered in that could signal an escalation in the GPDA's political clout through next season and beyond.

BROTHERS IN ARMS

Until the infamous 1982 Kyalami drivers' strike, the GPDA had not been too confrontational since their formation in 1961. Safety

concerns had led to a refusal to race at Spa in 1969 and at the Nordschleife the following year, but it was at the 1982 South African GP that Niki Lauda famously led a drivers' strike over the terms of a Superlicence that he felt left the drivers too subservient to the teams.

Faced with threats of the sack and lifetime bans, the drivers spent 24 hours barricaded inside a hotel room in Johannesburg while GPDA chairman Didier Pironi negotiated with Bernie Ecclestone et al at the track. In the end they did race, but Ecclestone managed to get

the GPDA dissolved before the end of the year.

It was revived in 1994 following the deaths of Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger, and has survived since then, Schumi and David Coulthard being the prime movers. But, until recently, it has retained a relatively low profile.

GROWING ACTIVITY

The GPDA's primary role has always been to maximise safety – after all, it's their necks on the line – but it's the FIA who take it upon themselves officially to administer safety, initiating high-tech research programmes into car construction, track facilities and medical support.

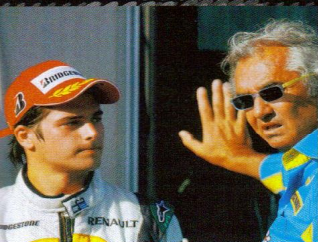
Backed by scientific data, the governing body find it hard to tolerate the GPDA questioning their recommendations – especially in public. Yet the GPDA's activities have burst into general view on several occasions recently. After the Michelin tyre débâcle at the United States GP in 2005, they tried (unsuccessfully) to submit their viewpoint to the FIA World Motor Sport Council.

In autumn 2005, the GPDA also crossed into new territory by making public their recommendations for the new qualifying format – clearly, the drivers were now seeking a say in other matters affecting the sport.

Also, in summer 2005, they exchanged increasingly agitated open letters with Mosley about safety at F1 tests. The result, seen at this September's Monza test, was the provision – for the first time at an open test – of a full race-weekend level of medical support, something not governed by FIA regulations.

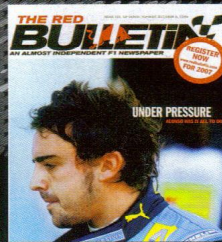
Then came this year's Italian Grand Prix, and an explosion over the size of run-off areas and the fact that they still use gravel rather than the more modern asphalt alternative.

The GPDA had been highlighting this as an area of concern at Monza for some years, but had been told that a



Briatore hires his boy, Nelson Jnr

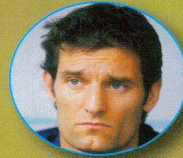
Renault's decision to run Nelson Piquet Jnr as a test driver for next year made sense after it emerged that he will be managed by team boss Flavio Briatore. The 21-year-old hopes to race in 2008



Paddock news goes online

The Red Bulletin, the paddock's gossip and satirical news mag at each GP, will go online in time for next season. If you feel like subscribing, then register by clicking on www.redbulletin.com

AND THE NEW GPDA DIRECTORS ARE...

		
Ralf Schumacher, chairman, who replaces Michael	Mark Webber, director, who replaces Jarno Trulli	Fernando Alonso, director, who replaces David Coulthard

Elections to a new three-man GPDA board were held at the Chinese GP. Ralf Schumacher was installed as chairman, and Mark Webber and Fernando Alonso as directors. Webber's election marks a return to the position he previously held before resigning in September

2005 in the wake of an on-track collision with Michael Schumacher. Membership to the GPDA is open to all race and third drivers, but isn't compulsory. All pay to join (it's a self- and well-funded organisation) and meetings are held at GPs.

fix was too costly. Yet, this year, Monza did find the money to resurface part of the track. So, when a senior Monza official failed to turn up to a meeting with the GPDA to explain the track's priorities, the drivers went public with their concerns – much to Mosley's chagrin.

He described the GPDA's approach as "amateurish", and said the GPDA had "caused trouble and annoyed everybody". In other words, "Be quiet children!" But the GPDA are, it seems, no longer prepared simply to shut up and buckle up.

BYE, BYE MICHAEL

There is a feeling among F1 drivers that Michael Schumacher's exit as their president could trigger a new, more assertive mood.

The Achilles' heel of the GPDA always has been, and always will be, a lack of unity – trying to get 22 fierce rivals to act with total solidarity isn't

easy. Part of this lack of unity has been a product of drivers' objections to Schumacher's style of leadership over the years. There should be no doubt that Schumacher has genuinely campaigned hard for safety, but he has also used his control to his own advantage.

It allowed him to establish a rapport and bargaining position with FIA officials, and be the first to know about circuit changes; it also gave him an influence over other drivers (witness his efforts at Monza 2001 to push for no overtaking at the start).

More power to Schumi, really, but the result was that some

rivals recoiled from the GPDA, and the FIA were safe in the knowledge that the association would not become too volatile. But now, with world champion Fernando Alonso taking an active role for the first time in a post-Schumi GPDA, there are hopes for greater unity.

"Sometimes, with Michael, there have been other agendas," said Webber after the elections. "That's sometimes good and sometimes bad for us as a group. That won't be there any more."

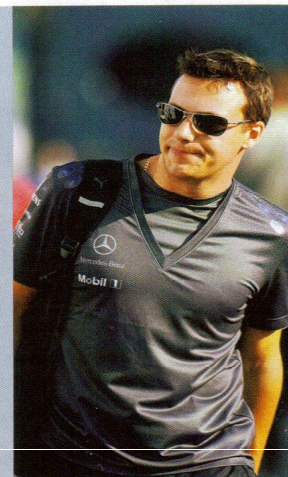
WATCH THIS SPACE

The legitimacy of the GPDA's concerns about Monza has been questioned, but the point to note is the increasing stridency of their posture. No one doubts that the GPDA's primary – no, let's say sole – reason to exist is safety. (F1 is far too commercially and legally complex these days for a Lauda-esque en masse contractual

objection to raise its head convincingly.) But if they feel their opinions and wishes regarding safety are being sidelined, there may well be a shift of mood leading to a more politically militant stance.

A unified group of drivers are potentially very powerful because they hold the keys to the show. No one else can do their job (drive 800bhp racing cars well); they are star names that the world recognises; and they enjoy the instinctive sympathy of the public. If an organised and unified GPDA were ever to flex their collective muscle in anger, their so-far dormant power could be awakened, and not easily fobbed off. And then big political sparks could fly.

Coulthard interview, p60 ➔



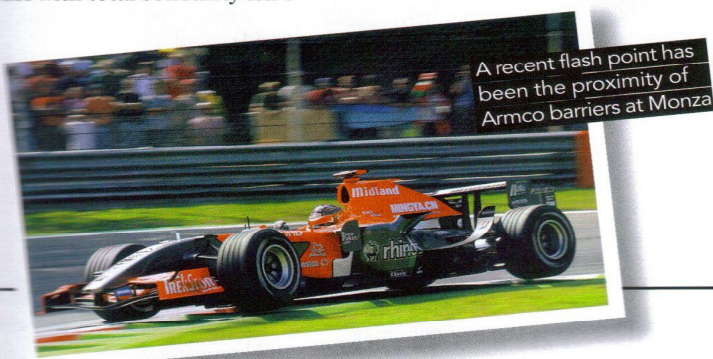
"LOST IN TRANSLATION"

GARY PAFFETT

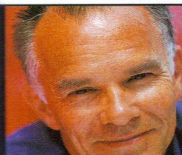
"Although the McLaren race seat is still up for grabs next year and is not completely out of the question, it is looking more and more unlikely that I will get that seat. So, they have given me a certain amount of freedom to look elsewhere."

Gary Paffett, McLaren test driver

TRANSLATION: "I hate that bloody Lewis Hamilton"



A recent flash point has been the proximity of Armco barriers at Monza



Peter Windsor's the friction circle

It's about time F1 teams took on a simple truth: they're more likely to win if they act as *teams*

Ferrari's Felipe Massa not only played the perfect team role for the back half of 2006; he was also charmingly open about the delicate question of 'letting-Michael-through'. A brief "I'm going to do all I can to help the team" followed by a deft lift of the right foot inevitably did the trick – and everyone loved him for it. It was as if the outcry that followed Michael's win in Austria, 2002 – and the FIA rule that has existed since then, forbidding team orders that influence the outcome of a race – has been but a dream, a bad dream.

The question must be asked, however: why are drivers like Massa clearly allowed to do something as fundamental as "influence the outcome of a race" when they appear flagrantly to be breaching the rules? I think it's because Ferrari would argue, if pushed, that Felipe's actions were not the result of 'orders' but the product of his own ideas, based on his loyalty to Michael, and thus to Ferrari.

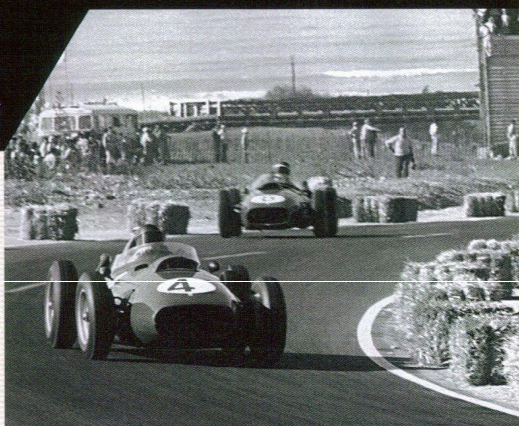
All of which is semantic nonsense, of course – just as the whole business of Austria 2002 was nonsense. The shouting and screaming after that race were much more about Michael himself than about the logic or not of team orders in F1 – and the Michael-bashers won the day. No matter that team orders had for a long time been an accepted part of the F1 scene, whether you're thinking of Phil Hill waving his team-mate past in order to clinch the 1958 drivers' championship for Mike

"With Michael's retirement is it not time to expunge the 'no team orders' rule?"

Hawthorn and Ferrari, or Lorenzo Bandini nerfing Graham Hill out of the 1964 finale so that John Surtees could also win for Maranello.

Compared with those examples, Michael's win in Austria was a mere walk in the park – unless, of course, you were one of those people who didn't like Michael because of other, unrelated, incidents or you were a driver/team owner/official who was jealous of Michael's incredibly strong political position at Ferrari. Either way, you no doubt breathed a sigh of relief that The Man Who Was Afraid to Race his Team-Mate was in future going to have to put it on the line.

Of course, nothing changed. Michael still went on winning; another of his team-mates (Rubens Barrichello) left in order to win as a joint number-one in a proper team(!); and Rubens's



Phil Hill (No 4) slows to allow Hawthorn through to take third, and the championship, in the 1958 Moroccan GP

replacement (Massa) began to enjoy success that he had never believed possible. 'Team co-ordination', in other words, continued unabated.

The problem is, not every team are as well co-ordinated as were Ferrari in the Michael era. Take Renault. That intra-team skirmish in China a month ago could easily have been averted by someone on the pit wall saying, "Stay where you are, Giancarlo, and try to keep Michael behind you. Fernando is cooling it for a few laps. Don't pass. Don't pass." They didn't – couldn't – say that, however, because it could have meant, if an FIA steward was having a bad day, that (illegal) team orders were being applied.

So long as modern F1 races are going to be punctuated by something as tedious as tyre 'graining', the chances are that one of two team cars is going to be faster/slower than the other at various stages of the race. Only Michael managed to create a team in which everyone knew their place and therefore knew how to react in a given situation. For the others, it is still ego versus ego – and the concept of one team driver thinking clearly and objectively about the other, Michael/Massa-style, is about as foreign as... F1 without Michael.

With Michael's retirement, therefore, is it not time to expunge the 'no team orders' rule from the Sporting Code? The Michael-bashers must be happy now that he has gone; and dramatic orders from the pit wall, with drivers either obeying or disobeying, should be an integral part of the F1 show. As it is, the less well-balanced teams (which basically means all, in this post-Michael era) will need the luxury of team orders in order to minimise the time wasted by graining... and – patently – to remind themselves that the object of the day is to beat the opposition and not themselves.

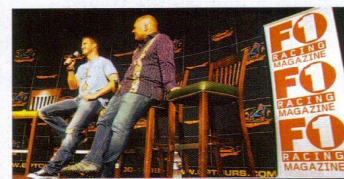
See China & Japan reports, p112, p118 ➔

FOOD FOR F1 THOUGHT

DINE WITH F1 RACING

NOW'S YOUR chance to spend an evening in the presence of F1 superstars while dining and dining in VIP style. On December 13 'An Evening with F1 Racing', featuring special guests Ron Dennis, Eddie Jordan and Damon Hill – and hosted by F1 Racing's editor-in-chief, Matt Bishop – will be held at the Hilton Park Lane. There will be F1 simulators and show cars on display, a charity auction and a raffle of F1 merchandise.

Tickets are £159 per head, or £1500 for tables of 10. Please call 0121 780 6231 for full details.



Ralf Schumacher and Matt Bishop also helped amuse Indy's F1 crowds

COMPETITION

WIN WURZ'S MONZA LAP

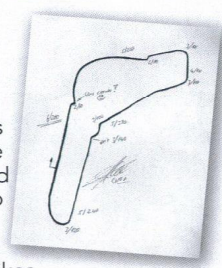
AS PART of our mega-exclusive feature lapping Monza in a Pagani Zonda with Williams driver Alex Wurz, he drew, annotated and signed a circuit map showing his Zonda gear selections and speeds. F1 Racing likes to treat its readers now and then, so we're giving you a chance to win this unique piece of F1 memorabilia. Just answer the following question:

• Which F1 team will Alex Wurz race for in 2007?

Send your answer, along with your name and postal address to f1racingcompetitions@haynet.com by November 24, with 'Wurz' in the subject heading.

(For full terms and conditions of the competition, see p4.)

Wurz drives Pagani, p100 ➔



Philips



at&t

Team Willy is back in the money
Williams's sponsorship roster is back in rude health. They have signed a \$35m, three-year title sponsorship deal with AT&T; and Philips also plan to up their Williams commitment from 2007

PARADE NEWS EXPOSÉ **BUSINESS** SCIENCE

THE BUSINESS OF F1

HONDA PLAN GREEN-THEME F1 MACHINES

HONDA HOPE to revolutionise F1 sponsorship by using their cars to promote a 'green' environmental image, F1 Racing has learnt. The plan chimes with the FIA's drive to make the sport a showcase for green technology. It also marks a radical departure by seeking to attract sponsorship on the basis of a themed package, rather than selling space on an ad hoc basis.

The green idea was pitched to the team by marketing agency 19 Management (owned by pop svengali Simon Fuller), who were this year charged with finding a replacement for Lucky Strike, whose \$60 million per year title sponsorship expires at the end of 2006.

Honda's all-embracing environmental focus is still



The stuff of Honda's dreams? You bet – greenbacks for green logos

unconfirmed, but Alistair Watkins, Honda's marketing director, said: "We're investigating new and exciting ways to market F1, and will reveal our plans early in 2007."

It is not yet clear how Honda will create their 'eco team', and

whether they plan to retain their white livery or adopt a 'greener' paint scheme. But their hopes are high that the fresh identity will appeal to environmentally conscious companies.

F1 may seem an unlikely

platform, but green business is booming and F1 guarantees global exposure. Multinationals such as petro-chemical giant BP already base their marketing plans on a green image, and would be an obvious big-name target in Honda's plans.



New Shell V-Power.
Fuel developed with Ferrari.

Bernie's SLEC loan bites back

F1's parent company, SLEC, are being sued for \$295 million over an unpaid loan. The news is a blow to CVC, who bought a majority stake in SLEC from Bernie Ecclestone for \$1bn a year ago



F1's top commercial get-together

The biggest and most important event in the motorsport business year – the Motorsport Business Forum – will be held in Monaco on December 6-7. See www.motorsportbusinessforum.com

KOREAN GP WILL BE MONEY MAGNET

NEWS THAT South Korea will definitely hold a grand prix from 2010 could prompt an influx of Korean money into the sport. Car manufacturer Hyundai have been seeking a way into the sport for years, but the grand prix – to be held at a Hermann Tilke circuit in the South Cholla province

– turns up the pressure.

Hyundai's board believe that, as a matter of pride, they simply must be in the sport by then – if not as a constructor then at least as a title sponsor.

Other potential Korean sponsors include electronics giants Samsung and LG, and car makers Daewoo and Kia.



A Bernie deal means only one thing: there's plenty of dosh sloshing about

THE EARNING CURVE

The 10 richest individuals in Formula 1

Bernie Ecclestone, CEO of Formula One Group	\$ 4.08bn
Dietrich Mateschitz, Red Bull founder	\$ 3.72bn
Mansour Ojeh, McLaren shareholder	\$ 1.40bn
Mari Hulman George, Indianapolis owner	\$ 1.00bn
Paddy McNally, Paddock Club organiser	\$ 850m
Michael Schumacher, Ferrari driver	\$ 450m
Luca Montezemolo, Ferrari president	\$ 400m
Piero Ferrari, Ferrari shareholder	\$ 375m
Ron Dennis, McLaren team principal	\$ 220m
Willi Weber, Driver manager	\$ 130m

The figures are estimated personal fortunes, taken from *SportBusiness – The Business of Formula One* by Christian Sylt and Caroline Reid.



Developed with

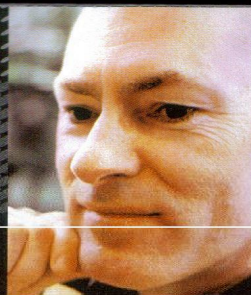


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Smith is on the move – again
Red Bull Racing technical director Mark Smith (left) is being linked to a Spyker move. If he can be bought out of his contract, he would work with Spyker's chief technology officer, Mike Gascoyne

THE SCIENCE OF F1

THE SUN SETS ON THE TYRE WAR

Round and black and interesting – how the battle has driven tyre technology forward

Tyres have been a source of greater concern for many teams than drivers



MICHELIN BOWED out of Formula 1 at the Brazilian Grand Prix, ending the French company's second foray into grand prix racing after just six years. Their departure is forcing six teams – Renault, McLaren, Honda, BMW, Red Bull and Toro Rosso – onto Bridgestone tyres next season. Even more significant, the move marks the end of the most intense tyre war in the history of the sport.

"It has been phenomenal," says Mark Webber. "Few people understand how much time is gained through tyres, but if you think how much power we lost last winter with the move to 2.4-litre V8s and then look at the lap times, it's amazing how quickly we went through corners in 2006. The

grip level and durability of the compounds was incredible."

Compounds and constructions haven't progressed in a linear fashion since 2001. Advances have been staggered (and staggeringly effective), the most expensive and sophisticated solutions being deployed in 2006.

TECHNOLOGY



"We have a motto," says Michelin's motorsport director,

The biggest jump came in 2006. Last winter we found two seconds per lap in the tyres alone

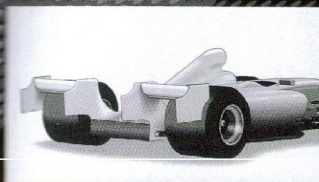
Frederic Henry-Biabaud. "True competition, in the sense that Michelin understands it, is the best research laboratory of all."

For Michelin and Bridgestone the holy grail has been to maximise grip while minimising wear rates. Early on, they failed

to get this balance right, as the relatively slow lap times of 2001 proved. But by 2006 they had managed to combine soft rubber compounds with innovative construction methods, to ensure superior temperature durability.

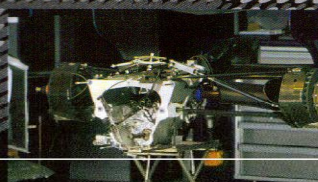
"We've made steady improvements year on year," says Hirohide Hamashima, Bridgestone's director of motorsport tyre development. "The biggest single jump in lap times came in 2006, but that was partly down to the return of tyre changing. Last winter, we found two seconds per lap in the tyres alone."

Nowhere was this improved pace better demonstrated than at Suzuka, where Michael Schumacher set the fastest-ever



'Overtaking-wing' has stalled

The centreline downwash-generating (CDG) wing – designed to improve overtaking – has been delayed. It was due to be introduced from 2008, but more research time will be needed



Penalties for gearbox changes

From 2008, drivers will suffer a five-place grid penalty for changing their gearbox during a grand prix weekend. Gear ratios can be changed once per race, but under supervision

2007 SPEED CUT

For the first time since 2000, F1 will have a single tyre supplier in 2007. Bridgestone were on their own back then, and will fulfil that same role from 2007 to 2010 inclusive.

Prior to the Chinese Grand Prix, they selected the spec of the rubber they will use next year. The tyres will be cheaper to make than in 2006 and slower, adding about two seconds to lap times. But that won't make the racing any less interesting.

"Going to one tyre next year will be very interesting because the way that you use the tyre will be crucial," says Ferrari technical director Ross Brawn. "It will still be a big technical challenge."

Furthermore, a return to slick tyres is likely for 2008.

"We're awaiting the FIA's decision on that," says Bridgestone's Hirohide Hamashima. "But it would cost a lot to change because the targets would move. Current development is geared towards anti-graining and anti-moving, so the emphasis would be different."



If quicker, slick tyres return in '08, then the "targets would move"

lap time in Q2 (1m28.954s), despite the cars having 200bhp less than in 2005.

LOGISTICS

Each tyre company produced more than 60,000 tyres a year, and took about 1200 to each



race. They also produced compounds specific to each car, and teams racked up endless testing miles as they sought the best tyre for an individual race track. For example, of Heikki Kovalainen's 12,500 miles of testing for Renault this year, more than three-quarters was geared towards tyre testing.

"The level of competition between us and Bridgestone increased in 2006," says Michelin's F1 programme director, Nick Shorrock. "Look at the statistics: in 2005, we tested 34 compounds, whereas in 2006 we tried 50 different compounds. There has been an incredible rate of increase."

EXPENSE

Neither company is willing to divulge the amount they've spent on the tyre war, but Bridgestone have hinted that next season – when they will supply the entire grid instead

of just five teams – will cost them less money than they



spent in 2006. Estimates put that figure at \$100 million.

From 2002 to 2005, when Ferrari were the only front-running team using Bridgestone, a significant proportion of the Scuderia's testing budget was paid by Bridgestone – a cool \$30 million per year.

ROAD CAR BENEFITS

As Michelin's Henry-Biabaud – says, F1 is an R&D laboratory for the tyre companies. But it's also a brand awareness exercise, which is why Bridgestone have also spent \$25 million a year on track signage with Allsport Management. As a result, their brand awareness has increased



from 25 per cent to more than 40 per cent in Europe alone.

However, there is no direct link between F1 and road-car tyre technology. But some of the philosophies are shared, such as the use of compounds that promote maximum grip and minimum wear, the tread patterns of full wet tyres and the technology of tyre grooves.

"The requirements of F1 and road tyres are very different," says Hisao Suganuma, Bridgestone's technical manager. "An F1 tyre is designed to last just 95 miles, whereas a road tyre has to last something like 12,500 miles. But it's true that grooved tyres are closer than slicks to road tyres because we spend a lot of time working on anti-movement from the

Each tyre company produced more than 60,000 tyres a year, and took 1200 to each race

grooves, and it's the same with road tyre technology."

RIVALRY? WHAT RIVALRY?

On-track competition has been intense, neither Bridgestone nor Michelin wasting a chance to protest the other. As recently as Monza, Michelin suggested that Bridgestone were spraying their tyres with a paint that improved single-lap performance.

The advantage has swung to and fro. Initially, Bridgestone had



the better tyre for cool or damp conditions, and Michelin held the advantage in hot weather. By the end, there was nothing to choose between them, and that is why the tyre war gave F1 such a fascinating variable.

In short, the rivalry was strong, but the respect equally intense.

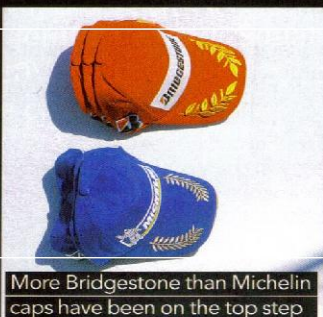
Michelin:

"There hasn't been as much contact between us and them as I would have liked," says Shorrock, "but there is a genuine respect between the two companies."



Bridgestone:

"I ask Michelin to come back to F1 as soon as possible," says Hamashima. "We respect them and have enjoyed competing against them. They've been a good rival."



More Bridgestone than Michelin caps have been on the top step

TALE OF THE TYRE WAR STATS: 2001-2006

BRIDGESTONE

Wins	62
Pole positions	51
Fastest laps	56
Drivers' championships	4
Constructors' championships	4

MICHELIN

Wins	43
Pole positions	54
Fastest laps	49
Drivers' championships	2
Constructors' championships	2



BRAVE NEW WORLD

ALL CHANGE FOR F1 2008

DESPITE AN ENGINE freeze, uniform slick tyres and a hefty reduction in aero grip, 2008's new breed of Formula 1 cars are expected to be the most radical the sport has ever seen.

"For 2008, it's a clean sheet of paper and time to start from scratch," Williams's technical director, Sam Michael, told *F1 Racing*. "It literally is a completely different formula. We've started work on our 2008 programme – but it's the equivalent of saying, 'Okay, guys, you've built a Formula 1 car, now go and build a sports car.' That's how different the 2008 Formula 1 cars will be."

Despite abandoning a controversial twin-wing concept that would theoretically have allowed closer racing, new aero and safety rules will oblige designers to rework any existing ideas completely.

"The 2008 chassis regulations will dominate everything – more than the engine and drivers do – because it will be such a different car," Michael added. "I'm not sure which way that will go, because it doesn't always come down to resources in matters like that. You could run 10 wind tunnels between now and '08 and test as much stuff as you could, but the car will be such a different design that it will really prosper from creativity."

"A lot of it will be fixed, because you're more restricted by the bodywork. But the tyres will be completely different, and that will be the key to it. There's a lot of work to do for that. If you think how hard it is to call the change in pecking order from '06 to '07, it'll be 10 times harder into 2008."



Will the distant future be as radical as this? One crystal-ball gazer says so



Alan Henry's the rumble strip

The final race of a season always feels different, but Brazil '06 was a real case of mixed emotions

Interlagos, on the face of it, is a run-down sort of place, but it is the spiritual home of Brazilian motor racing, where many deeds of derring-do have been enacted in the past. The pits are a disgrace and the main grandstands look as though they've been constructed out of rusty Meccano. Yet the circuit undeniably has some indefinable appeal, a unique quality that exudes a ramshackle sense of tradition. It falls into the same category as Silverstone, which Bernie Ecclestone once unkindly described, saying, "I think it's good that we still have circuits like this because it reminds you what motor racing was like in the old days."

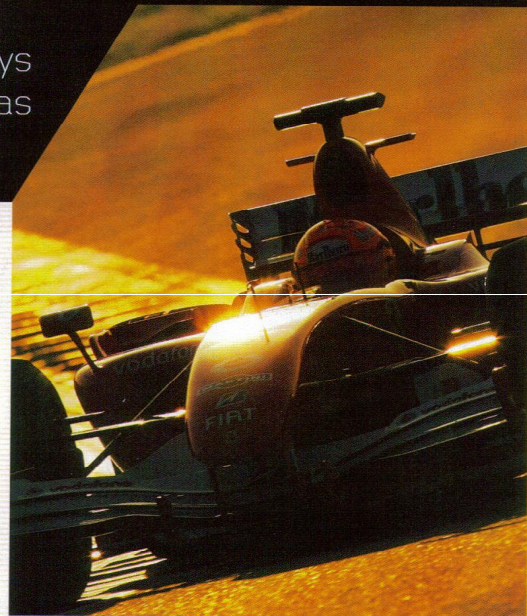
The mood in the paddock at the Autodromo José Carlos Pace – named after the late and much loved '75 Brazilian GP winner – reflected that peculiarly intense strain of end-of-term euphoria that only F1 can deliver. It's a heady mix of relief that we can all have a few precious months to catch our breath, spiced with an almost furtive sense of anticipation that the new car launches are already filling up our diaries for January, after which the opening race of the 2007 season in Melbourne will be only weeks away.

In a sense, the whole atmosphere served as a reminder of just how compelling this sport can be. We sometimes moan and bitch about the travelling, the oft-proceSSIONAL races and the time away from home, but it remains a singularly

"The mood in Brazil reflected the intense end-of-term euphoria that only F1 can deliver"

obsessive business that many on the inside often feel they could do without, but in reality are totally hooked on.

Yet for most of the competitors there was a lingering feeling of promise unfulfilled. Ferrari and Renault may have been riding high on the hog in 2006, but McLaren, Toyota, Williams and the rest of the underachievers could usually console themselves with the optimistic thought that this weekend's fiasco will quickly be forgotten and a fresh start anticipated ahead of the next race in a fortnight's time. In Brazil those hopes finally hit the buffers; what was done was



The lack of winter testing for next season will begin to show Michael just how much his life has changed

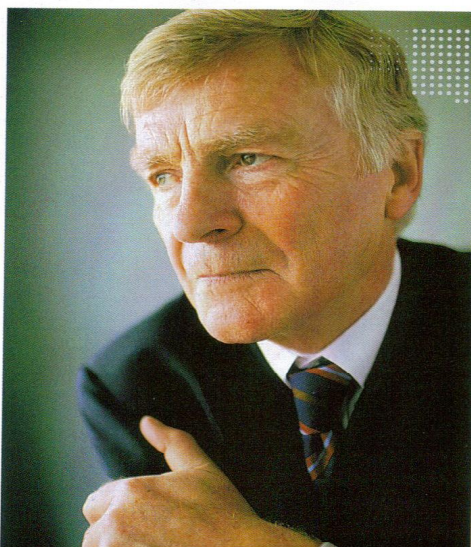
in the past and the chance for public atonement lay out of sight over the horizon.

It was much the same when you considered Michael Schumacher. This titanic world champion who bestrode the sport like a colossus for almost two decades was suddenly reduced to a plain 'Mr Citizen', stripping off his trademark red overalls for the final time and walking off into the sunset.

