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||| Matters of Moment |||

Cars in support races are not often faster than those at the top of the bill, but that was the case at Le Mans this year. As they took a breather after the Saturday morning Group C opening act for the 24 Hours, Bob Berridge and Gareth Evans mentioned the top speeds they'd both clocked in their respective Sauber Mercedes C11 and C9 mounts during dry practice. On the approach to the Mulsanne chicane and the run up to Indianapolis, the old Silver Arrows had hit an incredible 218mph.

Contrast that to the current prototypes, and the consequences of pegging back aero and power over the years are plain. In qualifying for the main event, Anthony Davidson topped the high-speed charts, maxing out at a mere 208mph in the new Toyota TS030 Hybrid. Historic racing: you just can't take it seriously, eh?

Admittedly, it's a very different story over the course of a full lap. Gareth's benchmark quallie time was over 20 seconds slower than the Audi R18 e-tron quattro that took pole position for the 24 Hours. So that would have been mid-grid for the C9 at 3pm on Saturday, leaving it just behind period Group C hero Martin Brundle in his Zytek-Nissan, a car that isn't even in the top class of modern prototypes. The rate of progress in braking distances and cornering speeds over the past 20 years could not be more stark.

Safety has come on a fair way too, and the thought occurred later on that evening, at just about 8pm. Davidson will be glad he is of this generation as he reflects on the violent accident that in past eras might have claimed his life. The two broken vertebrae sustained when the car slammed back to earth after its terrifying flip are the price racing drivers pay for essentially sitting on the floor, but a HANS device protected his neck as he slammed into the barrier and the carbon-composite tub he was sitting in means he'll still have two working

ankles when he leaves hospital. Modern racing cars never cease to amaze in this respect.

His account of the accident, which was caused by an amateur's lack of awareness in a Ferrari GT car, is revealing and shocking in equal measure. "I was almost completely past the car after the apex of the kink [at Mulsanne Corner]," Davidson said from his hospital bed. "I passed a Corvette and a Ferrari with the pro driver sticker on. They were fighting each other and I just assumed the Ferrari ahead was part



Damien Smith
Editor

of their group and therefore another pro. The car was all the way to the left as you would expect a pro driver to do. It was only when I got right up to the back that I realised it was one of the amateur-stickered cars. But I still wasn't alarmed, and thought he would stay left, which it looked like he was doing. I made the apex of the corner, started to brake and I was almost out of the corner when I felt the contact on the left rear."

There have always been amateurs at Le Mans and they have always been a concern for the pros. The speed differential between top prototypes

and the slowest GTs are a big part of the Le Mans challenge, but now modern power restrictions for LMP1s have caused a new problem. With less advantage in a straight line over the GTs, prototype aces have to be more assertive than ever in traffic. Three huge accidents of the same type in two years, following Mike Rockenfeller's similar night-time shunt on the Mulsanne last year and Allan McNish's earlier that day, is alarming. Banning the amateurs and losing a key ingredient of Le Mans, not to mention more than a few entries, is not a good option. Perhaps the pro/am stickers Davidson was trying to spot at 180mph should be made a little bigger, but more significantly, should the big cars have greater power as they did in the Group C days? Speeds would clearly go up, but an accident at 218mph isn't going to be much worse than at 208. If it helped the fastest drivers lap the slowest, more speed at Le Mans might actually be safer. >>>



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||| Matters of Moment |||

Davidson's description of the accident goes further: "The car pivoted round to the left, then took off and turned upside down. At that point I felt I was in an aeroplane out of control. I knew how close the barriers were, and travelling at that speed I was going to be there in no time. That part of the crash was pretty petrifying. It crashed back down to the ground, I felt an almighty punch up my spine when the car hit back down on four wheels. I still had my eyes closed and my hands off the wheel, in the brace position. Half a second after that I had the forward impact into the barrier."



The first TV pictures showed Anthony trying to clamber from his car and waving to the marshals, but then there was a period of uncertainty when paramedics could be seen attending to him. His explanation perhaps highlights why the ACO has regulated that prototypes will have higher cockpits next year. "I opened my eyes and realised I was still here, albeit in a bit of pain. I had feeling and could move my feet; everything was working. I know I should have stayed in the car, especially with back pain, but initially I felt full of panic and claustrophobia, I just had to get out of the car. It was really odd. I banged the door open and clambered out. I had to stretch out and the closest point was the side of the car, then the medics came over."

Le Mans is safer now than it has ever been, but it remains one of the most dangerous – and inspiring – race tracks in the world. All the best for a speedy recovery, Anthony.

Seeing Mike Rockenfeller on the Le Mans podium a year on from his dreadful crash was heartening, especially as he was joined by talented young Brit Oliver Jarvis. It was another Audi 1-2-3 on June 17, and you have to admire the way this formidable team goes racing. Still, with the greatest respect to Audi and its cast of accomplished drivers, I couldn't help feeling a pang of disappointment that they'd once again completed a podium lock-out.

That was because of the car which finished fourth. The Rebellion team of Neel Jani, Nick Heidfeld and Nicolas Prost put in one of those unobtrusive under-the-radar performances that ends in a brilliant result. Fourth was like a victory for a private team against the might of the Audi machine. But if one of the R18s had failed, a Lola prototype would have made the podium and that would have been so emotional for all concerned at the troubled racing car constructor.

As you can read on p14, The Huntingdon-based company has gone into administration, with around 70 of the 170 workforce having already lost their jobs. We mark National Motorsport Week in this issue, which celebrates the strength of the British racing industry, but at the same time take note that the sport will endure a terrible body-blow if Lola goes under. March, Reynard, Ralt – the great British constructors of the recent past are already history. Is Lola about to join them?

Martin Birrane saved Lola in 1997 when founder Eric Broadley needed him. He has spent much of his own fortune upholding a company with which he has great personal affinity from his own racing days. Birrane deserves great credit for keeping Lola afloat for the past 15 years and he will be heartbroken at how his vision is slipping away. He has done all he can. But in the ravages of the euro crisis and a crippling recession, will a saviour be found? We fear the worst and hope for the best. **M**



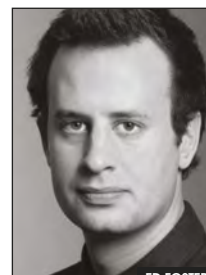
DAVID TREMAYNE



COLIN GOODWIN



GORDON CRUICKSHANK



ED FOSTER

CONTRIBUTORS

With 10 British World Champions (plus a curved ball) to laud in our special poll issue, we asked the best writers in the business to help you choose Britain's favourite F1 hero.

Nigel Mansell always stirred up passions, as **DAVID TREMAYNE** makes clear in his very personal profile of the Brummie battler.

Tremayne was in the paddock for much of Mansell's career, so he's well placed to judge *Il Leone's* place among racing's heroes.

Meanwhile, **COLIN GOODWIN** waves a banner for Graham Hill, who began as a mechanic.

Perhaps that's why Colin feels an affinity for him, since he is as likely to be wielding a welder as turning out copy. Col likes to get stuck in instead of just watching, too, and held the Guinness World Record for driving backwards (104mph, since you ask). He promised he wouldn't try that with the Ferrari 458 GTE we also asked him to test this time.

Our youngest staff member elected to thump his tub for our youngest champion. We tore **ED FOSTER** away from managing our buzzing website and organising our popular online podcasts to endorse a vote for Lewis Hamilton, the pocket rocket whose second stage has finally fired in 2012.

Speaking of second wind, the glory days of 1990s tin-tops came back in focus when deputy editor **GORDON CRUICKSHANK** peered under the knee-level bonnets of some Super Tourers – those techno-marvels that posed as saloons and went like snow off a super-heated shovel. Back then GC ignored them because they were new – but now they're historic he's fascinated.

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■ FORMULA 1

McLaren relishes challenge of 'unpredictability'

Lewis Hamilton's victory in the Canadian Grand Prix came as a huge relief not just to the 2008 World Champion, but to the whole McLaren organisation.

Following Jenson Button's superb win in the opening race in Australia, the team endured five frustrating weekends during which a variety of factors prevented its qualifying pace being converted into race success. The team suffered from poor pitstops, technical gremlins and – like everyone else – struggled to get fully on top of the 2012 Pirelli tyres. And that has remained a problem for Button, who has struggled to match his team-mate.

McLaren is not the only top team to have rued missed opportunities during the

opening part of the season, when the tyres made it impossible for anyone to predict what might happen at each race. But team boss Martin Whitmarsh sees a bigger picture and agrees that uncertainty has been good for the sport.

"I think it's challenging," he told *Motor Sport*. "It's so tight. Every millisecond counts and that creates a lot of pressure, not just in our team. The balance is great for the fans, with us not knowing our competitiveness from one day to the next. I think it's good that a bit of wind or track temperature change has that scale of impact on the relative competitiveness of the teams."

Unlike some of his peers, Whitmarsh does not see the

impact of the tyres as being a negative factor.

"It's a little bit like the DRS argument. For us purists, it's very easy to react against things that are apparently artificial. But if you go back three or four years, you've got to understand that we were defending ourselves at almost every Grand Prix about the lack of overtaking and the predictability. If you put yourself on pole, there was a more than 80 per cent probability that you would win the race.

"We have to accept that if we're going to attract hundreds of millions of people to turn on the TV and want to watch us, then we need to be unpredictable and challenging. Some big teams have moments of frustration,

but I think that overall the sport is healthier in that regard. No one can really make claims that there isn't an exciting spectacle.

"At the end of this year, the question will be whether or not we have a worthy World Champion. I suspect we will and that's what counts."

The Montréal win (above) came at a good time, since McLaren heads to Silverstone carrying the weight of expectation of the many Hamilton and Button fans.

"FOR US PURISTS, IT'S EASY TO REACT AGAINST THINGS THAT ARE APPARENTLY ARTIFICIAL"

MARTIN WHITMARSH

"Undeniably there's a sense of responsibility," says Whitmarsh. "Nowadays you go to the British GP, look into the stands and see the fans coming in and the number of caps and shirts that support our team.

"You can't avoid the sense of not wishing to let them down and give them a good day out. That's a fact and I find it quite a big thrill.

"There is an expectation on this team and it is probably higher than any other, with the exception of Ferrari in Italy. I wouldn't want it any other way, for us to head quietly into any race without the expectation that we are going to go out there and win." *Adam Cooper*

Roebuck's Reflections, p28



Red Bull

■ FORMULA 1

US races edge closer to reality

Sebastian Vettel gave a thumbs-up to the route of the Port Imperial F1 track in New Jersey after trying it in a road car one day after the Canadian Grand Prix.

But Formula 1 boss Bernie Ecclestone says that the event has yet to be confirmed for its proposed slot of June 2013, noting in Montréal that he will know more “within the next month”.

“We’re talking to them,” he told *Motor Sport*. “We have a contract and we’re waiting for bits and pieces of that to be put together. With me, until the cheque’s in the bank... It’s no good if it’s in the post.

“I think it will be good. The only problem at the moment is the financing.”

Meanwhile, the Circuit of the Americas has reached a financial settlement with estranged race founder Tavo Hellmund, heading off the threat of a messy legal battle in the build-up to November’s US Grand Prix.

“I think Tavo was concerned that he’d made a few agreements and they’d not been honoured,” said Ecclestone. “He’s hoping they’ll be honoured this time.

“Both parties were wrong in the way they structured their agreements. You had somebody investing money to build a circuit and get the land but who didn’t have a contract for a race, and Tavo had a contract for a race but didn’t have a circuit.”

■ HISTORICS

Austin’s bygone ambassadors

The US-based Historic Grand Prix series will be among the support races at this year’s inaugural United States Grand Prix at the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas in November.



Sutton

Organised by veteran US single-seater racer James King, the Historic Grand Prix organisation features F1 cars from the three-litre era, starting with Lotus 49s and including ground-effect Lotus and Williams chassis from the late 1970s and early ’80s.

Historic Grand Prix’s leading competitors include King, Duncan Dayton, Hamish Somerville, Ed Swart and Dan Marvin, with Bobby Rahal making occasional appearances. The group will race this year at Lime Rock’s Vintage Festival on August 31-September 3 and at the following weekend’s Watkins Glen Vintage GP before heading to Austin in November.

■ FORMULA 1

FIA rules on flawed floors

An FIA ruling banning controversial holes in the Red Bull floor before the Canadian Grand Prix reflects the intense competition at the front of the F1 grid – and the unstinting efforts of teams to exploit regulatory loopholes.

Red Bull placed small holes ahead of its rear wheels in the search of a small aero advantage, in the belief that – thanks to a grey area within the rules – they were not expressly banned.

Rivals disagreed, but none of their threatened protests materialised after Mark Webber’s Monaco GP win. The FIA took their views on board, however, and swiftly confirmed a ban.

RBR boss Christian Horner was keen to point out that the car was legal when it won in Monaco: “We felt it was completely legal and the technical delegate agreed with that opinion prior to the event,” he said. “It’s like a lot of areas – the regulations are open to interpretation.

“We discussed our viewpoint and the FIA was happy with it, but it then sought to clarify the position. Effectively, this resulted in that configuration no longer being permissible.”

■ FORMULA 1

Circuit bosses agree new promotional pact

Organisers of Grands Prix around the world have got together to form the Formula One Promoters Association, giving themselves a united voice for the first time.

The man behind the FOPA initiative is Melbourne’s Ron Walker, who also heads up the organisation. Its statutes underline that the aim is to “represent, promote and defend the interests of members”.

At first glance, the new arrangement seems to give the organisers greater weight in their

ON OUR WEBSITE

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Every month we record a podcast with some of the biggest names in motor sport. Last month it was current MotoGP rider Cal Crutchlow. Here’s an extract from the recording. If you want to listen to the whole interview, simply go to the website www.motorsportmagazine.com.



ROB WIDDOWS: Who among the riders in MotoGP is the standout guy for you?

CAL CRUTCHLOW: “I have different views on this because I’m someone who grew up watching Valentino Rossi. I would always say him because of who he is, what he’s done for the sport and how fast he’s been over the years. Maybe this year (with the Ducati) he’s not as quick as he has been, but he’s still, as a rider, as good as ever. Maybe something just hasn’t clicked yet.

Casey Stoner is by far the fastest guy on the planet right now, but I don’t think anyone can match Jorge Lorenzo’s unbelievable speed and consistency.

Dani Pedrosa is obviously always there and, on his day, can be as fast as anyone and win races by a long way. But for being so precise it’s got to be Lorenzo. We get the data so we can look at the information and, lap for lap, he is incredible. How he can do some of those things... If there are 20 laps his times will vary by only 0.2 seconds. You’ve never seen anything like it in your life.”

RW: How much does the home crowd give you a lift? Do you get perhaps a tenth or two because people are really willing you on?

CC: “I don’t know... What? Like Uri Geller with his spoon? If he really thinks about it, it bends... I’ll tell you what, hopefully all the fans can sit in the stands over the weekend and think that I can have a podium or something like that and it might happen. But seriously you have to treat it like it’s any other race when you’re on the track.

I love the fans being here and I’ve always done well at home. Obviously last year was a disaster (when he fell in qualifying, breaking his collarbone), but I did a World Superbike wildcard (in 2008) and finished second in the rain at Donington. I won at Donington in World Supersport (2009), then I did the double here at Silverstone in World Superbike (2010). Coming home is quite special. I love it, no doubt about that. I like to please people and I like to prove people wrong. I suppose a mix of both works.”

individual dealings with Bernie Ecclestone. The F1 boss denies that’s the case, however, and insists Walker’s aims are supportive.

“He told me it’s better to have an association in case the FIA starts to do silly things against me,” Ecclestone told *Motor Sport*. “Ron says he put this together to protect me, if I need it.”

Asked how shared knowledge might empower the organisers, Ecclestone added: “I can handle these things and have done for years. I don’t hide secrets from anyone.”

INDUSTRY

Lola on the brink as recession bites

The appointment of administrators at Lola has brought the future of racing car manufacture in the UK into sharp focus.

The administrators claim they are hopeful that Lola Cars International and its sister company, Lola Composites, can be saved, but should no buyer or buyers be found, the end of Lola would mark the disappearance of the last of the traditional major racing car constructors in the UK. March, Ralt and Reynard all ceased trading during the past two decades.

The company's move into administration was blamed by Lola, which is owned by Martin Birrane, on the economic downturn and the end of tax relief for research and development, which caused serious cashflow problems. The reality for the company is that it has had a series of lean years.

Lola's racing business has been confined to the sports

car market since its last major run of single-seaters for the Jim Russell Racing School at Sears Point in 2008-09. Its bid to build the latest generation IndyCar failed to supplant Dallara as the chassis supplier.

It appeared to have a good winter in 2011-12 when it built 10 LMP chassis and sold nine, and also produced a number of update kits for existing LMP1 and P2 Lolas. The reality is that these sales might not have off-set the development costs of the new package it produced for this season.

Each of the constructors producing cars for last year's new, cost-capped LMP2 category, which mandates a maximum price of €355,000 for a rolling chassis, privately admits to selling each vehicle at cost, or else at a loss. It then hopes to make its profit on the sale of spare parts over the life of the car.

The one-make single-seater formulae that now proliferate require a similar business model, although other constructors, namely Dallara and Tatuus in Italy, have made a success of building spec cars. Dallara builds the GP2, GP3 and Formula Renault 3.5 cars, while Tatuus has just won back the rights to assemble next year's Formula Renault 2000 chassis.



Sutton

"BUILDING A RACING CAR NO LONGER REQUIRES A TRADITIONAL FACTORY"

CHRIS AYLETT, MIA

It isn't easy to explain why a company such as Dallara has been a success over the past 10 years while Lola hasn't. Dallara sales and marketing director Nick Langley is well placed to make a judgment as he was business development boss at Lola until 1999.

"Perhaps there has been an attitude problem at Lola in the Birrane era," he says. "A successful race car manufacturer needs a strong engineering leader like Gianpaolo Dallara or Adrian Reynard."

Langley also believes Dallara has outstripped Lola in terms of its facilities. "When I joined Dallara in '99 I'd say that Lola was the equal of Dallara, but today I believe it lags behind in terms of wind-tunnels, driver simulation, finite element analysis and rapid prototyping."

Dallara also operates in a different way to Lola. Although it has a large fabrication shop, it has no labour-intensive composites facility and instead relies on sub-contractors.

It also has the valuable foundation stone of relationships with large manufacturers. It has an on-going deal with Audi that has spanned all the German manufacturer's Le Mans 24 Hours-winning prototypes.

The problem might be more endemic. The demise of large manufacturing companies such as Lola is inevitable, according to Chris Aylett, boss of the Motorsport Industry Association. "The truth today is that the art of building a racing car no longer requires a traditional factory," he says. "Racing cars can be designed on computer anywhere in the world and all the parts that make up that design sent to other companies in any part of the world at the push of a button and then assembled somewhere else."

Lola Cars International and Lola Composites were placed into administration in May with debts of £20 million and £6 million respectively. A wave of redundancies followed, reducing the 170-strong workforce by about 70.

If Lola can't be saved it would leave Radical as the UK's only volume racing car producer. Radical is one of the success stories of the past decade and a half and has produced 1400 cars since 1997, including 800 of its SR3 model. Its business model differs from that of traditional racing car constructors in that it builds its cars to its own regulations and, for the most part, runs its own series. *Gary Watkins*

Endurance racing has been Lola's motor sport staple in recent seasons



LAT

||| The Motor Sport Month |||



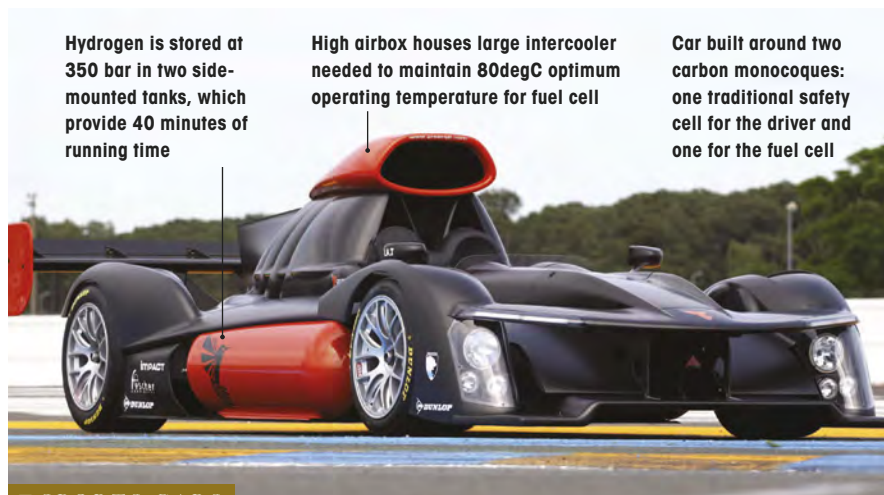
The build-up to the 2013 *Motor Sport* magazine Hall of Fame continues. Each year we host a star-studded night to honour great names of our sport and invite a selection from the past and present to join our club of heroes. Between now and the 2013 event we will be asking those who are already members of the Hall of Fame who they would choose to join them. This month we speak to founding member and British legend **Sir Stirling Moss**.



“There are a few names that spring to mind. I would choose Ross Brawn, who has achieved so much for more than one team, from Benetton and of course Ferrari with Michael Schumacher and now on to Mercedes-Benz. He has been right at the top of the sport for so long. Damon Hill also deserves recognition, not just for winning the World Championship but also for all he did during his time as president of the British Racing Drivers’ Club. I’d also choose Barry Sheene because he was such a great character for the sport.”



So who would you include in the Hall of Fame? Go to www.motorsportmagazine.com and tell us who we should make a member in 2013



■ SPORTS CARS

Will zero-emissions racer clean up at Le Mans?

A prototype powered by a hydrogen fuel cell will take the place of the Delta Wing as the experimental car on the grid in next year’s Le Mans 24 Hours.

The GreenGT H2, developed by a Franco-Swiss group, uses a hydrogen fuel cell to produce electricity to drive two 200kW electric motors that produce the equivalent of 540bhp. The group is billing the car, which will not be eligible for the general classification, as the first carbon-neutral, zero-emissions racer.

The only entry for the experimental ‘Garage 56’ slot, the car has been developed in conjunction with Welter Racing, which ran prototypes at Le Mans in the 1990s and 2000s. It tips the scales at 1240kg, more than 300kg above the LMP minimum.

The car is due to hit the track in July and will be demonstrated at Silverstone’s FIA World Endurance Championship round in August. GreenGT plans to enter the Spa 6 Hours next May as a trial race.

■ SPORTS CARS

The gas is always greener on the other side...

The LMP1 prototype class will in future be open to a range of alternative fuels in the Le Mans 24 Hours.

The new-for-2014 rules are based on energy consumption, but allow only petrol- or diesel-powered cars. The Automobile Club de l’Ouest and the FIA, which set the rules for Le Mans and the World Endurance Championship, have stated

that they will open up the category to other fuel sources.

ACO sporting manager Vincent Beaumesnil said: “We are very open to new fuels, but it is too soon to have electric and hydrogen cars racing against petrol and diesel cars. But, in the future, if a manufacturer comes with, say, bio-ethanol we would be happy to accept.”

The coupé-only P1 rules

for 2014 were announced during Le Mans week in June. The ACO has safeguarded privateers by creating a non-hybrid class, which will be allowed a larger fuel allocation.

The look of P1 cars will also change. They will become five per cent narrower, with slightly higher cockpits to improve visibility for the driver.



Chrysler’s new-generation Dodge Viper racer has started its test programme in preparation for an American Le Mans Series entry later this year. The V10-engined SRT Viper GTS-R, developed by Riley Technologies in the US, was put through its paces by Marc Goossens at Kershaw, North Carolina.

||| The Motor Sport Month |||



LAT

■ OBITUARIES



Paul Pietsch

The last Silver Arrows driver, Paul Pietsch, has died at the age of 100. Recruited by Auto Union in 1935 after promising drives in his own Bugatti and Alfa Romeo, Pietsch became team-mate to the legendary Bernd Rosemeyer, but perhaps

his greatest moment came in 1939 when in a Maserati 8CTF he briefly led the German Grand Prix.

He eventually finished third behind Caracciola's Mercedes and Müller's Auto Union, but it was a momentary satisfaction to head the Auto Union team that he famously left after his wife had an affair with team-mate Achille Varzi.

That split damaged what might have been a fine career; without a drive for 1936, he returned in private Maseratis for 1937 and '38 (6CM, above) before joining the works squad the following year. Although the troublesome 8CTF brought him little glory, he was to have joined Mercedes for 1940 if not for the war.

Although he made three GP starts after 1950, his larger legacy is the major motoring publishing house he founded in 1946, which produces the respected *Auto Motor und Sport* magazine, among many titles.



Ian Burgess

Grand Prix driver Ian Burgess, who died in May at the age of 81, was notable more for some shady associations than for track success, culminating in a period at Her Majesty's Pleasure.

After 500cc racing from 1951 Burgess joined Cooper, teaching at the Brands Hatch race school and racing the company's cars in F2 and F1 into 1958, as well as Tommy Atkins's Cooper. For 1959 he joined Scuderia Centro Sud, posting a career-best sixth in the German GP, and then raced privateer Lotus or Cooper chassis for Centro Sud, Camoradi and Anglo American.

Joining the ill-fated Scirocco enterprise for 1963, he struggled with the underdeveloped car, intermittently financed by a youthful American millionaire. That was the end of his racing. Later business deals involved a large quantity of heroin that the ebullient Burgess claimed was supplied to him by MI5 as payment for services rendered. When MI5 failed to corroborate this he received a 10-year jail sentence, after which he lived in Spain but made brief, unannounced visits home.

■ HISTORICS

Twin evening races for Classic

Two very different sports car generations will take star billing on the Saturday evening of this year's Silverstone Classic (July 20-22). The spectacular Group C evening race will be repeated, and for the first time the Pre-56 sports cars in the Woodcote Trophy will race in twilight as part of the packed 24-race programme.

After the runaway success of last year's evening Group C race, the Le Mans cars of

the 1980s will again wrap up Saturday's programme with a sprint race that begins at 8.35pm. The half-hour race will run past sunset and should create a fabulous spectacle. The Woodcote Trophy race also lasts 30 minutes and starts at 7.45pm.

During the three-day event, two of the biggest names from British motor racing will be on hand. Nigel Mansell will attend on Friday to open the event's AA World

before presenting a report on young driver safety. Mansell, 58, will be returning to the scene of three of his victories, in the British Grands Prix of 1987, 1991 and 1992. Sports car great Derek Bell will attend on Saturday to meet fans and sign autographs.

"Both Nigel and Derek are true motor sport giants and we are honoured that both will be joining us at this year's Silverstone Classic," said event director Nick Wigley.

Le Mans in Chelsea

London's motoring garden party is on again. Chelsea AutoLegends, held in the green surrounds of Chelsea's Royal Hospital, takes place on Sunday September 2.

Highlights will include a replica Le Mans pitlane lined with endurance classics of all eras, an F1 display, a tribute to women in motor sport, supercar and classic displays, Ace Café motorbikes and a celebration of '70s Cool.

A new Techno Park, with endurance racer Lord Drayson as patron, will promote technical advances in the sport. Tickets are £15 in advance, £25 on the day.



Daly returns for Revival

Thirty years after he last raced in the UK, former Grand Prix racer Derek Daly will be a star attraction at the Goodwood Revival Meeting in September when he shares the Sunbeam Rapier of Harry Sherrard in the St Mary's Trophy race.

The 1977 British F3 champion went on to contest 64 Grands Prix before switching his career to the US. He has not raced seriously for over 20 years and the outing at Goodwood will have particular significance as his first run in an F1 car was at Goodwood in December 1977, for the Theodore team. His last race in the UK was the 1982 British Grand Prix at Brands Hatch, when he drove for Williams. As well as his career as a TV commentator and public speaker, Daly (59) now oversees the racing career of his son Conor (above, with Derek).

"I was a great fan of Derek in his career, so I'm thrilled that he has accepted the invitation to race with me," said Sherrard.

||| The Motor Sport Month |||

Roy Salvadori, who has died shortly after his 90th birthday, was maybe the 1950s' busiest racing driver. Talented and versatile, he combined a strong work ethic with an indomitable will to win, and his services were in constant demand from works teams and privateers.

Although born of Italian immigrant parents, Roy Francesco Salvadori was every inch an Englishman. Earning the wherewithal to go racing by motor trading, he started racing in 1946 in a single-seater R-type MG, but rapidly progressed via a Riley Special to half-shares in a Grand Prix Alfa P3. By the 1948 British GP he had a Maserati 4C, and then a 4CL, but after that was destroyed in a fiery accident in Ireland he switched to a Le Mans Replica Frazer Nash. It was in his first race with this car, at Silverstone, that he had the worst accident of his career. Lapping a back marker at Stowe he got off line, hit the marker barrels and cartwheeled. His foot was trapped in the steering wheel spokes and he was flung around like a rag doll. Crash helmets were still not mandatory, and he'd saved money by not wearing one. He sustained a triple skull fracture and brain haemorrhaging, and the hospital phoned his parents to say that by the time they got there he would almost certainly be dead.

But Roy was racing again three months later, his only permanent legacy of the crash being total deafness in one ear. His speed undiminished and his reputation growing, he found he could earn a very good living driving other peoples' cars. By 1953 he was with Connaught in F1 and had joined the Aston Martin works sports car team. He also drove an Ecurie Ecosse C-type into second place in the Nürburgring



Roy Salvadori 1922 - 2012



1000Kms, driving almost single-handedly in a deteriorating car, and started a fruitful relationship with Sid Greene's Gilby Engineering, which fielded 250F and A6GCS

Maseratis. His time with Aston Martin was to last a decade, and a string of wins in DB3S and DBR1 cars culminated in a great victory in the 1959 Le Mans 24 Hours with Carroll Shelby. At Le Mans the following year, sharing the Border Reivers DBR1 with Jim Clark, he finished third.

In 1957 he drove in F1, first for BRM until Raymond Mays refused to follow his advice about improving the P25's notoriously unreliable brakes and he walked out. Then he had a couple of Vanwall drives before joining Cooper alongside Jack Brabham. After third place in the British GP, he took a fine second to Tony Brooks' Vanwall in the German GP at the Nürburgring, but took no pleasure from it: his friend Peter Collins had been killed in the race. He finished fourth in that year's World Championship behind Hawthorn, Moss and Brooks. By the time Aston Martin had finally got their anachronistic DBR4 F1 car ready Roy was loyalty-bound to drive it and left Cooper, but after Aston's withdrawal he

continued in F1 in Yeoman Credit Coopers. In a brilliant drive in the 1961 US GP at Watkins Glen he charged from eighth place to second, and was closing on Innes Ireland's leading Lotus when, with five laps to go, his engine failed. His last F1 season was 1962, alongside John Surtees in the Bowmaker Lola team.

Now over 40, Roy continued to campaign with huge success in British racing. At one big Crystal Palace meeting he raced different cars in four races – Cooper F1, Cooper Monaco sports-racer, Jaguar 3.8 saloon and E-type – and won all four. He drove prolifically for his lifelong friend John Coombs, scoring a string of victories, and going upside down in the Oulton Park lake when a tyre burst on his Jaguar 3.8.



Aston link was strong: DBR1 broke at Le Mans in 1957, but '59 victory with Shelby (right) was Roy's greatest moment

He was trapped in the car and came near to drowning before a marshal managed to wrench open a rear door and release him, but after changing his soaking, mud-caked overalls he took his F1 Lola out to qualify on the third row for the Gold Cup. He shared Briggs Cunningham's E-type at Le Mans in 1962, finishing fourth overall and winning the GT class, but in a similar car the following year he survived a dreadful 160mph accident not of his making, being ejected through the E-type's back window and landing, soaked in fuel, in the middle of the track.

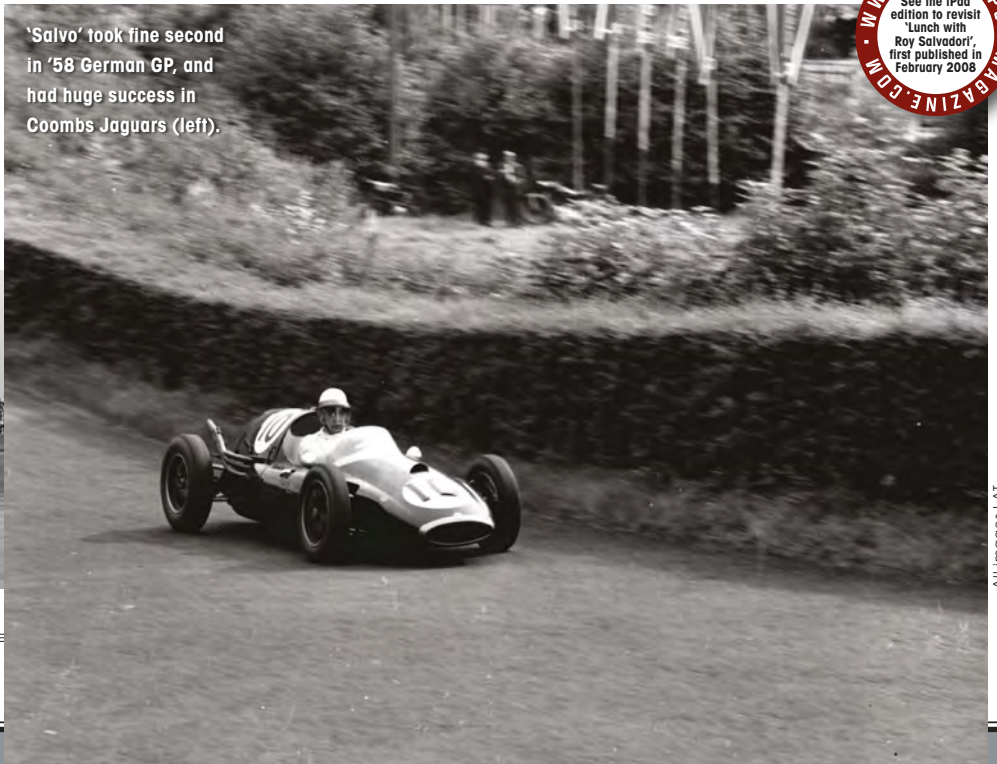
One of his most satisfying wins was beating the Ferraris on their home ground in the 1963 Coppa Inter-Europa at Monza in the Project 214 Aston, and he also drove with success for Maranello Concessionaires and for Tommy Atkins in Ferrari GTO and LM, Cooper-Maserati and AC Cobra. John Wyer, leaving Astons to head up JW Automotive, persuaded Roy to follow him, and having worked on the early development of the GT40 Roy had his last race in one at Goodwood in 1965, finishing second overall and winning the GT class.



Then he switched his energies to racing management, running the Cooper Formula 1 team with Jochen Rindt, John Surtees and Pedro Rodríguez. Meanwhile the garage business he'd operated since the late 1940s alongside his racing career expanded into major BMW and Alfa Romeo distributorships, before he sold out to a public company and moved to Monte Carlo.

With his wife Sue – the daughter of 1935 Le Mans winner John Hindmarsh, and thus the only person to be both the daughter and the wife of a Le Mans winner – Roy lived happily for more than 35 years in an apartment overlooking the Monaco Grand Prix start line, where his parties during the F1 weekend were legendary.

'Salvo' took fine second in '58 German GP, and had huge success in Coombs Jaguars (left).



Sadly in recent years his health had failed, and with John Coombs' help he was cared for in a home just along the coast in France.

Roy Salvadori represented an era of motor racing dominated by friendships, rivalries, parties, accidents, girlfriends and sportsmanship. As both a professional racer and a gentleman, Salvadori was always the most determined and ruthless of adversaries. *Simon Taylor*

Nigel Roebuck's Reflections, p28



||| Events of the Month |||

Le Mans, France

THE IMAGE OF A TOYOTA PROTOTYPE flipping through the air and slamming hard into a tyre barrier will be the lasting image of the 80th Le Mans 24 Hours. That **Anthony Davidson** escaped with 'only' two cracked vertebrae was remarkable given the accident's violence.

Once again the focus will fall on amateur drivers and their ability to race on the *grande dame* of all tracks. In an accident reminiscent of Mike Rockenfeller's last year, Davidson was sideswiped when Italian **Piergiuseppe Perazzini** failed to spot the Toyota TS030 Hybrid as it sliced down the inside of his Ferrari 458 Italia at the fast kink on the approach to Mulsanne Corner. As Perazzini crawled away from his wrecked car, Davidson worked his way out of his cramped cockpit, but then slumped back in shock and pain. After a long wait, there was relief all around when news filtered back that his injuries were not as serious as they might have been. He was tweeting from his hospital bed long before the race was run.

At the time of the accident, at 8pm on Saturday, the race between Toyota and the Audi e-tron quattro hybrids had come alive. The Audis had led from the start, but now the Japanese cars - making their race debuts, of course - were gaining ground despite running for a lap less during their stints. **Nicolas Lapierre** closed in on **Benoit Treluyer** and sensationally took the lead with two wheels on the grass. The pair duelled and swapped positions during a lap that recalled for real what Steve McQueen faked on the cinema screen.

But it all ended abruptly as the TV pictures switched to Mulsanne Corner and Davidson's horrific smash.

After an hour and a quarter behind the safety car, **Kazuki Nakajima** attempted to take up where



Audi celebrated its 11th Le Mans success, while the Starworks HPD (right) scored in LMP2

Le Mans 24 Hours

team-mate Lapierre left off and fight for the lead, but instead elbowed the experimental 'Garage 56' Delta Wing entry into a concrete wall out of the Porsche Curves. **Satoshi Motoyama** worked valiantly to repair the innovative Nissan-powered racer, but eventually had to admit defeat after toiling for an hour and a half by the side of the track. Still, the point of the Delta

Wing had been made and the project gained huge respect for the promise it showed during Le Mans week.

Toyota's challenge was also over. After repairs, Nakajima pitted again for a new alternator. The car returned to the track late on Saturday night, only for the engine to fail. Even without the accidents, a debut victory was always a long shot for the new car, whatever its pace. At least it looks as though Audi has a fight on its hands for the rest of the inaugural FIA World Endurance Championship - and on this evidence next year's Le Mans could be an all-time classic. One regret? Peugeot. If only the 908s could be part of the story, too.

At dusk on Saturday night, some wondered whether this race would now be the anti-climax so many had feared. But they hadn't counted on



Audi's admirable policy of allowing its drivers to race. And race hard, too.

Allan McNish, **Tom Kristensen** and **Dindo Capello** - celebrating his 48th birthday as Saturday turned to Sunday - had been delayed early on by a handling imbalance. During the night, though, the veterans got stuck in and worked their way back to second place, behind the sister R18 e-tron quattro. When **Marcel Fassler** suffered a couple of on-track incidents, they were ready to benefit.

On Sunday at 9am, Fassler's attempt to reclaim the lead from Kristensen ended with a gravel excursion, but the decisive error would come just after noon - and it was McNish who made it. The Scot removed the nose of his





R18 against a Porsche Curves barrier as he tried to lap a GT car, and the advantage swung back to Treluyer, Fassler and **André Lotterer**. The trio would score their second consecutive victory at the 'big one'.

