

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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ELECTRIC SHOCK!

VW SMASHES PIKES PEAK RECORD **P15**



Out-of-favour Ferrari driver has 2019 career option

KIMI

TIPPED FOR WORLD RALLY RETURN WITH TOYOTA



By David Evans

Toyota team principal Tommi Makinen is ready to give Kimi Raikkonen a test in a Yaris WRC should the Finn's Formula 1 options fall down next season.

Makinen, who has already run Raikkonen in a rally car, said it would be interesting to see what the 2007 Formula 1 title winner could do in a modern World Rally Car.

Makinen told *Motorsport News*: "If he wants to drive the car I can let him, no question."

Full story: P2-3

HAMILTON STRETCHES CLEAR

MERC MAN'S BENEFIT IN FRENCH GP P4



SUBARU BOUNCES BACK

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TWO IN A ROW FOR EDWARDS

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Makinen says 2007 F1 champ would be

TOYOTA



The Toyota Yaris has been a winner in 2018 already

By David Evans

If Kimi Raikkonen departs Formula 1 at the end of the season, Tommi Makinen would make a Toyota Yaris WRC available for him to test with an eye to a possible return to rallying.

Raikkonen's future with Italian squad Ferrari remains unclear, but if this is his final F1 season then he could be back in a World Rally Car for the first time since 2011.

The potential for a Raikkonen return to rallying's top flight was raised when Finnish media quoted what was an off-the-cuff – and reckoned to be off-the-record – remark from a senior Toyota Gazoo Racing team member at the Monaco Grand Prix earlier this year.

A source in the team told MN: "A kind of society-type journalist asked in a very informal way about Kimi and the story was completely blown up."

In an effort to clarify the situation, MN asked if there had been any communication between Makinen's Toyota squad and the 38-year-old Finn regarding next season.

"No," said Makinen. "I don't think he has even seen the car." Asked if he would be prepared to test Raikkonen in a factory Yaris WRC, Makinen said: "He hasn't tested anything now, but why not? If he wants to drive the car I can let him, no question."

Makinen ran Raikkonen when he contested a selection of Finnish Championship rounds (as well as the Rally della Marca in Italy), culminating in Rally Finland in 2009.

The four-time World Rally champion added: "There's no question for this [Raikkonen testing the Yaris] because I know him and I know how he is driving. He drives very well, he's not crazy. I ran him before [in his Abarth Grande Punto] before and I know him."

While he would like to see Raikkonen in a Toyota, Makinen admitted he felt his countryman still has plenty to offer in F1.

"I think he has more to give to Ferrari and I would like to see him still behind the wheel in the Ferrari in the future," he said.

"He has a massive number of fans around the world who want to see him still in a Formula 1 car."

Makinen admitted, however, that Raikkonen to rallying would also be a huge crowd-pleaser – something which would be appealing to Toyota's global marketing department in Japan.

He said: "I haven't spoken to Toyota, but why not if we could organise for him to drive – there would be a lot of promotion for this."

Raikkonen hasn't commented further on speculation that he could return to rallying. At the time the original story broke, he offered a forthright response saying: "For sure I'm interested in rallying whenever I stop, that's not a secret, but I have zero contact to anyone. People keep writing things, but not really my issue. The funny part was that it [the first story] said Mika Hakkinen confirmed it. The lady who wrote it and him, how much do they know about my life? Zero."

Kaj Lindstrom has co-driven Raikkonen on every rally he has started – including 22 WRC rounds as part of his own Ice 1 Racing team in 2011 and the Citroen Junior team in the preceding season. Lindstrom, who is now sporting director at Toyota Gazoo Racing, was



This could be his last F1 year

HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: LAT, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

welcome in a Yaris

OPEN TO THE CHANCE OF KIMI WRC COMEBACK



cautious in his response, saying it would be interesting to work with his former driver again.

Lindstrom said: "You know Kimi, when we drove before he said we would do a few rallies in the Fiat [in 2009]... he hasn't said anything yet. He might say he wants to do one rally or something and it would be interesting to see him in the car, but nothing has been talked about."

