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# MOTORSPORT NEWS

NOVEMBER 20 2019 ■ EVERY WEDNESDAY £3.60



Brazilian Grand Prix report P4

## Welsh wizard tipped to drive Yaris – alongside Sebastien Ogier

# EVANS TARGETED TO FORM TOYOTA SUPERTEAM



Ford Fiesta driver is set to leave M-Sport



Evans is on the tip of signing a deal to drive a Yaris in 2020

By David Evans

Elfyn Evans will be unveiled as a Toyota Gazoo Racing driver in the World Rally Championship next week – with Sebastien Ogier widely tipped to join him.

Evans visited TGR's Finnish HQ last month and MN understands has signed a two-year agreement to drive a Yaris WRC in the last week.

TGR team principal Tommi Makinen denied the deal was done, but told MN: "We are very, very interested in Elfyn."

Full story, p2-3



# PRIAULX ON TOP OF THE WORLD AGAIN IN MACAU

BRIT TAKES A TRIUMPH ON THE DEMANDING STREETS P22



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## Max shines in Brazilian thriller



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## Formula 3 street fighters hit Macau



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**FOR MOTORSPORT NEWS STAFF CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE SEE P31**



Citroen's exit from the WRC will cause a splash

**By David Evans**

**The World Rally service park is bracing itself for a week of monumental shifts with Elfyn Evans leaving M-Sport for the first time in his professional career and Citroen's departure from the WRC likely to trigger Sebastien Ogier's move to Toyota.**

Motorsport News understands Evans' move will be confirmed by Toyota Gazoo Racing on Monday next week. What remains less clear is Citroen's future plans and the implication on Ogier's position in the team.

MN's sources have confirmed Toyota is working on a deal to bring the Frenchman to the Puuppola-based squad for his final year in the series. That deal could be complicated, according to one team insider, by Ogier's reliance on Red Bull backing – with personal sponsors not given the sort of prominence found in other teams.

The source said: "Red Bull could be a problem for Seb, you can see that the drivers and co-drivers are not allowed to use their own crash helmet for personal promotion.

"But, we should remember, this is Sebastien Ogier we're talking

about. If you break this rule for anybody, then you break this rule for him!"

TGR team principal Tommi Makinen wouldn't be drawn on the chances of landing Ogier. Asked if he would be interested if Citroen departed and left Ogier on the sidelines, the Finn said: "Let's see what is happening. I hope we will know something soon."

Makinen has spoken regularly of the need for all the WRC's top teams to have a prominent lead driver to keep them in the series – and he admitted to concerns about the potential for the French firm's departure.

"We have three drivers who have the chance to be regularly on top of the podium," said Makinen, "but now [following Ott Tanak's move to join Thierry Neuville at Hyundai] we can only have two teams with a top driver – so that means only two teams can be happy. This is not good to have two other teams unhappy."

Citroen offered little by way of denial that it would depart the WRC. A PSA spokesperson told MN: "PSA Motorsport has announced the WEC programme from 2022 for the Peugeot brand. We are also extending our commitment to Formula E with our DS Techeetah team.

Regarding the WRC, there are indeed discussions with Sebastien Ogier about his participation in 2020. At this stage, to mention the different hypothesis would be speculation. We will come back to you very soon."

That spokesperson did, however, confirm Citroen would not commit to the WRC's 2022 hybrid plan.

They continued: "We will not run three electric-hybrid programmes. Citroen will not be in WRC from 2022, this is sure. For what happens now, there is no more news. We wait and see."

Both Evans and Ogier were unavailable for comment when contacted by MN.

Talk of Citroen's departure ramped up in Australia last week, coming as marked contrast to the previous round, when MN understands team principal Pierre Budar was an active participant in a meeting about the 2022 hybrid regulations held ahead of Rally of Spain.

Citroen's third departure from the WRC in the last 14 years – its fourth time walking away from the WRC in 33 years – would leave Ogier free to pursue a drive at Toyota. MN understands the six-time world champion pointed Makinen in the direction of Evans

**HOW HYUNDAI PLANS TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING IN 2020**

# HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: Red Bull Content Pool, mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Evans has been a mainstay of the M-Sport operation

## EVANS AND OGIER KEY TO WRC DRIVER MARKET

### Citroen's expected exit prompts major shake-up in WRC landscape

when asked for his preferred team-mate next season.

Evans has driven for M-Sport for his entire professional career. Every round of the world championship he has started has been at the wheel of an M-Sport-built Ford Fiesta. During their two seasons together at M-Sport, Evans and Ogier built a close working relationship, with the Frenchman quick to praise Evans' pace and development ability.

Beyond a likely Evans-Ogier alliance, Kalle Rovnanpera will drive a third Yaris WRC with Takamoto Katsuta running a fourth car on a part programme.

Where that news would leave current stars Kris Meeke and Jari-Matti Latvala is up for debate. Mäkinen has talked of a desire to keep hold of both drivers in the past, but with Juho Hanninen already signed up for testing duties, it would be hard to justify two more frontline drivers warming the bench.

Asked for his plans for life without Evans, M-Sport managing director Malcolm Wilson told MN: "We will see what unfolds. Our priority, like always, is about the business and the longer-term future."

Teemu Suninen remains under contract with M-Sport next year.



Mäkinen says he wants three drivers capable of winning



Sebastien Ogier could be headed towards another new team



Evans' first WRC part-season was back in '13

### Less chances for young talent to flourish at the highest level

A Nissan Micra and a Group N Subaru Impreza – those are the only other cars Elfin Evans has driven in anger. Since 2012, for the last eight years, he's been all about M-Sport. And all about the Fiesta.

See what I mean about seismic shifts. And, as if that's not enough, Citroen looking set to head for the WRC exit, but leaving Sebastien Ogier where he is – just with a change of overalls and a fourth employer in five years.

Tumultuous is heading our way.

If everything plays out the way it looks likely, Ogier, Evans and Rovnanpera will be announced by

Toyota on Monday with Citroen probably out of the door – potentially as early as the end of this week.

What does that mean? Where do we start? Given how little space is left at the end of this page, I'll make this analysis brief... it leaves us a manufacturer short, obviously. That means less cars on entry lists and less potential seats for current drivers and those coming through the ranks. It also means the end of an era. A couple of single-season sabbaticals aside, Citroen's been in the World Rally Championship since 2001 and it ruled our world

for a decade, lifting 17 world titles with Sebastien Loeb between 2003 and 2012.

With the confirmation there's no hybrid for Citroen, *les rouges* will be gone for a long time.

And the impact on the driver market is huge. Esapekka Lappi, Ogier's current team-mate, would be cast to the sidelines, where he'll find Kris Meeke, Jari-Matti Latvala, Craig Breen, Hayden Paddon, Andreas Mikkelsen and Mads Ostberg.

Brace yourself. We could be in for a bumpy ride...

David Evans

# BRAZILIAN GP REPORT



BY MATT  
BEER

# MAX ATTACKS AS MERC MUDDLES

## Red Bull driver capitalises as Hamilton's challenge runs out of steam

### FIVE KEY TALKING

#### 1. Mercedes drops the ball in Brazil

Going into the Brazilian Grand Prix weekend, Lewis Hamilton called it and the upcoming Abu Dhabi race "freebies" that would allow him to "experiment" for 2020 now his sixth championship was secured.

That was just as well because in a year where so much of Hamilton and Mercedes' advantage has come from executing weekends smoother than the opposition and not letting anything whatsoever slip. But this usually impeccably effective championship-winning combination was outpaced and outduelled on track, made clear strategic blunders and finished off by clattering into an innocent rival who was on course for a heroic maiden Formula 1 podium.

After a muted Friday, Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas were only third and fifth in qualifying – admitting that Mercedes had not optimised its package for the high altitude of Interlagos as well as Ferrari and Red Bull-Honda.

Still, Hamilton managed to battle past Sebastian Vettel's Ferrari through the opening corners and chase leader Max Verstappen during the first stint, before an early pitstop, an outstanding out-lap and Verstappen getting caught behind Robert Kubica's unsafely released Williams in the pitlane combined to leap Hamilton ahead of the Red Bull.

But the advantage was very shortlived, with Verstappen swiftly catching Hamilton again as both chased the yet-to-stop Charles Leclerc's Ferrari and the Red Bull surging past the Mercedes into the first corner. That left Hamilton ranting on the radio about inadequate information from the team when short of battery charge.

Verstappen pulled away slightly in the middle of the race and maintained his lead through what should have been the final pitstops, with Hamilton saying "there was nothing I could do" to get closer to the Red Bull.

Then the second Mercedes of Bottas parked with an engine problem and got stuck on the grass during the marshals' attempt to shift it, causing a safety car. Mercedes ordered Hamilton to do the opposite of whatever Verstappen did – so as the Red Bull pitted for fresh tyres, Hamilton stayed out and reassumed the lead.

With Verstappen rejoining second, Hamilton was soon expressing fears he'd be a "sitting duck", though Mercedes technical director James Allison – the team's lead man on the ground with Toto Wolff skipping the race – defended the tactic as "a chance to be in the lead". Hamilton was right, though – Verstappen back ahead within moments of the race restarting.

Things really unravelled when the Ferraris collided and caused another safety car. Mercedes offered Hamilton the choice of whether to pit or not, and told him he would only lose one place if he did. After some vacillation, he dived in. But Allison admitted the team realised it had been "plain dumb" – Mercedes had miscalculated and not foreseen that Hamilton would fall to fourth behind both Alex Albon and Pierre Gasly.

Hamilton dismissed Gasly instantly at the restart, but then clattered into Albon as he tried to take second. The Red Bull was spun down to 14th, and Hamilton was repassed by Gasly. He couldn't quite reclaim second from the Toro Rosso despite a huge last-lap effort, and was later demoted from third to seventh by a five-second penalty for the collision.

It was, as Allison put it, "not the shiniest of races".



Photos: LAT

Red Bull was the dominant force



Dutchman landed his eighth career grand prix triumph



Red Bull driver fought his way into the lead



Verstappen was held up by Kubica's Williams

## POINTS FROM BRAZIL

### 2. Honda brings its big horses

The Red Bull F1 stable and its engine partner Honda were running 1-2-3 as they prepared for the final restart with two laps to go, and even after Lewis Hamilton punted Alex Albon out of podium contention it still managed a 1-2 with Max Verstappen and Pierre Gasly.

Verstappen was a leading contender throughout practice then blitzed qualifying to take pole ahead of Sebastian Vettel and Hamilton. Even before race day, the Honda's performance on the uphill charge out of Interlagos' final corners was impressing rivals. "We have to admit that we were beaten fair and square today," said Vettel. "It was a bit of a surprise. Not to see them quick, but to see them that quick on the straights."

Honda's uprated turbocharger,



Hondas were impressive in Brazil

which has benefited from collaboration with the jet engine arm of the company, appears to be running more efficiently than rivals', which has proved advantageous at the higher-altitude circuits. The opposition has contrasting theories for how Honda's achieving this – one rival thinks the turbo hardware is bigger and therefore does more even with lower air density while another thinks the hardware is actually

smaller and requires less energy to spool the turbo so less air is less of a problem.

However the Honda performance is being achieved, Hamilton said that Verstappen "just blitzed me on the straight" – but welcomed the competition, adding: "Honda's obviously made some big steps and it's great to see another manufacturer as strong as they are now."

The only frustration was the loss of that podium sweep. Albon had started the weekend by topping the damp first practice session before crashing when trying slicks. He drove a superb race that included a feisty pass on Vettel at the first safety car restart, and deserved to be rewarded with the maiden podium he'd worked for. Not that he bore Hamilton any malice. "Of course he didn't mean to do it," said Albon. "I'm not angry at Lewis."

### 3. Ferrari's horses go lame

The angst between Ferrari's incumbent team leader Sebastian Vettel and rising young star Charles Leclerc has been bubbling all season but pre-Brazil had only erupted in the form of team orders spats or strops over tactics. At Interlagos, the pair had their first full-on race-wrecking collision.

Leclerc had started only 14th thanks to a grid penalty from an engine change required as a result of a problem in Austin practice and mistakes on laps he felt should've been good enough to top qualifying. He surged through the field early on and then had a chance to join the podium fight thanks to the late



Leclerc and Vettel retired on lap 65

safety cars.

Pitting under the first of these gave him fresh tyres for the late fight and he soon passed Vettel for fourth. But as Vettel repassed him, a brush of wheels broke Leclerc's suspension and gave Vettel a puncture that

would swiftly end his day too.

Both raged over the radio before calming down in time to meet the media. Team principal Mattia Binotto called the clash "a silly action" that would be dealt with back at Ferrari headquarters.

### 4. Gasly shows his ability again

"Since that switch I think he has driven exceptionally well. You can see his confidence is growing. He's driven some very strong races and his pace is getting better and better."

That was how Pierre Gasly's former team boss at Red Bull Christian Horner described the Frenchman's performances since his demotion back to Toro Rosso when swapped for Alex Albon during the summer. Many of Gasly's strong performances in his new (old) home had gone under the radar, but in Brazil he reminded the world of his ability. As a near-weekend-long leader of the Class B

pack, Gasly was on pole to capitalise when Valtteri Bottas and the Ferraris' dramas and Lewis Hamilton's late pitstop created one of those rare chances for a team outside the usual top three to get near the podium.

He ran third at the final restart, and though Hamilton immediately passed

him, Gasly was handed two places at once when the Mercedes tangled with Albon just ahead of him. He then held off the recovering Hamilton by just 0.062s at the line to claim his first F1 podium and Toro Rosso's second of what's becoming an amazing season for the small team.

Gasly described the result as "intense" and "just insane", prizing it even more because it was achieved by resisting the world champion. Former Red Bull teammate Verstappen lauded the result too, calling Gasly "incredible" and adding: "this year in the beginning maybe didn't work out the way it should but, as you can see, Pierre is very strong".



Gasly took a shock second position

### 5. Sainz makes the rostrum - a bit late

Pierre Gasly wasn't the only driver celebrating a first F1 podium in Brazil, but he was able to go straight there from his car whereas Carlos Sainz Jr was only elevated to his breakthrough result a few hours after the race when Lewis Hamilton was penalised for hitting Albon.

The achievement was all the more incredible because a wiring issue had meant Sainz didn't get to run in qualifying so started last.

A well-executed long-run strategy elevated him into the points and then, like Gasly, he moved forward as the frontrunners hit trouble.

Even after Hamilton's penalty was issued, Sainz had to wait a little longer to be confident he had his first podium as he was among the drivers at the centre of a debate over whether some cars had used DRS under yellow flags. That had been raised as a worry in the drivers' briefing last weekend after controversies in recent races.

The stewards ultimately ruled that every driver under suspicion had slowed enough to obey the letter of the rules even if their DRS had been open at the time so no penalties were required. But race director Michael Masi hinted that was something he felt might need tightening in the rules.



Sainz was promoted to third

## RACE FACTS

Results © 2019 Formula One Administration Ltd

**BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX**  
**Circuit:** Autodromo Jose Carlos Pace, Sao Paulo  
**Laps:** 71 **Race distance:** 190.09 miles **Lap:** 2.677 miles **Lap record:** 1m10.540s (Valtteri Bottas, 2018)  
**2018 winner:** Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

**TYRE CHOICE**

SOFT

MEDIUM

HARD

## RESULTS

### FIA Formula 1 World Championship, round 20/21

POS	DRIVERS	NAT	CAR-ENGINE	TIME
1	Max Verstappen	NLD	Red Bull-Honda	1h33m14.678s
2	Pierre Gasly	FRA	Toro Rosso-Honda	+6.077s
3	Carlos Sainz Jr	ESP	McLaren-Renault	+8.896s
4	Kimi Raikkonen	FIN	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+9.452s
5	Antonio Giovinazzi	ITA	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+10.201s
6	Daniel Ricciardo	AUS	Renault	+10.541s
7	Lewis Hamilton	GBR	Mercedes	+11.139s*
8	Lando Norris	GBR	McLaren-Renault	+11.204s
9	Sergio Perez	MEX	Racing Point-Mercedes	+11.529s
10	Daniil Kvyat	RUS	Toro Rosso-Honda	+11.931s
11	Kevin Magnussen	DNK	Haas-Ferrari	+12.732s
12	George Russell	GBR	Williams-Mercedes	+13.599s
13	Romain Grosjean	FRA	Haas-Ferrari	+14.247s
14	Alexander Albon	THA	Red Bull-Honda	+14.927s
15	Nico Hulkenberg	DEU	Renault	+18.059s**
16	Robert Kubica	POL	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap
17	Sebastian Vettel	DEU	Ferrari	L65/collision
18	Charles Leclerc	MCO	Ferrari	L65/collision
19	Lance Stroll	CAN	Racing Point-Mercedes	L65/accident damage
R	Valtteri Bottas	FIN	Mercedes	L51/power unit

\* = five-second penalty for causing a collision \*\* = five-second penalty for overtaking under the safety car Winner's average speed: 122.300mph

Lap leaders: Verstappen 1-21; Vettel 22-25; Verstappen 26-44; Vettel 45-48; Verstappen 49-53; Hamilton 54-59; Verstappen 60-71

**FASTEST LAP | VALTTERI BOTTAS 1m10.698s**

ON LAP 43 (AVERAGE SPEED: 136.346MPH)

## QUALIFYING

POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m07.508s	11	Ricciardo	1m08.903s
2	Vettel	1m07.631s	12	Giovinazzi	1m08.919s
3	Hamilton	1m07.699s	13	Hulkenberg	1m08.921s
4	Bottas	1m07.874s	14	Leclerc	1m07.728s*
5	Albon	1m07.935s	15	Perez	1m09.035s
6	Gasly	1m08.837s	16	Kvyat	1m09.320s
7	Grosjean	1m08.854s	17	Stroll	1m09.536s
8	Raikkonen	1m08.984s	18	Russell	1m10.126s
9	Magnussen	1m09.037s	19	Kubica	1m10.614s
10	Norris	1m08.868s	20	Sainz	**

\* = 10-place grid drop, additional power unit element used \*\* = required to start from the back, additional power unit elements used



Kimi Raikkonen headed a fourth and fifth-placed finish for Alfa Romeo

## CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS			CONSTRUCTORS		
POS	DRIVER	PTS	POS	CONSTRUCTOR	PTS
1	Lewis Hamilton	387	1	Mercedes	701
2	Valtteri Bottas	314	2	Ferrari	479
3	Max Verstappen	260	3	Red Bull-Honda	391
4	Charles Leclerc	249	4	McLaren-Renault	140
5	Sebastian Vettel	230	5	Renault	91
6	Pierre Gasly	95	6	Toro Rosso-Honda	83
7	Carlos Sainz Jr	95	7	Racing Point-Mercedes	67
8	Alexander Albon	84	8	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	57
9	Daniel Ricciardo	54	9	Haas-Ferrari	28
10	Sergio Perez	46	10	Williams-Mercedes	1

# RACING NEWS

## F1 ROUND-UP

### Brazil future

Interlagos is adamant it has a '99%' chance of keeping the Brazilian Grand Prix despite President Jair Bolsonaro strongly backing a project to take the race to a new track in Rio. Current Brazilian GP promoter Tamas Rohonyi said the Rio site is just "a land with trees and animals" that has no hope of being ready for the mooted 2021 race date.

### Carbon-neutral

Formula 1 has formally announced its plan to become carbon-neutral by 2030 and revealed the first details of how it hopes to offset its 256,551-tonne carbon footprint. Two targets have been identified, the first targeting "sustainable" grands prix by 2025 and the bigger goal to be "net zero carbon" by 2030. It plans to hit its goal via "ultra-efficient logistics and travel and 100% renewably powered offices, facilities and factories" as well as technical changes to the cars.

### Lewis contract

Lewis Hamilton has admitted he is not looking forward to negotiations with Mercedes over a new contract for 2021. "I only just did this contract and already I have to start talking about potentially the next one, which is frustrating because it is another stressful moment where you have to get into the room, get into the ring, and have a friendly yet intense conversation about terms and all of this kind of thing," he said. "But I am used to it and I like to think that I am a relatively good negotiator."

### Kubica's woe

Robert Kubica cited an unusual reason for his heavy crash in Friday practice for the Brazilian Grand Prix – the Haas of Kevin Magnussen having kicked up spray from a kerb ahead of him. Kubica, who had sat out practice one for Williams test driver Nicholas Latifi, smashed into the barriers at the long Sol left-hander as he tried to start his first flying lap of the day in practice two, which was taking place in the dry after morning rain. "[Magnussen] went completely wide over the kerb and pulled out a lot of water," Kubica explained.