The non-hybrid ultra of young Briton **Oliver Jarvis**, **Marco Bonanomi** and **Mike Rockenfeller** suffered early delays, but then enjoyed the most trouble-free run of all the Audis to complete a four-rings 1-2-3, ahead of Rebellion's Lola

which, as expected, claimed 'best of the rest' honours. **Neel Jani**, **Nick Heidfeld** and **Nicolas Prost** delivered the perfect tribute to those at Lola who are looking for new jobs following the constructor's fall into administration.

The secondary LMP2 class was claimed by Le Mans newcomer Starworks Motorsport, as Britons **Ryan Dalziel** and **Tom Kimber-Smith** led the American team to seventh overall.

Aston Martin took on Corvette and Ferrari in a thrilling GTE class, the Prodrive-run Vantage taking the fight to the American muscle car in the early stages. **Darren Turner**, **Stefan Mücke** and **Adrian Fernandez** would take a respectable third in class, while the wheel fell off the Chevy challenge – literally – as **Richard Westbrook** took over the lead car in the 11th hour. Class honours fell to AF Corse's Ferrari 458 Italia driven by **Giancarlo Fisichella**, **Gianmaria Bruni** and **Toni Vilander**.
Damien Smith

Group C makes a splash

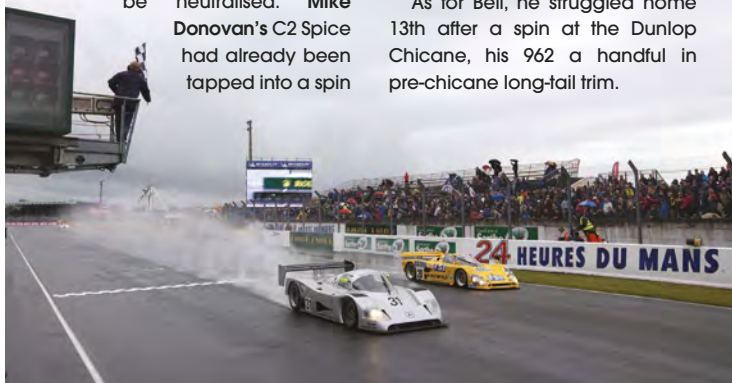
"THOSE WERE THE WORST conditions I've ever known, because I couldn't see a thing," said **Derek Bell**. The five-time Le Mans winner had just turned the clock back in a Kremer Porsche 962 during Motor Racing Legends' Group C support race, but the heavy rain that swept over the Sarthe on the morning before the 24 Hours hadn't made it as pleasurable as it should have been.

More than 30 of the glorious 1980s sports cars made for quite a spectacle as they headed into the Dunlop Chicane for the first time, but much of the race would be neutralised. **Mike Donovan's** C2 Spice had already been tapped into a spin

as he left the final corner to take the start. As he recovered and charged down the Mulsanne, his SE88 made contact with **Alain Schledinger's** Tiga and both cars slammed into the barriers. Once the mess had been cleared, there was time for just three laps of racing.

Bob Berridge had stormed from second on the grid to lead at the start, and no one could live with his Sauber Mercedes C11 once the safety car finally released the field. The Lancia LC2 of **Roger Wills** came closest, with poleman Gareth Evans settling for third in his Sauber Mercedes C9.

As for Bell, he struggled home 13th after a spin at the Dunlop Chicane, his 962 a handful in pre-chicane long-tail trim.



Stuart Scott leads a diverse field away at the start of the Croft race

Tour Britannia

Harrogate, Yorkshire

WITH A 1979 PORSCHE 911SC straight out of the box, former GT racer **Phil Hindley** swept to a commanding victory on Tour Britannia, Britain's classic race and rally extravaganza.

Hindley, who had never competed on an event of this nature before, was co-driven by the experienced **Andy Bull** and used the event to showcase the rally-prepared 911 built by his Tech 9 operation. While other leading contenders faltered, Hindley was quick on the special stages and peerless in the races at Croft and Cadwell Park to secure a winning margin of almost two minutes.

"It's a fantastic event and very hard work," said Hindley, after two and a half days of competition based around Harrogate. Heavy rain at times made the event particularly challenging, but the 911SC ran faultlessly.

With a reduced entry of 50 cars in the face of on-going recession, prime organiser **Alec Poole** still laid on a popular event and once again opened up a raft of new venues, including the spectacular Raby Castle and Aske Hall special stages in North Yorkshire. But it was the 20-minute races at Croft and Cadwell Park that really decided the result and Hindley won both, despite not having raced at Cadwell Park before.

Throughout the first day and a half, 2011 winner **John Clark** and co-driver **Philip Walker** challenged for the lead in their Porsche 911.

However, a brake problem at Harrogate Showground sent them off the road and out of contention. The 911 of **Mike Smith** and **Ian Ashley** suffered a damaged gearbox in the race at Croft and so it was **Roger Kilty** and **Lynette Banks** who moved up to second in their Ford Escort Mk1 from the Chevrolet Camaro of **Stuart Scott** and **Steve Wood**.

The Radical SL of **Richard Meaden** and **Nathan Cumberland** won the concurrent Targa event for modern cars, while the regularity event was won by the Porsche 911S of **Melissa Raven** and **Jeremy Haylock**.
Paul Lawrence



Class: Hindley/Bull (911) and Meaden/Cumberland (Radical, above)



Paul Lawrence

||| Events of the Month |||

Indy 500



Pole-sitter Ryan Briscoe led 32 pursuers into Turn One. The Team Penske man finished fifth aboard his Dallara-Chevrolet



Servià (above) was impressive fourth but Marco Andreotti lived up to his family's Indy jinx by failing to finish



Indianapolis, USA

MANY PEOPLE COUNTED DARIO Franchitti, Scott Dixon and Chip Ganassi's team out of contention at Indianapolis this year. Honda's teams were outpaced by Chevrolet's squads in the opening four IndyCar races and the Chevrolet teams comprehensively blew away their Honda-powered rivals in qualifying at Indy. Prior to Carburation Day, it looked like Chevy's lead teams Penske and Andreotti were going to dominate the 96th Indy 500.

But 'Carb Day' provided a strong hint that both Honda and Ganassi's team might have turned the tables. With new 'step two' engines, **Dario Franchitti** and **Scott Dixon** finished the day at the top of the time sheets. Both ran plenty of laps, as they had through the week of practice and qualifying, and in the race Dario and Scott worked together superbly, drafting their way to the front, then working together to lead the race and conserve as much fuel as possible. It was teamwork at its best and it paid off as they scored a resounding one-two finish.

"I was unhappy on qualifying day," Franchitti remarked. "I was angry. I had no expectations, but I thought we'd



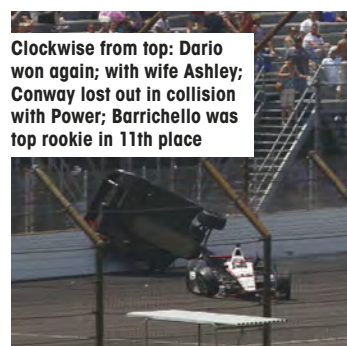
be quick and we weren't. I was honest and clear about being upset with it. The Honda guys have been working hard since before the start of the season, but they've been playing catch-up.

"They made the turnaround from the last day of qualifying to Carb Day and it was very impressive. When we're up against Chevy and Ilmor, who are smart people, I think what Honda did today to beat them and the turnaround from last week is something very special."

Ganassi's team boss Mike Hull said he believed both of his drivers were better set up for the race than anyone: "Unlike some people, our tyres were really good all the way through the run. We didn't give up anything on those long, green runs. We had really good race cars. We knew that by Thursday of the



Clockwise from top: Dario won again; with wife Ashley; Conway lost out in collision with Power; Barrichello was top rookie in 11th place



qualifying week. On the final day of practice we worked through a huge menu of items to create grip. I think we matched the balance of the car to the tyres and the engine today better than anybody else."

Hull believes Franchitti and Dixon work together better than any other two-car team in the world. "In Dario we have a guy who hasn't reached his midlife crisis yet, who drives with the experience of his age. But he comes to work every day with the enthusiasm and intent of an 18-year old.

"And then he's absolutely unselfish. In motor racing around the world with two-driver teams, how many teams can say that? I don't think there's one, except this team. Of course, I have a biased opinion. Dario and Scott work together as one and that got us to the front today. That's made a big difference to this team over time."

This was Franchitti's third win at Indy in the past six years and he joins the company of three-time 500 winners: Louis Meyer, Wilbur Shaw, Mauri Rose, Bobby Unser, Johnny Rutherford and Hélio Castroneves. It was also the 31st win of Dario's IndyCar career which moves him into a tie with Paul Tracy and Sébastien Bourdais for seventh on IndyCar's all-time winners list. *Gordon Kirby*

LAT *Dario Franchitti interview, p50*

||| Events of the Month |||

Cholmondeley Pageant of Power



Charles Joice's Jaguar XK140, the Hepworth family's restored Cooper T43 (below) and vintage scrambling (below left)



A year ago, the striking single-seat BAC Mono broke over the infamous jump just before the finish of the 1.2-mile sprint course. This time around, the Cheshire-based road-legal track day car, in the hands of GT racer **Duncan Tappy**, took top honours in the supercar class when the best of the weather arrived on the final day. Tappy was challenged by **James Pickford** (Ferrari 458), **Tom Onslow-Cole** (BMW M5) and **Niki Faulkner** (Lamborghini Aventador). **Scott Mansell**, in the Caterham SP300R, went fastest of all.

Noise and drama were everywhere in the grounds of Cholmondeley Castle, ranging from the sprint course to classic scrambling, air displays, stunt motorbikes, boat racing, off-road displays and autograss. Big crowds were well supplied with powered



From the top, Mark Finberg (GT40), Ash Mason (Bentley Speed 8), Brutus and a 1910 Edison-Puton monowheel

activity and when the sun eventually shines for three days, the event will finally enjoy the runaway success it surely deserves.

Back on track, the team from Hall and Hall brought a selection of BRMs from the Donington Collection, including the ex-**Richie Ginther** P57 'stackpipe' and the ex-**Jackie Oliver** P153 owned for decades by **Bobby Bell**. To celebrate the life of **Roy Salvadori**, **Rick Hall** brought the ex-**Stuart Lewis-Evans** Aston Martin DBR4 Grand Prix car, driven by Salvadori in period.

After four decades in a shed, the return of an ex-**David Hepworth** Cooper T43-Chevrolet hillclimb car was another highlight. Bought by Hepworth's sons **Steven** and **Andrew** when it was discovered in Scotland, the 1960 car emerged from a five-year rebuild with two days to spare. "We have tried to keep it as much in character as it was then," said Andrew, pointing to the damage to the front bodywork



inflicted by his father when unloading the car in 1965.

While there is much that is very good about the Pageant of Power, the entry lacked a little in cohesion, with widely disparate machines lumped together in vague classes. However, the 50th anniversary of the AC Cobra was a popular theme, with **Justin Law** flying along in his 289 Mk2 to set the pace.

The ever-popular aero-engined monsters of **Chris Williams** (Napier Bentley) and **Duncan Round** (Packard Bentley) thrilled the crowds with their usual fire-breathing spectacle, as did Brutus from the Sinsheim Museum in Germany. *Paul Lawrence*

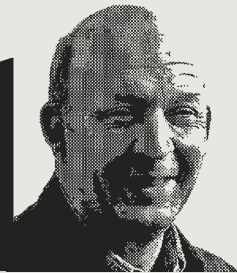


Paul Lawrence & Peter McFaayen

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- JUL 6/7 ALMS Northeast Grand Prix
- JUL 6-8 F1 Silverstone, Britain
- JUL 6-8 GT1 Algarve, Portugal
- JUL 6-8 HISTORICS Le Mans Classic
- JUL 8 INDYCAR Honda Indy Toronto
- JUL 8 MOTOGP Sachsenring, Germany
- JUL 15 MOTOGP Mugello, Italy
- JUL 20-22 F1 Hockenheim, Germany
- JUL 20-22 ALMS Grand Prix of Mosport
- JUL 20-22 HISTORICS Silverstone Classic
- JUL 22 INDYCAR Edmonton Indy
- JUL 27-29 F1 Hungaroring, Hungary
- JUL 29 MOTOGP Mazda Raceway, USA

Nigel Roebuck



REFLECTIONS

- Chris Amon on why St Jovite was his favourite track
- Lewis Hamilton returns to his winning ways
- The tackiness of the Monaco Grand Prix
- Remembering 'a damn good pro', Roy Salvadori

St Jovite. I remember years ago talking to Chris Amon about his favourite tracks, and being a touch surprised that he included this place two hours to the north of Montréal.

Thinking about it now, though, I might have anticipated it, for St Jovite was very much an Amon sort of circuit. Above all, Chris adored Spa, and of course we're talking now of the original Spa, complete with the misnamed Masta Kink – misnamed because it amounted to a left-hand corner followed by a right-hander, which could – just – be taken flat if you were very skilled and very brave. Get it wrong on the exit, and a large stone house awaited you. Jackie Stewart called it unquestionably the most testing corner – or corners – in all of motor racing, and if you have seen it you won't feel inclined to argue.

Spa, then, was an obvious choice for Amon, as was Clermont-Ferrand: "It was like a mini-Nürburgring, and I actually preferred it..." He was also partial to Montjuïc and Solitude, and had no doubts about his choice of circuit in England. "Oh, Oulton Park, without a doubt. I always enjoyed Silverstone, but I never really got along with Brands Hatch: Oulton's the best track in this country, no question."

Then Chris got on to St Jovite. "It wasn't that long – about the same length as Oulton – but probably as good a driver's circuit as I ever raced on. It was a place you could really get your teeth into – in fact, I drove what I always considered the best race of my life at St Jovite. As far as I can remember, it was actually the very first Can-Am race, in September 1966, and I was driving for McLaren, as team-mate to Bruce. I had



Amon (right) led '68 Canadian GP at St Jovite only for the 'box to break. It remains his favourite circuit



a long stop early on, and rejoined dead last, then came through to finish third, behind Surtees and McLaren. I shattered the lap record, and it was one of those rare days in a racing car when you just feel you can't do anything wrong..."

Amon had other great days at St Jovite, too, notably the Canadian Grand Prix in 1968, which he led from the start, building up a clear minute's lead before the Ferrari's transmission broke with 18 of the 90 laps to go. It turned out that Chris had been driving without a clutch virtually from the start.

Anyone who had recently seen Amon in the Oulton Park Gold Cup might have guessed that the '68 Ferrari would be ideal for St Jovite. Only a fortnight before the Canadian Grand Prix he had the biggest

accident of his career at Monza – over the barrier, then end-over-end into the trees – but it had no effect on his driving because, "I knew it hadn't been my fault..."

Neither was the transmission failure at St Jovite: it was simply another slice of the appalling luck which so blighted Amon's career. When I talked to Ickx (his teammate in '68) about him, Jacky just rolled his eyes. "Ah, poor Chris. When I went to

Ferrari he was a hero to me, and if there had been any justice, you know, he should have been World Champion that year – pole positions, leading races, although we had much less power than the Cosworths... He drove brilliantly the whole season, and yet he finished it without a win – and eventually of course he finished his *career* without one. Such a lovely guy and such a beautiful driver..."

On race day at St Jovite, though, Ickx was a spectator, having crashed on the first day of practice and broken his leg. "Early in the session I found that the throttle was staying on the floor – in fact, I nearly went off at the first corner, which was downhill and *very* quick. I came in, had it checked, went out again – and the same thing happened, at the same place. In again, >>>

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another check, then out I went once more, and this time I crashed – and at the same place! Sometimes, you know, you can grow up, and become intelligent – that’s the difference between a young guy and an experienced one...

“In fact, it could have been a really naughty accident, because there was no run-off there and the car got rolled up in the catch fencing. I was trapped inside, and fuel was running out – and the pump was still working. But, you know, when it’s not your day, it’s not your day. It was just an illustration of how your life can depend on little details – it can go this way, or it can go that...”

“A very bad weekend for Ferrari altogether. With my leg in plaster, I watched from the pits, and thought Chris was going to win at last – no one was anywhere near him...” Two years later Amon finished third in the Canadian Grand Prix, at the wheel of the lamentable March 701, while Ickx won – in a Ferrari.

One way and another, St Jovite was a significant place in the life and times of C Amon, for it was also there, in 1977, that he decided to retire as a driver. At the end of the previous season he had turned his back on F1, but he agreed to drive Walter Wolf’s new Dallara in the newly-reconstituted Can-Am series. In essence these were no more than F5000 cars with a central seat and sports car bodywork, and the Dallara was an especially evil contraption.

Amon loathed the car from the start, and found it quite hopeless at St Jovite. On top of that he was feeling increasingly uncertain about his future as a racing driver, and when Brian Redman had an enormous accident in practice, back-flipping at 150mph or so, it had a salutary effect. So badly injured was Brian that some assumed the worst, and one

paper went to press with the front page headline, *Redman est mort*. Fortunately he wasn’t, and of course survived to race again, but for Amon it was enough. He drove the Dallara in the race, then quietly let it be known that it was his last.

In normal circumstances it might have been difficult for Chris to find a replacement driver for such a recalcitrant car, but there was on hand a young and very brave Formula Atlantic driver who leaped at the chance. Step forward: Gilles Villeneuve. A few weeks later I was talking to Amon on the phone, and the conversation got round to Gilles. “Is he quick?” I asked, and Chris chuckled. “Quick?” he said. “I think he’s quicker than anyone I’ve ever seen.

“The most amazing thing about him, though, is the way he gets over a shunt – I mean, it’s literally as if nothing happened! Trust me,” he concluded, “this kid’s going to be in F1 very soon – and the other guys had better watch out...” He wasn’t wrong, was he?

For countless years I had resolved one day to visit St Jovite, and now I have. It may no longer be used for major race meetings (although an Indy Champ Car race was run there as recently as 2007), but assuredly it is in pristine condition.

Rather more pristine, clearly, than when in its brief heyday as an international venue. For one thing it is eight feet wider – at 30ft – than it used to be, and at important places there are indeed run-off areas now. The old race control tower is still there, though, and in fine condition, and the fundamentals of the track are as they were.

On race day at Montréal Mario Andretti, newly appointed as the Ambassador for the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, arrived for his first F1 race in two years. Tell me, I said, what you remember of St Jovite – in particular that first corner...

“Jeez, that was a track-and-a-half,” he said. “Funny thing, it seemed like all the great tracks this side of the water began with a long, fast, right-hander, with a downhill approach. Mosport was like that, and so was Bridgehampton. Even by their standards, though, the first turn at St Jovite was *something else!* Went on for ever, no run-off at all, just an earth bank, and then trees...”



Seen here sliding his Ferrari during the '68 Gold Cup, Amon loved Oulton Park. Villeneuve impressed the Kiwi when he first tested Dallara Can-Am car (above)

“We had two Indycar races there in 1967 and ’68, and I won both times. I flat loved that race track, but it didn’t do to spend much time looking closely at it. I remember going around quite slowly when I first got there – learning it, you know? Big mistake. Going slowly gave you time to look around, and you didn’t want to do that because you noticed that at the sides of the track there were boulders and God knows what. I remember saying to Al Unser, ‘The track’s great, but there’s just one thing – don’t look to the side...’”

The boulders are long gone, of course, but the essential hazards of St Jovite abide. I had several laps as a passenger in an expertly-driven Mercedes, and my guide pointed out where Redman had crashed, adding that ‘the hump’ had been significantly reduced in recent years. A particularly memorable – and picturesque – section is a steep climb with a stone bridge at the top of it, and a blind left-hander immediately afterwards. The place is glorious, set in the most sumptuous countryside imaginable. As we approached, I was reminded of early visits to the majestic Österreicherling.

Andretti, as ever, was on wonderful form in the Montréal paddock. “When were you last in something quick?” someone asked. “Last night,” came the prompt reply. “I was at Texas, driving the two-seater Indycar...” Well, he’s only 72.

Talk of St Jovite led to talk of safety, and at one point the conversation got round to seat belts. “Every time I drove a race car, I wore a belt,” said Mario. “You’ve got to remember that I started my career in the US, driving midgets and sprint cars, and they always had belts – sometimes a bit primitive, with a lap belt, and then a sort of strap across one shoulder, but belts nevertheless.

“In Europe, of course, belts in race cars arrived much later, but in the US they were mandatory. I drove a Ferrari 330LM at Bridgehampton in ’65 – my first race in a Ferrari, and my first race in a sports car. Beautiful thing, wire wheels, the whole nine yards.

“I guess, though, that Ferrari hadn’t quite got the hang of this seat belt thing at that point – in this LM they were sewn to the leather seat cushions! I could belt myself in, then get out of the car and walk away, which kind of defeated the object...”



Hamilton appears to have found his mojo. His drive in Montréal showed maturity

It was Andretti, lest we forget, who came up with the immortal line about Amon’s luck: “If Chris would have gone into the undertaking business, people would stop dying...”

Now it’s seven races, and seven winners. One wonders where it will ever end.

In point of fact, if anyone had a victory coming, it was Lewis Hamilton, who is driving incomparably better this year than last. In Barcelona his qualifying time was half a second faster than anyone else’s, and had he not been put to the back of the grid – a savage penalty, one thought, for a misdemeanour rather than a crime – it’s

unlikely that Pastor Maldonado’s name would already be on the Grand Prix winners’ list.

What impressed about Hamilton on that occasion was that he didn’t get flustered. Deep down he must have been madder than a wet hen about his penalty because he personally had done nothing to contribute to it, but instead of getting sulky and mumbling dissatisfaction with McLaren, the stewards and the whole damn thing he coped with it maturely, and drove the race in the same frame of mind. Twelve months ago there would very likely have been a coming-together with a backmarker as he tried to storm through the field, but in Barcelona he blended pace with patience – and did it, what’s more, while taking excellent care of his tyres, something which has never previously been a Hamilton trademark.

It was at Montréal five years ago that Lewis won his first Grand Prix – and >>>

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he won his second a week later at what was sadly to be the final F1 race at Indianapolis. At that time he was achieving like no rookie in the history of the sport, and I still think he drove consistently better in his first season than any time since.

Until now perhaps. Very well, this was his first victory of the year, but although Sebastian Vettel took pole position by a disturbing three-tenths of a second there was a widespread feeling in the paddock that this was going to be Hamilton's day. Montréal has always been a McLaren circuit, while Red Bull had never won there, but it went deeper than that: overwhelmingly Lewis was due a victory.

Twelve months ago, it will be remembered, his Canadian Grand Prix was disastrous. At the time his head seemed to be all over the place – he was driving erratically, making mistakes, honing a persecution complex, and consequently receiving rather less sympathy than might otherwise have been his due. A career that had once appeared limitless was on the skids: in the rains of Montréal he tried to put a risky move on team-mate Button, and that was the end of his afternoon. It could easily have called time on Jenson's, too, but fortunately his McLaren survived, and he came through to win memorably, pressuring Vettel into a mistake on the final lap.

Twelve months on, though, Hamilton is riding high once more, apparently enjoying life again and driving beautifully while Button, curiously, has gone the other way – curiously because no one, Jenson included, appears to understand why. He won emphatically at Melbourne, the first race of the season, and finished second in Shanghai, but otherwise has not really been a factor, and at Barcelona, Monaco and Montréal – all races he had previously won – he was frankly nowhere, and admitted as much.

The easy answer would be to blame the tyres – that, after all, is what more than one driver has done in the recent past to explain a run of poor form. Button, though, is not one to seek excuses, and in Canada he was emphatic that the problem lay elsewhere.



His team-mate could find grip, after all, so...

Perhaps more surprising is that Lewis has also been making his tyres last better, and that has been contrary to expectations, for traditionally – as with his hero Alain Prost – Jenson's ability to be kind to his tyres has always been a high card in his hand. In Montréal, though, he was the only one of the top 10 qualifiers to start the race on the harder compound on offer, yet was among the first to come in for fresh Pirellis, which rather defeated the object. Afterwards he declared that the Canadian Grand Prix had been his worst race for years, and he didn't really know what to do next.

Although the reasons behind it may be very different, the scenario rather reminds me, I must say, of the second half of the 2009 season when Button was driving for Brawn, partnered by Barrichello. To the halfway point, Jenson was as good as unbeatable, building up a daunting points

lead and virtually putting a lock on the World Championship. It was good he did, though, for thereafter he routinely struggled in qualifying, always citing 'a lack of grip', while Rubens seemed to have no such problems and took over as Brawn's front-runner. Button invariably raced way better than he had qualified, but starting so far back gave him far more work to do than should have been necessary.

There will of course always be those drivers who cope better than others with cars that are not *au point*. As Jo Ramírez said of a previous era at McLaren, "When Alain got the car exactly to his liking, he was unbeatable, but if the cars were not right – if problems had to be driven around – Ayrton always coped better."

Until recently one would have said that this was also the case with Button and Hamilton, which is why the current situation is so baffling. "I was really surprised," said



Monaco may be a 'glamour' Grand Prix but the backdrop has lost its old elegance

Lewis in Montréal, "how I could save my tyres and push at the same time." Jenson, meantime, could do neither. These are indeed strange times in Formula 1.

Ladies and gentlemen," a laconic BA pilot announced as we flew in a few years ago, "welcome to Gatwick – the only building site in the world with its own airport..."

The moment came back to me on the morning of Thursday, May 16, as I drove in from St Jean Cap Ferrat. "Welcome to Monaco," I murmured to myself, "the only building site in the world with its own Grand Prix..."

It's such a shame. There was a time when

I used to love it so. In the late-60s, when I first went there, Somerset Maugham may have long previously described Monaco as 'a sunny place for shady people', but I confess that I thought nothing of that: with its Belle Epoque villas and elegant skyline, Monte Carlo seemed to me a triumph of style over fashion, the very opposite of how it is today. As massive cranes deface the landscape at every turn, and yet more high-rise apartment blocks are crammed in, I'm afraid it strikes me as simply tacky – but then what do I know? It was Innes Ireland who originally christened the place 'Moneyco', and with every passing year the *raison d'être* of the strutting little Principality seems ever more apparent, but perhaps I'm missing something. After all, every Grand Prix driver of consequence, save Alonso, Vettel and Webber, lives there.

In my story on Alberto Ascari in last month's issue, there appeared a photograph of his Lancia pitching into the sea in 1955 – or rather of the cloud of steam and smoke which plumed up immediately after the accident. The picture was taken from the other side of the harbour, and what strikes you is the expanse of uncluttered water: a total of eight boats – including the one which rescued Ascari – are visible, and all are small.

Now, as row upon row of mammoth yachts and cruisers pack the harbour, the trick is to spot the Mediterranean. Fortunately, though, at the end of the day it is permitted to escape back into France, and some of us do it with all possible dispatch.

As long as there is a race in Monaco, though, next morning you head back to the traffic and chaos, and once you're there, ensconced in the paddock, everything settles down again. One of the good things about this Grand Prix is that you tend to run into people you haven't seen for a while, like Alain Prost and Riccardo Patrese. Throw in Niki Lauda, Keke Rosberg and Gerhard Berger, and an '80s grid begins to take shape.

Prost, without a doubt, is the one wearing best. At 57, he continues to cycle

fiendishly, and I doubt he weighs an ounce more than when he retired, as World Champion, in 1993. "How's the airline doing?" he asked Lauda. "Sold it!" came the reply. "At the end of last year. Sold Niki, like I sold Lauda Air. That's it – I'm out of names now..."

When it comes to gossip there is nowhere like Monza, for by September future deals are firming up, but the 'silly season' begins ever earlier, and the Monaco paddock was alive with rumour. In terms of 'who goes where?', most of the speculation centred on Ferrari, for it is assumed at this stage – although he demonstrated notably better form in Monaco – that Felipe Massa will

be shed at season's end. Italian colleagues were insisting that Sebastian Vettel has signed an option for 2014 (subject to certain performance parameters being met next season), and that Ferrari were therefore looking for a team-mate for Fernando Alonso 'for one year only'. Their conclusion was that Mark Webber, closing

in on 36, and a good friend of Alonso, was the logical choice.

At this stage of the game all things are possible, of course. Webber says he has agreed nothing for 2013, while Vettel insists that his future is with Red Bull. Into the mix, meantime, comes Lewis Hamilton, whose McLaren contract expires at the end of the year, and who insists he is in no hurry to make any decisions. Twelve months ago, when going through his 'difficult' phase, Hamilton paid a highly publicised visit to Red Bull in the Montréal paddock, but no one took it seriously. Now, though, if Lewis were spotted in Milton Keynes on a wet Tuesday afternoon, it would be a different matter. The wish to have Adrian Newey on your side, to drive the same car as Vettel, must be potent.

At the same time some in Monaco were suggesting that Hamilton might finish up at Ferrari, of all places. A few months ago Martin Brundle smilingly told me he'd be very disappointed in Alonso if it were not in his Ferrari contract that Lewis was *never* to be considered so long as he was there, but... you never know. >>>

I'm afraid
Monaco strikes
me as tacky -
but then what
do I know?"

Nigel Roebuck



If it be the case, as one of Fernando's closest friends told me long ago, that in his unhappy season with McLaren in 2007, his beef was with Ron Dennis rather than Hamilton, maybe one day they could be team-mates again. Certainly they have lately appeared almost chummy, with Lewis describing Fernando as "probably the best driver out there". Similarly, it may be remembered that last winter Alonso said he considered Hamilton his major rival. Ahead of Vettel? Yes, ahead of Vettel.

After Monaco Alonso narrowly led the World Championship, prompting Heikki Kovalainen – who took his place at McLaren – to predict that he will win it. "Whatever the track, whatever the conditions," Heikki said, "there is always one common denominator: Fernando is always near the front..."

So he is, and for me there's no argument that Fernando Alonso Diaz is the best, not least because you see the true essence of a racing driver in those years when he is up against it, when he obviously does not have the best car, and puts it in places it has no right to be. That was Villeneuve; that is Alonso. And neither of them, saints be praised, ever moaned.

Ferrari began this season's campaign at a very low level indeed. In Melbourne Alonso was unable even to make Q3, and started 12th, which he converted into fifth over the 58 laps, but in the mixed conditions of the next race, Sepang, he stupefied everyone by scoring his 28th Grand Prix victory, and routinely he has been in the mix.

I would venture that Alonso is driving better now than at any time in his life, but if Ferrari is lucky to have him, it is somewhat fortunate, too, that 'the tyre situation' this year has to some degree masked the F2012's deficiencies, in the sense that some rivals have proved unable to assert their cars' inherent superiority.

The first six Grands Prix produced six different winners, a phenomenon previously unknown in the history of the World Championship. For casual fans, I grant you, this can only be good, and I don't need to be told that uncertainty is the lifeblood of any sport, F1 included, but when – as at Monaco – a backmarker can suddenly pop up with fastest lap, simply because he's on a new set of tyres, and has a clear road in front of him, I get a little queasy, I'm afraid. What is going on here?

Alonso and Ferrari may have benefited from this situation, to some extent, not least by making intelligent decisions at the right moment, but Fernando himself clearly

has doubts about the state of F1, and he is by no means alone. While no one – save perhaps Michael Schumacher – would wish to see a return to the sprint-stop-sprint syndrome of a few years ago when refuelling was allowed, and the cars were always light and on at least relatively new tyres, neither can anyone be content,

surely, with a scenario which obliges drivers relatively to cruise, their main focus on 'making the tyres last'.

Or maybe I've got it wrong. Maybe it is only 'The Show' that matters, only the outward veneer. Clearly a lot of folk seem to think so, but honestly I'm growing a little bored with being brainwashed on how wonderful this 'new' F1 is.

Of late I've been thinking quite often of an American road test from the '60s. The vehicle in question was the original Lotus Europa, for which I – as an Elan owner at the time – had mild contempt, for it was remarkably sluggish in a straight line, and also had such eccentricities as fixed side windows and fixed seats (to get comfortable, you moved the pedals, believe it or not). Rather a silly car in many ways, it seemed to me, like those chopped-down Range Rovers that inevitably proliferate in and around Monaco. That said, Denis Jenkinson – on a wish and a prayer, one imagines – drove a Europa all the way to the Targa Florio (and back), and raved about its mid-engined handling. *Car and Driver* was similarly enthusiastic

– but with reservations, as the headline suggested: 'It's fantastic – but is it a car?'

Monaco is Monaco, of course, and close processions have been the way of it there for generations. It was no surprise to see Webber, Rosberg, Alonso, Vettel, Hamilton and Massa lapping all of a group in the late stages, but no one seemed inclined to make a move, and really the tension came only from wondering if anyone would drop it on an increasingly treacherous surface.

At other races, though, thanks to a combination of DRS and the tyre situation, there have been order changes aplenty – and, as I said, a different winner in each of the first half-dozen races. Plenty to talk about, then, but to paraphrase *Car and Driver*, 'It's fantastic – but is it racing?'

After Monaco 'fantastic' was the word Alonso used to describe the season to date, because it had proved so unpredictable, but he then tempered his remark. "It's good for the audience," he said, "and good that the races are getting so much attention. On the other hand, we can lose credibility – we can lose that the best teams, the best drivers, the best strategies, win the races, because at the moment it seems that in every race anyone can win.

"It doesn't matter the talent, it doesn't matter the team, the performance – it's like a lottery. What you achieve in F1 is not by chance. We need to make clear that if you win a race, it's because you did something better – and at the moment I don't think this is clear for everyone..."

I don't think it is, either. What say you?

When I first began going to races with my parents in the mid-50s, it wasn't long before I sorted out my favourites, and Stirling Moss, it need hardly be said, became an instant idol. I saw him win the Oulton Park Gold Cup in '54, and at the same meeting laid eyes for the first time on Jean Behra. You could buy paddock passes in those days, of course, and when I saw Behra standing by his light blue Gordini, cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth in time-honoured Gallic style, >>>



Spotlight on Singapore

IN 2008 SINGAPORE was thrust into the spotlight as one of the most dramatic additions to the Formula 1 calendar. Now in its fifth year, the Singapore Grand Prix will continue to enthral crowds with a powerful combination of thrilling race action and world-class entertainment amid a unique setting in downtown Singapore.

"In just a few years, the Singapore Grand Prix has become a classic F1 event," McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh said. "The circuit and facilities are world-class and it's one of the jewels of the calendar. If circuits like Spa, Silverstone, Monza and Monaco represent the epitome of classic Formula 1, then a circuit such as Marina Bay has, I think, quickly established itself as one of the sport's modern wonders."

NOTHING ELSE COMES CLOSE

The Marina Bay street circuit was developed in preference to a permanent out-of-town facility to bring the Grand Prix right into the heart of the city, with Singapore's heritage buildings and iconic modern architecture providing a spectacular backdrop to the action.

In contrast to the isolated location of many GP venues, which require lengthy journeys to reach the track, six of Singapore's subway stations are within walking distance of the circuit.

Of course the other thing that makes the Singapore race unique is its position as the only night race on the calendar. The race starts at 8pm local time and is illuminated by 1500 specially-designed projector lamps.

Among the race's many appeals is its ability to bring all the drama on track close to fans, as double World Champion Sebastian Vettel puts it: "It's spectacular seeing the cars so close



at night, seeing them right in front of you in the middle of the city. Also around the race there are a lot of concerts going on, things like that make it very spectacular for people to come."

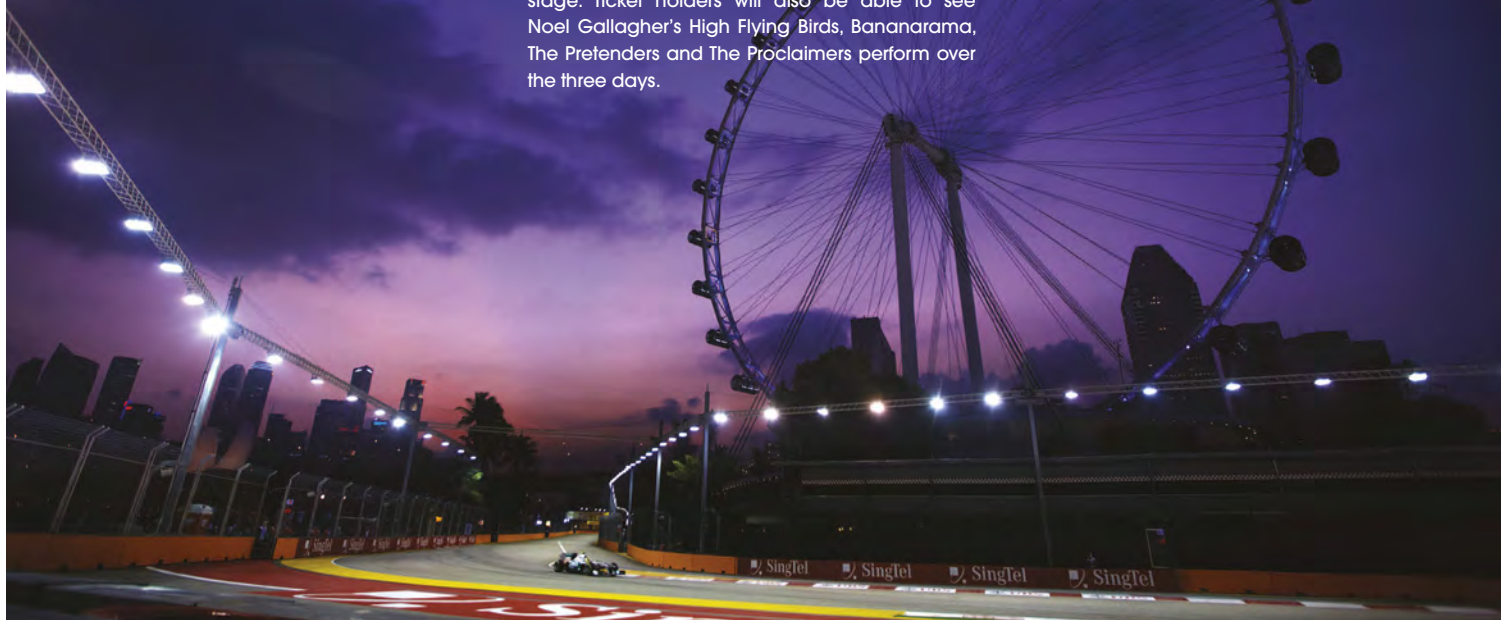
Part of the attraction this year are the headliner music acts: Taiwanese R&B king Jay Chou, pop sensation Katy Perry and Grammy-award winners Maroon 5, who will perform at the Padang stage. Ticket holders will also be able to see Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds, Bananarama, The Pretenders and The Proclaimers perform over the three days.

FANS SPOIL FOR CHOICE

This year fans can look forward to the return of the hugely successful Group Booking Special that offers fans, who purchase four or more tickets, fantastic savings. There are also new Combination Packages to enable fans to experience different parts of the circuit over the three days.

Tickets to the most anticipated event on the calendar are priced from SGD 198 (£98.90) for a three-day Zone 4 Walkabout ticket to SGD 2128 (£1063) for a three-day Turn 3 Premier Grandstand ticket. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.singaporegp.sg

With six World Champions on the grid, new technical rules and a new venue on the calendar, the 2012 F1 season brings with it a heightened sense of anticipation, suspense and unpredictability. From September 21-23, 2012 get ready for the lights, glamour and electrifying drama of a night race set in the heart of Singapore. 



Nigel Roebuck

I at once concluded that here was my idea of what a Grand Prix driver should be.