Let it not be forgotten that Michael climbed back from 17th to fourth after recovering from an early puncture, pulling the final overtaking move of his career on Kimi Räikkönen – the man who will succeed him at Ferrari next season – going into the first left-hander after the pits. His move on Kimi was unbelievable; the Finn must have felt as though he'd been taken down a dark alley for a good mugging.

For Michael, life will be so very different in the future. The first few months, spent with Corinna and the kids, will feel very familiar. But then, at around Christmas time, his life will become dramatically redefined. There will be no phone calls from Maranello to kick-start his sense of keen anticipation ahead of a new car and a new season, no pent-up excitement or stimulating tension. How Michael deals with recalibrating the tempo of his personal existence will certainly involve as big a challenge as any of his glittering on-track victories. Good luck. And thanks.

Brazilian Grand Prix report, p124 ➔



The howls over Fernando Alonso's penalty at Monza generated more heat than light. Put aside the outrage and remember this – race stewards are not the FIA's poodles

GRIP & SPIN

A personal view by Max Mosley

There are a lot of clever people in the Formula 1 paddock, but it's surprising how few of them think clearly when things get emotional. Take the great Alonso row at Monza. There were two questions:

first, did Alonso *as a matter of fact* impede Massa in the sense that Massa, because of Alonso's presence, was slower on that lap than he would otherwise have been; second, if that answer is "yes", should Alonso, in all the circumstances, have been penalised?

The first question could be answered by looking at the data, particularly that from Massa's car. In modern F1 there is often (as in this case) clear scientific evidence. That was available to the stewards but not, of course, to the paddock pundits. Apparently, it showed quite clearly that Massa was impeded in Parabolica, the circuit's final corner.

What about the argument that, merely by generating a dirty aero-wake, the car in front doesn't necessarily 'impede' the car behind? That point wasn't made in the Monza paddock, but appeared afterwards in more sober debate. Well, a modern F1 car is designed to run optimally in clean air. If forced to run in dirty air it is slower – ie, hindered – and thus, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, impeded. It was Alonso who, intentionally or not, forced Massa to run in dirty air. He therefore impeded him.

So the answer to the first question is known. The difficult question is the second one. You could argue that Alonso had no choice but to

had to pay for that predicament it should have been Alonso. Therefore Alonso should have let Massa past (as he might well have done had he had time) and sacrificed his own lap rather than put Massa's at risk.

In the paddock, that second question was completely lost in a sort of muddled babble. The worst offenders were ex-drivers who believed that Alonso was too far ahead to interfere with Massa, and offered various theories as to why Massa lost time while ignoring the stewards' finding of fact based on the data. Even in the press room, very few were able to separate fact (Alonso had indeed impeded Massa) from opinion (should Alonso be penalised?).

The stewards claimed that since they had penalised others in similar circumstances earlier in the season, they should be consistent now. Teams had complained for years about inconsistent stewards' decisions, and called for a permanent steward who would provide precisely the sort of consistency some of them now found offensive.

Of course, one can debate whether Alonso should or should not have been penalised. Everyone is entitled to an opinion. But it is intensely irritating to see the facts ignored and the real question never properly discussed. The stewards imposed a penalty only after painstaking analysis of the data. No wonder they decided never again to go to this trouble when all they got for their efforts was abuse.

So, you may ask, what is my personal view? Well, unencumbered by the baggage of earlier decisions, I wouldn't have penalised Alonso. But then I often disagree with the stewards. For example, I wouldn't have given Alonso a two-second penalty for the brake-testing (and yellow-flag) episode in Hungary – I would have sent him home. 'Brake testing' is using a car as a weapon to menace another driver – dangerous and a licence-loser if you do it on the road. In that same weekend I wouldn't have given Schumacher a two-second penalty for overtaking under a red flag, because, arguably, on that occasion it wasn't in the least dangerous. However, I can understand the stewards' view that red is more serious than yellow and should attract a bigger penalty.

But, fortunately perhaps, my opinion doesn't matter. The stewards, like our Court of Appeal, are entirely independent. The FIA is rather like a country, with an executive, a legislature and a judiciary – the classic separation of powers. Put simply, the legislature make the rules, the executive run things according to the rules and the judiciary decide whether the rules have been broken. The system works well providing no one interferes with the judges.

I hope this at least shows how ridiculous are those who suggest 'the FIA' favours this or that faction, or acts differently according to where an event is held. You may not always agree with the FIA – I certainly don't – but that is the price of an independent judiciary. **FO**

"It is intensely irritating to see the facts ignored and the real question never properly discussed"

drive flat-out to get to the line before the end of the session to start his qualifying lap, and that he was probably hardly aware of Massa, who was some distance behind. On the other hand, you could argue it wasn't Massa's fault that Alonso was late out of the pits (he was delayed by a tyre problem) and that if anyone

Was Alonso fairly punished? The stewards were right, says Max, but he'd have been more lenient





Dave Thompson salutes Schumi and the end of an era, winning our star letter prize – a superb Panasonic SDR-S150 camcorder

STAR LETTER

SCHUMI THE GREAT

I would never seek to excuse Michael Schumacher's infamous indiscretions of 1994, 1997 and 2006. But they are only three laps out of the most successful F1 career of all. Few people have ever dominated any sport to this extent, adapting and winning regardless of the technical or sporting regulations.

Plenty of moments stand out, but the 2005 Monaco Grand Prix sticks in my mind. As he struggled with a sluggish Ferrari, who else would blast the final yards to snatch a point? The man who hates to be beaten.

Having conquered and ruled the sport for more than a decade, how fitting that Michael is retiring at the top of his game, at a time when he is by far the most popular driver and still has so much to offer. Lesser men may throw stones, but Schumacher is the reason I get up in the middle of the night to watch F1.

Dave Thompson
Stockport, Cheshire



Panasonic

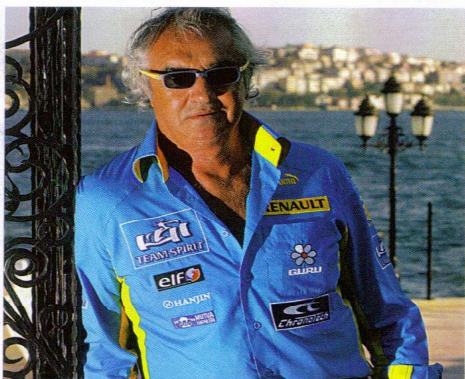
Every month, the writer of our star letter will win a prize from the Panasonic range of products

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NO THANKS, FLAVIO

I read with interest Flavio Briatore's interview (*F1 Racing*, October) and his suggestions for improving the television spectacle. His radical tweaks (such as reverse grids) are unlikely to be adopted, thank goodness; they'd certainly increase overtaking but undermine the spirit of F1, which would be perceived as 'manufactured' racing. Likewise, we don't want F1 to become GP2; rather, both should remain complementary series, because where's the sense in F1 attempting to imitate a junior formula? As we know, GP2 is Flavio's brainchild (so it makes sense for him to talk it up), but undoing 56 years of F1 heritage to produce 'World Wrestling Federation' racing surely isn't the answer.

Brian Walker
Nottingham



Flavio's F1 vision hasn't found universal favour. Should F1 impersonate GP2? No, says Walker

BACK IN YOUR BOX, JACQUES

I enjoyed the interview with Jacques Villeneuve in the September issue. He really had me laughing out loud, especially his observation that Michael Schumacher won't live on in people's memories. Just who will they be thinking of, as the years go by, when no one comes close to challenging Michael's achievements? Villeneuve? I doubt it.

Tom Guilfoyle
Ambler, Pennsylvania, USA

LET'S HEAR IT FOR QUICK NICK

So you "reckon" that Villeneuve would have been a better bet than Heidfeld, who you condemned as underwhelming (Up Front, September)? Heidfeld outraced JV at BMW and even outscored Kimi at Sauber in 2001. As for Heidfeld being "unmarketable", I find it hard to believe that a moody Canadian is more marketable than a German at BMW. Why should his quiet personality detract from his ability?

Scott Douglas
Edinburgh

PASSION TO MELT ICEMAN?

I have to confess that the Kimi/Ferrari prenuptials – Nordic stoicism uniting with Latin passion – has all the ingredients of a marriage made in hell. Maybe Kimi's ability will be sufficient to bridge the cultural void, but, as Michael Schumacher's tenure has shown, Ferrari thrive on the driver leading the team, which is pretty much the antithesis of how McLaren operate.

Ian Abbott
Salt Spring Island, BC, Canada



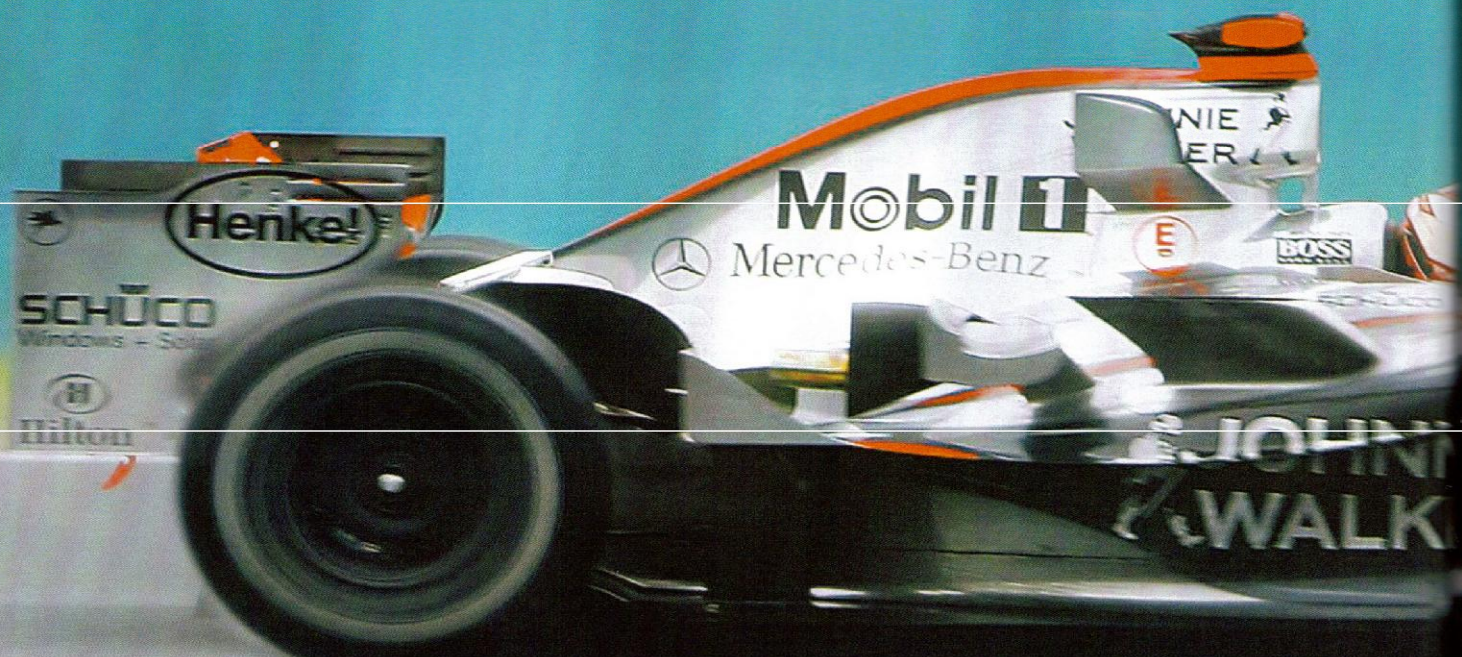
Unsettled Chinese weather and a drying track gave us stacks of welcome drama in Shanghai

RAIN, RAIN, DON'T GO AWAY

As the Chinese Grand Prix demonstrated, Formula 1 at its best is a captivating spectacle. Once again, though, we had to rely on the inclement weather to play its part in producing a classic. Although the suggestion of sprinklers at circuits is often dismissed as ludicrous, there is no denying that random sprinkler systems would provoke unpredictable racing, reduce grip, and allow for close jostling and overtaking. In fact, the proportion of memorable wet races speaks for itself – Donington 1993, Spa 1995 and Hungary 2006, to name just three.

If the FIA intend to listen to the findings of their survey, namely the overwhelming demand for more on-track overtaking, then maybe the suggestion of sprinklers is not as comical as it sounds. Either that, or take F1 to less predictable climes.

James Andrews
Swindon, Wiltshire



Speed is only

It's the most important driver hiring in a decade — Ferrari's replacement for Michael Schumacher. So now the coronation is over, what — apart from speed — must Kimi Räikkönen deliver?

Words Peter Windsor

So in he will step — the monosyllablist with the jagged, glacial, helmet design — that once-familiar McLaren man. In he will climb, unrecognisable now in his red Puma race suit, sliding into that famous, detailed seat and settling now — as if he belongs there — right into the centre, the heart, of Michael Schumacher's world.

The new world, that is to say, of Kimi-Matias Räikkönen.

Of course, this is more than just your standard driver swap. I mean, how do you refill the footwell of the most successful F1 champion of all time? How do you follow that act? You cannot. It cannot be reproduced. The combination will never again be as strong — that mix of Michael, the Ferrari team and the merging of minds.

You can, however, move on, and you can wonder how it will be — this Kimi/Ferrari episode, this new-look, age-old Ferrari team who will now be minus, probably, one of their major technical players (Ross Brawn); and they will be substantially reweighted, now that Michael has gone, by one Felipe Massa, that very good, Italian-speaking race winner who knows the Maranello boys and the Ferrari system about as well as anyone on the planet.

So, how will Kimi fare?

Let's look first at the parameters...

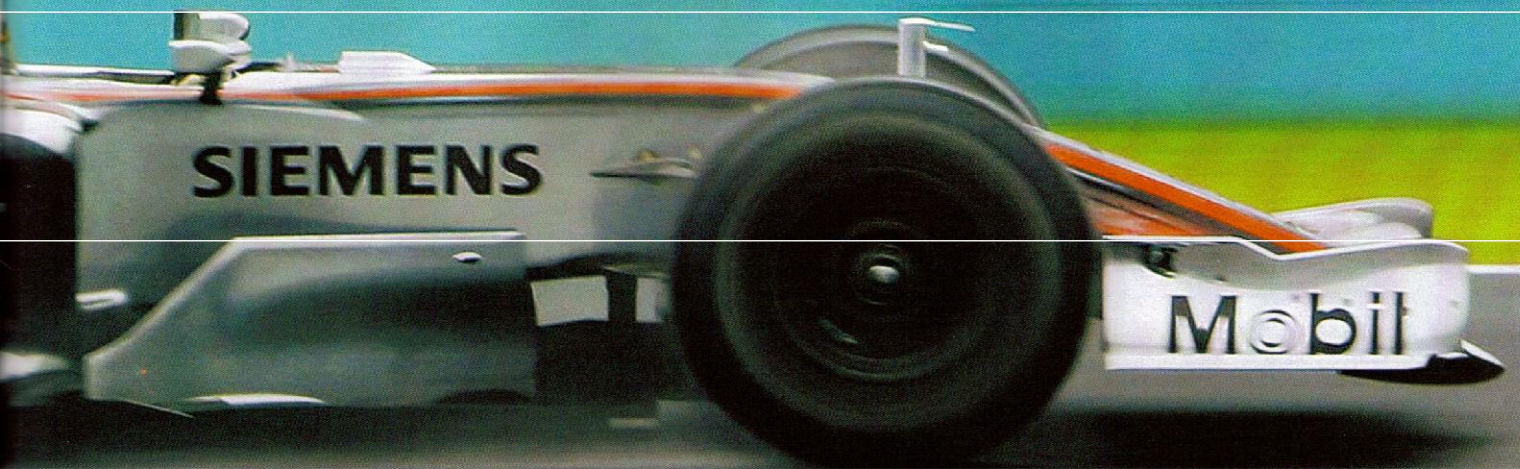
factor one Speed

KIMI IS THE purest driver in Formula 1 right now. He thinks in straight lines; he drives in straight lines — and he manages the dynamic weight of the car perfectly. There is nothing extraneous about his driving. He seamlessly blends the craft of gentle-firm pedal application with little-turn/big-turn steering inputs.

And he knows what he's doing. Kimi isn't some Finnish ice sculpture, discovered under 50ft of snow and now fortuitously plugged into an F1 cockpit. Kimi went through his

crashing, toy-throwing spell in Formula Renault, discovered the basic principles — and honed them. For this, Steve Robertson — his co-manager along with Steve's father, David — deserves major credit. A former pupil of driving coach Rob Wilson himself, Steve long ago instilled the methods of Fifty-Four Nine (FFN — Wilson's driving academy) into the mind of Kimi Räikkönen. No surprise, then, that every current Räikkönen-Robertson F3 driver is also trained by FFN.

Kimi's ability was never more



half the story

More lowlights – frustration with McLaren (above, below) finally pushed Kimi towards Ferrari



obvious than in the McLaren/Montoya days – and the comparison is worth making because Felipe Massa is, today, somewhere up there with Montoya in terms of speed and an ability to win a race. Juan Pablo would complain of understeer; Kimi, more likely to be concerned with poor traction, would have his car slightly angled towards the apex before touching the brakes. He'd initially turn the wheel more gently than would Juan; and – while Juan was dabbling the throttle and already

releasing the positive lock – would apply the substance of the steering against a decreasing brake-pedal pressure; and would have a straighter, more compliant car on exit as a result of his extremely subtle throttle-teasing. Juan drove with heart, feel and reflex – and could never tame the McLaren's understeer. Kimi, driving with his head, his hands and his feet, was a quantum leap in front. Kimi is now as fast as was Michael – with the proviso that Michael was a more *technical* driver: he was more able to play

with the car's electronic aids in order to compensate for changing fuel loads or degrading tyre grip. Would Michael, in Kimi's McLaren, have been so hurt by cold tyres in stint two in Hungary this year? We'll never know – but we can surmise that Michael (a) might not have allowed the brakes to have run so hot in the first stint, and (b) might have done more with the diff/traction control/brake balance ratio to get the rubber working in stint two. Fernando? Fernando in a Renault is now as quick as Kimi,

but we have yet to see whether Fernando will be as fast as Kimi in a McLaren with understeer. Kimi is definitely quicker, meanwhile, than Massa – quicker in the sense that he will more consistently be able to sustain the car's ultimate lap time, and in so doing be less demanding on himself and the car; like Michael, though, he will from time to time be out-qualified or even out-paced by Massa (just as Michael was occasionally out-paced by Rubens Barrichello and even Eddie Irvine). ▶

Race craft

factor two



RELATIVE TO Michael, this is probably Kimi's weakest area. He succumbed to Michael's pressure in Canada this year – and then there was the famous incident at Magny-Cours in 2002, when Kimi ran wide on oil and lost the lead to Michael. Both events were late-race. Was it mental fatigue? Physical/mental fatigue? Maybe.

"Kimi resisted the temptation to stop under SC conditions, then pulverised his opposition"

Relative to everyone else, Kimi is right there. No doubt about that. What about Monaco 2004, when Kimi, in the lead, resisted the temptation to stop under Safety Car conditions, lost his time cushion and then pulverised his opposition at the restart? You could say that this was just great, on-the-limit

driving – but then you would be missing the cerebral side of it, because Kimi, believe it or not, is human and it is human to wonder if you've done the right thing and therefore to feel the pressure.

Then there's that other, wonderful, Michael-like talent, evident when Kimi has to brake later than he wants in order to command an inside line. He releases the brakes a little, straightens the car, brakes again, making it clear that no one turns in until *he* turns in – and then he's off, a dragster again, clean and easy. No locked inside fronts, no Ralf-like flurries. Just small, effective movements.

The big question, of course, concerns Ross Brawn. Ross's greatest role at Ferrari is that of technical co-ordinator – the engineer who puts together the best package of people, who motivates the team, who controls the technical absolutes. Along the way, though, Ross has

developed a great little sideline of also calling the race-day shots from the pit wall – something he did with Michael Schumacher throughout his F1 career. This was a relationship out of the Jim Clark/Colin Chapman mould – a relationship that Jim once described as bordering on the telepathic. "One minute I'd think to myself, 'What's Dan [Gurney] up to?'" Clark said, "and the next, as if by magic, Colin has the information I need on the pit board. We're on exactly the same wavelength."

When Ross says, "In, Michael in", therefore, Michael doesn't hesitate to wonder (a) why his strategy has suddenly been changed, (b) what is going to happen to the other Ferrari driver, (c) if they know what *he* knows, or (d) if this means a last-minute splash-and-go. He just does it. And Ross knows he is going to just do it. And that is why they're so great together. Ross thinks *exactly* the way Michael thinks – and vice versa. Not 'pretty much' or 'thereabouts'. *Exactly*. Down to the last flux of thought.

Kimi will have no such link – and, in moments when two-way creativity could win the day, that may hurt him.

Technical input

factor three



I DON'T THINK this will be a problem for Kimi. Like Michael, Kimi always drives absolutely on his car's limit, thus making it relatively simple for the engineers to make qualitative judgements. And the engineers – that network of great people who Ross Brawn has stitched together over the years – have been together long enough to be able to survive without the odd suggestion or observation from Michael, assuming, of course, that Michael ever did say to

Ross: "I've just noticed a mega heat-shield on the McLaren. We should get one built and I'll run it at Fiorano next week."

Great feedback, in other words, is only important if the driver isn't as fast as a Michael, a Kimi or a Fernando. The next tier of drivers all *believe* they are on the limit; the problem is that they're performing at *their* limit, not the car's. That is why so many teams appear to chase their tails – to stagnate, or to make little progress – as BMW

were this year, for example, before they began to race Robert Kubica.

Kimi doesn't need to open his mouth, then, in order to do the technical job at Ferrari. He just needs to drive – even though, at McLaren, he proved to be very precise in his comments from the car and in the debriefs.

The big issue, I guess, was that Michael's second home was Fiorano and that, yes, he used to phone his engineers constantly, thirsty for

information from every test, every analysis. Kimi, we know, likes to hibernate when he's not driving the car – hibernate as in hanging with his mates, riding/driving anything on wheels, or swinging a hockey stick. So what will happen now that he is at Ferrari? Will the whole technical structure be irreparably damaged?

I believe that Michael's diligence was more of a motivational thing than a pivotal part of Ferrari's ►



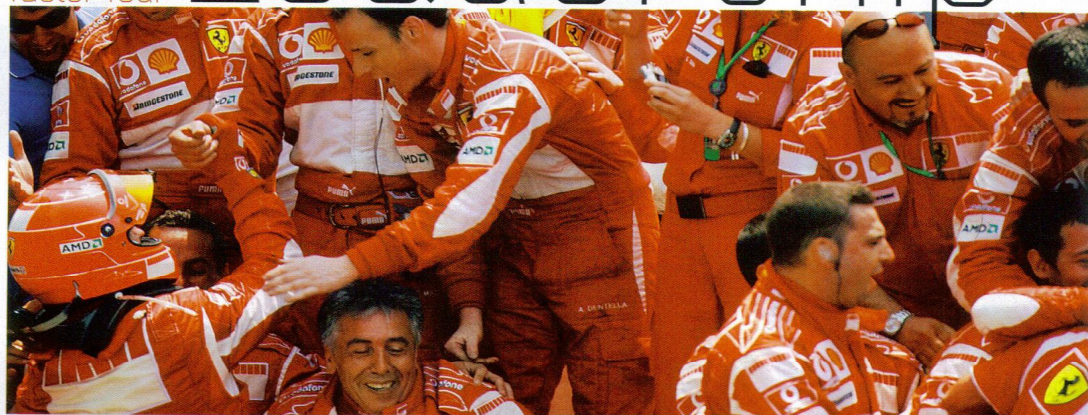
Kimi won't have
the telepathic
link with Ross
Brawn that
Michael enjoyed

technical development. After all, this was pretty much 'his' team. These guys were all loyal to Michael – and he, in turn, repaid them by paying meticulous attention to everyone with whom he worked. Sure, he had much to impart – and the more time he spent with his engineers, the better their performance. Now that the era is over, Kimi's by definition will be different – and will require a different approach. Kimi has no history with the guys; they're not there for Kimi. They are there, instead, for Ferrari. Kimi knows that – and thus their loyalty will be earned in a different way.

In the car. On the stopwatch. On the podium. *That* will be Kimi's technical input.

Leadership

factor four



THIS IS AN interesting one because Felipe Massa, managed by Jean Todt's son, Nicolas, is in there at Ferrari, planning to win more races and prove he's right up there with Kimi for speed and ability. Whether he ever *beats* Kimi is to some extent irrelevant. The key point is that Massa *believes* he can do it. That

makes the new Ferrari team very different from anything we've seen since 1996.

To my mind, this is Ferrari's biggest hurdle: with Michael, they've proved a million times over that a team maximise their title chances by running a clear one/two driver line-up; Williams and McLaren have

proved, by contrast, that a team neutralise their championship potential by allowing their equal-status drivers to take points from each other. I'm not talking team orders here, because the odds of (a) an opportunity arising that justifies them and/or (b) there being a legal way in which they can be

Schumi (above) was a supreme team motivator; Räikkönen's task (below) will be a massive one



applied, are about 100 to one. No, I'm talking the nuances of Ferrari being Michael's team and everyone thus naturally falling into line. Michael would do the tests that he and Ross deemed crucial; Michael alone would run the option tyres on Friday because there was a chance they'd be raceable, and the primes he already knew. The little things. The things that shaped a championship.

Without Michael, Ferrari will inevitably become FERRARI SpA Sefac (Società Esercizio Fabbriche Automobili e Corse), and the 'leadership' will be – what? Jean Todt? Luca Montezemolo? There's nothing wrong with those two in isolation – but where will the delineation be between Ferrari trying to win the championship and Ferrari finding the best route towards winning the championship? With Michael, they never had to make that choice. Now, on

"Ferrari, pre-Michael, could win a handful of races but *not* a championship"

paper, there is no reason to think Ferrari will handle this problem any more successfully than have Williams or McLaren in the past; on the contrary, Ferrari proved, pre-Michael, to be good at winning a handful of races but *not* a championship.

Kimi can do little about this. He'll be on a massive learning curve and will be assuming that the best way to win a title is to win as many races as possible. Quite right – except that Felipe, now that he is a winner, will be thinking the same way. That is what makes all this so different.

Beyond that, remember that Kimi, unlike Michael, is focused more on tomorrow and the next race than on the longer-term championship. Ferrari won't feel this for a while, because the Michael Syndrome won't instantly evaporate with his departure, but it will in time become evident. Kimi is a free Finnish spirit. Michael is a teutonic, championship-winning driving machine. There is a difference. ▸

THE KEY FIGURES IN KIMI'S FERRARI JIGSAW

The success of the Räikkönen/Ferrari adventure will, ultimately, depend a great deal on personal chemistry. So, who are the key people that Kimi must work with?

MANAGEMENT

Ferrari's president, **Luca Montezemolo**, is the biggest cheese, and a self-confessed Kimi fan; and MD and team principal **Jean Todt** has long rhapsodised about Kimi. No probs there, then – other than the huge weight of expectation. Todt is likely to retire soon, however, and technical director **Ross Brawn** could take the top job, perhaps after a sabbatical.



TECHNICAL

Chassis designer **Rory Byrne** stays on as design and development consultant until the end of 2007, although day-to-day design decisions will be taken by the talented head of design and development, **Aldo Costa**, and chief designer **Nicolas Tombazis**. **Paolo Martinelli** remains as engine director. Will Kimi have much to do with any of them? Probably not. He'll simply want to drive.



ENGINEERING

Ferrari have yet to name Kimi's race engineer. Rumours of the appointment of engineers from other teams suggest that **Chris Dyer**, Schumi's race engineer, is either moving on – or up. **Rob Smedley** is likely to remain as Felipe Massa's engineer. **Luca Baldisserri**, currently chief race engineer, would have a bigger part to play in calling Kimi's strategy if Brawn disappears.



DRIVERS

Luca Badoer will show Kimi the ropes. No one knows Ferrari better – he has been their test driver since 2000. Equally experienced tester **Marc Gené** will be a useful source of advice, too, as Kimi adjusts to a Bridgestone-shod Ferrari chassis. A healthy relationship with teammate **Felipe Massa** would also be beneficial – since he's managed by the boss's son, Nicolas Todt.



THE WILD CARD

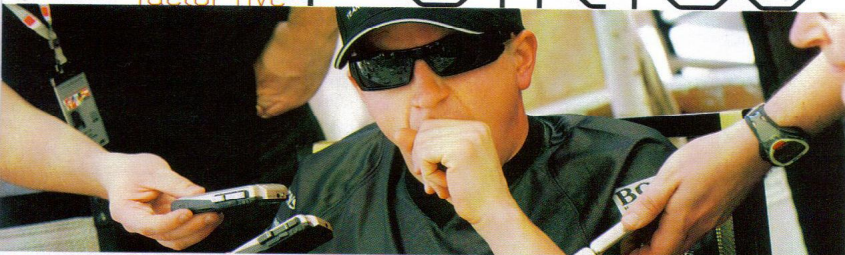
It will be interesting to see how **Michael Schumacher's** future role at Ferrari is fine tuned. Schumacher must remain hands-off enough to let Kimi establish himself, but involved enough, at least in the short-term, to ease the transition for his beloved team – and their new driver.

Robert Holmes



Politics

factor five



GENERAL POLITICS will not affect Kimi. On the contrary, his ability to remain completely unmoved by what is written or said about him in the media; his total lack of interest in unions such as the Grand Prix Drivers' Association; his ambivalence about dignitaries; his ability to shrug off anything that is thrown at him, be it a penalty, an engine failure or a messed-up pit stop; his fondness for saying nothing; his penchant for leaving the track as early as possible and minding his own business – these will all be positive counterbalances for a Ferrari team who will be more 'political' than they've been over the past decade. (I say "more 'political'" because this will be a Ferrari team without Michael – without a central pillar. As such, the various support structures will naturally increase in strength and hence not always be centrally focused.)