# F1 ENGINE LEGALITY ROW CONTINUES TO RAGE

## FIA sends out further directive forcing teams to reveal details of their oil usage



Photos: LAT

Ferrari's mid-season gains raised questions

By Scott Mitchell

**Formula 1's engine legality debate continued to rage through the Brazilian Grand Prix weekend, with a further FIA directive being sent out that compelled all teams to reveal details of their oil usage.**

Ferrari's clear power advantage in the second half of the 2019 F1 season has prompted its main rivals to raise a series of queries with the FIA about potential loopholes, including the burning of oil as additional fuel and ways to circumnavigate the tight fuel-flow limits.

That has now prompted two

technical directives to be issued, which is the FIA's standard method for responding to questions raised about rules when there is no direct suspicion that an individual team is cheating.

The first directive – during the United States GP weekend – specified that three fuel-flow proposals Red Bull floated would all be illegal if a team was using them, while the directive sent out ahead of Brazil reiterated previous instructions that outlaw burning liquid to improve performance and also requested every team sends details such as the designation, specification and quantity of lubricants in their engines.

The flurry of queries and directives has coincided with Ferrari appearing to lose form. It had started on pole for six straight grands prix following the summer break – though the last of those, in Mexico, was inherited via a penalty for Max Verstappen – but did not top qualifying in the US or Brazil. Rivals have also hinted that its straightline performance is notably poorer now.

Mercedes technical director James Allison said: "Probably the only thing that you could stand back from a distance and say is that it's two races on the trot where it hasn't been pole position for a Ferrari. And they sort of had

a reasonably comfortable margin [before that]. So it's an interesting thing, but not anything you could draw any solid conclusions from."

Ferrari has been adamant it has not changed a single thing on its engine design or settings. It acknowledges it has lost its straightline edge but puts this down to adjusting its set-ups to run higher downforce to make up for cornering weaknesses.

"What we did is to read carefully the TDs because you need to meet up with whatever is a new technical directive. It's important to understand it," said team boss Mattia Binotto. "But we didn't change our operations, our way

of using the engines. And that is since the start of the season."

The FIA's head of single-seater matters Nikolas Tombazis said at present the governing body had no reason to believe any F1 team had been cheating but would monitor the situation closely.

"We are happy about people complying. We check people all the time," he said. "But the truth is that we should never be happy completely, meaning that we need to keep checking. We can't always just say everything is fine, because otherwise that means that we stopped working. So we check all the cars all the time, in as much detail as we can."



Hulkenberg: Not giving up on F1

## RED BULL LOCKS DOWN ITS DRIVERS AS HULKENBERG HEADS TOWARDS F1 EXIT

The 2020 Formula 1 driver line-up is almost complete, with Red Bull confirming it will keep Alex Albon alongside Max Verstappen in its main team next season and that Pierre Gasly and Daniil Kvyat continue at Toro Rosso.

That means the only remaining vacancy on the grid is the second Williams drive being vacated by Robert Kubica, but an announcement that Formula 2 frontrunner Nicholas Latifi will be promoted into that seat from the reserve role is

expected in the coming weeks.

Nico Hulkenberg will be the odd man out, having lost his Renault seat to Esteban Ocon. An initial hope of a Haas drive disappeared when it decided to keep Romain Grosjean, and Hulkenberg's other potential options at Alfa Romeo and Williams were always long shots.

But Hulkenberg insisted this did not mean his F1 career was ending.

"Of course I've done mistakes, like we all do sometimes that I would have liked to avoid, a few

moves or things I'd do differently now, but that's always easy to say with hindsight," said the 32-year-old, who has famously never managed a podium finish in 176 F1 starts.

"So all-in-all, I'm at peace with what I've achieved and I don't feel I'm retiring as a race driver. I am not leaving F1, I might not be on the grid, but if there's an opportunity I'm going to be ready."

A sensation in his junior career – when he took Germany to the A1GP crown, won

European Formula 3 and GP2 and then gave Williams a pole in his F1 rookie season – Hulkenberg never managed to secure a top F1 drive, although he was long linked to Ferrari.

He has played down rumours he will move to the DTM, and declined to comment on a suggestion he was heading for the Ed Carpenter Racing IndyCar team for a road/street course only programme. ECR dropped driver Spencer Pigot last week but called the Hulkenberg speculation "false".

FROM F1 ENGINES TO THE ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY

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**DRIVEN**  
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*'Verschoor is victorious'*  
Macau GP report, p22



Peugeot raced in LMP1 from 2007-11, winning Le Mans in '09

## PEUGEOT TO RETURN TO LE MANS WITH HYPERCAR

French manufacturer to make sportscars comeback with WEC entry for 2022

By Jamie Klein

The World Endurance Championship has been handed a huge boost with Peugeot announcing it will return to the Le Mans 24 Hours with a new hypercar in 2022.

The statement from parent company PSA Motorsport revealed few details of the project, although there has been speculation that stalwart sportscar constructor ORECA

and leading privateer LMP1 team Rebellion Racing will be involved.

Peugeot's last top-line sportscar racing involvement was when it took on Audi with its 908 HDi FAP in LMP1's diesel era in the 2000s.

That programme ran from 2007-11, and included an outright Le Mans victory in 2009. But, despite developing a hybrid version of the car, Peugeot abruptly cancelled the project on the eve of the

inaugural WEC season in 2012 and left newcomer Toyota as Audi's opposition for the start of the new series.

Peugeot had previously won Le Mans in both 1992 and '93 at the tail end of the Group C era.

PSA motorsport director Jean-Marc Finot said: "I am very excited at the prospect of channelling the skills and passion of my team into this project.

"It is a new challenge and I know our experts will rise to

it with another demonstration of their will to win with teams financed by the [PSA] Group's brands, fuelled by their long experience of top-flight FIA championships and hunger for success."

Peugeot is the third manufacturer to commit to the WEC's hypercar rules, which begin in the 2020-21 season, joining Toyota and Aston Martin. The small ByKolles and Glickenhaus operations are also expected to build cars.

### QUICK LAPS THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP

**DRS was used for the first time in Macau, but its introduction was not flawless as the device failed multiple times. It had to be turned off in the qualification race as some drivers were able to use it and some were not, due to what MN understands was a sensor issue. Juri Vips believed the lack of DRS cost him a chance to win as his did not work for one lap while attacking winner Richard Verschoor (see report, page**

**22)...** Raffaele Marciello won the FIA GT World Cup at Macau, under intense pressure from the Porsches of Laurens Vanthoor and Earl Bamber. Last year's Blancpain Sprint champion Marciello had a great run off the Melco Hairpin, making his Gruppe-run Mercedes impossible to pass on the straights. Rowe Racing duo Vanthoor and Bamber swapped positions mid-race in a bid to attack, but neither could and Bamber handed second back to his team-mate at the finish...

**Gordon Shedden missed all three Macau World Touring Car Cup races due to damage sustained in a qualifying crash. The three-time British Touring Car champion went off at the uphill right-hander of Moorish, and was subsequently hit from behind by points leader Norbert Michelisz. Shedden's WRT squad announced on Friday evening that the damage to his Audi was too severe to be repaired at the track...** Kyle Busch

became the first double champion of NASCAR's playoff format era by winning the deciding race at Homestead, despite having not taken a victory since June. His Joe Gibbs Racing team-mate and title rival Martin Truex Jr dominated at first but had to pit because his tyres were incorrectly fitted and could only recover to second. Fellow title contenders Kevin Harvick and Denny Hamlin were hampered by a strategy miscue and overheating, respectively.



Turvey, Sims, Bird, Rowland and Calado (l-r) will fly British flag



Formula E rookie Calado will drive for the Jaguar squad

### CALADO JOINS THE FORMULA E BRITS

The 2019-20 Formula E season begins in Riyadh this weekend, with five British drivers on the grid to take on high-profile new arrivals Mercedes and Porsche.

While Virgin's long-time FE frontrunner Sam Bird, NIO underdog hero Oliver Turvey, Nissan's 2018-19 rookie star Oliver Rowland and BMW incumbent Alexander Sims all have existing series experience, Jaguar's new signing James Calado's FE deal marks his return to single-seaters after a six-year absence.

Former Force India Formula 1 reserve Calado has focused on sportscar racing with Ferrari in recent years, and will continue with that programme alongside joining Mitch Evans in the Jaguar FE line-up.

Calado feels he has quickly reacclimated to single-seaters in testing but is still getting his head around FE.

"It's not strange – it's like

learning to ride a bike," he said. "You sit in it and you don't forget. What is strange is all the energy management, and the fact that it's electric. That's what's really bizarre. And to get your head around why you need to be efficient is really key. So that will be my weak point – it won't be my one-lap performance."

Mercedes brings Formula 2 champion Nyck de Vries and former McLaren F1 driver Stoffel Vandoorne as its line-up for its series debut, while Porsche has secured FE champion Jean-Eric Vergne's former DS Techeetah team-mate Andre Lotterer and fellow former LMP1 driver Neel Jani.

Vergne successfully pursued BMW's Antonio Felix da Costa as his new partner once he sensed Lotterer was likely to leave for Porsche – approaching da Costa himself at a time when DS Techeetah was certain Lotterer wouldn't go.

AUTOSPORT F1 CORRESPONDENT

# SCOTT MITCHELL

"Vettel/Leclerc dynamic could tear Ferrari apart"



**S**how me a top racing team with two alpha drivers who do not come to blows at some point, and I'll show you a racing team that doesn't really have two alpha drivers in it, or isn't 'top' enough for it to matter.

Egos and stakes are high, especially in Formula 1, and I cannot think of a proper pairing in recent years that hasn't resulted in problems. Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg present the obvious example. Max Verstappen and Daniel Ricciardo too. But neither of those partnerships, and none since Hamilton and Fernando Alonso at McLaren, had the explosive Sebastian Vettel-Charles Leclerc dynamic that Ferrari is currently contending with.

When Leclerc mugged Vettel into the first corner on lap 66 of the Brazilian Grand Prix, anger and emotion got the better of Vettel. He was free to race, to try to respond to the pass, which he did. He was free to race, to move to the outside aided by the DRS on the run to Turn 4, which he did. But, as team boss Mattia Binotto pointed out, free to race does not mean do something stupid. Which Vettel did, moving left and causing the collision that ended both drivers' race.

Most racing drivers are prone to the red mist descending from time to time but nobody seems quite so afflicted as Vettel. Either he made the most basic of racing errors on Sunday, drifting aimlessly off-line, or he had a total loss of sense and was willing to crash into his team-mate. He has history in this department. Just think back to the 2010 Turkish Grand Prix. Only this time, Vettel's not the young hotshot with Dr Helmut Marko in his corner. Far from it.

Returning to the Hamilton/Alonso comparison, Ferrari faces something very similar to what McLaren struggled with in 2007: an experienced world champion who needs to be the centre of attention to thrive, and a young upstart who shouldn't really be calling the shots but is too quick to be caged.

Vettel and Leclerc threaten a very damaging dynamic that could tear Ferrari apart. It is not helpful for either driver, or the team, to be distracted by a civil war. And this kind of collision can be the genesis of exactly that.

Binotto did not want to review the incident on Sunday at Interlagos. He preferred to wait until Ferrari returned to the confines at Maranello to get the situation under control. Whether he does so could come to define Binotto's short time as team boss. If what he called a "silly" action in Brazil is not met with serious action, his drivers' relationship – and Ferrari's entire 2020 season – will be in jeopardy.

AGREE/DISAGREE?  
letters@motorsport-news.co.uk



## RACING NEWS

## MOTORSPORT UK REVEALS STRATEGY

Governing body unveils new investment plan as licence and event permit fees will rise



Club racers will receive new benefits as licences cost more

By Stephen Lickorish

Motorsport UK has unveiled a new strategy for the 2020 season and beyond in a bid to promote the sport more, but clubs are concerned by a significant increase to event permit fees.

British motorsport's governing body has revealed a raft of changes for next year as it tries to simplify its structure and raise additional income to allow it to reinvest more into the sport.

It is aiming to raise additional income in order to not only increase promotion but also offer more education and training initiatives, as well as to fund future innovation projects. By investing in these key areas, Motorsport UK hopes to try to secure the future of motorsport in this country against a backdrop of reducing numbers of licence holders and an aging demographic of participants.

Motorsport UK also intends to offer more to members and has already launched a range of discounts and offers. It has also scrapped licence fees for officials, taken away the requirement for all drivers aged between 45 and 60 to have a medical in order to receive a licence, and increased the amount of personal accident insurance cover that is included with a licence.

Its licence structure has been completely revamped for 2020. A new RS Clubman licence, which is free of charge, has been introduced for those competing in grassroots disciplines, like autotests and autosolos.

The National B licence has also been replaced by an Interclub one and National A is now simply known as National. It will also now be easier to upgrade a licence and the licence non-production fee has been reduced to 50% of the licence cost, capped at £100.

In order to help fund the investment strategy, Motorsport UK has sought to raise additional income from a number of sources, including from licence fee and event permit fee increases.

Circuit racing licences have increased between 3% for some of the International licences and to 55% for the new Interclub licence. These increases have also been replicated in other disciplines,

## Motorsport UK

The governing body answers some of the key questions raised by the changes

## Q&amp;A

## What is Motorsport UK trying to achieve with these changes, and why now?

Above all, we want to inspire and enable more people to participate in our sport in a safe, fair, fun, inclusive and progressive environment.

The investment strategy and restructuring of permits and licences aims to create a

sustainable future for our sport and address a number of fundamental risks which are causing a decline in numbers, particularly at grassroots level. This includes a lack of investment in grassroots motorsport, to help clubs grow their membership

## How do the permit changes and new RS

## Clubman licence benefit the sport?

The simplified permit and licence structure aims to create a more accessible and easier to understand route into the sport for new competitors.

Permit cost increases cater for enhanced personal accident and public liability insurance, and allow more investment into the grassroots

of the sport to help clubs grow their membership and encourage greater participation in motorsport.

The RS Clubman licence will not only allow us to understand who is competing with our insurance – which is a requirement – but it will allow us to engage with grassroots competitors and encourage repeat participation to create a

closer relationship with the sport.

## Why are permit costs going up for clubs?

Over the last 20 years or so Motorsport UK clubs have benefitted from a relatively stable insurance market. For nine of these years the permit insurance per capita remained static. Unfortunately the

motorsport insurance market has now changed and we have had to renegotiate our cover, which accounts for the majority of the change in price. For example, public liability insurance cover for clubs has now been increased to £100million. There has also been an enhancement to personal accident insurance for members.

## National champions get BTCC prize test

Three UK national racing champions got the chance to experience up-to-date British Touring Car Championship machinery at Snetterton last week as part of a Dunlop-backed prize drive scheme.

This year's Mini Challenge JCW champion James Gornall, last year's Mini Cooper Pro class winner Kyle Reid and Focus Cup title winner Andy Wilmot all got a run in a Motorbase Performance Ford Focus RS at the Norfolk track, with guidance from the car's regular driver, Ollie Jackson.

Dunlop offers the prize drive to reward racers who are successful on its tyres in lower forms of racing.

Gornall, the 2008 British GT champion said: "Getting to drive a British Touring Car is a dream come true. The two reasons I chose to race in the Mini Challenge were to



Reid, Gornall and Wilmot (l-r) all drove Motorbase Ford Focus

learn about driving a front-wheel-drive car and for the possibility of this test. I quickly felt quite comfortable."

Reid, who won a drive in the BMW Endurance Challenge race in support of the Rolex 24 at Daytona earlier this season for his success in the 2018 Mini Challenge Cooper Pro

category, was schedule to sample a BTCC car at the end of last season but had been forced to postpone his prize drive due to work commitments.

Wilmot, 39, contested a half-season in the BTCC in 2015 in a Welch Motorsport-run Proton Persona.

## Sunoco 240 Challenge winner Reid plans full Mini JCW season

Former Sunoco 240 Challenge winner Kyle Reid will contest a full season of the Mini Challenge JCW series next season when it joins the British Touring Car Championship package.

Reid, 30, dominated the Cooper Pro series in 2018 to earn his Sunoco Daytona prize drive but work commitments on an oil rig limited his outings this season. He only contested one JCW round at Brands Hatch, but failed to finish any of the races.

He now plots a full season in the category with Exce8 Motorsport.

"I can't wait to get stuck into the JCWs next year and start to show progress," said Reid. "I've bought a brand-new car and running with Exce8 was a bit of a no-brainer for me because the team really know what is best for the car and also for the driver. This will be my first time getting the opportunity to run alongside a professional team as I have always run cars myself over my eight years of racing."

"There's such a high-quality grid in the JCWs that going in thinking you'll win straight away is probably a bit naive, so I'll be looking for a few big reversed-grid results at the start and hopefully kick on to fight for outright podiums from there."



Reid impressed with his Cooper Pro display in 2018

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Mick Walker



Chambers believes now is the time to act to promote the sport

like rallying (*see tables*). Almost all event permit fees have also increased by a standard £5.

"We studied the challenges very carefully, and concluded we need a fresh approach and a five-year plan to reinvest in the sport," said Motorsport UK CEO Hugh Chambers. "This will involve a rebalancing of the economics, and in time, the diversification of revenues away from our current reliance on the competitors."

"In the short term we have new initiatives that will bring money into the sport and ease that burden right away. We have a fantastic and committed community, and based on the feedback we have to these changes, I am sure that we can all work together to build a stronger future for the sport."

Racing clubs can understand the change in licence fees but are worried about the impact of the increase in event permit charges.

Every club has to pay a set fee to Motorsport UK for each entry it receives at every meeting it organises, and this figure varies depending on whether or not it is for an endurance race and what

type of meeting it is.

Club bosses say those increases will have to be passed on to competitors, with the British Racing and Sports Car Club calculating it will increase the amount it pays by £30,000 a year.

"It's disappointing," said BRSCC chairman Peter Daly. "Motorsport UK is actively working to try and promote the sport but they are using the hard-earned cash of people that have been supporting the sport for years. It's the clubmen that are being hit pretty hard."

"An increase in entry fees is a small percentage in the budget of circuit racing but increases in fees become a barrier to people competing in motorsport – it's such an emotive topic."

"I fully understand the other side of it. A competitor may spend £1000 on new tyres to go a tenth of a second quicker and they also moan about an increase of £10 in entry fees, but that's the competitor's choice."

British Automobile Racing Club general manager Ian Watson added: "Any time that prices go up, it concerns us. I can see a lot of logic in the licence fee

## CHANGING FEES

### Race licence fees

LICENCE	2019	2020	% INCREASE
International A	£1158	£1193	3.0%
International B	£417	£430	3.1%
International C	£214	£220	2.8%
International D	£214	£220	2.8%
International Truck	£214	£220	2.8%
National Truck	£101	£155	53.5%
National (Nat A)	£101	£155	53.5%
Interclub (Nat B)	£64	£99	54.7%

### Rally licence fees

LICENCE	2019	2020	% INCREASE
International	£221	£228	3.2%
International Historic	£221	£228	3.2%
Stage National (Nat A)	£105	£155	47.6%
Stage Interclub (Nat B)	£64	£99	54.7%
National – non-driver	£64	£99	54.7%

### Event permit fees (per driver)

TYPE OF EVENT	2019	2020	% INCREASE
Car race International	£57.80	£62.80	8.7%
Endurance race International	£66.05	£71.05	7.8%
Car race National (Nat A)	£29.75	£34.75	16.8%
Endurance race National (Nat A)	£35.25	£40.25	14.2%
Car race Interclub (Nat B)	£26.00	£31.00	19.2%
Endurance race Interclub (Nat B)	£30.90	£35.90	16.2%
Car race Clubmans	£22.95	n/a	n/a
Endurance race Clubmans	£27.10	n/a	n/a

changes because of the benefits competitors can get in return.

"The permit fees is a completely separate issue. We, like a lot of folks, are very concerned. It will hit us quite hard in terms of the amount of money we have to give to Motorsport UK."

Watson admits it is difficult to know what impact the increase in fees will have on entry numbers.

One of the Classic Sports Car Club's concerns is the removal of the Clubman permit for events, which some of its meetings ran under. Instead it now has to run all of its fixtures on an Interclub permit – the equivalent of the old National B. This represents a 35.1% increase per entry.

"It's going to have a big impact because every club, however they are run, is not going to be able to absorb those costs," said CSCC director David Smitheram. "By dropping the Clubmans permit and by making us run Interclub it means every one of our entries is going to pay around £8 more per round – and we've got no choice but to pass that on."

"For your average club racer, what's six or seven rounds of £8 more but it's all cumulative."

Some drivers gain by not having to pay for a medical but they will pay more for their licence."