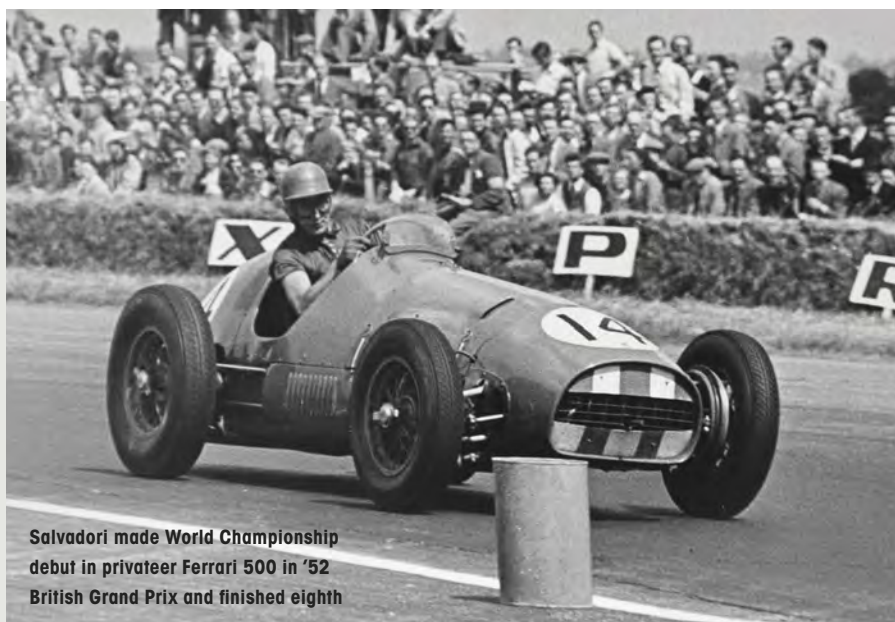
Dan Gurney thought so, too: “Even for those days, Jean was something of a throwback to a different time. He wasn’t a moaner at all – he was a fiery guy, and he was there to race. I thought a great deal of him, and I really admired his incredibly combative spirit. He was a proud man, and he was a battler – and, believe me, he wasn’t slow!”

Gurney shared a factory Ferrari with Behra at Le Mans in 1959, and they led until the middle of the night when the car broke. The other Ferraris duly followed suit, and on Sunday afternoon it was a pair of Aston Martin DBR1s which took the chequered flag, the leading car crewed by Roy Salvadori and Carroll Shelby. As I write, both men have left us in the last month, Roy at 90, Carroll at 89.

Salvadori was the third of my idols when I was a kid. When you’re young and impressionable some drivers’ names resonate more than others. Clay Regazzoni and Johnny Servoz-Gavin, for example, could hardly have gone through life as shipping clerks or solicitors, and in the same way I thought ‘Roy Salvadori’ perfect for one who drove a 250F.

As I mentioned last month, I always had a thing about ‘The Trident’. “Head was Ferrari, and heart was Maserati,” Jenks once said to me, and it summed up how I felt, too. Moss and Behra I always thought of as Maserati men, and Salvadori, too, had a role to play. Back in 1954 he was driving not only a 250F for Sid Greene’s Gilby Engineering team, but also a gorgeous A6GCS sports car, and it was in this that I saw him first, at the British Empire Trophy, also at Oulton.

Salvadori may not have been a great driver in the Moss sense of the word, but he was more than merely good, and on certain days could run with anyone. History will remember him primarily for his sports car exploits – in the Aston Martin team he was a match for all save Stirling – but Roy was one of those who could drive anything, and do justice to it. He made his



Salvadori made World Championship debut in privateer Ferrari 500 in '52 British Grand Prix and finished eighth

Grand Prix debut at Silverstone in 1952, finishing eighth in a privately-entered Ferrari, and 10 years on was a member of the Bowmaker Lola team, partnering John Surtees.

In between times Salvadori drove for a variety of outfits, including – briefly – BRM and Vanwall, but his single-seater career is associated chiefly with Cooper. Although Roy was never to win a Grand Prix, on at least two occasions he came close, and at a Goodwood lunch a few years ago he told me about them.

“I was always a realist about my own abilities,” he said. “I saw myself as a damn good pro, and sometimes a bit more than that, but when you were up against people like Fangio and Moss there was no point in kidding yourself. I think, in the right car, I was capable of competing seriously with them some days – but the thing is, they were *always* at that level...”

“To be quite honest, there were only a couple of times in my career when I really felt I might win a Grand Prix. One was at Silverstone in '56, when I was in the Gilby Maser, and eventually went out with a misfire – the engine was still running, but I packed it in because I was worried about blowing up: Gilby simply didn’t have the wherewithal for a complete rebuild at Maserati. I was proud of that drive, though, because the car was getting quite long in the tooth by then, and I’d been running second to Moss’s factory 250F – I couldn’t do anything about him, but I was ahead of Fangio and Collins in their Ferraris – and they finished 1-2 after Stirling eventually retired...”

“The other occasion was towards the

end of my F1 career, at Watkins Glen in 1961, driving a customer Cooper for the Yeoman Credit team. I’d had a pretty poor season, but I always liked the ‘Glen, and in the race I really got going well, passing people like Gurney and McLaren, and getting into second place behind Ireland’s Lotus, which I was catching at a rate of knots – until I came up to lap Clark, who had been delayed earlier on.

“There were about half a dozen laps to go, and it was clear that Jimmy was obeying orders from Chapman, and holding me up so as to protect Innes, his team-mate. I wasn’t very happy about it, but I suppose, in similar circumstances, I’d have done the same! Anyway, I finally forced my way by – but almost immediately the engine went bang, and that was that. It was almost certainly my own fault – I’m sure I must have over-revved in my attempts to get past Jimmy – but still I was awfully disappointed. I was coming up to 40, and thought, ‘Well, that’s probably my last chance to be a Grand Prix winner’. Which it duly was...”

Salvadori had a wonderfully understated way with him – “I was awfully disappointed...” – and took great pleasure in gently needling his rivals – “Christ, Stirling, is that all Astons are paying you?” – but any of them would attest to the fact that on the race track he was a fierce competitor, well able to take care of himself. In my experience, he was delightful company; I lament the loss of another childhood god. **M**

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DISPATCHES



LAT

AN AFFIRMATION OF PASSION

IT'S BRITISH GRAND PRIX TIME. THIS IS NOT AS NATIONALISTIC AS it looks. Our Nige is long retired, Union flag boxers are mercifully less evident, jingoistic tattoos less popular, and many languages may be heard among the chatter in the grandstands these days. There will be Ferrari flags and 'Come On Kimi' banners among the McLaren baseball caps and flags of St George come raceday.

Thankfully the angst over whether or not the British race would survive the ravages of Mr Ecclestone's master plan has subsided, and Silverstone has some long-term security. But there can be no complacency. A Grand Prix is fiercely expensive to stage and margins are tight, so much so that further investment is needed and the circuit has been in talks with American and Middle Eastern investors. A capacity crowd is vital and, all things being equal, the place will be heaving over that first weekend in July.


I have witnessed the evolution of our home race for more than half a century, from Aintree to Brands Hatch to Silverstone. The halcyon days, for me, were the Brands years, the natural amphitheatre providing unsurpassed viewing for spectators and a busy, challenging lap for the drivers. The advent of run-off areas, and other related safety matters, finally forced a permanent move to the wide open spaces of Northamptonshire where Silverstone, in its largely original configuration, provided a breathtakingly fast lap and demanded bravery and downforce in equal measure. It could not last: the cars became so mind-bendingly quick through the corners, that the emasculation, or re-profiling, began. The joys of old Woodcote, old Copse, old Stowe were gone. Who can forget Keke Rosberg through those corners in the Williams-Honda?

I will whisper this bit. I don't like the new circuit, it does not thrill me. Should either Damon Hill or Derek Warwick have the time to be reading this, I'm sorry. I know how much effort and expense has gone into the new layout and I accept that facilities for spectators are hugely better. Good vantage points remain – the banks on

the outside of Maggotts and Becketts are my favoured haunts. For the drivers, I am sure Silverstone is hold-your-breath exciting in parts, but for me the place has somehow lost its flow, lost that feeling that it was a place like no other on the calendar. Some of this, I sense, has to do with the moving of the pits and grid. The new location, and the new buildings, just don't feel right to me.

The British Grand Prix is of course about much more than the circuit. It is a wonderful occasion, a meeting of minds and an affirmation of our undiluted passion for the sport. The removal of this race was, and is, unthinkable, while the same may be said for Spa, Monza, Monaco and Interlagos. Even now, there is a palpable sense of history about our summer pilgrimage to Northants, just as there was in the days of Brands and Aintree. It is a huge party; everyone is there, an uplifting assurance that we have all made the trip to soak it all up together. We are brothers and sisters in arms, never mind our creed, colour or language.

Most years we have our heroes, whether they be leading from the front or fighting from the back. 'Our Jens' and 'Our Lewis' attract a less provocative crowd than did 'Our Nige', but we remain convinced that our support, in whatever form, gives them a tenth or two over the lap. They tell us they can hear our cheers above the noise behind their heads; we are an integral part of the show. And that is what makes a sporting event a thrilling occasion.

In the next few days, as the race approaches, we will start to fret about the weather as only us Brits can do. Will it rain? Should we take umbrella and boots, or will it be hot and sunny? Should we pack water, shades and sun creams? Some years I see the same people on the bank at Maggotts, in the queue for a bacon roll, or hovering hopefully at the paddock turnstiles, clutching programmes to be autographed. Perhaps they are different people dressed in the same uniform, the uniform of the F1 fan. It matters not; it is part of the shared experience. See you there. 

||| Mat Oxley |||

ON TWO WHEELS



WALK ON THE HIGHSIDE

THIS ICONIC PHOTOGRAPH SYMBOLISES THE 500 TWO-STROKE at the apex of its wickedness. The victim – being cruelly ejected from his Honda NSR500 – is Wayne Gardner, Australia's first 500 World Champion, who got through his career on a mix of champagne and Novocaine. Gardner's injury woes personified a thrilling era of racing that was wracked with suffering.

The year is 1990 when the phenomenon of the highside crash had the sport in a panic. So many riders were getting hurt that something had to be done. Highsides were happening because power curves and slick tyres had developed to a point where they offered riders only the narrowest of comfort zones.

The 500cc two-strokes of the era were kicking out a wild 170bhp at the top of a precipitous power curve. The tyre companies hurried to keep up, creating tyres with more grip, but crucially the latest rubber lacked feel: by the time the rider felt the rear tyre smearing sideways as he accelerated out of a corner it was too late to smoothly control the slide. Instead the tyre would suddenly regain grip and all that energy would create a disastrous whiplash effect, catapulting the rider over the handlebars to certain pain.

There is no worse way to crash a GP 'bike than a highside. Want to know how it feels? Try jumping off the roof of a car at 90mph.

Gardner knew more about highsides than most, certainly more than he wanted to know. The 1987 500 World Champion had a bull-in-a-china-shop riding style and rode with his heart as much as with his head. "Emotion was absolutely a big thing for me," he says. "It sometimes pushed me past what's humanly possible and sometimes it got me into trouble."

He limped away from this crash – during qualifying for the Czech GP at Brno – with a broken right wrist. Amazingly, that wasn't enough to deter him from starting the race. Aided by painkilling drugs, he rode to second place behind Wayne Rainey.

The painkilling technology of the day was particularly nasty,

Mesotherapy used dozens of pin-prick injections in the injury area, designed to numb the pain without affecting mental agility.

Three weeks later Gardner went through the same rigmarole to race at his home Grand Prix at Phillip Island. "Prior to the race I strapped up the wrist and Dr Costa ('bike racing's controversial Mr Fixit) put 25 injections in my wrist."

What followed was one of the most remarkable victories in Grand Prix history. Gardner fought a vicious duel with bitter rival Mick Doohan, despite damaging his fairing in the early stages. "I dropped about five seconds behind," recalls Gardner. "Then I went: you know what, I can't let this happen. I just told myself, if it hurts, deal with the pain after the race."

Gardner came back at Doohan – who later accused him of running him off the track – to win by eight-tenths of a second. "To this day I still don't know how I won that race with a broken wrist and broken fairing."

After Phillip Island Gardner went under the knife in Sydney, where surgeons took a bone graft from his hip to fix the scaphoid bone in the wrist.

Two years later Honda unleashed its 'big-bang' NSR500, with a revised firing configuration that gave riders a much better feeling for the rear tyre. Rival manufacturers soon followed suit. Gardner thought he could win his second world title with Honda's latest weapon, but it wasn't to be. He slid off early on during the rain-soaked opener at Suzuka, then remounted and staged a typically gritty charge through the pack. He was pushing hard for a podium finish when he fell again, this time badly breaking his right leg.

"Lying in the clinic at Suzuka I kept thinking I don't want to do this anymore," he says.

Gardner duly retired from 'bikes at the end of the year and switched to four wheels, racing in the Australian V8 Supercar series and the All-Japan Grand Touring Car Championship. **M**

THE US SCENE



INDYCAR'S ENGINE WAR

THIS YEAR'S INDYCAR SERIES HAS BEEN RE-INVIGORATED BY the return of competition between engine manufacturers. Honda was IndyCar's sole supplier over the past six years but this year's new 12,000rpm-limited 2.2-litre turbo V6 formula has inspired serious competition from Chevrolet. Designed and built by Ilmor in the UK, Chevrolet's turbo V6 made a roaring start, winning this year's opening four IndyCar races, all with Team Penske, before Honda bounced back at Indianapolis with much improved 'step two' engines.

In qualifying at Indianapolis the Chevy-powered Penske and Andretti teams swept the front two rows of the grid, but Honda's updated engine arrived for the race allowing Dario Franchitti and Scott Dixon to score a resounding one-two for Chip Ganassi's team and Honda. IndyCar's new formula requires each driver to put 1800 miles on an engine before a change, resulting in the use of five engines over the course of the season.

Honda Performance Development's assistant vice-president Steve Eriksen told me Honda will focus its development work on refining details of the pistons to achieve better combustion and efficiency. "I think the fuel efficiency of the latest engine is a step up from what we had before and certainly a step up on power as well," Eriksen observed. "We've laid out the plan for the year and each one of those five engines will be a step up based on what we can do within IndyCar's homologation specifications."

Eriksen said HPD's engineers are delighted to have plenty of development work on their plates this year. He's particularly pleased to be working on direct injection. "It's one thing to do direct injection with gasoline but another thing with the flow rates of ethanol," Eriksen said. "Running at 12,000rpm with ethanol your injection window is so short and you've got to get so much fuel in there that it's not really atomised at very high pressure. We're excited about all the possible refinements of

injectors, spray patterns, atomisation and all the things you need to do to make it more efficient."

Ilmor boss Mario Illien agrees about the technical challenges to IndyCar's new formula. "There's so much calibration and mapping to be done with turbocharging and direct injection," Illien said. "That was a challenge in itself, especially direct injection with ethanol, and we continue to work on the dyno to make it better."

Takuma Sato drives Bobby Rahal's Honda-powered IndyCar this year. Rahal analysed the battle between Honda and Chevrolet so far. "You have to acknowledge that Ilmor has done an extremely good job with the Chevy programme," he said. "There's a tremendous amount of IndyCar experience at Ilmor, particularly with turbocharged engines, and I think frankly that was its advantage in the short term. Initially, Chevy had a bit of an advantage on both power and fuel mileage and better response on street courses because of its twin turbo.

"On the Honda side there's a lot of newer people with less experience. However, the HPD management is very experienced and Honda has reacted very aggressively to the situation and showed what it can do in the race at Indianapolis. I believe Chevy has awakened a sleeping giant and I think the race is on now."

Meanwhile Mario Illien looks forward to 2015 when IndyCar hopes to open up its engine and chassis rules. "I think the engine rules we have now is quite a good package," Illien commented. "I'd like to maintain that. But if we can combine it with a proper hybrid solution I think that is the way forward because you talk about better economy and relevance to road cars. It would be more difficult to introduce in IndyCar because of the ovals, but on the road courses I think it's got to be part of the future."

After a decade of technical torpor it's encouraging that IndyCar has begun to get itself back on track as a competitive, cutting-edge form of motor racing. **M**

||| Desirables |||



Best of British
Clockwise from top left:

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Disaster is relative

Sir,

Thank you for your features commemorating the 30th anniversary of the passing of Gilles Villeneuve. I have only ever attended one Grand Prix, the 1977 British race, so I had the privilege of observing Gilles' Grand Prix debut – albeit the only GP where he didn't drive a Ferrari – and I remember being impressed by his ability to stay ahead of his team-mate Jochen Mass who was driving the then new McLaren M26 while Gilles himself was piloting the older M23.

With his recruitment by Ferrari I kept a keen interest in his progression, aided by the articles of Mr Roebuck, DSJ, Peter Windsor and others.

I do therefore have to take issue with the remarks of my namesake Alistair Caldwell in that issue. To call Gilles' move to Ferrari 'a disaster' and a waste of a huge talent seems to me not to understand the legacy that Gilles Villeneuve leaves behind and how that legacy is entwined in the legend that is the Scuderia. If Gilles did indeed add to the glorious history of Ferrari, then it is also true that Ferrari is integral to the veneration of the F1 career of the boy from Berthierville.

It seems to me disingenuous for Alistair to suggest that Gilles would have won a world championship with McLaren had he stayed there. When exactly would he have won it? In the whole of Gilles' career with Ferrari – where he won a paltry six Grands Prix – the entire McLaren team won two! Alistair might say that he would have won in 1982, but, had he lived, he would, quite probably, have won it anyway driving the 126C2.

The magic of Villeneuve, for me at least, is that he did what he did while driving for the Prancing Horse.

Bryan Caldwell, Vancouver, BC, Canada

The Monaco Grand Prix - why?

Sir,

Without wanting to detract from Mark Webber's deserved victory, maybe someone who enjoys F1 racing, rather than its financial exploitation, can explain why the Monaco GP remains on the current F1 calendar?

Without mention of the innumerable previous similar occasions, based on this year's race alone it is obvious that passing, unless while in the pits or under the blue flag, is not possible. Each attempt at a pass on the track ended in either disaster or the gained place having to be allowed back due to the sole half

overtaking opportunity inevitably culminating in a collision or a car having to run off the marked track.

The drivers' frustration must only be equalled by that of the TV commentators as they try to inject some enthusiasm into the audience while describing the identical line of cars lap after lap.

Clearly the FIA Overtaking Committee never even contemplated the exclusion of the miserably narrow and outdated Monaco facilities, or it would have been top of their priority list. KERS and DRS, both introduced to increase overtaking, are without any merit on a track so incapable of sustaining them.

Each year I vow not to watch the Monaco GP, but always do on the vague chance that I might witness a brilliant clean pass, other than under the blue flag or in the pits.

I fear I'm wasting my time. It's Superbikes next year for me.

Bill Pack, South Shields, Tyne & Wear

On the right track

Sir,

Nice article on Jean-Pierre Beltoise. He did indeed win two F1 races for BRM, though only one was a GP – interestingly, this time in the dry. The P180 F1 win at Brands was the final F1 victory for BRM.

I saw JP-B at Monaco recently where they held a special luncheon to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the win. At 75 he was looking very fit despite his wife's attempts to cut back on being too much of a *bon viveur*! He signed the right side of the 'coke bottle' of P180/02 which I now own and use in Historic F1. My first drive with the car was at Monaco and I was interested to find that the steering is exceptionally light and precise, at least in comparison to a March 711 and BRM P133.

In your same edition I see Tony Southgate makes reference to Beltoise and this car which BRM (Stanley) gave up with at the end of the season when Tony jumped ship. Howden Ganley, who also drove and tested the car, insists that Southgate was on the right track with the P180 and that if further

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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15 Lots Road, London SW10 0QJ

or e-mail: editorial@motorsportmagazine.co.uk

(Please include your full name and postal area)

developed it would have given the Cosworth cars a good run for their money.

Robs Lamplough, Hungerford, Berks

Cooper correction

Sir,

What a great article in the June issue by Doug Nye reflecting on the 1962 F1 season battle between Graham Hill and Jim Clark.

In the interest of accuracy I feel I must correct an error in the sub-item 'Insight'. Graham Hill did indeed win the Glover Trophy at Goodwood to record his first F1 win with Bruce McLaren second. However, Bruce was not in a V8 Climax-engined Cooper but the four-cylinder Cooper-Climax T55, the car he had used to win the Lavant Cup race (for four-cylinder F1 cars) earlier in the day.

Ian Pratt, Waltham on the Wolds, Leicestershire

Ferrari wasn't the only one...

Sir,

The 'terrifying story' recounted by Nigel Roebuck about *Commendatore* Ferrari's reaction to Castelletti's death ('Castelletti morto... e la macchina?') prompted a memory of a distant event at a distant time, location unspecified, names withheld. Two drivers shared a car. It was a fine day, when motor racing seems the ultimate sport. At last news started to filter back to the paddock; someone had gone off, in a big way. 'It's Trevor.' 'How bad?' 'Dunno.' At that point Trevor's co-driver strolled past, still in his overalls, eating an ice-cream cornet. 'How bad, Jack?' Jack made no reply, continued to nibble his cornet, gave a thumbs-down and passed on. He had just learned Trevor was dead.

Jack had come through the war, as well as the hazardous formulae that existed then. He had even made it, briefly, into Formula 1, a fine driver though not of the top rank. We supposed it was a situation he had encountered many times before, in battle and sport. We gave him that. But we never discovered if he asked about the condition of the car...

Frank Barnard, Peasmarsh, nr Rye, East Sussex

Salvadori - a true gentleman

Sir,

The passing of Carroll Shelby and Roy Salvadori within a few weeks of each other is sad for all motor sport enthusiasts who >>>

||| Letters |||

have followed the 'golden age' of the '50s and '60s. Much has been written about their exploits winning Le Mans in 1959 for Aston Martin. I was fortunate to be acquainted with both through an event I was helping to organise some years ago – both were friendly, professional and easy to work with... true gentlemen. I had never met Roy before agreeing the project with him in a brief telephone conversation and I followed this up with full details in the post. I had arranged for him and Susie to fly up to London from Nice. He rang me to say, "Jon, please don't waste your client's money [a major multi-national] with business class tickets. We fly this route quite often, it takes no time at all, economy class will be just fine." As I said, a true gentleman.

Jon Gross, Pimlico, Hertfordshire

Demolishing a Dino

Sir,

Having seen the car race I read with interest the article on the Colonel's Dino 206SP. As mentioned Mike Parkes drove it in the 1966 Brands Hatch British GP Group 7 'Big Banger' support race, easily winning the 2-litre class. Parkes usually went well at Brands, so it was a surprise that, during practice for the following August Monday Guards International race, he lost control of the Dino at Paddock Bend and crumpled it hard into the bank.

I was in the paddock when the wrecker brought in the very battered Dino, most of the left side crushed. It was clearly a non-runner for Monday's race. As we watched the car being winched down a crestfallen Parkes stood by, looking very unhappy. His mood can't have been improved much when up strolled Graham Hill (driving a Team Surtees Lola T70 that weekend), looked at the sad Dino, looked at Parkes and said "Bloody hell, Michael!".

David Fox, Schwenksville, Pennsylvania, USA

F1 is unsustainable

Sir,

Did Christian Sylt and Caroline Reid deliberately set out to scare potential investors to death? They certainly did me! Their article (July issue) on the way F1 business operates pointed up some harsh facts, and, as they say, something will certainly "have to give" in due course. Other quotes from the article include "many teams are still struggling financially" and "F1's circuits have had financial troubles

even when the economy was booming". So the two key players in the production are struggling. That just leaves the commercial rights owners making consistent profits, and if they are able to negotiate terms that include annual circuit fee increases of "between 5 and 10 per cent" – even in times of almost zero economic growth – this will surely be even further destabilising. I was brought up to believe good business requires that something remains in it for everyone. Perhaps the FIA should be asked to comment on what might become quite an issue for its sport.

M Knight, Ascot, Berks

A worthy winner

Sir,

I was thrilled to learn I had won the Guy Allen signed print that featured on the cover of the June issue of *Motor Sport*. I do not often enter competitions, but did on this occasion because as a schoolboy in the '60s, Graham Hill was my idol. While not as talented as some of his peers such as Jim Clark, his hard work, tenacity and determination bridged the gap – qualities to abide by that were pointed out to me by my father, an ardent motor racing fan.

I think it's easy to forget how little information was available at that time and how spoilt we are now. Following a GP there would be a newspaper report on the Monday and maybe some grainy black and white film on the TV days later. Therefore my father's copies of the Green 'Un were the only way to keep up with the sport in the '60s. I devoured Jenks' reports with all the detail of chassis numbers and between-race modifications made to the cars.

The only other way was to watch *Tom Tom*, a science-themed children's programme which was broadcast on the BBC at around 5pm on Tuesdays between 1965 and 1970. Here the

KEEP IN TOUCH

The new-look *Motor Sport* website is the place to discuss motor racing past, present and future. Don't miss the opportunity to comment on blogs, video and audio podcasts, and read Nigel Roebuck's newsletter and the editor's monthly letter. To get involved in the discussion simply log on to www.motorsportmagazine.com and tell our writers exactly what you think!

Also, don't forget that if you have any images which would be suitable for our You Were There feature in the magazine, please send them to the office (address on p46).

whole GP would be played out in about 10 minutes with accurately detailed cars on a gigantic four-lane Scalextric that was the envy of all who watched. The floor manager would be out of shot deftly removing cars that had retired or changed positions.

Thank you again. I can assure you that the print, which arrived today, will not be appearing on eBay but will be framed and mounted in a prominent position where it will act as a reminder of what to me was the best decade of motor sport.

Phil d'Arcy, Prescott, Cheltenham

Monaco misremembered

Sir,

I was delighted to learn from Gordon Cruickshank's Historic Scene story in the July issue that the Rob Walker Lotus 18, driven by Stirling Moss to that unforgettable 1961 Monaco victory, has seen a new lease of racing life at Silverstone.

My wife and I admired the Moss Lotus at Donington some years ago and agreed that, compared to today's F1 cars, it resembled a large biscuit box, albeit a rather important one.

However, if I might take brief issue with GC on one point: Moss' win was not over Phil Hill's Ferrari but the similar car of Richie Ginther, who in fact finished second, with Hill third. I can remember this incredible race as if it were run yesterday, shown in live but fragmented relay on BBC TV. My understanding is that once the Ferrari pit had despaired of Hill catching Moss, they signalled Ginther, who had been half a second faster than Hill in practice, to pass his fellow American and see if he could do any better.

At Chelsea AutoLegends last year I waited patiently in the rain to shake Sir Stirling's hand, still unable to forget that Sunday in May half a century earlier. Of such stuff are legends made.

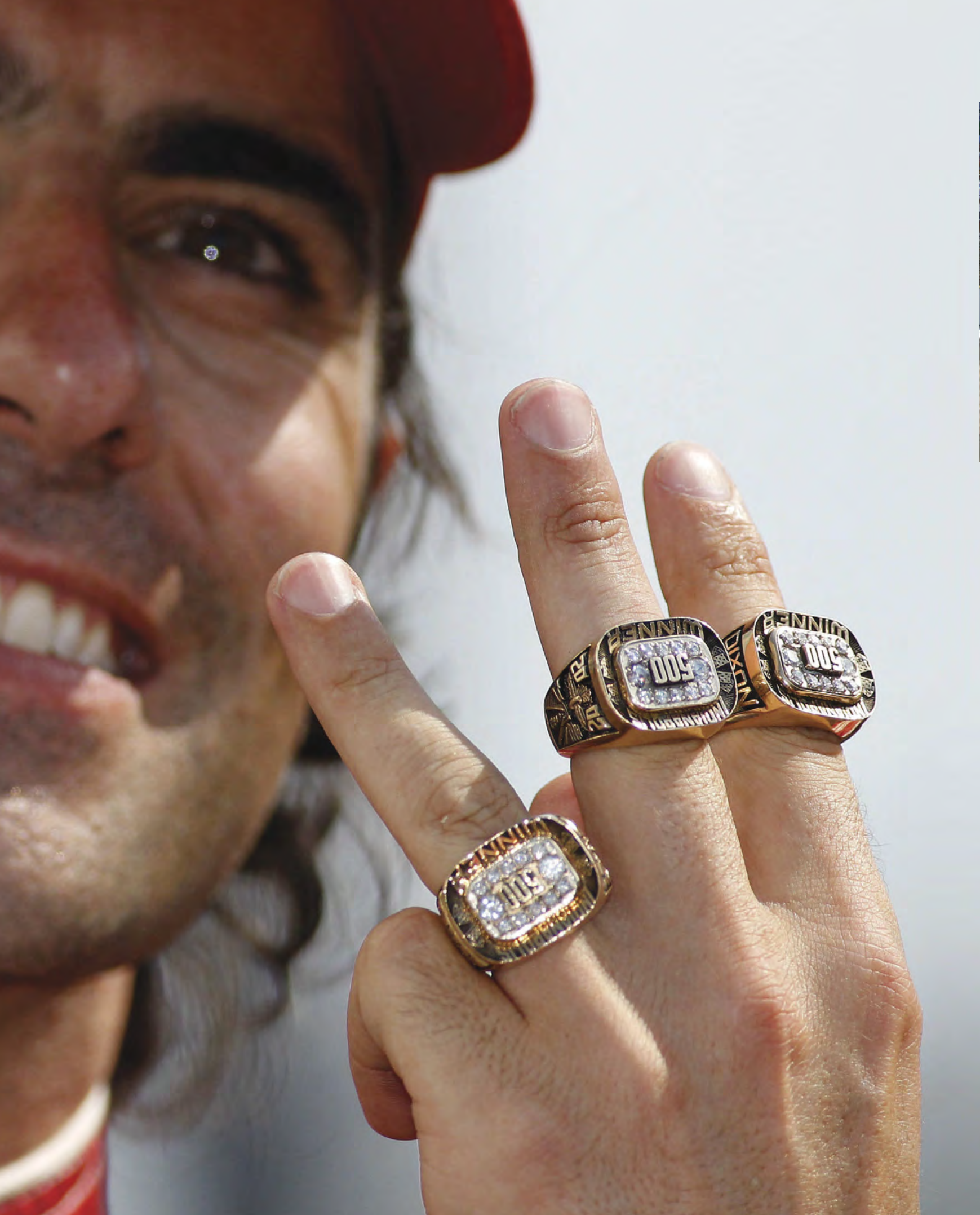
Craig Brown, Caterham, Surrey

A load of balls...

Sir,

I enjoyed 'Lunch with...' Tony Southgate in the June issue and was amused by his quoting of the American phrase 'balls on the hood'. On the same page, your picture editor confirmed that F1 people are indeed made of different stuff. Man, jeans were tight in the '70s!

Toby Colliver, West Byfleet, Surrey 





All images LAT

Dario Franchitti the Third

Let's start with the bare facts. Four IndyCar championships, a Daytona 24 Hours victory, a class win in the LMP2 category at Sebring and now two Indianapolis 500 wins have become three. It's safe to say that Dario Franchitti has chiselled his name into the Indycar history books.

But this was done long before May 27 and his latest Indy victory. After he turned his back on Formula 1 in 1997 – when he rejected a daunting, and unattractive, 60-page testing contract by Ron Dennis – the mild-mannered Scot has forged a record-breaking career in American single-seaters. Fifteen years after his first race in CART he has become the most successful foreign driver ever to compete in Indycars. It took until 2007 for him to win his first championship, and then after an unsuccessful foray into NASCAR he returned in 2009 with Chip Ganassi Racing to win an

incredible three titles in a row. It looked like the all-new Indycar in 2012 would put an end to the run of success after a trying start to the season, but come 'the Big One' the *Motor Sport* Hall of Fame member reminded everyone why it pays to never give up, even when you're facing backwards in the pits on lap 15.

BY ED FOSTER

“You're never sure that the win is possible,” he tells us during the post-race victory tour. “I'm never sure in any race what's really possible. I try and keep an open mind, to do my

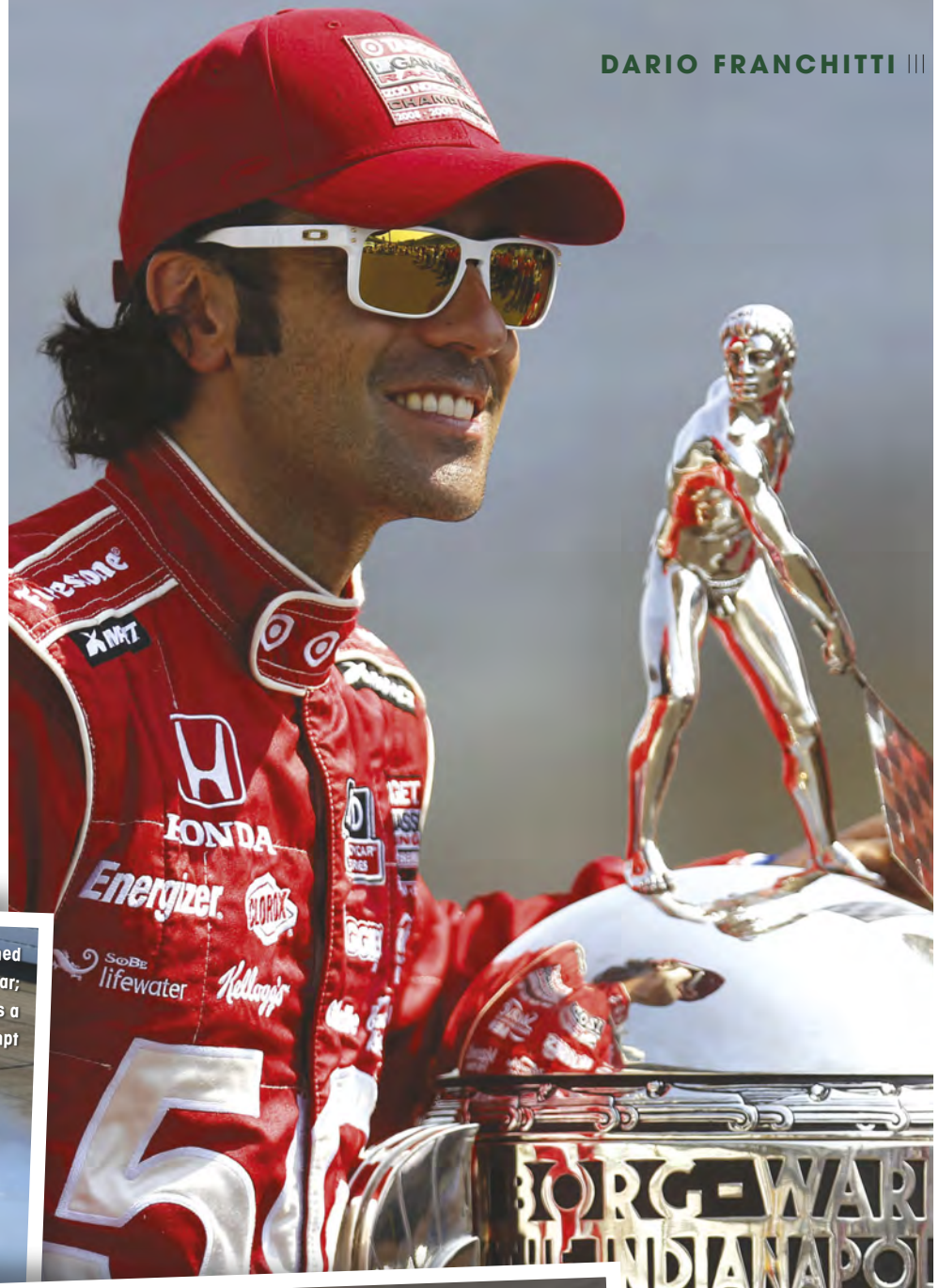
best. On lap 15, though, I was facing backwards in the pitlane [after he was hit by EJ Viso in the first round of stops] with the front wing missing. I was a bit concerned then!”

An open mind was certainly what the Scot needed after qualifying. It was dominated by the Chevrolet-powered cars – with only the Honda-engined machine of Josef Newgarden making the top 10 – and Franchitti was left languishing down in 16th on the grid. OK, Honda had performance tweaks for its >>>

engine before the race, but would these be enough to close that gap?

“I was concerned with the speed in qualifying, definitely,” he admits. “The balance of the car was good, but the speed just wasn’t there. Honda had said all along that there was a new specification engine coming, and they believed that it was going to be a step forward... it really was as well. When we put it in the car on Carb Day [the final practice day] there was a big difference straight away. We had the same balance, but the speeds were up, the fuel economy was better – it really helped us.”

Franchitti edged his team-mate Scott Dixon to place his name at the top of the timesheets and take Carb Day honours. However, despite the new pace it wasn’t going to be an easy job to climb through the field without incident. “The way the draft works with the new car is that it allowed lead changes because it was quite big, and the leader became a bit of a sitting duck because of that. But further back in the pack it was maybe more difficult to pass because of the bigger weight of the car and the fact that it’s Indy. You’ve only got a one-and-a-half lane race track – you’ve got to get right up on the gearbox of the car in front to make those passes.”



Clockwise from top: Dario claimed Borg-Warner trophy for another year; being spun out by Viso; Sato takes a tumble after last-gasp pass attempt

Climb through the field he did and with a late yellow for a Marco Andretti crash, Dixon and Franchitti found themselves behind leader Tony Kanaan. After the restart the Chip Ganassi duo peeled past Kanaan, as did Takuma Sato. Franchitti then found a way past his team-mate, followed by Sato. The field was set with two laps to go: Franchitti in front, a ‘sitting duck’, with the Japanese behind. The final lap began and immediately Sato tried to dive down the inside of Franchitti, but it wasn’t on – he got too low and spun out. “I definitely gave him enough room,” says Franchitti. “I gave him as much room as I had to give him. I gave him *more* than I had to! Ultimately, though, the fact that I gave him more room saved me because had



I squeezed him more he would have collected me – he actually hit me after he spun. Had I been closer he would have hit me harder and we both would have been in the fence.”

Sato saw things differently and claimed that Dario hadn’t left enough space, despite other drivers – such as Kanaan and Dixon – disagreeing. “I was absolutely fair in what I

did,” counters Franchitti. “It’s not my fault that he couldn’t hold it down there. I was as high as I could be without getting into the grey [the slippier, non-racing line].

“My job is not to pull out of the way and give him position, certainly not on the last lap of the Indy 500! I was fine with the move up until he said that I didn’t give him

room. I had a bit of a chat with him about that. I don’t have a problem with the move; it was the last lap of the 500 and he had to make it, but he wasn’t even halfway alongside.”

A yellow flag was immediately waved and Franchitti cruised across the line, having escaped incident, victorious again. Beside him were Dixon and Kanaan – three of the late >>>

||| DARIO FRANCHITTI

Dan Wheldon's best friends. "Right after I crossed the line I did think about Dan [who won the race last year], absolutely. I look over and see Scott on one side and Tony on the other, and I just thought... 'That's incredible'. When you consider that along with Dan's brothers, Scott, Tony and I carried Dan's coffin it's just amazing. You couldn't write that script – I'm sure, wherever Dan is, he had a good laugh about that.