There is another kind of politics in F1, however – an area in which Michael excelled. I refer, of course, to his ability to maximise Ferrari's (and thus his own) chances of winning by reading the regulations, looking at the variables and playing his options. While Williams, for example, enticed Michelin back into F1 *without* creating some sort of medium-term exclusivity clause, Michael (working with Brawn, Todt etc) managed to create a situation that enabled

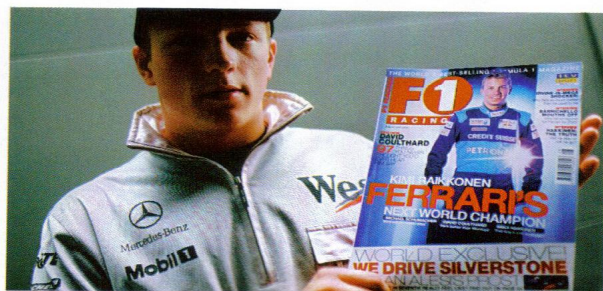
Ferrari, virtually alone, to race with Bridgestones. As a result, he helped himself to another couple of championships. The outside world merely saw McLaren switching from Bridgestones to Michelins; Michael saw Ferrari with an unfair advantage.

Can Kimi play a similar role in the most powerful team in the business? I think not. Kimi is about as interested in thinking laterally, or long-term, as I am, sadly, in playing ice-hockey. Of course, the residue of the Michael era will still be there for a while. Montezemolo and Todt and Brawn (if he remains) will endeavour to think the same way they did with Michael, to look for the same political moves. The catalyst, though, will be gone, and the original (political) ideas, as a result, will be fewer.

Michael has said he is looking at playing a role within the Ferrari/Fiat family, so perhaps this will be it – a sort of political consultancy that looks not at the FIA's sporting or technical codes or at engineering specifics but at championship strategy in general. At the Unfair Advantage.

Whether Michael would actually want to help someone like Kimi is, of course, another matter. I can see Michael eager to help Ferrari, and wanting to assist Felipe. But Kimi? I'm sure Michael would say that Kimi needs no help from anyone. And thus it would begin...

In August 2001, F1 Racing predicted that Kimi would be Ferrari's next world champion



MIND THE LAP...

Perhaps Ferrari will do well to take a leaf out of McLaren's book

For raw speed, Kimi Räikkönen is as good as anyone in the history of Formula 1. As such, of course, he is capable of winning championships.

He got as near as dammit in 2003 and 2005, and his eventual failure in both years could be blamed on poor car reliability rather than any failing on his part.

But, in order to dredge out of him the world-beating performances we've seen since McLaren hired him in late 2001, Ron Dennis and his not-always-so-merry men have had to work extremely hard on their young superstar's human frailties – including, it has to be said, his penchant for the odd light ale.

'Stand by your man', at least in public, is a maxim by which Ron Dennis lives his professional life. For that reason, he will never publicly reveal the efforts that he and a few trustees went to, these past five seasons, to keep Kimi on the (relatively) straight 'n' narrow. "We all make mistakes. We all have demons," is his favourite get-out clause if challenged directly on the point.

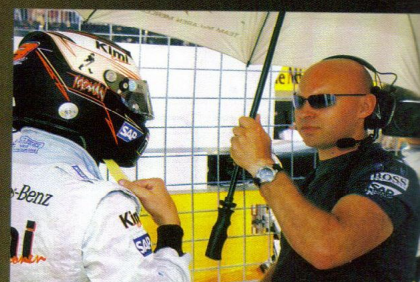
But his and those hand-picked colleagues' efforts were substantial – and were spearheaded by Mark Arnall, Kimi's physio. A McLaren employee for the past decade, Mark cut his teeth on Mika Häkkinen – and Mika was happy to admit that Mark's input was a hugely valuable part of his title-winning infrastructure. And it's true: Mark married a Finnish girl, learnt Finnish and moved to Monaco when he was working with Mika. Now he hangs out in Helsinki, down the road from Kimi's place.

Kimi has always required a lot more 'care' than Mika – or, let's face it, the man he's replacing at Ferrari, Michael Schumacher, who got all the support he needed from Jean Todt, his team boss and friend.

So, do Ferrari know what they're getting? Let's hope so. Kimi himself seems to. At Monza, he revealed, he's hired Mark – "to carry on looking after me at Ferrari".

Good luck to them both.

Robert Holmes



Mark Arnall (right) is both fitness trainer and Kimi's protective shield

Ron Dennis and his McLaren heavies often had to rescue Kimi from himself



'LEADERSHIP' AND 'RACE CRAFT': they are causes for concern. What's more, if Michael is to play any future role – *if* – you can be sure his sympathies will lie more with Felipe than with Kimi. Yes, Michael will want 'his' team to keep on winning: more power to Michael, though, if Felipe, his 'protégé', can win, too, and if Kimi finds it... not as easy as they said it was going to be.

As for technical feedback, the matter rests somewhat on the commitment of Ross Brawn. The fear, from Kimi's point of view, must be that Ross will take not just one year off but two or three... and end up either fishing professionally or switching to Toyota for \$30 million.

Plug Kimi into a quick, competitive car and he will win. Period. Definitely... providing, of course, that all goes to plan, that he's done his homework, doesn't make the odd mistake, and that Felipe doesn't interfere.

And that Fernando, cool, calm and almost unnoticed in a better-balanced McLaren team, is not at the same time notching up clear points and race wins, too. **FO**

09

BELGIUM 2002**TAKE THAT – AND THEN SOME**

A LESSON IN HOW, UTTERLY, TO DESTROY YOUR OPPOSITION

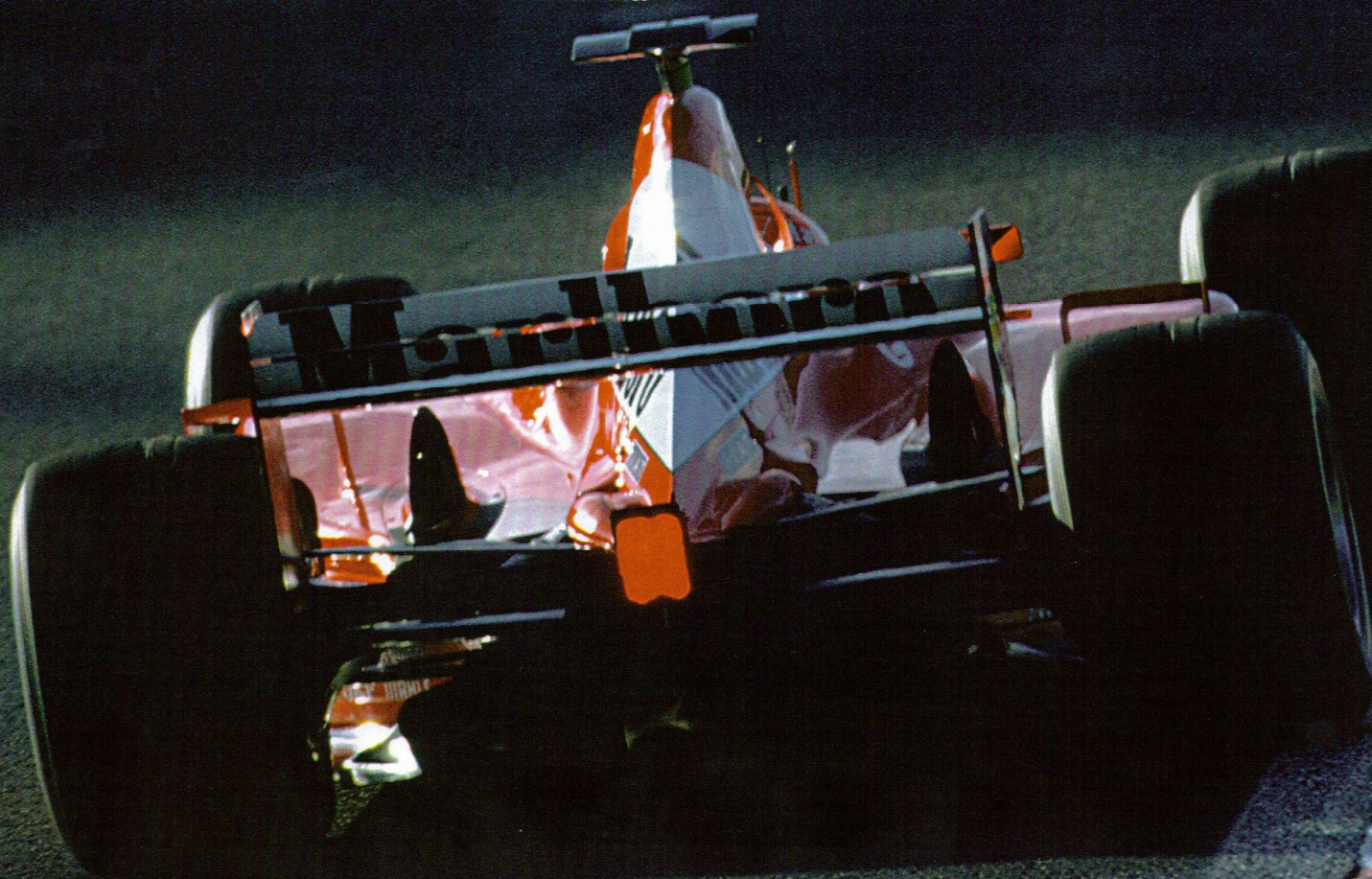
Started P1

Finished P1

Here were Ferrari and Michael at the peak of their powers. Schumi didn't have to push, but the F2002 was so good that he nailed it for the simple joy of doing so. Perhaps he was also mindful that, championship decided, he'd let team-mate Rubens Barrichello win the previous race, in Hungary. So now was the moment to reassert himself. And Michael destroyed him. Admittedly, he was on soft Bridgestones and Rubens on hards; even so, he had 26sec in hand before he backed off.

"At first, I watched my pace for a few laps, to look after the tyres, but after that... I just enjoyed myself, honestly. At certain periods I had to save the tyres, but otherwise I just went flat-out as much as I could"

Michael Schumacher



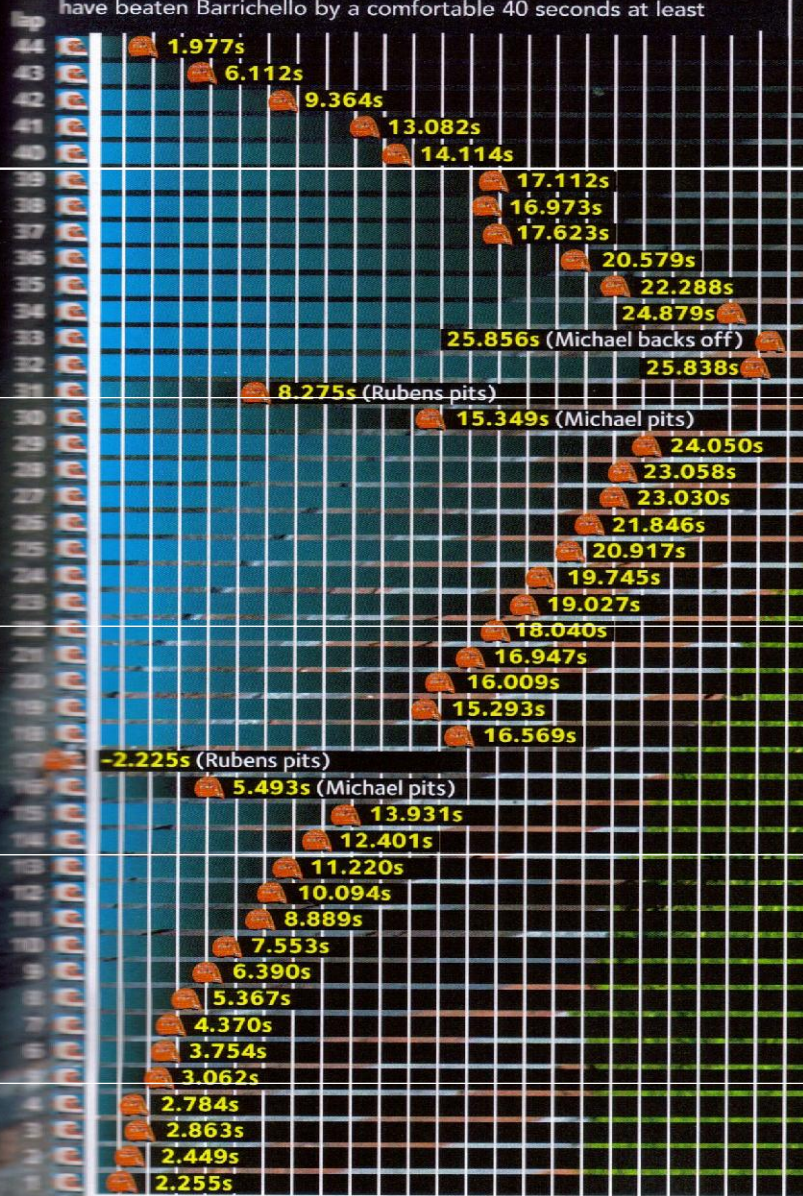
GENIUS.

Pure and simple.



THE TALE OF DEVASTATION

This graphic illustrates the gap from Rubens to Michael on every lap of the race. Had he kept on pushing, Schumacher could well have beaten Barrichello by a comfortable 40 seconds at least



GENIUS RANKING 18/25



Ability ★★★★★
 Brain ★★★★★
 Heart ★★★★★
 Balls ★★★★★
 Brawn ★★★★★

If you're in any danger of losing sight of why Michael Schumacher belongs in the pantheon of great Formula 1 drivers, then linger here a while. From 9 to 1, we count down the races that prove his unarguable supremacy

Words Dom Taylor
 Additional research
 Will Hings and www.forix.com

We've all seen them, marvelled at them, been stunned by them. Some of us may also have groaned at their predictability. But they are those moments when Michael Schumacher has done something so special, so extraordinary, that, whether you're a Schumi fan or not, you cannot ignore the fact that you are witnessing motor-racing greatness.

And here are the nine races that most clearly illustrate Michael's genius moments in a racing career thick with such skill and calculation – the clichéd champagne moments, if you like, that crown his career. Not that they're all wins – indeed, you might argue that some of his greatest victories are not on our list. But the priority here is strokes of genius, not simply wins.

For each champagne moment, we've rated Schumi's performance in five areas to produce an overall Genius Rating: Ability, Brain, Heart, Balls and Brawn (as in Ross Brawn, Ferrari's technical director, and so representing strategic nous rather than outright muscle). The rest are self-explanatory. So, which is Michael's most genius champagne moment ever? Read on... ▷



THE MAKING OF A LEGEND

08

AUSTRIA 2003

THE KING OF COOL

WHO ELSE COULD WIN AFTER A PIT-STOP FIRE?

Started P1

Finished P1

Michael should have lost Austria 2003 – twice over. Instead, he won it twice. Once in qualifying, having cocked up Turn 2 on his hot lap. And once in the race, after a pit-stop fire. It was a weekend that proved providence was on Michael's side.

MIRACLE 1: QUALIFYING

After the first sector, Schumi was already 0.2sec down on Kimi Räikkönen's time. Then he compounded things by getting it completely wrong into Turn 2, locking up a rear wheel and missing the apex by a full car width. We'd have all understood if he'd given up. But Schumi doesn't – can't – think like that.

A straight-line speed advantage of 2.5mph over the McLaren in an aggressive middle sector reduced the gap to 0.05sec. He therefore carried more speed through Turn 6 than Kimi, and was tidy through the final two corners to take pole by a heart-stopping 0.039sec.

MIRACLE 2: SECOND PIT STOP

It was 20.4sec of drama that should have cost Michael the race. The fuel nozzle jammed and began leaking fuel into the filler. Flames erupted around the nozzle. Schumi glanced casually to the right, no visible sign of panic. Finally the nozzle was freed. More flames. Three Ferrari mechanics with fire extinguishers pounced. The lollipop man calmly gave the signal to go. Michael pulled out, wiping foam from his visor with his hand as he checked his mirrors. Impossibly cool.

GENIUS RANKING 19/25



Ability	★★★★☆
Brain	★★★★☆
Heart	★★★★☆
Balls	★★★★☆
Brawn	★★★★☆

FRANCE 2004

LEFT-FIELD THINKING FOUR-STOP STRATEGY, ANYONE?

Started P2
Finished P1

07

Michael v Fernando Alonso at Magny-Cours 2004 was a masterclass in strategic thinking by Ferrari's Luca Badoer. A four-stop strategy was unheard of, but Magny-Cours's short pit lane and Michael's relentless pace made it work. Alonso's quick-starting Renault was on pole, so Michael, in the faster car, knew he'd be stuck behind Alonso (overtaking is notoriously tricky here). A four-stop strategy, while no faster, would, in theory, at least get him out of sync with the Renault and release the Ferrari. Here's how it panned out:

Lap 1-11 Schumi running a close second behind Alonso

Lap 11 Schumi is first to pit for tyres and fuel, a quick stop of just 7.4sec

Lap 14 Alonso pits, rejoins still in P1, his lead up to 2.8sec

Lap 25 Schumi reduces Alonso's lead to nothing; Ross Brawn makes the call to switch to the Badoer-conceived four-stopper

Lap 29 Schumi makes a very short second stop, then rejoins to produce the fastest laps of the race

Lap 32 Alonso's second stop – fuelled shorter to try to keep track position – but he rejoins just behind Schumacher. Michael now has to build enough of a lead to pit twice more to Alonso's once and still retain the lead

Lap 42 Schumi, 5.5sec in lead, makes a third stop of just 6.5sec

Lap 46 Alonso's third stop, rejoins 11.5sec behind. A pit stop at Magny-Cours is 11 sec plus stationary time – so Schumi has 16 laps to extend his lead by about 7.0sec

Lap 49 In a car 30kg lighter than Alonso's, and with his Bridgestones in the zone, Schumi's lead starts to grow. He's 0.4sec quicker per lap, then 0.5sec, then 0.9sec, then 1.4sec, 1.0sec, 1.2sec, 1.4sec, 1.4sec, 1.5sec.

Lap 62 Michael makes his final stop with comfortable 20sec lead. The win is in the bag

GENIUS RANKING 20/25



Ability	★★★★☆
Brain	★★★★☆
Heart	★★★★☆
Balls	★★★★☆
Brawn	★★★★☆

Badoer claims the winning team's gong for his four-stop strategy at Magny-Cours '04





06

SPAIN 1994

GEARS? WHO NEEDS GEARS?

SNATCHES A PODIUM AFTER 42 LAPS IN FIFTH GEAR

Started P1

Finished P2

Michael was already Formula 1's Next Big Thing, but at Barcelona, exactly one month after Ayrton Senna's death at Imola, he proved himself a worthy successor – spending 42 laps of the Spanish Grand Prix stuck in fifth gear, but still finishing second.

These are the lap times he did before his gearbox packed in:

1m30.840s, 1m26.971s, 1m26.552s, 1m26.462s, 1m25.936s, 1m25.709s, 1m25.713s, 1m25.597s, 1m27.542s, 1m25.553s, 1m25.768s, 1m27.202s, 1m25.608s, 1m27.214s, 1m25.770s, 1m26.341s, 1m25.694s, 1m25.155s, 1m26.009s, 1m27.732s, 1m37.326s (in lap), 2m2.829s (out lap)

For his second and third stints, he adapted his driving style to the problem, so was still able to lap in the 1m27s – even dipping into the 26s on occasion – despite having only fifth gear. It was an exceptional performance.

1m31.835s, 1m31.503s, 1m29.368s, 1m30.282s, 1m29.634s, 1m28.438s, 1m28.740s, 1m27.970s, 1m27.129s, 1m27.277s, 1m27.193s, 1m27.576s, 1m27.674s, 1m27.061s, 1m28.687s, 1m28.571s, 1m26.340s, 1m26.171s, 1m26.884s, 1m28.140s, 1m32.870s, 1m28.050s, 1m34.742s (in lap), 1m52.749s (out lap), 1m27.950s, 1m27.468s, 1m27.720s, 1m28.066s, 1m27.882s, 1m27.514s, 1m26.983s, 1m27.202s, 1m28.802s, 1m28.803s, 1m27.896s, 1m28.297s, 1m28.873s, 1m28.853s, 1m31.903s, 1m30.877s, 1m32.240s, 1m31.417s, 1m35.387s

“My experience in Group C sports cars helped me in this, because I learnt a lot of ways of running differently, of changing my driving style, usually to save fuel. I used that same driving style and it helped me a lot” Michael Schumacher

GENIUS RANKING 20/25



Ability ★★★★★
Brain ★★★★★
Heart ★★★★★
Balls ★★★★★
Brawn ★★★★★

05

CANADA 2003

BRAKES? WHO NEEDS BRAKES?

THE ART OF WINNING WHILE DISABLED

Started P3

Finished P1

You can overtake in Canada, that's the thing. So when Michael crossed the line in first place with a train of three cars right behind him (Ralf Schumacher, Juan Pablo Montoya and Fernando Alonso), after driving more than half the race with terminally worn brakes, Ferrari's technical director, Ross Brawn, was inspired to claim it was “one of the best races I have ever seen”. In short, Ferrari got their brakes badly wrong. There had been little dry running during the weekend, but data from a pre-Montreal Monza test suggested they would be okay in a dry race. They weren't. Montreal is often a brake killer, but Michael destroyed them in double-quick time running second behind his brother. He'd had to push in order to be in a position to pinch the lead in the first round of stops (which he did, in typical Michael style) and then control the race from the front (which he also did).

“There was nothing we could do in this first stint because we couldn't drop back from Ralf; we needed to be there at pit-stop time. We just had to let him wear them [Michael's brakes] and try to recover afterwards. We breathed a sigh of relief when we got to the chequered flag. The strategy worked well but the deciding factor was the way Michael drove. He really drove fantastically well. I'd say it was one of his best races.”

Ross Brawn

GENIUS RANKING 21/25



Ability ★★★★★
Brain ★★★★★
Heart ★★★★★
Balls ★★★★★
Brawn ★★★★★

SPAIN 1996

THE RAINMEISTER

FOUR SECONDS A LAP QUICKER IN THE WET THAN ANYONE ELSE? HELLO...

Started P3

Finished P1

04

It was one of those days when Michael's rivals were humbled. All they could do was admit defeat, and acknowledge an otherworldly performance:



“Where was Michael's advantage? Everywhere! He was much quicker in the corners, and that's all there was to it. It was okay for the first few laps, until he got in my mirrors. As long as he was behind me, he couldn't see as well. But then he just flew by me, and once he got in front he just left me standing.” Jacques Villeneuve, Williams, third



“I had no chance to follow Michael.” Jean Alesi, Benetton, second



“I've no explanation for it. We made some final changes after the warm-up, which suited the car even more, and our strategy – two stops – was perfect. I was freezing in the car, and it was so bloody cold on the podium that my teeth were chattering louder than an engine.”

Michael Schumacher, Ferrari, first ▶

GENIUS RANKING 21/25



Ability ★★★★★
Brain ★★★★★
Heart ★★★★★
Balls ★★★★★
Brawn ★★★★★



03

MALAYSIA 1999

SECOND TO NONE

THE GREATEST TEAM DRIVE EVER

Started P1
Finished P2



Mika Häkkinen:

"I was pissed off! It was the hardest race I've ever done. Michael wasn't consistent in the fast corners. I always had to be careful in case he was going to brake there or in surprising places. I was pushing him very hard, but passing him was always risky. He was sometimes quick and sometimes slow, and accelerating in funny places. I had to be careful not to run into him."

Why was Michael driving like this? Because delaying Häkkinen was the only way he could ensure that his team-mate, Eddie Irvine, won the race. Schumi had at least a second of raw pace over Irvine, but, following his Silverstone accident in which he broke a leg that put him out of the championship for six races, it was Irvine who was in the title hunt. In this first race back, Michael set about reminding everyone that it should have been him, while keeping Häkkinen at bay to gift Irvine the victory.



Eddie Irvine:

"Michael is depressing. He's the best number one and the best number two."

Martin Brundle sums up:

"He was in a class of his own. He spent the entire afternoon trying to go slowly and, even then, he had to give away the race lead. Twice!"



Welcome back, Michael. Schumi looks pleased with his afternoon's work – while poor Mika looks wasted

GENIUS RANKING 22/25



Ability ★★★★★
Brain ★★★★★
Heart ★★★★★
Balls ★☆☆☆☆
Brawn ★★★★★

02

BELGIUM 1995

SLIPPERY WHEN WET

AUDACIOUS WIN IN THE RAIN FROM 16TH ON THE GRID

Started P16
Finished P1

PHASE ONE: The romp to the front. It took Michael just 16 laps to jig his way from 16th to first:

- Lap one dispatches Katayama, Boullion and Salo: P13
- Lap two breezes past Barrichello and Frentzen: P10
- Lap three makes light work of Brundle and Panis: P8
- Lap four Alesi retires: P7
- Lap six passes Blundell, Herbert spins: P5
- Lap 11 takes Irvine: P4
- Lap 14 Coulthard pits from lead: P3
- Lap 15 Berger pits from second: P2
- Lap 16 Hill pits from lead: P1

PHASE TWO: Tactical genius and ruthless thuggery. Damon Hill's Williams was faster on the day than Michael's Benetton, but Schumi gambled big on tyre choice, producing incredible skill to stay out on slicks during two wet periods. Hill, by contrast, was technically on the 'right' tyres at every stage, but had to pit five times in total – and that included a stop-go penalty for speeding in the pit lane.

- Lap 18 Schumi pits, rejoins on slicks: P2 behind Hill
 - Lap 21 rain starts, Hill pits for wets. Schumi stays out on slicks
 - Lap 22 On a soaking track, Hill catches Michael quickly, but can't get past
 - Lap 23 Hill tries a move at Les Combes, Michael cuts him up, banging his right rear wheel against Hill's front left, slightly damaging Hill's steering
 - Lap 24 Schumi runs wide at Les Combes, Hill takes lead
 - Lap 25 rain stops
 - Lap 26 Hill pits for slicks on a drying track, Schumi takes lead
- The FIA took a token dim view of Schumi's antics on lap 23, giving him a suspended one-race ban, but allowing the result to stand. Ruthless genius rewarded. ▶



GENIUS RANKING 23/25



Ability ★★★★★
Brain ★★★★★
Heart ★★★★★
Balls ★★★★★
Brawn ★★★★★

01

HUNGARY 1998

YOUR MISSION, SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT IT...

BRAWN ASKS, SCHUMACHER DELIVERS

Started P3

Finished P1

"You have 19 laps to build up a 25-second lead"

Ross Brawn

"Thank you very much"

Michael Schumacher

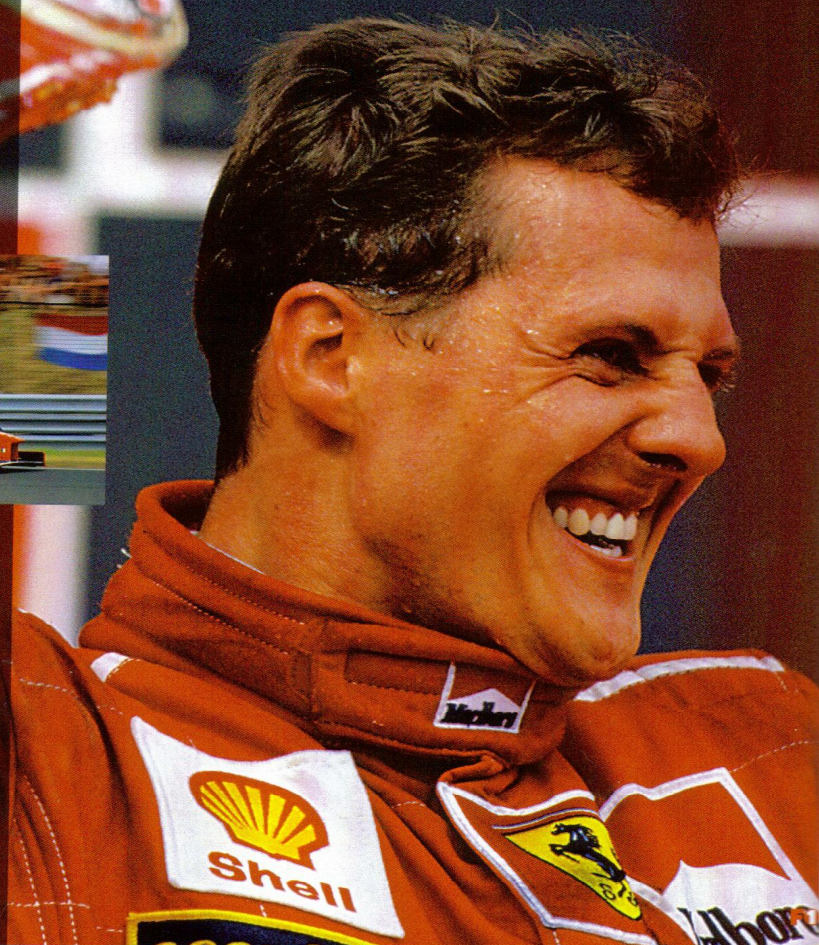
McLaren were outfoxed by a combination of Ross Brawn's daring three-stop strategy and Schumacher's brilliance in making it work. It was a strategy Brawn knew he could ask only of Michael – no other driver would have been up to it.

"Ross told me, 'You have 19 laps to build up a 25-second lead'," said Michael. "I said, 'Thank you very much!'"

And, of course, he delivered. It was lap 43. He needed to find the time in order to make his third and final stop on lap 62 and emerge still in the lead. Here are the astonishing laps that followed:

Lap 44 1m38.655s (out lap)
Lap 45 1m19.918s
Lap 46 1m19.594s
Lap 47 1m20.694s
Lap 48 1m19.805s
Lap 49 1m20.640s
Lap 50 1m21.286
Lap 51 1m20.302s
Lap 52 1m25.822s
Lap 53 1m20.672s
Lap 54 1m19.857s
Lap 55 1m21.008s
Lap 56 1m20.163s
Lap 57 1m20.106s
Lap 58 1m19.625s
Lap 59 1m19.966s
Lap 60 1m19.286s
Lap 61 1m19.510s
Lap 62 1m24.217s (in lap)
Lap 63 1m41.326s (out lap)

While Michael was banging in the 1m19s, DC couldn't manage anything below a 1m21.2s. As a result, Schumi built a lead of 29sec – emerging after his final pit stop a comfortable 5.0sec in front of Coulthard. Job done. **F1**



GENIUS RANKING 25/25



Ability ★★★★★
Brain ★★★★★
Heart ★★★★★
Balls ★★★★★
Brawn ★★★★★

AN F1 RACING GUIDE TO YOUTUBE

Words Dom Taylor

From a standing start in Feb 2005 to worldwide phenomenon today, Youtube now enjoys 100 million video hits a day. Here are a few favourites

If you're not into YouTube (www.youtube.com), you're just not getting the most out of your F1 these days. The free internet video site – and similar sites such as Googlevideo and Metacafe – is now the way for F1 fans to ensure a daily fix. The F1 Racing office is full of YouTube addicts (it's work – that's our excuse).