"Honesty, if he would like to do one rally and, for sure, Tommi has said he's an interesting person, it would be easy for him to do that. Tommi knows him [Raikkonen] well and Kimi knows me well. But, you know, this kind of story has to be really careful. If we say anything then it goes on and suddenly we have Kimi in the car

and in the team for the whole season – this kind of thing can get a little bit silly."

Not since he retired early from the 2011 Wales Rally GB has Raikkonen competed in a rally, but clearly his appetite for rallying remains.

The Finn's strongest WRC finish was fifth on the 2010 Rally Turkey. After a full season with Citroën in 2010, he completed a largely European-based WRC season in 2011, twice posting a sixth-place in Jordan and Germany.

Former Citroën Junior Team team-mate Sebastien Ogier says Raikkonen would find the series has moved on again with the latest generation of World Rally Cars.

The five-time champion told *MN*: "I guess it would be difficult for him once again. We remember when he came several years ago, he struggled and now, after being out [of rallying] for some time, it won't be easier – especially now as I feel the level is even higher than when he was here before."

"But if he wants to, then I am sure he can be good. It's just a question of whether he wants to – we know he's not a big worker [in rallying]. But, a name like Raikkonen is never bad for the sport, that's for sure."



Raikkonen put some of his own money into his privateer WRC campaign in 2011

Will the iceman come back to rallying?

Who knows? Nobody knows. Except him.

He will, however, test a Toyota Yaris WRC. Why wouldn't he?

He's made no secret of how much he enjoys the discipline – don't forget he sank some of his own cash into a DS3 WRC in 2011 – and Toyota Gazoo Racing is based in Puuppola, not too far north of Espoo, where Raikkonen was born. Led by Tommi Makinen, Toyota is the most Finnish of teams, a place where the Iceman would be warmly received and very welcome.

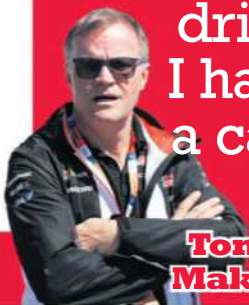
And, in that part of the world, in Toyota's backyard, Raikkonen could test a Yaris WRC all day long next week and we'd never know a thing about it. The forests close to Jyväskylä hold plenty of secrets from rallying's top flight, this could be just another one to be told in the distant future.

Just as Ken Block's return to the WRC will be seismic when the American hits Spain in October, a Raikkonen outing any time soon would offer precisely the same mass appeal, regardless of the potential result.

MOTORSPORT NEWS
says...

David Evans

"If Kimi wants to drive, I have a car"



Tommi Makinen

FRENCH GP REPORT

BY ANTHONY ROWLINSON

Mercedes' man heads them home as his rivals implode



HAMILTON



Lewis was untouchable up front to win in France



Verstappen took strong second

The last time Formula 1 raced at Paul Ricard, in 1990, a feisty Brit – Nigel Mansell – was on pole, Ferrari was in the thick of it and a passionate throner had high hopes for strong results from a clutch of their country's *pilotes*.

At a glance, not much seemed to have altered in the intervening 28 years, as Lewis Hamilton blasted to his 75th pole position, Sebastian Vettel and Ferrari challenged for the front row (before winding up P3), while Romain Grosjean, Esteban Ocon, Pierre Gasly and Monegasque Charles Leclerc all entertained *pour la France*.

But how different things truly are almost three decades on – most regrettably as regards the performance of Williams and McLaren. These two pillars of Formula 1, titans of the 1980s and '90s, have scarcely looked so enfeebled as they did in France, locking out the grid's lower orders with only a tardy Brendon Hartley spoiling the back-end symmetry in P17 for Toro Rosso (although he'd start in P20, after incurring a penalty for changed engine components).

And what a thump down to earth for Fernando Alonso – last week a Le Mans winner; this week a Q1 'exiteer'.

"On the personal side I'm trying to do everything possible," he reflected. "But this is Formula 1. You need the right package and the right place. Although even amid all this disaster we are seventh in the championship, so we must be doing something right."