"All my Indy wins mean a lot to me and it's difficult to pick one over the other. But having to battle through the field, as I had to in 2007, was a great feeling. To do that, and survive that last lap was crazy. With all the emotion of the weekend, and honouring Dan, it made this one really special."

The three Indy wins have elevated Franchitti onto a level with the likes of Louis Meyer, Johnny Rutherford, Bobby Unser and Hélio Castroneves, but, despite being a huge fan of the history of the sport, the enormity of what the amiable Scot has achieved seems yet to have dawned on him. "It was funny," he says in reply to being asked how it feels to join the three-timers, "right after the race the first driver I saw was Johnny, then I saw Hélio, and then I saw Bobby Unser quite quickly as well. The three-timers were everywhere! I'm very proud to have won at Indy once, never mind three times..." He swiftly moves on before elaborating. "Funnily enough, Johnny, on the first day of practice, came up and gave me his biography. He knows I love reading about the history of the sport so he gave me his book and inside he had written, 'I hope to welcome you to the three-time winners club really soon'. On Sunday night the message crossed my mind!"

For Franchitti, sitting fourth in the championship standings following the Detroit race, it's been a difficult start to the 2012 season, as every team has had to adjust to the new Dallara chassis. There's nothing like big rule changes to shake things up – F1's Brawn GP in 2009 was the perfect example – but it looks like the Ganassi team is already recovering from an early season stumble. "You know," says Dario, "we struggled in the first three races [at St Petersburg, Barber Motorsports Park and Long Beach], and our pace wasn't great. We ran out of fuel in the first one, then we had a failure in the second race. We really didn't look like we were going to win any of the first three.

"Then we went to Brazil and missed pole by a couple of thousandths. We were running well in the race, but got taken out. We came back to finish fifth, so Brazil was a turnaround.



Clockwise from top: Dario with Wheldon, winning and savouring '10 win, taking the garlands after maiden triumph in '07 for Andretti Green



"Obviously, winning Indy really helps [towards the championship], so we're back in the fight. It's definitely still possible. Like I say, in the years when we're up there challenging for the championship, until it's mathematically impossible for anyone to beat us – or impossible for me to win it – it's not over so we're going to keep on fighting."

Facing the wrong way in the pits, with a missing front wing, on the 15th lap of the Indy 500 was one such time. And it paid off. Now that Ganassi has got to grips with the new car, Franchitti is a definite title contender.

He's now one of the most experienced drivers on the IndyCar grid, but with experience comes age. At 39, Franchitti is by no means in the final years of his racing career, but for a man who has never been averse to racing different types of car there is one hole in his CV: a Le Mans-shaped hole.

"I'd love to do Le Mans," he says, clearly excited about the idea. "I haven't been able to

do it before now, though, because with the IndyCar schedule it's just not possible to focus on it fully. At some point I'd love it to be the next challenge. I've been there once as a spectator and obviously Marino [Franchitti, his younger brother] is racing the

DeltaWing, so I'd love to go and have a chance to try and win it."

Typically with Franchitti talk soon turns back to the history of the sport. "I was lucky enough this year that Derek Bell gave me one of his old helmets for my birthday to add to my collection. That was definitely a highlight of my birthday! But yes, I do love sports car racing. I've won Daytona and we've won our class at Sebring so I'd love to go to Le Mans and go for that one at some point."

But IndyCar is his world right now and his focus is on the task at hand. Indeed we chatted only days after his third Indy win and when asked about whether he ever sits down and thinks of his achievements to date he sounds quite surprised. "No... I think about the next race," he says. "I don't really think about it in any terms other than that. Now that Indy is over it will be Detroit next weekend [where he finished second behind team-mate Dixon].

"I don't think about the stats or anything like that yet... In the last two days it did hit me a little bit. It's incredible, but I can't quite take it in yet. I try and keep quite a tight focus and just get on with it. OK, we did have a big celebration on Sunday night, but it's back to work now." **M**

INDY'S BIGGEST WINNERS

4 WINS	AJ Foyt	1961, '64, '67, '77
	Al Unser Sr	1970, '71, '78, '87
	Rick Mears	1979, '84, '88, '91
3 WINS	Louis Meyer	1928, '33, '36
	Wilbur Shaw	1937, '39, '40
	Mauri Rose	1941*, '47, '48
	Bobby Unser	1968, '75, '81
	Johnny Rutherford	1974, '76, '80
	Hélio Castroneves	2001, '02, '09
	Dario Franchitti	2007, '10, '12

* Took over Floyd Davis' car to win



Britain has produced more Formula 1 World Champions than any other country – a perfect 10.

Compare that to Brazil and Finland with three each and it looks sure to be one record that won't soon be broken. To mark National Motorsport Week (June 30-July 7), which heralds the strength of the British racing industry, we join forces with governing body the Motor Sports Association and present a special collection of personal portraits of the 10 – with an extra 11th for the man who is considered by some to be Britain's greatest champion, even if the official title always slipped through his fingers...

Once you have read the articles written by some of motor racing's finest writers, we invite you to log on to our website and vote for your favourite British F1 hero. Note we're not asking you to choose 'the greatest' – comparing drivers from different eras is a fatuous impossibility. What *Motor Sport* and the MSA wish to discover is which British driver is held in the greatest affection by enthusiasts, not only for their records of success but also for their characters and approaches to racing life. So from Mike Hawthorn in the 1950s to modern hero Jenson Button, which British champion would you vote for? >>>

Go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions
and make your opinion count



1958

MIKE HAWTHORN

BY DOUG NYE

John Michael Hawthorn, our first British World Champion Driver, has been done no favours as increasingly frequent Grand Prix races have devalued the currency and distorted the record book.

He started only 45 World Championship GPs... and won three. They put him level with Johnny Herbert (161 Grand Prix starts), Thierry Boutsen (163), Heinz-Harald Frentzen (156) and Didier Pironi (70). A more revealing contemporary three-win match is with Phil Hill – 48 GP starts – and Peter Collins (only 32).

When I was a kid in Guildford, Surrey, Mike Hawthorn – from nearby Farnham – became our local motor racing prodigy. Early-starting Stirling Moss had been a public celeb for nearly four years when Hawthorn first burst upon the public consciousness on Easter Monday, 1952, winning three races in the day upon his Cooper-Bristol debut at Goodwood.

Born in Mexborough, Yorkshire, Mike grew up in Farnham after Brooklands-tuner father Leslie moved the family there in 1931 where Leslie's TT Garage became established between The Albion and Duke of Cambridge pubs. Leslie was a hard-drinking, hard-driving larrikin. When Farnham's first illuminated 30mph signs appeared – he pinched them.

While he served in the wartime Air Transport Auxiliary, blond Mike 'studied' at Ardingly School where he was nicknamed 'Snowball' and played school band bugle alongside drum major Bill Cotton Jr.

Mike began competitive motorcycle scrambling and was a reluctant apprentice at Guildford's Dennis fire engine factory. Home life was in tumult. His parents frequently rowed so noisily that their house in Rowledge – named

Merridale – was known locally as 'Merry Hell'.

When his parents separated, Mike bridged their divide, but was especially close to Leslie. In 1950-51 they began racing together with a 1496cc Riley Sprite and 1100cc Imp. Mike won the *Motor Sport* Trophy in a fine full season, and Leslie's friend Bob Chase ordered them a brand-new F2 Cooper-Bristol.

At Zandvoort for the 1952 Dutch GP the Hawthorns stayed in the same hotel as Ferrari, whose manager Amarotti 'expressed interest'. After the Italian GP he was offered a Ferrari test drive at Modena; he loved the Ferrari 500's brakes, got back into his Cooper-Bristol, misjudged his braking and crashed. Still, Ferrari signed him for 1953, Mike becoming the first

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Hawthorn's second place gave him the title of World Champion, the first time it has been won by a British driver, and though he beat Moss on points rather than a 'knock-out' win he has worked and driven with the quality worthy of a World Champion throughout the entire season, right from the Argentine Grand Prix across the length and breadth of Europe to the Moroccan Grand Prix.

Denis Jenkinson, November 1958

British driver to join a Continental works team since Mercedes signed Dick Seaman in 1937.

He beat Fangio fair and square in the French GP – the first British winner since Segrave 30 years before. He celebrated with AC de Champagne secretary Jacqueline Delaunay, and fathered a son...

Ferrari retained him for 1954, but at home he – and Moss – were vilified by the press for

avoiding National Service. At Syracuse he sustained severe burns but on Monday, June 7, Leslie crashed fatally while driving home from Goodwood. Devastated, Mike took on TT Garage responsibilities to help Mum, yet then won that year's Spanish GP. His burns were still weeping. A chronic kidney problem demanded surgery, and his eventual National Service medical judged him 'Grade 4 – unfit'.

He joined Vanwall and Jaguar for 1955, but his Le Mans victory with Ivor Bueb was overshadowed by disaster for which he initially blamed himself, then denied guilt, partly at the urging of Jaguar team manager – and surrogate father figure – 'Lofty' England.

Personal loss engulfed him. One chum, Mike Currie, had long-since died in a Frazer Nash. Just after Le Mans '55 his old school-mate Don Beauman was killed in a Connaught at Wicklow. In August another pal, Julian Crossley, died after an Ulster GP motorcycle crash, and in September – again at Dundrod – Richard Mainwaring was killed in an Elva.

Mike endured this cumulative trauma as a harder, darker person. In his cups he was enormous fun, but could lurch swiftly from boisterous to boorish. He defied constraint. 'Lofty' – a good judge – defended him to the end; "No, Doug – he was just a thoroughly good bloke". Nick Syrett, another friend and good judge, would concur. Mike had learned to fly in Leslie's Fairchild Arguses, then bought a Percival Vega Gull and friends described his aviation exploits as 'terrifying'. For many, Mike Hawthorn was either loved or loathed...

BRM in 1956 proved a disaster; a seized driveshaft joint at Goodwood saw him thrown out as the car somersaulted. He won a sports car race for Ferrari at Monza – and crashed a



Intent Hawthorn placed second and set fastest lap at Spa in '58, claiming that year's title although friendly rival Moss (below) won more rounds.



Lotus 11 painfully (again) at Oulton Park. His great friendship with Peter Collins provided crucial support, and in 1957 Mike joined him full-time back at Ferrari.

Into 1958 he began a serious relationship with Jean Howarth, a Hardy Amies model. Mike accumulated Championship points and won the French GP at Reims, passing his winnings to Jacqueline Delaunay. Three Grand Prix drivers died that year; Mike's team-mate Luigi Musso at Reims, most shocking loss of all Peter Collins at the Nürburgring, and finally Stuart Lewis-Evans at Casablanca where Mike clinched the World Championship.

Hollowed out by three years of loss and elation, and dogged by his kidney deficit, he announced his immediate retirement.

Mere weeks later, on a rough, wet and squally January 22, 1959, the World Champion drove London-bound in his Jaguar saloon 'VDU 881' and caught up with Rob Walker, Dorking-bound along the Hog's Back road in his Mercedes-Benz 300SL 'ROB 2'. The juices surged, they tore down onto the Guildford Bypass, and under full throttle the Jaguar spun, bounced off a lorry, folded in two around a roadside tree, and just as Rob reached him, Mike Hawthorn – his skull shattered – died. Rumoured medical opinion was that he would likely have died in any case within 18 months, so rapidly was he losing kidney function.

He had been a man of his time, a fun-loving, womanising, hard-driving hooligan – adored and lionised by his mates, a man of surprising extremes, often charitable concern, keen to see

kids given a proper chance. Incurable, vulgar, tough outside, perhaps a too-often hurt small boy inside – how can we now tell? But Mike Hawthorn was, by the standards of his time, a true Brit: on track a real sportsman – racing first, money second – and many genuinely loved him for it. If I drank, I'd raise a pint of mild and bitter in his memory. In Farnham we attend his grave on January 22 each year. Considered criticism is no bar to genuine respect.

To vote for Mike Hawthorn as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

- GRANDS PRIX: 45
- POLE POSITIONS: 4
- FASTEST LAPS: 6
- WINS: 3
- CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1
- OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
1955 Le Mans 24 Hours (1st)

All Images LAT



1962 & '68

GRAHAM HILL

BY COLIN GOODWIN

The little grey autograph book was lost many years ago. No great loss. Even as a young child I never quite understood the fascination in collecting a signature. My book contained only two: Peter Purves', which wasn't much good because of course John Noakes' was the one to have; and Tim Piggot-Smith's. I hadn't a clue who he was, someone must have pointed me at the actor at some local show or event. Too long ago to remember.

But in that book there was a loose piece of paper and on it was scribbled 'To Colin from Graham Hill'. My mum had bumped into Hill on a train from Waterloo to Woking. Imagine seeing a Formula 1 driver on a rattler today, though quite what Hill was doing on one I'm not sure. Possibly on his way to the Brabham factory, or maybe to Rob Walker's if it was a year or so earlier. Had I been there with her I'm not sure how well I'd have coped, but I'm sure Hill would have been well used to dealing with awestruck schoolboys.

I am the only one of our writers who did not see his subject in action. It was chronologically possible, I just lacked a father interested in motor racing who could have taken me to watch. But you didn't have to go to see Graham Hill in the late 1960s because he came to you. You wouldn't say he was a David Beckham of his time, but he was as well known as George Best and that was as good as being a Beatle. I remember Hill talking to us from his hospital bed after the Watkins Glen crash in 1969, joking, heroic and inspirational.

That same year I went to see *The Battle of Britain* at the Woking Odeon. Graham Hill was

like the pilots, right down to the moustache. Even at seven years old I knew that he was the essential Englishman. Talking of films, my shock at seeing my first female breast on celluloid in Alistair Maclean's *Caravan to Vaccares* was quickly followed by the



FROM THE ARCHIVES

When the season started most people were convinced that Jim Clark was going to sweep the board and his untimely death threw the Grand Prix season into a gloom. Hill had to take over the lead of Team Lotus and he did the job nobly and worked hard to achieve his crown. When you have won the Spanish GP, the Monaco GP and the Mexican GP you can be considered a worthy Grand Prix driver, unlike a lot of people who won nothing this season but like to be known as Grand Prix drivers.

Denis Jenkinson, December 1968

surprise of seeing Graham Hill playing a helicopter pilot in the film.

Hill's speed began to diminish in the early 1970s but I loyally collected Embassy Hill book matches and admired Hill's sideburns and long hair. And then one foggy November night in 1975 he was gone.

They say that Graham Hill was never a natural driver, that he had to work at it. Really? To win two world championships? The Indianapolis 500? Le Mans? The only driver ever to win all three? Not a natural? Remember that Hill only started motor racing when he was 26 years old. We should note that most of today's 'natural' drivers will have been at the wheel since the age of 8. Yet within three years Hill was lining up on the grid at the 1958 Monaco Grand Prix in a not particularly good Lotus 12. He won his first world championship in 1962 in a BRM, which itself wasn't a brilliant car.

But hold on, I've missed a trick. Five Monaco wins. A circuit that demands precise driving, a ridiculous number of gearchanges with each one of them a chance to blow up a fragile '60s racing engine. If there is a track that requires natural skill it is surely Monaco. Look at the others who have won many times there: Senna with the most victories of anyone with six. Schumacher with five. Prost with four. Stewart and Moss with three each. Do I have to point out the obvious common denominator? Correct, they're all rightly considered naturals.

What, I wonder, does Sir Jackie Stewart think? As Hill's team-mate at BRM in 1965 and '66 there are few men alive today better qualified to comment. "I can see your argument, Colin; perhaps 'not natural' is not quite the



Hill was a gritty charger, seen here winning the '63 US GP (top), placing second in '65 German GP and claiming '68 Monaco GP (opposite page)

right phrase or even fair, but there is no doubt that Graham had a different style of driving to most others. I'd describe it as methodical. Whereas Jimmy [Clark], Stirling, to a certain extent myself, would drive around a car's handling problem, Graham would fiddle with the car until it was right. Graham would take very different lines around a corner to others, and I know because sometimes I was following him."

Our other great racing knight, Sir Stirling, echoes Stewart's comments. "I'd go along with Jackie and say that Graham didn't have a natural ability to drive a car extremely quickly. But having said that, when I was to choose a partner for a sports car race at say, the Nürburgring, I would always choose Graham because he was so reliable. Quick, but unlikely to do anything stupid. A bit like Tony Brooks in that respect."

Deep down I wasn't expecting Stewart or Moss to dramatically back my argument. But it doesn't matter anyway, because both of them understand perfectly why Hill should have been a hero for a small boy in the late 1960s and

GRANDS PRIX: 176
POLE POSITIONS: 13
FASTEST LAPS: 10
WINS: 14
CHAMPIONSHIPS: 2
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
1972 Le Mans 24 Hours (1st),
1966 Indianapolis 500 (1st),
1960 Targa Florio (1st)

beyond. They both echoed the same sentiments that I have heard from many drivers, journalists, photographers and racing mechanics who were around F1 on Graham's watch; that he was terrific fun, excellent company and a joy to be around. My late friend Michael Cooper, who photographed F1 throughout the '60s, had an endless fund of Graham Hill anecdotes; of uproarious goings on at the Steering Wheel Club in Mayfair and at [American car dealer] Cliff Davis' outrageous annual parties.

Sir Stirling Moss is as well known today as he was when he retired from racing exactly 50 years ago. It is as much his force of personality as his talent behind the wheel that has seen him remain a well-loved figure. I'm certain that if Hill was alive today he would be held in the same reverence and would be as much in demand at historic events as Moss.

To vote for Graham Hill as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>



1963 & '65

JIM CLARK

BY PETER WINDSOR

Back in Australia in early 1966, when I was 13 and the world seemed to go on forever, the talk among my buddies was of The Beatles and Vietnam. For me, though, the long summer holidays (December through to late February) brought another focus: midday on sun-filled Saturdays – and therefore hopefully allowing for the time difference to New Zealand – I'd spend hours 'tuning' my trannie to find news of the weekend's Tasman race.

I succeeded rarely. There'd be the occasional crackle of a mention that included a 'Jackie Stewart' or a 'Graham Hill' but for the most part I sat alone in my room, turning over endless scenarios of what might be transpiring at Pukekohe while my mates went surfing or 'jumped' the Manly ferries.

Then it struck me. Jim Clark, at some point, must fly in to Sydney. Warwick Farm's International 100 was scheduled for mid-February. I'd go to Mascot to meet him. I'd wait there until the drivers arrived.

I rang Qantas; and, those being the days when airlines loved to help, I was asked to wait.

"Hello. Yes. A Mr J Clark is flying to Sydney from Auckland on Monday." I trembled with excitement – but would it be the real Jim Clark? I went for the clincher: "Could you tell me if there is a Mr J Stewart on that flight, too?"

"One second. Yes. A Mr J Stewart is also on the manifest."

I wore my school uniform, I remember. I walked to Manly wharf, caught the ferry, alighted at Circular Quay, took three buses – and then I was there. Mascot Airport. Gum trees and concrete. Holdens and Valiants

meandering into the new car park. I walked into the terminal. To my surprise, Geoff Sykes was there – Geoff the legendary promoter of the Warwick Farm circuit. I was delighted to see that he, too, was in a jacket and tie.

I waited nervously, sick with tension. Jackie Stewart emerged first. Jackie, wearing light blue short-sleeved shirt and dark trousers. And there was Jim behind him. Sun-tanned; red and white short-sleeve shirt; tan slacks. Quickly a group formed around Geoff. I recognised Bill Bryce, the New Zealand journalist/manager. And there was Graham Hill...

I stood in the background, staring at Jim. He was shaking hands with Geoff, laughing at the jokes of Graham and Jackie. A few minutes

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Nobody was more pleased with this Lotus victory by reliability, and hard driving by Clark, than Colin Chapman and his mechanics, for with wins at Zandvoort, Spa, Reims, Silverstone and Monza it made Lotus the undisputed Champion Manufacturers of 1963, and Clark the undisputed Champion Driver for 1963, and if you add on a second place at Indianapolis and first place at Milwaukee you have a driver/car combination that must be champion regardless of any points system.

Denis Jenkinson, October 1963

passed. People began to move. Then Geoff waved me forwards. "Oh. Jim, Jackie: I'd like you to meet Peter Windsor, a young man who helps us from time to time in the club offices."

I shook their hands. Jim, I remember, said: "Will I see you at the race this weekend?"

I stammered something in the affirmative.

And, with that, they were off. I saw Jim win at Warwick Farm a few days later: his green and yellow Lotus 39 dominated. Morosely riding the top deck of the 387 bus to school on the Monday afterwards, sick with anti-climax, I knew exactly what I wanted to do for the rest of my life: I wanted to work in motor racing. I wanted never to wake up on a Monday morning with that back-to-school feeling. I wanted to write. I wanted perhaps to manage drivers, to run a team. My compass north was Jim Clark. To me, he *was* the motor racing world.

And so I travelled to Mascot again in 1968, this time with my father in our white Zephyr Six. Jim was leaving Australia on this occasion; it was early March. The Tasman Series had again been won. Jim was heading for Chicago and then to Indy, where he would test the new Lotus 56 turbine wedge car. Geoff was there to say farewell, together with Mary Packard and John Stranger from the AARC office.

I shook Jim's hand and wished him luck for the season to come. Then I ran upstairs with my Dad to watch him fly in the PanAm 707.

It didn't. It taxied back to the terminal. Jim and the other passengers filed back inside. My dad and I were almost alone in the arrivals lounge. "You're still here!" said Jim. "Good. The flights' been delayed. Come and have a cup of coffee or something."

We went upstairs to the restaurant. Jim drew up an extra chair for an attractive flight attendant. And then we spoke for 20 minutes or so. I asked him about the weekend's wet Tasman race at Longford – "the conditions were terrible; it was almost too wet to race. I was very happy for Piers, though. He really deserved to win..."; about what he was doing



Clark (above after 1963 Italian GP win) was the yardstick by which other drivers were judged. Here he leads at Clermont-Ferrand where he would win the '65 French GP

next - "testing at Indy, then back to Europe for a couple of F2 races before the F1 season begins"; and about why he wore a dark blue peak on his helmet in the 1964 Dutch and 1966 Mexican GPs - "I broke the white one and had to borrow one. That's all I could get....". I then told Jim about my ambitions. Did he think it would be possible for me to work in motor sport?

"Of course," he said. "If you really want it badly enough. Just never give up. That's all. Never give up."

"We've taken enough of your time," said dad, sensing that Jim would like some private space with said flight attendant. "We should be going. Come on Pete, let's give Mr Clark some peace and quiet."

I left reluctantly, remembering that last thumbnail: Jim, his hair slightly longer than in previous years, his suntanned face a little more lived-in, smiling that smile, laughing that laugh. Always polite. Always humble. It was difficult to imagine that he was, too, the ferociously fast racing driver who only a few weeks before had been balancing a Gold Leaf Lotus 49 on a knife-edge right by my flag post at The Farm, dark blue Buco leaning left, fingertips guiding the wheel. That he was the driver who would never give up. Never. Even when he was dealing with the savage resistance of a Lotus 30, or competing in some minor F2 race somewhere in Germany, in the wet, between the trees, with handling that didn't feel right.

GRANDS PRIX: 72
POLE POSITIONS: 33
FASTEST LAPS: 28
WINS: 25
CHAMPIONSHIPS: 2
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
1965 Indianapolis 500 (1st),
many saloon car victories

Those two Clarks will never be married in my mind; there will always exist the dichotomy. And so

I live with images born in the Australian sun, in golden days at Warwick Farm, against a backdrop of a ribbon of Tarmac, green grass, blue sky, white picket fencing, gum trees, flags, bunting and girls in mini dresses, head scarves and Wayfarers.

And of a racing driver, nervously biting his nails, adding new depth to what my young mind understood greatness to be.

To vote for Jim Clark as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>



1964

JOHN SURTEES

BY ALAN HENRY

John Surtees' glittering celebrity status is rightly underpinned by his unique achievement of being the only competitor ever to win world championships on two wheels and four. Yet his F1 record of six Grand Prix wins out of 111 career starts could be said to short-change his talents. Surtees was not simply a *good* driver, he was unquestionably a *great* driver, right up there among an elite group of contemporaries which included Jim Clark, Dan Gurney and Jack Brabham.

He was also one of those drivers with a tantalising 'what might have been' hovering over his record of achievement. Had not Lotus boss Colin Chapman messed him about at the end of his freshman 1960 season in F1, the heyday of the 1.5-litre F1 era might well have been dominated by a Clark-Surtees super team which would have pre-dated Jimmy's Lotus 49 partnership with Graham Hill by five full seasons.

John remains to this day an enigmatic character. You can hear what he is saying, but you can never be quite sure what he is thinking. During his active racing years he was a man who was content to let his achievements on the track speak for themselves. And, particularly on two wheels, they were utterly dazzling.

John grew up in a household which was deeply involved in the motorcycle business. His father, Jack Surtees, was a successful 'bike dealer who encouraged his son's emergent interest in the sport. He cut his teeth on a Vincent Grey Flash on which he would score

his first victory at Brands Hatch in 1951 when he was barely 18 years of age.

He later bought a Manx Norton and was invited to join the works team in 1955, clinching his reputation as one of the sport's most gifted rising stars with a memorable victory over Geoff Duke's Gilera at Silverstone at the end of the season. Unable to persuade Norton to continue with a works effort in 1956, despite getting close to attracting commercial

of 1960, when he quit professional motorcycle racing for good, John won the 350 and 500 world championships, as well as the Senior and Junior Isle of Man TT in 1958 and '59, plus the Senior once again in 1960. Yet he was always disappointed that the autocratic Count Domenico Agusta proved increasingly reluctant to field 'bikes in non-championship and British domestic events, or even to permit Surtees to use his own private Nortons in these events.

This lack of flexibility on Agusta's part led Surtees to take the initiative to supplement his racing programme. The Count may have been contractually able to restrict John's motorcycle racing, but there was nothing to prevent him competing on four wheels. In fact, late in 1959, Surtees was invited to test an Aston Martin DBR1 at Goodwood by Reg Parnell. Earlier he had also received a great deal of tacit encouragement from Mike Hawthorn and Vanwall boss Tony Vandervell.

John duly made his four-wheeled racing debut at Goodwood in April, 1960, driving a Ken Tyrrell-entered Cooper-Austin Formula Junior. He was only narrowly defeated by Jim

Clark's Lotus. He also underlined his world class by finishing second in the British GP at Silverstone in a works Lotus 18 and rounded off the season with pole for the Portuguese GP at Oporto.

Yet as his relationship with Lotus came to an untimely end, so John was left pursuing his F1 ambitions with the Reg Parnell-run Yeoman Credit team in 1961 which became the Bowmaker Lola F1 squad – and scarcely any



sponsorship from a UK national daily paper, he switched to the Italian MV Agusta squad for 1956. Then he set about ensuring that the Surtees name was writ large in the pages of motorcycle racing history.

It would be a cause of some regret to John that MV's rivals Gilera and Moto Guzzi soon withdrew from racing, leaving the MV squad to dominate the scene. Even so, Surtees performed remarkably. In the three seasons up to the end



Surtees' record on two wheels was exemplary, his career with Ferrari (opposite, en route to second in 1964 Dutch GP) being sadly curtailed by political intrigue

more successful – in 1962. Not until he joined Ferrari in 1963 would the magic be rekindled.

Surtees had come to love Italy during his time at MV Agusta and deeply admired the way the Italians operated. Paradoxically, despite the success which would come his way, in Enzo Ferrari Surtees would find the same sort of stubborn, self-absorbed and autocratic character as that of Count Domenico Agusta. And just as Agusta's intransigence steered Surtees towards the exit door, so it was with the *Commendatore*. After winning the F1 championship by a single point in 1964, the injuries John sustained when he crashed a Can-Am Lola gave Enzo's Machiavellian team manager Eugenio Dragoni the excuse he needed to kick John into touch.

Life in F1 was never again the same for the British driver, although he continued to chase his personal holy grail of ambition through Cooper, Honda and BRM before becoming a constructor in his own right. Several of his drivers saw him as too much of an interventionist, unable to delegate, yet the underlying bond he forged with fellow motorcycle man Mike Hailwood seemed to

GRANDS PRIX: 111
POLE POSITIONS: 8
FASTEST LAPS: 11
WINS: 6
CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
Seven-time Motorcycle
World Champion, six-time
Isle of Man winner, 1963
Sebring 12 Hours (1st),
1963 and '65 Nürburgring
1000Kms (1st), 1966
Monza 1000Kms (1st), 1966
Can-Am Champion

prove him capable where necessary. And Surtees F1 cars were far from also-rans; in both 1971 and '72, JS and Mike the Bike came within sniffing distance of winning the South African GP before their machinery wilted beneath them.

From a personal viewpoint, as a young journalist I always found John warm-hearted and generous – until I was on the receiving end of one of his terse letters at *Motoring News*. But he never held a grudge and, when I was walking back to the Kyalami paddock in a state of shock after seeing Tom Pryce killed in front of me in the '77 South African GP, John ushered me into his team caravan and poured me a large slug of scotch. He hardly said a word. Nor did he have to.

To vote for John Surtees as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>



1969, '71 & '73

JACKIE STEWART

BY NIGEL ROEBUCK

My first memory of seeing Jackie Stewart is at the Oulton Park Gold Cup meeting in 1964: a small trim man, talking to a pretty girl – Helen, his wife – with a scarf tied around her head. They were standing by their car, a green Mini. That day Stewart, driving Ken Tyrrell's Cooper-BMC, won the Formula 3 race beating Chris Irwin's Merlyn.

There was at first an innocence about him – a small-town boy in a world of bright lights – but he was already canny. “My retainer with Ken in '64 – to make it legal – was £5! Actually he offered me an alternative of £10,000, in return for 10 per cent of my future earnings, but I had enough savvy to go for the £5...”

Stewart didn't lose many F3 races that season, and the Formula 1 teams were clamouring for him. Of particular interest were Lotus, with Jim Clark, and BRM, with Graham Hill. The obvious choice was Lotus, which built the quickest cars, but Stewart was wiser than that. He knew that the team's focus would stay with Clark, and also that Colin Chapman was a man who demanded results – and quickly.

Just as Alain Prost would turn down the opportunity of an instant F1 debut with McLaren, so Jackie similarly reasoned he could do without that kind of pressure. BRM, meantime, offered a competitive car and the chance to play himself in. He settled for that – and won his third F1 race, the International Trophy at Silverstone, beating the Ferrari of World Champion John Surtees.

Once in a while, a driver comes along who is just different, and from the start there was something about Stewart, his whole being, which

radiated confidence. His jaunty step brought to mind Stirling Moss. Both walked through a paddock as if they owned them, and in a way they did. Following Fangio's retirement, Moss' place in the protocol of racing was mirrored by Stewart's after the death of Clark. They were the best of their times, and they knew it.

Only a few races into his first season Stewart was already faster than Hill, and at Monza he won his first Grand Prix. In 1966 he won the Monaco Grand Prix, and the future could hardly have been brighter – but it might have been snuffed out in the rains of Spa, where his BRM crashed on the opening lap.

Although Stewart's most serious injury was a broken collarbone, he was trapped in the

– the right being used to hold the lever in gear – he led much of the way.

A year on, Clark died at Hockenheim, and F1 was suddenly without a leader. By his actions – on the track and off – over the next few months, Stewart laid claim to the mantle. Following Tyrrell's decision to go into Grand Prix racing, Jackie had joined him, and in Ken's Matra MS10 won three Grands Prix, including the extraordinary triumph at a foggy, sodden Nürburgring, where he was ahead by four minutes...

For the next five seasons the Stewart-Tyrrell partnership was the dominant force in F1, winning the World Championship three times. When Jackie retired at the end of 1973 his tally was 27 victories from 99 starts. Not all statistics are damned lies.

Away from the cockpit, too, his influence was felt. Stewart galvanised attitudes to safety, and in so doing incurred the wrath of traditionalists. Certainly there were occasions when he imposed his will without much subtlety, but time was short, and kid gloves were useless in a fight with the establishment.

I met Jackie in 1971, the year in which he won his second title. At Barcelona, my first race as a journalist, Rob Walker introduced me. “Welcome aboard,” he said. “If ever you need anything from me, you only have to ask...”

Nowadays, you get emails from teams ahead of a Grand Prix weekend, advising that their drivers will be ‘available to print media’ at a certain time for a maximum of 10 minutes or so. Forty years ago, when PR had yet to raise its precious head, F1 was an informal world, with any lines of demarcation drawn faintly, if at all.

Even so, I was pleasantly gratified by the first meeting with Stewart, the king of the hill. A few

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Earlier in the season I wondered if Stewart was running before he could walk, but after his performances this season there is no question about it, he is a natural fast driver and has set a new standard in Grand Prix driving, and he does it all with very little effort and without 'blood, sweat and tears', like some drivers.

Denis Jenkinson, September 1965

wreckage – soaked in fuel – for some time. No organised rescue system was in place, and Jackie was removed from his car by two fellow drivers. The experience profoundly reshaped his attitude to safety, and would have a profound effect upon the future of the sport.

Not that it ever showed in his driving, mind you. Twelve months later Stewart returned to Spa with the cumbersome BRM H16, and, despite having to steer with his left hand only



JYS was the ultimate professional driver, taking his first F1 title in '69 after scoring six GP wins including the Dutch as pictured here



weeks later, at a Silverstone test, I saw him in the paddock. “Hi, how are you?” he said. “How are you settling in?” Very well, I replied – and could we do an interview some time? “Sure,” he said. “Want to do it now?” And so we sat near the Tyrrell truck, and talked for half an hour and more.

All these years on I find Jackie fundamentally unchanged, still dissatisfied with anything less than the best, still extraordinarily efficient and driven, still warm and approachable. He has always – like Mario Andretti – been aware of his market value, and gone for top dollar, but none of the companies with whom he has worked would say they were short-changed. To his business life JYS brought the same professionalism that characterized his driving. He does it to this day. And no other driver has matched him in a willingness to put something back into the sport.

A straight question gets a straight response, and always has. In the late '60s, when he left Harold Wilson's Britain for Switzerland, there was criticism in the national press. Jackie shrugged it off. “It occurred to me,” he said, “that, nine weekends out of 10, I was risking my life for the Chancellor of the Exchequer...”

Risking his life he indisputably was, too, and it was the loss of so many friends, notably Clark, Courage, Rindt and Cevert, which spurred Stewart to transform attitudes to safety. Every racing driver of the last 40 years is in his debt.

Thinking back to that first year, 1971, I remember the sublime confidence of a racing driver who knew his position in his own world. I think of Paul Ricard, scene of the French Grand Prix. Stewart had set the fastest qualifying time, and was in the pits, chatting with friends. Over the PA system came the news that Jacky Ickx had gone quicker. “Christ,” said Jackie, reaching for his helmet, “that means I'll have to go out again...”

To vote for Jackie Stewart as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

- GRANDS PRIX: 99
- POLE POSITIONS: 17
- FASTEST LAPS: 15
- WINS: 27
- CHAMPIONSHIPS: 3
- OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS: British Racing Drivers Club president (2000-06), Scottish, Welsh, English, Irish, British and European Clay Pigeon Champion, Mediterranean Coupe des Nations (clay pigeon shooting) (1st)



1976

JAMES HUNT

BY ROB WIDDOWS

James Hunt. Two words that trigger opinion and emotion. A name that transcends the sport that made him a global superstar, gave him pop idol status. I wonder what they mean to you?

The bare facts are nothing out of the ordinary. World Champion once, by a single point. Ten wins from 92 Grands Prix with three teams over 7 years. But when it comes to James Hunt, it is not the statistics that are of interest, it is the myth, the aura of romance and glamour that continues to fascinate. This most dashing and maverick of men made headlines that the average racing driver could only dream about. Why? Because he lived and played outside the comfort zone, beyond what is considered to be the acceptable *modus operandi* of a champion sportsman.

You loved him or you loathed him – few sat on the fence. There were two James Hunts: the megastar driver and later the skilled broadcaster. Maybe there were two more, the swashbuckling lothario, then later the kind, loving father of Tom and Freddie. You knew all four, sometimes your feet were in more than one camp, but above all none of it was ever dull.

The truth can be hard to distil from the tittle-tattle. The wider media is not always overly concerned with the truth, often preferring something a little more tasty, a tad more salacious. Here we are concerned with Hunt the racing driver. Highly motivated, with a raging desire to win, talented, super-competitive and, in his heyday, bold and brave on the limit. He could be remote, arrogant even, and was always tense, fidgety, edgy and nervous before a race, prone to throwing up in the hours before the start. As he neared retirement, with

some cash in the bank and a life ahead of him, he became scared and increasingly keen to survive intact.

Two years my elder, James was of my generation and perhaps this is why, upon first acquaintance, I liked him, found myself amused and intrigued by him. We were both sons of middle-class professional fathers, we'd been through public school in the 1960s, emerging as rebels, not keen to play by any more rules, and we took pleasure in raising a finger to the



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Lauda's withdrawal from the Japanese race left Hunt with a hollow victory and the claim to be World Champion for 1976.

Someone has to be World Champion because the rule book says so, but I have always maintained that the FIA should be in a position to withhold the title if they did not consider anyone was worthy of it. 1976 is a year in which I would have withheld the award. Hunt was the most successful driver, with seven outright victories, aside from politics and tribunals, and that can't be bad, for the name of the game is 'winning'...

Denis Jenkinson, December 1976

establishment that controlled our formative years. I understood the tatty jeans, the long hair, the provocative T-shirts, the reluctance to conform. I'm not saying I respected it, I'm simply saying that later on it helped me to understand the way he was, both as man and racing driver.

We are here concerned with British World Champions, so let's begin with his very British arrival on the F1 scene with Lord Alexander Hesketh, the man who dared give James a chance. They needed each other, the superbly athletic and highly competitive public schoolboy and the fiercely patriotic, deceptively ambitious aristocrat. They were serious racers, make no mistake, but this was where the myth began to gather pace. There were yachts, helicopters, lots of champagne and not a few sexy women. Predictably, the media fell upon this and feasted, milked it until the money dried up, the party petered out and Hesketh went away for a period of fiscal re-adjustment.

None of us will forget the first of those 10 Grand Prix victories. He'd already tasted glory by winning the International Trophy in front of an adoring crowd at Silverstone, but at Zandvoort in the summer of '75 it all came together for Hunt and Hesketh. Victory was finally his after a depressing run of no less than five retirements. Something had to go right in the end. To win his first GP he had employed speed, intelligence and patience. Under pressure from Niki Lauda in the closing laps he kept his cool, silencing the critics who said that 'Hunt the Shunt' would crack under pressure. But he beat the man who would become both his friend and his nemesis the following season. The margin mattered not, it was the winning that counted. He competed not for fun, or >>>



Hunt the lothario was catnip for the wilder media but the image overshadowed his ability as a driver

for the love of it, but for the winning, just as he had in squash, a game at which he also excelled.

It was intoxicating while it lasted but it could never be sustained. The team shut up shop, Hunt facing unemployment.

But the Hollywood script had one more surprise. During the winter of '75, World Champion Emerson Fittipaldi shocked us all by resigning from McLaren, leaving a vacancy that needed filling, and fast. Never one to miss an opportunity, James jumped and so did Marlboro which paid the drivers' bills at the British team. He was not its typical signing, not by a long chalk. Too maverick, sartorially challenged, unpredictable and a bit of a loose cannon. The promotional potential of the dashing and handsome Hunt, however, was not lost on John Hogan of Marlboro and James duly reported for pre-season testing duties at Silverstone. Team manager Alastair Caldwell remembers the day.