However, the good times may not last for ever. Formula One Management, who own the rights to all moving pictures of grand prix action, are cracking down on copyright infringement.

"Where we find that sites such as YouTube contain material that belongs to us we will ask them to remove it," an FOM spokesperson told us. "We're confident that they'll co-operate." In short, they reckon this stuff shouldn't be up there. For now, though, we suggest you make hay while the YouTube sun shines.

AWESOME ON-BOARD

Nothing like sitting on your hero's helmet for a quick lap or 12

Search for **Alonso Hungary 2006**

Fernando evokes memories of Senna at Donington 1993 as he scythes through the field in the wet, making everyone else look very ordinary.



Haibreg - Alonso onboard hungria hungaroring 2006

Search for **Mika Spa 2000**

Two laps on board with Mika Häkkinen. On the first Michael blocks him dangerously; on the second Mika pulls off one of the greatest overtaking moves of all time going into Les Combes.



Mika Hakkinen Spa 2000

Search for **Long Beach F1 1978**

You think Patrick Depailler is pushing hard. Then he starts his hot lap and you see the real meaning of commitment. Hardcore stuff.

Search for **On board Tyrrell P34**

You've heard of the six wheeler – now see it in action, with the cockpit bodywork stripped so you can even see Depailler heel-and-toeing.

Search for **Jim Clark Oulton Park** A rare chance to see Clark's smoothness first hand from an on-board camera.

MEGA OVERTAKING

Re-live those massive, heart-stopping moments again and again

Search for **Alonso 130R**

One of the boldest, most audacious moves of all time – around the outside of Schumi through the fearsome 130R curve at Suzuka 2005. Incredible speed and commitment.



Alonso 130R

Search for **Montoya Räikkönen**

Never let it be said that Montoya couldn't do the stuff. Here he totally out-muscles Kimi. A breathtaking display of both overtaking and TV direction.



raikkonen montoya

Search for **Best F1 overtaking**

A medley of the best overtaking moves of the past 20 years, from Mansell v Piquet (Silverstone 1987) to Montoya v Schumi (Brazil 2001).

Search for **Mansell Berger**

Incredibly daring move by Nigel on the last lap of the 1990 Mexican GP, making it stick around the outside of Gerhard.



Mansell overtook Berger at the Grand Prix of Mexico

Search for **Piquet Senna 1986**

Talk about bravery. Piquet's move on Senna at the Hungaroring in 1986 is as daring as it gets. Nelson is totally sideways.



Piquet Vs. Senna Hungaroring 1986

FUNNY STUFF

The best thing about such moments is that we'll be laughing for ever

Search for **Montoya camera man**

"You fucking idiot! You broke my fucking head!" explodes Montoya after a TV cameraman inadvertently bangs into him. Note how automatic Connie's restraining reflex is. She knows her man. Beautifully caught.



Juan Pablo Montoya hit by a Camera man!



SENNA

YouTube brings the great man and his unique personality back to life

Search for **Senna irritado**

Ayrton storms out of a drivers' briefing. Fascinating insight into the F1 holy of holies at Suzuka 1990. Senna eyes the room with contempt before walking out in protest during a safety debate.



Search for **Senna NSX**

Ayrton in a Honda NSX at Suzuka. A camera mounted in the footwell actually shows him heel-and-toeing. Amazing throttle control – and some very white socks.



Search for **Senna Stewart**

Senna being interviewed by Jackie Stewart. Worth watching just to hear Senna patronisingly call JYS "Stewart" after Jackie touches a raw nerve.



Search for **Senna Monaco 1989**

Senna's Monaco wonder lap. He said he went beyond the limit when he drove this lap. You'll see why.

Search for **Senna Donington 1993**

Ayrton's McLaren makes everyone else look pathetically pedestrian in the streaming wet as he overtakes five cars to lead at the end of the first lap.

ARCHIVE

Heroic (and not-so-heroic) deeds from the past

Search for **Nürburgring 1957**

Rare footage of Juan Manuel Fangio's incredible victory for Maserati over the Lancia-Ferraris of Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins, both of whom he passed on the penultimate lap after making up almost a minute.

Search for **Brabham Monaco 1970**

Jack Brabham reveals

Nürburgring 1957



Schumi's inspiration for his parking antics at Rascasse this year, getting it all wrong on the last lap at Monaco in 1970 – letting Jochen Rindt through for a famous victory. Fantastic.

Search for **Ronnie Kyalami**

1978 Peterson chases down and passes Patrick Depailler to take the chequered flag at the South African GP.

Search for **Coulthard wall**

DC hits the wall on the entry to the pit lane while leading the 1995 Australian Grand Prix.

Search for **Kimi boat**

An apparently drunk Kimi loses his balance and falls from the top deck of his boat onto his head, much to the amusement

of assembled onlookers.

Search for **Fucking Räikkönen**

"Fucking, fucking Räikkönen! What a fucking idiot!" Montoya rants having been blocked by Kimi during practice at Spa 2002.

Search for **Speed boner**

"Last night I had a boner this big!" boasts our mate Scott.

Search for **Schumacher hits**

pit Michael overshoots his pit box and wipes out his front jack man (who's okay, though).

Search for **Piquet Salazar**

What a kick! Piquet spews anger at his mate Eliseo Salazar for punting them both out at Hockenheim 1982.

CONTROVERSY

Funny how they all seem to involve Michael Schumacher

Search for **Fontana Jerez 1997**

Norberto Fontana claims that Ferrari ordered him to block Villeneuve so Schumi could pull away. Peter Sauber denies it.

Fontana blocking Villeneuve



Search for **Schumacher**

Hill 1994 Michael's first championship win is excruciating to watch. He knew exactly what he was doing.

Search for **Schumacher**

Monaco 2006 Rascasse-gate. Did he park it? Judge for yourself – from three different camera angles.

Michael Schumacher - Monaco - 2006 - quail



Search for **Schumacher**

Frentzen 1998 Schumi steams out of the pits and straight into Frentzen. Patrick Head goes crazy.

YOUR YOUTUBE

Found any hidden F1 gems on YouTube? We want to hear about them. Send the links to our usual address: letters.f1racing@haynet.com **FO**

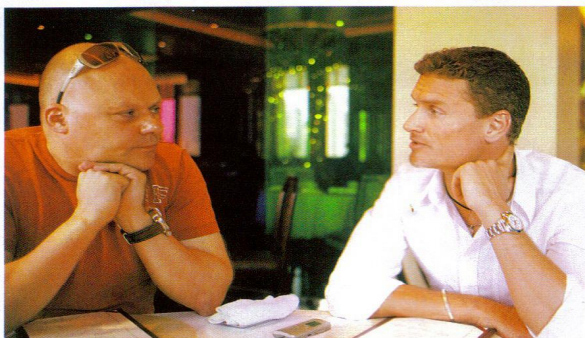


DC'S ANCIENT CHINESE PROVERB:

"IF QUICK DRIVER WANT TO BE OLD DRIVER, HE MUST ALSO BE QUICK THINKER"

On a tour-lite of Shanghai during Chinese GP week, DC – a 13-season veteran – shares a few sharp thoughts on the FIA, GPDA and safety

Bishop takes in the experienced DC's niggles and FIA concerns as well as his love of the sport



Interview Matt Bishop
Photographs Steven Tee/LAT

WE MEET AT THE Shanghai Portman Ritz Carlton Hotel, which is on Nanjing Xi Lu, a street that's not only a thoroughfare but an emblem of the People's Republic of China's long march from the Mao Zedong era to card-carrying communo-capitalism, if such a thing can exist. For next to this imposing five-star hotel are ritzy outlets of western luxu-chains such as Prada, Gucci and Louis Vuitton, yet all around are skinny, poor and knackered-looking workers wobbling about their business on rickety bicycles.

Such people's average annual earnings are, according to a Chinese Government survey of 2004, 16,000 Yuan (\$2023). Rural people get a lot less. A main grandstand ticket for the 2006 Chinese Grand Prix costs 2680 Yuan (\$339) – or nine weeks' wages for the man on the Shanghai omnibus.

It's lunchtime on Wednesday September 27, and, although we don't actually discuss such disparities, we – Steven Tee (*F1 Racing's* photographer) and I – are aware that David is clocking the nuances just as we are. He's a grown-up, you see – and, unlike some of his peers, takes a genuine interest in the world outside Formula 1.

Yes, he's also wealthy; yes, he enjoys the fruits of his long success in F1; yes, he leads a luxurious (and tax-efficient) life in a very different place from where we are now. And that very different place is, of course, Monaco – which elite principality English novelist and playwright Somerset Maugham once described as "a sunny place for shady people".

That description may to some extent still be apt, but it doesn't apply to DC. Although he'd probably blanch at the description, David reckons to be, and is, a good citizen. A good F1 citizen, too. He has always loved the sport, and wants to do his bit to make it as good as it possibly can be.

So it is that, over lunch at the Whampoa Club at swanky Three On The Bund (a pleasant stroll from the Portman Ritz Carlton, along alleys lined each side with knick-knack stalls), we talk only briefly about Red Bull Racing and Dietrich Mateschitz and Christian Horner and Adrian Newey and Christian Klien and Robert Doornbos and Mark Webber and Mark Smith and Ben Agathangelou, and whatnot. No, although DC is as ardent about his racing as ever – and finds it hard to suppress his irritation with our guide, Sergei Nikolenko (a Ukrainian, oddly, but a Shanghai resident and fluent in the local lingo), when he asks over coffee whether retirement is on his mind – ▸



Coulthard is keen to correct the "wrong" impression his Schumi remarks have conveyed

"Michael has taken a lot, but given a lot, too. But there are others who just take"



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FAR EAST SPECIAL THE THOUGHTS OF DAVID COULTHARD



simply inaccurate. I have great respect for Michael's on-track achievements, just as I have great appreciation for the way he and I have been able to work together, off track, within the GPDA [Grand Prix Drivers' Association], for the good of the sport.

"That said, there's no question that it must be very difficult for the public to understand some of the things Michael has done on track, and to forgive him for not apologising for having done them. And that's two black marks, isn't it? The first for what he's done, and the second for not saying sorry for doing it. And a sorry would be nice. Or perhaps he genuinely believes he's never done anything wrong, which is even more worrying.

"In a couple of days the new GPDA board will be announced [it was, and it now comprises Ralf Schumacher (chairman), Fernando Alonso and Mark Webber, who will replace the

three previous board members, Jarno Trulli, Schumi and DC] and I haven't put my name forward this time. I've been a director since 1995. That's long enough. But of course I'll remain active.

"I still feel a great responsibility to the sport, because I love it, and I think it's as important to give to it as it is to take from it. Michael has taken a lot, but he's given a lot, too. I've taken less, and given less, but I've certainly given. But there are others who just take. An example is Rubens [Barrichello]. I've raced against him for years and years, and he's a nice guy, and talented, but he just turns up, does his race and buggers off. And he's only one example, and I'm only singling him out because he's been around as long as I have – longer, in fact.

"I tried to encourage Nico [Rosberg] to put himself forward as a potential GPDA director, and his response was, 'No way!' So I said, 'Okay, but why not?' And he said, 'No way am I ready for that.' And I see what he means, but I still think it's a shame that the youngsters don't appear to be that interested in the GPDA. It's the only route via which they can influence their sport, their profession, their livelihood, and yet they don't seem to want to know.

"Don't you think that's odd? I do. I just can't imagine why anyone *wouldn't* want to be active in the only forum via which he can increase the likelihood of his going home safe and sound at the end of a day spent caning one of the 22 fastest cars in the world around a race track. So when someone like Nico says he isn't ready, well, that's bollocks."

He leans back, takes another sip of Tsingtao, and chuckles. He's a good talker – no, make that a *great* talker – when the mood takes him, and the mood has taken him today. And his fervour does him credit. Like his childhood hero and mentor, Jackie Stewart, he passionately believes in the cause of drivers' safety.

And while FIA president Max Mosley claims to be fully supportive of the GPDA's efforts to optimise its members' welfare, he sometimes has a funny way of showing it. Indeed, his often mocking attitude to drivers' public utterances on the subject – epitomised by his remarks in response to their expressions of real concern about the amount of run-off at Monza's second chicane this year – makes him an unpopular figure among the men who risk limb and, yes, even now, life, while playing the sport he regulates. And that's odd, when in ▶

The Oriental Pearl Tower and Huangpu River (above); Red Bull's main man in the pits (left)



DC's conversation tends to focus more on the state of the sport than the state of his team. And all the more so, I fancy, now that Michael Schumacher has finally decided to hang up his famous red Schubert.

"At Monza I told a journalist, on the record, that I think Michael is a great champion but there will always be a question-mark over some of the things he's done," says David, taking a sip of Tsingtao beer. "But that was me, as an F1 fan, making an observation – not me, as a fellow F1 driver, launching a Jacques Villeneuve-style attack on Michael. But the headlines that my Monza remark spawned – 'Coulthard backs Alonso's attack on Schumi' and the like – were

"Coulthard's a good talker – a great talker – when the mood takes him, as it has today"



"When someone like Nico says he isn't ready [to get involved in the GPDA], that's bollocks"

DC checks out a China transport staple – but cars are accelerating into the lives of many millions



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"We aren't about to be intimidated into keeping our mouths shut for fear of getting a slap"

fact he and the FIA (and Bernie Ecclestone, too, for that matter) have done so much these past 15 years to improve safety in F1.

"We have to be prepared to stand up and be counted," says DC, spearing a juicy king prawn. "It isn't just a case of sounding off. No, it's a case of: we have views, and we can back them up with facts, and we aren't about to be intimidated into keeping our mouths shut for fear of getting a slap. And we aren't just shouting ya-boo-sucks at an authority figure. We're asking real questions and want real answers.

"But Monza is a good example of what we sometimes get. Because, instead of real answers, we got a letter from Max saying we were speaking out of turn, and that the terms of our Superlicences include a clause that says we aren't allowed to speak out of turn or against the governing body – etcetera. And that's sad, really, isn't it? Because all we were trying to do was request Max's assistance, in a professional and non-hysterical manner."

Another king prawn is speared. And watching and listening to this intelligent and now super-experienced racing driver, I reflect that it's hard not to be impressed by him, by his rhetoric and spirit. Not only impressed but persuaded. But Mosley seemingly thinks otherwise.

"Of course," he adds, interrupting my train of thought, "this impasse is all the more surprising because Max and Charlie [Whiting, the FIA's safety delegate and race director] have always been such strong advocates of circuit safety and have done the sport a power of good over the years, something I'm damn' grateful for."

On the other hand, perhaps safety isn't the point – or isn't Max's beef, anyway. Perhaps what really gets Max's goat isn't the drivers' speechifying about their desire to stay alive; maybe it's their interest in what they see as their rights in other areas. Yes, rights. Bluntly, the FIA would probably prefer the GPDA never to express an opinion on any subject other than safety – I've heard FIA men say just that, in fact, and it was a concession that Schumi was always happy to make when he was GPDA chairman. But it's a view that clearly riles DC.

"I don't presume to have even a minuscule amount of Max's brain power," he says, "and I have to admit that he's always well prepared and in possession of all the data that the FIA's team of highly skilled

Buttons, badges and communist memorabilia; DC is the only reliable Red Bull points scorer



research engineers have assembled for him – but it's still us, and only us, the drivers, who really know what it's like to follow a car through a wall of spray at somewhere like Spa. In fact, it's only us who know what it's like to drive a modern F1 car, period. Obviously, that's the case. And I can't imagine that at, say, NASA, if a professional body of astronauts were to present their views to the powers-that-be, they'd be told, 'Shut up and prepare for blast-off.'

"Or, put it another way: the FIA recently commissioned a survey to find out what F1 fans think of the sport – and rightly so [91,000 fans took part, and the results will be analysed by a panel of F1 grandees in next month's *F1 Racing*]. I'm all for the fans expressing their views; I'm all for everyone involved in the sport expressing

their views; why, then, must we drivers *not* express ours?"

Our waiter whisks our plates away, and produces dessert menus. There's a silence while we peruse them, but finally we opt for coffees. "When will you retire, David?" our guide then asks, out of the blue.

"I'm enjoying being a racing driver," he replies politely, but you can tell he regards the question as slightly foolish. "Why would I be thinking about retiring? I've just signed a new contract with Red Bull [a new two-year contract, in fact, but he doesn't say that].

"Also, unlike some drivers [I fancy he may be thinking of Mika Häkkinen], I really don't mind all the travelling. In fact, I regard time on an aeroplane as quality time: no mobile phone, no Blackberry, no email, no nothing. Okay, I'm fortunate in that I'm able to take my loved ones with me to grands prix, so it isn't like my life is on hold."

Ah... loved ones. And... specifically, Karen Minier, DC's girlfriend these past 11 months. Is he prepared, today, to reveal as much about his love life as he has about his professional life?

He is: "It isn't that I've never been in love before – because I have – but this time it's a different depth of love, of feeling, of shared experience. And I hope and trust that it'll continue to grow. So, yes, we're engaged. And, at a certain point in time, yes, I want us to be married, and have a family together. And when that certain point in time comes, I hope she'll feel the same way about me."

May all their troubles be little ones. I doubt if they'll call their first son Max, though. **FO**



FAR EAST SPECIAL
**FRANK WILLIAMS
DOES THAMES TOWN**

Made in China

Cars, cameras, teddies – and now the Chinese can duplicate Ye Olde Merrie England. Frank Williams visits Thames Town – a Shanghai suburb

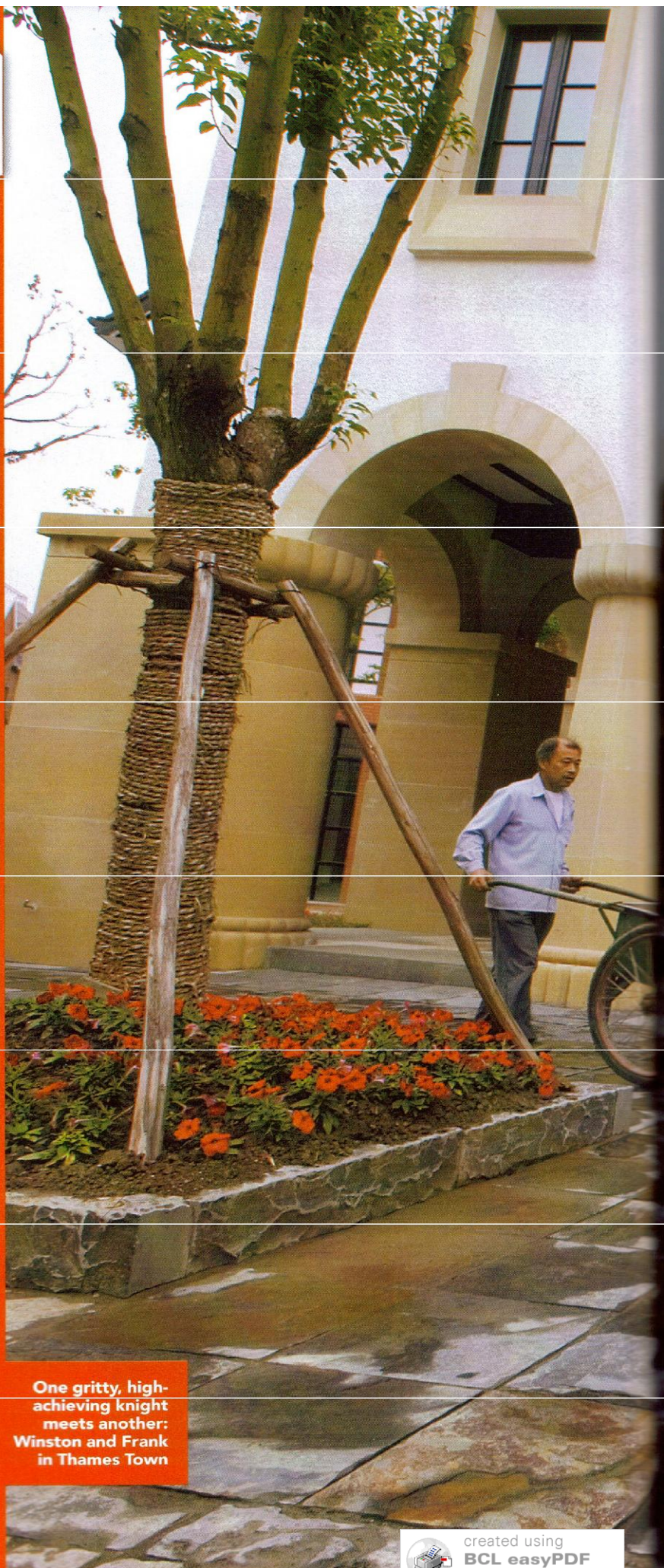
Interview Peter Windsor
Photographs Glenn Dunbar/LAT

This grey, sticky Monday morning in Shanghai finds Sir Francis Owen Williams in Thames Town, about 20 miles out of town, staring at the protruding jaw of Sir Winston Spencer Churchill.

"Top man. Right man at the right time," says Frank in that strained, understated, measured way of his. The conversation turns naturally to Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese *generalissimo* who annoyed Churchill back in 1942 by involving himself in Indian politics in an attempt to win support for the war against Japan. Frank recalls a subsequent incident in New York, when Madame Chiang Kai-shek invited Sir Winston up from Washington but took umbrage when he suggested that they meet half way.

"As I say, top man," he repeats with a smile – much as he has been repeating such anecdotes for the past 40 years or so, maintaining his position as the most historically aware, detail-conscious and beautifully articulate F1 team owner in Motorhome Alley.

Now, though, we are visiting this amazing Chinese government-sponsored development – a tribute, if you like, to western >



One gritty, high-achieving knight meets another: Winston and Frank in Thames Town





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imperialist architecture of pre-Mao China – there are nine Euro-towns in the master plan – and Frank is fascinated.

“Extraordinary,” he says, taking in the red phone boxes and Kensington-and-Chelsea waste-paper bins. “You have to tip your hat to them. I can’t imagine anything like this happening anywhere else in the world – and that’s the point, isn’t it? There’s no country – no continent – quite like China. In 25 years it will, by most forecasts, be the world’s largest economy. That may seem a long time in F1 terms but it’s nothing in terms of the global economy. It’s an exciting time to be here.”

The previous day, at the

“You have to tip your hat to the Chinese. I can’t imagine anything like this anywhere else in the world” Frank Williams

Hermann Tilke-designed Shanghai circuit, Frank’s two cars had finally made the chequered flag for the first time since Spain. They weren’t quick but at least they were reliable. That was something. Yesterday was also the day we heard that Cosworth would be no more. With Williams switching to Toyota engines for 2007, Cosworth’s only chance for F1 survival lay with the Midland-Spyker team; but, in China, Spyker

announced a new Ferrari deal.

“Very sad for Cosworth, very sad,” says Frank. “They built very good engines for us this year on an absolute shoestring. On nothing. The problem is that we’re racing in an age of the manufacturer. Sponsors need that solidarity. It’s a fact of life.” So how is it now for Frank, here in China, looking ahead to 2007? Is this the new frontier?

“Perhaps, although one has to remember that the largest

and most successful companies in China, and there aren’t hundreds of them, are mainly government-owned. Some, because of outward investment, are not yet hugely profitable. I think it will take time for large, \$30 million F1 sponsorship packages to emerge from China. And then, on top of that, the country needs an infrastructure to produce drivers, to develop a motor racing industry.”

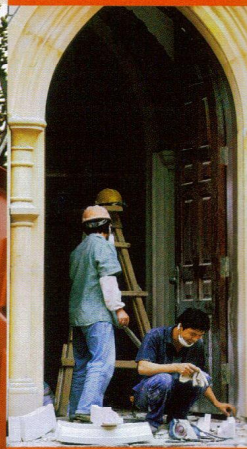
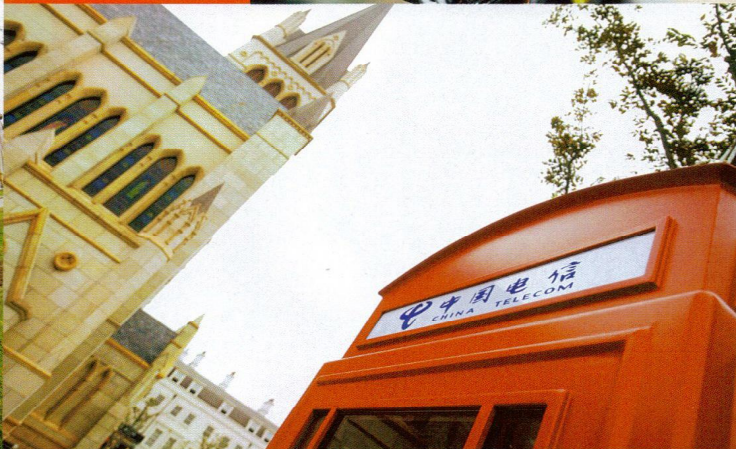
Even so, I suggest, we have



Maybe our friendly Chinese local (left) is also dreaming of cricket on the village green



Builders work overtime; and the houses will go on sale for \$84,000 to \$758,000



Christians can park under the church; modelled on a Bristol original, it is presently a wedding venue



Windsor (left) and Frank tour the \$375m project that will house up to 10,000 people



FAR EAST SPECIAL: FRANK WILLIAMS DOES THAMES TOWN

FRANK TURNS EAST FOR 2007 POWER



Once Williams had properly mated their chassis know-how to Honda power in 1985, they ushered in a competitive streak that raised the bar of F1's turbo era and won three championships (drivers' and constructors'). The switch to Toyota for 2007 will encourage similarly lofty targets within a team whose absence from F1's top table has been long and painful.

First test of the Toyota lump at Silverstone – the news (good or bad) is under wraps

But in order to maximise the new partnership Williams will need to adopt a different mindset from the one that allowed the Honda deal to fall apart in 1987. Back then, Frank refused to accept some of the manufacturer's demands – such as not running Satoru Nakajima for 1987 – and insisted on the 'master and servant' supplier relationship that has, for better or worse, been the dominant modus operandi at Williams for the past 30 years.

No, if Williams are to make the Toyota alliance work, they will need to be more pliable. Success with a Japanese partner is not achieved by barking orders at Tokyo, but more through gentle persuasion.

Williams know that this is a fresh start that must come good for them. And the pressure won't simply be on the engineering department – the approach of the entire team must be to bend to accommodate the whims of a Japanese super-manufacturer who simply must, in turn, deliver results for the team.

Steve Cooper

JAKOB EBERVILAT

a Chinese Grand Prix, which means that Bernard Ecclestone hasn't exactly been backward in dealing with the Chinese government and that the responses aren't always negative.

Frank takes the point but draws a distinction between a circuit and a race representing a country, and an F1 team working with a Chinese company, government-owned or not.

I'm reminded of some of our chats back in the 1970s, '80s and '90s, when I worked for Williams Grand Prix Engineering both as sponsorship manager and team manager. You'd be thinking inside the box, covering all the angles, when suddenly in would come Frank and you'd be on the outside looking in, seeing things from a wholly different angle. No surprise that in 1978, when everyone else was chasing Marlboro money, Frank was in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, persuading the Arabs to use F1 in order to become "the best in the west". He succeeded, too. He won his first grand prix in the colours of Saudi Arabian Airlines, TAG and the Middle East division of Mobil Oil. All those companies were drawn by Frank's passion, determination and charm. Within a couple of weeks Frank was speaking their language – literally.

Twenty years ago Frank broke his fourth and fifth vertebrae in a road accident in the South of France (*Windsor was his passenger at the time – ed*). He lost his mobility but the charm and drive and love of all things F1 continued unabated. Today, as he has been since 1987, Frank is up at the usual time, on the phone constantly, juggling 50 balls in the air, checking the time every 10 minutes or so and thinking in terms of tomorrow, the next week, the next month and then maybe the next three months. In between, he keeps himself fully abreast of current affairs and the world's economies, and reads history for fun. If you want to know a company's third-quarter figures, check Ceefax – or ring Frank Williams.

Equally, back in that hospital in 1986, when he was semi-conscious, Frank had no difficulty reeling off the exact details of Admiral Yamamoto's fleet before the Battle of Midway in the Second World War.

We meander around town,

noting that the local church – brand new and ready to roll, despite its 16th-century essence – is probably the first to feature an underground car park. Presently, though, it starts to rain and Frank heads for his car. He used to relish tough conditions in his cross-country running days but now, for obvious reasons, he no longer tolerates the cold and wet. At various points after the accident, both in France and England, he was given little chance of survival. Yet here he is, 20 years on, with a further 91 grand prix victories (for a total of 113), seven constructors' championships (for a total of nine) and five drivers' championships (for a total of seven) to his credit. Given the scale of Frank's achievement – given his defiance of the odds – it is of course fitting that the list of Williams's constructors' victories significantly exceeds that of their drivers' titles.

However, 2006 has not been a good year. To be blunt, the 2005-06 Williams FW27/28 has provided the longest winless streak in the history of the company (which, technically, dates back to 1972 but for practical purposes began with the first Patrick Head-designed car, the FW06, in 1978). Worse, I point out to Frank, this is a chassis-induced slump. His others – in 1983, 1988 and 1998 – were engine-induced, in that they were interim years before his next engine (the Honda, the Renault and the BMW) came into production. The Williams chassis, in those years, was still either a significant points-scorer, a podium finisher or a winner. This trough, which began with BMW engines and continued with Cosworth, is directly related to Williams's unreliability and lack of pace in the aero/grip/balance department. For evidence, look at the way BMW have performed since they left Williams.