Addressing these concerns, a Motorsport UK spokesperson said: "We have removed the Clubman's grade to simplify the system so the permit grade system now aligns fully with the licence grading system. Previously, to compete in a Clubman's car race, competitors required a Race National B Licence, that did not make sense."

"At the Interclub level, clubs will be able to invite other championships to their meetings; whereas at the Clubman level, it was restricted to only championships organised by the organising club. The original concept was the 'closed to club grassroots' events at a Clubman permit level."

"But, over the years this was perhaps adopted differently by some clubs, as many championships were fronted by one of the organising clubs, so this resulted in a shift from the National B to Clubman event permits, and this was contrary to the intention of that level of permit."

## Karter wins Villeneuve-backed British F4 seat

Dutch karting champion Marijn Kremers has secured a funded seat with Carlin in British Formula 4 next season after winning a shootout co-organised by 1997 Formula 1 champion Jacques Villeneuve.

Dutch driver Kremers, 21, triumphed in the competition held by racing school FEED Racing France at Magny-Cours last week.

Villeneuve founded the school alongside Patrick Lemarie – a test driver for the BAR F1 outfit for four years while Villeneuve was at the team – and the duo were part of a judging panel for the shootout that also featured 1996 Monaco Grand Prix winner Olivier Panis.

Nearly 100 drivers registered for the scholarship and these were whittled down to a final six that contested the shootout in Mygale F4 cars.

Kremers, who won the CIK-FIA



Kremers (c) with Villeneuve (l)

KZ world karting title this year, will now receive a funded British F4 season with leading squad Carlin.

"It feels great [to win]!" said Kremers. "I see the season in British F4 as a great opportunity for me to boost my racing career to the next level and it is a great feeling to have secured a seat with an amazing team as Carlin."

"Even as a rookie I'm sure with their guidance I'll be able to put on some good results and hopefully a championship fight."

## Clio Cup reveals Barcelona date for final round

The final round of the relaunched Clio Cup UK has been confirmed with the series joining up with its French and Spanish equivalents at Barcelona at the end of next year.

The series will move to the British GT support package for 2020 having previously raced alongside the British Touring Car Championship and will be supported by Renault Sport Racing France after Renault UK withdrew its funding.

It had already been confirmed that the Clio Cup would appear at five of the British GT meetings and with Clio Cup France at Magny-Cours in September.



Teams looked at new car

But the final date has been announced as the European Clio Cup series will join up at Barcelona on November 7-8.

Prospective teams and drivers had a first chance to look at the new fifth-generation car at Renault's Formula 1 base in Enstone last weekend as the series was officially launched for 2020.

As well as the new car and calendar, entry fees have also been reduced to about £8000 + VAT for next season.

One team that has already revealed it will place new car orders is Westbourne Motorsport and it is in talks with drivers.

"We will be on the Clio Cup grid for sure," said team boss Richard Colburn. "With the Clio Cup UK, we're going to great tracks both in the UK and abroad. It's a bit different to race at Silverstone GP and Brands GP – it's something new for the drivers."

## DEPUTY EDITOR

# STEPHEN LICKORISH

"Motorsport UK had to look at ways to increase income"



**S**omething had to change. There has been a gradual, but constant decline, in the number of competition licence holders in the UK over the last few years and, without this being addressed, motorsport in this country would die a slow death.

When David Richards and Hugh Chambers took over as chairman and chief executive, respectively, of what was then the Motor Sports Association, they recognised this and have focused on improving the grassroots of the sport to encourage new people to participate. And Motorsport UK has done some good work in this area already. Take the increased life of belts and seats in rallying and the launch of a wide-ranging and extensive benefits programme for members. All steps in the right direction.

The investment strategy the governing body has adopted for 2020 and beyond is also very positive. It highlights key areas to focus on, including the promotion of the sport, recruitment and training of new volunteers (including the vital marshals), and adoption of new technologies and forward-thinking ideas.

Obviously, all of those worthy initiatives cost money. In some cases, lots of money. And so attention turned to ways that Motorsport UK can increase its income. In that regard it's looking to attract sponsorship and is offering consultancy services to events around the world. But there also comes the tetchy subject of licence and event permit fee rises.

First of all, it's important to remember that it's in the interest of every single licence holder in the UK that Motorsport UK's plan for the future works – otherwise the prospect of there being no motorsport in this country becomes more real.

As much as everybody hates price rises no matter what the scenario, it does at least make sense for everybody to pay that little bit more for the good of the sport. Especially bearing in mind the discounts available to members, an increased level of personal accident insurance cover as part of the licence and those aged 45-60 will no longer need to fork out for a costly annual medical.

But what makes those price rises less palatable and a harder sell is when the distribution of those increases appears unfair. You would reasonably expect those with international licences, more serious drivers, to be more wealthy and therefore foot a larger chunk of the bill. Sadly, that's not the case. While the bottom-level Interclub licence has increased by a significant 55%, the top International A has gone up by just the 3%.

It's a similar story with event permit fees – the Clubmans permit has been scrapped for circuit race meetings and that again hits the grassroots. Understandably, the clubs are concerned and will have to pass these costs onto their drivers.

The big question is whether or not this could be a tipping point for those considering hanging up their helmet and push them into doing so. Motorsport UK are confident it won't be, but that remains to be seen.

● What do you make of the changes?

Let us know by emailing [letters@motorsport-news.co.uk](mailto:letters@motorsport-news.co.uk)

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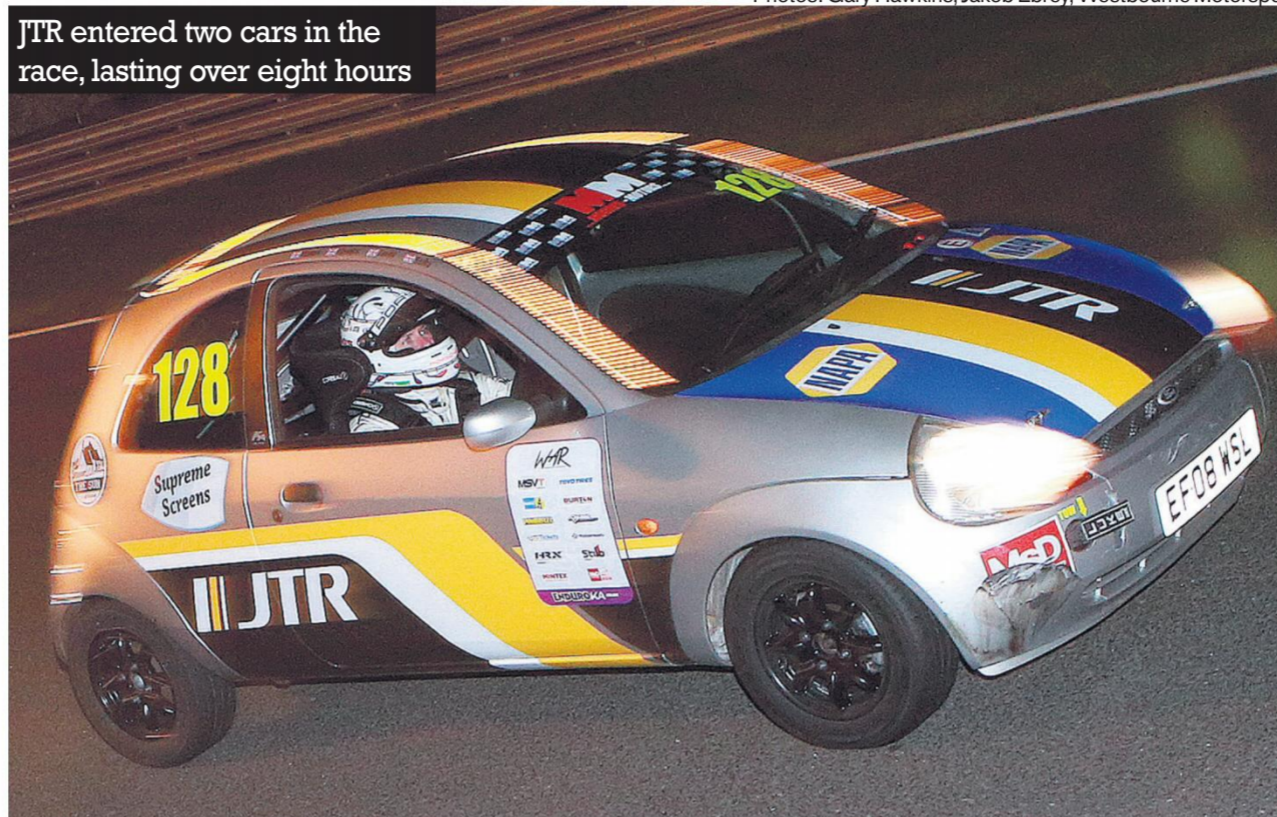


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# RACING NEWS



Tandy (second right) celebrates a two-lap winning margin



JTR entered two cars in the race, lasting over eight hours

Photos: Gary Hawkins, Jakob Ebrey, Westbourne Motorsport

## TANDY PLOTS MORE ENDUROKA OUTINGS

### Le Mans winner's JTR crew takes victory in IndyKa 500 race at Brands Hatch on Ford Ka debut

By **Brian Phillips**

**Le Mans winner Nick Tandy would like to defend his victory in EnduroKa's IndyKa 500 race after the JTR team boss won the Brands Hatch race last weekend.**

JTR entered two cars in the event and Porsche factory driver Tandy was joined by Lewis Selby, Elliot Mason and James Rhodes in the winning machine.

"We could have done with a bit more practice with four drivers, but the cars are fun to drive and

a pleasure to build and race," said Tandy. "Co-driver Lewis Selby is our front-wheel-drive expert for set-up and driving.

"What I like is the whole team aspect in long distance racing. You can get a buzz from the short stuff, but here

your team-mates become friends and the motivation is not to let the team down.

"It has been such a great weekend with a good atmosphere in the paddock. We would like to come back and do it again."

If the event was a triumph for

Tandy and his team-mates, it was less successful for the second JTR car. Co-driven by Porsche Carrera Cup GB regulars Lewis Plato and Dan Vaughan with James Robinson and Vic Lee, it finished 16th after making 10 pitstops.



Mk4 car was sampled at Motorsport Days Live event

### BRSCC plans to run new series for Mk4 Mazda MX-5s next season

The British Racing and Sports Car Club plans to introduce a new series for the Mk4 version of the Mazda MX-5 next season.

The club runs a very successful series for the Mk1 model of the sportscar and will amalgamate its MX-5 Supercup and Super Series for the Mk3 edition next season.

In addition to the existing categories, plans are in place to run a grid dedicated to the Mk4 model later in the year.

"We very much plan to run this as a series and it would come along with the [existing] Mazda package, but probably

not at all of them – we will probably have four standalone events for the Mk4s," said BRSCC competitions director Dominic Ostrowski, who added the cars could also compete in the new Clubsport Trophy. "It probably won't be until May, just as a way of introducing it and trying to build a good amount of interest for 2021."

A car built by long-time MX-5 competitor Paul Sheard Autosport was available for interested drivers to sample at the recent Motorsport Days Live event at Silverstone. Ostrowski added there was a good reaction

from those who tested it.

"It was good, a lot of people went out in the car and people were quite excited about it," he said. "There's still some development work to be done on it but that's normal."

There is not at present a dedicated series for the Mk4 version of the MX-5 but a number of them do compete in the British Automobile Racing Club's MaX5 Championship.

However, that series has struggled for entries, averaging just nine cars this year, and BARC chiefs say the category's future is under review.

### Westbourne Motorsport aiming to repeat its past success in the Junior Saloon Car Championship

Successful Junior Saloon Car Championship squad Westbourne Motorsport plans to return to the series next season after not fielding cars in the category for the past two years.

The squad has won titles in both the series' current JSSC

guise and in its previous Saxmax form. Westbourne's main campaigns in recent years have been in the Renault UK Clio Cup, Michelin Clio Series and in historic racing.

Team boss Richard Colburn says that developing the careers

of young drivers is a key part of the team and he wanted to return to a junior category to assist with this.

"It's been a very good championship for us in the past with wins," he said. "We're already talking to a couple of

people who ran in it this year but we're looking for at least two new drivers too. We've got two new cars in build fresh to the championship.

"What we find important in that championship is it's not too expensive, it's very affordable."



Team has won title in the past

### Champion of Brands runs Down tribute

The last Champion of Brands Formula Ford 1600 event of the year was contested for the Martin Down memorial trophy as a tribute to the late Getem builder Martin Down, who died a week before the Brands finale.

Down built his first FF1600 Getem in the 1970s with Alan Brunning and challenged the establishment for 40 years.

Among those paying their respects at Brands were race preparation expert Pete Alexander, a Champion of Brands title holder when it was a points-scoring championship. Out for the first time in Formula Ford in more than 10 years, Alexander drove the Macon MR8 he's been fielding for other drivers in historic races.

Down's son Jason scored two fourth places in his Getem Mygale on Saturday and was sent out first in qualifying with a gentlemen's agreement that nobody would try to pass for at least a lap.

### OBITUARY

**Brian Fisher**  
1941-2019

Three-time Castle Combe Special GT champion Brian Fisher, who died peacefully last week following a long neurological illness, was among the west country's best-loved club racers.

A celebrated Bridgwater hairdresser, Brian personified popular period perception of the genre. Fashionably longer locks, cheeky chappie banter and a penchant for flash cars made him one of the Somerset town's most recognisable characters.

Fisher started competing in the mid-1960s, initially in autocross, sprints and hillclimbs, before switching to the circuits. Racer Tony Dolley, a friend for more than 40 years, recalls watching him at a local autocross: "Most of the competitors had Minis, Imps and Escorts, but Brian, being Brian, raced a Porsche 911!"

Castle Combe historian Pete Stowe's first record of Fisher competing there was in Clubmans in 1967, where he finished a class-winning fourth in a 999cc U2-BMC.

A stalwart in the circuit's GT championship, Fisher won the title in '86 and '87 in a Skoda S130RS clone and in '95 in a Shrike P15, all powered by a 1500cc Ford BDA built by Dave 'Philspeed' Phillips.

A great family man, Fisher nurtured the talents of sons Josh (a triple Combe FF champ) and Felix from an early age, although sadly his illness kept him away in recent years. To them, wife Lorraine, his family and friends, MN extends sincere condolences.

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# HISTORICS

'Drama for VSCC trial'  
Rain stops play, below



## DOWN THE PUB ALEX SUMMERS

Hillclimber and F5000 racer  
Age: 28 Lives: Henley-in-Arden



Hillclimb expert Summers

### He started young

"Dad built me a kart out of a lawnmower when I was seven or eight and I drove it around an old tennis court. My family has been racing since the 1920s. My grandad Bill had Maseratis and Alfa Romeos and then my dad had an MG KN Special and Healeys and so on."

### He then moved to speed events

"I did a bit of karting but I was big into music when I was younger so I never pursued any serious karting. At 16, I got a go in Dad's Formula Ford at a sprint and it went from there in hillclimbing."

### He's British champion

"Then I was having a chat with Roger Moran and he asked if I'd like to share the Gould GR61 with Scott [Moran]. So I shared the car at one of the later Prescott rounds in 2014. For one reason or another, primarily because Scott wasn't doing a full year, I managed to clinch the 2015 British Hillclimb championship. My mum Lindsay competes on the hills and so does my fiancée Debbie Dunbar. We're getting married in June next year."

### He raced an F5000

"I raced my dad's early Formula 5000 Lola T140 at Silverstone in October. I'd raced this car once before in 2014 at Silverstone. I came back in 2015 and we ran a bearing. It is so different to the hillclimb car, but it is brilliant."

### That era holds his interest

"Apart from the karts, I grew up in a bit of a motorsport drought in the family during a period of about 15 years when there were no cars. I had pictures on the wall from this sort of era. We were friendly with Martin Stretton when I was growing up and this is what I thought racing cars should look like. I never really gelled with Formula 1 cars when I was growing up."

### The F5000 was just for fun

"This is a bit of end-of-season fun but it's really important for me to do some events either side of the British Hillclimb Championship. It is such a frantic schedule and it is just relentless. To come and do this at the end of the year is good fun. No one expects anything and it is huge fun."

# NEW HISTORIC RALLY FOR TELFORD

## Shropshire showpiece modelled on some of the continent's best

Photos: Paul Lawrence



Classic will run at Weston Park

By Paul Lawrence

**A brand-new retro rally event will run next June, based around Telford in Shropshire it will feature demonstration stages at nearby venues including Weston Park.**

Over the weekend of June 6-7, Rallying History will run its first event and already has plans to grow it into a UK

equivalent of major European events like the Eifel Classic and Rally Legend.

After scrutineering in Telford Town Park on Saturday, Sunday will include over 60 miles in eight demonstration stages and 100 road miles. The entry will be capped at 80 cars and in the first six days the organisers received 173 registrations.

"I've been working on this for 18 months," said prime

mover Warner Lewis from the Rallying History club.

"Telford Council is very much behind it and really wants it to happen. It will always be a demonstration event so that we can run Group B cars. We want to walk before we run," added Lewis, who has ambitions to include closed road sections.

The Historic Rally Festival will be open to rally cars from 1955 to 2007 and the entry selection will

be designed to produce a wide and varied entry list.

The field will include several star drivers and the festival will be run to current special stage rally standards in terms of safety and spectator control.

"We're trying to do it all correctly," said Lewis who intends it to become an annual event.

Any profits made will be handed to charity.



TR2: a quarter of a million

## Former factory Triumph breaks the bank with bumper auction sale

An ex-works Triumph TR2 from the 1955 Le Mans 24-Hour race sold for a model record of £258,750 at the Classic Motor Show auction, nearly double its guide price.

'PKV 374' was raced in the fateful 1955 Le Mans by Leslie

Brooke and Mort Morris-Goodall and finished 19th after spending two and a half hours beached on a sand bank at Tetre Rouge.

It was bought by Prince Hussein of Jordan. It then had several owners before being

bought in 1972 by Jan Pearce. A restoration was completed and, from 2000, it has competed in various events, including the 2005 Le Mans Legends. Pearce, one of the early members of the TR Register, died in 2015 and the car was sold by his family.

## Manta to return to Killarney Historic

Paul Lietaer, one of the biggest names in Belgian rallying, will return to the Killarney Historic Rally in his Opel Manta 400.

This year's rally, on Saturday November 30, will mark his fourth visit to Killarney. His maiden appearance was back in 1984 when he contested the Rally of the Lakes in a Talbot Sunbeam Lotus. His last visit was 21 years ago when he contested the third running of the Killarney Historic Rally in a Ford Escort Mk2 and finished 12th overall.

The Manta has taken him to two significant Belgian rally titles, including the 1988 Belgian National crown, and this is the car that he will drive in Killarney.



Coffey has claimed four championships

## COFFEY STEPS DOWN AND PUTS TURNER UP FOR SALE

Four-time Historic Road Sports champion Dick Coffey has retired from racing and put his hugely successful Turner Mk1 up for sale.

The 1960 car, chassis 60/292 registered 500 NKX, was first owned by engine builder

Alexander Engineering and used as a demonstrator, launched at a press day at Goodwood in July 1960.

It was rebuilt for racing in 1984 by Chris Horner, and joined the Historic Road Sports grid in 1986. It has just

completed its 34th consecutive season in the championship.

Horner won the overall title in 1996 and Coffey took it over in 2002 and has added four more overall titles as well as eight class titles in the 1300cc division.

## IN BRIEF

### Cotswolds axed

The Vintage Sports-Car Club was forced to cancel its Cotswold Trial planned for Saturday due to flooding in the area. The Prescott-based trial is the final date in the popular VSCC trials calendar but the event was scrubbed in deference to local land owners and residents.

### Masters of the track

British racers Greg Thornton and Ron Maydon are the 2019 Masters Historic Formula 1 USA Champions. Thornton took the American post-78 title in his Lotus 91/5 while Maydon won pre-78 division in his LEC CRP1. The titles were decided during the support race to the US Grand Prix in Texas, which was the final round of this year's six-race schedule.

### Abel exonerated

Historic rally driver John Abel has been acquitted of causing the death of a motorcyclist during the 2018 Clwyd Vale Classic. Abel's Ford Escort Mk1 was hit by the motorbike, which had been reported as travelling at high speed in the Clocaenog area. The jury at Caernarfon Crown Court took just 40 minutes to reach a unanimous verdict.

### Clubmans is ready

Running on Sunday's stages of the Roger Albert Clark Rally is the Clubmans Rally, with up to 20 cars spread though the field of the main event. The Escort Mk2s of Alistair Brearley and Mark McCulloch are the top seeds while the entry also includes the Opel Kadett GTE of Martin Oglesby and John Parker.