"First impressions weren't great. He walked into the pitlane, in that sloping gait of his, dressed... well, not very tidily," remembers Caldwell, "and he was hunched, as tall guys often are, and the guys looked at me as if to say 'jeez, what does he look like? Is he going to fit in the car?' We knew he was fast, but he was like no other driver we'd ever had at McLaren, put it that way."

The '76 season is motor racing folklore. In the rain and fog of Fuji Lauda quit, unsettled by the conditions. Hunt, too, panicked, the short fuse had burnt, and thought he'd finished too low down to win the title. Reassured, he headed for the podium and a big party began. Landing at Heathrow to a rock star's welcome, he was headline news round the world.

Not long before he died, working at a Formula 3000 race at the (new) Nürburgring, I was offered some laps of the Nordschleife with James at the wheel. I was too busy. I have always regretted that I didn't take the time to sit alongside the 1976 World Champion.

To vote for James Hunt as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

GRANDS PRIX: 92
POLE POSITIONS: 14
FASTEST LAPS: 8
WINS: 10
CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS: 1973 Tour of Britain (1st)



1992

NIGEL MANSSELL

BY DAVID TREMAYNE

Monza, 1989. As we walked through the paddock, Nigel Roebuck, Alan Henry and I, a forlorn figure limped towards us. The moustache bristled. “Ohh,” Nigel Mansell groaned theatrically, before we’d even had a chance to offer greetings. “I’m not sure if I can race this weekend...”

“Why ever not?” we asked, dutifully, imagining some horror that must have befallen him. A shunt we hadn’t heard of, perhaps?

“I dropped the sock drawer on my foot, it’s killing me...”

Strange, when you look back on such a great career, how initial thoughts should so often fall upon the endless anecdotes about self-told tales of personal damage, rather than his derring-do on the race track.

But let’s forget the litany of ailments, which he still trots out almost by default even today. The chips he appeared at times to carry on both shoulders. The grating tendency to whinge. At a birthday party in August 2010 he was still talking about what the ACO described as a “bump on the head” when he crashed 17 minutes into the Le Mans race, claiming he’d sustained a hit with significant *g*-force. He looked fine, though a conversation a year later with a team engineer suggested that he had indeed received a much heavier blow than was thought at the time. Then there was the story he told when he cycled around Britain in July that year raising funds for UK Youth – how he heard his Achilles’ tendon snap as he first began to pedal. Somehow he managed to complete the ride despite such a crippling injury... He’s doing another ride soon from John O’Groats to

Paris; he was driver steward in Monaco, where he was nursing a broken collar bone after a tumble from the bike.

But let’s put all this aside; Nigel Mansell’s towering achievements on the track deserve more than that.

Look behind the easily identified character flaws to the abundant talent; impressive physical strength; mental strength, too, which made him all but impervious to pressure even from the likes of Senna; the ability to find grip; the refusal ever to let his head drop in adversity – can you ever recall him driving a poor race?

Once you understood the secret of Nigel Ernest Mansell, the rest was simple. He was desperately insecure. He needed to be loved. He needed to be to be seen as the hero who had overcome vast odds to earn the triumph that would capture the hearts of spectators. That very insecurity, that need, was the well from which he drew his fantastic determination by the bucket-load. Quite possibly, no driver ever had more. It was his greatest asset, the thrust that propelled him, slowly at first, from nothing to something.

When the chance of a Lotus test arose at Paul Ricard at the end of 1979 he shrugged off a fractured vertebra and refused painkillers so he could stay sharp. He was the last of five drivers to run, did only 10 laps, but got down to a decent time faster than the more experienced Eddie Cheever and Jan Lammers. That performance earned him the test drive that he parlayed into a race seat.

When he made his GP debut in Austria the following year he went to the startline sitting in a bath of fuel. Where Tom Pryce had suffered in silence *en route* to fourth place at the ’Ring five years earlier, Nigel needed to

have his fortitude recognised. That could be wearing, but it was the way he was. “There I was, about to start my first Grand Prix, and I was getting the most incredible stinging pains in my backside,” he related. “Everyone kept asking me if I wanted to get out, but how could I? There was no way. You just don’t do that when you’re about to make your Grand Prix debut!”

They poured water into the cockpit but it soon evaporated, yet he soldiered on until the engine broke after 41 laps. What was it the great Jack Dempsey said? “A champion is somebody who gets up when they can’t.”

I watched Mansell at Brands Hatch in 1983 wrestling the awful Lotus 93T, and his driving was nothing short of breathtaking. But though the fearsome determination and bravery were the cornerstones of his career, there was much more besides. Forget all that mumbo-jumbo about him being a grafter who made up in effort what he lacked in ability. There was massive natural talent there.

“Nigel was a very, very quick, strong, determined driver who knew what he wanted and was very clever at setting up a car,” designer and race engineer Frank Dernie says, before making a valuable distinction. “And he was forceful rather than aggressive.”

Lotus and Williams team manager Peter Collins, who gave him that Ricard test, concurs. “Everyone said that Alain Prost was brilliant at chassis setting, but when they were at Ferrari in 1990 Nigel sorted out his 641/2 much quicker. And he was one helluva race driver.”

Indeed. He was a warrior, a superb racer. Every test session, let alone practice or qualifying session, he needed to be fastest. That’s the way he was. He always attacked.



'Our Nige' the warrior took nine GP wins on his way to claiming the '92 title including the Hungarian (above) and the British when 'Mansell Mania' was at its height

Who can forget his string of Grand Prix victories on home soil, especially the one that came with that brilliant dummy he sold Nelson Piquet before destroying him at Silverstone in 1987? That wonderfully opportunistic pass on Senna in Hungary in 1989? His majestic domination in the Williams FW14 and 14B, and that side-by-side, spark-raising battle down the main straight with Senna in Barcelona in 1991? From late 1985 onwards there was never any question that he was the real deal. A World Championship, 31 GP wins, 32 poles and 30 fastest laps attest to that.

At a key stage he lost the vital support of one of the men who believed in him the most: Colin Chapman. Thereafter his relationship with Lotus boss Peter Warr was a burden to them both and it was not until he switched to Williams in 1985 that his true ability shone through. But he never gave up during this troubled period, and therein lies the key. Mansell never quit.

And it wasn't just in victory that he shone. The way that he lost the 1986 title in Adelaide was typically spectacular, as his left rear Goodyear exploded. Fortune of the cruellest kind. Yet he took the defeat stoically like the sportsman that he always was, and came back stronger than ever when a lesser man might have been crushed.

Read James Allen's excellent biography, and I defy you not to get caught up as the hard-trying Brit claws his way to the top. There was always something special about his appeal as the man of the people, from an ordinary upbringing, who could do such extraordinary things.

He might have worn his insecurity like a badge, but he always believed in himself. And his guts and commitment, allied to that rare skill, stand even today as an inspiration to all aspiring racers, an example of where moxie, self-belief and sheer determination can take you.

And that means so much more.

To vote for Nigel Mansell as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

GRANDS PRIX: 187
 POLE POSITIONS: 32
 FASTEST LAPS: 30
 WINS: 31
 CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1
 OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
 1993 CART Champion



1996

DAMON HILL

BY ADAM COOPER

Back in 1985 when covering the national racing scene I got my hands on a complete set of commentators' sheets for the Formula Ford Festival, filled in by the drivers for the benefit of Brian Jones, the voice of Brands Hatch. It was a useful reference on the 200 or so competitors, many of whom – including such as Herbert, Blundell, Gachot and Irvine – were destined to climb the motor racing ladder.

Along with the stats and biographical data competitors were asked to list their ambition. Most chose an obvious theme, such as 'Win the Festival,' 'Do FF2000 next year,' 'Be World Champion,' that sort of thing. But one man had put a little more thought into his answer, writing 'To do better than expected.' His name was Damon Hill.

The phrase somehow sums up Hill's career. As he worked his way up he always had to fight against the doubters, and now that his F1 career can be viewed in the context of just how good his nemesis Michael Schumacher turned out to be, it's still easy for the critics to downplay his achievements.

And yet it's all there in black and white – Hill won the 1996 World Championship, earned 22 Grand Prix victories, and took 20 pole positions. And he did it all with a dignity and good humour.

He had a famous surname, but it was far from easy for Damon. He was 15 when Graham died, just as they were getting to know each

other and sharing a passion for mucking around on 'bikes. Life was tough in every way for the Hill family after that, and Damon was a little lost until at 19 he found satisfaction in two-wheeled club racing.

Cars were the obvious next step, but he didn't start his first race until 1983, when he was already 23. Up against guys who had raced karts since they were kids, he's the first to admit that he didn't have a clue what he was



doing back then. Schuey was already a GP winner at that age so Hill's subsequent achievements are all the more impressive.

There are obvious parallels with his father. Damon once told me that contrary to the popular image of him as a grafter, Graham must have been one of the great natural drivers, given that he didn't drive a road car until he was 25, and was World Champion within a few years. It was a good point.

The naysayers will remind you that he was beaten by so-and-so in F3 or whatever, and therefore he couldn't have been any good. The point is that by necessity Hill was a late developer, and was getting better all the time.

He had a little help from early supporters such as John Webb and George Harrison, but he worked his way through the ranks the hard way and on merit. It was his genuine pace in F3000 that landed him a Williams testing deal for 1991.

There were plenty of miles and a lot of high-tech stuff to test, so it was a good education. He also showed some grit when manhandling the awful Brabham onto the grid a couple of times in 1992, before the team folded. It's not easy to impress Frank Williams and Patrick Head, but they'd seen enough to put Hill in a race seat alongside Alain Prost for 1993. He had a superb car, but the rookie still had to get the job done, and that year he scored three wins and often held his own against one of the all-time greats.

For 1994 he was set to play number two to Ayrton Senna, but that all changed after Imola. It's arguably that season rather than his title success two years later that Hill deserves most respect for. Suddenly thrust into the team leader role, he helped to pull the shattered Williams outfit together. His win in a dramatic rain-affected race at Suzuka was magnificent, and it was only the crippled Schumacher's desperate lunge in Adelaide that cost Damon the title.

Had he won, critics would have rightly pointed out that the German lost out badly at



Hill the younger was a late developer, just like his father. And like Graham, he had grit to spare; nor was Damon afraid of arch-rival Schumacher (opposite)

the hands of the FIA, but as the *Senna* movie suggested, all was not what it seemed that year.

Things began to go awry for Damon in 1995. His two infamous clashes with Schumacher were the lowest points of a season that just didn't gel, despite more race wins. Off track there were signs of tension, too, as his relationship with the media was strained, reflecting the massive pressure on his shoulders.

In 1996 it all fell into place. Michael moved to Ferrari and Williams again had the quickest car, and despite an unexpectedly strong challenge from rookie team-mate Jacques Villeneuve, Damon finally wrapped up the title in Japan. The irony was that he'd long ago been dropped for the following year, a heavy price for his '95 form.

Signing for Arrows had seemed like a good idea at the time, but 1997 was a wasted year. The only high point was Hungary, where Arrows and Bridgestone hit the sweet spot and Damon led until hitting trouble late on.

He then moved to Jordan, enticed by a bit of EJ blarney and an attractive pay day, courtesy of B&H. The '98 season started poorly, but the car improved, and in Spa Hill had genuine pace. Helped by some wet weather carnage, he scored an accomplished win.

In 1999, the year he turned 39, Damon suddenly recognised that he could no longer balance what he was doing with the risks

involved, and family life came into focus. He was persuaded to stay on until the end of the season, which was probably a mistake. He counted down the races, and after an early delay in the Suzuka finale he pulled into the pits and walked away.

For a while he kept a relatively low profile, only to reinvent himself as an elder statesman of the sport in his role as President of the BRDC – one that he fulfilled with considerable success. He's now looking after the career of son Josh and keeping busy as an FIA Steward and TV pundit. And has he achieved the ambition he outlined back in 1985? Most definitely...

To vote for Damon Hill as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

GRANDS PRIX: 115
 POLE POSITIONS: 20
 FASTEST LAPS: 19
 WINS: 22
 CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1
 OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
 British Racing Drivers Club
 president 2006-11

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2008

LEWIS HAMILTON

BY ED FOSTER

“**L**ewis broke all the records when he arrived in Formula 1 in 2007,” says the managing director of McLaren Jonathan Neale. “People were advising us that he should come in and do a year in the test team before getting into the race car. But Ron [Dennis] and Martin [Whitmarsh] were confident about putting him straight in there, even though it would be quite testing alongside Fernando Alonso.

“How would he measure up on the grid? How would a 21-year-old handle racing alongside someone with the pedigree of Fernando Alonso? How would the media treat both of them? We were managing expectations, but then, of course, Lewis just tore up the rule book. He said ‘Stuff you!’ We were all looking at each other and saying ‘perhaps we ought to recalibrate ourselves’...”

Lewis Hamilton came into F1 at the beginning of 2007 and didn't fail to finish on the podium until the 10th round at the Nürburgring. Two wins, four second places and three thirds in his first nine races. Even his double world champion team-mate wondered what was happening.

Blisteringly quick, superb in wet conditions and someone whose meteoric rise through the ranks surprised not only his fellow racers, but McLaren's boss Ron Dennis: Lewis Hamilton marched onto the F1 track as if he had been there for two seasons already.

To many, though, that wasn't a surprise. At the age of six he was a national champion in remote-control car racing and in his first taste of karting that year at Rye House in Hertfordshire, he promptly lapped his father Anthony. Karting titles soon followed and

at the tender age of 10 he approached Dennis saying that he not only wanted to race for McLaren, but that he also wanted to be World Champion. Thirteen years later he had achieved both.

But was his speedy rise through the ranks thanks to the financial support that McLaren had been supplying since 1998 rather than out-and-out speed? It certainly helped him get into the right cars. However, he didn't fail to deliver and progressed rapidly to the GP2 Series in 2006, which he won on his first attempt.

“We went for a test at Mallory Park in 2001 in the Formula Renault car,” says Manor Motorsport founder John Booth who ran Lewis



in Formula Renault and F3. “We had to hire the circuit exclusively because he wasn't old enough to have a race licence, and within four or five laps it became pretty obvious he was special. He didn't have a road car licence and he couldn't even drive at the time, but he still picked up the gearshift no problem.

“He actually had a fairly major shunt that day. We got the car repaired; he went back out again and was just as quick straight away. He had the confidence and the speed.

“In his first year of Formula Renault [after doing the Winter Series in 2001] he showed lots of speed. He won three races and started the next year as favourite. We went to every pre-season test and he was always quickest by five or six tenths. In the first four races it didn't quite click, but we went to Silverstone and he was lying fifth on slicks when it started to rain. He went on to win quite comfortably. He won the next nine races after that. His wet weather driving... It's just totally natural.”

Once onto the F1 grid in 2007 he dazzled both the believers and the sceptics, even if the latter were keen to point out that his seamless transition into the top echelon of the sport was down to hours in the McLaren simulator and on the test track.

“I don't agree with that,” says Booth. “OK, it helped him learn the circuits and sort the consistency, but I'm not so sure it helped the raw speed.” Neale agrees: “We put some good engineers with Lewis over the winter so that he could learn the systems, but the rest is down to natural ability and force of nature. It was extraordinary.”

Since his championship victory in 2008 – which was famously sealed on the last corner of the last lap in the last race – he has occasionally struggled with uncompetitive cars, mistakes have crept into his driving which was so flawless when he first arrived, and last year he slumped into a depression which appeared to affect him both on and off the track. It's a worrying trait that he is going some way to making amends for this season.

“Lewis isn't happy when he's not winning,” admits Neale. “He's certainly never going to back off chasing someone to preserve the car. Lewis is still learning and it's the great >>>



Hamilton became a Grand Prix driver in 2007 and World Champion just one season later. His head may have dropped last year but he's on stellar form in 2012

drivers who carry on learning. He's not the finished deal, but then neither is Jenson.

"He's still going through a learning process; it's been commented on a lot, but it's been gradual. He's adapted progressively. It's very easy – as we all know – when you're on a roll to build a virtuous spiral and that confidence will get you a long way. Likewise when it goes the other way you can get a dose of the jitters. When you've got the white heat of public scrutiny and media attention on you... that's an enormous pressure on young people. I don't mean that in a patronising way to Lewis at all – I'm nearly twice his age! The innate talent was in there, but you've still got to survive the ravages of the pitlane. And that's hard."

After his world title in 2008 it prompted Sir Jackie Stewart to tell *Motor Sport* that he could be the next Jim Clark. Anything less than consecutive titles would seem, to many, a disappointment. But four seasons on, he's still waiting for that second title.

A rejuvenated Hamilton in 2012 could set that straight – if McLaren can give him a consistently competitive car. Beyond this year, will he remain at McLaren? Rumours are swirling that Red Bull, Mercedes or Ferrari

could sign him. At the age of 27, Lewis should be hitting his peak – and his next career decision could be the biggest he'll ever make.

"Lewis is up there with the best of all the McLaren drivers," says Neale. "He's by far and away not the finished package yet, but we're starting to see a new element to his game and the canniness that we saw in Fernando and Mika [Häkkinen]. His car control is very good, his will to win is unrivalled. If he decides to be in the sport for a long period of time he will be amazing. You'll look back in a decade's time and think 'where were you when Lewis...'. He's that good."

To vote for Lewis Hamilton as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

GRANDS PRIX: 97*
POLE POSITIONS: 21
FASTEST LAPS: 11
WINS: 18
CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
KARTING: 1995-2000
numerous titles including
2000 European Formula
A Champion and 2000
World Cup Champion
and World Number One.
2000 European Karting
Champion
SINGLE SEATERS: 2003
Formula Renault 2.0 UK
Champion, 2005 Formula 3
Euro Series Champion, and
2006 GP2 Champion
*as of Canadian GP 2012



2009

JENSON BUTTON

BY DAMIEN SMITH

Jenson Button was always special, it just took longer than it should have for his stars to align so he could prove it. The grains of truth were always there, certainly from his stellar rise from Formula Ford to a Grand Prix debut in just two years, and even through the subsequent eight long years of hard graft in Formula 1, first at Benetton/Renault and on to BAR/Honda.

If the dice had landed differently, the long wait could have been so much shorter. His current team principal, Martin Whitmarsh, recalls that Button's first taste of F1 was in a Häkkinen/Newey-era McLaren, at a wet Silverstone in a prize test for winning a young driver award. "I wasn't there, but I remember our then team manager Davey [Ryan] coming back and saying this guy was so cool, so smooth and so in control of his emotions," he says. "So we were impressed."

McLaren didn't sign him. Instead, his second F1 test was for Alain Prost's team, and the four-time World Champion, with whom Button would be compared in later years because of their shared smoothness of style, was also impressed by this teenage prodigy with the cartoon name. But it would be Frank Williams who would take the plunge and give him a contract to race.

Only for one season, though: Juan Pablo Montoya was always odds-on to take his seat, whatever Jenson managed in that rookie 2000 season. A point in his second race, qualifying third at Spa, finishing fourth at Hockenheim, out-qualifying respected team-mate Ralf Schumacher... it wasn't enough. So he was farmed out to a sceptical Flavio Briatore and a tricky Benetton that he could rarely tune to

his refined 'narrow window' style. The "slog", as Whitmarsh puts it, had begun.

These years would provide the grit in the oyster. He grew up, matured, learned how to massage a team for his own interests, gained the respect of race engineers. In 2004 he found himself in a competitive BAR and finished third in the World Championship. Just his luck that it should be the height of the Schumacher/Ferrari era. Race wins were always just out of reach.

That first victory, at the Hungaroring in 2006, came at the 113th time of trying, thanks to his renowned skill in changeable conditions, but also with a heavy dose of luck.



Then Honda blew its potential and gave him a couple of dud cars, and two years were wasted. When the Japanese giant pulled the plug, Button looked all washed up.

Amazing that it was all just four and a half years ago. Jenson could never have imagined how his life was about to change. Ross Brawn, Honda's compensatory millions and a decent Mercedes engine gave him the chance he'd always been searching for, and he made it pay. Victory in six of the first seven races for one-

season-only Brawn GP would carry him to his grail, perhaps the most unlikely World Championship we've ever seen.

But since then, he's more than lived up to his title. Like James Hunt before him, becoming World Champion gave Button an assurance and confidence to perform even better than in his title year – and remarkably, back at the team where it all began.

When Whitmarsh called him from a Heathrow baggage carousel on his return from the 2009 Brazilian GP, he didn't really expect to lure the new champ to McLaren. "If I was to describe the nature of that call I would have said 'this is a long shot, but it's worth a go and we'll see what happens'," the team principal says. "But I heard the words, he said he was interested and we decided to pursue it. And we pursued it to a conclusion very quickly."

Was Button mad, we thought? "For someone as intelligent as Jenson is," says Whitmarsh, "to evaluate the situation and determine that he wanted the challenge of being measured in a McLaren against Lewis Hamilton showed an extraordinary level of self-belief, of commitment, hunger and bravery, because he was very comfortable where he was."

The opportunistic wins that have followed, the hard-charging victories such as his unforgettable Canadian GP performance last year, the dominance of Melbourne in March... finally Button has delivered on the early promise of 1998, when I followed his almost vertical progress in the cut and thrust of Formula Ford. During those first raw days in racing cars, he made mistakes, but those errors would rarely be repeated, and the sunny smile and his easy-going attitude made him impossible to dislike. Nothing much has changed.



Button appeared set for the sidelines in early '09. At the end of the year he was a deserved champion

That smile and attitude won over the engineers and mechanics at McLaren almost immediately. Thanks to his approach, they love to work for him because they know he gives his all, under the microscope at the highest-profile British team, going head to head with a rival world champion... a combustible prospect that somehow has never truly caught alight, even in Montréal last year when the pair collided.

"Jenson deserves the major credit for the harmony that exists," says Whitmarsh. "I hope I help and create the environment, and Lewis helps too. But frankly the person who is most disarming, most straightforward and mature is Jenson.

"I remember hosting the first lunch with them before we'd turned a wheel in anger. One of the things I said was that there is no one out there in the world of media that is interested in how well you guys get on together. They're only interested in any hint or suspicion that you don't. They will try to contort or encourage words that promote conflict, or the perception of it, and you both have to be aware of that.

"Instead, what we have is a situation where if one wins the other puts on a victory shirt and takes part in good-spirited celebrations. I am an extraordinarily lucky team principal to have them."

In terms of sheer natural speed, Hamilton is hard to match – and that goes for anyone in F1 during this golden generation of Grand Prix drivers. But for all his easy-going charm, Button has an inner steel, a professional intensity and the intelligence to win another title. The team-mates carry a

mutual respect. Lewis will always fancy his chances against Jenson in a straight fight, but as Britain's most recent champion has proven time and again, his stars are now perfectly aligned, and the grit is now a shiny, bright pearl. His power should never be underestimated again.

To vote for Jenson Button as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

GRANDS PRIX: 215*
POLE POSITIONS: 7
FASTEST LAPS: 7
WINS: 13
CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
KARTING: 1991 British Cadet Champion, 1992 Junior TKM Champion, 1997 Ayrton Senna Memorial Cup and European Super A Champion.
SINGLE SEATERS: 1998 British Formula Ford Champion and 1998 Formula Ford Festival winner
 *as of Canadian GP 2012



AND OUR '11TH MAN'...

STIRLING MOSS

BY NIGEL ROEBUCK

“When Gilles was around,” said an acquaintance of mine, “for me there was only one driver in the race...”

I knew what he meant. In all these years of being ensnared by racing, I can think of only one other in that way – and perhaps to an even greater degree. An early memory is of being at Oulton Park, of the cars coming round on the warming-up lap for the Gold Cup. Past they came, past they came – and then someone said, “Here he is!”

And there he was. White helmet, arms straight, red 250F, number 7. The car, in typical Maserati style, had arrived too late for practice, and so Stirling Moss was starting from the back. By lap four he was into the lead, and there he stayed. At eight, I was entranced.

Unless you were around at the time, it is impossible to appreciate just how much Moss *was* motor racing in Britain back then. There were others – Hawthorn, Collins, the prodigiously talented Brooks – but none captured the public imagination like Stirling, and I would venture that none has since.

Moss is the anomaly in this list – the intruder, you might say – because he never won the World Championship. To me, that diminishes only the worth of the title: I think Stirling the greatest of them all, no matter the points, no matter the country.

“If Moss had put reason before passion,” Enzo Ferrari said, “he would have been World

Champion many times.” So he would – but he wouldn’t then have been Stirling Moss. The attraction of driving, in his later years, for Rob Walker was not simply that they were friends; there was the added frisson of beating the factory teams as a privateer. And now, he says, as he looks back he rather likes the fact that he never became World Champion; an inherently modest man, he will never say he was the best of his era – but he was.

Although Moss’ driving style was very different from Villeneuve’s, there is much that links the two, much that explains the devotion they drew from the fans. Gilles was the racer pure, and for all his artistry Stirling, too, will say that he prides himself primarily as a racer, rather than driver.

At the time of his last accident at Goodwood – unexplained half a century on – he was laps behind after a pitstop, but going flat out because there was still a lap record to be had, still something to be taken from the day. And still spectators to be entertained, of course. If you were a Moss fan at a race track, you never went home dissatisfied.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

I have never been a great enthusiast for the Drivers’ World Championship system of points chasing, for many reasons, and in the past it has been shown to give the Championship to the wrong man, or to the right man by reason of luck...

Denis Jenkinson, December 1964

To picture Stirling at his zenith, conjure if you will an image of one with the style and ease of Prost and the passionate genius of Villeneuve. At his peak – which he was to the last day of his career – Moss’ driving was essentially without flaw, and he was plainly quicker than the rest. Wet or dry, fast circuit or slow, it didn’t matter, and it was the same with cars. When Cooper and then Chapman revolutionised Grand Prix racing, Stirling effortlessly adapted: in 1956 he won at Monaco in a 250F, and four years later did it again in a Lotus 18.

Through my childhood Moss was a national hero, a sportsman revered like Matthews or Compton, yet through all that time his phone number was in the book – as it is to this day. He never felt he should be isolated, he said: if someone, be it a fan or Alfred Neubauer, wished to contact him, he was available. Hard to believe in the context of 2012.

Overwhelmingly, Stirling personified ‘racing driver’. Fundamentally a shy man, he never found it easy to face a crowded room, to make a speech or whatever – even though he had the charisma to still that room simply by walking in. At a circuit he was different again, always walking quickly – on the balls of his feet – and absolutely in his own environment.

Again, though, he was marvellous with the fans. In the paddock that day at Oulton he asked me if I’d like to sit in the Maserati, and smilingly posed by the car as my dad took a picture. In an instant he became a hero, and although I have considered him a friend for nigh on 40 years, a hero he remains.



Moss (above at Silverstone '61 and winning at Aintree in '57) bridged major changes in F1 car design, effortlessly adapting to each. He was a champion in all but name and a great ambassador for the sport



There was a purity in the way Moss went racing. Like most of his contemporaries, he had no great mechanical knowledge, and if a car wasn't behaving itself, he simply drove around the problems.

He was also quintessentially a sportsman, which sounds passé in the world of today, but was highly valued in his own time. It is well documented that, thanks to the point-scoring system of the time, Moss lost the 1958 World Championship by a point to Hawthorn, despite winning four Grands Prix to Mike's one. Less remembered is that had he not voluntarily gone to the stewards at Oporto, and spoken up in Hawthorn's defence, his rival would have been disqualified. Suggest that it was a remarkably selfless thing to do, and he looks bemused.

Moss was perhaps at his greatest in 1961, his last full season, when he put his virtuosity to work at Monaco and the Nürburgring, archetypal driver's circuits both, and beat the more powerful Ferraris in Walker's obsolete Lotus-Climax.

Then, with an abruptness I can remember to this day, it all ended at Goodwood. As Stirling's

life hung in the balance, fans across the world tremblingly listened to news bulletins, willing him to survive.

Fifty years on, he remains a figure of reverence in motor racing. Had there been no shunt that day in 1962, he reckons he would have raced until the mid-70s – he was, after all, only 32 at the time, and well able to envisage F1 at 45 or so.

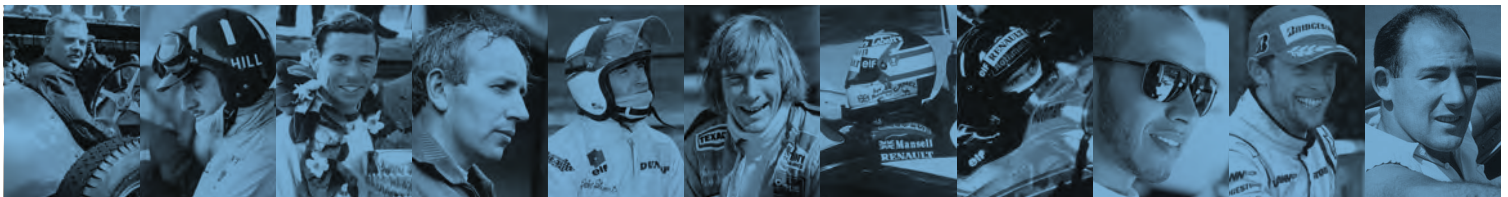
"I know the fashion these days is to quit when you've made your money, at 34 or something," he says, "but I couldn't have done that – I'd never have been that smart! I loved it far too much. It was easy for me to understand how a guy like Andretti went on racing as long as he did, however much he had in the bank. That man was a *racer*, like Villeneuve was a racer. And like I was..."

To vote for Stirling Moss as your favourite driver, go to www.motorsportmagazine.com/worldchampions >>>

GRANDS PRIX: 66
 POLE POSITIONS: 16
 FASTEST LAPS: 19
 WINS: 16
 CHAMPIONSHIPS: 0
 (runner-up in 1955-58)
 OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS:
 1955 Mille Miglia (1st),
 1955 Targa Florio (1st),
 1950-51, '55, '58-61
 Tourist Trophy (1st),
 1954 Gold Alpine Cup,
 1953 Reims 12 Hours (1st),
 1954 Sebring 12 Hours (1st),
 1956, '58-60 Nürburgring
 1000Kms (1st)



OVER TO YOU...



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and make your opinion count

NATIONAL MOTORSPORT WEEK

EVER SINCE THE LIKES OF JOHN COOPER AND COLIN CHAPMAN started dominating Grand Prix racing in the late 1950s and early '60s, Britain has been the hub of influence and innovation in motor racing.

To celebrate the UK's success in motor sport, National Motorsport Week was founded back in 2006 and the aim was clear from the start. "The concept is a simple one," said MIA CEO Chris Aylett at the time, "take a mate to motor sport". Introduce a friend who may be interested but who has never participated, and let them enjoy the sport. Whether it's one friend, two or 10, all we ask is that all those who enjoy motor sport should get involved."

Jointly promoted by the Motorsport Industry Association (MIA) and the Motor Sports Association (MSA), this year's event runs between the Goodwood Festival of Speed, on June 30, and the British Grand Prix, on July 8. However, although the week is sandwiched between two headline motor sport events, much of its focus is on grass-roots racing and novice events run by local motor clubs.

The reason behind organising such a week is not merely to advertise how much Britain contributes to the motor sport industry, but to inspire excitement in the sport that we all love, and generate new interest. If Britain is going to remain at the forefront of the industry it is imperative that we try to increase the number of spectators, marshals, competitors and officials.

There are events all the way through the week that will be helping to raise awareness, from Lindholme Motor Sports Club's display of rally cars at the RAF Waddington Air Show on June 30, to a newcomer's Autotest event at Loughborough Car Club in Leicester.

On July 2, though, one of the headline events will take place in the shape of the MIA's Summer Reception at the House of Lords. Although this is restricted to the Association's members and their guests it will provide one of the best opportunities to meet some of the industry's leading figures. The Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Motorsport Industry will be presented on the day, which has been given to the likes of Adrian Newey, Ross Brawn OBE and Sir Stirling Moss in the past.

This year both David Coulthard and Mercedes CEO Nick Fry are official spokesmen for National Motorsport Week. "Britain is the home of international motor sport," says Coulthard, "and we all have so much to celebrate. The history books show that we have produced more F1 world champions than any other nation and British teams and drivers remain at the forefront of Grand Prix racing today. But there's far more to National Motorsport Week than simply waving the flag; it's a great opportunity for everyone involved to showcase their own successes and activities."

Make sure that you make the most of the week between the Festival of Speed and the British GP by visiting www.nationalmotorsportweek.co.uk.

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Return to splendour

In the 1990s saloon car racing pulled in record crowds. Now enthusiasts for that dramatic era have fired up those staggeringly complex Super Tourers for the first race in 12 years, at Silverstone Classic

BY GORDON CRUICKSHANK



It's a world of initials, saloon racing. ETC, ITC, WTC – and TOCA, which doesn't stand for anything, but steered by laconic Aussie Alan Gow turned the BTCC into a marketing success only Formula 1 could rival. Gow's 1990s masterstroke was Super Touring, a catchy name for a flexible framework that gave saloons mass appeal before popping its own bubble.

It's 12 years since the hunkered-down four-doors elbowed their way through the last frenetic corner of the last race in this free-for-all frenzy. Yes, they were 'just' four-door saloons, but under its canny title, this relaunch swept the grid clear of classes, subdivisions and build targets and let factory teams loose with grinder and welding torch to build the fastest high street lookalikes they could contrive. With racetrack prestige and sales-grabbing marque loyalty as the prize, it blossomed into a gladiatorial games that had the crowds roaring in the stands and the TV cameras beaming every fender-bending argy-barguing moment into homes across the nation. Circuit managers beamed over bulging gate

receipts, branded clothing highlighted the entry queues, and a new generation grew up driving Corsas and Clios, dreaming of being Cleland or Muller or Plato carving their way through a mirror-crunching pack.

Then the bills came in – and they overflowed with noughts. Whispers of six, eight, 10 million for a season sent a chill through the paddock, shivering those who didn't spend that much on advertising, let alone motor racing. Manufacturers got their coats and began to leave the party, until only the wealthy die-hards remained, having a great time and not noticing the room was empty...

At its noisy height there were an astonishing 10 factory teams, but latterly it was down to three, running an extra car each and cajoling GpN cars to fill grids like paid companions at a Hollywood premiere. After a decade of booming exhausts, Super Touring bust a gasket and coasted silently into the pits. Until this July, when Silverstone's enormous Classic meeting hosts the first Super Touring race since 2000.

We're sheltering under Silverstone's Wing, struggling to marshal several examples of >>>



Super Touring cars in among the melée of Media Day. It's wet, it's busy and it's hard to talk as everything from Edwardians to an F1 Benetton fire up and set sail.

"That's one of mine!" says Jeff Allam, famed saloon car wrangler, here to give us his assessment of three cars spanning the start and finish of the Super Touring adventure. He's looking at a Cavalier, one of his mounts during his time as a works Vauxhall driver in the early '90s. We're not trying that one today, though; instead the menu includes a 1991 BMW M3 such as Jeff drove during the '90 BTCC season, and a late-era 1999 Prodrive Mondeo, which should recall his year in a Mondeo in the Australian Super Touring series. The novelty will be the 1997 Nissan Primera squatting in front of us on its rubber-roller wheels.

But Allam is gazing at a TWR Rover SD1. "Loved those things. In fact I bought one. Ran it up the hill at Goodwood but blew it up and sold it to a guy in Belgium. Wish I hadn't."

Allam has great history with the bulky V8s: he hustled Tom Walkinshaw's cars to GpA wins around Europe – including winning the TT here at Silverstone – and in Australia where in Rovers, Jaguars and Holdens he starred at his beloved Bathurst. He's a car dealer now, hasn't raced since 2004, but like all retired drivers he still has race suit and helmet. "I stopped at what felt like the top, after the years with Vauxhall," he reckons. "Never wanted to return. Quit while



you're enjoying it, I say. And I did. I felt race weekends were like a hobby, not work."

Yet rather than get involved in historic racing, he's closely allied with current BTCC racing: he's the driving standards advisor, part of a panel who dish out the wrist-slapping when required. And saloons require a lot. That's what happens when cars are closely matched and drivers wrapped in protective metal.

It was that question of close matching that bore Super Touring. Saloons had flagged in the

1980s, with patchy grids and a confusing class system, hugely dominated by homologation specials such as Cosworth RS500s. Super Touring swept that away, bringing a 2-litre limit, 'first past the post' winners and a flexible tech spec that allowed manufacturers to mix and match parts from their range as long as the engine used the same block and head and sat in the same place. Suspension had to keep the same configuration, and limits on revs, tyre size and usage gave privateers a helping hand. No-one foresaw the extraordinary technical sophistication that a decade of Super Touring would bring – and the peak of it is here in front of us, rumbling in the pitlane.

To call it a Mondeo is unfair: tasked with winning the title for Ford, Prodrive took the V6 from the American Probe, canted it forward and slammed it so far down between the wheels that the drive shaft runs through the vee. You can barely see the block down there, the dry sump, fist-sized clutch and compact sequential 'box practically scraping the road, with gears hoisting the drive back up to the diff. Huge discs are gripped by six-piston callipers, and while it still runs MacPherson struts, you could never buy these ones from your dealer. The effort that went into the special parts and hand-built shell (1000 man-hours, they say) beggar belief, so the car is lucky to have an owner like Alvin Powell, who'll be racing it in the Classic event. >>>



Fearsomely complex title-winning Prodrive-built Ford Mondeos were pinnacle of Super Touring era

“I’ve got another 2000 Mondeo and Paul Radisich’s 1993 World Touring Cup winner too. Luckily I’ve got a Prodrive guy who worked on them at the time who does the engines, and I do the rest.” Alvin reckons he raced Super Touring longer than anyone, among 40 years of racing, and while he has a Tiga C2 car and an F40, it’s the Mondeos he wants to race. “Trouble is, there hasn’t been a series. I’ve run in Formula Saloon and various Welsh series” – Alvin is volubly Welsh – “but like any thoroughbred they need proper exercise.”

Beside me I see Jeff hold up his helmet and blow dust off it. He catches my eye and grins. “Just dug it out of the loft!” He slides inside and yanks the sequential ‘box into first. “It’s not easy to move off,” comments Alvin. “It needs 4000 revs but if you go to 5 or 6 it buries itself in the tarmac.” But with a confident blare Jeff is off down the new pitlane to a track much changed since his last run.

When he gets back he’s grinning, despite the mucky weather. “I had to remember which way the corners went! It’s all a bit tighter than my day,” he shouts over the exhaust, squirming out. It may be a four-door car – as the rules demanded – but that seat is way down on the floor, inside that cage of steel tube. “That was an eye-opener – first time I’ve sat in a late-model Super Touring car. Plenty of torque in it, not peaky at all, but boy you’d have to be committed to stay on the limit in that.”



We turn to the Nissan, a works Primera from two years before the Ford. Dave Jarman is another serial owner: he started out racing Datsun 240Zs – his company DJR prepares them for historic events – and has had two racing Primers before including David Leslie’s 1999 pace-setter. “But I had to race them in club events, and it doesn’t seem right to risk something with history in that arena.” And history this does have: one of the 1997 ground-up new builds by RML for either Anthony Reid or David Leslie (Dave’s still digging), it went to leading privateer Matt Neal for 1998 and, re-shelled, gave him a string of privateer wins.