Frank disputes none of this; instead, he immediately looks ahead, pointing out that Patrick will shortly be moving back into a house near the factory in Grove, near Wantage, Oxfordshire – not permanently, you understand; this will be to facilitate his mid-week logistics – and that Sam Michael, the team's technical director, has "changed a lot" over the past 12 months. From there, Frank

makes it clear, he is satisfied with the image his team enjoy as the one least likely to be caught "bending" the regulations.

Translation: if the car's aero has been poor, that is mostly because Williams have not been building Ferrari- and Renault-like flexi-wings in an imaginative interpretation of the rules. And Michael, who bristles at the thought of criticism, now realises that Williams have lost too many good engineers during his watch (leading to the poor design detailing that in turn led to unreliability) and that he still needs the input of those who

have been around much longer. Hence Patrick's new house.

The next Williams era is now upon us. Toyota engines. Bridgestones for all. Alex Wurz/ Nico Rosberg. Sam Michael/ Patrick Head – or is it Patrick Head/Sam Michael? And Frank therefore has much to be moving on with. CNN marches on in the background of his hotel room. The phone rings. Outside, the Shanghai rain continues and this little piece of England in this vast, new continent continues to pave its way. I take my leave and wish him – as ever – all the best. It has been a pleasure. **FO**





FAR EAST SPECIAL
SUZUKA SENSATIONS
2006 JAPANESE GP

SUZUKA'S SCREAM TEAM

Do the Japanese enjoy F1? Do they like to have a good time? Are ducks waterproof?

Words Dom Taylor Photographs Darren Heath





"The track, the fans, the colours, the flags, the bedlam – all completely insane"

A grandstand becomes a field of poppies as Super Aguri flags are unfurled; the One Samurai (opp); transport for the masses (below)

THANK YOU FOR Impression Schumacher!" reads the sign at the merchandising stand. "The Highest Champion!" says another. Teenage screams fill the air as 20 pairs of legs in knee-length socks hurtle overhead, flailing upside down from the twisting, diving roller-coaster above. A Samurai warrior in an oversize Viking helmet sporting cans of Red Bull on the front thunders a fearsome greeting as he draws his sword: "Rooaaargh! Welcome!"

This is Suzuka, and it's bonkers. The track, the fans, the Motopia theme park next door, the sounds, the colours, the

smells, the weather, the flags, the costumes, the traffic, the queues, the bedlam, the endearingly shonky English – all completely insane. Police bark down megaphones, autograph obsessors peer through every car window that passes, hoping the westerners inside are famous enough to merit their attention, then shriek uncontrollably when someone spots a driver.

F1's top snapper, Darren Heath, and I have spent the weekend immersing ourselves in the hysteria. Our mission is to sample as much of Suzuka's heady cocktail of madness as our fragile western brains will take.



It's race morning at the main gate. A river of humanity is flooding into the circuit, fed by streams and tributaries from the car parks and roads – stretching back three miles, uninterrupted, in both directions. They file in patiently, calmly but excitedly, never pushing, to the unlikely sound of New Orleans jazz pumping from speakers hidden in the foliage of the immaculate flower beds and hanging baskets dotted around.

They surge on passionately in every direction, to enormous and expensive merchandising stands on the left, to the famous Kirin Beer ferris wheel and other

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FAR EAST SPECIAL SUZUKA SENSATIONS 2006 JAPANESE GP

rides to the right – including Black Out, the roller-coaster of screaming *shogakusei* (schoolgirls) fame – and on, finally, to the grandstands around the circuit. Such is the fluidity between these two set-ups, that it feels as if the track is just one of the rides, rather than a grand prix circuit randomly juxtaposed with a theme park. The two work perfectly together.

The vastness and density of the crowd are overwhelming (today is a 160,000 sell-out), but the atmosphere is friendly and remarkably stress-free. Perhaps that's because the Japanese are well used to being part of big crowds in tight spaces. More than that, though, the good vibes flow because everyone is clearly thrilled to be here, thrilled that F1 is here, too – perhaps for the last time as the Japanese GP moves to Fuji in 2007 (see p74).

For now, though, Suzuka is a life-affirming place. You can't help but feel happy when a *manga* cartoon-cute *chiisai ko* (little girl) in pigtails perched on her dad's shoulders smiles at you and ecstatically waves her fun-size Honda flag. Her expression is mirrored by all ages everywhere – wonderment,

joy, fun. It's infectious. Anyone who's been to Spa (where armed guards patrol with unmuzzled dogs to keep a lid on the fun) will know it isn't always like this on the outside of an F1 track. But it should be. Motopia is a perfect name for it. This is what F1 will be like in heaven (minus the dumb two-race engine rule, of course).

Even the circuit map is designed to make you smile as you enter. In it, colourful party balloons fly over the pit straight, and a rainbow hovers over Turn 1. Each ride is labelled not with a dry description, but a speech bubble – the attractions are personified and animated. The Japanese love to breathe life and character into everything.

On the ground, every few metres, a cartoon illustrates the profile of one of Suzuka's famous corners. I can tip-toe around Spoon in all its double-apex glory here. Over there, obscured by countless legs filing into the main grandstand, are the beautiful and tricky Esses traced out on the pavement.



The mouse that roars (top) – Super Aguri have a massive fan base; they're queuing round the block for this one: keeping Ralf or Jarno at their fingertips

Only a circuit so outrageous in design would be appropriate here – which is why Suzuka perfectly reflects the fantasy. God bless John Hugenholz, the late circuit designer who built this place for Honda. The curvy, contoured madness of Suzuka's famous figure-8 is an intrinsic part of the atmosphere. All this insanity beside a sterile, modern Hermann Tilke circuit such as Shanghai would have nothing like the same effect.

"Come and look at this," says Darren, nodding towards a vast queue of people, emerging in freakishly orderly fashion from a corner of the gigantic Toyota stand. At the front, 45-year-old Tetsuya (Ted, for short) is one of four Toyota fans getting their nails done, Suzuka style. You can have a Toyota logo, or the initials RS (Ralf Schumacher) or JT (Jarno Trulli) on every nail. The 300-long queue for the service contains a good few other men, too, like Kaneda, 25, who's well up for it. "Ralfa Schumacho!" he screams as Darren points his lens.

But Toyota are by no means the fans' favourite. Nor are Honda, or even Ferrari (although, at a glance, both seem more popular than Toyota). No, the team gear of choice here is Super Aguri.

It wasn't to be for Schumi fans who expected him to win his eighth title in Japan



Only at Suzuka could a press officer win her 15 minutes of fame

The Suzuka crowd have been an odd bunch since the Japanese GP first moved there in 1987. That first year, the teams had been told that race day would be a sell-out, such was the national sense of expectation.

Sunday morning warm-up in those days meant the teams would arrive on race day while it was still dark. But, contrary to

expectations, the place was dead. Then, as the sun rose, they saw that the grandstands were packed to bursting. The crowd had been there all along, waiting in eerie silence for dawn to strike this strange new event.

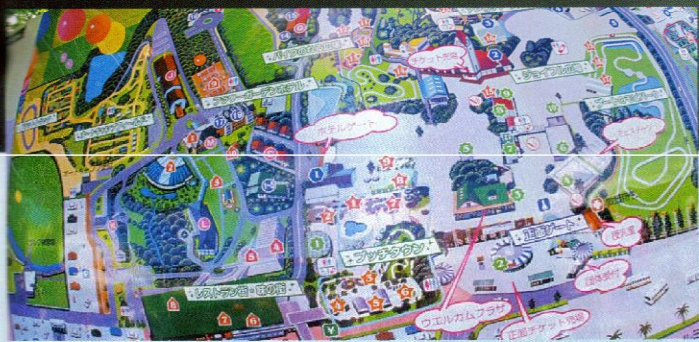
Fans can idolise the most unlikely people, too. In 1992, Fuji TV ran a piece on women in F1, which aired the Wednesday before

the race. It briefly featured and named the then Williams press officer, Ann Bradshaw, who's normally known only to insiders. "Come race day, I couldn't walk through the crowd without being mobbed," says Ann, who now works for BMW-Sauber. "They all wanted autographs and shouted 'Ann-san! Ann-san!'. It was ridiculous!" Yep, that's Suzuka.



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As an all-Japanese team in a fiercely nationalistic country, perhaps this shouldn't surprise us. But the support for Super Aguri-Honda is more to do with the man behind the team. At a Saturday evening public appearance at the Honda stand, Takuma Sato gets a decent cheer, Sakon Yamamoto loudish applause – but the place erupts when Aguri Suzuki comes out on stage. Digital cameras and phones held high at the end of outstretched arms like high-tech giraffes bombard the stage with enough flash power to turn night momentarily to day. Suzuki is a national treasure, a pioneer, and a true hero. In him, the Japanese obsession with F1 and celebrity combine – inspiring bedlam among the fans. Organised, polite bedlam, though, of course.

Fast-forward to race morning and the fever building in the grandstands is just as well organised. Japanese sports fans have taken a shine to clapping sticks – inflatable sausages that

banged together make five times the noise of a regular clap. In one grandstand on the outside of Turn 1, every single person has a Toyota-branded pair. When all 4000 of them start flapping, it sounds like machine-gun fire.

All fall silent, however, and without exception, for the national anthem. Then, as the excitement, so tangible even outside the circuit this morning, reaches its zenith, the natural amphitheatre of Turn 1 becomes a garden of colour, movement

Cute but functional, the circuit and fun-fair map helps race-goers to enjoy themselves

and life. An entire grandstand whip out their red Super Aguri flags, from a distance instantly becoming a bank of dazzling poppies. Simultaneously, the clapping sticks go into overdrive, looking and sounding like giant crickets. And all choreographed, it seems, by the staccato shouts of the over-excited PA announcer.

As if on cue, the wind, so fresh yet so warm in the gorgeous Suzuka sunshine, gusting strongly down from the Suzuka mountains in the distance,

breathes life into everything in sight. Bamboo, pine and birch trees behind the grandstands all wave in unison as the cars head out on their parade lap. Even the paddy fields below shimmer with excitement, the wind creating ripple patterns on the waving rice plants. Everything, it seems, is aflutter, waiting for those five red lights to flash on and go out.

Then, a Super Aguri banner is unfurled. It perfectly captures the moment in wonderfully quirky Japanese-English: "Thank You Suzuka. Thank You Memories. Have a Good Race!" Why can't every race be at Suzuka?

Fuji prepares for '07, p74 →

Japan race report, p118 →

"The curvy, contoured madness of Suzuka's figure-8 is an intrinsic part of the atmosphere"



November 2006 F1 Review 73



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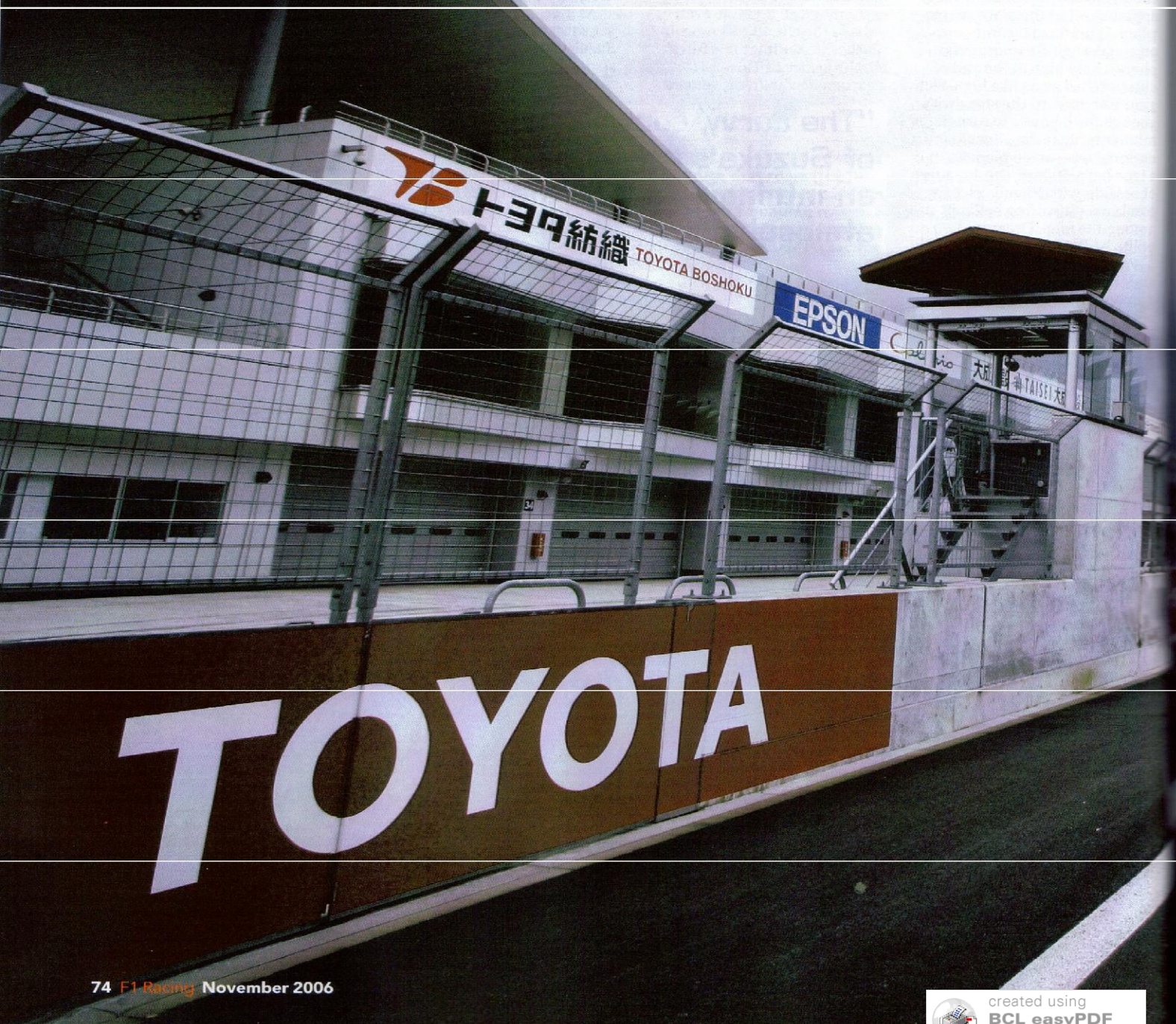
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FAR EAST SPECIAL
FUJI NOW
2007 JAPANESE GP



New 24,000-seat grandstand and pit/paddock facilities at Fuji may well be the best in the world



EVERY SILVER LINING HAS A CLOUD

Next year, the Japanese GP ups sticks and moves from stunning Suzuka to bland Fuji

Words Tom Clarkson Photographs Steve Etherington/LAT

There's nothing wrong with Fuji Speedway, the venue of next year's Japanese Grand Prix – not if great facilities, fancy grandstands and a pampering VIP set-up float your boat. As for likely on-track action, however, there's nothing particularly right with it, either. It ticks all the big-spend boxes for track safety and corporate schmoozing, just as Bahrain, Shanghai and Hockenheim do. But that doesn't make it a great race track.

Like those other middle-of-the-road, slow-to-medium-speed circuits, the new Fuji is a missed opportunity. It has a great name and breathtaking backdrop in Mount Fuji, the highest peak in Japan,

but the 2.78-mile layout will be a test of engineers, not drivers, because car set-up will need to be a tricky compromise between straight-line speed down the near mile-long pit straight and low-speed grip around the hairpins and chicanes of the remainder of the lap.

As you'd expect of track designer Hermann Tilke when he's given a \$167 million refurb budget, as was the case with Fuji, the infrastructure surrounding the Speedway is first class. The 34 pit garages are bigger than any other circuit's in the world, the views from the commentary booths are second-to-none, and the grandstand opposite the pits seats a staggering 24,000 people. ▸



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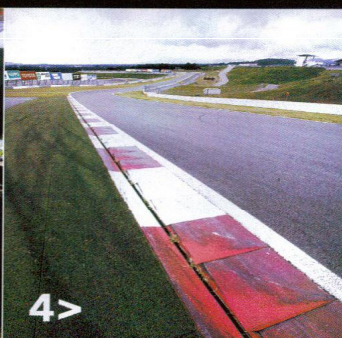


1> Facilities of pit garages (all 34 of them) are probably the best in the world 2> Turn 6 hairpin marks the end of the quicker section

3>



4>



5>



3> Race control centre is as good as it gets 4> Turn 2 is flat-out, leading to the most interesting stretch 5> Race start nerve centre

In all these peripheral, and arguably unimportant, areas Fuji is superior to Suzuka, the home of F1 in Japan these past 20 years. But it will be Suzuka and not Fuji that will go down in the annals of F1 history as a great place to race cars.

"I haven't been to Fuji yet," says Jenson Button, "but it has a lot to live up to. Suzuka is a truly fantastic circuit, and just so much fun to drive in these cars. This year, the start of the lap was literally breathtaking."

The reason that Fuji has stolen the GP from Suzuka, of course, comes down to money. The track has paid F1's commercial boss, Bernie Ecclestone, a vast sum to stage the race, and Suzuka didn't want to get involved in a pissing contest with its arch-rivals. In fact, Suzuka's bosses suspect that

"Suzuka bosses suspect that Fuji was promised the GP back in 2002"

Fuji was promised the GP by Ecclestone back in 2002, when they began their renovation work.

"There will definitely be no race at Suzuka in 2007," said Ecclestone at this year's Japanese GP. "As for the future, who knows?"

Suzuka certainly hopes to make a swift comeback onto the F1 calendar, perhaps in the form of the Pacific GP, which was last staged at Aida in 1995. Indeed, the track's reputation as the focal point of the Japanese racing industry partly depends on the race returning, as does the honour of owners Honda, who have lost out in this recent tug-of-war with Toyota, who bought 93 per cent of Fuji in 2000.

In defence of Fuji's conservative layout, Hiroaki Kato, the track's president, says he "tried to retain the characteristics of the old layout" during the renovation work. But, according to Jacques Laffite, who raced in the F1 GPs at Fuji in 1976 and '77, that may have been a mistake.

"The only thing I remember about the old

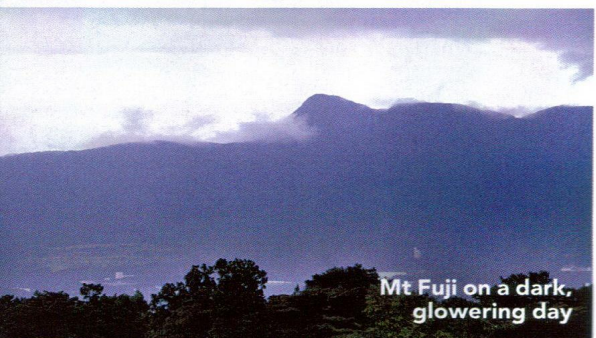
track is the long straight," he says. "I can't remember anything else about the layout of the circuit, and that's significant in itself because I can remember all the good tracks very clearly. So I don't think it was very challenging, no, and it would have been best to start afresh."

As well as retaining the basic original shape of the track, Tilke was asked to produce a lap time in the region of 1m20s. Given that F1 cars lapped the old circuit in 1m12s in the '70s, increasing the lap time with modern cars was no easy task. And Tilke took the easiest options available to him: hairpins and chicanes. Hell, the last five corners are all first and second gear.

According to Fernando Alonso, who drove last year's Renault R25 at a Mild Seven PR day at the track in September, there's only one challenging corner on the entire lap, a long, flat-in-fourth right-hander. The rest, he says, is "Mickey Mouse"; it isn't dissimilar to the Hungaroring.

"I didn't do sufficient laps to gain a big impression of the track," says Fernando, "but it will certainly be difficult to set up the car because you'll need an effective compromise between straight-line speed and cornering grip."

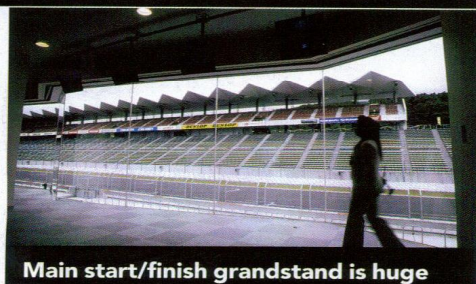
Wary of the F1 industry's love affair with Suzuka, the Fuji PR team are quick to itemise why Fuji deserves its new-found status; and in so doing, inadvertently reveal



Mt Fuji on a dark, glowing day



Magnificent pit lane nears completion



Main start/finish grandstand is huge



The track itself is exceptionally smooth

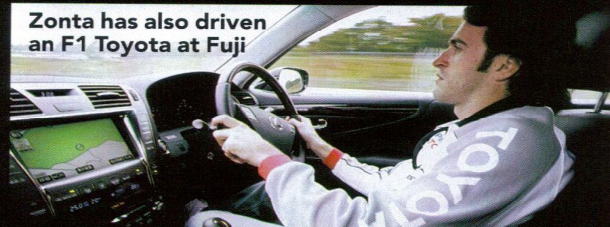
Ricardo Zonta at Fuji: Toyota's third driver laps the track

"The pit straight is very long, so you're sitting at maximum revs for quite a long time. You're doing about 200mph when you hit the brakes at the 120m board, then change down to first gear. This is the best overtaking opportunity on the lap.

"Turn 2 is a flat kink right; then you're into the left-hander at Turn 3, which is a quick lift in fourth gear. A small crest makes it difficult to see the exit, so it's hard to know when to get back on the throttle.

"Next are the high-speed Turns 4/5, called R100. They make a 180-degree right-hander that

Zonta has also driven an F1 Toyota at Fuji

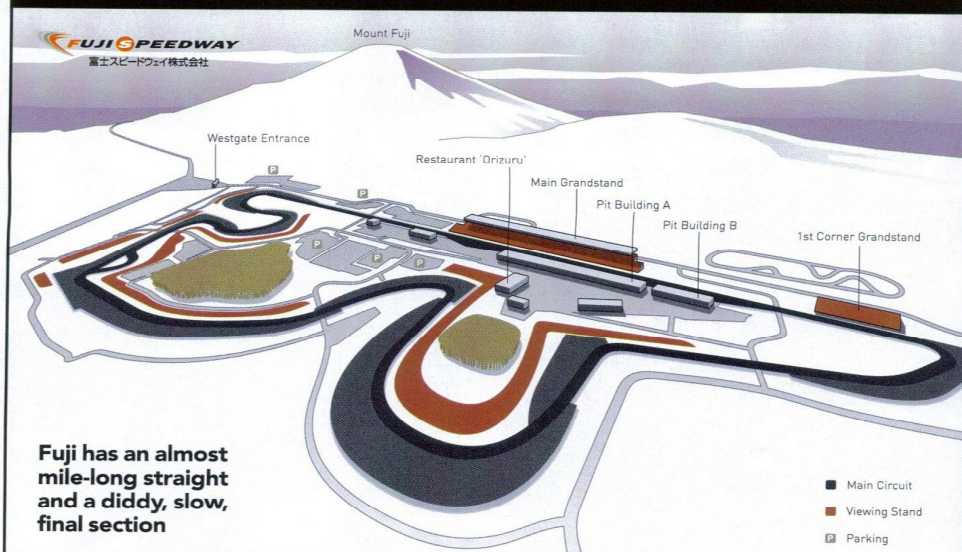


could be flat in fifth on new tyres. You lift at the end of the corner to keep the car over to the right in preparation for the left-hand hairpin at Turn 6.

"You're through the best part of the track now, and into the slower, more technical section. From the exit of the hairpin you're flat through Turns

7, 8 and 9, before getting hard on the brakes for another overtaking point."

"Between Turns 10 and 15 it's all frustrating first and second-gear stuff. The last three corners are off-camber, so it's difficult to find traction. And you need a good exit on the last corner, or you're penalised down the long pit straight."



Fuji has an almost mile-long straight and a diddy, slow, final section

"Improved overtaking is a valid point – it's limited at Suzuka by the importance of aero"

Toyota's motivation for grabbing the race.

F1 Racing has been given a document entitled 'Shizuoka, the best place for the F1 race', which makes the following points.

First: the prefecture of Shizuoka (location of the Fuji circuit) is the cradle of Japan's automobile industry, having been the birthplace of Sakichi Toyota and Soichiro Honda, the founders of Toyota Corporation and Honda Motor Corporation respectively.

Second: being situated just 62 miles from Tokyo, Fuji has 63 per cent of Japan's 80-million population within a 190-mile radius.

Third: the long pit straight will offer some of the best overtaking opportunities in F1.

Points one and two are irrelevant. Toyota can't buy credibility through a tenuous association with Soichiro Honda, and the track's location matters not a jot. Suzuka's coastal locale some 300 miles south-west of Tokyo hasn't deterred people from attending the GP over the past 20 years. This year's race was a 160,000 sell-out, and who can forget the late '80s and early '90s when more than a million people applied for tickets every year.

However, improved overtaking chances is a valid point because they're limited at Suzuka by the importance of aerodynamics at the track. Ex-Tyrrell and Arrows F1 driver Tora Takagi, now a Formula Nippon and

Japanese GT front-runner, agrees.

"Suzuka is a much more challenging track to drive," he says. "If you get Suzuka right on a qualifying lap, you have every reason to feel satisfied. Fuji, on the other hand, doesn't offer that challenge, but the racing is nearly always better, thanks to the long straight."

Whatever the pros and cons of Fuji Speedway, it's on the calendar to stay and the F1 world must roll with it. But it would be a pity to lose Suzuka forever, and perhaps the arrival of Fuji will spur Honda into updating Suzuka's facilities in the hope of hosting a Pacific GP in future years.

"We would like to see two races in Japan in the future," says Honda F1 CEO Nick Fry. "They would be justified because both we and Toyota have two teams in F1, which is a third of the grid."

Fingers crossed. **FO**



FUJI 76 I WAS THERE!



James lived life at full throttle – just as he did his racing

In October 1976 – 30 years ago to the month – the most thrilling world championship in F1 history hit its climax at the rain-lashed Japanese GP. The race delivered maximum drama – and Hunt emerged as Britain's newest sporting hero

Interviews Steve Cooper/Tim Scott Photographs LAT Archive

THE BUILD-UP

HUNT LIMBERS UP IN A TOKYO HOTEL



ALASTAIR CALDWELL (McLaren team manager)



"Towards the end of the season, I couldn't control James – so I let him misbehave. But after we'd won in Canada and the US, we suddenly found ourselves in with a shout, so got very serious [going into Fuji, James was on 65pts and Niki Lauda on 68pts]. We arrived early in Japan and were able to get our body clocks tuned in. All the others didn't turn up until Tuesday or Wednesday – and were jet-lagged and groggy, so we'd already got a little bit of a psychological advantage."

JOCHEN MASS (No2 McLaren driver)



"It didn't feel like the last race of the season. Our schedules were a lot easier in those days, so we were pretty relaxed. I knew I had no chance for the title, and was okay about the fact that James had done better than me during the year. Everyone in the team was ▶



Main: in the Fuji pits; and on the front row (opp, above), with Andretti on pole

really geared up for the weekend, though – we knew we had a good chance, and I wanted to help James.”

DAVE RYAN (McLaren mechanic)



“The whole team just had belief. We were wrongly disqualified on a couple of occasions earlier in the year and that just gave us a reason to dig deeper. All the boys just felt the title was coming to us.”

Caldwell: “We were staying in a Tokyo hotel where the Air France and British Airways crews would stop over. Every morning, there would be 15 new stewardesses in the lobby and James would bound over and say, ‘Hello, I’m James Hunt!’ to which they’d all reply, ‘Oh, we know who you are!’ And he happily fucked himself to death during the week before the race.”



Do we race or don't we?
Hunt, Lauda,
Peterson and
Jarier (all in
red) hesitate

AT THE TRACK

WOT, US WORRY? McLAREN
WIND-UP FERRARI



Ryan: “The facilities were pretty basic in Japan. We were in some rotten hotel somewhere, and you’d go to one of the mechanics’ rooms and the drivers would be in there drinking beers with the rest of the lads. F1 was a much smaller, tighter group back then.”

TEDDY MAYER (McLaren team boss)



“I don’t remember being worried about the championship. One nice thing I do remember is checking in at the Fuji circuit hotel and being presented with a bottle of whisky. I subsequently found out that it was intended for Ferrari’s team manager.”



Hunt steals
the lead from
pole-sitter
Andretti (who
wins the race)

Caldwell: “Our mechanics got up to a little mischief. We made up a story that the tarmac at the track was breaking up, and fabricated mesh guards for the sidepods, radiator ducts and airbox. Niki was a good mate of James’s and spent a lot of time socialising with the McLaren boys – when he saw those gauze meshes he ran back to the Ferrari garage looking worried.”

“So Ferrari spent the whole of Friday morning chasing around Tokyo looking for the correct gauze when they should really have been focusing on gear ratios and first practice. Of course, we then simply removed the gauze. Afterwards, I remember Niki coming up to me and saying, ‘You bastard!’ and walking back to the Ferrari mechanics saying, ‘They were taking the piss out of us, lads...’”

DANIEL AUDETTO (Ferrari team manager)



“There was a bit of needle between us and McLaren all year. But that’s normal business; it’s a competitive environment. In Formula 1, you don’t need nice guys. Teddy and I had to fight, although we could still go and have a drink together afterwards.”

ON SUNDAY MORNING

FEAR AND LOATHING
IN THE TITLE DECIDER



Mario Andretti (No1 Lotus driver, race winner)



“On Sunday morning, it started raining unbelievably – just this torrential rain. It was incredible. There was a drivers’ meeting in the pagoda on Sunday morning – we were trying to delay the start, but there was just no way of reasoning with the organisers.”