Emollient words, but that's scant consolation for a double world champion who still operates without apparent loss of ability or zeal: his qualifying tally against team-mate

Stoffel Vandoorne is 8-0. The suspicions of those predicting an Alonso exit from F1 at the end of this season – to continue a career in machinery that allows him to race at the sharp end in whichever championship he alights – were only given fuel by this shocking display.

Amid reports of staff discontent at McLaren HQ and bizarre tittle-tattle about chocolate Freddos being presented as staff bonuses, it can only be concluded that all is far from well behind the glazed edifice of the McLaren Technology Centre.

None of this troubled the man once again at the front, however, for Hamilton was in commanding form at Ricard. Having topped both Friday practice sessions, his pole lap was a classic 'Hammer blow' for those pretenders to P1. Team-mate Valtteri Bottas came close, revelling, like Lewis, in performance upgrades delivered by Mercedes engine HQ in Brixworth to clock a 1m30.147s that was briefly fastest time in the fading moments of qualifying. But Hamilton was having none of it. A 1m30.029s lap settled the matter – although Lewis reckoned he'd left maybe 0.3s 'out there'.

"It was good, but not spectacular," Hamilton said. "The laps in both Q1 and Q2 were better."

Turn 6, the right-hander looping towards the back straight, had proved challenging owing to a strong tail wind. "Iran wide there and lost a lot of time," said Hamilton. Ditto Bottas and ditto Vettel, whose final effort was unusually scrappy – the result, he reckoned, of trying too hard: "I lost the car a little bit everywhere. It was washing out, so it wasn't a phenomenal lap. I tried to push everything in the last attempt, but I was sliding, losing the line, losing time and I lost the lap. I just didn't get a great feeling."

All had been compromised by heavy

FP3 showers that washed away much of the rubber that had been laid down during earlier sessions. Rain spots also threatened to disrupt qualifying, although in the event all the top runners set their times on ultrasofts.

An intriguing strategy divergence came into play during Q2, however. Both Mercedes and Red Bull (Max Verstappen fourth, Daniel Ricciardo fifth) set their fastest times on supersoft Pirellis, with which compounds they would therefore start the race. That made a one-stopper most likely for both the blue and silver cars, pursuing the theoretically optimal supersoft-ultrasoft choice. Ferrari, though, appeared to be gambling on a racier approach, by relying on ultrasofts from the start. A one-stopper remained viable, though the likely need to switch to marginally slower supersofts from around lap 25 seemed counter-intuitive.

Whatever the merits of the decision, Kimi Raikkonen was already compromised by an underwhelming P6 start slot – 0.6s from Vettel. With rumours swelling that his consistently tame performances will result in his replacement by emerging superstar Charles Leclerc for 2019, Kimi's effort did little to silence doubters.

That man Leclerc, by contrast, was the undoubted Saturday stand-out. He nailed his first Q3 with a stirring lap that owed much to his ability to finesse his Sauber over Ricard's kerbs without losing balance. That, and a Friday 'all-nighter' with his engineers, in pursuit of better grip and balance from the C37. "It was not only a success in terms of the final result, but also because since yesterday we made a huge step forward," he said. "The car feels great and I feel very comfortable on track."

It was a massive effort and Leclerc benefited from Q3 troubles for the two Haas cars, both of which had made it

comfortably into the top ten with sixth- and seventh-fastest Q2 times.

Kevin Magnussen complained that Kimi had overtaken him on his fastest lap, ruining his Q3, he claimed, to leave him ninth, while Grosjean blew it at T3 during his first qualifying run. He clipped the inside kerb on entry, prompting the car to flick left, before a long, slow, sideways slide into the barriers at T4. The prang wiped the nose from Grosjean's VF-18, ended his session and brought out the red flag.

Team boss Guenther Steiner was philosophical: "All in all, ninth and 10th is not a bad result, but we should be seventh and eighth. I think the car is at that level, so tomorrow we have to make up spots at the start."

Renault's Carlos Sainz completed the top 10 with P7. Once again 'best of the rest', he flourished where team-mate Nico Hulkenberg failed to find a happy chassis balance.