Again the motor is barely visible, the 320bhp straight four pressed against the bulkhead (you were not allowed to cut the metalwork except

to enlarge the arches internally) behind the drive shaft. And the intakes face straight ahead, unlike the standard car: for the racer Nissan reversed the head to give intake room. There’s also extra piping to the double-caliper brakes, for these are water-cooled, with a little radiator underneath. Suspension mimics the original but is all fabricated, a nightmare for restoration.

Where Powell benefits from Prodrive’s stock of spares, Jarman had to make new parts to get it running again. Luckily, he says, he has help from a man who built these at RML. “And it still has the data logging, so I’ve got Neal’s times as a target!”. He points out that the best Super Tourers remain 3sec quicker than today’s cars, which meant that redundant cars were a cheap way to win club races, but the result was that many were bodged about to keep running.

There’s a reason why Neal showed so well in this car: up to ’98 the works machines copied the independent rear suspension arms of the 4WD Primera, but then were told they had to revert to the 2WD’s beam axle. Independents in a year-old car could remain independent.

Jeff returns from his stint. “It’s amazing how far back you sit – behind the B-pillar! I suppose that’s because Matt Neal is 10ft tall [he’s 6ft 7in].” Dave laughs. “You have to sight the apex through the side window.”

Before we download Jeff we have to rush him to the last car, the oldest and the simplest,



For 1998 privateer Matt Neal took on works Nissan Primera. Top: Jeff Allam was amazed at rearward seat placement

an E30 M3 BMW which gave Steve Soper four wins in the BTCC in '91, the first full year of 2-litre Super Touring. The German firm had the easiest task in complying, with a 2-litre engine to hand and endless previous success with the M3. That year produced fierce rivalry between BMW and Vauxhall, with a dramatic season closer, crowds of 40,000 and new entries from Toyota and Nissan. Super Touring was getting on cam.

While Jeff is out making waves, the car's owner Mark Smith repeats the same frustration – there's been nowhere to race these cars. He drives a string of Munich racers in different saloon and marque series, but he hasn't been prepared to waste this one, which he found in the States. "It's a proper Prodrive car with the six-speed Hollinger gearbox and three wins with Soper." So it's suitable that Steve Soper has just arrived to look over his old car, and here's Dave Brodie, another tin-top star who will race his Cosworth RS500 at the Classic. Lots of hand-shaking when Allam reappears.

"Now that BMW felt like a true touring car, a saloon made to go racing. Simple and straightforward, not radically reengineered. You could have great fun with that, whereas the Super Tourers would be hard work to get the times. Alain Menu told me how tricky they were, the hours they'd spend tuning the car to each track." Something tells me Allam is a traditionalist.

"Those two are far more technical than my era," he muses. "I'm amazed how much difference the two years between the Nissan and



the Ford made. And the budget: the Mondeo build quality is sharper, it feels more hi-tech, and the V6 is very strong. In the Nissan you have to use the gearbox all the time, whereas in the Ford you can back off, then put your foot down and it's right there. They tell me it's got 320bhp; I couldn't feel that on this damp track, but my Cavalier had just shy of 300, so these aren't so much more. They're just much more sophisticated.

"At the limit I think both will do a good job – though if you took a few kerbs in that Mondeo you'd tear pieces out of the bottom of it! Today's cars can plough into the gravel and out

the other side, whereas the Super Tourers would be beached."

No doubt about it, Allam is not in awe of this era. He's impressed by the technical achievement in the cars, but not what they did for saloon racing. "I thought Super Touring would be expensive and separate the works from the privateers, and it did. There was a massive difference between works and privateer cars – two or three seconds a lap, whereas today a second can cover 12 cars." All this became true, of course, but there was a hugely successful period first, the new rules bringing razor-edge racing and tempting in Mazda, Peugeot, Renault, then Alfa and Volvo, then Honda and Audi. But budgets and professionalism soared too, involving TWR, TOMs, Schnitzer and Williams GP to run manufacturer teams, and bringing in F1 drivers such as Derek Warwick and Nigel Mansell. After Alfa forced a rule change by introducing wings and splitters in '94, costs hit a new plane. It's said Nissan spent £8m on its title charge in '99, and Ford threw in an extra £2m for the final year of the era, before new cost-cutting regs led to smaller, cheaper machines in 2001.

Not that Allam is suffering from nostalgia; he reckons today's BTCC racing is better than ever, especially with the NGTC machines - New Generation Touring Cars with standard-spec 2-litre turbo engine and suspension packages which will by 2013 supplant the Super 2000s. "You can buy an engine from Mountune or Neil Brown and they'll be the same, which >>>



Steve Soper had a successful 1991, coming fourth in the series in the M3 now run by Mark Smith

||| SUPER TOURER TEST

has brought viable economics and closer racing. A privateer with reasonable backing can race with the leaders. It'll still be your Neals and Platos and Gordon Sheddens who take the championships, but there are drivers out there who can compete like they did in the early '90s. They're relatively close, which is healthier. They could be a bit faster, but they look fantastic, and the crowds are coming back."

Jeff never liked the double-header sprints of Super Touring, so he's extra impressed by what today's drivers face. "We had endless testing; they're straight into qualifying after one practice. They have to dial themselves into the track immediately. And three races on Sunday! I never had to do that. That's intense."

In time, though, the NGTCs will become period pieces too and people will be running historic races for them, but it may not be quite as hard as this Super Touring project. For every Powell and Jarman who have prepared their cars 'in case', there are many more Super Touring owners who need to be tempted, according to one of the people who have hauled this field together. Johnny Westbrook is passionate about touring cars: he's chief mechanic for Frank Wrathall's Dynajet Toyota Avensis in BTCC, and owns a '95 Super Touring Cavalier which Wrathall will drive in the race. He and Jarman, backed by Powell, have driven the scheme along, and he too laments the club racing fate of many cars. "A lot of people don't comprehend their importance, and it's so hard to return them to spec. The guys who built them are around, but they're still involved in BTCC!

People just see a saloon, but with the unique parts they're as hard to run as a Group C car."

For this first revival Westbrook and his coterie are inviting genuine '75-on Gp2, DTM and GpA machines as well – even RS500s.

"They've got 200 more bhp but narrower tyres and inferior brakes, so I don't think the gap will be too large." But they are determined to have 'proper' cars, with history and without tweaks. "Let's face it, the Super Tourers are so sophisticated there's nothing we could do to make them faster, but modern electronics would let you run more boost on a Cosworth, so we must crack down on that now or lose credibility."

That matters, because these guys want to see a small series next year, beginning a Super Touring resurgence.

"I see crowds of 20,000 at BTCC races and it's the same people who watched these cars 15 years ago," says Westbrook. "We want to appeal to them, people who wouldn't normally go to a historic meeting but who still remember and love these cars."

It's that level of loyalty Allam recalls fondly. "It's about crowd support. They followed Plato, Cleland, Neal, wearing the colours like football fans. That's the strength of it." He's optimistic that NGTC will attain the same level, without

the complexity of what he's driven today.

"I've really enjoyed sampling all three, and I'm impressed by the effort these guys have to put in to keep them going. These cars are so specialised – even the engine mounts are Rose joints. They cost £300,000 apiece to build, yet I remember seeing Mondeos advertised at £35k!"

Could he be tempted to race a Super Tourer? "If you asked which did I want to race, the Ford offered more contact and balance than the Nissan which felt very busy. You'd work harder with the Nissan. If you said 'there's a spare Mondeo' I'd give it a bash. But that M3 just lit my face up. An H box, everything where you'd want it – I could have spent an hour in that car! That could make

me want to get my race licence again."

So if you're reading this after Silverstone Classic, and you saw a blue, green and white helmet, newly polished, inside an M3 you'll know what happened... **M**

That M3 lit my face up. That could make me get my licence again!"

Silverstone Classic – July 20-22. Super Tourers race Saturday and Sunday. For tickets, call 0871 231 0849 or visit www.silverstoneclassic.com



Ten years of development resulted in some of the most advanced saloon racers ever – and they're coming back to Silverstone



Stuart Graham won TTs on two wheels (left, Suzuki 50, 1967) and four, in the green Camaros (above) he raced in the 1970s

Mortons



There are many examples of a racer's talent being passed on from father to son, and even to a third generation. Indeed there are whole clans, like the

Andrettis and Unsers in the USA, where each succeeding generation seems destined for the family business. Damon Hill is the only case so far of an F1 World Champion's son becoming World Champion (a goal for you there, Nico) but, as editor Damien's poignant chat with Jacques Villeneuve reminded us in *Motor Sport* last month, without the Zolder tragedy that took Gilles' life Jacques too could have been a champion son of a champion.

It would take a qualified psychologist to analyse the complex motivations that drive the son of a racing driver to go racing himself. Yet we can all imagine what it must be like for a young boy growing up in the household of a top racer as he watches his famous father grapple with the pressures and dangers of a racing career, and receive the plaudits and rewards of success. But what if – as Joann Villeneuve described so movingly last month – that household is riven by tragedy? What must be the effect on a young boy of losing his father just when success was giving him, in his son's eyes, a sort of immortality? And then, how does a mother feel if she sees her own son move towards the career that robbed her of her husband?

They're all questions I want to ask when I meet Stuart Graham for lunch. A top-level bike racer in the 1960s, Stuart is the only Isle of Man TT winner who is the son of a TT winner. He then switched to cars, and became the only man to win the TT on two wheels and four. His father, the great Les Graham, was World Champion in 1949; but in 1953, when Stuart was just 11, Les was killed on the Isle of Man. Six years later Stuart began racing bikes himself.

He is 70 now, small, fit and wiry, the same nine stone he was 50 years ago. He still dons his helmet to enjoy historic outings at Goodwood, but has sold his thriving Honda car dealership. He lives with his wife Margaret and a line-up of cherished classics, from frog-eye Sprite to 300SL Gullwing, in the comfortable Cheshire house they bought in the 1960s. Stuart's local is the Cholmondeley Arms, a Victorian schoolhouse-turned-pub near the Pageant of Power venue. He tucks into a plate of prawns, whitebait, calamari and crab, followed by Cholmondeley Mess, a welter of strawberries, meringue and cream, and takes a couple of scant sips of Sauvignon Blanc. "The boxer Henry Cooper said to me years ago, 'Bloody 'ell, Stu, you can put it away, you skinny little bastard. You're a burner.' I think that's a medical term."

Les Graham started as a teenager on the dirt tracks of his native Liverpool, and was a

Lunch with...

STUART GRAHAM

It's already a unique claim, being the TT-winning son of a TT winner, but this man embellished it by winning further TTs in big, brawny saloon cars

BY SIMON TAYLOR



professional road racer by the time World War II stopped everything. He flew Lancasters and was awarded the DFC for bravery, but would never divulge why. "All we could find in his logbooks was an entry after a raid over some U-boat pens in 1944 that just said, 'Bit of a hairy evening.' As a kid whenever I tried to ask him anything about the war, he'd just dismiss it.

"After the war he joined AJS as works rider and development engineer, working on the famous AJS Porcupine, so called because of the cooling fins sticking up at all angles on its big fore-and-aft V-twin. It handled a bit like a five-barred gate, but in those days everything did until the Manx Norton came out with a proper frame. But it was quick. In 1949 the first World Championship was run – the car Championship only started the following year – and Dad won it. Suddenly he was someone for everyone to cheer for in austere post-war Britain. He appeared on early TV shows, and there was always somebody coming to the house to take photos or do an interview. I was seven, my brother Chris was four, and we just accepted that we had a famous dad.

"There was a lot of complacency in most of the British motorbike firms. Dad was trying to move development forward at AJS, but it was like pushing water uphill. And by now the Italian bikes were starting to show well. In >>>

James Mitchell

1950 Dad won the Swiss GP again for AJS, but Umberto Masetti took the championship on a Gilera, and MV Agusta were developing a four-cylinder 500 with shaft drive. Dad could see the way the wind was blowing. So when he was approached by Count Domenico Agusta at the end of 1950, offering pretty spectacular money for the time, he signed. Some people likened it to Dick Seaman going to Mercedes in 1937.

“MV’s Four was quick and powerful but pretty crude, and Dad’s brief was to develop it into a winner. In 1951 he didn’t score any points because it broke all the time. In 1952 it was better, and he built up a big lead in the Senior TT. Oil was blowing out everywhere and his boot and the gearchange pedal were covered in it. On the last lap his foot slipped, he missed a gear and he over-revved it, bending a valve. But he nursed it home to finish second. As the year went on the Four became more reliable, and finally at Monza in September Dad won, the MV’s first victory in front of its home crowd. The *tifosi* went completely mad. Three weeks after that he won the final round in Barcelona, finishing up second in the Championship, three points behind Masetti. So for 1953 hopes were high.

“Dad was approaching 40, and reckoned that after he’d stopped racing his future would still be with MV on the engineering side. So he moved the family to Italy, and found a house in a little village in Lombardy, in easy reach of the MV factory at Gallarati. My brother and I had lessons from a private tutor, and were due to start school in Switzerland that summer. I was obsessed with cars and motorbikes, of course. I’d spend hours wandering around the MV factory, getting in the way. Dad would chuck us in the back of his Jaguar MkVII and take us down the *autostrada* to Monza when the Grand Prix cars were testing: Fangio and González in the Maserati A6GCMs, Ascari and Villoresi in the Ferrari Tipo 500s. We’d be running wild around the paddock, drinking it all in. Ascari and my dad became good friends: Alberto’s daily driver was a Jaguar MkVII too, so they compared notes.

“Geoff Duke had now moved to Gilera, and everybody was saying 1953 was going to be a vintage season, a head-to-head between Duke’s Gilera and Graham’s MV. The Isle of Man was the first round of the championship, and we all travelled to England for it. My brother and I stayed with my grandmother at Wallasey while my mother went with Dad to the Island. MV



[1] Graham made his outdated Matchless 500 single go absurdly fast [2] Honda six was baptism of fire [3] Stuart leads Honda team-mate Mike Hailwood at Monza [4] father Les was 1949 World Champion on AJS, and then [5] turned MV Agusta into world beater [6] Stuart learns skills on father’s MV



had a single-cylinder 125cc bike, effectively a quarter of the Four, and Dad ran that in the 125 TT. It was a hot class in those days with works Mondials and NSUs, but he beat them all. Back at Wallasey there was great excitement that Daddy had won, and everything was looking good for the Senior TT the next day.

“We listened to the radio commentary, done as usual by Graham Walker, Murray’s father. Dad was second at the end of the first lap. Then suddenly he wasn’t mentioned any more. I supposed he must have retired. The race carried on and finished, and then my aunt arrived. She was obviously upset, and it scared me. I knew something was wrong but I didn’t know what. She took us upstairs, sat us on the bed and told us: Daddy’s not coming back.

“My next memory is of going with my cousin into the park to feed the ducks, and a newspaper photographer sneaking out of the bushes and taking my picture. And next day, walking to the shops, my aunt hurried me past a newsagent, but I’d seen a picture on one of the front pages of a body lying on the pavement beside a

crashed motorbike. There were many theories about what happened, some plausible, some outlandish. But the basic story is that as he hit the big bump at the bottom of Bray Hill something broke, or maybe the bike just got away from him. He hit the wall on the other side and was killed instantly. If you go in there, you’re not going to walk away from it.

“We never went back to Italy. I remember, in the silly way kids do, being worried about my pushbike which was still there. But the Agusta family were wonderful, they arranged for all our personal effects to be sent back to us. In this country the trade barons from Castrol, Lucas and Shell were all very helpful to the widow with her two young boys. She found a house for us to live in, and my brother and I were sent to boarding school. It was a traumatic time, but children are very resilient. Life carried on. It’s amazing how you can get over these things.

“I still had my total obsession with cars and motorbikes, and spent all my time reading car magazines and drawing bikes in my exercise books. So I only scraped a couple of O-levels, but I managed to get an apprenticeship at Rolls-Royce in Crewe. I was 16, and to get to work I got myself a Lambretta scooter. Then I



Morrons

Champion you're expected to be good. The press love to report it when you go well, but are very quick to say if you're not up to scratch.

"In 1962 I rode the Aermacchi in most of the national events, and then Bill Webster died suddenly, which was a real blow. Fortunately I'd established a bit of a name for myself, and a chap called Jim Ball offered me a 350cc AJS 7R and a 500cc Matchless G50. The deal was I prepared them and raced them, and if I broke them I fixed them. I was 21 now, I'd finished my Rolls apprenticeship and had a job in their drawing office. It was handy being at the Crewe factory: if one of the bikes broke, there was always somebody who'd help you make bits. I did my first 350 and 500 TTs and finished them both, and was getting good results up and down the country. At Rolls I was earning £15 for a hard week's work, yet in a good Sunday at Snetterton I could pick up £25 in prize money. So I decided it was time to go racing full-time. Margaret and I heaved the two bikes into the back of a little Ford van, hooked a tiny caravan on the back, and off we went to Europe.

"Matchless had stopped making bikes by then, and my G50 was bog-standard, but I prepared it very carefully. My light weight meant I could run good gearing, so I was pulling a higher top speed. There were lots of tricks to get up to the weight limit – most of the skinnier riders used to drink a pint of milk just before scrutineering – but at Assen the scrutineer said I was under weight and threw me out. This was bad. If I didn't get the start money, I couldn't afford to get to the next race. I managed to find a Dutch deep-sea diver's belt with lead weights sewn into it, put that on under my sweater, found another scrutineer, and I was in.

"I was still running my two single-cylinder bikes as we went into the 1966 season. The MV Agusta and Honda multis would be well up the road, then the works Czech Jawa twins, and I usually managed to be next up at the front of the privateer bunch. At Imola, with the old Tamburello with the trees on the outside, I was fourth in the 500 race: Giacomo Agostini won it for MV Agusta, and Mike Hailwood, who'd left MV for Honda, was second. The championship started at Hockenheim. I was

fourth there, and fifth in Round 2 at Assen. Then we went to Spa. And, of course, it rained.

"The race started in a total downpour. It was ridiculous, you couldn't see a bloody thing, and there were lots of crashes. Agostini was out in front, Mike had a problem and retired, and his Honda team-mate Jim Redman had a big accident and took down a concrete post. The visibility was awful, with the spray hanging in the trees like it always did round the old Spa. But I found a rhythm, concentrated on staying on board and not making a mistake. Bit by bit I'd catch the odd rider and pass him, but I had no pit signals because I only had Margaret

doing the timekeeping. I just kept going, freezing cold, and after what seemed an age there in the murk was the chequered flag. Agostini had won on the MV, and I was astonished to learn that my old Matchless single had taken second place. A mere privateer, I was third in the 500 World Championship after three rounds.

"Monday morning after any race always used to be Krankenhaus day, when you visited the local hospital to cheer up all your mates who'd been injured. Mike Hailwood and I jumped into Mike's 330GT Ferrari and went into Verviers to see Jim Redman and my pal Derek Woodman, who rode another of Jim Ball's bikes. Derek had gone off on the outside of Burnenville and ended up in someone's front garden, and he was smashed up pretty badly. We found Jim in bed all drugged up, and Mike said, 'It's no good you lying there. We've got championships to win.' Jim

said, 'You'd better get young Stuart to help you out.' I didn't take any notice at the time; I thought it was just a flippant remark.

"Margaret and I packed up our two bikes, hitched up the caravan, and set off for the next race in East Germany at the Sachsenring, another hairy place I'd never seen before. After a few adventures with the Iron Curtain border officials I drove into the paddock, and was summoned by Honda. The team manager said they'd planned to approach me at the end of the year, but with Jim's accident they were bringing things forward. Then they led me to their 250cc six-cylinder, seven-gear machine. Until you've heard it you can't really believe it, but it's the noisiest thing you can imagine, with six >>>



"Monday was Krankenhaus day, when you visited your injured mates"

||| LUNCH WITH...

tiny cylinders screaming away at impossible revs. It was on a different planet from anything I'd ever ridden before, and I had to go out and practice it before I'd even seen the circuit. It was a baptism of fire, but Honda told me to bring it home, so I had a decent steady ride to fourth place. Getting back on the Matchless for the 500 race just felt so easy. But Honda wanted me to concentrate on their 250, and the two bikes were totally different, so I soon gave up the G50."

In the Finnish Grand Prix at Imatra, and again on the Isle of Man, Hailwood and Graham finished one-two for Honda on the 250 Sixes. "Having Mike as a team-mate was pretty daunting: it doesn't do a lot for your confidence when he's several seconds a lap faster than you in some places. But I was in my first full season of Grand Prix racing, having to learn most of the circuits, and very conscious of my responsibility. By the time we got to Monza, the last European round, I felt more at home. During practice I said to Mike, 'What d'you reckon to the Curva Grande? Is it flat, or not?' 'Sure, of course it's flat.' So I built myself up to it, and finally managed to squeak through totally flat. After the session I said, 'You're right, Curva Grande is flat, but it's a bit hairy.' 'What? I was only joking, you brave little bastard.' Because I was lighter and smaller than Mike I could pull a higher gear than him, and during the race I found I could slipstream past him. So I thought, What do we do here? Is he going to let me win it – because by then he'd clinched the 250 World Championship – and how do I win it? Do I lead him into the Parabolica on the last lap, do I slipstream and do him on the line? And then three laps from the end, the bloody crank broke.

"Mike and Ago were a brilliant pair: they always competed over who could collect the most ladies. Little Billy Ivy was part of all that too, rushing around in his dirty Ferrari 275GTB with the side bashed in where he'd wiped it along a wall in the Isle of Man. Mike was very quick everywhere, but he wasn't at all technical. When I first rode the Six I found if you didn't get a down-change on the seven-speed gearbox precisely right, you could find neutral and the engine would die instantly. At the Sachsenring nobody had warned me about this and I frightened myself silly. I said to Mike, 'This box is dreadful. Every time I change down I hit neutral.' And Mike said, 'Yeah, they do that. It's a bastard.' Honda didn't say much, and there was a language barrier, so we just had to get on with it. And Mike did. Occasionally I'd have a little moan and say, 'The handling's not nice.' And they'd say, 'Well, Hailwood-san has said no plobrem, and he is two seconds a rap quicker.' So I'd privately ask Mike what he thought about the handling, and he'd say, 'Yeah, it's a bastard, isn't it?'"

"Agostini was brilliant too, an extremely good rider, but the MV handled so much better. The Hondas had more power, but they were never easy to ride. Of the two – and I'm sure Giacomo would agree with this – Mike was the ultimate, because he could race just as well on a 125 as on a 500. He had a natural ability to adapt to the characteristics of any bike and get the best out of it. Maybe when he got to cars, where set-up was more important, he lost out a bit. He was a very intelligent bloke, an excellent musician on clarinet and piano, and everybody loved him. He wouldn't have fitted into the modern scene, because he wasn't dedicated enough. Emerson Fittipaldi told me he was doing an F2 race somewhere, just leaving the hotel after an early breakfast to go to the track for qualifying, and Mike came in after a night on the tiles. 'Then,' says Emerson, 'we get to the track, and he out-qualifies me.'

"After all Mike had done, after all those hard races, his end was so cruel – to get killed like he did, along with his young daughter, by a truck making an illegal U-turn when they'd just nipped out to buy fish and chips for supper. The truck driver was fined £100.

"For 1967 my Honda contract seemed a formality. But in December word came from Japan that they were cutting back, concentrating on a single entry for Mike in the 500s, and boring out the 250 for Mike to run in the 350s. Sorry,

Stuart, we won't need you. But then Suzuki came calling. I flew out to Japan in February, tried their 50cc and 125cc machines, saw the four-cylinder 250 they were developing, and signed the biggest contract I'd ever seen.

"That meant adapting to two-strokes, which are completely different from four-strokes. It was a real culture shock. The first thing is, no engine braking. And because the oil is in the fuel, they don't like to run on a closed throttle, or they can seize unexpectedly. The 125 would



[1] Graham inspects proof of yet another TT victory [2] 1979 was final year of current racing, in 3-litre Fabergé Capri [3] As BRDC director Stuart got involved in historic racing, winning historic TT too; 250GTO drive at Revival was later benefit [4] Lister-Chevrolet was a regular at Goodwood – which is "just right"



do 130mph, and the 50 did nearly 120mph, so they were quick. But the power bands were incredibly narrow. The 50cc bike had to be kept at all times between 17,000 and 17,500rpm. At 16,900rpm it had no power: at 17,600 it blew up. So you had 14 gears, and you had to watch the rev-counter all the time. The 125 was a little easier: it only revved to 15,000rpm, and the power came in at 14,000, so you made do with just 10 gears. On both you were changing gear all the time: you didn't use the clutch to change, but you kept your fingers on the clutch lever permanently in case it seized. The mixture lever was vital. On the Isle of Man you needed to richen it up at sea level, weaken it off up The Mountain, and vary it in between as the air pressure and temperature changed. So you were busy. I lapped the Island at an average of 86mph on the 50, and on the 125 I just missed my 100mph lap. I finished second on the 125 to Phil Read's Yamaha Four – we still had twins, our Four wasn't ready and we couldn't match the Yamaha for power – but I won the 50cc TT, getting my Isle of Man victory at last.

“What can I say about the Isle of Man? Everybody has an emotional relationship with the place. You feel the mythology the moment you get there. When you drive into Douglas over the Fairy Bridge you have to say hello to

the fairies, otherwise you're going to have bad luck for the whole time you're there.

“It is what it is because of its length, 37¼ miles around. Most of the corners are quick ones, so it's incredibly fast, and it's very bumpy. In a single lap you've got every possible hazard: walls, kerbs, drains, towns, villages, countryside, then you're climbing up onto The Mountain where it's very bleak, very fast, and often foggy. It can be raining in one place and not in another. I never learned it properly, not every inch of it. If you did cram in three laps during practice you were doing well, usually you'd only manage two. The satisfaction if you did a good lap was immense. But sometimes you'd do everything right, and then in the last mile you'd make a mistake, and the good lap was gone. The bits you could remember were the easy bits, the named places. But there'd be others with no name, the odd kink, a brow with a corner after it. And then, just as you got to know a stretch, they'd resurface it or take away a tree, and it was all changed.

“I always hated Bray Hill. I didn't think about Dad there, not consciously anyway, but I don't think anybody enjoys rushing downhill. You plunge steeply down on a blind curve, then it bottoms out where another road joins, and as the suspension hits the bump stops it knocks the wind out of you on the tank. Then you go up again and you get well off the ground as you go over the top, with stone walls either side. You feel as though you're three feet behind the bike all the time, trying to keep up.

“During 1967, even with our twins against the Yamaha Fours, we were competitive all year. I won the Finnish GP, and ended up third in both 50 and 125 Championships. Then, for

the final round in Japan, Suzuki got us our 125 Four at last. It was brilliant: not only faster, but better handling too. I had a race-long battle with Bill Ivy on the works Yamaha, until my exhausts started hitting the ground and I settled for second. It was a great debut, and 1968 seemed set fair. Suzuki came up with a 50cc three-cylinder, with even more gears, and 20bhp – that's 400bhp per litre! And our new Four was going to be magic round the Island. Then in February I was summoned to Suzuki's Brussels office and told they were pulling out.

“The FIM had decided that everything was getting too complicated and too expensive – that sounds familiar, doesn't it? – and so they'd brought in new rules restricting some of the smaller classes to single cylinders and six-speed boxes. So Honda, Suzuki, Yamaha and Kawasaki all got together and said, we're off. In fact it suited them, they'd been spending millions, they'd done what they needed to do. Suzuki

gave me one of my 1967 bikes to do non-championship events and I was back to being a privateer, preparing it myself just like the old days. I won some races in Italy and Austria, and I did a deal with John Webb to race on his English circuits. Then I bought myself a little garage business in Cheshire and decided I'd retired. I wrote to Suzuki and asked if they'd like their bike back, but never got a reply. Then a young lad called Barry Sheene asked to buy it. It was the first serious bike Barry had.

“In 1973 with my brother Chris, who'd become a brilliant engine man, I watched a Group 1 race at Oulton Park. It looked like fun, so I got an old 3-litre Capri and did a few races. One day at Silverstone Les Leston's Z28 Camaro was popping and banging and he was getting nowhere with it. In the paddock we got it running right, and Les blew them all away in the race. He said, 'You'd better take this thing back to Cheshire and prepare it properly,' which we did. Then Les phoned to say he was stuck in Hong Kong and couldn't make Oulton Park that Saturday, so I drove the car to Oulton, stuck the numbers on, put it on pole and cleared off in the race. A week later I did the Martini Silverstone support race for Les, and had a big lead until a tyre punctured. So I decided to find a used Camaro of my own, prepare it properly and get stuck in. I scored eight wins in what was left of the season, and for 1974 it got more serious as Group 1 became the British Touring Car Championship.” Stuart dominated the big class with a string of overall victories, but >>>

“You feel you're three feet behind the bike, trying to keep up”



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||| LUNCH WITH...

was beaten to the title by Bernard Unett's little Avenger which won its class by a wider margin. The Camaro was immaculately turned out – "I've always been a fussy bugger when it comes to presentation" – and Stuart had already painted it metallic dark green when he approached Fabergé for sponsorship. His relationship with the Brut 33 brand would last for four seasons.

In 1974 the Tourist Trophy at Silverstone was for Gp1 saloons for the first time. "Most of the other big cars had two drivers, but the Camaro's appetite for brakes and tyres was high, and I decided I knew best how to preserve the car. With 'bikes, in my era anyway, it paid to be smooth and precise, and when I got to cars I was never one of those flamboyant people with armfuls of opposite lock. If I could do the whole three-hours-plus with only one stop we had a chance. So we came up with a lap time that would be competitive and still eke out the fuel." Stuart won the race by two laps. For 1975 the TT was run to *Coupe de l'Avenir* rules, which brought in the quick BMWs from Europe. Stuart found another secondhand Camaro, built it up just for this race with 7.4-litre engine, put it on pole by 3.4sec and won by over a lap. And that year he dominated the big class in the BTCC once again.

He raced his Camaros overseas in 1976, running at Spa, Mugello, Brno and Kyalami with co-driver Reine Wisell. Then he did three years in 3-litre Capris, one of three works-supported drivers with Gordon Spice and Vince Woodman. "Every weekend we were at it in very equally matched cars with the likes of Chris Craft, Tom Walkinshaw, Jeff Allam and the rest. It was terrific fun. In 1968 I put together a complicated deal to run a Capri in the French championship, so I was racing one weekend in England and the next in France. It was all a bit crackers, midnight ferries to Calais, trying to fit in some testing, dealing with the sponsors, keeping my garage business running. I did the Spa 24 Hours with Brian Muir as my co-driver, and we led the race before various problems intervened. In 1979 Jacques Lafitte drove with us – another wonderful man.

"At the end of 1979 I stopped. I'd had seven good years of touring cars, and there are only so many weekends you can keep going to Silverstone and Brands Hatch. I bought a bigger garage, and became a Honda main dealer. As a director of the BRDC, I got very involved with starting up the Historic Festival, and I found myself being sucked back into racing again, did four seasons in John Beasley's Lola T70, and took it to South Africa on David Piper's series. Then one day Bobby Bell, who had an Alfa T33, called to say he was entered for a race at Thruxton and couldn't make it. After I won that, Bobby lent me his Lister-Chevrolet. I took it home, sorted it out, brother Chris did a great

engine for it, and we raced it a lot. I did the Historic TT at Silverstone three times in Paul Michaels' ex-Equipe Endeavour Aston DB4, sharing with Richard Attwood. We were third, then we were second, and finally we won it, so that was a different type of TT victory to add to the list. In the end we'd just wipe the dust off the Lister's tyres each September and do the Goodwood Revival with it.

"Goodwood is the only decent circuit left for historic cars. Today's tracks have been so changed to suit modern racing that they no longer lend themselves to historics. The last thing old cars need is short, sharp corners with lots of stop and start. I don't think Goodwood is dangerous: it's just right. But each year it's getting more serious, more competitive, and you do heave a sigh of relief on Sunday night to have got through another year without the big accident happening. But for me it's about the honour of being there, and showing off glorious machinery to entertain the public. The Lister has been sold now, but I've been lucky enough to be put in Cobra, Galaxie, Project 214 Aston, Healey 100S, Jaguar Mk1, Ferrari GTO, even an Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire.

Looking back, I've been incredibly lucky. I've never broken a bone, on two wheels or four. When I was racing bikes I fell off on average about once a year, but it usually happened on a slow corner. The exception was on the Isle of Man. Up on The Mountain there's a 100mph right-hander known as Windy Corner. In practice one year I was on a quick one, and I found out how it got its name. In the split second when I needed to peel into the corner the wind coming up the valley caught me side-on, and the bike wouldn't turn in. I was braking hard, coming down the gears, but I slid onto the grass verge and straight for a stone wall. Just before the wall there was a ditch, the front wheel went down into it, and I cleared the wall and landed in the field the other side. I picked myself up, climbed over the wall, righted the bike and rode it back to the pits. My old pal



Tommy Robb was caught by the wind at exactly the same spot, but he didn't clear the wall. He hit it and broke his neck, and he still suffers from it to this day.

"In our era you tried not to take silly risks, because you knew if you crashed you were probably going to hurt yourself badly. We had pudding basin helmets, single-layer leathers, none of the Kevlar body protection they have nowadays. We used to wear golfing gloves because they gave us more feel, which was ridiculous really. Almost every week it seemed a friend, or somebody I knew, got killed or injured. It was always at the back of my mind that I could die, but we all ignore things we don't want to think about. I believed it wasn't going to happen to me, even while I knew it very much could happen to me – and had happened to my father. And a different part of me felt fatalistic about it: if it happens it happens. It's all very strange, and I never really figured it out..." **M**

**EXCLUSIVE
READERS EVENT**

Join *Motor Sport*
for an evening with

**JOHN
SURTEES**
OBE

at the Bluebird
restaurant, Chelsea



On Tuesday October 2, 2012, *Motor Sport* will be hosting an exclusive reader event with John Surtees. The only person to have won a World Championship on both two and four wheels will be sharing tales from his career with readers of *Motor Sport*, at the historic Bluebird restaurant in Chelsea, London.

You will be greeted with a champagne reception, followed by a delicious three-course meal. After dinner the fun continues as John Surtees, with *Motor Sport's* Editor-in-Chief Nigel Roebuck and Editor Damien Smith, will discuss his colourful racing career, followed by an opportunity for readers to ask the 1964 Formula 1 World Champion their own questions.

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WHEN: Tuesday October 2, 2012
TIME: 6.30pm – 10.30pm
**WHERE: The Bluebird restaurant,
Chelsea, London**

No. 3 Les Leston pit board and bag

Les Leston, who died recently at the age of 91, was an accomplished racing driver through the 1950s and into the '60s, but his automotive legacy won't be found in the results columns of *MotorSport* back issues. Instead, you'll discover it on the advertising pages, month after month, year after year. Leston's car accessory business, run from his shop in London's High Holborn, set the trends for enthusiasts who wanted to customise their Ford Anglias, Cortinas and Zephyrs. As a well-known jazz drummer, Leston obviously understood the true meaning of cool... His business expanded into supplying the racing world with equipment, such as this pit board set we spotted on display in a low cabinet at the Donington Grand Prix Collection. But pity the poor mechanic who had to hang this out for his passing driver: lightweight plastics were still a couple of generations away!



H O L D T H E H O R S E S

Against all normal wisdom, if you want to take your Ferrari 458 to Le Mans you'll need to de-tune the engine. We drive the GTE version to see what else changes

BY COLIN GOODWIN

There are several motoring clichés that are complete bunk – like a Caterham Seven being ‘a four-wheeled motorbike’. A Caterham, or any other sports car for that matter, doesn't lean into a corner so is nothing like a bike. And anyone who has driven a racing kart knows that no car has ever had ‘kart-like steering’, and a good thing too because a slight jink of the steering wheel would have you spearing off the high street and through Waterstone's window.

And then there's ‘It's a racing car for the road’. Even the stiffest and most uncomfortable road-legal car is still not going to feel like a true racing machine, not least because it won't be running on slicks on the public road. My first drive in Ferrari's then-new 458 Italia was at Donington Park in the summer of 2010. It is a shockingly fast and competent car, so much so I thought, that the average owner would be in awe of the thing on a circuit and probably most of the time several hundred yards behind the

car. I very nearly wrote later, before stopping myself, that it was like a road-legal racing car.

And I'm glad I did hold back, because today we're driving a pukka racing Ferrari 458 and just a brief squint at it shows that it's a long way removed from its number-plated brother. It's a GT2-spec car that JMW Motorsport ran in the European Le Mans Series in 2011, and by the time you read this should have made its second appearance at the Le Mans 24 Hours itself. Although JMW's yellow 458 is built to GT2 specifications the class is now called GTE in both the series and at Le Mans. Slightly confusing? It is to me, so I rang Gary Watkins, *Motor Sport* contributor and the Stephen Hawking of sports car racing, for clarification. Pointing out that sports car racing classes have always been complicated, Watkins explained that GTE is split into two groups: GTE /Am for teams with a maximum of one professional driver and GTE/Pro for teams with a pair of pros, which is the group that JMW competes in.

We're at Pembrey in South Wales, where team driver James Walker will be testing >>>





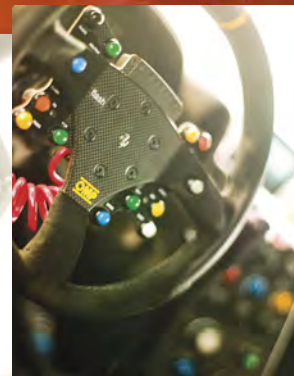


Left, Goodwin tells Walker how to go faster. Race car sheds a lot of weight; wheel controls move to dash

the car after we've had our run in it. I have raced bikes at Pembrey but have never driven a car around it. An odd circuit, quite flat with a mixture of medium-speed corners and a couple of really cheeky tighteners. Team manager Tim Sugden, who drove with Walker and Rob Bell at Le Mans in 2011, takes me for a couple of laps in a BMW 3-Series for a quick conversion course from two wheels to four.

The 458 GT2, like all Ferrari sports racing cars of the past three decades, is built by Michelotto in Padova. The company starts with a body in white and then sets about totally transforming the car. There's the most perfectly stitched roll cage ever and a bespoke fascia that's a beautiful combination of carbon fibre and anodised switches. As you slip into the low-set bucket seat and replace the removable steering wheel you are presented with a more straightforward set of controls than in the standard 458 Italia. While not a total Luddite, I can't be doing with a plethora of steering wheel-mounted controls that would confuse a concert pianist. After all, Porsche does without them on its fabulous GT3 RS 4.0. Michelotto moves the knobs that control the engine management system and various parameters such as the power steering to the fascia, leaving the steering wheel free for the radio transmit buttons, neutral button and other stuff that's more important to have immediately to thumb.

To the right of the steering wheel (all 458 GT2s are left-hand drive) is a large chunky gearshift. No diddy little paddles on this car. The lever is connected to a sequential Hewland gearbox. "The Hewland 'box is one of the car's strengths," says Sugden, "It's new for the 458 but it's an updated version of a very well proven design." Behind me is the 458's 4498cc 90-degree V8 engine which in the road car produces 570bhp. In this car it has been castrated by 28.3mm air restrictors that bring



the power down to 465bhp at 6250rpm. There's a bit of a drawback with the GT2 tipping the scales at 1245kg to the road car's 1485kg. I've done the important sum for you and the answer is that the racer has a power to weight deficit of 10bhp per tonne.