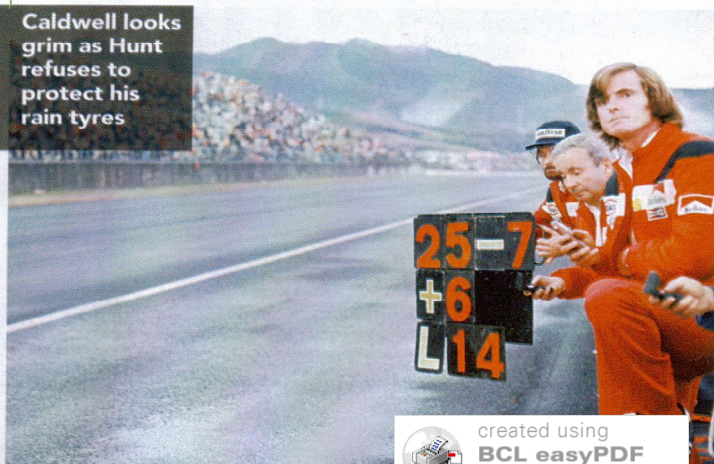
Audetto: “Bernie [Ecclestone] came and met with most of the drivers in a little motorhome and said, ‘Guys, do me a favour. I have a contract with satellite TV to run this race. Please just take the start.’ You know Bernie – he’s very good at getting what he wants.”

Ryan: “The Japanese crowd behaved very well during the delay. Lance Gibbs, the team’s sign-writer, pulled out the pit board and his whistle and went out onto the straight and started entertaining the whole crowd.”

Caldwell: “Lance pulled out his Acme Thunderer whistle and started blowing it. Suddenly, it seemed like the whole crowd got out their whistles and started blowing, too. Then Lance taught them to slow hand-clap, and the whole grandstand clapped along with him.”

“We needed to race in order to win the title, so I sneakily got the mechanics to start the engines up. Of course, nothing gets the crowd going like the sound of the engines, and when the other teams heard this *wap-wap-wap* as we warmed up our cars, they started doing

Caldwell looks
grim as Hunt
refuses to
protect his
rain tyres





James leads at Fuji for 61 laps before both left tyres cry enough

the same, worried that they were missing something. "When the organisers heard all this whistling, slow hand-clapping and engine noise, they were horrified and agreed to start the race immediately. By this time, it was about 3.00pm and already getting dark."

Niki Lauda (Ferrari world champion)



"We were all sitting together when the Japanese race director came in and said, 'Okay, we're starting the race now.' I was the leader of the pack and got up and said, 'What the fuck's going on?' The weather was completely unacceptable – even the biggest idiot could see it was impossible to race. He told us that it would be dark by six so we had to start because of the television deal."

Mayer: "James certainly wasn't relaxed. He was very grumpy and worried about the rain. He told me, 'I'm not going out there. I'm not racing, I tell you.' I didn't hold him back. But, of course, I knew all along that once he got into the car we wouldn't be able to stop him. Before a race, James was so nervous he was usually physically ill. He was a difficult animal."

Mass: "James was definitely more keyed up than usual. He was so absent-minded, he walked out of the back of the pits and took a pee against a fence post. During the delay, he was totally oblivious of a crowd of spectators on the other side of the fence. All the Japanese girls were very shy and turned away. James would never normally do that, but on that day his mind was somewhere else."

Lauda: "Since my accident at the Nürburgring I just didn't have the reserves to take any crazy chances. I decided to do just one lap and go home."

Ryan: "It was quite mental to go racing in those conditions. But us mechanics wanted to race – we wanted to get it over and done with."

THE RACE

CHAOS, CONFUSION – AND A CHAMPIONSHIP



Mass: "James and I had no real plan for the race. I just knew he needed to finish at least fourth, and that I'd help him if he needed it – and I was happy to."

Andretti: "They were the worst conditions I'd ever seen at the start of a motor race. There was so much standing water, it was terrible. I was moving the steering wheel more on the straight than in the corners."

Audetto: "Niki pulled in straight away – it was too dangerous. Mauro Forghieri [Ferrari designer and team boss] and I had to look after him and decide what to tell the press. Niki told me, 'Tell them it was my decision, because I don't want to hurt James's image.'"

Lauda: "The mechanics accepted my decision – they had to. Even Mr Ferrari accepted it – I rang him afterwards and told him. Anyway, I didn't lose the championship in Japan – I lost it at the Nürburgring."

Andretti: "After a few laps, the rain started to subside, then it stopped. It became a question of riding it out."

Caldwell: "When a track starts to dry, the most important thing is to keep those rain tyres wet. So we hung out a pit board with the words 'cool tyres' on it, and Jochen immediately splashed over into the puddles to look after his tyres. But James didn't respond. He drove steadfastly on the drying line – I was so angry with him."

Andretti: "I was leading the race and James was my pursuer. Then, all of a sudden, he disappeared – and



FAR EAST SPECIAL FUJI THEN 1976 JAPANESE GP



Lauda plays it sensible, retiring at the end of the first lap

I didn't need to guess what had happened to him."

Caldwell: "We'd held out another pit board with an arrow pointing to the pits – we'd be ready for him if he wanted to stop, but we hung short of holding out an 'in' board because we knew it would be his decision. He ploughed on – but it got so bad that both left-side tyres failed."

Ryan: "When James came in, I was on the left front. While we weren't a big team, we all worked on both drivers' cars and got him out quickly. Still, James thought we'd blown it."

Mayer: "We were absolutely on tenterhooks. Even though we had to change both tyres, we didn't think it was game over. We knew that if he got back out there and started fighting he'd still be in with a chance."

Andretti: "My tyres were getting worse, too. The final corner, a long-radius uphill right-hander, was just killing the left-front. But I had to keep pushing and search out the wet patches. I could see the tread changing colour and the car was understeering more and more, but I was gonna try to bring it home and still win."

Caldwell: "James rejoined in fifth and immediately passed a couple of cars. Then he came up behind [Clay] Regazzoni – normally one of the toughest guys to pass. Stupidly, Ferrari had told Clay a few weeks earlier that they were sacking him for the following season. And because he knew he was on his way out, he simply pulled over and waved James through,

and James finished third – it was unbelievable."

Mayer: "When he drove back into the pits, he didn't believe that he'd done enough. He was shouting at me, saying terrible things. But I kept shouting at him, 'James, you've won!' It took him two or three minutes to calm down enough to let it sink in."

FRANK WILLIAMS (team owner)



"There was certainly a little bit of confusion. James wouldn't believe it – and I ran up to him and said, 'You've won! You've won the title!' But there was such a hullabaloo that it was hard to get through to him."

Caldwell: "James just got over-excited. We never messed up – we were rock solid."

Lauda: "After I lost the championship, I was happy that James had won it. He was my mate."

THE AFTERMATH

THEY DON'T MAKE CHAMPS
LIKE THIS ANY MORE



Lauda: "I was driven back to the airport with the race still going on. I told the driver to keep the radio on, but we drove through a tunnel and lost the signal. It was only when we finally stopped at the terminal and I saw the Japanese Ferrari importer's face that I immediately knew I'd lost the championship."

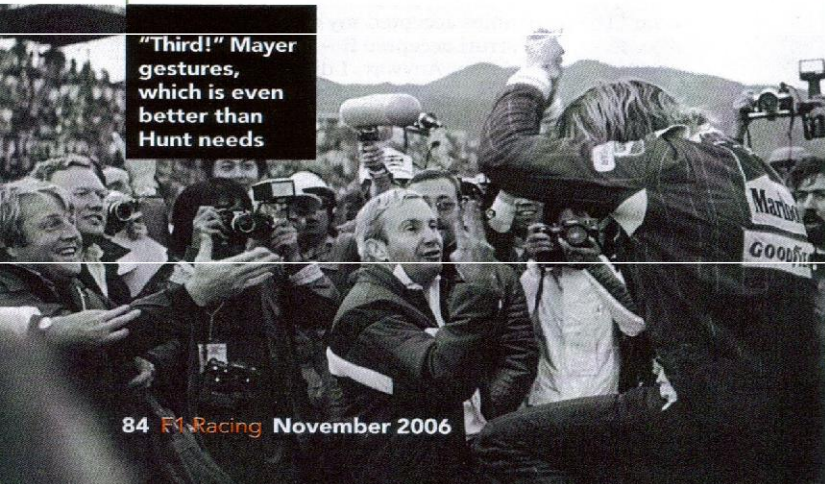
Caldwell: "On Sunday night, the mechanics somehow got hold of a cable-laying truck with a huge roll of cable. They drove it round and round the hotel, barricading up every door and ground-floor window. Then they clambered through a first-floor window and went to bed!"

Ryan: "We partied so hard that one of the lads lost his plane ticket. We still managed to get him through immigration and onto the flight without it. There was so much confusion – I don't think James was sober for a long time after that race."

Caldwell: "That weekend changed James's life – you can't win the world championship without having it alter your perspective somewhat."

Mayer: "The title gave James even more confidence to be a bit of a rebel. He knew he could get away with anything after he'd become world champion." **FO**

"Third!" Mayer gestures, which is even better than Hunt needs



F1 to 21

Sebastian Vettel Third driver: BMW-Sauber

On family values, progressing to F1, speeding fines and a bright future

Your career progress has been pretty meteoric so far. Tell us about your early racing experience and how you started.

I drove my first home-made kart in our back yard when I was just three years old, but I didn't start racing properly until 1995 [when he was seven]. We just took it race by race, week by week. Then I was lucky enough to be eligible to compete in the inaugural year of a new mini-karting formula for kids aged from eight to 12. In 2003 I stepped up to Formula BMW and won the title the following year. Then in 2005 I moved up into the F3 Euroseries and stayed there in 2006, which is where we are now.

When did you first receive the invitation to test for the BMW-Sauber team? And what did you make of the experience?

Well, the first time I drove an F1 car was September 2005, when I tried a Williams-BMW, but that was just to get a first idea of what an F1 car was like, how much heavier it was than an F3 car and so on, rather than a serious test. Then in July I had another test, this time with BMW-Sauber at Jerez, immediately after Indianapolis, where I qualified for my Superlicence after covering the necessary number of kilometres. Then there was the thing with Jacques [Villeneuve] leaving the team and Robert [Kubica] moving up to the race team. So by then I was just beginning to think that it might work out for me. The next thing I knew was that I got the call and suddenly I was arriving in Istanbul for the Turkish Grand Prix.

You will always be remembered as the driver who picked up a pit-lane speeding fine on his F1 debut.

Yes, after only nine seconds. I forgot to push the button as I went down the pit lane for the first time. Then I did it again at Monza, but the fine was a bit higher there at \$3500. So I thought, right, stop, that's it, no more.

Throughout your teenage years you were very involved in karting, so how did you manage to fit in your education?

It was always difficult for me because I missed a lot of lessons, but at the same time it was also important for me to have a proper education. It doesn't matter if you're involved in motorsport, football, hockey or whatever; if you get injured and have to take some time out, it can be difficult to get back. And, of course, if you then want to apply for a job, they aren't going to ask you whether you did a lot of sport when you were a teenager. They want to know about your exam results, and that's why a serious education is so important.

Were your parents always supportive of your motor-racing ambitions?

Oh yes, very much so. We did that first season on our own, which I think cost us about \$9400. But then we had to raise some sponsorship if I was going to be able to continue. I remember dressing up in a suit and attending all the racing shows in an effort to raise the money we needed. Fortunately, we found Red Bull very early on, who are still supporting me, and now we've

got BMW, too. But my parents were always very supportive, always taking me to the kart races. I mean, when you're 10 you rely on your parents a lot because you can't drive on the road. They were also at Monza, but obviously can't come to all the races as my father has to work and I have an eight-year-old brother who is in second grade at school. Come to think of it, I'm still not old enough to be able to hire a car.

Niki Lauda said it would be interesting to ask you whether it was actually easier to drive a modern F1 car than your current F3 car. What do you think?

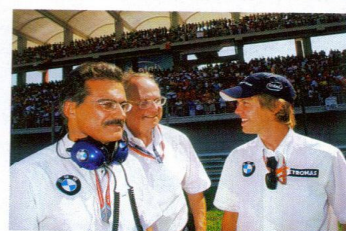
Well, yes, in an F3 car we don't have traction control, so maybe it's a bit harder – and, of course, I haven't driven an F1 car in the wet. There is obviously a lot more downforce on an F1 car, but you have to be really clean and precise about the way you drive it, whereas in an F3 car you have to throw it about more with a lot of steering input.

So what are your plans for next season?

To be honest it's a bit early to say. I haven't had time to think about it. After Japan I headed back to Europe for the Le Mans F3 Euroseries, then I went to the Brazilian Grand Prix. After that it's back to Hockenheim, where F3 is supporting the DTM final. So it's quite busy, but at least I can collect some more air miles. Once that's all finished it won't be quite so busy and there should be plenty of time to sit down and consider what the best options are for next year. **FO**

+5 fast facts

- 1 What do you have on your iPod at the moment?**
There's just so much. I just keep piling more on, but if you ask me what's my favourite, then I would have to say The Beatles
- 2 What's your favourite food?**
My mother's!
- 3 Who would you most like to have dinner with?**
My family, including all my aunts and uncles
- 4 Where did you last go on holiday?**
Austria, but I would love to go to the Maldives
- 5 What is your favourite comedy series?**
Little Britain



BMW's Mario Theissen and Burkhard Göschel with Vettel



"The next thing I
knew I got the call
and I was arriving
in Istanbul for the
Turkish Grand Prix"



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HEIKKI KOVALAINEN

It's a big ask – Heikki, an F1 rookie, is stepping into Fernando's shoes. So, lots of luck, fella. That learning curve will be...

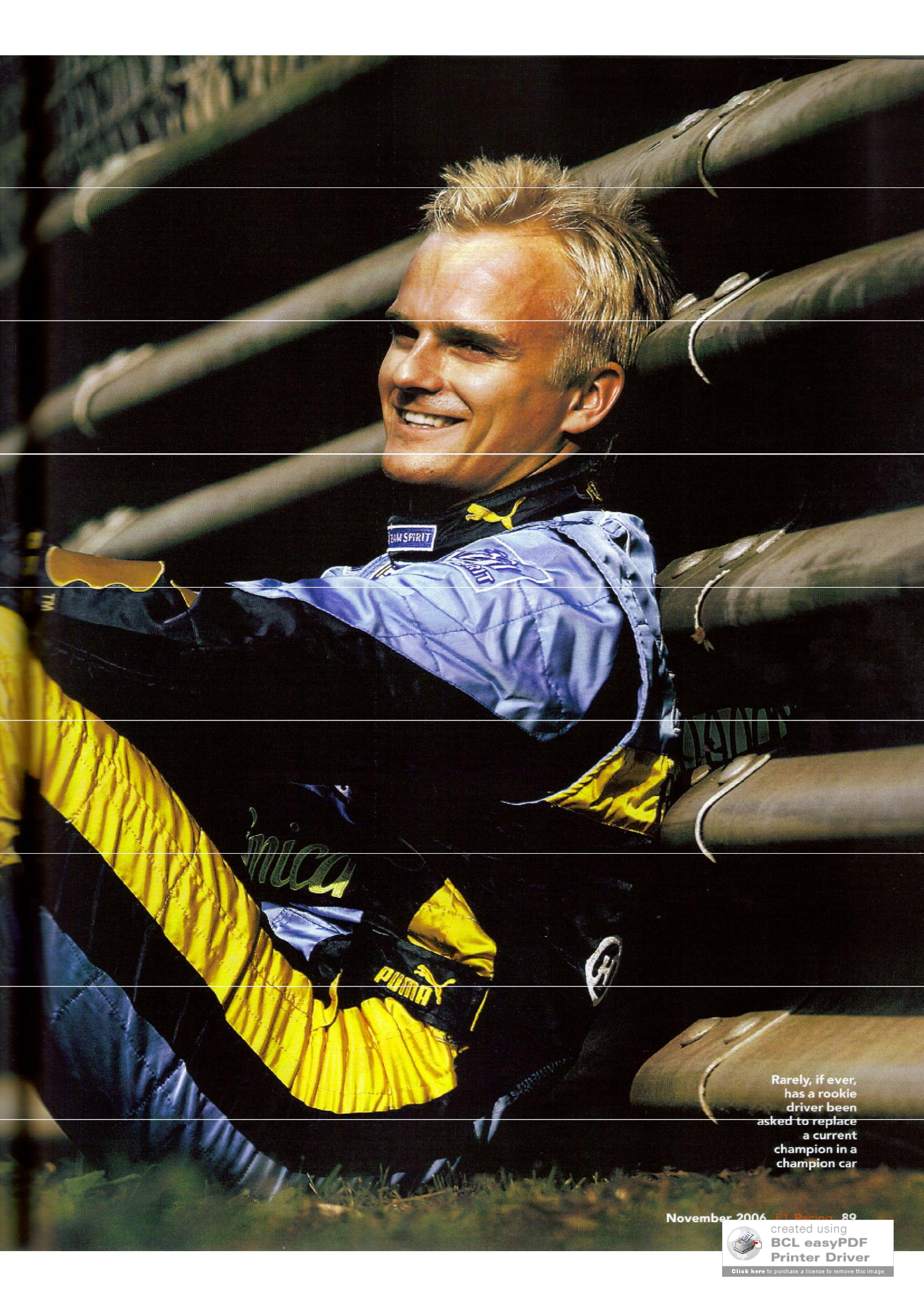
STEEP & DEEP

Words Peter Windsor Portraits Charles Coates/LAT

Let's get one thing straight: Heikki Kovalainen is not a Mika or Kimi. There's even an argument for linking him to Lapland, because his home town is Suomussalmi, in the neighbourhood of one S Claus, and he doesn't mind the Christmas trees and reindeers association. That's Heikki with a smile. Then there's another Heikki – one who is ice-pick hard – as hard as the Finns who beat back the Soviets in the Battle of Suomussalmi in 1939-40.

Don't be deceived, then, by appearances. Heikki may look Kimi-esque, and may indeed have a talent quota right up there with the great Mika's. As an individual, though, he's from another world – of adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions and thus longish sentences – in Finnish, Sami (Lapp) and very fluent English. Finally – and how's this for differing from the F1 norm, let alone the Finnish norm? – he has no reservations about talking to the press and his sponsors whenever possible and in being not only polite and civil but also genuinely, openly, funny in a regular-guy sort of way.

Having Heikki around in a race-winning car will be a bit like having Gilles Villeneuve back in the paddock. Suddenly, our faith will be restored. ▶



Rarely, if ever,
has a rookie
driver been
asked to replace
a current
champion in a
champion car

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Marking time in his testing role (above); Heikki will team up with Fisi in '07 – but it should have been with Fernando

So how will he go, this non-Finnish Finn? Unfortunately, a couple of things will run against Heikki in 2007 – assuming, of course, you're being dispassionate about his chances and asking: "Can Kovalainen take up where Fernando Alonso left off?" (If you're making appropriate allowances – as in, "This will be his first F1 season, so he'll be succeeding even if he achieves a few placings, let alone wins" – then that, of course, is another matter. You won't be disappointed.)

As the driver stepping right into the seat vacated by Fernando Alonso, however; as the "spearhead" – and here I take the word right out of their press release – of Renault's championship challenge, Heikki has much to sustain and then to deliver. So the pressure on him will thus be much greater than that on, say, Nico Rosberg or Lewis Hamilton.

"Spearhead." I misquote slightly, because that word was actually used by Renault, as long ago as last June, to describe Giancarlo Fisichella's new role in 2007. I prefer to tie it to Heikki because there is no doubt at all in my mind that he will in reality be the driver

who gives Renault their best chance of winning. And, as such – as the spearhead of Renault's championship hopes – Heikki will be carrying a lot on his Fisi-sized shoulders.

The big surprise, of course – the tragedy, if you like – was that Renault got it wrong in 2006. Not in terms of their championship challenge but in terms of their future. I wasn't the only observer to suggest at the start of this year that the team should be Fernando Alonso/Heikki Kovalainen – and we said so for three very good reasons: one, Heikki's development would be faster and more defined with Alonso in the other car; two, Fernando did not need the support of Fisi to mount his second championship challenge (on the contrary, Fisi's performance was inevitably going to fall again if things looked good for Fernando); three, re-signing Fisi on the basis of 'continuity' inevitably meant that Renault were going to work around him in the absence of Fernando and to accept his view as the real one. Heikki will be performing within those parameters – and his work therefore may suffer owing to the standards that will be applied.

In short, Renault have to some extent wasted the opportunity of bringing Heikki along at the best possible rate. Yes, he has covered a million F1 test miles over the past 18 months and, yes, he will be capable of winning races in 2007 if the R27 is as competitive as were the R25 and R26. What he won't have is the benefit of a rock-solid benchmark around which to work. Fisi, we know, is not Alonso, either for fighting spirit or plain, simple lap time. And that, in Heikki's debut year, will be frustrating for the team.

Renault's championship chances aside, Heikki will, of course, be great to watch and should quickly have the measure of his much more experienced team-mate. He has phenomenal car control; he has a brain that allows him to be self-critical yet self-confident; he knows how to manage a race; and, of course, he has closely observed and analysed Fernando over the past couple of years.

It has been quite difficult to gauge his progress in 2006 because much of his test driving has been in private and has inevitably been linked to a given set of tyres, fuel load, wing type or geometry. He has been very fast,



"Heikki has phenomenal car control, and a brain that allows him to be self-critical yet self-confident"

though – as at Barcelona, where, for a while during the summer, he held the 'unofficial' lap record, despite the Renault not being in full qualifying trim – and, on the basis of Renault's on-going ability to win races, has obviously been very accurate in the way he has gone about his business. The shame was that an illness – a stomach virus – affected him in the critical, pre-China test at Jerez. With Fernando sidelined by a knee injury, Renault above all needed Heikki in there, doing the homework on the outer edge of the envelope, Fernando-style. As it was, their data was primarily gained by Fisi and José María López. Not good.

So what sort of lap times can we expect from the Lapp whose time it is? Heikki is a relatively late apex driver in the Mika mould – a trait that is due, I think, to his natural tendency to soften the exit of tightening corners by taking comparatively wide entry lines. When my driver-coaching colleague, Rob Wilson, and I were lucky enough to see him a couple of years ago he definitely displayed some initial excess wheel movement on the entry to some corners, coupled with some initial indecision about

correct steering rates. This caused him a few problems on tighter corners because he was inevitably asking too much of the car (the later you turn, the sharper you turn), but at the Silverstone test this year, particularly at the complex, and then at Ricard, where I drove laps with both Heikki and Fernando in a Mégane 225 turbo, his development was clear to see. Now, he was turning in earlier, with a more gentle steering approach, and loading up the lighter wheel a little more. Now he had a more obedient car.

For an obviously aggressive and pushy driver, however, Heikki still wasn't turning the steering wheel particularly quickly – but then we have to remember that the reference point in the Renault team has, for the past four years, been one Fernando Alonso, he of the all-time, record-breaking, dazzling initial turn-in. I spoke to Heikki last year about Fernando's ability to command the car at this point of the corner, and thus to benefit from increased front tyre temperatures, and he was nothing but genuine in his praise for Fernando's creativity. (I say this in the context of other drivers who have been ▶

All the way with Renault

Heikki has been locked into the Renault Driver Development programme since '02

It isn't just Heikki's champion-in-the-making status, or even the shock of blond hair that makes him Renault's golden boy. He's also the purest offspring of their talent-nurturing Renault Driver Development (RDD) programme. Every car he has ever raced on track has had a Renault engine, and he has occupied every rung of that ladder.

Renault had long supported rising French stars – Depailler, Laffite, Jabouille, Arnoux, Pironi, Prost – but in 2002, with RDD, they established a formulae hierarchy to promote their own drivers: from entry-level Formula Renault single-seaters, to the World Series by Renault, and the Renault-powered GP2 series.

After a rookie season in FRenault in '01, Kovalainen joined the first RDD intake – Renault-engined British F3. He was a dominant force, stepping up to the World Series and claiming that title in 2004. Then it was GP2 – where he was pipped to the inaugural crown by Nico Rosberg – followed by this year's test role with Renault F1.

Kovalainen is the RDD driver who paid off. Others reached F1 racer status before him – Tiago Monteiro and Robert Kubica – but they had been dropped from RDD. Heikki is the first to go all the way with Renault, and in that he is unique among manufacturer patronage of young drivers.

Tim Scott



Five F3 wins in 2002 (left); GP2 in 2005



HEIKKI KOVALAINEN



Testing (above) under the watchful eye of Alonso – he is silky smooth, and very precise

“Kovalainen is very bold, very fast and very refreshing”

derisive of Fernando's style – or who, at best, believe that Fernando is flattered by the Renault. We'll see about that. McLarens famously lack decent front ends, as Juan Pablo Montoya discovered; but Fernando is no idiot. I can see him struggling with perennial understeer at McLaren about as clearly as I can see Juan Pablo on a South Beach diet.)

I sensed, though, an inner belief that he, Heikki, could do it his way – and I think he can and does. The timing of the steering input is just as critical as the rate at which it is applied – and both movements, in turn, are tied to footwork – to the rate at which braking is decreased and throttle applied. If anyone has an innate feel for this – for the moment – it is Kovalainen. He is beautifully supple behind the wheel. You could see that at Ricard, and, as we've noted, he has wonderful car control, a skill that is out there in the realms of Tom Pryce/Ronnie Peterson/Gilles Villeneuve.

He is extremely precise, too, in his use of the brakes – in his initial use of the brake pedal (nothing violent), at knowing the exact rate at which he should decrease the pedal pressure, and in his placement of the car. His gearchanging in the Mégane was silky-smooth, as you'd expect, as was his heel-and-toe co-ordination. You may say, “so what?” in this age of paddle-shifts – but you'd be surprised by the number of F1 drivers who are lumpy in this department. As Ayrton Senna once said, lumps are completely contrary to the flow of driving – and any driver who tolerates them is a driver who is less than perfect.

To sum up, then: Heikki is a very bold, very fast, very refreshing racing driver in an F1 paddock cluttered with monotones and PR-speak. He has great, natural car control – which, at this stage of his career, without Fernando as a yardstick, he is going to have to be really disciplined about *not* using merely to achieve the relatively simple, short-term goal of out-qualifying or out-racing Fisi. To compete with Alonso or Kimi, and to win the championship next year for Renault, Heikki will need to manage the dynamic weight of the Renault perfectly for 100 minutes or more, 17 or 18 times in the year, paying particular attention to the exits of slow- and medium-speed corners and chicanes. He has been doing this pretty well in 2005-06, in controlled conditions, learning from the master that is Fernando, and I have no doubt that he has the intelligence and skill to apply himself now in races. Renault have given him the opportunity he deserves; the difficult thing, in the absence of Fernando, will be to continue that rate of improvement in the vortex of racing pressure. **F1**



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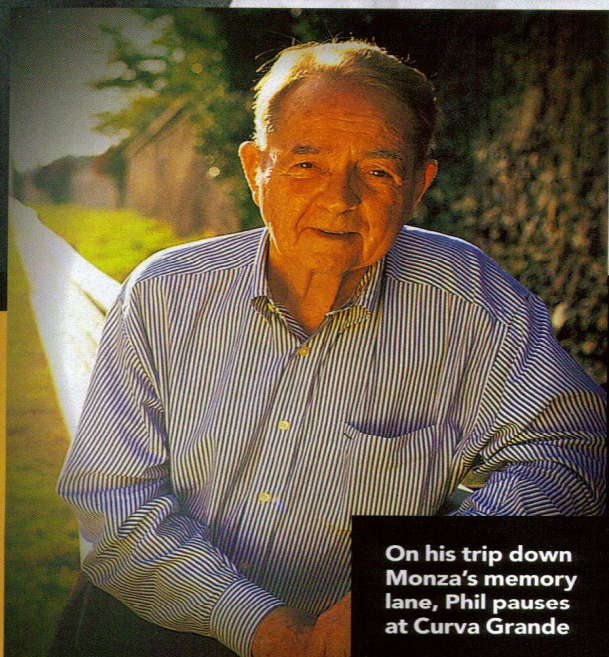
MONZA 1961

REMEMBER HIM THIS WAY

Age has wearied him, but the years do not condemn... In 2006, Phil Hill returned to the track he 'owned' 45 years ago – it was a moving finale



Interview Tom Clarkson Portraits Darren Heath



On his trip down Monza's memory lane, Phil pauses at Curva Grande

Phil Hill, Ferrari's 1961 world champion, hunches over a lightweight shooting stick as he shuffles through the 2006 Monza paddock. One laborious step at a time. It's a poignant moment, surrounded as he is by supple Italian youth and memories of those far-off days of F1 ascendancy when he took the title at this very circuit. How different things look now. Phil is a frail old man. At 79, his voice rises to little more than a whisper and he says it hurts to walk too far. Naturally introverted, he has become increasingly reclusive as old age and immobility have caught up with him.

His back aches – a dull pain that's a legacy of too many years of pounding abuse inside the cockpits of racing cars. He stops beside ▶

CV Phil Hill

DOB April 20, 1927

Lives Sacramento, California

- 1950** Began racing in an MG TC in West coast SCCA events
- 1952** International debut in Carrera Panamericana
- 1955** SCCA sports car champion
- 1956** Lands Ferrari factory sports car contract, winning Swedish GP and Messina 5 Hours
- 1958** Scores first of three Le Mans 24 Hours wins with Ferrari
- 1958** Makes Formula 1 debut in Jo Bonnier's Maserati 250F (9pts, 10th= in championship)
- 1959** First full F1 season with Ferrari (20pts, 4th in championship)
- 1960** F1 with Ferrari. Scores first victory at Monza in Dino 246, the last- ever for a front- engine car (16pts, 5th in championship)
- 1961** Wins Belgian and Italian GPs on way to title in 156 Sharknose (34pts, 1st in championship)
- 1962** Final season with Ferrari (14pts, 6th in championship)
- 1963** F1 with ATS (0pts)
- 1964** F1 with Cooper (1pt, 19th= in championship)
- 1966** Final F1 race in an Eagle at Monza (0pts)
- 1967** Ends career with BOAC Brands Hatch 6 Hours sports car win in Chaparral

In the 1961 title-winning Ferrari 156 (below); at Reims in '61 (opp) where he was on pole for the French GP, and produced the fastest lap, before a spin put him out of the reckoning



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MONZA 1961

a Toyota transporter to take a little pain relief. From his trouser pocket he pulls a plastic box with the days of the week marked on top. From the compartment marked 'Saturday' he takes a pill and puts it in his mouth. He swallows hard before continuing his journey towards the pit lane. Few people recognise this self-effacing, gentle Californian. In the youth- and image-obsessed world of modern F1, Phil no longer fits. His age is off the scale – he's from a bygone, pre-Michael Schumacher, era.