### VSCC's 2020 line-up

The Vintage Sports-Car Club has confirmed a reduced programme of race meetings for 2020, with a four-event schedule concluding with a return to Mallory Park on August 23. The season starts at Silverstone, as usual, on April 18-19 before taking in one-day race meetings at Oulton Park (May 30) and Cadwell Park (June 20).

### Leominster all set

The Herefordshire town of Leominster is gearing up for the start of the Roger Albert Clark Rally on Thursday (November 21). During Thursday, scrutineering will be held at Brightwells from 1000hrs. Later, from 1500hrs, the cars will line up in Broad Street in the town centre ahead of the official start at 1600hrs. Spectators are welcome, without charge, with parking available in the Broad Street Car Park.

### HRCR open day

The Historic Rally Car Register Open Day on Saturday, January 11, at the British Motor Museum, Gaydon will feature a series of short forums covering speed events, road rallies, stage rallies and tours. Hosted by Mike Broad, the free-to-attend forums are aimed at novices or those seeking to change disciplines within the sport.

### James hits 50

Almost 50 years after his first rally in December 1969, vastly experienced Welsh co-driver Ryland James will contest the Roger Albert Clark Rally in the Ford Anglia of Malcolm Rich. It will be James' first rally in an Anglia although an Anglia did win the first rally he started. They will be leading contenders in historic Category 1 for pre-'68 cars.

# ROGER ALBERT CLARK PREVIEW



Classic stages are part of R.A.C. route



David Kynaston's TR7 provides variety

Photos: Paul Lawrence

## THE RETURN OF HISTORIC RALLYING'S STERNEST TEST

Paul Lawrence looks at the reborn Roger Albert Clark event, which starts this week



Steve Graham adds a dash of Italian flair to the event in 2017 in his Lancia



The victorious crews celebrate the end of the last R.A.C. event back in 2017

After a wait of two years, it is here. The Roger Albert Clark Rally is the rally of the year for many competitors, marshals and fans. Five days of action across Wales, Northumberland and southern Scotland kick off tomorrow (Thursday) and finish in Carlisle late on Monday afternoon.

The 13th edition of the Roger Albert Clark Rally is the biggest and toughest yet, with 300 stage miles over 32 stages on classic Mid-Wales gravel, daunting tests in Kielder and famous Scottish stages like Twiglees and Caste O'er. Fittingly, the event has drawn its biggest and most competitive entry ever, with a gaggle of contenders in a field of 130 cars.

This is far more than most modern one-day forest sprints. It represents a full

BTRDA season in one rally, with long days and lots of miles in the dark. The stages in legendary forests have an unrivalled atmosphere and it is a proper adventure for everyone involved, including the fans.

The success of the rally is down to one man and his hugely supportive family. Colin Heppenstall, his wife Nicola and their teenage children Victoria and Thomas, run this rally. Sure, lots of volunteers play key support roles, but without the sheer dedication of the Heppenstalls, there would be no rally.

At the head of the action will be a horde of full-spec Ford Escort Mk2s and our sidebar looks at the prospects for the top five seeds. But the quality goes way, way down the order and anyone in the top 30 has a realistic shot at finishing in the top 10.

The 2019 British Historic champions Simon Webster and Jez Rogers were fifth two years ago, while a quality-packed top 10 also includes Adrian Hetherington/

Andrew Grennan and Alan Walker/John Connor, who took a fabulous fourth overall in 2017. Henri Grehan, Ben Friend and Rudi Lancaster are other members of the rapid Escort Mk2 pack.

Christophe Jacob is among the European visitors, while Swedish ace Arne Backstrom is expected to fly in his Volvo 240. From Belgium is Ghislain de Mevius in his Nissan 240RS and adding variety are Phil Collins (Opel Ascona), Andrew Siddall (Fiat 131) and Wayne Sisson, who brings his newly-prepped Mitsubishi Galant to class F2.

The leading Pinto-powered Escort Mk2s in class D3 include Stuart Egglestone, Guy Woodcock and Josh Browne. Meanwhile, in Category 2 (for the pre '75 cars) 2010 winner Stefan Stouf heads the field.

Event veteran Jeremy Easson (Datsun 240Z) tops class C4 while Josh Carr goes up against Tony Shields in class C3 for the Pinto-powered Escort Mk1s. The 1600cc

historics run in the first pack of cars and in class D2 the Escort Mk2s of John Mennell and David Goose should set the pace, while class C2 is topped by the Mk1 Escorts of David Bennett and Stuart Cariss.

The pre '68 cars in Category 1 also run at the front of the field, led by the legend that is Bob Bean in his Lotus Cortina. Other contenders in Category 1 include Paul Mankin (Porsche 911), Drexel Gillespie (Volvo Amazon) and Malcolm Rich (Ford Anglia).

The concurrent Open Rally is for two-wheel-drive cars of any age, topped by former WRC driver Gregoire de Mevius in his Toyota Celica. Former Open winners Dave Hemingway and Simon Ashton are back to maintain their 100% starting record in their Ford Escort Mk2 and go up against 2017 Open winners David Hutchinson and Jeff Garnett, who have swapped their Escort Mk2 for a Toyota GT86. ■

### WHEN AND WHERE

#### Thursday, November 21

After documentation at Brightwells in Leominster, the competitive action starts with two runs through a nine-mile stage in Radnor forest before a return to Leominster.

#### Friday, November 22

A day of short, sharp stages in the Epynt region with service on the military ranges wraps up nearly 50 miles in Wales before crews load up and head for Carlisle.

#### Saturday, November 23

The 0800hrs restart from Carlisle leads into stages

across Kielder as far east as Harwood. The longest, toughest day covers over 100 stage miles with the first crew not due back into Carlisle until after 2100hrs: the main service area will be at Kielder Waterside.

#### Sunday, November 24

Restart from Carlisle for a full day of stages in southern Scotland taking in classics like Twiglees and Castle O'er. The main service area will be at Lockerbie Lorry Park.

#### Monday, November 25

The 0700hrs restart from

Carlisle opens a tough final leg of 66 stage miles in the central block of Kielder. The main service area will be at Kielder Waterside while the finish is back at H&H Auctions in Carlisle.

#### More information

Full spectator information is on the event website at racmc.org. The best way to follow the rally from afar is via the event's Facebook page, which will include extensive live coverage. The definitive event report will be in MN next Wednesday.

### FIVE TOP STAGES

**Motorsport News picks five of the 32 stages that could be turning points in this year's Roger Albert Clark showpiece.**

#### Radnor

We think the atmosphere in Radnor on Thursday evening will be electric. It's a fast and flowing stage and, after some early hairpins, it is a place to put a marker down for the following four days of competition.

#### Kershope

After the journey north on

Friday night, there's no easy lead-in for Saturday as it kicks off with 16.66 miles in Kershope. The stage starts in Scotland and crosses the border with a couple of bridges thrown in.

#### Paddaburn

A classic Kielder stage is the final test of a long Saturday and crews will be tired heading into this 15-miler. It'll be gone 2000hrs before the first car leaves the line.

#### Greskine

The first fully Scottish

stage starts Sunday with a climb up to higher ground and packs plenty of deceptive twists and turns into the demanding 11 miles. It's another wake-up call with first car at 0900hrs.

#### Bewshaugh

Rally manager Colin Heppenstall always has a sting in the tail for the final stage of the rally and this time it is 17.67 miles in the central block of Kielder as the light fades on Monday. Bewshaugh will be a nervous stage for some.

### MN'S TOP 5 DRIVERS

MN rates the prospect for the top five crews



#### 1 Martin McCormack/Barney Mitchell

**Ford Escort Mk2**  
The rapid Northern Irishman is bidding for a third win on his favourite rally and is going to be hard to stop. No driver has yet won the Roger Albert three times and Mitchell proved more than up to the co-driver's job in 2017.



#### 2 Matthew Robinson/Sam Collis

**Ford Escort Mk2**  
Winner in 2014, 'Robbo' has had a fairly quiet season this year, but victory on the recent Trackrod Rally was a good warm-up. They will be major contenders. Collis is the perfect foil and fun will be had.



#### 3 Jason Pritchard/Phil Clarke

**Ford Escort Mk2**  
With three BHRC titles under his belt, winning the Roger Albert Clark is a notable omission on Pritchard's ever-growing rallying CV. Two years ago he was doing everything right when a shaft failed in Scotland.



#### 4 Roger Chilman/Patrick Walsh

**Ford Escort Mk2**  
Chilman made his Roger Albert debut two years ago and was immediately chasing victory among the regular historicists. He'll attack from the off on home ground in Radnor and could be leading leaving Wales.



#### 5 Paul Barrett/Gordon Noble

**Ford Escort Mk2**  
The 2018 British Historic Rally champion has sat out most of 2019 due to work commitments. Now he's back for his first Roger Albert and should be right up there, but an event of this scale will be a new challenge.

# RALLY NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Loeb will take part in Rallye du Var

Adamo is already looking ahead

# HYUNDAI READY TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING IN 2020

## South Korean firm begins preparations to defend world championship crown

By David Evans

**There will be no winter break for this year's World Rally champion manufacturer Hyundai – team director Andrea Adamo says a successful defence depends on getting straight to work on 2020.**

That work begins with this week's Rallye du Var in the south of France, where Sebastien Loeb will drive a Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC as part of the squad's initial Monte Carlo test.

Adamo, new to the job of team director for this season, was quick to pay tribute to his predecessor in the role, Michel Nandan, when he talked about his team's success through 2019. He also praised the focus of the Alzenau-based outfit through what has been a busy season for the factory and customer team.

"When I became team director," he said, "I picked up the mantle from others who had laid solid foundations. This title represents the work of a lot of people

before me, who had done a great job that needed some refinement.

"To win a world championship is the highest career point of anyone involved in motorsport and it's certainly a great satisfaction for everyone working at Hyundai Motorsport, absolutely every single person in the company. Never before this season had everyone in the company been so focused to do well, both in our WRC and customer racing activities. Each individual has their unique fingerprint on this result."

Asked about the immediate future for the team, Adamo added: "We will have the opportunity to share and celebrate this result with everyone [in the factory at Alzenau]. Then our next steps will be to continue the development of the car, do some testing and participate in some extra events to be fully prepared for 2020.

"We have Rallye du Var with Sebastien Loeb and we will have some gravel development testing as well as the first part of pre-event test for Monte-Carlo.



Neuville: Drivers' title runner-up

There is no such thing as a winter break, if we want to defend our title in 2020."

Adamo has cut a controversial figure on his first season in charge of a team, dropping Andreas Mikkelsen and bringing Craig Breen in favour of former Hyundai driver Hayden Paddon in Finland. The Italian admits he is happy with the job he has done this year.

"It is a personal satisfaction to see that somehow hard work always pays off," he said. "Believing in your targets is the only way to bring this kind of result home.

### FINAL STANDINGS

Manufacturers points after 13/13 rounds

P	TEAM	PTS
1	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT	380
2	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT	362
3	Citroen Total WRT	284
4	M-Sport Ford WRT	218

been in charge of its own WRC programme through a Frankfurt factory which works closely with the South Korean manufacturer's own performance engineering department close to Seoul.

Hyundai lead driver Thierry Neuville was one of the pivotal figures in the change of leadership from Nandan to Adamo and the Belgian admits he's been impressed with the progress the team has made this season.

Neuville, who finished second in the drivers' points for the fourth consecutive time (and fifth time in total), said: "We have continuously developed our car throughout the whole season. I had a fast car on all surfaces, which was one of the key things for our success. I also had strong team-mates; Andreas [Mikkelsen] finished fourth in the championship, Dani [Sordo] secured important points during the season and having Sebastien [Loeb] was also very helpful. They all gave me such great support in the drivers' battle."

HOW THE SERVICE PARK REACTED TO RALLY AUSTRALIA AXE

PAGE 23



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*'We took a giant challenge'*  
Oliver Bennett's World RX attack, p28



# PADDON AIMS TO CONQUER WRC IN SELF-RUN TEAM

Kiwi has his sights set at a home-grown team for World Rally successes

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Paddon drove the Fiesta R5 on Wales Rally GB



Paddon has lofty 2020 targets

By David Evans

**Hayden Paddon will focus his efforts on building a world championship-winning Team New Zealand in the next five years.**

The Kiwi missed his second opportunity to drive a World Rally Car in Australia last week, but says he has moved on from the disappointment and is resigned to the fact that his WRC career could be over.

Paddon was scheduled to drive a Ford Fiesta WRC in Coffs Harbour last week. The Australian outing was in place

after he missed out on a Rally Finland start following a freak testing crash just days before the start of the event.

Paddon has told MN he will now focus on building his business and developing a team to take on the world from his base near Queenstown.

"Australia was disappointing," he said. "But I moved on quickly and I haven't looked back. I'll always look forward and that means working on the exciting opportunities we have here."

"I would like to have a team from New Zealand competing and winning a world

championship in international motorsport in the next five years. I don't know what programme that will be yet, a lot can and will change [in motorsport] in that time, but we have the building blocks in place to launch that from here."

Paddon says that focus could mean him missing out on the chance to tackle his home round of the world championship in New Zealand next season.

"I've got to be realistic," he said. "Being a spectator on my home event is a very real possibility. That would be a hard pill to swallow, but it's the way it

is. Hyundai New Zealand gave us this short-term opportunity [to drive an M-Sport Ford], but nothing has come to fruition from that and we can't keep pushing that. I'm not willing to risk that relationship [with Hyundai NZ] or what I'm building here."

M-Sport had talked of trying to find a way to get Paddon out as early as round two in Sweden next season, but the former Rally Argentina winner's not so sure.

"It's just not as simple as that," he said. "I've worked 24-7 for the last 20 years to be in the WRC and I still want to be, of course I do. But I have to be realistic as well."

## RALLY AUSTRALIA BOSS SAYS HE IS MAKING 2020 PLANS

Rally Australia chairman Andrew Papadopoulos says Australia's story in the World Rally Championship is not finished and has vowed to be back in the series.

Rally Australia was cancelled just hours after last week's MN closed for press. While the teams immediately began the process of dismantling the service park, the drivers remained in Coffs Harbour to work with the locals.

A relief fund organised by the WRC and Rally Australia could top \$100,000 (£53,000) for the Rural Fire Service. The teams donated all the food purchased to feed the crews and engineers through the week.

Australia is not included on next year's WRC calendar, where it has been replaced by Rally New Zealand. MN's understanding is that

Auckland returns for a single season, opening the door for Australia to be back in 2021. Rally Australia first appeared on the calendar 30 years ago and remained in Perth until 2006. It moved to the east coast in 2009 and shifted to Coffs in '11. Both the promoter and the governing body have previously made clear their preference to find a new home with a bigger centre of population than the 70,000 in Coffs Harbour.

Papadopoulos suggested a rally could be run in Coffs next season. He said: "I want to say thank you to the Coffs coast, not that we're quite finished here. I thank the community for being part of Rally Australia and we'll continue to value that input we receive."

"We have a few plans for Coffs next year, this is a fantastic

place to have the rally. We've had good government support and brought lots of economic benefit to the community. It's sad to finish this event this way, but it's important to make sure our community is safe."

"We'll be back and we'll do what we can do really well in Australia and [that's to] run the best WRC round in the world."

Papadopoulos admitted the decision to cancel the event ultimately took longer than he would have wanted. The final call came on Tuesday afternoon, by which time Coffs Harbour itself was in the path of the fire and there was growing anger at the delay taken to what appeared to be an obvious decision.

Papadopoulos added: "With the international aspect of this event, we had to consult with the emergency services, the



Rally Australia was axed

police and the government to make the right decision and I know it's probably taken longer than it should, but we had to make the right decision."

Six people have died and close to 500 homes were lost across the state of New South Wales. Rain and hail on Sunday – what would have been the final day of the rally – helped douse some of the flames, but strengthening winds have brought fears for worsening conditions this week.



Peugeot revealed new car

## Peugeot reveals new customer front-wheel-drive 208 R2 battler

In a week when PSA Motorsport's commitment to the World Rally Championship has come into question, Peugeot has revealed a brand-new car – the first to be built for the FIA's Rally 4 category.

The front-wheel-drive 208 Rally 4 is a replacement for the 208 R2, of which more than 450 have been sold around the world. The French manufacturer has been working

on the new car since the summer of 2018.

A three-cylinder 1.2-litre turbocharged engine and Sadev gearbox is all housed in the PSA Group's new CMP platform. The car will break cover in both Spain, where ERC3 champion Efrén Llarena will drive a 208 Rally 4 on the Madrid Rally, and on the Rallye du Var in the south of France.

Homologation to allow the car,

which will sell for around £55,000 (before tax) into the WRC is expected before the end of the first quarter of 2020.

The one-make 208 Rally Cup in France and Spain will both utilise the new car next year.

● While Citroen's participation in the WRC is under question, MN has been assured Citroen Racing's customer department will continue to supply and service the C3 R5.

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

# DAVID EVANS

"It has been a long road to glory for Hyundai"



**B**efore I talk about anything else, I want to take my hat off to Sebastien Ogier. The outgoing world champion dug deep before he left Coffs Harbour last week and donated €10,000 (which is pretty much £10,000 these days) to help wildlife injured in the bushfires.

What a thoroughly good bloke he is. As are his colleagues, who stayed on to raise awareness of the work of the Rural Fire Service and Red Cross – as well as thanking more than 300 volunteers who had ruled out a week of their lives to run Rally Australia. Toyota also added £125,000 to the firefighters' pot as a donation as the WRC rallied around.

It wasn't hard to feel sympathy for a whole lot of folk last week and Hyundai had to number among those. Here's a team which has fought and battled through the season to lift its maiden world title and that magic feeling was somewhat lost in the moment.

Congratulations to team director Andrea Adamo and his Hyundai Motorsport operation. You were the best and you deserved to win.

And it's good to see Hyundai success. Some of us remember the first chapter of the South Korean's World Rally Championship story; the one written by a Motor Sports Developments team run by David Whitehead.

In fact, Hyundai's story goes back even further than that. Greg Carr was the first driver to use a Hyundai in the WRC, when he started the 1991 Rally Australia in a Group Hyundai Lantra. Wayne Bell then battled on with that car for a few years before Hyundai got behind his Asia Pacific Rally Championship bid in 1994. The Australian took that year's Formula 2 APRC title and just a few years later Hyundai had focused its eye on a pukka F2 car and the WRC proper.

Along with Bell, Alister McRae and Kenneth Eriksson (and Graham Middleton for one round only in Rally GB, 1999) were employed to drive the Coupe kit cars, but the Scot and the Swede were doing so with one thing in mind: the Accent WRC.

The Accent WRC arrived in 2000, running the same engine as the Coupe, albeit with a bit of fiddling on the bore and stroke front and a big Garrett blower bolted to the side. The Accent had all the right bits and looked like a potential challenger. Looks can be deceptive. When the South Koreans launched their first WRC assault, they were the eighth manufacturer to be competing at rallying's highest level and they had no answer to French budgets, the Ford Focus or Japanese know-how.

When Armin Schwarz and Freddy Loix rocked up in Monte Carlo with a car set up for the previous autumn's Sanremo Rally, alarm bells started to ring. They got louder when the crews stepped into the car for the first stage of the season, complete with duct tape over the previous year's sponsors.

The team lasted 10 rallies before becoming the first manufacturer to miss a rally since registration for the series became compulsory eight years previous. Those sporting, commercial and ultimately legal dramas are now behind Hyundai now. Today, the South Koreans stand on top of the world. And rightly so.



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'Woodhouse wins at Cadwell'  
MN Circuit Rally report, p25



# BELL CONSIDERS JUNIOR WRC IN '20

## Youngster fully focussed on final Peugeot Rally Cup Iberica round

Photos: Chicane Media



Winner last time out in Spain: Bell

By Luke Barry

**Ruairi Bell is targeting a Junior World Rally Championship assault in 2020 but says his full focus is on the final round of the Peugeot Rally Cup Iberica this weekend.**

The 19-year-old became the first British driver to win a round of the championship on last month's Rally RACC Catalunya, and has a shot at claiming second in the standings on Rally Comunidad Madrid this weekend.

"Second, third and fourth, we're all split by [basically nothing] so it's anyone's game at the moment. It's basically whoever puts themselves highest on the board will get second," Bell told MN.

"We've played the mature, level-headed game [this year] and it's not always the most enjoyable game because you want to send it on every stage.

"I've done the hard work this year. I'm not saying the pace hasn't built, the pace has built, but it's been progressive. It's not been [a case of] going out of the blocks

hard, setting some really good times, crash, [and then] start again. That's what a lot of people do and we've just tried to do it a bit differently."