Down in the footwell is a sight that you won't see in the standard 458: three pedals. Sugden has already explained that upchanges are done without the clutch but that it's important to shift while accelerating hard because otherwise the gears will baulk.

A roadgoing Italia's engine sounds pretty manic, but the GT2's is even more raucous. Pulling away isn't hard; you just need to feed in plenty of revs and not try to ease in the short-throw clutch pedal too smoothly. The perfect long-distance racing car should not be hard work to drive. First impression of road vs race 458 is that the steering on this car has better

feel and slightly more weight than the road car. There's not a lot wrong with the road car's two turns lock-to-lock but I remember when I drove the car at Donington with rival Lotus, Porsche GT3 and Noble M600 to hand it didn't feel quite as precise as the others.

Not surprisingly, Michelotto fits completely adjustable suspension to its racers, and obviously stiffer damping, springs and anti-roll bars. All these, plus Dunlop slicks, give the GT2 a much more hard-edged feel than the road car. This is JMW's only car, so testing to extreme the effectiveness of the GT2's aero package through Pembrey's cling-on tight Honda curve is not worth the risk. I suspect that the racer would gain an edge here and build on it further on braking into the hairpin that follows it. The brakes are mighty and the grip from the warmed slicks plus the reduced overall weight would see the GT2 outbrake the road car here.

Not surprisingly it is the Hewland gearbox that makes the racing 458 feel entirely different to the road-going Italia. The road car's F1-inspired robotic manual has a millisecond-fast change and in its most race-orientated setting is quite harsh. The Hewland's straight-cut gears and manual operation reflect much more heavy engineering. With the racer's weight-saving but without the air restrictors this would be a truly spectacular car, totally removed from the showroom car. Wish I was on a track that I knew well, like Brands or Snetterton, so there was more confidence to drive the car harder. I suspect that the harder you push it the >>>

||| FERRARI GTE TEST

Racer employs
Hewland gearbox for
longevity and boasts
significant aero effect



further it distances itself from its tax-discarrying relatives.

If we could make a direct comparison of lap times, the GT2 would undoubtedly come out on top, the difference depending a lot upon the circuit used. But it is fairly irrelevant because the Michelotto car is designed to go hard and fast for 24 hours. And today's endurance events tend to be sprint races that happen to go on for a very long time. Here at Pembrey a cautious Goodwin is barely making the car sweat and after only just breaking into double figures in laps I bring it back safe and in one piece. Much to the delight, I'd imagine, of Jim McWhirter, the JMW in the team's name.

Jim McWhirter is a real gent, in the sport for the love of it. He puts his hands deep into his pockets for this show. The cost-saving option would be to run in the GTE/Am category and jet in some financier type with an artful full of Krugerrands, but McWhirter likes to win, too, so a driver fast with the money but slow on the track is of no use at all. And Jim McWhirter and his team do win. Already the team has claimed two GT2 championships and won the opening ELMS round at Paul Ricard this season. Last year the team came second in the series' GTE/Pro class and that meant a guaranteed entry for Le Mans this June, the ultimate goal for anyone who races sports cars. Last year at the Sarthe the team finished 24th overall and ninth in class. Rob Bell has left to drive McLaren's MP4-12C GT car so young James Walker is now partnered

by Jonny Cocker, with Kiwi Roger Wills joining them for the classic French race itself.

In 2009 the team ran a Ferrari 430 GT2 but in 2010 switched to Aston Martin and its GT2 racer. "With the Aston we were essentially the works development team," explains Sugden. "We were working with Prodrive and very much tackling problems as we came across them, sometimes at the track on race weekends. The only other Aston apart from ours was one being raced in Japan.

"Running the Ferrari is more straightforward. For starters we have strength in numbers because there are around 15 other 458s being raced in the various different GT2 classes including 11 in GTE/Pro. Also, the Michelotto people are very easy to deal with. There's always someone on the end of the 'phone and we have a Michelotto technician who knows every grommet and washer on the car present at every race. Last year it was an excellent French engineer called Brice La Forge, with Christian Michelotto, who is the son of the founder and who runs the company, turning up at the odd round. He's a great bloke, super-chilled out who's often found sitting cross-legged in the back of a truck smoking a fag."

The bulk of the competition in the 2011 season came, not surprisingly, from Porsche and its 997 RSR. Traditionally, if you want the simplest way to go sports car racing then a turnkey Porsche 911 is your best option. Porsche

sends its motor sport support trucks and parts wagons to all rounds and if you bend something on the car it's simply a matter of producing a credit card at the counter and buying the replacement. "Porsche goes racing in its own way," says Sugden. "Michelotto just does it the Italian way but the end result is the same – the parts and technical support is just as good."

Arguably Ferrari has never had such a strong presence in sports car racing. Actually, the clock has been turned way back to the days of Rob Walker, Scuderia Filipinetti and other private teams that did the racing for the factory and who built strong relationships with Maranello. McWhirter is a bit of a Walker character with public school accent swapped for Ulster, but

with the same passion and attitude to the people who work (and volunteer) for his team. From Sugden and his chief engineer Steve Bunkhall to the team gofer, there's a family atmosphere that blends with the top-notch professionalism of the team's equipment and working practice.

McWhirter himself has competition history, starting in 1970 with 210

National karts through to 250cc superkarts. A break followed from the mid-80s to a return to competition with a couple of seasons in the Ferrari Challenge. Initially McWhirter had a team run a car for him in LMS, before in 2009 deciding to turn a big fortune into a small one by running his own team. Yet the grin on his face as he stands on Pembrey's earth bank watching James Walker blast past in the Dunlop-liveried 458 GT2 implies that he reckons this is money well spent. **M**

"Michelotto is a great bloke, often found in the back of a truck smoking"



Ed Hartley

Journalists who race are common: journalists who are genuine racing drivers less so. We can only dream of imitating Paul Frère, a Le Mans winner no less, or *The Autocar's* pre-war scribe and Bentley ace Sammy Davis. Today, there are a clutch (a suitable collective noun) who attempt to get somewhere close and I know of about half a dozen who can hold their own as racers.

But none of them work on the staff at *Motor Sport*. Our intrepid Ed Foster dabbles in the family MGB and the odd club race, dep ed Gordon Cruickshank still exercises his Jaguar MkII in classic road rallies, but it's all a long way from hanging off a motorcycle sidecar with Eric Oliver or sitting beside Stirling Moss on the Mille Miglia.

There's little more grating than self-indulgent journo's who rate themselves as racers, and say as much in print. Nevertheless, the sweet taste of competition, the adrenaline pump of sitting on a grid waiting for the lights to go out, to be pitched into the cut and thrust, to have a go yourself... It can only improve your ability to write about the sport and better understand the drivers' eye-view.

SCHOOL OF ARDS KNOCKS

Gaining a licence to be let loose on the tracks has never been easier. Even for the lowliest form of wannabe racers...

BY DAMIEN SMITH

I was saying as much to Jackie Oliver after a passenger run around Goodwood's rally stage in an MG Metro 6R4 in March. He nodded and suggested I head to Silverstone to get my licence. Foster had been egging on art editor Damon Cogman and I to join him in some club racing high jinks, so... we took the plunge. All for the good of *Motor Sport*, of course. And where better than Silverstone to earn our spurs?

To claim our national B licences and cut our racing teeth, we would need to pass the Novice

Driver Training Course administered by the Association of Racing Drivers Schools. The ARDS test, as it is known, can be taken at just about every race circuit in the UK. The Silverstone Driving Experience offered us a half-day of tuition and the test, so we jumped at the chance to escape from the office.

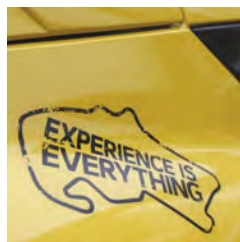
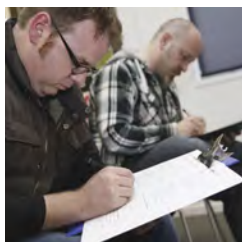
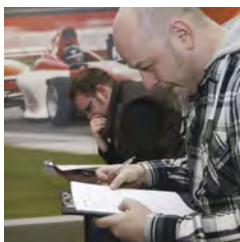
Now, at this point I should admit I've got a bit of history with both Silverstone and the ARDS test. Twice before I've been through the process and held a licence, only to foolishly let it lapse on both occasions. That was largely down to the shuddering experience of my only previous race start, on the old Silverstone 'International' layout. Just over 10 years ago I allowed myself to be

pitched into a Ford Fiesta BTCC support race, with too little preparation. From the moment I looked in my mirrors on the first lap and saw Silverstone Sid's familiar Jaguar fire tender trying hard not to pass me, I knew it had been a mistake. My confidence was duly shot.

All these years later, it's high time I banish those memories. Our guide for the morning is Andrew Bentley, a familiar face on the UK national scene and one of Silverstone's most experienced instructors. We meet him in the



Silverstone Experience Centre (left) offers a wide range of cars and courses. Andrew Bentley (below) patiently steered the editor and art boy Cogman through the ARDS course



impressive Driving Experience centre situated between Hangar Straight and the Stowe circuit. Before we jump in a car, we head for the classroom to watch the Motor Sport Association's ARDS video presented by another familiar face, Steve Deeks, and a pep talk on vehicle dynamics from Andrew. We reckon we have a good idea about the pitch-and-roll physics of a car in motion, but to hear it described so eloquently focuses the mind. Andrew's words will filter back as we approach Copse, Maggotts and the rest later on.

We're on the national circuit for our sessions. A lap each in the passenger seat reminds us once again how racing drivers always seem to bend reality by appearing to have so much time when they're at speed, and then it's our turn in a hot little 2-litre Renault Mégane. We're given three short runs each, the last being the one that counts for the test.

Andrew's patience and calm tuition helps us both improve our lines and technique, and Copse, my old nemesis during that dim and distant Fiesta race, soon becomes much less daunting. To pass the test, speed is of no relevance. We need to show we've listened to the tuition, that we have good awareness (in other words, keep an eye on our mirrors as we share the track with other school cars), and an essential one – don't spin. The speed will come later. Apparently.

On our test run, Andrew keeps quiet until we head for the pits, and tells us we've passed. Exams have never been so much fun.

But it's not over yet. We return to the classroom for the written test, checking our knowledge of flag signals and racing procedure. In our jobs, it's all stuff we should know, and anyway that smooth talker Deeks has given us all the answers in the video. No pressure then. Fortunately, our blushes are spared and we're told we've passed this bit, too.

Our gratitude duly proffered to Andrew, I sit down with the school's director Chris Ward, who I first met about 15 years ago when he was a promising Formula Vauxhall racer. To run the country's biggest racing school is clearly a full-time job, but Chris is still very much an active racing driver. "We like our instructors all to be current racers because it's good for the credibility of the centre," he says. "Some of them are high-profile, too. As you might have seen, [Le Mans and sports car racer] Danny Watts was here today."


Instructing during the week and on non-race weekends has long been a handy earner for young and aspiring professional racers. "We have a core of 30 instructors but we draw on a pool of 80 to 90," says Chris. "The benefit of Silverstone is that we can run three circuits

all at once, and we can put 900 drivers through the Driving Experience on a weekend. On the single-seater course, we can get 140 drivers through in a day, each with 40 minutes of driving time."

Talk to a racing driver for any length of time and it won't take long to hear tales of cheeky instructor shenanigans. But as Chris explains, now more than ever instructing is a serious business, and must be considered so by the young drivers the school employees. "We start them at a lower level and build up their experience," he says. "It takes a year to train a good instructor."

The choice of courses and 'experiences', in a wide range of cars, is deeply impressive at Silverstone. Competition between the circuits, and particularly Jonathan Palmer's MotorSport Vision, is rife, so courses must cater for all levels of experience and price. As long as everyone leaves with a smile on their face, Chris is happy.

As for Damon and I, what happens next is anyone's guess. We've passed the first test, but the bigger hurdles are still to come. It might be a bit late for that Le Mans win though.

Our thanks to the Silverstone Driving Experience. For more information on its range of courses, go to www.silverstone.co.uk. For more on how to get started in motor sport, visit www.gomotorsport.net 

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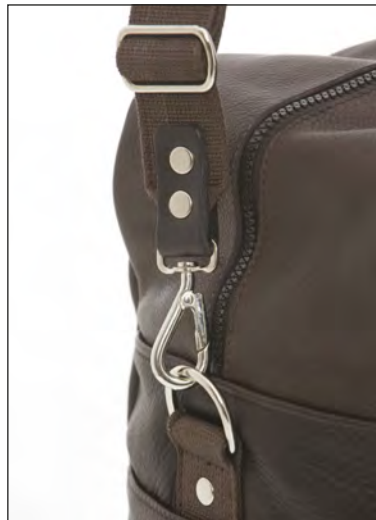
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Road cars



by
Andrew
Frankel

Alfa Romeo has announced the return of the Alfa Spider, to be built by Mazda in Hiroshima from 2015. Don't be appalled. The car will be developed jointly by Alfa and Mazda over the next three years, the Mazda version being the new MX-5. Each will use their own engines, styling and set up, so all the joint venture will really ensure is that they're built properly in a volume that makes sense for both manufacturers. You can also expect the result to be light and, most importantly, rear-wheel drive.

I've always wondered whether the Alfa Spider would live in our hearts in quite the same way had Benjamin Braddock not been given a Duetto as a graduation present. The truth not relevant to *The Graduate* was that those early Spiders were merely pleasant cars, a modest standard to which all subsequent Spiders failed to aspire. By the early 1990s, the Spider had descended into complete self-parody and ended up a sad, antediluvian shadow of its not-that-great former self, not so much a has-been as a never-really-was.

Nor can much that is nice be found to say about the front-wheel drive Spiders that followed, either the GTV-based model of the 1990s or the Brera Spider of the last decade. Like the first Spider, the moment you had drunk in their undeniably attractive appearance, you'd already experienced absolutely the best they had to offer. No car should be at its best when parked and certainly not an Alfa Romeo.

Nevertheless, my hopes are high for the new one. Forget Alfa's last Japanese JV resulting in the Arna and Nissan Cherry Europe and focus instead on a more recent but still distant

collaboration. In the late '80s Alfa Romeo joined with Fiat, Lancia and Saab to create a new 'Type 4' platform. Just like this new deal with Mazda, all parties used the same chassis but were allowed total freedom to clothe and power it how they chose. It resulted in the Fiat Croma, Lancia Thema, Saab 9000 and Alfa 164. And of them all it was the Alfa that was best by far. I think there is every chance that the new Alfa Spider won't be the best since the original, but the best full stop.



While we're on the subject of car manufacturers evoking spirits from their past, Renault appears on the point of putting Alpine back into action. At the Monaco Grand Prix it first showed and then ran this extraordinary looking concept car called the A110-50, allegedly to celebrate the original A110 reaching its half century.

Of course, all the talk is of whether it's going to make it into production. We have to be careful here because manufacturers are very good at suggesting they might turn concepts

into cars when, in fact, they have not the slightest intention of doing anything of the sort because it increases coverage many times over. Then again concepts that actually work properly usually demonstrate a level of commitment by their creators far beyond what's needed to create an inanimate object and park it on a motor show stand.

But let's assume just for a moment that Renault is sincere when it says it is actively looking at ways of putting the car into production. What should it be? Clearly it should be small, light and place its engine behind the driver, all of which the concept achieves, courtesy of its Mègane Trophy race car underpinnings.

I think it should then be tuned to be a maximum attack track day car with enough civility to drive to the 'Ring and back without reducing its occupants to tears. So it needs a small amount of luggage space, a decent-sized fuel tank, heating and options such as air-conditioning. Any attempt to go after the Porsche Cayman would be doomed.

The problem with my suggested approach is that sales volumes would be low, so the purchase price would need to be high, and is anyone going to spend a lot of money on an Alpine? If the last one, the great driving but glacially slow-selling A610, is any guide, the answer would seem to be few. But the A610's problem was they aimed it at 911 buyers, an inevitably doomed strategy. Renault's maths alone will tell them if it can make money out of a stripped-out but still expensive track day car. If not, I expect we'll be waiting a while yet for Alpine to return.

I have fumed at length on the website about the Government's crowd-pleasing yet thoughtless decision to exempt pre-1960 cars from the MoT test, so won't dwell on it for long here. But as they appear to have developed a Toivonen-type skill for handbrake turns on all matters from pasties to buzzards, is it too much to hope for one here?

Briefly, their pitch is that owners of pre-60 cars are such good coves who maintain their cars so well they don't need MoTs. My pitch is that this is arrant, dangerous nonsense. Now any old wreck that's been slowly rotting away in a shed these last few years, because it has no more chance of passing an MoT than I do of winning the Targa Florio, can now be put back on the road entirely legally. Far worse than this, cars with potentially lethal faults that would be picked up in an instant by anyone qualified to issue an MoT certificate can be tarted up and flogged on to some poor, unsuspecting member of the public. And if the Government thinks that not a single person involved in the old car world is capable of behaving this way, they are even more removed from reality than I thought.

The man responsible, Greg Knight MP, has accused me of making heavy weather of this issue. He may have a point, but not half as big a point as will be made to him and his Government by the families of the first innocent bystanders to be injured or worse by a mechanical failure on a pre-60 car that would otherwise have been spotted by a routine MoT check.

After less than 18 months in the role, Bentley boss Wolfgang Durheimer is leaving Crewe to become head of R&D for Audi. While the news is undoubtedly good for Audi and a clear fit for Durheimer who is an engineer first and foremost, it means Bentley is about to usher in its third



CEO in two years. That man is Wolfgang Schreiber (left) who is currently in charge of VW's commercial vehicle operations. The better news is that Schreiber has also been both technical and managing director of Bugatti.

Time will tell what this means for Bentley.

Unlike Schreiber, Durheimer is not a VW careerist and was at both BMW and a then-independent Porsche before joining Bentley. Durheimer also has racing in his blood and had commissioned a feasibility study into the possibility of returning Bentley to Le Mans. All I hope is that Schreiber sticks around and brings stability back to the Bentley board.

MY MOTORING MONTH



CLINKING GLASSES WITH LEGENDS OF THE MILLE MIGLIA

I'VE NOT RECENTLY WITNESSED A more improbable scene than watching Sir Stirling and Lady Susie Moss, Norman Dewis and Patrick Head standing patiently in one of Ryanair's famous queues at Stansted. My job was to escort them to Brescia for the start of this year's Mille Miglia.

They were there to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Stirling and Norman's entry in a works Jaguar C-type equipped with a newfangled 'plate brake' better known to you and I as a disc. In 1952 after adventures that made Stirling's 1955 run look positively uneventful, they retired near the finish while in what Norman only recently discovered was second place, not third as has been assumed.

Spool forward 60 years and Stirling and Norman are at the start not in the 1951 Le Mans-winning XKC003 in which they did their original run, because it was cut up by the factory in 1953, but 005 which is the car in which Stirling won the disc's first ever race at Reims the following month.

But before that they appeared in the square where all the cars were paraded for the town to see. From the reception granted them, you'd have thought Brad and Angelina were in town, not a couple of retired racers with a combined age of 173. When Jaguar's PR boss asked me where he might find them, all I could do was point helplessly at a seething mass of humanity. Of course the boys took it all in their stride as the world's press and public descended on

them, conducting an endless stream of interviews, posing with pretty girls and apparently enjoying themselves.

On the start ramp more pandemonium ensued. It was lost on no-one that rarely was the phrase 'once in a lifetime opportunity' more appropriately used; and as Stirling lifted the clutch and glided off the start ramp, you couldn't hear the engine over the noise of the crowd. They then drove around the town, returning to the start before handing it over to Patrick to compete in the actual event.

Why Patrick? Because when its first owner Tommy Wisdom was finished with the car in 1953, he sold it to Brigadier Michael Head who campaigned it in Scandinavia for two seasons. Patrick remembers the car well from his childhood and it was wonderful to see them reunited.

When it was all over, we repaired with the Mosses and Norman to a trattoria for a quiet evening after a long, hot and busy day. Some hours and several bottles later, we were privileged to be told by Norman a little of the life he hardly ever talks about. Before Jaguar even existed as a marque, Norman spent four years as a centre turret gunner in Bristol Blenheims. He was eventually grounded by a kidney complaint brought on by years spent in the poorly sealed turret which blasted sub-zero air onto his back. I suggested he must have been somewhat relieved by the news. "Relieved?", he replied. "No not really, disappointed in fact."

At 1.30am I retired, leaving Norman in full flow. Seven hours later I dragged my liverish body downstairs to find an immaculately turned out Norman having had his morning stroll, laughing and joking with Stirling as if he'd been on tomato juice all night. This summer Norman Dewis will celebrate his 92nd birthday.



A COOPER WITH A DFV? IT'S THE FUTURE THAT NEVER WAS

THE DEATH OF ROY SALVADORI just three weeks after the passing of Carroll Shelby meant that the only two people ever to have won the Le Mans 24 Hours in an Aston Martin have now been taken from us.

I last spoke to Roy about five years ago, about his less well remembered life managing the Cooper F1 team in general and the Cooper-Maserati I was about to drive in particular. He was somewhat rueful about the job and the Maser engine that had been forced upon the team by its then-owner, Mario Tozzi-Condivi, who also imported Maseratis into the UK. Far from taking the battle to the newly-developed Cosworth DFV, the V12 was in fact "based on the V12 made in the '50s to give the 250F a bit more shove".

By 1967 anyone with eyes could see what the car needed was a DFV. "But John Cooper was against it. The Minis were a huge part of his life, and he didn't want to jeopardise that by doing a deal with Ford. Look at what's happened to the Cooper name and the way it's used today and you have to say he made the right decision..."

Indeed, but it is worth imagining for a moment what such a car might have been like. Salvadori was adamant that the T81 and T86 were decent cars with inadequate engines. Fitted with a DFV and with the talents of Jochen Rindt and Pedro Rodríguez at the wheel, Cooper's decline and fall as an F1 constructor could, at the very least, have been arrested and possibly even reversed.



MERCEDES-BENZ C63 AMG BLACK SERIES

Cars intended to function equally well on road and track rarely work. To a car designer they're as different as land and sea and you only need to watch a seal try to move down a beach to know how optimising a design for one environment can compromise it for another.

It's a balance Mercedes has sometimes struggled to find with its AMG 'Black Series' products. The first was based on the SLK and proved a terrible car. It had more power than its chassis could cope with and was frustrating on the road and, at times, scary on the track without ever being in the least bit rewarding.

The next one seemed even less promising, based as it was on the mediocre CLK, but against the odds it was inspirational. So hopes were high for the SL-based Black Series, with its 670bhp, twin-turbo 6-litre V12 motor but then swiftly dashed. It was restless and remote on the road and, for all its power, neither capable nor particularly entertaining on the track.

What, then, to make of this new Black Series, based on the C63 AMG coupé but with its pumped up haunches and two-seat interior? On paper not too much. An additional £40,990 over the £57,775 charged for the standard and hardly pedestrian C63, liberates just 53 extra horsepower from its mighty 6.2-litre V8, enough to shave 0.3sec off the 0-62mph time.

Top speed has risen from 155 to 186mph, but only because Mercedes has rewritten the line of code in its electronics to say 300 rather than 250km/h. Both are entirely artificial limits. There's not even been a massive weight saving: the Black Series SL was 200kg lighter than the donor vehicle, this C-class has a token 20kg less left to carry.

And yet, when you drive it, you discover another Black Series car that confounds expectations – this time, thank goodness, for all the right reasons.

The cabin sets the tone for what's to come. There are no rear seats in here, and only the slimmest of racing buckets for you and your soon to be terrified passenger. The steering



FACTFILE

ENGINE: 6.2 litres, eight cylinders, petrol
TOP SPEED: 186 mph (limited)
PRICE: £98,765
POWER: 510bhp at 6800rpm
FUEL/CO₂: 23.2mpg, 286g/km
www.mercedes-benz.co.uk

wheel is the same, but now it has a suede rim. Mercedes could have saved a load more weight by throwing away all comfort and convenience items such as climate control and navigation but only at the cost of compromising its sales potential. Unless you stray into the hardcore world of Radicals, Caterhams and Ariel Atoms, customers actually want this stuff in their performance cars more than they might admit.

It starts with a bark that would wake half the street were owners of such cars inclined to live in terraces. There's no getting around it, the V8 cannot help giving a small but deafening whoop simply at the joy of being called to action. You select drive and creep away at idle, muttering apologies to your neighbours as you pass. ►►



Supercharged Elise S papers over Lotus' cracks rather brilliantly

LOTUS ELISE S

ONE OF THE MANY problems faced by Lotus right now is how to make money out of the Elise. We, the motoring press, have fawned over it these past 16 years but the truth is if you're going to make a good business selling cars in volumes as low as this, you need to be able to charge proper money for them. Which is why Lotus' business plan – should it ever come to fruition – is based on selling larger numbers of more expensive cars.

My fear is that's not what people want Lotus to be. My sense, rejected by the now-former Lotus boss Dany Bahar when I suggested as much to him, is that those who love Lotuses love them to be small, light, simple, technologically advanced and affordable. Problem is that this business model may have worked in Lotus' heyday almost 50 years ago, but there appear to be insufficient takers today.

I hope Bahar is right, that my view is peculiarly UK-centric and that in other regions around the world, particularly places like China where the Lotus brand is still strong,

people will not think twice about spending Porsche 911 money on a Lotus.

It has, however, to survive in the meantime and one of the ways it's trying to do so is with this new supercharged Elise S. Of course forced-induction Elises are nothing new and this one has no more power than the last, the supercharged Elise SC. But, says Lotus, it has far more torque, further down the rev range and is distinctly more driveable.

And they're right, to a point. It's much easier to make the new S perform than the old SC, which required lots of revs all of the time. But so too was keeping it screaming at 8000rpm part of the fun, especially if you were on a track day. The S is less interesting to listen to and less inclined to rev, having done its best work long before even 7000rpm is reached.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 1.8 litres, four cylinders, petrol
TOP SPEED: 145mph
PRICE: £37,150
POWER: 217bhp at 6800rpm
FUEL/CO₂: 37.5mpg, 175g/km
www.lotuscars.com

Then again if you believe what makes a Lotus is not how fast it goes down a straight, but the way it gets into and out of a corner, the S makes the Elise better than ever. It's not its unchanged peak power but the extra mid-range shove that really challenges the chassis and brings it alive. Even with the open differential Lotus continues to use, traction is very rarely an issue with Elises, but now, thanks to this engine, you can come out of corners right on the very limit of both longitudinal and lateral acceleration. It is sublime fun.

The Elise S costs £37,150, an £8000 premium over the standard car. It's a lot of money especially when you consider the base Elise is lighter and has even sweeter steering, but it does raise power from 134bhp to 217bhp and turn the Elise from enjoyable recreation into a serious weapon. Then again, if that's what you want your Lotus to be, what you really need is the 345bhp Exige S, a full appraisal of which will appear on these pages next month.

Dawn is definitely the best time for you to drive this car and the worst for those who live nearby.

It throws its big surprise before you've done much more than tickle the throttle. Even on quite tricky surfaces, this is a remarkably comfortable car given its apparent singularity of purpose. It's not soft – on the contrary in fact – but the suspension is so well damped it takes the sharp edges off every imperfection you hit. If you're wondering where that extra £40,000 has been spent, I wouldn't mind wagering that a disproportionate amount went on the dampers.

But it does make you fear for it. Cars that are this nuanced and accommodating at such low speeds have a tendency to come unstuck as effort levels rise. The Black Series SL, for instance, became progressively less manageable the faster you went, to the point that on the track you had to be consciously conservative with entry speeds into corners to stop the power of the engine overwhelming the abilities of its chassis.

Not this time. This Black Series model starts good, and then only gets better. On my usual test route, tackled while all sensible people were still in bed, this 1710kg, front-engined, automatic Mercedes coupé brought most readily to mind the memory of the Porsche 911 GT3. Despite the Mercedes' weight and the positioning of its engine, it has that Porsche deftness, the ability not only to get into a corner on exactly the line you had intended, but then to stay there, rooted to your chosen trajectory,

no matter what changes in camber or surface the road might throw at you. Indeed because it resists understeer more, I'd say it was more reassuring and easier to drive cross-country than a GT3 if, ultimately, probably not quite so quick or communicative.

Perhaps more than any other car with this level of performance, the Mercedes makes you confident, confident it will be able to cope with whatever challenge you set it. On the public road this is not necessarily an entirely good thing, because it encourages anti-social behaviour. It's so controllable you can drive it at outrageous angles of attack without ever using more than your fair share of road. All you'll do instead is scare occupants of on-coming cars. So if you really want to explore what this car can do, there's only one sensible place to do it.

But that's on a circuit, where I confidently expected the C-class's composure to fall apart. It was so good on the road, it had to go all wrong on the track.



Latest C-class from Mercedes' intermittently good 'Black Series' line has well-balanced chassis and engine note that'll wake the dead

Except it doesn't. I'll grant that the road is its preferred habitat and not even some of the best judged suspension settings you'll find on a road car can ameliorate entirely the unavoidably negative effects of its substantial mass. But it doesn't get ragged if you slightly overdo your entry speed as did the Black Series version of the SL, it just scrubs off in mild and stable understeer until it's ready to commit to the corner.

By now you may be wondering why I have got so far through this story without going into much detail about its engine and gearbox. The reason is that the chassis is so good, it reduces these other components to mere supporting roles. The V8 is lusty and sounds great but it's really just there to get the car to the speeds at which you can best enjoy its handling. The paddle shift gearbox is less good, sometimes pausing before up changes and refusing downshifts even when in its most sporting setting.

Like all Black Series cars, the C-class is built in limited numbers, which is why Mercedes can charge so much for it: people will pay for the exclusivity and the residual value that results. And now that the BMW M3 GTS and Porsche 911 GT3 are no longer on sale, there really isn't anything else like it out there. A Nissan GTR would be quicker still but, to me at least, nothing like as good either to own or drive. So for now at least, it exists in a tiny little bubble all of its own. Those preparing new rivals for it need to know it's going to take a hell of a lot of bursting.



Focus ST had our man salivating. Vauxhall's next hot Astra will need to be better than good



FORD FOCUS ST

YOU KNOW THE WAY it is with hot hatches. Each successive generation is more powerful than the last, but only to mask the fact that it's also heavier and less interesting to drive. Is it any coincidence that when people talk hot hatches together it is to cars like the original VW Golf and Peugeot 205 GTI that their attentions turn? It is not coincidence.

But here is one that bucks this trend. Yes, the new Ford Focus ST is a little more powerful than the last, but so too is it also a little lighter and more exciting to drive. Indeed its character, if not its outright

performance is closer to the unhinged Focus RS of 2010.

Its speed is not remarkable. Power comes from a 2-litre turbo engine producing a very useful 247bhp, enough to propel it to 62mph in 6.3sec. In this there is nothing outstanding at all. Of rather greater interest is the way Ford has decided to make this car handle. It is as if, stung by

criticism that the normal Focus is soggy to drive compared to its predecessor, Ford has decided to show the world exactly what this platform can do when set up to entertain.

The answer is a car with so much inherent agility, you'd think it had been tuned for a rally stage. Its natural inclination is to turn into corners with just the smallest whiff of understeer, but if you sharply shut the throttles while you do, instead of simply neutralising as you might expect, it will oversteer so rapidly you think it's going to spin. Except it doesn't. On the track where I drove it, I couldn't find an angle from which it would not recover with a swift kick of the throttle.

All this in a car available with either five doors or as an estate. As practical as any other Focus, if rather more raucous, and priced from £21,995, the ST is another landmark in a line of great fast Fords. Vauxhall's Astra VXR, due out imminently, will need to be better than any hot Vauxhall hatch this side of an HSR Chevette to beat it.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 2.0 litres, four cylinders, petrol
TOP SPEED: 154mph
PRICE: £21,995
POWER: 247bhp at 6000rpm
FUEL/CO₂: 38.8mpg, 169g/km
www.ford.co.uk





New S4 Avant is well built as we have come to expect from Audi but Frankel finds it dull

AUDI S4 AVANT

LOOKING BACK, I FIND it a little shocking to discover that I cannot remember an 'S' model Audi I really liked. Given the numbers there have been over the years there must surely have been some, and my inability to recall even one may say as much about my memory as Audi's cars. Even so, while Audi make many decent standard

cars and a few outstanding 'RS' models (which are engineered by an entirely separate division within Audi), the tepid 'S' models have consistently failed to shine.

This new S4 Avant is no different. It's fast, well built and surprisingly grippy, but Audi has never faltered on these measures. Yet again it is the less easily quantified yet equally important subjective

criteria in which it is lacking. Its steering is numb, its ride quality poor and the 3-litre supercharged V6 sounds dull at all but maximum effort. Moreover, like most cars with superchargers, its fuel consumption was terrible, struggling to do 25mpg most of the time.

Compare that to the A6 saloon I also tried this month, fitted with a monster 313bhp, V6 diesel engine. With a little less power but a lot more torque, claimed acceleration is identical to the S4, but the engine is almost silent, its ride excellent and it'll do 40mpg everywhere. It's no fun to drive, but unlike the S4, it's not trying to be. To me it is the far more satisfying and capable of the two.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 3.0 litres, six cylinders, supercharged

TOP SPEED: 155mph (limited)

PRICE: £39,880

POWER: 328bhp at 5500rpm

FUEL/CO₂: 33.6mpg, 197g/km

www.audi.co.uk




AND THAT REMINDS ME...

Sleep is for wimps: drinking when not driving on the Mille Miglia

Attending the start of this year's Mille Miglia vividly brought back the only time I have taken part in the retrospective. It was 2003 and I was to share a Mercedes-Benz 300SL with Jo Eberhardt, then MD of Mercedes in the UK. The plan was to share the driving but after I'd made a pig's breakfast navigating the first special stage and he'd spent a few miles driving this car with its marvellous engine but inadequate brakes and tricky handling, we'd soon worked out which seat suited us best.

The event was wonderful because the Benz was more than fast enough to hang onto the Ferraris and Maseratis that populated the sharp end of the field, but predictably entirely uneventful. I truly don't think it occurred to me that the car might break down until, three hours from the finish, it did. We smelled fuel, stopped and saw petrol leaking from a filter. Naturally a modern Mercedes appeared from nowhere brimming with mechanics and spares. And, yes, they had the bit we needed and it could be fitted in five minutes – but only after the engine had been allowed to cool for an hour. Which left us with two hours in which to do three hours of driving.

On the long roads back to Brescia, I cruised it at 135mph, Jo grinning, me not quite believing what was happening. We overtook more than 100 competitors and arrived back in Brescia occupying the same slot we'd vacated.

Touchingly, Jo's first thoughts were for the mechanics so suggested we joined them for 'a quick drink'. I don't know how long it took to have that drink, but I do remember being surprised to see daylight as I left the bar the following morning. Looking at my watch I realised it was 24 hours since I'd woken in Rome, already tired from two days on the Mille Miglia. And, aside for 60 minutes at the side of the road, I'd been drinking or driving for every one of them. 



Sidetracked

WITH ED FOSTER



As the filming draws to a close on the upcoming Ron Howard film *Rush*, all will be going quiet until the first trailers emerge ahead of its release in early 2013.

The director of *Apollo 13* and *Frost/Nixon* has been tweeting (I can't believe that's a verb...) plenty of pictures from the filming and, despite Fuji being 'created' at Blackbushe airport, it looks tantalisingly good. Part of this is down to the use of proper cars, as well as the likes of the BRM replicas featured in the June issue.

Luckily for the production crew, there just happens to be an FIA-sanctioned Historic Formula One Championship (HFO), and in that series there is 'Class D', for post-71 flat bottom F1 cars. That is rather handy when you're making a film about the relationship between Niki Lauda and James Hunt.

THE MEN BEHIND THE MOVIE

The potential of a film often starts with people you won't even see on screen. That's certainly the case with Ron Howard's latest movie *Rush*

"Jim [Hajicosta, a co-producer on the film] came along to our first round last year at Hockenheim and introduced himself," Dan Collins, the championship's organiser, tells me after getting back from the Monaco Historique. "The production team was asking things like

what incidents happened in which particular season and at which circuits. They had done some research but not having any prior knowledge of F1 for any era, let alone back in the 1970s, they got a few things mixed up. We weren't the only people involved, to be fair –



Blackbushe doubled for the world's classic circuits during the making of Howard's forthcoming *Rush*

All Images: Nichola Aigner



Niki Lauda was also a consultant on the project, as were a few other people involved in historic motor sport.” Hajicosta, who looks remarkably like Jean-Pierre Jarier, is also a huge Formula 1 fan and has no doubt been steering things in the right direction.

“We put them straight on a few incidents, but our big job was to track down where all the cars were today and the current owners. What they also wanted us to do was to find different tracks to film certain scenes at. Some of the action took place at circuits which don't exist

anymore so we were looking at corners on tracks in the UK that would replicate those. There simply isn't one circuit that has everything on it in the world. We suggested if their budget would stretch to it going somewhere like Guadix in Spain, or one of the southern test circuits because there's very little around them and special effects can add in anything, but they really wanted to do it in the UK.”

That decision will have been partly down to the cost saving, but also some of the most skilled production teams in the world can be

found here and film crews get very good tax breaks when they're based in Britain.

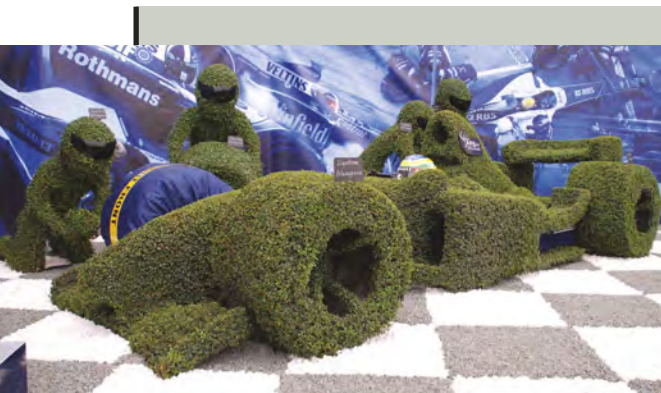
“We came up with Donington, Snetterton and possibly Pembrey. Then for the sequences around the startline they used Blackbushe airport. It's actually been used for a number of different circuits. They've just dressed it up differently.”

Talk soon turns to the rumours that some of the facts about the period have been massaged and whether or not it will end up being a convincing portrayal of 1970s F1. “It will definitely be a drama,” says the man whose only other filmic experience was being one of the hooded men in Queen's *Radio Ga Ga* video. “To be honest, when they first approached me I wasn't so sure because there have been plenty of people over the years who have talked about making a film about motor racing, but they've never really come to anything. Then they said that Ron Howard was taking it on.

“I had a meeting with him and asked why he was doing a film about Formula 1 because it's not very well-known in the 'States and he didn't know much about it. He said ‘I don't know anything about it! I'm a big fan of sports, but not of auto racing. It was the relationship between Hunt and Lauda that attracted me; like it was with the astronauts in *Apollo 13* and between Frost and Nixon’.