So just remember two things: first, the faces of those who do recognise him – a vanishingly small number – light up with affection; and second, in his day, behind the wheel, he was a legend. In his pomp, from 1958 to 1961, Phil could be devastatingly fast. Back then he was swamped by adoring *tifosi* in the Monza paddock.

Not today, though. He's heading for the entrance to the pit lane for an *F1 Racing* photoshoot. The pain-relieving chemicals are slow to kick in, and after covering a bit more ground, he asks to sit down. He places his shooting stick outside the Williams pit and watches the team prepare their cars for tomorrow's Italian Grand Prix.

Frank Williams sees us from his team's pit garage and offers Phil his spare wheelchair, which he accepts... grudgingly. "That's very kind," Phil says in his soft Californian lilt, "but I don't want anyone to see me in this." I push him towards our rendezvous and we stop outside the Ferrari pit, where mechanics are swarming over Michael Schumacher's 248. Phil stares at the activity, grinding his teeth.

"The race team were run very differently back then," he says. "They definitely weren't the tight-knit group you see with Schumacher, [Jean] Todt and [Ross] Brawn."

So the story goes, Enzo Ferrari didn't actually congratulate Phil on winning the world title until three days after he clinched it, when Phil visited the Old Man's house in Maranello. Phil refuses

At the wheel, Phil is rejuvenated (below); leading Ginther at Monza '61 (right)



to be drawn, saying simply that "things were different".

F1 Racing snapper Darren Heath is waiting for us outside the Renault pit in an FIA Mercedes A-class, in which we're going to complete a lap of the track. We decant Phil into the driver's seat, ready for his first lap of Monza in more than 40 years. Now he comes alive. The back pain evaporates and suddenly his posture straightens. He doesn't drive fast – no more than 50mph at any point – but driving is clearly something he still takes very seriously. He shuffles his bottom deep into the seat and cocks his head forward in concentration. On the approach to the first chicane he begins to speak, but I can't hear what he's saying over the engine noise. I push my Dictaphone close to his mouth and listen to the words later.

"In an F1 car this place felt damn' fast," he says. "It seemed like a dangerous circuit but, then again, everywhere seemed dangerous in those days. It was a slipstream track. Whoever was behind was going to be ahead a minute later. It made it challenging because it was very close racing." He gestures, his hands conveying cars running nose-to-

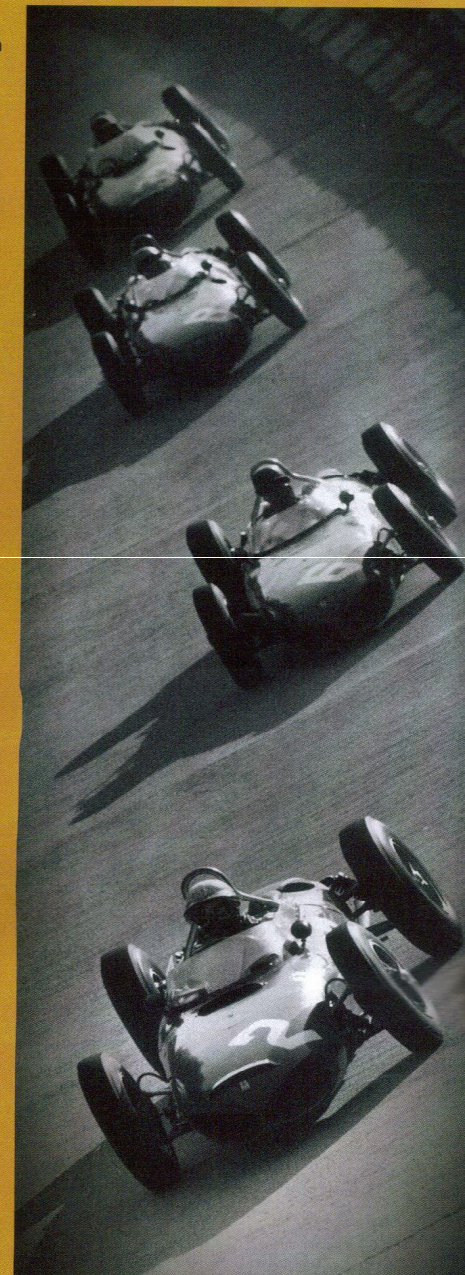
MONZA: FORMULA 1'S TEMPLE OF SPEED

Opened in 1922 when even Formula 1's fabled 1950s' titans were still in nappies or short trousers, the Autodromo Nazionale di Monza has long since basked in legendary status.

Its marvellously dilapidated state testifies to a glorious heritage and longevity – the withered and flaking paintwork of the ancient nestling unashamedly beside the brushed aluminium and smoked glass of the ultra-modern. A living, breathing, if ancient, temple to motorsport, it has always embodied Italy's passion for Formula 1.

In 1955, the track was even extended to include a banked, concrete oval. Unused now for 40 years, it stands imperious and quietly crumbling, in the heart of the surrounding forest.

Attempts to tame the track have usually proved fruitless. As speeds escalated, the high-speed track and flat-out blasts were cut with chicanes in the 1970s. But the circuit wouldn't be restrained – and speeds rose inexorably, Michael Schumacher eventually eclipsing Peter Gethin's 1971 fastest-ever average winning speed of 150.761mph with a race-long 153.846mph average in 2003. A year earlier, Juan Pablo Montoya had blasted to pole



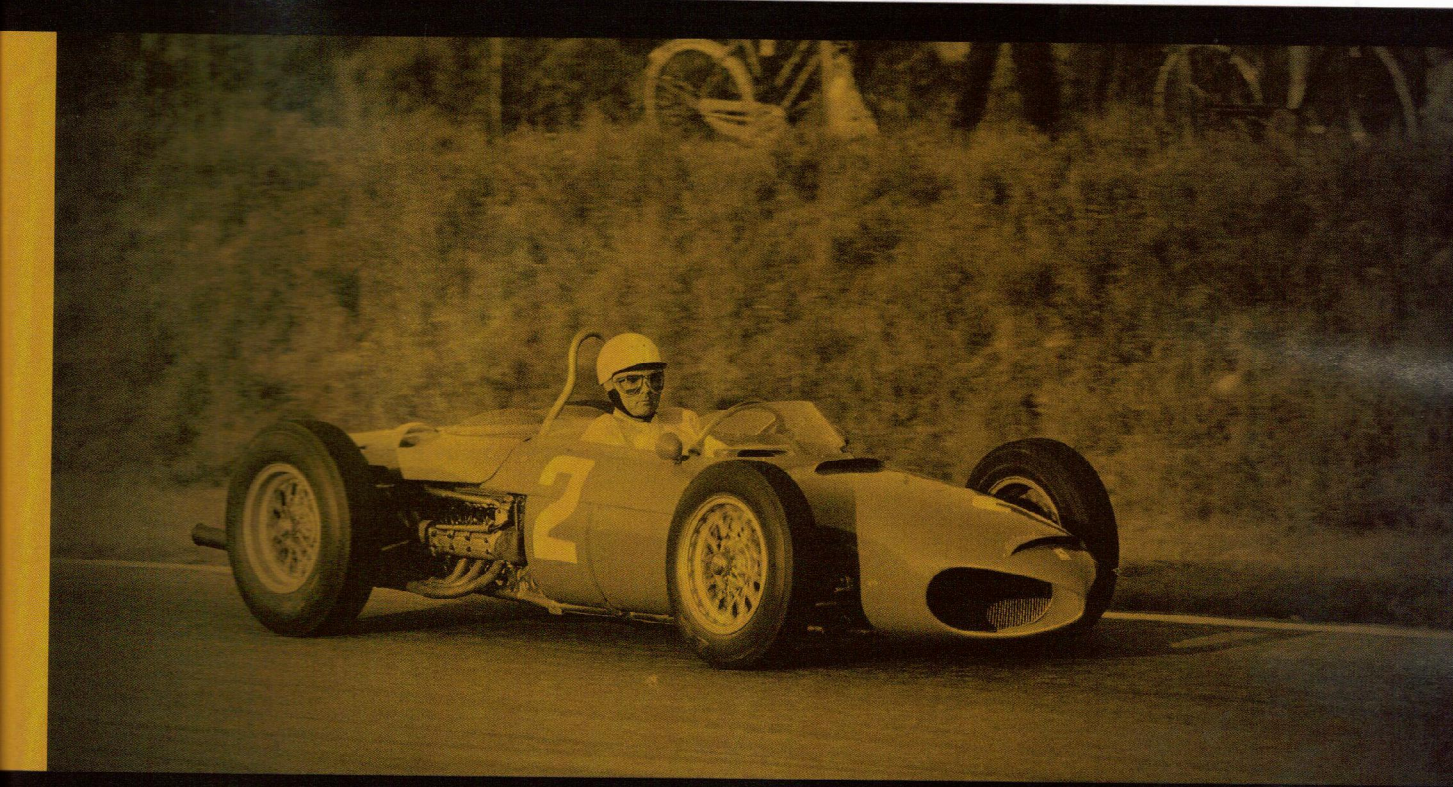
position at an astonishing average speed of 161.443mph.

Monza is the final resting place of Alberto Ascari, and the circuit where the championship challenges and the lives of Wolfgang von Trips and Jochen Rindt were cruelly extinguished (Rindt is still the only posthumous

world champion).

Monza also precipitated the death of Ronnie Peterson, who succumbed to his injuries following a first-lap shunt. It is a track inhabited by many motorsport ghosts, and their spirits no doubt still look down upon Monza and smile.

Steve Cooper



tail and wheel-to-wheel.

"Monza was also the first track at which I decided to wear a seatbelt. It was at the 'War of Two Worlds' race, when the Indycars came over. Dan [Gurney] and I went out to the banking to watch and were alarmed to see the way those big cars jumped around. [Luigi] Musso, who was fastest, was half out of the car, just hanging on to the steering wheel.

"We had a heck of a time locating a belt, but finally found one in Milan. It was one of those big military-type belts. The main reason for wanting it was because if the cars were going to be as loose as they looked, we didn't care what we did. Anything to save the situation."

156 was easily the class of the 1961 field, winning five out of seven races

"MUSSO WAS HALF OUT OF THE CAR, JUST HANGING ON TO THE STEERING WHEEL"

Phil stops the car on the outside of the second chicane, beside a dilapidated old wall. He gets out and leans against the nearest barrier, looking in the direction of Curva Grande. The profile of the corner is unchanged from his day, but it wasn't easy-flat back then; more a flick from fifth gear to fourth, balancing the car on the throttle until the exit.

We drive on. At the exit of both Lesmos, he runs the car out to the rumble strips and there's even a hint of opposite lock as the car bounces around. At Ascari, he says simply, "This is where Alberto died"; under braking for Parabolica he says, "This is where Trips was killed."

Morbid reminiscence? Perhaps, but Phil was always remarkably candid about the dangers of the sport and his struggles to find a balance between the perils and pleasures of his profession.

"People were being killed left, right and centre back then," he says. "I became hyper-sensitive to the danger, and wasn't sure that I wasn't going to kill myself. As ▶

With 156 designer Carlo Chiti – von Trips's death is writ large on their faces





MONZA 1961

a result, racing brought out the worst in me. Without it, I don't know what kind of person I might have become. But I'm not sure I liked the person I *did* become because I was selfish, irritable and defensive."

When his team-mate, Wolfgang von Trips, then leading the 1961 championship by six points, was killed at Monza, Phil's title victory became inextricably linked to death. Phil took the race and with it the crown, by a single point, but you'd be wrong to call him lucky. He'd worked hard behind the scenes to lay the foundations of that success: the night before the race, he was even refusing to drive in the GP unless he got a new engine because he was worried about valve springs breaking on the motor he'd used during qualifying.

That '61 race was Phil's second successive win at Monza and rounded off a four-year run in which he had finished no lower than third in the Italian GP. "Yes, when I look at my results," he says, "Monza was always good to me. But it was the circumstances that made it difficult for me to remain upbeat. So many drivers were getting killed, and they weren't just fellow competitors – they were team-mates and friends.

"I never thought I could drive Monza better than anyone else. For me, that attitude was the classic way to kill yourself. There was no logic to it; I just went out there and did it."

At the end of our lap in the A-class, Phil peels into the pit lane

"I'M NOT SURE I LIKED THE PERSON I BECAME: SELFISH, IRRITABLE AND DEFENSIVE"

where he parks up. He pauses in the cockpit for a second, saying nothing, before we help him back into the wheelchair and push him to the Ferrari hospitality area.

He sits down in the main Ferrari motorhome to eat an orange and arrange a time for his chauffeur (laid on by Ferrari for the weekend) to pick him up and return him to his hotel at Lake Como. Then he's left to his own devices for a few minutes until Jean Todt walks over to welcome him.

"Phil," says Todt in a loud voice. "It's great to have you at the race – welcome."

They discuss Lake Como for a while, but the conversation is one-sided because Phil is tired and finds it hard to make himself heard. Todt then disappears into a huddle of engineers, who are discussing whether Fernando Alonso held up Felipe Massa during qualifying.

While Todt and Phil are talking, Michael Schumacher walks into the motorhome and sits at the adjacent table. When Todt has gone, Schumi comes over and introduces himself.

"It's a pleasure to meet you," says Phil. "Congratulations on everything you've achieved. Hell, I only won one championship, yet you've got seven – maybe even eight quite soon."

"To be honest," says Michael, "the first one was the most special. The others feel pretty much the same."

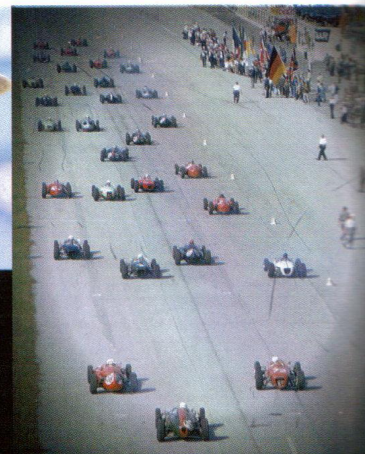
Their conversation moves on to the differences in layout between Monza today versus Monza in 1961, and then to the differences in the cars. Michael is tenderly solicitous, a quality he rarely shows to the outside world, helping Phil to sit down before returning to his table of friends.

Phil then proffers his thoughts on Ferrari and Monza, a track that he owned for a couple of years, in the sense that a sportsman can own the affection of a crowd.

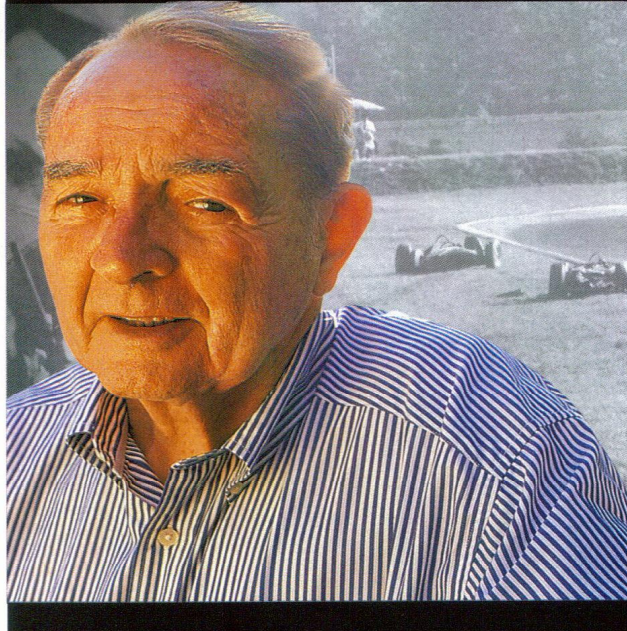
"I've always loved Italy and Monza," he says. "This was one of the first Continental tracks that I ever went to, and for that reason I have



The 1961 Monza start: there were 32 cars on the grid, the Ferraris lining up first to fourth



Hill takes the chequer – and the championship by a single point



Jim Clark and von Trips collided at Parabolica (above), killing von Trips and 11 spectators



a lot of feeling for it. The crowd were very colourful and there is something special and distinctive to the sound you get at Monza. Hearing the cars come out of Parabolica and pass the pits flat-out has always had a certain sameness, whether it was a 2.5-litre V12 or a 1.5-litre V6. I don't know if it's due to the way the sound bounces off the grandstands, but it's always been the same at Monza, and I like that. Yes, I've always liked that."

Raphael, Phil's chauffeur, then appears at the door to drive him back to his hotel.

Hunched over his lightweight shooting stick, Phil shuffles through the Monza paddock towards the swipe gates. One laborious step at time. And with no plans to return. **FO**



MONZA 2006



F



...is for Fast

...or Fangio, if it's a Pagani Zonda F you're talking about. Alex Wurz 'fanged' one around Monza, just for the hell of it. **Matt Bishop** sat alongside, and lived to spin (really!) the yarn

Photographs Lorenzo Bellanca/LAT, Charles Coates/LAT, Steven Tee/LAT



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MONZA 2006

"Suddenly, we're off, sideways, backwards, spinning, crunching gravel, finally facing the wrong way"

The speedo needle has just climbed past 250km/h (155.35mph), and is still arcing steadily clockwise. Alex Wurz hooks sixth as swiftly as it takes to say his surname. This is *quick*. I look left. He's leaning back in his seat, head tilted in the same direction, alert blue-green eyes looking a long way ahead, hands gripping the wheel a smidgen higher than a-quarter-to-three but not quite as high as ten-to-two, left foot poised directly above the clutch pedal (but not riding it, of

course), right foot rammed on the gas.

We flashed past the pits a long time ago. I take a peek at the speedo again: 260km/h (161.56mph), maybe a tad more. The First Chicane is almost upon us. I snatch another glance at Alex's face, at his eyes. No change. Calm but in control. Suddenly, without blinking, he stamps on the middle pedal, and, with nary a hip-wiggle, the Pagani Zonda F (for Fangio) sheds speed like no other road car I've been in before.



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Zonda at Monza
is fast and fun.
"Like winning
at Le Mans in
'96," says Alex

Wurz just loves the
Zonda's cabin – and
relishes its power,
topping 260km/h
(a cool 161.56mph)



trajectory tee'd up perfectly for a swift exit
towards Curva Grande.

Or not... because, in an effort to have even
more fun than we are already, Alex plants
his right foot as we slide through the second
apex – and suddenly we're off, sideways,
backwards, spinning, crunching gravel, and
finally facing the wrong way.

"Er... oops," says Alex, with his distinctive
high-pitched giggle, but already he's in first,
inching the car forward, back onto blacktop.
And, no sooner has he done so, than he dials
up 6000rpm-odd, dumps the clutch, yanks
the wheel over to the right and spin-turns us
back onto the straight (and narrow).

Curva Grande is easy-flat, which means an
indicated 220km/h (136.71mph) in a Zonda
F, and Alex is hooting with laughter all the
way round. Chatting, too: "Wow! I guess that
was what you could call an eventful first
corner. Were your photographers there?"

"I hope so. (They were.)"

"This car really does have a lot of power."

"It sure does. This is the F version, with
the ClubSport package, which is good for
650bhp. It only weighs 1230kg, too, so the

power-to-weight ratio is 528bhp per tonne."

"Wow! I guess I spun because I kind of
had a different kind of power-to-weight ratio
in mind. I've turned the TC [traction control]
off, of course, because it's more fun like that,
but I guess I was treating it like it had, you
know, 200-300bhp per tonne. You know,
like a *normal* high-performance road car.
And to get normal high-performance road
cars to go sideways, in the dry, you really
have to floor it and flick the wheel at the
same time. I did that, and, well, you saw
what happened..."

"Sure did."

"Maybe the problem was the excess cross-
weight on the right-hand side of the car," he
says, chuckling, pointing at my claret-gut.

We both fall silent as the second chicane
is done and dusted in a few savagely rapid
movements of hands and feet – plus another
flurry of opposite lock – and then we're
accelerating hard towards the Lesmos.

"Obviously," he goes on, "for normal road
use you'd have the TC on. I guess they've
spiced the throttle response and curve with
TC in mind – because, without it, which is ▶

It goes like this, and as simple as this:
sixth-fifth-fourth-third-second, just one
hand on the wheel throughout, steering
infinitesimally nuanced as he gets third
but then rapidly yet oh-so-progressively
increased as he snicks the lever back to
second and turns-in.

Now we're thumping the apex rumble
strips on the right, the car deliciously
tweaked to 10 degrees of opposite lock,
deftly applied again with one hand, our



MONZA 2006

always quicker on track in a road car, it's pretty twitchy. A bit too twitchy, in fact."

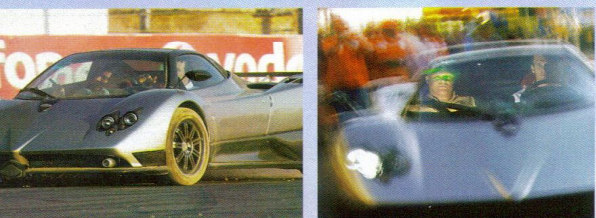
The Lesmos are truly wonderful corners – 160km/h (99.42mph) in an F1 car, 100km/h (62.14mph) in an F. But plunging out of the second one towards Ascari, hurtling through the trees, flitting in and out of dappled sunshine and shade, is a fabulously evocative experience.

"This is super-cool," says Alex. ('Super' is a very Alex word; everything is either super-this or super-that.) "And the cabin of this car – you know, the bubble – reminds me of my days with Mercedes and Porsche at Le Mans. And it's a super-nice feeling, man."

For the train-spotters among you, I should at this point state that Alex became (and remains) the youngest ever outright winner of Les 24 Heures du Mans when, at just 22 years and four months, he won the 1996 event in a Porsche WSC95.

We scythe through Ascari, the Pagani perfectly poised throughout, every inch of road casually utilised, 10 degrees of opposite lock this way then 10 degrees the other, the steering done always with one hand. But Monza is all about straights, and the Pagani eats 'em up.

"Super engine, no?" says Alex, as he gives 12 Mercedes cylinders and 7291 Mercedes cubic centimetres the full treatment in third, then fourth, then fifth. "I really like this car. Look how well-finished the interior is – all the switches, so nicely machined, so carefully detailed. Super-good." ▸



Left: post-gravel tweak. Right: snapped by Ferrari guys in the pit lane

Looks quick, even when it's going slow. When it's going quick... wow!

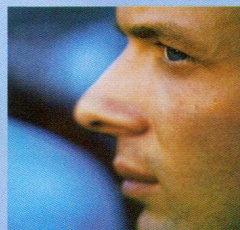
When taxi driving goes wrong...

Herr Wurz remembers a truly-madly-deeply scary day at the A1-Ring

"It happened at the opening of the A1-Ring, in 1996. I was in a touring car – I'd better not say which one – and I was giving VIPs fast laps around the new track. As I approached Turn Two at about 240km/h (149.13mph), I had complete brake failure – and the guy sitting next to me was the chief prosecutor of Austria, just about the worst person it could have happened with.

"I tried to flick the car sideways, to scrub off speed, but it was hopeless. We hit an unprotected concrete pillar, with no tyre wall around it, at 180km/h (111.85mph).

"It was a *huge* shunt. The concrete pillar entered the cockpit and passed between me and my



Wurz hit concrete – and headlines – in '96

passenger, ripping the engine/gearbox assembly away and ramming it under our seats and out the other side.

"When the car came to a stop, I knew I was okay – even though, in the impact, in spite of my belts, I was pushed so violently forward that my helmet totally destroyed the steering wheel and dashboard.

"But my passenger was unconscious. His breathing was weak. I

shouted at him, to try to rouse him. His eyes moved, so I figured he was alive.

"He was rushed to hospital, to intensive care, where he slipped into a coma.

"Thankfully, in time, he pulled through. I spoke to him after his recovery, and he was super-cool about it. 'You really pissed me off,' he said, laughing, 'because I was really looking forward to the rest of the lap.'

"But, ever since, I've always been spooked by 'taxi driving'. I'm prepared to take risks for myself, but not for someone else, and that's why I always brake super-early when I'm 'taxi driving'. But, then, once I'm into a corner, I give it the works. There's no real risk in that."



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MONZA 2006

"It's a very quick car – but also very, er, high heels-operatable," says Alex as we climb out

We touch 240km/h (149.13mph) before slowing to 120km/h (74.56mph) for the entry to Parabolica – and, even though F1 drivers tend to dismiss it as straightforward, it's a mighty corner to be driven through by someone who really knows the way. The apex is a long one, and hard to spot – well, hard for me – but Alex piles on ever more throttle as we track around, showing 150km/h (93.21mph) as he takes fourth on the exit rumble strip.

In the end, he does four laps. He spins once more – again at the First Chicane, where indeed he pirouetted his Williams the day before – and would clearly have liked to do more had time allowed.

We roll to a smoky halt. Christopher Pagani – the son of Pagani founder Horacio and Nelsinho Piquet looky-likey – who delivered the car for Alex's Monza delectation, is beaming proudly.

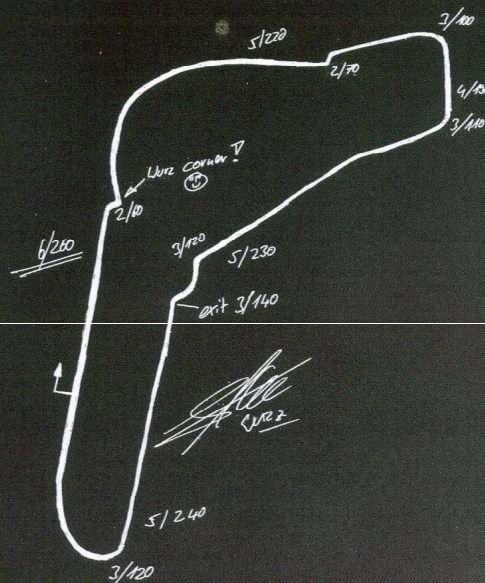
"It's a super car," Alex tells him as we climb out. "Very quick – but also very, er, high heels-operatable. It's easy to drive slowly, to manoeuvre. It's got a good steering lock and an easy clutch. It pulls away easily on idle. How much?"

"About \$740,000."

"Pity." **F1**

A Zonda lap of Monza...

...Wurz-style. Alex was :-) or at the very least :-) about his two spins at the First Chicane



(Left, from top to bottom) Zonda F is beautifully detailed, inside and out. Massive exhausts are a signature feature – as is storming cornering (below)



F1 to one

Didier Coton Manager, Alex Wurz

On Wurz's prospects for 2007; on the state of Williams; on Mika Häkkinen

Which drivers do Aces Management Group [Coton's company] take care of now?

Alex Wurz, Mika Häkkinen, Olivier Panis, Nicolas Lapierre, James Rossiter, Roger Yasukawa and a girl called Marlène Broggi.

Describe the kind of a guy Alex is, both as a driver and a man.

Alex is a great driver – quick, fit, technical, intelligent. He's an aggressively competitive racer – people who associate him only with the tens of thousands of testing kilometres he drove for McLaren and Williams between 2001 and 2006 will see that steel again next year. And, even though he's still only 32, he's fantastically experienced – he has already started 53 grands prix, the first as long ago as 1997. Last but not least, he's a super guy and a great family man.

Apart from Imola 2005, when he replaced the injured Juan Pablo Montoya, Alex hasn't driven a grand prix since 2000. Will he be race-rusty in 2007?

Did he look race-rusty at Imola last year? No, he optimised McLaren's pit-stop strategy to leapfrog three other cars and build on that advantage [Wurz finished third, behind Fernando Alonso and Michael Schumacher]. So I have no doubt that he'll get the job done, just as I have no doubt that a team as serious about winning as Williams wouldn't have given him a race drive if they didn't agree with me.

What's your impression of Williams these days?

Very good. Wherever you go – factory, motorhome, garage – you get a real sense of racing spirit. But, more than that,

everyone is utterly focused. What kind of season do you think Alex will have in 2007 in terms of results?

It's very early days as far as the Williams-Toyota relationship is concerned, but I have a lot of past experience of Toyota – from Olivier's time there – and I know how committed they are to achieving success in F1. And, speaking to Frank [Williams, team principal], Patrick [Head, director of engineering] and Sam [Michael, technical director], I get a strong sense that they understand where they need to be and how to get there. And Alex's input will be crucial to that journey – as will Nico's [Rosberg], who I think will have a good year, too.

When you took Alex on in early 2005, he was in no-man's land at McLaren, testing but never racing. It isn't the first time you've rescued a driver's career – you did it with Olivier, too [Panis had no race-drive options for 2000, so Coton placed him at McLaren as third driver, from where he relaunched his race career at B.A.R-Honda and Toyota]. What's your secret?

There's no secret – I do things my way, that's all. But Olivier, like Alex, was and is very professional, technical, quick and open to new ideas.

Which of your other drivers are on the cusp of F1?

Nicolas sustained an injury at Monaco this year, which meant he wasn't able to do the excellent job in GP2 that I know he's capable of doing. So he'll do GP2 again next year. As a part of Honda's young driver programme, James has already had a taste

of F1 – in fact, he's tested Honda's F1 car several times this year. Honda are investing in him, moulding him, and it's good to see. Both Nicolas and James have real F1 potential.

What about Olivier?

Olivier has decided to quit F1, having been a test driver for Toyota for the past two seasons, because he still aches to race. So all I can say at the moment is: watch this space!

Would you say the time you worked with Mika at McLaren in the late '90s, when he won back-to-back championships [in 1998 and 1999], is the highlight of your career so far?

In a sense, yes – except that in those days I was working with Keke [Rosberg], and Keke was Mika's actual manager, not me. But I worked with Mika every day throughout that time. And watching him develop, and win, and guiding him throughout that process... well, it was marvellous. But, in a different way, helping Olivier and Alex find their way back into F1 race drives has been every bit as satisfying.

Was it ever possible that Mika might return to F1 as was rumoured in late 2004?