Bell has already had an extremely successful season after receiving €60,000 from M-Sport and Pirelli to put towards the JWRC for finishing as the highest-placed Fiesta R2 driver across the Junior British Rally Championship season.

Bell's target is to utilise his prize fund, as well as bonuses received from the Iberica Cup, to compete in next season's JWRC.

"At the moment [the focus is] just on the last round, let's get the last round done this year and then get an idea of what we want to do next year," he added.

"I'd really like to do JWRC and looking at the new calendar going to Chile [it] looks amazing; I've just got to make it work. [I've] got to have a really productive Christmas and just use what we've achieved this year because now is the time I have something to shout about."

## African adventure awaits Pryce

Osian Pryce has admitted the difficulty in preparing for the upcoming East African Safari Classic Rally which will be the longest and most gruelling event of his career.

The former British Rally Championship frontrunner has been entered by the Minti Motorsports team in a Ford Escort Mk1, and has been taking advice from the likes of former rally winner Ryan Champion ahead of the nine-day event which begins next Wednesday.

"I was going to the event with the same guys anyway, just being part of the team and helping out, but they rang me up yesterday [last Thursday] and said do you fancy taking the Escort?" Pryce told MN.

"I was like 'are you for real or what's the catch?' And they said 'no, no, we want you to take the Escort if you're willing to take it'. The Escort was sat there pretty much ready to go so they just decided to enter me as well as a bit of extra support and a bit of team support really."

Although co-driver Dale Furniss has been to Kenya before, Pryce has no experience rallying in Africa and admits he doesn't know what to expect from the event which covers more than 3000 miles.

"It's a difficult one to prepare for because there's so many unknowns, I'm not really sure what to expect," he added.

"It's going to be a car-breaker; you can't go flat out from start to finish unlike sprint events. I'll have to just use my head a little bit more but it's the enormity of the challenge ahead, it's a big thing and I want to do the best possible job I can and hopefully get to the end in one piece."



## NEW M-SPORT FIESTA 'TICKS ALL THE BOXES' FOR MOFFETT

Josh Moffett has dropped the strongest hint yet that M-Sport's second-generation Ford Fiesta R5 is the car he will use next season following victory on the resurrected Jim Clark Rally.

Driving the same Fiesta, Stéphane Lefebvre steered to success on Rallye du Condroz the previous weekend, Moffett and co-driver Andy Hayes won the Scottish Borders event by a comfortable 41.7 seconds.

The Fiesta is one of three new R5 cars Moffett has sampled recently after he hired a Hyundai i20 R5 for the

Donegal International as well as a Volkswagen Polo GTi for the Donegal Harvest Rally, finishing in fifth and fourth places respectively.

"They all have their strengths and weaknesses but the Fiesta was a definite improvement from a power point of view," said the 2018 Irish Tarmac champion.

"We had a really quick test before the rally and it didn't take long to get on top of things and to feel comfortable with the new car.

"Given the conditions, and the fact it was not my car, I

wanted to finish the rally and get it home in one piece. Without doubt there is more performance, I could have gone quicker."

It is believed that 19 Mk2 Fiesta R5s have been built and shipped to customers so far.

"The Fiesta definitely ticks all the boxes," added Moffett.

"The support we have received from M-Sport with our current cars has been outstanding – they have always gone out of their way for us and they are never too far away to get spare parts."

## THE STRAIGHT-TALKING SCOT

# JOHN FIFE

"Attitudes appear to be changing"



**T**here was an almost palpable sense of relief inside Rally HQ at the end of the Jim Clark Rally earlier this month. In the weeks running up to the event it must have felt as though the eyes of the nation were on the organising team.

They needn't have worried as the rally ran well and pretty much to schedule. They did lose two stages though when the first runs of the Langton test were cancelled on safety grounds. That decision was taken at midday on Friday so that there was time to get the news out on social media to the thousands of fans who were flocking in to the area.

Two more stages on Saturday were affected by accidents which meant that a number of drivers had to be given notional times. That can happen to anyone, but both incidents were dealt with effectively ensuring that the second run at both tests were not affected. There was no over-reaction and each incident was considered on merit and action taken as swiftly as possible.

Prior to the event there were some lurid headlines in the 'popular press' although to be fair, there was some responsible reporting and journalism out there, too.

Perhaps surprisingly, and credit where credit is due, the main Scottish tabloids were quite fair whereas some of our supposedly more 'respected' outlets and broadcasters were more interested in reporting history rather than news.

Fortunately, the Jim Clark Rally team rose above such headline-grabbing attempts and simply got on with the job.

Chief supporters were the local folks of the Scottish Borders who were pleased to have 'their rally' back. Of course it caused some disruption and of course there were a few grumbles and dissenters but for the most part, folks were enthusiastic and Duns was abuzz.

Big crowds turned out for the Friday afternoon start and there was a decent crowd at the finish despite the cold and the rain. Mind you some of the drivers tried to inject a bit of heat into the proceedings with some noise and wheelspin. And the police? They heard and saw nothing untoward. Nice one.

Among drivers and co-drivers too there was a sense of relief and satisfaction. There was barely a word of complaint about lost stages and notional times, with everyone just pleased to be back on closed roads in the Scottish Borders.

The spectators, too, played their part. When the safety crews running ahead of the rally asked folk to move back, they did so. Attitudes appear to be changing.

And so to next year with plans already underway for a return to the rally's traditional date – in May – which will hopefully bring better weather.



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# RALLY NEWS

## CIRCUIT OF IRELAND NAME WILL RETURN FOR 2020 SEASON

Iconic rally will be a two-day event and form part of the ITRC calendar next year

Photos: ERC Media, rallygallery.com



Craig Breen won the last Circuit of Ireland Rally in 2016

By Jason Craig

**Bosses of the Ulster Automobile Club believe the time is now right to resurrect the Circuit of Ireland name after successfully promoting back-to-back closed road competitions.**

Funding difficulties coupled with the collapse of the Stormont Executive in Belfast had forced the world-famous Circuit name to be pulled from the motorsport calendar for the past three seasons.

When it was last staged in 2016 the event was a round of the European, British and Irish Tarmac Rally Championships, with Craig Breen scoring a second straight victory.

In order to fill the void, the Ulster Automobile Club ran the Easter

Stages Rally in its place with each instalment securing strong numbers across all classes.

Next year's event will use the Circuit name once again under an international permit over two days and which will be a round of the ITRC. The Easter Stages will continue over one day under a national licence.

"The team have been working towards this goal since the first Easter Stages Rally in 2018," said clerk of the course, Graeme Stewart.

"We have reviewed each event to ensure the status and the operational aspects of the event have improved each year and we believe the 2020 rally is the right time to reuse the Circuit title.

"Next year is going to see an increase in the number of special stages with the introduction of

new locations resulting in an increase in stage mileage over some of Ireland's best Tarmac roads.

"Stepping up to international status has led to an even sharper focus on the team's attention to the choice of special stages, route planning and the many logistical issues."

Stewart also reiterated his desire to see the event grow and attract more crews from the other side of the Irish Sea, with a return to the European Rally Championship calendar also a possibility (*below*).

"We remain interested in being a round of the British Championship," he said.

"However, we have to make sure the event remains good value for money and that it attracts crowds for the right reasons."

### Ingram title success could spark UK return to the European Rally Championship, says series boss Ley

The head of the European Rally Championship has told MN that the success of Chris Ingram will assist any future bid from the UK should it wish to be reinstated into the series.

Ingram became the first Brit since Vic Elford in 1967 to win

the European title at Rally Hungary earlier this month.

The last UK round to feature on the ERC calendar was the Circuit of Ireland in 2016 and Jean-Baptiste Ley, boss of the championship, confirmed that he remains in contact with

organisers of the event and is open to the Tarmac classic returning to the series.

"The UK is one of the strongest countries in western Europe," he told MN. "The UK and France are two countries that would be very good for the ERC but they

are not the easiest [to add] because rallying is not a priority in these places."

Ingram also stated he would welcome the return of a UK round to the ERC calendar.

"I would love to see the Circuit of Ireland Rally back

in the ERC," Ingram said.

"The fact that there are no rounds in the UK, France or Spain is just ridiculous to be honest. We desperately need that to change and I would be for the UK getting back into the ERC."

### ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

Cilwendeg winner Chris Hand repeated his west Wales success in north Wales by claiming the **Farrington Trophy Rally**, partnered on this occasion by Darren Ikin.

There was a tight battle for the lead between the winners and newly-crowned Welsh champions Mark Lennox/Ian Beamond. The two crews traded times throughout the night, but Hands/Ikin always, but only narrowly, had the upper hand.

An impressive performance put the Ford Ka of Zak Hughes/Robbie Pugh in third place; the pair never having been outside the top five all night. Matthew Jones/Ryan Griffiths had just been off the leaders' pace in the opening sections, but they were then slowed by engine maladies for their Vauxhall Astra GTE that eventually put them out of the rally. Similar problems caused the retirement of Paul Morgan/Matt Rees's Honda Civic.

The event was run in challenging conditions, with heavy rain, mist and floods of standing water making the going tough. Only 34 of the 59 starters were classified as finishers at the end.

Ian Mills

#### Farrington Trophy Rally

**Organiser:** Clwyd Vale Motor Club **When:** November 16-17 **Where:** North-east Wales **Championships:** ANWCC **Route:** 130 miles **Starters:** 59

#### Results

1 Chris Hand/Darren Ikin (Ford Sierra) 3m36s; 2 Mark Lennox/Ian Beamond (Ford Escort) +46s; 3 Zak Hughes/Robbie Pugh (Ford Ka); 4 Mike Webber/Ashley Owen (BMW 318Ti); 5 Mal Acott/Roger Evans (Escort); 6 Steve King/Andrew Lowe (BMW 318Ti); 7 Dan/Cyril Jones (Vauxhall Nova); 8 Gerald Williams/Jamie Atherton (Escort); 9 Andrew Baines/Deio Hughes (Escort); 10 Steven Southall/Richard Bestwick (BMW 318Ti).

**Class winners: Experts:** Lennox/Beamond; **Semi-experts:** Williams/Atherton; **Novices:** Tegid Evans/David Davies (Ford Fiesta ST150).



Mitsubishi Lancer E4 crew won by eight seconds

### VEY/MACKLIN COME OUT ON TOP OF CLOSE BATTLE AGAINST BENNETT/BILLET

#### Challenger Stages

By Ian Harden

**Organiser:** Bournemouth and District Motor Club **When:** November 17 **Where:** Bovington Camp, Dorset **Championships:** ASWMC Sealed Surface; AEMC/AEMC Stages: 6 **Starters:** 71

Mitsubishi Lancer E4 driver Andy Vey withstood immense pressure for perennial rival Geoff Bennett (Ford Escort Mk2) to take his second consecutive Challenger Stages win.

In dry but cold conditions after an overcast and damp start, the two drivers were never more than six seconds apart on any stage. However, Vey and co-driver James

Macklin's mid-rally pace proved decisive as they set three fastest times in a row on SS4, 5 and 6, despite their intercom going dead on SS5. With a small lead established, they held Bennett and co-driver John Billett's final-test charge at bay and won by eight seconds.

Bovington first-timers Shaun Weston and Dean Mevo produced a fast, confident performance to finish third. Fresh from recent success at the Cheviot Stages, the Escort Mk2 pairing chose soft suspension settings and medium compound tyres in the slippery early going.

This proved the right choice as they overhauled Richard Seal/

Bruce Yeomans (Escort Mk2) on SS3. They went on to set third fastest time on the remaining stages and finish ahead of fourth-placed Robert Hayter/Alistair Crossly (Lancer E4 RS) by 43s. Hayter's day-long consistency netted a string of fourth fastest times and he battled with Seal early on, relegating his Escort-mounted rival to fifth on SS4, the second double-lap stage of the day.

Seal, in his first event since the Rally of Barbados in June, held onto fifth for the remainder of the rally. Gaining confidence after fixing an overheating problem before the event, the Escort Mk2 driver later survived a lurid spin

on the approach to a chicane on SS4. Sixth spot went to Ben Short/Hannah Chislet, as the Mazda MX-5 crew attacked hard on the final stage to overhaul Darrell Taylor/Matt Devlin's Lancer E10. The two protagonists finished equal on time but Short went faster on SS1, giving him the place on a tie-breaker.

#### Results

1 Andy Vey/James Macklin (Mitsubishi Lancer E4) 33m31s; 2 Geoff Bennett/John Billett (Ford Warrior Escort Mk2) +8s; 3 Shaun Weston/Dean Mevo (Escort Mk2); 4 Robert Hayter/Alistair Crossly (Lancer E4); 5 Richard Seal/Bruce Yeomans (Escort Mk2); 6 Ben Short/Hannah Chislet (Mazda MX-5); 7 Darrell Taylor/Matt Devlin (Lancer E10); 8 Chris Wheeler/Shawn Layland (Citroen DS 3 R3T); 9 Andrew Phillips/Sophie Buckland (Peugeot 205); 10 Dean Long/Jonathan Barrett (Subaru Impreza). **Class winners:** Paul Davis/Keith Richings (Vauxhall Corsa); Short/Chislet; Phillips/Buckland; Bennett/Billett; Hayter/Crossly.

### Woodhouse plots more MN outings

Former Motorsport News Circuit Rally champion Ian Woodhouse intends to compete in more rounds during the course of this season after taking top spot on the NHMC Cadwell Park Stages last weekend.

Woodhouse and co-driver Paul Rowland returned to the series in style with victory aboard their newly-rebuilt Ford Escort Mk2.

Despite not being registered as a championship-contesting entry, Woodhouse intends to compete at both Donington Park and Snetterton ahead of a full-season assault in 2020-21.

"It's all about pennies at the moment," said the 2016-17 MN Circuit Rally champion.

"We're not entered for the championship, so it's all about testing for now. We're hoping to be out for Donington and Snetterton this season."

Woodhouse won the second round of the championship by over a minute after dominating the event.

He added: "It couldn't have gone much better. The car is fantastic, feels good and I've enjoyed being back.

"We only had the problem with the lights, and had a bit of contact in traffic, but that's just giving people a bit of excitement I suppose!"

### Rallying return for Sillett after crash

Vincent Sillett made his competitive rallying return at Cadwell Park last weekend, his first appearance since a heavy Flying Fortress Stages shunt last year.

Driving a Ford Escort Mk2, Sillett finished 31st overall in the second Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship meeting of the season, despite suffering an off into a hay bale on stage one in tricky conditions.

"I touched the brakes and nothing happened," he said. "To be honest, after the crash last year, I think having a moment here relaxed me more. I feel better for it now it's out the way."

Sillett and co-driver Samm Keeley were airlifted to hospital in the 2018 accident, with Sillett adding: "It scared the sh\*t out of [my family] that did. That could have killed me.

"I'm hoping to do more of these rallies. This is a taster of it, and then I'll be coming flat out at the start of next season I hope."

Keeley was not in attendance due to other commitments, with Oliver Matthews taking over navigation duties at Cadwell Park.

# TOCA SUPPORTS REVIEW

## GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

### STANDINGS

P	DRIVER	PTS
1	Harry King	627
2	Will Burns	614
3	Tom Hibbert	560
4	Reece Somerfield	422
5	Carlito Miracco	369
6	Simon Rudd	266



Elite driver King was unstoppable at Brands



King delivered when it mattered to clinch the GT4 Supercup crown

# KING REIGNS SUPREME AS SUPPORTS SHINE

No shortage of action on the BTCC undercard this season. By **Stephen Lickorish**

**T**hirteen points may have separated Harry King and Will Burns at the end of the Ginetta GT4 Supercup campaign, but that was not a true reflection of the season. In reality, King was the dominant force.

It had all been going so well for the Elite Motorsport driver in the first half of the year. Five wins, three other podiums, and five fastest laps all led to a 48-point lead heading into the

summer break. But the August Thruxton meeting threatened to be a turning point in the direction the title was heading in.

On the final lap of the first contest in Hampshire, King and Burns were battling for the lead up Woodham Hill when there was slight contact between the two, giving King a puncture. Worse was to follow in the second race as a driveshaft failure prevented King from even completing the green-flag lap. Even though King fought back to win the finale and Burns had his own mechanical woes, the weekend still represented a major change in

fortunes as Burns took a 13-point lead.

“Going into Thruxton I had a 40/50 point lead and I was thinking ‘all I have to do is finish the races,’” recalls King. “It was quite difficult to take and it made me really motivated.”

That motivation was evident over the remaining three weekends, although things again did not quite go to plan as King picked up a false start penalty in race two at Knockhill.

That meant it was all to play for heading into the Brands Hatch finale. And that was when King really shone. Burns grabbed pole by just 0.05 seconds over King and, with the

two title rivals on the front row, it was all set up to be a fascinating battle. King, however, had other ideas. By the end of the first lap he was 1.5s ahead and he just continued to pull away to eventually seal the win by 11s. And he beat Burns again in the second race. That reduced the pressure in race three, with third place enough for King to receive the crown.

“It caught me out by how much quicker I was,” King admits. “We did it when I needed to and we smashed it in the first race in the wet.”

King’s Elite team boss Eddie Ives was impressed with the way his

driver delivered when it mattered.

“He was under lots of pressure – which in the past has got to Harry – at Brands Hatch but he knew there was a job to do and he drove away with it,” says Ives.

That Brands performance left Burns runner-up for a second time (he missed out by just three points in 2016), but it was still a strong season for the Rob Boston Racing driver. Between them, King and Burns were utterly dominant as they won 16 of the 23 races, Tom Hibbert being the only other driver to triumph more than once.

## BRITISH FORMULA 4



P	DRIVER	PTS
1	Zane Maloney	427
2	Sebastian Alvarez	407
3	Louis Foster	353
4	Josh Skelton	326.5
5	Bart Horsten	275.5
6	Luke Browning	268.5

Carlin driver Maloney won seven out of nine races during May and June

## MALONEY'S WINNING STREAK

Lando Norris didn't manage it. Max Fewtrell didn't even come close. And Kiern Jewiss was unable to either. What Zane Maloney did en route to this season's British Formula 4 crown was almost unprecedented.

He won seven of the nine races held at Thruxton, Croft and Oulton Park in May and June in a period of utter dominance (and one of the two races he did not triumph in was the non-event in race two at Croft where heavy rain limited the contest to just one classified racing lap). Of the other four F4 champions, only Jamie Caroline achieved something similar when he took seven wins in eight races in 2017.

“In racing you make some mistakes, which you try to minimise, but when it all comes together, it makes you hungrier – I knew I could do it,” says Maloney of that win streak that started with his maiden car racing win in the second Thruxton race.

Those victories put the Barbados-born driver in a commanding position at

the head of the points standings before the summer break. The Carlin driver was 55 points ahead of Louis Foster and 77 clear of third-placed Sebastian Alvarez.

But the formbook turned around completely in the second half of the season. JHR driver Carter Williams took three wins, while second-year driver Alvarez came on strong too as Maloney only took three further victories. Mexican driver Alvarez tore chunks out of Maloney's advantage to the extent that they started the third Silverstone race in September tied on points. And then they collided. The rivalry was truly ignited.

Maloney delivered when it mattered, however. Never afraid of making a risky overtake, he dived around the outside of Foster at Paddock Hill Bend on the first lap of the first race at the Brands Hatch finale.

“I had a really good start and told myself ‘there's no championship in this race, I won't go out and compromise my championship, but if there's a move on, I would go

for it,’” he says.

He did and it paid off as he stormed to victory, managing two safety car restarts well, before clinching the crown with another win in the last race in front of a crowd that included 40 friends and family members who had travelled from Barbados.

It was all much closer than it probably should have been. Maloney suffered a driveshaft failure on the way to the grid when he was starting on pole at Knockhill and needlessly tangled with Bart Horsten at Riches in the second Snetterton race in an overly-ambitious move.

“At Snetterton it was a half move from me and it was my fault and I learned from it,” recalls Maloney. “I think it taught me more than if I had just been good all season – I had to work for it [the title].”

Before Maloney hit his stride, Foster was initially the driver to beat. But the Double R racer struggled in the middle of the season.

“We started off strong and in the mid-phase I was strung down by my GCSEs quite a lot – I think that was the cause of my mid-season mare,” he admits.