The problem Howard is facing is that he is trying to tell a three- or four-year story in less than two hours. There is no way that he can get in all the details, nor have everything as it was.

“For the average person,” Collins continues, “it will look good. I think, I hope, that most enthusiasts will accept those things that >>>



Rob Keenan

NOT ONLY DID WILLIAMS BREAK its eight-year winless streak at the Spanish Grand Prix, it then followed that up with another win at the Chelsea Flower Show. Some of you might have seen the topiary Grand Prix car outside its base in Grove and it was a 'new' version of that which claimed the gold medal in the Great Pavilion Awards. It took King & Co - in conjunction with the F1 team - three years to cultivate the hedge. Am I right in thinking this is Bruno Senna's first win in an F1 car?

are not quite accurate because they are in there in order to tell the story.”

Even though Collins was approached to source and supply the cars, he admits that HFO didn't have the infrastructure to cope with the extra work, so directed the production team to event management, communications and PR company Stuart McCrudden Associates. “They got paid for their help,” he says, “and I believe the owners of the cars got something for having their cars used, depending on whether they were stationary or running. Of course, it costs money to fire these things up!

“We hope the film will be good for the championship, that it will bring more spectators and competitors. There are clearly plenty out there because so many people [who don't race] brought their cars out for the film. We're also supporting the British GP in July and the film has definitely helped raise our profile.



“It hasn't actually been too stressful, but I suggest that some individuals would say that it has been one panic after the other because things like filming schedules kept getting changed!” There also seems to have been a bit of a learning phase when the film crew first started working with the cars. “In the early days there were situations when the guys with cars were told ‘we won't be doing any engine starts for at least 30 minutes’ and then someone would come up two minutes later and say ‘start them up’. None of the engines had been warmed up and we had to explain that you can't just fire up an F1 engine when you feel like it.

“One of the guys – Chris Dinnage [the team manager at Classic Team Lotus] – was doing some driving up at Snetterton. He was immediately behind the camera car and had been told that nobody was to overtake for this particular shot. He then heard this engine coming up beside him and thought somebody must be trying to pass. It turned out that it was a helicopter two feet off his right shoulder. I think it was a bit of a surprise!”

A Hollywood film about F1 will always be faced with scepticism, but with the likes of the HFO involved behind the scenes it's had all the necessary help to send it into post-production on the right track. No pun intended.



THE VERY BEST OF BRITISH

To maintain Britain's technological edge, Cranfield has organised a conference for the next generation of engineers, writers and designers

AS SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE SEEN on the *Motor Sport* website, Cranfield University is hosting a History of Motorsport Technology Conference on July 3.

It's part of a larger initiative, promoted by the Motorsport Industry Association (MIA) and the Motor Sports Association (MSA), called National Motorsport Week that runs from June 30 to July 8. The week, which is bracketed by the Goodwood Festival of Speed and the British Grand Prix, is a celebration of British motor sport and a “very good thing” according to Sir Stirling Moss. “Britain has long since led the world in motor sport and it is important for the industry that we attract newcomers to the sport.”

The conference is not all about attracting young talent, though. “Yes, we are appealing to students,” says Cranfield's motor sport programme director Clive Temple, “but it will also be for writers, designers and engineers interested in motor sport.”

The day will be spent with key speakers – from ex-technical director of Team Lotus Peter Wright to ex-F1 designer Brian O'Rourke – talking about topics as wide-ranging as ground effects in the 1920s, F1 car design and development in the 1960s and '70s, F1 turbocharging, the Group C era, modern race car simulation development and even the Land Speed Record.

Sir Jackie Stewart, who used to be the chairman of Cranfield's MSc Motorsport Engineering and Management course, will be the guest of honour and will address attendees.

“Some of the words I'll be using that evening (at the dinner) will be based on observations about how important the British motor sport industry is,” he told me. “It really only started in the late 1950s when two men – John Cooper and Colin Chapman – put the engine behind the driver. It changed the whole profile of the sport on a global scale. Jack Brabham won back-to-back championships with the Cooper and the industry had to reshape itself. Suddenly Britain took over with everything from gearboxes to radiators.

“I don't think Britain has acknowledged what the British motor sport industry has created economically in this country. When you look at the number of people employed in Motorsport Valley it is between 40-50,000. Probably 8000 of those work for small companies with fewer than 10 employees, but they're world experts in what they do whether it's looming, composites or even alternative materials.”

Universities such as Cranfield are helping to fill the new generation of engineers that these companies are looking for, but when I met the Minister in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Mark Prisk (June issue), he was adamant that there weren't enough coming into the sport. As Sir Jackie points out, “Britain plays a very important role in motor sport, and if we don't, somebody else will”.

However, according to the three-time World Champion the industry doesn't just need more engineers. “I went to see the students doing the MSc course at Cranfield a lot when I was chairman,” he says, “and I will never forget going in once and seeing all their heads buried inside gearboxes or suspension. I said ‘look guys, you've got to realise something – you've got to go well beyond just being engineers. You've really got to be salesmen and you've got to understand marketing because if you come up with a new technology you've got to be able to sell it to a team's technical director’.

“The other thing about many engineers in the British motor sport industry is how well they convert their talents – look at Gordon Murray. The point is that you've got to go beyond being an engineer; everyone has got to have more than they think they need.”

The conference on July 3 will be just the sort of place where you will be able to pick up all that extra information. Hopefully you will have enough time to book your place after reading this, so go to www.cranfield.ac.uk to find out more. **M**



Historic Scene

WITH GORDON CRUICKSHANK

Oregon-made Stohr was rapid but not as quick as Force PT (right). Taylor enjoyed runs in Stovebolt Special (bottom)



Falconer's Chaparral 2 recreation with its forest of intakes and stackpipe exhausts, having its first public outing since the Chaparral historian completed it. It even has the proper two-speed auto 'box. While our ears recovered from the big V8s there was a clean interlude as Nissan sent its Leaf NISMO RC whispering round the park; a lightweight race car packing the drivetrain of the Leaf road car, this was making its world competition debut, a minor coup for the club, and its times put it easily among the modified machinery.

One of the joys of this day in the park is the sheer variety of the 200 cars: modified Escorts, a Gilbern, a turbocharged Clan, a kit-car selection majoring on Cobra and GT40 (I always feel an affinity for these as I once was part of a firm which made Stratos replicas), what looked like a Maserati A6GCS and

turned out to be based on Nissan Skyline underpinnings, even an upright MG YB saloon.

A very crisp Anglia on Minilites reminded me of a historic rally I did in the 1980s: one entrant was a petite grey-haired grandmother in a fairly standard Anglia, and as I watched her line up for the first timed test I thought 'good for her', in what I fear was a slightly condescending manner. Then she whacked the revs to max, smoked the tyres, chucked the car into an impressive slide and put down a superb time.

STORM THE PALACE

The Sevenoaks & District MC's sprint at Crystal Palace attracted the sublime and the strange

Palaces figure a lot this year, but the only one I've been to lately wasn't there. Crystal Palace burnt down in 1936, but that same year cars began racing at London's only circuit, and while that intermittent history got the black flag in 1972 (or '74 for some club events) the rasp of racing engines has been resurrected by Sevenoaks and District MC.

This was the third year of 'Motorsport at the Palace', now a sinuous sprint rather than the short-lap racing that once made the Palace famous for four-wheeled knuckle-dusting, but in the May sunshine it was an evocative reminder of what used to be, long before Brands and Silverstone were thought of. Using part of the old circuit, the sprint winds through trees as race tracks did pre-war, and as a Fiat Balilla and the GN 'Spider' buzzed through Pond hairpin towards Big Tree Bend it could have been the '30s – until the roar of V8s, shrieking 'bike engines and the whine of high-voltage electricity snapped us back to 2012.

Fastest runs were always going to come from

the hillclimb and sprint machines, and sure enough the tiny Suzuki GSXR-powered carbon-fibre Force PT of Gary Thomas blitzed everything else with a time of 33.80sec, a course record even though everyone was finding the track extremely slippery. He was closely harried by a 1970s Ensign, proving that a metal chassis can still do the job. Our own Simon Taylor went impressively loudly in the Stovebolt Special, boasting the most cc's of the day, though he couldn't quite match Richard



pat on the back to Sevenoaks and District MC over their Crystal Palace sprint programme, which included half a page headed 'What is a Sprint?', explaining in the simplest terms about racing "from Point A to Point B", as well as "why do the cars look so different?" Given that this event was aimed at a much more general public than we're used to, many of them only stumbling across the cars during a visit to the park, I thought this was a perceptive move: it's easy to forget that not everyone knows how motor sport works.

I learned that when I took my brother-in-law, who has as much interest in cars as the Queen has in gangsta rap, to Goodwood Revival. We found a good place to watch the start of the St Mary's saloon race and settled down. The flag fell, the pack screamed off and disappeared round Madgwick, and after a minute chatting the b-in-l stood up and began collecting his belongings. Just then the field tore back into view through the chicane.

"Oh," he said, looking surprised. "They go round again, do they?"



Chaparral clone (above left);
Leaf racer (left) made debut;
DAX Rush, hot Davrian and MG
6R4 (above) highlights variety

Mike Lamberty/Grishots

It was Anne Hall, revisiting her glory days as one of the gang of female rally stars we could boast in the '50s and '60s...

Back among the Palace historics sat a Cooper 'Bobtail', whose owner Bob Searles told me that his father worked for Cooper and tested new Bobtails on the road – which made a connection of sorts with the blazing yellow Radical SR3 nearby, the new road version of the blisteringly quick track cars this thriving British business makes.

In some ways it's surprising that the racket of racing engines is allowed to resound across this Victorian city park, home to the famous concrete dinosaurs, but organiser Colin Billings says the council is behind them in every way bar finance; it's the club which paid for the Armco and any resurfacing needed – up by the Terrace the cars are still running on 1960s Tarmac. Locals are supportive, as the park is

big enough to leave the picnickers and dog walkers unaffected. "We don't want to be enormous," says Billings, "just popular."

Let's be honest, the competition element at the Palace is hardly crucial; like a low-key Goodwood Festival, it's more a chance for people who don't normally follow motor sport to get close to a variety of cars. But for those who know the history, it's tempting to imagine that Mk2 Jaguar flickering through the trees is being chased by Clark and Arundell in three-wheeling Cortinas, or that the single-seater screaming along the top section is actually Jochen Rindt about to skate past the unforgiving sleepers (long gone) of North Tower Bend and set the first 100mph lap. If you'd been here a few months back during the filming of *Rush*, the forthcoming Hunt/Lauda film, those memories would be easy to stir. If not, try a visit next May.



IN THE WORKSHOP

Motor Wheel Services

WHAT'S YOUR HISTORY?

MWS was founded in London in 1927, and has been in the Smith family's hands since 1947. The manufacture, service and repair facilities are now located at Langley, Slough, where we have 18 employees, but we also have agents in the US and Australia and sell world-wide.

WHAT'S YOUR RANGE OF SKILLS?

We build wire wheels from scratch, with cold-rolled rims, forged centres and butted spokes, on splined or bolt-on hubs. We keep all popular wheels in stock, pre- and post-war, and build to order for more unusual fittings, and we can also rebuild original wheels on the same hub and rim to retain originality. We supply and fit tyres and tubes to suit most veteran, vintage and classic cars, and sell all accessories for wire wheels.

WHAT UNUSUAL WHEELS HAVE YOU HAD TO BUILD OR RESTORE?

Owners of rare vehicles such as older Maseratis often bring us wheels for restoration – we've refurbished quite a few Ferrari 250 units – and Brooklands Museum came to us to rebuild the Napier-Railton's wheels. We refurbish classic steel wheels, too, such as Rostyles, and we've produced three-bolt hubs to suit Citroën 2CV-based kit cars such as the popular Lomax.

WHAT'S IN THE WORKSHOP NOW?

We are always increasing our ranges of rolled-edge rim sizes, vintage centres and splined hubs, and we are the main distributor for Blockley tyres whose range is increasing constantly. We have just opened a new tyre fitting bay to increase capacity of these and other tyre makes.

WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU PROUD OF?

We do a lot of work for museums such as Brooklands and Haynes, we build the wheels for Audi's Auto Union replicas, and we are the OE suppliers to Morgan and Suffolk Sportscars. Also we were commissioned by Luigi Colani to build the wheels for his Pierce-Arrow concept car.

GC was talking to Oliver Smith
www.mwsint.com

DREAM GARAGE

WHAT WE'D BLOW THE BUDGET ON THIS MONTH



OLD RACING CAR CO
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There's something appealing about a straight Van den Plas 3-litre that's not pretending to be an LM car; this one has kept all its vitals together since WO saw it leave the works.

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G-CAT RACING
CHEVRON
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Beautiful even standing still, but this Cosworth FVC-powered car is eligible for a wide range of events across Europe. See it race at Silverstone Classic.

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ZWAKMAN JAGUAR
SS100 JAGUAR
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The well-known 1938 Earls Court show car, a prime example of British '30s streamlining at its best. Unique, rapid and very elegant.

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||| Auctions |||



Early Miller offers a rare chance to own a running example

Around the houses

NEWS FROM THE MAIN AUCTION HOUSES AROUND THE WORLD

- GOODING AND COMPANY -

On August 18/19 the American auction house Gooding and Company is offering for sale two interesting racers in the shape of a 1964 Ford GT40 prototype and a single-seater Miller.

The former is chassis number GT/104, which joined three other cars from the manufacturer for the '64 Le Mans 24 Hours. The car was then passed to Shelby American and raced in the opening round of the 1965 season at Daytona, where it finished third. It has recently undergone a full restoration and is expected to fetch a whopping £3.2-4.5 million.

The 1919 Miller TNT racer (above) has a less straightforward history, but is no less interesting. A Los Angeles brewer called Maier funded the TNT project and two cars were entered for the 1919 Indy 500. Only one car was finished, however, and it failed to make the start after Maier's interest, and money, dried up. The four-cylinder engine was lost during World War II, but in the late 1970s the car was found and a straight-eight Miller 183 power plant was put in. The original chassis, back axle and radiator remain and the project has recently undergone a £120,000 restoration: it carries an estimate of £480-580,000.

Other interesting lots for sale include singer Jay Kay's 1955 Maserati A6G/54 Frua Berlinetta (£960,000-1.3m), an original 1966 Shelby 427 Cobra (£480-610,000) and Prince Louis Napoleon's 1938 Bugatti Type 57C Stelvio (£830,000-1m).

- SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS -

There were mixed emotions at Silverstone Auctions' May 16 event. Despite good overall sales, the ex-Ayrton Senna Toleman TG184-2 – the first F1 car he raced, in 1984 – failed to find a new owner. The last bid of £505,000 was “just insufficient” for the conglomerate-owned car according to the Northamptonshire auction company. However, it is still talking to two interested parties and hopes a deal will be done soon. Other racers did find buyers, though, with the ex-Ayrton Senna 1982 Ralt RT3 F3 car selling for £113,300, a 2009 Fiat 500 Abarth racer for £15,950 and a 1973 Porsche 911 Carrera RS 2.7 Touring – complete with FIA HTP papers and passport – for £204,600.

- RMAUCTIONS -

Details are already being released of some early consignments for RM's Monterey August 17/18 sale, which include an interesting GT40. The 1968 Gulf/Mirage Lightweight racer (POA), chassis number P/1074, was one of several Lightweights built for the JWA/Gulf team and competed regularly throughout the 1968 season. It was then sold to Solar Productions and used as a camera car on the famous Steve McQueen film *Le Mans*.

Elsewhere in the sale is a 1955 Ferrari 410 Sport Berlinetta and a 1938 Talbot-Lago Teardrop Coupé. The Ferrari (POA) is one of only four 410 Sports built and is the only one with a closed Scaglietti body. Chassis number

0594 CM was repainted red in the 1960s, but has recently been returned to its original specification and colour.

The Talbot is equally as rare as only four of the original five Jeancart-style cars survive, this being one of them. The former Pebble Beach 'Elegance in Motion' winner has recently been to France where it received a full restoration by experts in the marque. It carries an estimate of £1.6-2m.

At its Monaco sale on May 11, RM not only sold plenty of interesting cars, which we covered last month, but also achieved some record prices for bikes. The motorcycle sale raised more than £1m, two Ducati Desmosedici GPs, raced by Casey Stoner and Valentino Rossi, going for £201,690 and £196,990 respectively. It was the first time Ducati Corse had offered recent machines for public auction, which goes some way to explaining the impressive results.

- ARTCURIAL -

Interesting racers keep being signed up for Artcurial's Le Mans Classic sale on July 7. The latest lots to join the 120-car line-up are a 2007 Audi R10 TDI (£1-1.3m), which ran at Le Mans twice, a 2010 Saleen S7R (£480-640,000), which won the LM GT1 category in 2010, and an ex-NART 1966 ASA 1300GT (£240-280,000), raced at that year's Le Mans by Donna Mae-Mims and Suzy Dietrich. **M**

FORTHCOMING AUCTIONS

JUN 29 BONHAMS *Collectors' Cars and Automobilia*, Goodwood, Sussex Tel: 020 7447 7440

JUL 7 ARTCURIAL *Sport & GTs au Mans Classic*, Le Mans, France Tel: 0033 1 4299 2056

JUL 14 COYS *Fine Motor Cars including the Jaguar Legend*, Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire Tel: 020 8614 7888

JUL 17 BARONS *Classic, Collectors and Sports Car Auction*, Esher Hall, Sandown Park Exhibition Complex, Surrey Tel: 023 8066 8413

JUL 18 BRIGHTWELLS *Classic Cars and Motorcycles*, Easters Court, Leominster, Herefordshire Tel: 01568 611 122

JUL 21 SILVERSTONE AUCTIONS *The Silverstone Classic Sale*, The Wing Building, Silverstone Circuit, Northamptonshire Tel: 01926 691 141

JUL 20-21 MECUM *Des Moines Auction*, Iowa State Fairgrounds, East 30th & East University Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa Tel: 001 (262) 275-5050

JUL 26 ARTCURIAL *Reserves from HSH The Prince of Monaco's Private Collection of Cars*, Terrasses de Fontvieille, Monaco Tel: 0033 1 42 99 16 31

JUL 28 RM AUCTIONS *St John's Sale*, The Inn at St John's, Plymouth, Michigan Tel: 001 519 352 4575

FOR FULL AUCTION LISTINGS
AND RESULTS VISIT
www.motorsportmagazine.com

Reviews



MILLE MIGLIA STORY 1927-1957

by Leonardo Acerbi

Unlike Acerbi's previous Mille Miglia texts, this one isn't marque specific. Instead it covers each running of the classic road race with potted histories backed up by original documents, artwork and imagery.

Many of the pics taken by the official race photographer Alberto Sorlini are unfamiliar; we were particularly taken with shots of 'etceterinis' such as the Zannini-Bertozzo Giannini and Giancarlo Rigamonti's OSCA S750 barchetta.

The many one-off Ferraris also captivate, not least Giannino Marzotto's The Egg as do such unlikely competition tools as the Alfa 'Matta' off-roader, which competed in '52.

Presented in Italian and English, the text is brief but informative although it is sprinkled with a few florid phrases. But it's hard to nit-pick as you're so well served for the money. It's not a definitive history by any means, but a great introduction to the subject with a wealth of archive material. **GC**

Published by Giorgio Nada
ISBN 978 1 84425 324 1, 29 Euros



FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION

THE ART OF THE SUPERCAR

by Stuart Codling

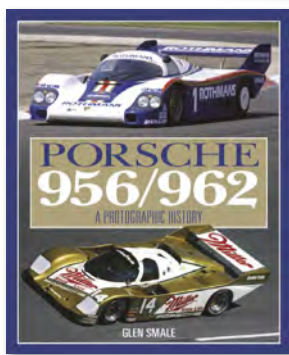
Let's be honest, there's no shortage of books on supercars out there. Type 'supercar' into Amazon and you'll be staring at a screen displaying well over 400 results.

However, Codling's effort focuses on the styling, the beauty and the relationship between form and function. The author doesn't brag about driving the cars himself, instead choosing to cover the history of each car and the aforementioned styling.

From the 'Gullwing' to the MP4-12C, the highlights of the supercar timeline have been picked out and the text is bolstered by McLaren design director Frank Stephenson's views and some stunning photography.

Such a glossy book carrying a price tag of only £25 is certainly refreshing, and don't let it make you believe this is a token effort. Favourite car? In my opinion the Aston Martin DB4GT Zagato is one of the most achingly beautiful cars ever built. **EF**

Published by Motorbooks
ISBN 978 0 7603 4116 2, £25



PORSCHE 956/962 A PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY

by Glen Smale

Pick your favourite livery. That's the game we always end up playing when a Porsche Group C book lands in the office. Richard Lloyd's Canon paintjob is usually high on the list, while I usually mumble something about John Fitzpatrick always nailing it with his J David and Skool Bandit colours. But browse for any length of time through a book like this and the mind-boggling variety of both the familiar and obscure strikes home once again.

Coming in at more than 500 glossy pages, there are a lot of great archive images to enjoy, 700-plus in fact, from Brands Hatch to Mosport, Fuji to Mexico City. You could say, as a photographic record of an era, it's comprehensive.

The format is divided into parts which cover each season of the 956/962's long life, with each split again into chapters covering the world championship (under its different guises), IMSA in the US and the lesser races that were part of Interserie. A large results section at the back documents every race for every car, which is useful too.

There's little new here, but that's probably missing the point. As for the merits of revisiting familiar territory, you won't hear any complaints from this magazine! The Group C era remains much loved, as our 30th anniversary celebration last month acknowledged. If you were there and the memories are vivid, you'll revel in this book. A welcome indulgence. **DS**

Published by Haynes Publishing, ISBN 978 0 85733 098 7, £75



FASTEST

Written, produced and directed by Mark Neale

Narrated by Ewan McGregor, this film about MotoGP follows in the footsteps of the brilliant *TT: Closer to the Edge* in that even people who know nothing about bike racing will enjoy it.

It's not really about MotoGP, though. It's more a biographical look at Valentino Rossi's career at Yamaha. It goes further back in time, but despite the footage of the Italian testing the Ducati and the line "as the 2012 season begins" at the end, it does stop when he leaves Yamaha at the end of 2010.

"The young people are coming," says Jorge Lorenzo early in the DVD. "How close we are to Valentino we'll see at the end of the season." This is the main focus of the 1hr 45min documentary as Rossi struggles with injury and younger riders in his quest to seal his eighth title in the top class.

Like bikes? It's a must. Don't really like bikes? You'll probably really enjoy it. **EF**
Universal Pictures, www.fastestthemovie.com, \$9.99

YOU WERE THERE

Some casual behind the scenes photographs from a busy Silverstone paddock in 1965



ANTHONY ASKEW

When Askew bought his ticket for the 1965 British GP he found you got in on practice day for free. So he took his Zeiss 35mm camera along, because as he recalls, "I could rarely take pictures during the race as without a telephoto lens I was just too far away."

{1} Stewart's BRM by the Willment transporter {2} A wave from Dan Gurney in his Brabham {3} A joke between a relaxed Hill and Clark {4} Transport contrast: the Lotus mobile workshop and Bob Anderson's VW pick-up {5} Hill trickles his BRM out to the track, with Cresta and Sprite behind {6} John Cooper (note fag in hand), Bruce McLaren behind {7} Lorenzo Bandini, looking every inch the archetypal racing driver



||| Doug Nye |||



Lauda (middle) was on a mission to beat 'radpole' Prost (left) for '84 F1 crown. Engineer Steve Nichols is between them

international-era promotions man Richard West produced some wonderful insights and vignettes.

Howden Ganley: "Bruce was an amazingly natural leader of men. That's what he called us. He'd come into the workshop and say 'Right men, this is what we're going to do...'. And with him at our head we'd just do it. If he'd come in one morning and said 'Right men, knock off what you're doing, instead we're going to march across the Gobi Desert', we'd have done it."

Jan McLaren recalled Bruce as having been "...just a wonderful brother...", while Greeta Hulme told how Denny's transfer to

GP Library

MOB RULE AT BROOKLANDS

The great and the good of McLaren's glorious past recently descended on The Track to swap yarns and recall so many absent friends



The 1976 James Hunt crew with left to right: Ray Rowe, Howard Moore, Hughie Absalom, Freddie Hunt, Dave Ryan, John Hornby, Mark Scott, Roy Reader, Gordon Coppuck

John Dunbar

The recent 'MOB' – McLaren Old Boys – reunion evening at Brooklands was a remarkable success. It overran well into the small hours before the dozens of staff veterans only reluctantly dispersed into the night. After presenting our Motorfilms archive movies late that evening, I found myself trundling the trusty Land Rover – over on its ear at about 20 degrees – around the Members' Banking in pitch darkness to show what the old Motor Course was all about to Jennifer Revson – lovely sister of poor Peter and Doug Revson – plus a couple of her friends and veteran Scarab, Can-Am and Indy McLaren owner/driver Don Devine.

They had made the pilgrimage from the US,

and former team engineer Matthew Jeffreys had done a stupendous job of contacting so many team veterans worldwide and persuading them to attend. From New Zealand came a large party including Bruce's sister Jan McLaren, his widow Pattie Brickett, and Greeta Hulme, Denny the Bear's ex-wife and widow. Drivers present included Howden Ganley, who was also Bruce's fourth employee when the team was founded back in 1963-64, John Watson and the ebullient Bruno Giacomelli. Veteran team members and associates included team co-founder Tyler Alexander, Ray Rowe, Hughie Absalom, Mike Barney, Ron Smith, Bruce's secretary Susie Dunbar, Kerry Adams, Dave Ryan, Howard Moore, Cary Taylor, Neil Trundle and almost one hundred more.

Brief interviews by McLaren's former

McLaren for 1968 after he'd won the World Championship with Brabham in '67 came as a complete revelation: "With Jack's team, going to each race just seemed to happen, at a few days' notice. But when Denny joined Bruce we couldn't believe the difference. Within the first few days, Phil Kerr provided Denny with a full schedule for more or less the entire year, flights, hire car reservations, hotels, contact names and numbers, everything, already mapped out. To us, such forethought was amazing..."

Designer Gordon Coppuck – of particular M8, M16 and M23 fame – recalled some wonderfully evocative moments, such as an incident during his first two weeks with the team as a humble draughtsman: "I was still finding my feet at the Colnbrook works when I went down into the workshop and I think Alastair Caldwell" – who, incidentally could not attend the Reunion since he was instead rallying in America, with his mum who's in her

90s navigating – “...had decided it was time they all needed a break from building the cars. So instead he began riding a monkey bike around the workshop.

“Inevitably – we’re all competitive people – someone produced a stopwatch, so it then became a real battle to see who could lap fastest. Then they insisted that, as the new boy, I should have a go. What they didn’t realise was that I’d had a works Greeves ride and experience in the International Six Day’s Trial, so I knew my way around ’bikes. And then after a first couple of quick laps I shot up to the turn just by the workshop lathe only to find that after checking the watch someone had tipped a can of oil all over the floor...

“It was at that moment that I realised I’d landed on my feet. McLaren’s really was the place I wanted to work.”

James Hunt’s son Freddie was present to meet his dad’s former mechanics, while Bruno Giacomelli recalled his few McLaren F1 drives with Italianate emphasis and affection: “Was incredible for me. In 1968 I stood wiz my papa on the back straight at Monza and saw Denny Hulme and McLaren win the Italian Grand Prix. Ten years later I was there driving for McLaren in the Gran Premio – aymazing!”

John Watson ruefully recalled another Monza experience as “...my Chuck Yeager moment, acting as test pilot and seeing how a moulded carbon fibre-chassised car would react if you were daft enough to spin one into a crash barrier at around 140mph-plus. I hit the Armco at the Lesmo Curves with one hell of a thump and the car broke in two, yet I stepped out unhurt... An absolute revelation. In an aluminium car I’m sure the outcome would have been very different....”

Hughie Absolom recalled Johnny Rutherford at Indy explaining how he said he “...just seemed to win the 500 on alternate years, and that’s precisely what he went on to do”, while Ayrton Senna’s erstwhile race engineer James Robinson recalled the Brazilian giant’s amazing win in the 1991 Belgian GP: “He’d lost fourth gear and found the car stuck in third, and explained later he’d over-revved the engine and seen smoke behind and thought he was finished. But then he found one gear, and then another, and another. And he told me how he’d thought through the problem, and recalled spending time with Neil Trundle in the



however ‘hanging on’ enough to hold the gear in neutral and prevent selecting two at once.

“Given that the gearbox was manual with the H shift pattern, actually to remember lap after lap that he had to miss out two important gears some five times every lap takes some processing. And that’s exactly what happened – and he won again. He really was a fantastically intelligent driver, and through following that car’s assembly he’d equipped himself both to identify the core problem, and to drive around it...”

Steve Nichols, soft-spoken prime creator of the 1988 MP4/4 and sometime race engineer to Niki Lauda, Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost, recalled Niki’s implacable determination to win the World title in 1984: “In the car on the way to the French GP at Dijon, Niki was way behind Alain in the Championship” – actually by

15 points – “... and he just said ‘Shit, he is so fast, sooo fast ... but I know I can catch him! I will catch him! I will work and work and work and I will beat him’ – and that’s exactly what he did, to win that year’s Championship by half a point. He was just utterly, implacably, determined to win. And he did it. And later with Senna and Prost I remember assuring Alain that no way would I as his race engineer allow him to be in any way disadvantaged, technically. I pointed out that I am competitive too, and I wanted my driver and car to

win just as much as he did.

“But they were both good guys. Alain used to come in after a good qualifying lap, grin and say ‘Aah, not too bad for a liddle Tadpole, huh?’. In fact he and Ayrton were really very similar, but kind of mirror images of each other. One was hard as nails on the outside, yet really soft and friendly inside, while the other was soft and friendly on the outside, yet made of spring-steel inside.”

The Brooklands Clubhouse was a splendid venue, and in the darkness, as I told the girls and Don the story of ‘Pearly’ Lambert’s ghost and the Brooklands hauntings, this Reunion was – indeed – a most memorable event. >>>

gearbox rebuild shop at some point over the winter. Having watched Neil and chatted about his work he remembered that the two gears giving the most trouble were on the same shaft, so logically if he avoided using them, and only used the others, he might just make the finish. The ‘roll-pin’ that pinned the selector fork to the shaft had sheared through and so would not move those two gears when requested. It was

||| Doug Nye |||



Siffert braving Lotus 'special' at '62 Monaco GP. Below, 512F – 'F' for Filipinetti – retired at Le Mans in '71

Filipinetti: triumph before tragedy

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Scuderia Filipinetti. Cadaverous-looking, chain-smoking, big-spending Georges Filipinetti was a very successful Swiss-Italian motor trader and property entrepreneur – at least until it all went terribly wrong for him into the 1970s...

As a would-be amateur racer in 1939 he had been a member of the Ecurie Genève campaigning Maseratis. Post-war his sponsorship helped elevate the Rallye Genève to international stature, and into the 1960s he became President of the Swiss Karting authority. He wangled himself diplomatic status as San Marino's representative at the United Nations in Geneva, while his SAVAF company – Société Anonyme pour la Vente des Automobiles Ferrari – prospered as the marque's Swiss concessionaire.

Madame Filipinetti, the German-born Marthe Armleder, was the former wife of Swiss racing driver Ciro Basadonna. She was also heiress to Geneva's ritzy Hotel Richemond. While Filipinetti imported Ferraris, Basadonna imported Maseratis...

Through 1961, Filipinetti admired promising young former racing motorcyclist Jo Siffert, then making his name on four wheels in a Formula Junior Lotus 18, soon replaced by a Lotus 20. Georges Filipinetti decided to foster such Swiss talent in the 1962 season. His natural tendency towards the grand gesture saw him claim the title Ecurie Nationale Suisse, only for the Automobile Club de Suisse to object violently, on the grounds that no such private team should claim 'national' stature.

So he changed the name to his own and Ecurie Filipinetti was born, then speedily Italianised as Scuderia Filipinetti. Jo Siffert made his World

Championship Formula 1 debut in that year's Monaco Grand Prix, driving a Lotus 'special' combining a Type 21 forward frame and suspension with type 24-style rear end, powered by an upright-mounted Climax PPF four-cylinder engine. While this Monaco entry had been made as Ecurie Nationale Suisse, by the time practice began Seppi's bright red Lotus special wore jazzy Ecurie Filipinetti lettering across its scuttle. True V8-engined Lotus 24s were later acquired, while Filipinetti also entered an FJ/F1 Lotus 22, Porsche 718 and eventually the ex-Serenissima/Edgar Berner Ferrari 250GTO – with drivers Siffert, Heinz Schiller and Herbert Müller that same year.

But 'Seppi' Siffert proved too independently-minded for Georges Filipinetti. Into 1963 he actually owned and ran the Type 24 which Filipinetti entered for him and covered expenses. Filipinetti was thrilled when Siffert won the early '63 Syracuse GP in Sicily,

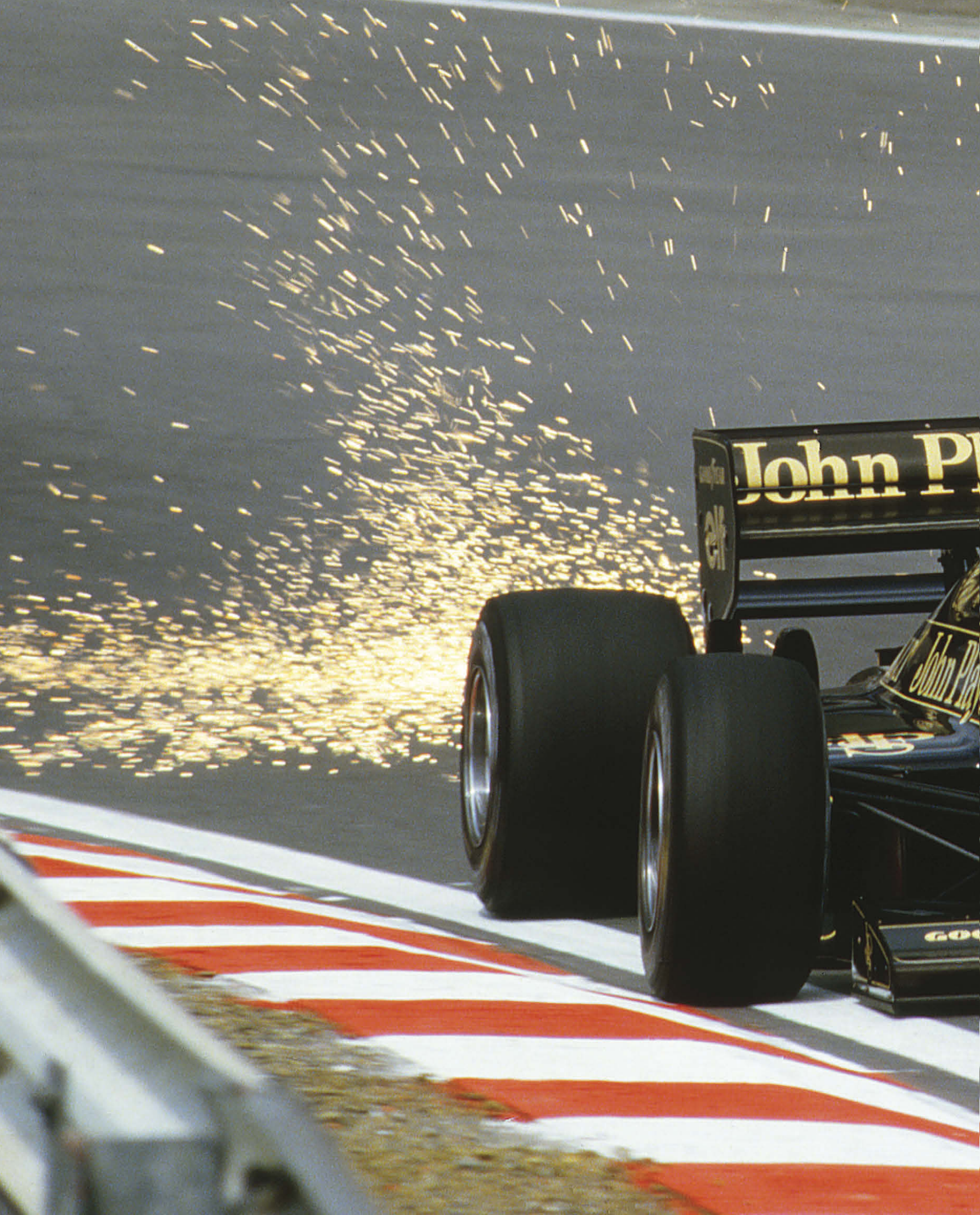
but he then wanted Seppi to run in the glamour event at Monaco while the driver himself fancied the prize money in the Rome GP at Vallelunga the preceding weekend. Filipinetti cancelled their Rome entry, and cabled Siffert there, accusing him of 'grave indiscipline' and literally ordering him to report with the car at Monte Carlo the following Wednesday. Their transporter crashed, bending the Lotus, and after cobbling a repair to start in Monte Carlo – and retire early – Siffert left Filipinetti's new team.

The Swiss Scuderia went on to compete primarily in World Championship endurance racing. Its greatest day came in 1966 on the rain-dampened byways of north-western Sicily when Herbie Müller and Willy Mairesse won the Targa Florio in Filipinetti's Porsche 906. The Scuderia's name also appeared on assorted Ford GTs, Cortinas and Mustangs that year. They were also involved with Cobras, including the Daytona Coupé, and Joakim Bonnier's Formula 1 Cooper-Maserati, and even Dan Gurney's prototype Eagle-Climax F1 car which Herbie Müller campaigned in occasional mountain climb events. The Scuderia later ran Chevrolet Corvettes, a Lola T70 GT and Ferrari 512S and M, then assorted 2- and 3-litre Lola sports-racing cars, Formula 3 Martinis and a Trivellato Fiat 128 touring car project for 1972.

Scuderia Filipinetti drivers between 1962 and '73 included Jim Clark, Phil Hill, Vic Elford, Masten Gregory, Henri Pescarolo, Ronnie Peterson, Lodovico Scarfiotti, Peter Sutcliffe, Peter Westbury, Jonathan Williams, Reine Wisell, Jean-Louis Lafosse and Jacques Coulon. Michael Parkes served latterly as the Scuderia's technical director-cum-number one driver, but the Scuderia's career ended abruptly on June 6 1973, a month after Le Patron had died, on May 3. He was said to have been aged only 65, born in 1907, which is odd since his 1939 racing licence pictured in Ed Heuvink's Filipinetti book – published by Chronosports SA, St Sulpice, 2002 – shows his date of birth as August 13, 1901...which would have made him 72.

The magnate's unfortunate son, Jean-Pierre Filipinetti, was left saddled with a crumbling business and property empire and burgeoning debts. Little went right for him and in 1987 he committed suicide, leaving a wife and two children. Marthe Filipinetti, Georges' widow, also ended her own life. Sad postscripts to the influential and largely successful life of an extraordinary enthusiast. **M**





||| Parting Shot |||

Belgian Grand Prix, Spa-Francorchamps, May 25, 1986

Ayrton Senna's Lotus 98T kicks up the sparks at Eau Rouge. The Brazilian led for a while, but finished second after early spinner Nigel Mansell passed him during the pitstops

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