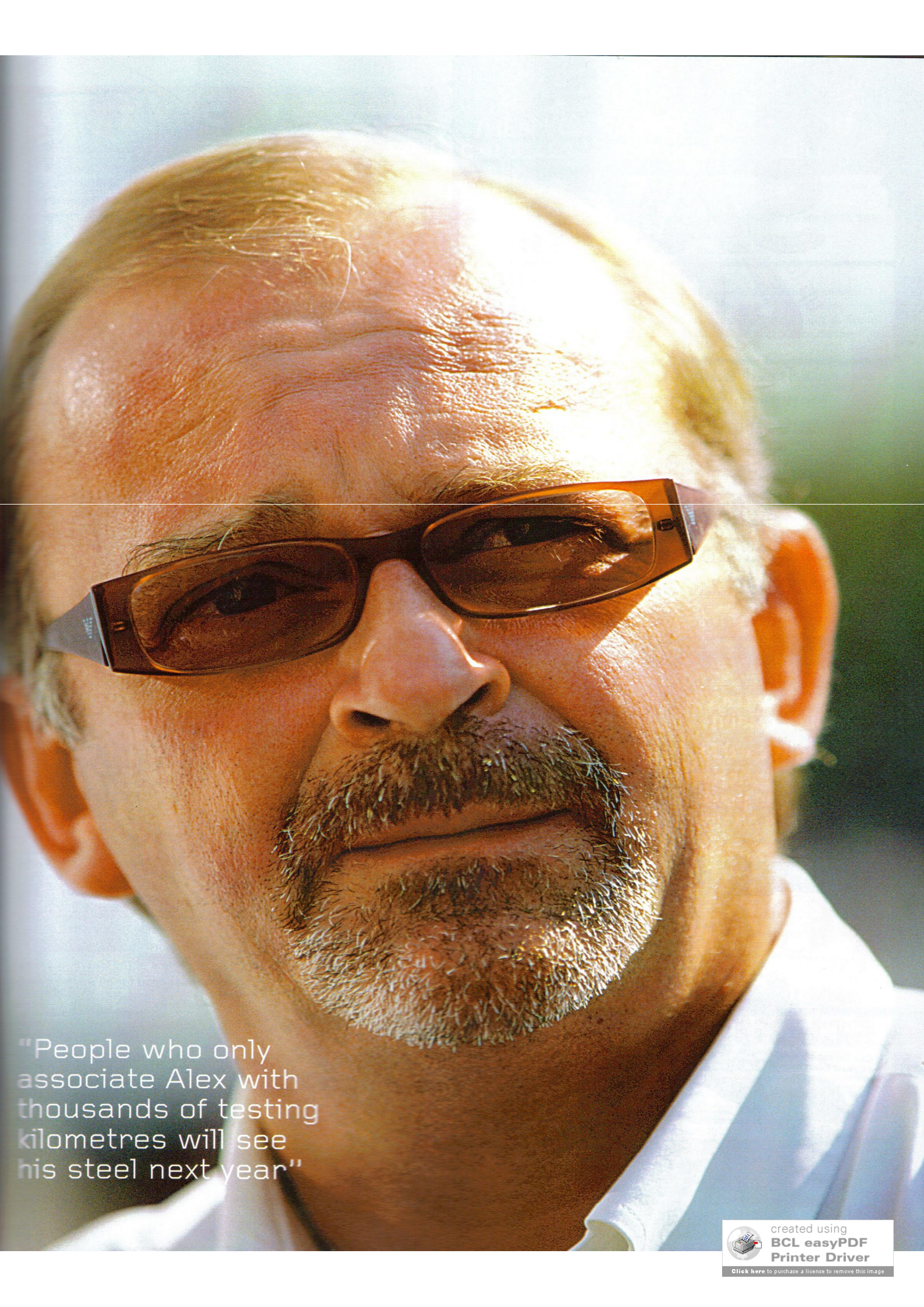
Well, he was approached by a team, yes, but I'd rather not name that team [*it was Williams – ed*]. At one point Mika was very keen, and, together with the team concerned, we spent many months discussing the possibility, but it never happened. And so we approached Mercedes – with whom Mika, anyway, had an excellent relationship, having had so much success with their engines in F1 – and he ended up in DTM, which he loves. **F1**

+5 fast facts

- 1 Have you ever carried a driver's briefcase for him?**
Of course!
- 2 You're Belgian – so what's your favourite Belgian beer?**
I don't drink beer. I prefer wine every time.
- 3 Is it true that you used to live in Wales?**
Absolutely true – I lived in Brynmawr for two-and-a-half years.
- 4 Which is your favourite city for a weekend break?**
What with the amount of travel I do, the answer has to be my adopted home city, where I can relax with my family: Monaco.
- 5 Do you believe in God?**
No, I was never brought up to do so.



Williams chassis engineer Frank Dernie (left) confers with Coton



"People who only
associate Alex with
thousands of testing
kilometres will see
his steel next year"

BRAZILIAN Grand Prix

World Championship

Round 18

Interlagos 22.10.06

RACE REPORT

by Peter Windsor



The master bows out after one last show

Alonso took the championship, and Massa the race, but Brazil 2006 belonged to one man: Michael Schumacher

Into his last F1 race Michael Schumacher took with him to Brazil those to whom he is very close – his wife, Corinna; his father, Rolf; his former masseuse and trainer, Balbir Singh; his manager, Willi Weber; a couple of friends from the karting days in Germany (Peter Kaiser and Heribert Fringeling); his mate Mick Doohan and some new friends from his second home in Norway. They stayed at the Grand Hyatt, flush with the teeming dual carriageway that is the road to Interlagos, and for the most part, in between dinners in the local *churrascarias* they sat around the back of the Ferrari garage, playing backgammon and avoiding the stares.

Team Michael. Team organisation. Team leave-us-alone.

Team Ferrari.

You could see it in the eyes of Chris Dyer and Nigel Stepney and Aldo Costa and the engine guys and the mechanics and the engineers. You could see the sadness as reality broke – the reality of a Monday morning afterwards and the harshness of an



Massa led into Turn 1, as Schumi dived up the inside in a desperate bid to make up places

airport security check and a seat in the wrong part of the plane. The reality of a Ferrari team that no longer features Michael Schumacher.

He was fine, though. There were no regrets as he was driven into Interlagos one more time, through the infamous Gate Seven, past that statue of José-Carlos Pace, through the tunnel, up by the Shell tribune and then right up to the swipe gates. One more 'Bong-bing'. One more quick run through the mêlée. Let them chase Felipe! Local hero on the pole! Rubens eat your heart out!

MO'S MOMENTS

1

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX, LAP 47

TOP 10 TAKU

Takuma Sato set the ninth fastest lap of the race; a perfect summary of a stunning performance by the Super Aguri driver as he headed for 10th place ahead of Red Bull, Toro Rosso and Spyker. "This is an absolutely fantastic result," enthused Sato. "This was another great team effort. I felt comfortable in the car. I was taking the corners side-by-side with the other cars on the first lap and we overtook the Red Bull and Spyker cars. We were really able to push and take it to the two Toro Rossos, so for the whole time I was racing and I really, really enjoyed it. A big thanks to all the team; it has been a long and hard season but this is so encouraging."

Maurice Hamilton

Takuma Sato finished an excellent 10th, ahead of Red Bull, Toro Rosso and Spyker



DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

after 18 of 18 rounds

1	Fernando Alonso	134
2	Michael Schumacher	121
3	Felipe Massa	80
4	Giancarlo Fisichella	72
5	Kimi Räikkönen	65
6	Jenson Button	56
7	Rubens Barrichello	30
8	Juan Pablo Montoya	26
9	Nick Heidfeld	23
10	Ralf Schumacher	20
11	Pedro de la Rosa	19
12	Jarno Trulli	15
13	David Coulthard	13
14=	Mark Webber	7
14=	Jacques Villeneuve	7
16	Robert Kubica	6
17	Nico Rosberg	4
18	Christian Klien	2
19	Vitantonio Liuzzi	1
20=	Scott Speed	0
20=	Tiago Monteiro	0
20=	Christijan Albers	0
20=	Takuma Sato	0
20=	Franck Montagny	0
20=	Yuji Ide	0
20=	Robert Doornbos	0
20=	Sakon Yamamoto	0

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

after 18 of 18 rounds

1	Renault	206
2	Ferrari	201
3	McLaren-Mercedes	110
4	Honda	86
5	Toyota	36
6	BMW-Sauber	35
7	Red Bull-Ferrari	16
8	Williams-Cosworth	11
9	Scuderia Toro Rosso-Cosworth	1
10=	Spyker MF1-Toyota	0
10=	Super Aguri-Honda	0



Button, top scorer over the last six races of the season, ended 2006 with another podium finish

His championship had ended, of course, in Japan, with that valve failure in the V8. Was it the max revs spell in China? Was it the extra lateral-g of that Q2 qualifying lap in Japan? He'd probably never know. It had happened. That was all. Game over.

The following week, in Spain, he'd felt as good as ever. The Ferrari 248 had been a gem of a car – a perfect, lovely racing car. And thus he had stared at Brazil. At a constructors' championship to be won. At the last grand prix of his life.

Long ago, it seemed, he had decided to stop. He still loved driving, and driving for the team, but this year, as the races unfolded, he also loved the thought of driving until retirement, up until the moment when he could draw a line and stop. It was like driving

itself! It had an exactitude that no one could imagine. You stared at it eye-to-eye but you did not back away. You raced at it 100 per cent. Right up until the moment.

It seemed from the outset, then, to be a normal Michael weekend. Sit out most of the first session while the track is cleaned by the Friday rabbits. Try the car for a lap or two. P1.

More laps in the afternoon, checking the tyres, remembering the bumps. P6 – or P3 among the racers. Trulli's Toyota is quicker (on softer Bridgestones) but Jenson, in the Honda, is a possible worry. The Renault, on the hardest of the Michelins, is P10. In the drivers' briefing later that afternoon, Charlie Whiting speaks nicely about Michael. "Speech, speech," respond the other drivers. Michael declines bashfully. A good day.

"Out the back, into Turn 6, Michael is the epitome of the racing driver's art"



Schumi passed one Renault, only for a puncture to rob him of the chance to catch the second

On Saturday, under a clearer sky, the routine is familiar. Chat with Ross Brawn in the back office. Watch the times. Wait for somebody quick to venture out. Ah. De la Rosa. And now Kimi. It is 11.20. Walk into the garage, turning to the right, towards the two pristine Schubert helmets (for this race carrying the names of Michael's 91 grand prix wins). Select the lower one. Face the back of the garage, thus avoiding the photographers and possible flashbulbs. Ear plugs-cum-headphones. Lick the tips and push them in. Mask. HANS collar. Helmet. Into the car. Belts. Timing screen. Wait. And then... tyre covers off. It is 11.27. Two flying laps. P1.

Two flying laps: three words, but a surface hardly scratched. Out the back, into Turn 6, Michael is absolutely the epitome of the racing driver's art, loading up the Ferrari into that bumpy, tightening radius, fifth-fourth-gear corner with razor-sharp placement and exquisite feel for steering and throttle. Over the past two days I have invited a number of Michael's peers to quantify his technique, >

MO'S MOMENTS

2

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX, SLOWING DOWN LAP

CHEERING A HOME WIN

A dream come true for Felipe Massa, the first Brazilian to win at home since Ayrton Senna in 1993. Massa got as far as the second turn, where he saw a fan running towards him with the Brazilian flag. "That was one of the easiest races I've ever had," said Massa. "I was screaming in my helmet and remembered all the difficult times. It's easy to remember the good times but also the hard times mean a lot. I also remembered seeing Ayrton picking up the Brazilian flag after winning at Monaco and I wanted to do the same. I thought the guy was going to climb into the car with me! But I wanted to have that flag so much. It was a fantastic feeling." Maurice Hamilton

Just as Senna had done before at Monaco, Massa saluted his win with the Brazilian flag

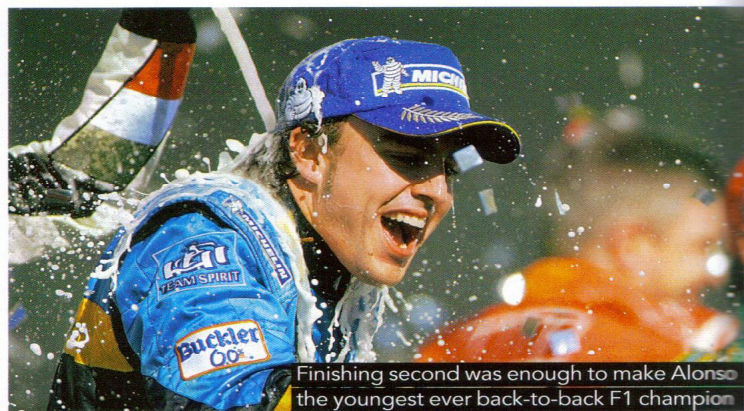


BRAZILIAN Grand Prix RACE REPORT

"Michael hoped for a miracle, but his gods were also heading for retirement"



Among Schumi's many victims as he charged to fourth was his former team-mate Barrichello



Finishing second was enough to make Alonso the youngest ever back-to-back F1 champion



Michael celebrated a Ferrari win, if not his own

MO'S MOMENTS

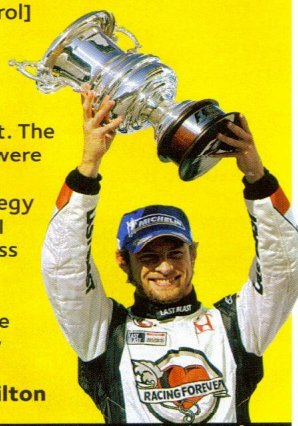


3

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX, LAP 71 FINISHING ON A HIGH

Jenson Button finished the season having scored more points than any other driver during the last six races and rounded it off with a brilliant drive as he sliced through from 14th on the grid to third. "The season is 18 races long," said Button. "But it's encouraging to finish it on a high note; we've just been getting better all the time. That was probably one of the most enjoyable races I've had. After the TC [traction control] problem in qualifying, the team did a good job to sort things out. The car and tyres were really working well, our strategy was good and I was able to pass people on the track rather than during the pit stops. Very satisfying."

Maurice Hamilton



Button had an enjoyable race, climbing from 14th on the grid to a fine third place finish

to put it into a context of their own. Not one, though, not one of those egocentric cretins is prepared to admit that Michael is, above all, the best at what they all do, which makes you think, for the millionth time over the past decade, that they should try some serious Michael-watching from a place like Turn 6 in Brazil. Instead... instead. Instead they stare at their telemetry and talk about understeer. Or oversteer. Or some other reason why they are not going to beat Michael Schumacher.

Out of car. Helmet off. Cap on. Chat to Dyer and to the engine guys. Felipe is P1. Michael, despite a spin on old tyres at the exit of 12 (the slow, crucial, uphill left-hander that leads onto the final straight) – "so that's the bump not to hit on full power" – is P2.

Q1 and Q2 pass without incident – assuming, of course, that you call Michael Schumacher's 1min 10.313 lap of Interlagos straightforward. Consider that this brilliant, error-free lap was 0.3s faster than Rubens Barrichello's 2004 pole time with the 900bhp V10 Ferrari; was 0.3s quicker than his team-mate's best; was a whole 0.8s quicker than the first non-Ferrari guy (Fernando Alonso) and that the Interlagos lap is one of the shortest on the calendar, and you have a measure of how well this old retiree was driving on the second last day of his F1 life. This final, light-fuel, new-tyre lap ever to be driven by Michael was completed, for the record, at precisely 1430:30, when the weekend was at last turning serious. It was one to watch and never to forget.

Then it changed. Then the gods who have watched over Michael for so long decided

that he still might go out there and win it – Suzuka engine failure or not – and that this eye-staring business was getting out of hand. So they added something else: it could have been anything, but you can call it a glitch in the fuel pump. Remember fuel pumps? You last heard of them back in the Cosworth DFV days, when fuel was contaminated and metering units were as reliable as Brazilian rental cars. No one has fuel pump problems today – not in this double-click F1 era run by guys you never see.

Yet fail they can – as any mechanical component can and does. Ferrari number five had been perfect at the end of Q2. Q3, it just stuttered round for a lap and never improved. Michael sat there for a while in the car, hoping for a miracle, but too quickly he got the message: his gods were also heading for something called retirement. Their work, after all these years, was seemingly done.

Of course it was. A great, pushy start, in which he eases inside both BMW drivers at Turn 3, and charges up to Fisichella's Renault. A dink to the left, a dink to the right – before suddenly and inevitably, a Renault right rear-wing endplate carves into the Ferrari's left rear Bridgestone, puncturing it badly. It is all over... except that Michael is Michael. He regains the lap lost to Fisi, he pushes Fisi into an error, he brilliantly passes Kimi down the inside – "the pass of the year!" – he sets another amazing fastest lap, he nurses some slow-speed handling dramas with his usual attention to diff, TC and brake balance, he is only five seconds behind Fernando by the end... and he finishes fourth, ahead of guys like Fisi and Kimi. Throughout, he has been a constant threat, despite the mountain to be climbed. His speed on a full fuel load, after both stops, is spellbinding.

There is, too, an ending with music. The race is won by Ferrari's other driver – by Felipe Massa – and Michael, in parc fermé, is totally and genuinely happy. As well he should be. For this was Michael's Ferrari team that had won the Brazilian Grand Prix – the Ferrari team that had given him five world championships in addition to the two he scored at Benetton. By the margin of an engine blow-up, or a half-spin at Monaco or a missed test prior to Melbourne, he had almost made it an eighth. **FO**

BRAZILIAN Grand Prix

RACE STATS

All the facts from Round 18



Did you know?

For the benefit of Alonso fans, the race was shown live in Real Madrid's Bernabeu Stadium before a Real Madrid/Barcelona match. The Toyota mechanics took second-place behind hosts Petrobras in a seven-a-side football tournament. Jenson Button's mechanics signed their names on his helmet for the race

STARTING GRID

QUALIFYING TIMES	FIRST PIT STOP ON LAP	ENGINE: 1ST OR 2ND RACE	DRIVER STARTING POSITION
1m10.680s (set in Q3)	24	1	Felipe Massa
1m11.299s Q3	21	2	Kimi Räikkönen
1m11.328s Q3	-	2	Jarno Trulli
1m11.567s Q3	26	1	Fernando Alonso
1m11.619s Q3	21	2	Rubens Barrichello
1m11.629s Q3	21	1	Giancarlo Fisichella
1m11.695s Q3	-	2	Ralf Schumacher
1m11.882s Q3	28	2	Nick Heidfeld
1m12.131s Q3	27	2	Robert Kubica
no time Q3	9	1	Michael Schumacher
1m11.650s Q2	-	1	Mark Webber
1m11.658s Q2	35	1	Pedro de la Rosa
1m11.679s Q2	-	2	Nico Rosberg
1m11.742s Q2	25	2	Jenson Button
1m12.861s Q2	32	2	Vitantonio Liuzzi
1m12.856s Q1	33	1	Scott Speed
1m13.138s Q1	48	2	Christijan Albers
1m13.249s Q1	-	1	David Coulthard
1m13.269s Q1	28	1	Takuma Sato
1m13.357s Q1	27	2	Sakon Yamamoto
no time Q1	39	2	Tiago Monteiro
1m12.591s Q2*	35	1	Robert Doornbos

*Engine penalty

RACE RESULT

DRIVER FINAL POSITION	PLACE AFTER LAP 1	TOTAL RACE TIME
1 ← Felipe Massa Ferrari 248 (Bridgestone)	1	1h31m53.751s
2 ← Fernando Alonso Renault R26 (Michelin)	4	+18.658s
3 ← Jenson Button Honda RA106 (Michelin)	10	+19.394s
4 ← Michael Schumacher Ferrari 248 (Bridgestone)	7	+24.094s
5 ← Kimi Räikkönen McLaren-Mercedes MP4-21 (Michelin)	2	+28.503s
6 ← Giancarlo Fisichella Renault R26 (Michelin)	6	+30.287s
7 ← Rubens Barrichello Honda RA106 (Michelin)	5	+40.294s
8 ← Pedro de la Rosa McLaren-Mercedes MP4-21 (Michelin)	11	+52.068s
9 ← Robert Kubica BMW-Sauber F1.06 (Michelin)	9	+67.642s
10 ← Takuma Sato Super Aguri-Honda SA06 (Bridgestone)	15	+1 lap
11 ← Scott Speed Toro Rosso-Cosworth STR01 (Michelin)	14	+1 lap
12 ← Robert Doornbos Red Bull-Ferrari RB2 (Michelin)	19	+1 lap
13 ← Vitantonio Liuzzi Toro Rosso-Cosworth STR01 (Michelin)	13	+1 lap
14 ← Christijan Albers Spyker MF1-Toyota M16 (Bridgestone)	17	+1 lap
15 ← Tiago Monteiro Spyker MF1-Toyota M16 (Bridgestone)	20	+2 laps
16 ← Sakon Yamamoto Super Aguri-Honda SA06 (Bridgestone)	18	+2 laps
17 ← Nick Heidfeld BMW-Sauber F1.06 (Michelin)	12	suspension - 63 laps
18 ← NOT CLASSIFIED	CAUSE OF RETIREMENT	
19 ← David Coulthard Red Bull-Ferrari RB2 (Michelin)	16	gearbox - 14 laps
20 ← Jarno Trulli Toyota TF106 (Bridgestone)	3	suspension - 10 laps
21 ← Ralf Schumacher Toyota TF106 (Bridgestone)	8	suspension - 9 laps
22 ← Mark Webber Williams-Cosworth FW28 (Bridgestone)	21	collision - 1 lap
← Nico Rosberg Williams-Cosworth FW28 (Bridgestone)	-	accident - 0 laps

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX

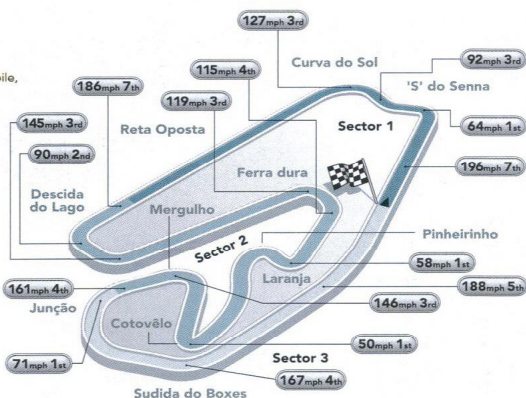
Date October 22 2006 Weather Sunny, warm, 23C Track temp 30-46C Attendance (race day) 64,000 Number of laps 71



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INTERLAGOS

Circuit length 2.677 miles
Figures as per 2005 V10s



INTERLAGOS LAP BY LAP

Lap 1 The BMW drivers run side by side and wide at Turn 4, allowing M Schumacher to pass both. Rosberg hits the back of Webber, and crashes heavily later that lap. Massa leads from Räikkönen, Trulli, Alonso, Barrichello, Fisichella and M Schumacher
Lap 2 Safety Car deployed
Lap 7 Safety Car in
Lap 8 R Schumacher retires; Trulli is also out a lap later
Lap 9 M Schumacher takes fifth from Fisichella into Turn 1 but is forced to the pits with a puncture, rejoining 19th
Lap 20 Massa leads Räikkönen by

10.6s from Alonso, Fisichella, Barrichello and Button
Lap 25 Button pits to move ahead of Räikkönen, but cannot usurp Alonso
Lap 40 Massa leads Alonso by 25s from Button, Räikkönen, Fisichella and Barrichello. M Schumacher is eighth
Lap 47 Schumacher pits from seventh and passes Barrichello
Lap 63 Schumacher forces Fisichella into a mistake and takes fifth
Lap 69 Schumacher takes fourth from Räikkönen
Lap 71 Massa wins as Alonso holds off Button and seals world championship

SPEEDS AND PIT STOPS

Fastest lap Michael Schumacher 1m12.162s on lap 70 (133.577mph)
Fastest pit stop Sakon Yamamoto 22.886s
Slowest pit stop Michael Schumacher 29.476s
Fastest through speed trap Michael Schumacher 197.595mph
Slowest through speed trap Tiago Monteiro 184.981mph

RACES TO DATE

	SAN MARINO	AUSTRALIA	MALAYSIA	BRAZILIAN	EUROPE	MONACO	SPAIN	BRITAIN	CANADA	USA	FRANCE	HUNGARY	TURKEY	CHINA	JAPAN	BRAZIL
Fernando Alonso	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	5	2	5	R	2	R	2
Giancarlo Fisichella	R	1	5	8	6	3	6	4	4	3	6	6	R	6	4	3
Kimi Räikkönen	3	R	2	5	4	5	R	3	3	R	5	3	R	R	2	5
Juan Pablo Montoya	5	4	R	3	R	R	2	6	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pedro de la Rosa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	R	2	5	R	5	11	8
Michael Schumacher	2	6	R	1	1	2	5	2	2	1	1	1	8	3	1	1
Felipe Massa	9	5	R	4	3	4	9	5	5	2	3	2	7	1	9	2
Ralf Schumacher	14	8	3	9	R	R	8	R	R	R	4	9	6	7	15	7
Jarno Trulli	16	9	R	9	10	17	11	6	4	R	7	12	9	7	R	6
Mark Webber	6	R	6	R	9	R	R	12	R	R	R	R	10	10	8	R
Nico Rosberg	7	R	R	11	7	11	R	9	R	9	14	R	R	R	11	10
Rubens Barrichello	15	10	7	10	5	7	4	10	R	6	R	4	8	6	6	12
Jenson Button	4	3	9	7	R	6	11	R	9	R	R	4	1	4	5	4
David Coulthard	10	14	8	R	R	14	3	12	8	7	9	11	5	15	12	9
Christian Klien	8	R	R	R	13	R	14	11	R	12	8	R	11	11	-	-
Robert Doornbos	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	13
Nick Heidfeld	12	R	4	13	10	8	7	7	7	R	8	R	3	14	8	7
Jacques Villeneuve	R	7	6	12	8	12	14	8	R	R	11	R	-	-	-	-
Robert Kubica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	EX	12	3	13
Tiago Monteiro	17	13	R	16	12	16	15	16	14	R	EX	9	R	R	R	16
Christijan Albers	R	12	10	R	13	R	12	15	R	15	EX	10	R	17	15	14
Vitantonio Liuzzi	11	11	R	14	R	15	10	13	13	8	13	10	R	R	14	14
Scott Speed	13	R	11	15	11	R	13	R	10	R	10	12	11	13	13	14
Takuma Sato	18	14	12	R	R	17	R	17	15	R	R	R	13	NC	16	DQ
Yuji Ide	R	R	13	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Franck Montagny	-	-	-	-	R	R	16	18	R	R	16	-	-	-	-	-
Sakon Yamamoto	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	R	16

KEY: R Retired; EX Excluded from result



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This much
I know...

Eddie **Jordan** speaks out

Well, well, well. Now that I'm closer to the punters, I'm asking myself how this championship ended up going to the wire. I used to ask myself the same thing when I was in the sport but never dared come up with an answer other than... chance.

Back then, people used to put it in my mind that Bernie pulled all the strings and we were just puppets, but I'd dismiss that and say I made my own luck. Recently, though, like some fans, I've been wondering whether the puppet-master theory might hold water.

Back in June, Alonso was walking the title, 25 points ahead and it looked like another predictable season. Not good for business. Now, Bernie has a nose for turning things around and creating hype when it's needed, and, to remain appealing, the sport really needed to keep the championship on the boil to the last race. Then, suddenly, Michael won five races out of seven, making it without doubt one of the most exciting seasons for a long time – and everyone was wondering whether Schumi could do it one last time.

So, is it possible that Bernie exerted gentle influence over the stewards' penalty decisions this year? Maybe Michael got the minimum in Monaco, while Alonso was treated harshly at Monza. The same goes for the ruling on Renault's mass dampers. Yes, it seemed

harsh, but it had the desired effect. I'd even go so far as to wonder whether an engine in Suzuka could have been controlled or stopped remotely to help spice things up even more. It's almost unthinkable, but it is possible.

This season was in decline; then suddenly it became very exciting. And with Button at Honda, Kimi at Ferrari and Alonso at McLaren, it's a guessing game for next year, too, which is also great for a business that Bernie controls but doesn't own (though he's

"Is it possible that Bernie exerted gentle influence over stewards' penalty decisions?"

sold it four times, according to Ken Tyrrell, without ever owning it in the first place).

I haven't been to many races since I sold Jordan, but I went to Brazil – I was at Michael's first race and wanted to be at his last. We'll never know whether the 2006 championship was orchestrated by the ringmaster, but for once I'm daring to ask.

← **Championship special, p12**

PHOTO FINISH TOO SEXY FOR HIS SHIRT



Too right, we say. He's moody, broody, hunky and spunky. Let's face it, Ralfie fans know their man, and how they like their beefcake: well done

NEXT MONTH...

**F1 Racing's annual
Man of the Year awards**

The 14 categories include
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Contents subject to change

FROM OUR SPY ON THE INSIDE

Dear Lewis,

Let me ask you a serious question – but just between you and me, eh? For God's sake don't let Uncle Ron suspect we've been chatting, but I'd really like to know whether you think you've got a *real* prospect of getting on terms with Ferdy when he finally rolls into sunny Woking for his first day's work. Alonso is a brilliant operator, but I'd also have to say he's shown himself to be a bit of a cry-baby just recently.

He clearly doesn't yet understand how this business works – so you've really got to be aware of one key aspect of F1 before you sign up. If you're ever unlucky enough to find yourself within a mile of any Ferrari, best pull in to the pits for a cappuccino before you find yourself parked up on the hard shoulder being grilled by the FIA's Thought Police for having the temerity to consider blocking one of Maranello's finest.

This may be academic, of course, in 2007, as I've heard that Max is proposing that the Kimster and Flip will be escorted by motorcycle outriders in all next year's races, so the best you can do is join the queue and tuck in behind. After all that frightful bollocks at Monza when the stewards had a senior moment and decided Massa had been held up by Ferdy, even though the Benetton was almost half-a-lap in front, it's best to take care. It was all about as credible as the governing body declaring that Max's old F2 Brabham had been found on the moon.

Meanwhile, you'll find Macca's a friendly enough place once you get into the swing – one of the few remaining real bedrock F1 teams. Okay, Ron may drone on a bit about "optimising every facet of your interfacing potential", but just take the Old Boy with a pinch of salt. I don't know what it means, either, so just smile sweetly and it'll all be tickety-boo.

Enjoy the greyscape at your new job!

the SCRUTINEER



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