Maloney lost his points gap

## PORSCHE CA

### HARPER

Right from when he stepped into a silver Type 991 Porsche at the 2018-19 Porsche GT4 Supercup shootout two years ago, his speed and word go was very forward two years ago, surprise that he crowned a Carlin driver. Quite simply, like denying Harper a year. From the time where he qualified half a second – a off-track moment backmarker the charge – he looked

“It's always been the season story and not have a silly, because you right from the start. “That's what we past – in my first Cup I had a podium while third in the In Ginetta Junior and built up but

There were concerns about this time around. JTR driver Harper qualify on pole opening race in next meetings – at least a podium these reversed heads too. That strong position

Harper took the eight pole

## RENAULT UK

### YOU

It was the rivalry Touring Car Championship support series to Formula 4 prototype Maloney and Sebastian Alvarez came to blows as points heading but this was different

Jack Young and inseparable thruxton and clashed on The sight of Coates at Thruxton's Croft final lap following Young and subsequent to the crowd, was most memorable

For the major there were no points between swung one way the Young pretence his first full season up against Clivio



Coates (1) an

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Dan Bathie

CARRERA CUP GB

# HARPER PROVES UNSTOPPABLE

When Dan Harper first stepped into the second-generation Carrera GT3 Cup car, he was only 16 at the time. Years ago, he turned in the car from the very impressive. Fast cars and it's no surprise he has now been Carrera Cup champion. No-one else looked at Harper the title this year very first round, but he was on pole by a margin apart from a brief moment when an errant driver threatened to derail his race. It was comfortable. It was very important to start with, bag good points and DNF or something that you're on the backfoot to start," says Harper. "It was happening in the first year in Carrera Cup. The nature at Brands Hatch was very first race. For we started slow and it was too late." "I was certainly not starting slow. After Brands, I went on to win the first five of the season and he took half of the grid second put him in a bit of a fix out of positions."



Thruxton win impressed Harper's team boss Tandy

penultimate meeting at Silverstone and even a tricky race where he struggled with slick tyres on a wet track was still enough for him to be crowned with three races to spare.

Harper's consistency over the season impressed his team boss Nick Tandy – someone who knows a thing or two about driving Porsches quickly.

"His qualifying record is impressive and that's what sets up those weekends when you score big points in race one and it takes the pressure off a bit to chase the points in race two,"

says Tandy. "His ability to drive the car, for someone of his age and experience, is unbelievable.

"The thing that impressed me most was the Thruxton weekend. He was on pole but it rained and he got passed by a load of cars at the start but he didn't panic and the race came to him."

Also noticeable was how few mistakes Harper made – aside from almost spinning away a win at the final corner at Croft – compared to last season.

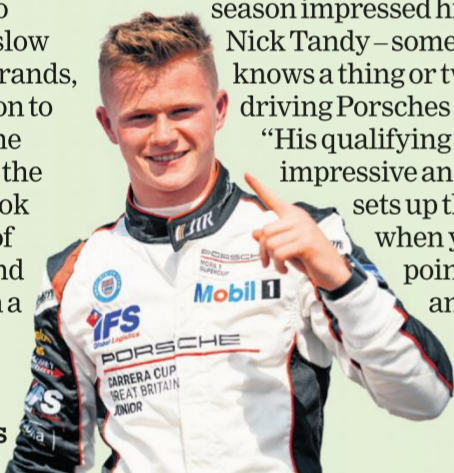
"I was a lot more relaxed compared to last year and it definitely worked," he says. "That's definitely something I had to work on. In the first year those wee mistakes were coming from a lack of experience but also because I knew I had the pace to win

STANDINGS

P	DRIVER	PTS
1	Dan Harper	159
2	Josh Webster	114
3	George Gamble	113
4	Lewis Plato	94
5	Seb Perez	57
6	Dan Vaughan	51

and fight for the podium, but I was pushing too hard to get it."

Harper admits he was slightly worried when 2014 champion Josh Webster returned to the series from the second event at Donington Park, but the Team Parker driver only defeated Harper three times and just clinched second in the standings by a single point from George Gamble.



GINETTA JUNIOR



Consistent qualifying and race performances helped Hedley

# HEDLEY AHEAD OF THE REST

Since the Ginetta Junior Winter Series was launched back in 2008, only once has its champion not gone on to finish either first or second in the main category's standings if they competed in it the following year. Therefore, 2018 Winter Series victor James Hedley was instantly one of the favourites for this season's crown. Not that the Elite Motorsport driver let that expectation get to him at all.

"It did put a little bit of extra pressure on because, if you look at the stats, most people who have won the Winter Series have won the championship the year after," says Hedley. "I didn't really take it to heart – I wasn't thinking about the championship at the start of the year."

That soon changed when an ultra-consistent first half of the season, where he only finished one of the first 11 races off the podium, left him leading by a mammoth 95 points heading into the summer break.

The second of those podiums demonstrated Hedley's prowess this season. In race two at Brands Hatch, he was involved in a first-lap tangle at Graham Hill Bend and dropped to 14th. But that didn't put off Hedley as he stormed through the field to take second.

"The fact we were a second quicker than most people on track was just amazing and it gave me lots of confidence, especially as it was in the wet," he adds. "I didn't rate myself in the wet last year – I was terrible – so did a lot of winter testing in the wet."

That work paid off, as he was quick in all of the varied conditions the 2019 season produced. But what was most noticeable about Hedley's year was his consistency. Unlike in some of the other support series, the comfortable mid-season leader didn't have a wobble in the second half of the year. Instead Hedley continued to pick up the strong results and never looked like

STANDINGS

P	DRIVER	PTS
1	James Hedley	680
2	Zak O'Sullivan	591
3	Will Martin	524
4	Lorcan Hanafin	480
5	James Taylor	461
6	Casper Stevenson	427



Hedley had comfortable lead

missing out on the title.

"He was super impressive all year at every circuit," says Elite team boss Eddie Ives. "I don't think he showed any signs of weakness – the pressure didn't get to him in any way, shape or form. He is a very talented kid and he had done the best preparation."

Even when Will Martin went on a run of victories, Hedley was often finishing second behind him. Hedley even feels he could've been more aggressive in those races and challenged for more wins.

"In some of the races I was a little bit too cautious, but that's in hindsight," he admits. It didn't matter, though.

Despite Martin winning more races – including a brilliant battle at Thruxton with Zak O'Sullivan when the pair banged wheels constantly up Woodham Hill and surging from 19th on the grid to triumph in the finale – he lacked the consistency of Hedley and finished third in the points. The runner-up was instead O'Sullivan, who had a remarkable rookie season, but was ultimately too far behind Hedley after those early races to challenge.

CLIO CUP

# YOUNG AND COATES RIVALRY BOILS

Among the British Championship's this year. Yes, British agonists Zane Robertson and Sebastian Alvarez were tied on into the final round, different. Max Coates were throughout the season on numerous occasions. Coates spinning off Club chicane on the contact from subsequently bowing as one of the year's moments. The season, more than a handful when the pair as fortune to the other. It was tender – still in only son of car racing – regular Coates,



Coates (1) lost out in Silverstone clash

who narrowly missed out on the crown in 2018.

Initially it was advantage Coates as he claimed a double win in the season-opener, but only after Young was stripped of a victory for braking too heavily behind the safety car. That set the theme for the year as an ever-increasing number of penalties were handed out as the rivalry intensified. Young fought back at Donington, taking his first series wins, while Coates was disqualified from qualifying for have the roof air vent taped over when the circuit had dried (rules state this can only be done in the wet).

"We got penalised in qualifying for something we gained no advantage from," explains Coates. "We weren't intentionally cheating in any shape or form. It was wet before we went out and conditions were drying and we just didn't take the tape off."

That had further consequences as Coates started back in the pack and suffered engine damage after a stone

was flicked up. But he fought back at Croft with another double before honours were even at Oulton Park.

Then the rivalry ignited at Snetterton after the summer break, as Young was twice penalised for contact with Coates, before there came that infamous Thruxton incident.

"I had massive damage in both races at Snetterton, and race one and race two at Thruxton – I couldn't sustain that level of damage after every race and I wasn't enjoying it," Coates recalls. "I enjoy the racing but didn't enjoy getting knocked off."

Worse was to come at Silverstone as this time it was former Team Hard team-mate Jade Edwards who collided with Coates at Brooklands. Suddenly, from being five or six points apart, Young had a 15-point advantage heading into the Brands Hatch finale.

But still it wasn't over. Young was handed a 30-second penalty

STANDINGS

P	DRIVER	PTS
1	Jack Young	362
2	Max Coates	357
3	Jamie Bond	312
4	Brett Lidsey	301
5	Ben Colburn	241
6	Ethan Hammerton	234

for overlapping another car on the safety car restart in the first race. Now Coates was back in front. However, he started a safety car-interrupted race two down in 10th and could only recover to second behind Young, handing the Northern Irishman the crown.

Jamie Bond joined the series at Donington and, as the arch-rivals took points off each other, threatened to enter the mix but had too much ground to gain.

Despite a lack of entries for its final season on the BTCC package, the Clio Cup still delivered yet another enthralling title tussle.



Young battled



## REPORT

Photos: LAT

# VERSCHOOR BEATS THE BOOKIES FOR MAJESTIC MACAU WIN

Dutchman holds off Red Bull man Vips for Grand Prix success on the streets. By **Jack Benyon**

Rarely does modern motorsport throw up a genuine shock in the modern era, but Macau rookies Richard Verschoor and MP Motorsport – both from the Netherlands – winning on their first Grand Prix attempt around the Guia circuit was genuinely unbelievable. Even the winners admitted as much.

It was a completely new-look Macau this year, with the event adopting the car and teams from the new FIA Formula 3 Championship despite remaining a non-points scoring race. The new car brought DRS, degrading Pirelli tyres – as opposed to the previous car's everlasting Hankooks – and the circuit made seven safety changes to combat the soaring speeds, up by about 13mph on the main straight to 185mph. Luckily the changes didn't alter the style of the track or the complete commitment it demands.

The extra pace didn't please all drivers – double winner Dan Ticktum calling it "dangerous" – but they did mean spectacular times were possible with the cars four seconds per lap quicker than last year's already record-setting pace.

Despite the changes, a lot of the old Macau characteristics remain. Mainly, a win there demands balls-out, risky driving close to the street circuit's barriers, but also a heavy amount of luck.

Intrigue was high in Ticktum following his mid-season Red Bull exile, Macau being the first big test he's undertaken since. But despite impressing in practice, he was caught up in a crash started by his Carlin team-mate Logan Sargeant, who clipped a rapid Arjun Maini on the first lap of the qualification race. That put Ticktum to the back of the field – along with another pre-race favourite Jake Hughes – and they rebounded to 13th and 17th in the grand prix, respectively.

Instead, the pace was set by the man Ticktum left behind in the Red Bull programme – Juri Vips. The Estonian spent the F3 season in an unwinnable battle with the unbelievable pace of the Prema Racing-run cars, all three beating Vips in the championship and winning the teams' title with two rounds to spare.

However, with the new F3 car, the key to the championship was to get the car as low as possible and forcing airflow over the front to create downforce. Prema masters that in every category, but in Macau the bumps mean the cars have to be raised, meaning the base set-



MP Motorsport man battled for victory



Ilott was the top Briton in sixth position



Dutch ace Verschoor took his opportunity

ups at Macau were different and helped shake up the order.

Prema still challenged, but Marcus Armstrong's prodigious pace was ruined by a qualifying crash while he was set for pole, and F3 champion, and Armstrong's fellow Ferrari junior, Robert Shwartzman lasted just one lap in the grand prix. Christian Lundgaard, driving for Macau returnee ART Grand Prix, cut across the front of Shwartzman at Mandarin causing a broken front wing and a puncture.

Verschoor – dropped by Red Bull in 2017 and who finished 13th in FIA F3 this year – believed he could have won the qualification race had he not been stuck behind Callum Ilott, but rocketed into contention from the second row to challenge Vips in the main race. The race looked to be over when Vips crossed the line to end the first lap 1.8 seconds clear. The Pirelli tyres would have to be pushed hard for Verschoor to reel that in and without the DRS it looked unlikely.

However, the spectacle was robbed of this foregone conclusion, unlike the qualifying race, which had been a procession won by Vips. In the second clash, Leo Pulcini had crashed out of seventh at Lisboa, and then DTM driver Ferdinand Habsburg got the

Esses all wrong and fired into the barrier from sixth.

The resulting safety car gave Verschoor his chance and he took it with both hands. A further virtual safety car interrupted but then shortly after, the Dutch driver hit the wall at Turn 10 and his steering was bent. Vips came on strong.

However, just as Vips nosed ahead after Mandarin, the DRS stopped working for him and he ran wide trying to outbrake Verschoor into Lisboa. He had burned his tyres in his tireless bid to recapture the lead and Verschoor was able to hold on for a fairytale win.

How a certain win faded to a loss sums up Vips's season, but there's no doubt he's in contention for an F1 seat in 2021 and how he rebounds from this year will be key.

Sargeant rounded out the podium for British team Carlin, which had improved massively from its woeful F3 season.

But the weekend belonged to MP, Verschoor's Red Bull backed team-mate Liam Lawson causing more celebration by taking seventh from 20th on the grid, ahead of Armstrong who recovered from 17th. The winner hopes the victory will "open doors" for 2020, and he deserves just that.

## Priaux gets back to the front as Muller thrusts himself into the tin-top title battle

It's been 12 years since Andy Priaux sealed his most recent World Touring Car title with a Macau victory, but he was on top of the world once more last Sunday as he returned to the winners' circle with victory on the Guia circuit. Better still, it was at the head of a British 1-2, as he bested Rob Huff in the weekend's tin-top finale.

Priaux's Cyan Performance Lynk & Co 03 could not match the single-lap pace of Huff's Volkswagen Golf GTI in Friday's second qualifying session, as Macau master Huff stormed to his ninth Macau pole.

But that ultimately counted for little, as Priaux got the jump on his compatriot off the line and headed the pack on the run to Lisboa.

This was no Macau classic, but the yo-yoing gap between the two leaders – as the VW overcame its straightline speed deficit down to Lisboa and caught the Lynk & Co on the mountain each lap, before Priaux squirmed clear off the Melco hairpin – set up a suitably tense finish to the race.

The VW's Achilles' heel eventually told as Huff struggled to give his target a serious headache into

Lisboa, and Priaux duly claimed his first World Touring Car win since 2010, which also denied Huff a record 10th Macau win.

Priaux had to forfeit a first WTCC podium a day earlier, after Cyan intervened to boost Thed Bjork in the order, so was grateful that he had been allowed to go for victory.

"I'm just very proud that the team supported me," he said. "Christian [Dahl, Cyan Racing CEO] is a racer and he wants to be number one. To be leading here was special, with Rob pushing me all the way and JK [Jean-Karl Vernay] just behind,

so I had to push like hell and I didn't think of anything else."

That victory completed a Cyan clean sweep of the Guia Race weekend, as Yvan Muller victories in the first two races hoisted him into serious title contention. The first was won from pole, while the second came courtesy first of a strong launch, then team orders as Yann Ehrlacher and Bjork moved over.

A sixth-place finish in race three means Muller sits third overall in the table, 11 points off leader Norbert Michelisz.

**Jack Cozens**

### Results

**Race one:** 1 Yvan Muller (Lynk & Co 03) 20m30.047s; 2 Norbert Michelisz (Hyundai i30 N) +0.405s; 3 Kevin Ceccon (Alfa Romeo Guilia); 4 Rob Huff (Volkswagen Golf GTI); 5 Thed Bjork (Lynk & Co 03); 6 Andy Priaux (Lynk & Co 03); 7 Frederic Versich (Audi RS3); 8 Yann Ehrlacher (Lynk & Co 03); 9 Gabriele Tarquini (Hyundai i30 N); 10 Nicky Catsburg (Hyundai i30 N).  
**Race two:** 1 Muller 20m28.159s; 2 Bjork +0.455s; 3 Ceccon; 4 Esteban Guerrieri (Honda Civic); 5 Johan Kristoffersson (Volkswagen Golf GTI); 6 Ehrlacher; 7 Priaux; 8 Versich; 9 Jean-Karl Vernay (Audi RS3); 10 Michelisz.  
**Race three:** 1 Priaux 27m58.428s; 2 Huff +0.352s; 3 Vernay; 4 Kristoffersson; 5 Catsburg; 6 Muller; 7 Bjork; 8 Ehrlacher; 9 Ceccon; 10 Guerrieri.

### RESULTS

#### Macau F3 Grand Prix

When: November 16-17, 2019 Laps: 15 Miles: 57.042

POS	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Richard Verschoor (NLD)	MP Motorsport	38m10.330s
2	Juri Vips (EST)	Hitech Grand Prix	+0.792s
3	Logan Sargeant (USA)	Carlin Buzz Racing	+1.540s
4	Christian Lundgaard (DNK)	ART Grand Prix	+2.241s
5	Alessio Lorandi (ITA)	Trident Motorsport	+5.020s
6	Callum Ilott (GBR)	Sauber Junior Team by Charouz	+5.922s
7	Liam Lawson (NZL)	MP Motorsport	+8.594s
8	Marcus Armstrong (NZL)	SJM Theodore Racing by Prema	+9.365s
9	David Beckmann (DEU)	Trident Motorsport	+13.239s
10	Frederik Vesti (DNK)	SJM Theodore Racing by Prema	+13.633s

11 Yuki Tsunoda (JPN) (Hitech Grand Prix) +15.717s; 12 Keyvan Andrus (DEU) (HWA Racelab) +18.665s; 13 Dan Ticktum (GBR) (Carlin Buzz Racing) +19.230s; 14 Lukas Dunner (AUT) (MP Motorsport) +20.498s; 15 Sebastian Fernandez (VEN) (ART Grand Prix) +21.705s; 16 Enzo Fittipaldi (BRA) (Sauber Junior Team by Charouz) +26.174s; 17 Jake Hughes (GBR) (HWA Racelab) +26.294s; 18 Max Fewtrell (GBR) (Hitech Grand Prix) +28.690s; 19 Charles Leong (MAC) (Jenzer Motorsport) +33.792s; 20 Andreas Estner (DEU) (Jenzer Motorsport) +34.400s; 21 David Schumacher (DEU) (Sauber Junior Team by Charouz) +35.884s; 22 Enaam Ahmed (GBR) (Campos Racing) +36.521s; 23 Arjun Maini (IND) (Jenzer Motorsport) +37.184s; 24 Felipe Drugovich (BRA) (Carlin Buzz Racing) +37.621s; 25 Alessio Deledda (ITA) (Campos Racing) +53.135s; R Sophia Florsch (DEU) (HWA Racelab) 8 laps; R Ferdinand Habsburg (AUT) (ART Grand Prix) 3 laps; R Leonardo Pulcini (ITA) (Campos Racing) 3 laps; R Olli Caldwell (GBR) (Trident Motorsport) 3 laps; R Robert Shwartzman (RUS) (SJM Theodore Racing by Prema) 0 laps.

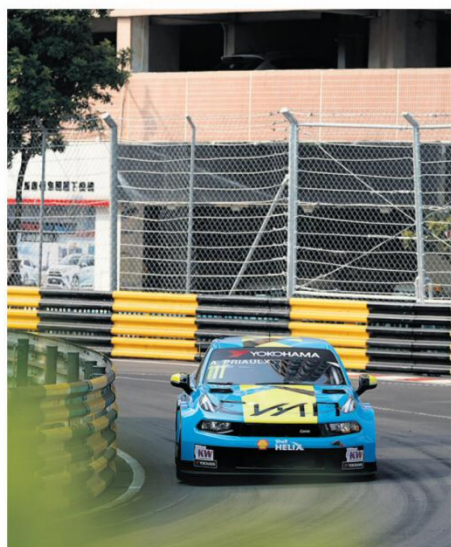
Winner's average speed: 89.659mph. Fastest lap: Hughes 2m06.419s (108.291mph). Grid decided by result of qualification race.

Qualification race (10 lap – 38.028 miles)

1 Vips 25m09.190s; 2 Shwartzman +1.549s; 3 Lundgaard +5.625s; 4 Verschoor +7.402s; 5 Ilott +10.767s; 6 Sargeant +11.216s; 7 Lorandi +11.900s; 8 Habsburg +13.200s; 9 Beckmann +20.006s; 10 Pulcini +25.551s; 11 Andrus; 12 Dunner; 13 Leong; 14 Fittipaldi; 15 Fernandez; 16 Tsunoda; 17 Armstrong; 18 Vesti; 19 Estner; 20 Lawson; 21 Florsch; 22 Fewtrell; 23 Caldwell; 24 Deledda; 25 Schumacher; R Drugovich; R Ticktum 8 laps; R Hughes 0 laps; R Maini; R Ahmed. Winner's average speed: 90.711mph. Fastest lap: Vips 2m06.317s (108.378mph).



Vips had a storming first lap



Priaux returned to top spot

# AUSTRALIA FALL OUT

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

## MAKING THE RIGHT DECISION FOR THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE

Why the WRC had no choice but to cancel final round. By David Evans



WRC drivers met emergency services

**T**here's nothing new about captivating onboard footage from Australia. Remember Colin McRae and Nicky Grist flying the Bunnings jumps in 1997? More recently, film from the inside through Nambucca or Wedding Bells has dropped jaws around the world.

They've got nothing on this one.

Taken between the trees south of the usual Rally Australia route, it's shot down a dirt road in a place called Rainbow Flat.

And the car's not a car. It's a truck. A firetruck.

Aboard is genuine bravery in the shape of New South Wales' Rural Fire Service. We wince at the prospect of threading a fire engine through a burning forest. Those guys? Unflinching. Even as white hot embers bounce off the windscreen and scorch the earth where they settle, the driver presses on in the knowledge that just one of those towering, blazing gum trees falling in his path would mean the end of the road for him and his crew.

And in this case, the end of the road would mean *the end of the road*.

Watching it was humbling.

Much of the local news coverage from the Rally Australia regions made for chastened viewing in the days leading up to the final round of the World Rally Championship.

Gone were the pictures of rally drivers falling off surf boards, co-drivers playing volleyball with dolphins. In their place were harrowing images of locals – locals who would normally be preparing for a day at the stages – writing their telephone numbers on the side of horses, covering their animal's eyes as they attempt to lead them away from hell.

Right around the same time, we were busy wondering if Sebastien Ogier would drive those roads faster than Thierry Neuville and edge the Belgian for second in the championship.

How silly.

But should we be so quick to condemn such folly?

This time, I believe we should. As early as Thursday last week, opening the

window before you went to sleep in a Coffs Harbour hotel room meant waking to the smell of smoke through the room. This danger was close. And getting closer.

And still Europe headed south. Flying directly to the danger zone.

The locals were flabbergasted.

One Coffs resident told me: "We've seen bushfires around here before. We've got some idea of what's coming and how to deal with it. But bringing people who've got no experience of this situation right into what could be a catastrophic situation? How can that be sensible?"

When Ott Tanak won this year's drivers' title in Spain, the decision was taken that Motorsport News might skip Australia. In the end, I was booked on a plane from London bound for Brisbane at 0900hrs Tuesday morning. The event was cancelled seven hours before that particular A380's wheels left the Tarmac at Heathrow.

I would have been one of the last to arrive into Coffs. And for what?

The day before the cancellation came, I'm told the mood shifted in the service park. There was sympathy and understanding for the plight of the organisers.

After thousands of man hours and the thick end of a year at the wheel of Rally Australia, the decision to flush it all down the toilet must have been absolutely agonising. It was anything but easy.

And, as usual, the organisers wouldn't have made such a choice independently. There was consistent input from the emergency services, motorsport's governing body and WRC Promoter. The loss of four days' coverage for the promoter's web-based All Live service and television broadcasters around the world was huge, both in financial terms and the hours of absent action.

But as the ash continued to fall on Coffs and the layer of smoke sat above the city keeping the sun out, tempers frayed and more and more questions were asked. A late-night power cut earlier in the week sent the layer of smoke into darkness, darkness that is except for the orange glow over the hills inland from the coast.

And when the televisions came back on, they were full of catastrophic risk and the fact that Coffs Harbour lay directly in the



New South Wales is under seige

path of a blazing apparent Armageddon.

Enough was enough.

Sources started talking.

One said: "This situation is more than crazy. The smoke is everywhere. We are looking on maps and the fire is coming straight to Coffs Harbour and nobody can stand up and say the thing that everybody knows has to happen: Rally Australia is cancelled.

"We have been watching the TV and we see fire and rescue crews so tired they can't stand up, but we are thinking to ask them to come and sit at the side of the road so we can have a rally.

"We have seen people's homes, farms, animals, everything is burning and we are talking about running some stupid stages for three days. This is a bad joke. Somebody needs to take control. F\*\*k this meeting, f\*\*k this time to make a decision. People are being advised to run away from these places – not advised: told to run away."

As if that wasn't enough, Rural Fire Service deputy commissioner Rob Rogers added: "I've been in this industry for 40 years and I've not seen a scenario like this before.

"I really haven't. Not when you've got all this fire and this catastrophic risk. If someone came to me and said: 'Let's do a scenario role-play.' I'd say: 'Let's try to keep this a bit more realistic.' It's that sort of out-of-the-box."

And still the rally was running. In some shape.

I'm not reaching into the blame culture to land the lack of a quick decision at somebody's door. I have absolute sympathy for clerk of the course Wayne Kenny and event chairman Andrew Papadopoulos. Both are fine rally men who would grace – along with their teams



Fans supported the WRC strongly

of volunteers – the best of the best WRC organisers.

But that decision should have been taken earlier – and independently of the FIA and WRC Promoter. The FIA and promoter comes to Coffs once a year. In for a week, 10 days at the most, and then gone. It's naive to think a round of the FIA WRC would cancel its event without a green light from the FIA or WRC, but calling a halt to Rally Australia was an all-Australian decision to make when the implications went so far beyond a sporting event.

And, from what I've heard from the service park, it's one that should have been made earlier.

Yes, it is easy to be wise after the event. It's very, very much harder to make the big calls before the event.

And ironically enough, as Wednesday moves towards Thursday and what would have been shakedown day... it's blue skies and not a smoky cloud on the horizon. If you landed into CFS today (and hadn't shared your flight with a plane-load of reserve firefighters and flown over extraordinary infernos) you could be forgiven for wondering why the service park's in pieces and everybody's heading home.

But what if? What if a car had gone off and set fire to the grass? Or a tree? Or a house?

The risk simply wasn't worth taking. And anyway, the wind is set to change direction again at the weekend. Sad to say, but Coffs and NSW is not out of the woods yet.

What makes this story, for me, even more unsavoury is the largely unspoken word that this week was, in reality, to be the WRC's farewell to Coffs Harbour. For seven years the city in the shadow of the



Local wildlife is under threat

Muttonbird Island on the shores of the South Pacific had won over the hearts of the WRC. Or at least some of them. Crucially, the promoter was never convinced – a 70,000 population was never going to cut it in terms of a fanbase.

But I got it. It took me a few years, but I learned to love the place. A walk on the beach backdropped by another killer Aussie sunrise remains the finest use of jet lag-ravaged sleep, while scrambled eggs on sourdough washed down by a long black at Urban on Harbour Drive made the best of those over-early starts.

And the people: folk like media guru Chris Nixon, were and are some of the nicest and most helpful I've met in a lot of years in the championship.

But next year, Coffs is off the agenda. It's Auckland for the WRC. Back to New Zealand. How could you be sad about going back to some of planet earth's finest roads for a spot of camber surfing?

You can't be.

But I'm enormously sad for Coffs, New South Wales and Rally Australia. This is far from the end of Australia's story in the World Rally Championship, but finding a new home and mustering the enthusiasm for a return following a disastrous set of natural circumstances can't be easy.

This wasn't the right way for the WRC to say goodbye to Coffs, but if the last week has provided anything it was perspective.

Much as it hurts, Papadopoulos was bang on, it simply wasn't appropriate to run a rally.

People died in those fires last week. We lost a round of the championship. Move on.

Catch you somewhere very soon, CNIX and pals. ■

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# MN CIRCUIT RALLY

Photos: SMJ Photography

## CLASS ROUND-UP

"I think getting to finish is what it's about today," were the thoughts of last year's **class C** winner Mike English as he took to the final stage of the day looking to repeat that feat. He did just that to ensure overall and MN spoils in the category by 27s.

There was more bragging rights for the Ford Escort which took a 1-2 finish thanks to the returning Rob Cox, who made his comeback for the first time in a year following gearbox woes over the past 12 months.

"We just tested the car the night before for the first time and it feels great already," said Cox. "We'll see how we go now and hopefully start to build on what we've got."

Chris Ruck had a familiar feeling in **class B**, adding to his Oulton Park triumph to stake his claim for an overall title tilt with Cadwell spoils in his Vauxhall Corsa.

Despite the left-hand-drive model "maxing out at 100mph", Ruck held back a charging Ken Sturdy, who shone in a Suzuki Swift that enjoyed the wetter surface. Ashleigh Morris added more crucial points in third place in her Ford Fiesta R200 as just 27s covered the trio.

**Class A** was split at Cadwell as Dale Lawson revelled at his favourite circuit to overpower Matt Wood's Vauxhall Corsa and add another win for the MG ZR on its return, taking **A2** spoils overall. Delays to planned engine improvements meant they opted against registering as an MN championship entry, though, with those points instead going to Ron Walker's Ford Puma.

**Class A1** victory went the way of the Toyota Yaris of Ian Bass, beating Ian Houston's Chevrolet Spark as their only other rival, Ian Holliday, retired in his Ford Ka with radiator damage.

Honours in **class D1** may have gone to event winner Ian Woodhouse, but maximum MN championship points were the deserving reward for Mike Taylor.

Lee Allen's 14s **D2** win over Philip Megginson was the closest of the classes but was enough to grab the MN points in his Mitsubishi Lancer E3.



Ruck: class B honours



Winning margin was more than a minute

# WOODHOUSE BACK TO WINNING WAYS

Former champion is master of tricky conditions. By **Dan Mason**

**I**t was as though 2016-17 Motorsport News Circuit Rally champion Ian Woodhouse had never been away from the series as he showed his rivals a clean pair of heels to win the NHMC Cadwell Park Stages on his return.

Torrential conditions and two stage cancellations provided plenty of hurdles in a rally of attrition, but it did not stop Woodhouse and co-driver Paul Rowland from sealing a first victory for their Ford Escort Mk2, which last won with Mark Kelly at the same circuit in 2018.

Although it appeared simple by the final time check, echoed by five punishing stages wins from the six contested, the returning champion had to roll his sleeves up initially thanks to some welcome early competition.

"We really need it to chuck down," was Woodhouse's verdict after the opening stage as he trailed the rapid Darrian T90 of Joshua Davey. After a solid, class-winning performance in the Oulton Park opener Davey and co-driver Tamsyn Davey's initial blast through the forest was enough to leap into a five-second lead over Woodhouse come the conclusion of the first stage.

Then, with one cloud burst, fortune shifted. Woodhouse's wishes had been granted as the conditions worsened and he grabbed the lead with an effort over eight seconds quicker than his nearest rival.

Davey's Darrian appeared the only contender to the rebuilt Mk2, but reliability trouble reared its ugly head on SS3.

"The car was running well but started jumping out of gears randomly, it was maybe all going too well," said co-driver Tamsyn.

The car stopped with reoccurring problems on the following stage, throttle issues ultimately forcing them into retirement. Clear from his

pursuers, Woodhouse was unrelenting, reeling off four consecutive stage victories in the afternoon to stave off an inspired Mike Taylor in an updated Talbot Sunbeam Lotus.

There was one surprise in store for Woodhouse and Rowland as night descended in the latter stages, although it would not prevent them sealing a first MN win since their title-winning campaign in 2017.

"It was perfect – well, until the lights stopped working on stage seven," said Woodhouse, who finished with a winning margin of just over a minute. "We thought to cable tie the stork on the flash. Other than that, it's spot on, and I can't ask for any more. I tested at Donington and I actually scared myself a little bit, which is probably a good sign!"

When gearbox gremlins removed Stephen Tilburn's Escort Mk2 from the mix Taylor relaxed, safe in the knowledge he could follow Woodhouse home for his second MN Circuit Rally Championship podium finish.

"The new engine has been working very well," said Taylor, who matched his career best rally result from Anglesey with the runner-up spot. "We've had a whole new front end fitted since Oulton, and it all shows that our personal in-house developments are now working well."

The surprise package of the day rounded out the podium after being aided by the reigning MN Circuit Rally champion.

Chris West may have been absent from the entry list but he was on hand to support Dan Corner, who was carrying a former Peugeot engine of West's in his 205 as he climbed the field to snatch third place ahead of the chasing Escort Mk2 of title contender, Michael Walton.

"I wasn't expecting that", Chris [West] has been fantastic to me, and it's given us a big boost for this," said Corner after taking the rostrum.

The quiet assassin was Allan McDowall who followed Walton

## RESULTS

NHMC Cadwell Park Stages, Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship, round 2/7, November 17

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Ian Woodhouse/Paul Rowland	Ford Escort Mk2	33m21s
2	Mike Taylor/Martin Hagggett	Talbot Sunbeam Lotus	+1m04s
3	Dan Corner/Mark Regan	Peugeot 205	+1m25s
4	Michael Walton/Jamie Vaughan	Ford Escort Mk2	+1m52s
5	Allan McDowall/James Robson	Opel Kadett	+2m08s
6	Mike English/Andy Robinson	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m27s
7	Rob Cox/Joe Graham	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m54s
8	Paul Murro/Callum Cross	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m56s
9	Cathy Sewart/Colin Stephens	Talbot Sunbeam Lotus	+2m59s
10	Stuart Popplewell/Nigel Barber	SEAT Ibiza	+3m22s

Event class winners: Chris Ruck/Steve Harris (Vauxhall Corsa); English/Robinson; Ian Bass/Harry Walshaw (Toyota Yaris); Dale/Andrew Lawson (MG ZR); Woodhouse/Rowland; Lee/Abigail Allen (Mitsubishi Lancer E3)  
MN class winners: Ron Walker/Amy McCubbin (Ford Puma); Ruck/Harris; English/Robinson; Taylor/Hagggett; Allen/Allen.



Taylor and Hagggett were best of the rest in their Talbot Sunbeam Lotus

home in fifth place in his flamboyant Opel Kadett, beating the experienced Escort Mk2 pairing of class C frontrunners Mike English and Rob Cox, the latter returning to the series for the first time in 12 months.

Paul Murro's Escort Mk2 again placed inside the top 10, which was rounded out by Cathy Sewart in another Sunbeam Lotus and the over-achieving SEAT Ibiza of

Stuart Popplewell.

Another Darrian to hit trouble was that of Barry Morris. His crash forced the cancellation of stage two, before a more substantial incident for Adam Williams and Rachael Atherton brought SS4 to a halt when their Subaru Impreza aquaplaned backwards into the barriers. Both were taken to hospital for precautionary checks.

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# RACING REPORTS

**BRANDS HATCH: MSVR BY BRIAN PHILLIPS**
**NOVEMBER 16-17**

Photos: Gary Hawkins

## TANDY'S TEAM TAKES INDYKA 500 GLORY



JTR squad won race by two laps



Maclennan was a comfortable winner in the Champion of Brands Formula Ford contests

### WINNERS

**EnduroKa**  
JTR (Nick Tandy, James Rhodes, Elliot Mason, Lewis Selby)

**Champion of Brands Formula Ford 1600**  
Races 1 & 2: Neil Maclennan (Spectrum 011C)

**Trackday championship**  
Chris Payne (Caterham Super 7)

**MSV Supercup championship**  
Colin Tester/Hugh Gurney (BMW M3)

**Trackday Trophy**  
James Baldwin/Miguel Faisca (Nissan 370Z)

A colourful and incident-packed IndyKa 500 race brought the Brands Hatch season to a close in darkness on Sunday and gave victory after 432 laps in 500 minutes – or eight hours 20 minutes – to JTR's Nick Tandy and co-drivers James Rhodes, Elliot Mason and Lewis Selby.

Tandy ended a short opening stint by stopping early to refuel and swap drivers during a safety car period. This helped the JTR team to overcome a two-lap penalty for a refuelling infringement to finish four laps in front on the road, reduced to a two-lap victory margin. The Le Mans winner completed more than 100 laps in darkness on his dash to victory, setting the race's fastest lap on the 365th tour.

Second was taken by Octane Junkies (Adam Smith, Martyn Smith, Laurence Wiltshire and Barry Ward) after a major setback when its race-leading car punctured on debris from an early incident, dropping to 18th after an hour. Another lap back in third came Matt Hibberd, Nick Holmes and Stefan Marsh for Club Racing UK, delighted with their first top three finish. They had to ask directions to the podium.

One of the many hard luck stories affected CHR Motorsport, favourite for the podium and very possible victory after Stratton Mackay, Dave Mayer, Paul Robson and James Rankin put in a stirring performance until Mayer put the car off at Clearways with about two hours to go. Less than 10 minutes before the end Mark Mathieson put the car shared by ex-McLaren Formula 1 boss Eric Boullier among others on its roof at Clearways.

The race was punctuated by 10 safety car interventions and a long list of penalties, mainly for track limits and refuelling misdemeanours.

Neil Maclennan (Spectrum) cruised

to his third and fourth **Champion of Brands** victories on Saturday, the race one-winning margin limited only by two caution periods to remove stranded cars.

Both races featured gripping duels for second place involving Richard Tarling's Jamun and the Van Diemen of Oliver White. A brief excursion by White in race one dropped him to fifth, promoting Castle Combe regular Tom Hawkins to a surprise third place, out for the first time in a Kevin Mills Spectrum.

While Maclennan headed into the distance in race two, White probed Tarling's defences endlessly until finally edging alongside at the final corner to take second by 0.062 seconds, or well under a car's length. Tarling said: "Every time he got a better line out of Clearways and just tucked his nose up the inside on the last lap, and I couldn't chop across."

A stop-go penalty for making his pitstop 2s short cost Ben Davis (Renault Clio) the **Trackday Championship** title, although he graciously conceded that Scott Parkin (SEAT Ibiza), second in the race, was a worthy champion. Caterham racer Chris Payne "drove like an idiot" in wet qualifying and charged from 23rd on the grid to win in the dry.

Darren Goes (SEAT Leon) successfully defended a small **MSV Supercup** points lead, doing the necessary mental arithmetic as he drove round to take third in class, fifth overall and the title. Colin Tester and Hugh Gurney steered a BMW M3 to victory over the Nissan 370Z of World's Fastest Gamer 2 winner James Baldwin and 2013 GT Academy victor Miguel Faisca. Minutes later, the Nissan duo won the **Trackday Trophy** by more than a lap on a crowded circuit.

## FROM LOOKING AFTER VERSTAPPEN'S ENGINE TO CO-DRIVING A MK2 ESCORT

How BTRDA champion co-driver Sturdy is combining two very different roles over the next two weeks. By **Jack Benyon**

**J**oe Sturdy is the only man to co-drive a Ford Escort Mk2 and Max Verstappen in a Red Bull RB15.

In the day job, Sturdy is effectively Verstappen's engine reliability engineer. While the sound of GianPiero Lambiase is the one you'll be familiar with over the radio as Verstappen's chief engineer, Sturdy sits close by. If the 1.6-litre hybrid Honda power unit begins to falter, it's Sturdy's job to make sure it doesn't hamper F1's young star from staying in the race.

But for fun, Sturdy is a rally co-driver – and a good one. The 2015 BTRDA Rally First champion, alongside Nick Carr, also contested the British Championship in 2016 before running out of cash. The two have become close friends and will run together at car number 23 – Red Bull driver Alex Albon's race number, coincidentally – on the Roger Albert Clark Rally in a Historic Escort built by Carr.

It's probably a dream job at Honda for most people, but asking which he'd prefer to do every day – race or rally – Sturdy ponders the question for a while.

"If there were no financial implications, I think I'd have tried to be a co-driver full-time," he says.

"The people I was co-driving with have gone on to have

careers with WRC teams. I started a little bit late but I feel like if money was no object I would have pursued it. I didn't fancy the potential for a few years of not earning any money and maybe not getting anywhere.

"Also you could be the best co-driver in the world but if you're not with a good driver, you can spend your whole career underperforming as a team. That shows it is important, how well the driver is doing. I couldn't sit with a slow driver, do a good job and be happy at the end of it.

"There is a bit more danger being sat in a rally car as opposed to being sat at a desk with a screen in front of me."

The tongue in cheek description of "being sat at a desk" is factual but doesn't do Sturdy enough credit. He was born into motorsport – his dad, Ken, and mum, Jane, were regular competitors and Ken still rallies today – and he's risen through the ranks in F1 just as quickly as Verstappen. At 27, Sturdy has moved,

via Manor, Force India, Renault and finally Honda, into a role it takes some people decades to achieve.

The move to Red Bull this year soon featured a mid-season car swap from Pierre Gasly to Verstappen, and now – much like his job of making sure Verstappen gets to the end – he'll fire into some of rallying's toughest stages in a gruelling 300-mile event on the R.A.C. as he guides Carr through adversity.

Let's just hope the guidance doesn't extend to the Escort's power unit. The engine engineer in the passenger seat won't be much use then...

"Put me in front of Nick's engine and I'm almost a complete amateur!" he adds.

"The F1 engines are just completely different machines now. It's mad how far the engines have come. I almost skipped that bit at the start where I should have been fiddling with an engine like in the rally Escorts. I just jumped in at the top end. I'm probably missing the basic skills, but Nick teaches me a lot.

"I probably get involved in that more than most co-drivers with car set-up stuff and helping Nick with decisions when he's building and prepping the car."

As soon as the event finishes, Sturdy will be straight on a flight to Abu Dhabi, finishing the F1 season. It should be a bit warmer than a Welsh forest. ■

● Turn to page 13 for a full R.A.C. preview.



Sturdy won Rally First title



Sturdy (inset right with his father) will swap world of F1 for the R.A.C. rally

Photos: Kevin Money

# INTERVIEW

Photos: FIA World RX, Hal Ridge



Xite Racing Mini is recognisable

## HOW OLIVER BENNETT IS CREATING THE RIGHT KIND OF ENERGY

Hal Ridge speaks to a World RX battler who has taken on a huge task in 2019

**O**liver Bennett, prior to his rallycross debut, already showed the attitude that marked him out from a number of his rivals. He was laidback about his future challenge. "I've got no experience but I've driven plenty of fast cars on the road so I'm sure it will be fine," he remarked casually.

The then-24-year-old had come from a background of motocross and tried his hand at stage rallying but admitted he'd got bored of waiting in the middle of a forest for hours for him and a broken car to be collected.

But, not only had Bennett acquired a high-spec OlsbergsMSE-built Ford Fiesta Supercar in which to begin his rallycross career, he also mentioned that he was planning to use the venture as a platform to achieve exposure for a new Energy Drink brand, Xite.

There have been numerous spurious caffeine drinks disappear as quickly as they've arrived in motor racing so, initially, taking Bennett's plans seriously was difficult.

Onlookers couldn't have been more wrong to doubt him though. From Bennett's very first pre-season test at Lydden Hill in early 2017, the

Bristol driver certainly wasn't scared of the 600bhp Ford Fiesta, and subsequently finished on the podium in the second round of the British Rallycross Championship in a hotly-contested season. Such was his consistency that he was in the hunt for the title.

He also sampled his home round of World RX and, over the winter, made the next bold move, for his small team to build and develop its own unique BMW Mini Cooper Supercar for 2018. A mix of World RX and American events were contested in the car's maiden campaign before the Xite Racing squad undertook a full World RX campaign this year.

And, while doing all that, Bennett and his partner Megan have developed the Xite Energy brand to the point where since the summer, it has grown from a team of three staff members to over 15. Directly in control of production, marketing and sales, Bennett's forecasts suggest the employee count will grow to 40 in the next 18 months, while Xite is already available on the high street, in stores like Holland & Barrett.

"I guess we picked the two of the most difficult things in the world; a top FIA motorsport and an energy drink brand where there is already two really competitive players," Bennett told Motorsport News. "I was heavily into health and fitness and drank a lot of

energy drinks that weren't particularly good for me, so the two ideas came at the same time. I was doing the product side, then it occurred to me that motorsport's a great platform to market that brand, so why not do two together.

"I think that's probably the push that made me go to World RX sooner than perhaps organically I would have. I probably would have done another year in British, maybe a European series, and built up to this level, but the brand pushed me to this level [for the exposure]. I haven't regretted it at all because we're fighting in the mix, we don't look silly and people know we've built our own car. They [the drinks brand and motorsport] work great together."

Not to beat about the bush, the Brit hasn't set the world on fire with his pace in the Mini. But, looking at where he was even 12 months ago – coupled with the fact he has such little experience compared to his rivals, no team-mate with which to share data and no real opportunity for testing – the fact that Bennett's made semi-finals this year and set top-10 qualifying times is a significant achievement.

Bennett says: "It was nuts to build a car and just come and race it at this level. I didn't have the seat time, experience of any of the circuits, and for a team that's never built a car before, it was a serious

task. I think people have been surprised at how close we've got. Even for myself, we have to realise that we are fighting for semi-finals [that's where we are]. We are in the top 12 lap times consistently and I've probably done as many laps in my career as the other guys have done in a test session, so I think for where we are it's been really good."

In his first term of British RX, only two years ago, the Bristol racer featured on the podium seven from nine times and only lost the title on dropped scores. But, he wasn't the fastest. Now, proof of what Bennett's learned in World RX is provided by setting the pace when he returns for selected outings in the British series.

Twice in the last two years he's set the pace, and would have walked away with a win had it not been for mitigating factors.

But like so many businessmen in the motor racing world, Bennett is constantly torn between the time required to improve as a driver, and that which needs dedicating to his start-up.

As he has since entering the paddock though, Bennett continues to strive for being unique. Not only with running the one-off Mini Supercar, but by taking a different approach to the norm with his drinks brand and not creating a product to tack on the might of Red Bull and Monster.

"It's super tough. We wanted to create a new product that's better for you. Our drink is natural, it's zero sugar," he says. "There's no preservatives, no taurine, no colouring. For us, there were three pillars to success; brand, taste and function. We want it to be novel in all three. We've started our niche and grow from there I think, once people get excited and see the brand and try it."

With infectious enthusiasm about his passions, Bennett is also modest and realistic about his own role as a sporting ambassador for his Xite Energy brand. Proud of how both his rallycross and business careers have gone so far, eyes are only looking forward for the Mini racer.

"I'm probably one of the smaller ambassadors on the Xite team now. It is interesting to see the brand grow around me and no doubt I'll play a smaller role in that exposure in the future, but it's nice to see it get going. It's pretty crazy really, to say I've done the two," he explains.

"Two years ago I was at World RX as a spectator thinking it would be amazing to do that one day. Now we are here, and I've got a brand growing across the UK. I'm immensely proud of even getting to the stage we have. How far things go, only the future will tell us. But it's extremely positive for the amount we've done, who knows what the next two years or four years will bring." ■

Brit Bennett has made semi-finals in WRX



Bennett impressed right from first test

## SPORTING SCENE



Photos: World RX, Trevor Coulson

There will be no Americas RX series in the future

# PLUG PULLED ON AMERICAS RALLYCROSS CONTEST FOR 2020

## United States-based series canned as talks on future of the category stall

By Hal Ridge

**The Americas Rallycross Championship has been ended with immediate effect, following the conclusion of its second term.**

ARX was created by World Rallycross Championship promoter IMG for the 2018 season amid the demise of the American-based Global Rallycross Championship. The series was run over four rounds in its first campaign, with three of those rounds joining World RX events, and a standalone round on a new rallycross track at the Circuit of the Americas.

For 2019, two new rallycross circuits were built at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course and Gateway Motorsports Park as the series expanded to six events. But, while teams with varying levels of factory support competed in the series – including from Volkswagen and Subaru – only seven Supercars contested most of the 2019 campaign.

A statement issued by the series says it will end after efforts to secure long-term commercial partners didn't come to fruition.

"After consultation with a wide group of stakeholders and interested parties,

IMG has taken the difficult decision to not extend the Americas Rallycross Championship beyond the 2019 season," said the statement. "Over the past few months, IMG had been exploring a number of options with commercial partners to secure the long-term future of the championship but, unfortunately, none of those options came to fruition."

Scott Speed and Tanner Foust took an ARX title each in the two years the series ran. With World RX having dropped its American round at COTA from the 2019 calendar, and the Canadian round at

Trois-Rivieres for 2020, there are no planned IMG-run rallycross events to be held in North America next year.

"The expanding footprint of the FIA World Rallycross Championship means that we may revisit the possibility of the inclusion of a North American round on the world calendar in the future," said the statement.

Run as part of Travis Pastrana's Nitro World Games, Nitro Rallycross, which for the last two years has run as a standalone rallycross event at the Utah Motorsports Campus, is expected to run at least one event in America next year.

## Sponsor killed in Birmingham tragedy

BriSCA F1 organisers have begun an inquiry into a fatal accident that happened at Birmingham Wheels on Saturday which caused the Gala Night event to be cancelled.

Long-time motorsport enthusiast and backer Colin North was killed in an incident with one of the support vehicles during the build-up to the event.

North had a senior role at Teng Tools, which had backed a host of drivers and championships in short oval racing and on the circuits too.

A statement from BriSCA said: "We are co-operating fully with the police and Health and Safety Executive, which is investigating this tragic accident.

"Further information will be provided in due course but at this stage in the investigation it is inappropriate for us to comment further and we will not do so."



North succumbed to his injuries



The BTRDA runners will visit Lydden Hill on two occasions in 2020

## BTRDA 2020 calendar to sign off at Knockhill again

The BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship will visit Lydden Hill on a pair of occasions next season as part of a nine-round calendar.

The Clubmans series will begin at Blyton Park on March 29 for round one before the first of two double-headers at Pembrey on April 25-26. Round four will be held at Lydden Hill on May 30-31, before a return

to Blyton on June 28 for round five, then the second visit to Pembrey in the now-traditional early August slot (August 8-9).

Lydden will host round eight on September 12, and for the second year in a row Knockhill in Scotland will host the season finale, this year on October 18.

A pre-season test day will be held at Blyton on February 23.

## Female racer Lhoste to battle for Andros Trophy

RX Academy racer Clementine Lhoste has signed to race a brand new top-category Peugeot e-208 in the Andros Trophy Ice Racing series this winter.

Twenty-one-year-old Lhoste, who made her rallycross debut in the RX Academy series this year, has been racing in the Andros Trophy support classes for the last six years. She will graduate to a top-class four-wheel-drive, four-wheel-steer machine in the Elite category, sharing the Sylvain Pussier Competition e-208 with experienced campaigner Benjamin Riviere, who will drive it in the top Elite Pro class. A sister car will be shared by Nathanael Berthon and Sylvain Pussier.

"The Andros Trophy is always difficult because we have very little or no testing before the season because snow and cold temperatures generally arrive late in France," Lhoste told MN. "There are a lot of changes this year, the Andros Trophy has become a 100% electric discipline; we will be up against very big teams like Sebastien Loeb Racing and Yvan Muller Racing. Jumping to the top is a big challenge, but I know the circuits.

"I have experience of electric cars in the [two-wheel-drive] support class, but what I haven't experienced yet is the four-wheel steering. We won't get much time to practice before the first race [at Val Thorens on the first weekend in December] because the cars will be finished only at the end of November."



Lhoste will race Peugeot e-208

## Britons head to Barbados RX

A number of British rallycross drivers will take part in the Barbados Rallycross Carnival this weekend at the Vacluse Raceway on the Caribbean island.

Welshman Mike Manning will compete with his Ford Fiesta Supercar, while Steve Harris will campaign his Retro Rallycross Ford RS200. A British-based RS200 rallycross machine has competed on the island before when Irishman George Tracey raced Pat Doran's machine at a rallycross event in 2006, in which Doran himself, Dermot Carnegie and Lawrence Gibson also took part.

This time around Terry Moore will race his Retro RX Mini Clubman, while former British and European Championship Supercar racer John Cross has swapped the Lancia Stratos he now campaigns in Retro RX in the UK to take part in the well-supported Bimma Cup category in both rally and rallycross events this week.

## Champ Hansen to foster new talents

The Yellow Squad young driver programme operated by World Rallycross champion Timmy Hansen and brother Kevin will expand into the RX2 International Series next year.

Having run Swede Julius Ljungdahl to fourth overall in the RallyX Nordic CrossCar category this year and the RallyX On Ice CrossCar title, Yellow Squad will collaborate with existing RX2 outfit Team Faren to race in the World RX support class next year.

Team Faren has won RX2 events in recent years and is owned by former World RX driver Eric Faren. Timmy Hansen will undertake the role of head of driver development.

"In my career I was lucky to grow up in a family that lives and breathes rallycross, and in my parents, Kenneth and Susann, I had two great teachers," said Timmy Hansen. "But not everyone has a multiple rallycross champion in the family, so I was keen to work with Kevin in finding and developing the next generation of rallycross talent ourselves, using all the lessons I have learned from my years in World RX.

"There are so many elements that go into being a great rallycross driver beyond what happens in the driver's seat, and I will be working with the Yellow Squad drivers as much away from the car as in it."

The programme is yet to announce any drivers for 2020.



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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

### MN SAYS...

# Evans lands the dream drive for 2020

## Elfyn gets the keys to the car that took Ott Tanak to the world rally title

There has been an earthquake in the World Rally Championship this week, and there will be more shockwaves to come. The news that Citroen is staring at the exit door is hardly a surprise given the lack of silverware that has been heading to France in recent seasons, despite the return of prodigal son Sebastien Ogier.

While that is a dent for the World Rally Championship as a whole, it will spread ripples throughout the service park and that means that several drivers are now facing an uncertain future. When the music stops, it seems that Kris Meeke might well be headed out of the contest, whereas Elfyn Evans might well find himself in the plum seat in a Toyota Yaris WRC.

Even if Ogier follows him to the Japanese marque, this will be a platform for Evans to bloom. He has spent most of his career being nurtured by M-Sport, but he needs to spread his wings and strike out on his own. Being in the fastest car in the series will be a boon, and give him just the springboard to take his career to the next level.

**Matt James, Editor** (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



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An evocative shot by Mike Griffin taken from the watersplash at the Neil Howard Stages at Oulton Park, part of the MN series



The London to Brighton Veteran run, taken by Robert Taylor



Alan Morgan's picture of a flying Phil Collins' Opel Ascona



Gary Hill's shot: one of these lines at Paddock Hill is very wrong



An unusual Alfa Romeo, taken at Oulton by Graham Lomax



Richard Salisbury's shot from the Neil Howard Stages at Oulton



Peter Atkins enjoyed the action at the Walter Hayes Trophy



Sunset on the Walter Hayes Trophy, from Robert Ingham

GOT AN OPINION?

LET US KNOW: LETTERS@MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK

## TV GUIDE

Single-seater races around the unforgiving Macau circuit are often very dramatic. And when tin-top or sportscar contests are held on the Guia streets, that is a recipe for even more chaos. Think of 2017, when the GT World Cup qualifying race there had to be suspended after a huge pile-up involving 16 cars completely blocked the track.

This year, the **World Touring Car Cup** again visited Macau and highlights from the second and third races held last weekend are shown this week. Tune in to catch all of the best action on Wednesday (1900-2100hrs, Eurosport 2). The GT cars were in attendance too and to find out who emerged on top this year be sure to catch Tuesday's highlights programme (2200-2305hrs, Eurosport 1).

Away from Macau and there's no shortage of **Classic Formula 1** races being shown on Sky Sports F1



The world's most expensive GT car scrapheap was created at Macau back in 2017

this week. And street circuits again feature here too. The key moments from the streets of Monte Carlo in the 1989 Monaco Grand Prix are shown on Wednesday (2100-2135hrs) and that is followed by the 1990 Australian GP from Adelaide (2135-2205hrs).

There are also two very dramatic title-deciders being shown with the destiny of the F1 title far from certain heading into the 2007 Brazilian GP (Thursday, 2100-2300hrs) and 2012 Brazilian GP (Monday, 2100-2315hrs). Finally, for those looking

for something very different to Macau and F1, there are **British Rallycross** highlights on the box. This also featured a close showdown in the finale but it was Julian Godfrey who eventually triumphed at the end of last month (Tuesday, 0100-0200hrs, BT Sport 2).

## LIVE TV

### Formula E: Ad Diriyah

■ **Race one:** Friday, 1200-1300hrs, Eurosport 2/ BBC online

■ **Race two:** Saturday, 1200-1300hrs, Eurosport 2/ BBC online

### Australian Supercars: Newcastle

■ **Race one:** Saturday, 0415-0700hrs, BT Sport 1

■ **Race two:** Sunday, 0415-0700hrs, BT Sport 3



Porsche makes FE debut

## LISTINGS



Ford Escort Mk2s will be the bedrock of the R.A.C. Rally

### RALLYING THURSDAY-MONDAY

■ **Leominster and Carlisle, Cumbria Roger Albert Clark Rally**  
Starts 1601hrs Admission £80 access all areas pass, £10 per car Thursday and Friday, £25 Saturday

and Sunday, £20 Monday Web racrmc.org

### SATURDAY

■ **Blyton Park, Lincs PD Extinguishers Hall Trophy Rally**  
Starts 0930hrs Admission TBA Web clitheroedmc.co.uk

### SATURDAY/SUNDAY

■ **Anglesey, North Wales Pentraeth Automotive Glyn Memorial Stages**  
Starts 1100hrs Admission adult £10-£15 Web camconline.co.uk

Listings correct at time of press, but please check before travelling

## NEXT WEEK

## OUT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

# WHO CAN TOP THE ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY?

Full report on the marathon event



## TOM'S TOYOTA

How Ingram's fared in first season with new Corolla



## SOLBERG'S GREATEST DRIVES

The retiring legend picks his best moments



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# MOTORSPORT NEWS

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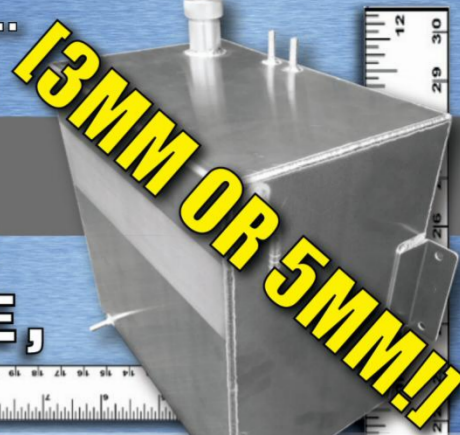
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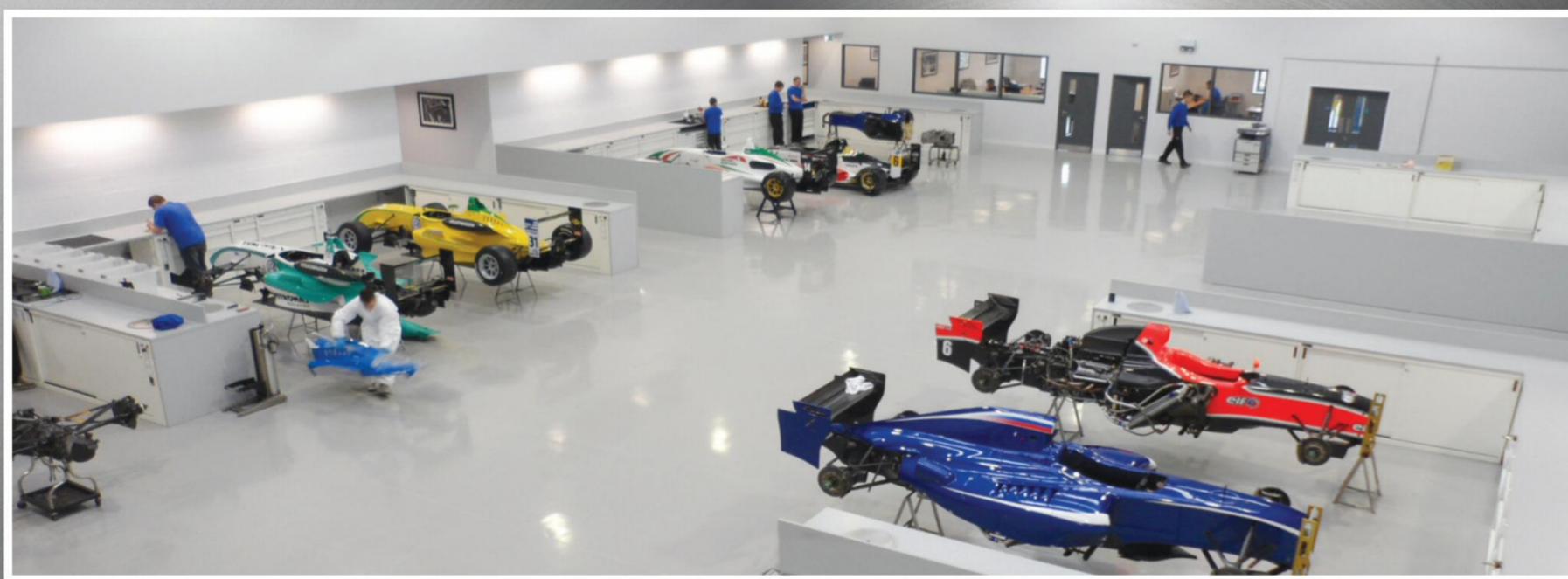


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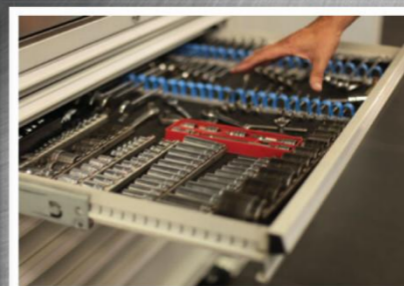


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