Race

This one was over almost before it started. A Vettel flyer from P3 put him briefly ahead of Bottas, who'd started in P2, and for a moment the Ferrari was gaining on Hamilton, directly ahead but covering, defensively, into T1.

Had Bottas not been to Vettel's right, Seb would surely have jinked out and tried to run side-by-side with Lewis into Turn 2. But Valtteri *was* there, standing his own ground, and when Bottas braked into the first corner, then turned left to take his line, Vettel found himself boxed in with nowhere to go.

For a split second this looked like a rerun of Singapore 2017, when a too-hot Vettel managed to eliminate himself, Raikkonen and Verstappen at the first corner.

This time around the consequences were less dramatic, although still significant – both for race and

championship. The Ferrari's right front-wing endplate tagged Bottas' left-rear, spinning the Mercedes out and condemning Valtteri to a long, slow, three-wheeled drag back to the pits, during which his W09 sustained floor damage from a flailing Pirelli that would hamper his pace thereafter. Vettel, too, was pit-bound for a change of nose and tyres.

That left weekend pace-man Hamilton in the clear and free to control the race from the front, which he proceeded to do, immaculately, through to lap 53 and win number 65.

Verstappen, who'd started fourth, was immediately up to second after the fracas and he too would go on to execute a perfect, fast, untroubled race – never in the hunt for a win, but equally untroubled for second place.

Sainz was elevated to third – a position above his Renault's performance station, but a temporary placing that brought joy to the local throng, who cheered the yellow car to the echo as it crossed the line in P3 at the start of the second lap. Their partisan elation was tempered, however, by further lap-one woe lower down the order. Remarkably, at this race of all races, the contretemps involved all three French drivers and resulted in the elimination of two. It began as Esteban Ocon, from P11, drew alongside Haas man Grosjean on the pit straight immediately after the start, before the two made contact.

"I was on the edge of the track but he moved over and hit me," said Ocon, "which caused a lot of damage to the side of my car and the floor."

Then, approaching Turn 3, Gasly, behind Ocon, lost his Toro Rosso under braking and punted the Force India into retirement. Gasly was out on the spot, too, and with car parts littering the track, the appearance of the safety car was inevitable.

"He just moved over on me"
Unlucky Ocon, below



ROUND 08

Photos: LAT

HAMMERS IT



Commanding drive regained points lead

A wild first lap, then, but alas the French Grand Prix had spurted all of its excitement in one go. What remained was largely processional, though enlivened by the prospect of a fightback by Bottas and Vettel, in two of the fastest cars out there.

Vettel's was the most convincing, as he set off on a long soft-tyred charge that took him to fifth (also his finishing position), before his lap 40 stop for a set of ultras. While stationary he also served the five-second time penalty given to him as a 'naughty boy' wrist-slap for causing the first-lap mayhem. "It was my fault," he later conceded. "My start was too good and I was left with nowhere to go. I tried to brake early." While it was reassuring to hear Vettel's *mea culpa*, the light-touch penalty was viewed with some scepticism by his peers.

"It's disappointing because we had a chance to get a 1-2 today," said Hamilton, "which is always an incredible feeling – the ultimate goal. We're all going into Turn 1 as hard as we could, so it's kind of a racing incident and these things can happen.

But when someone destroys your race through an error, ultimately you should not be able to finish ahead of him because it's taken him out of the race."

This, of course, is precisely what happened to Bottas, who trailed home in seventh (with fastest lap), having seemed a dead-cert podium finisher.

"That was a battling performance from Valtteri," said Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. "Sebastian clearly misjudged his braking for Turn 1, which cost both him and Valtteri dearly. When the car stopped, we saw that the floor area around the tyre was pretty badly damaged and flapping about – and Valtteri described the car balance as 'shocking.'"

Verstappen, with commendably acerbic wit, suggested that perhaps Vettel should consider "changing his style". Relishing the opportunity to bait an opponent he added: "Next time you see Seb you [media] should ask him to change his style. Because that's what he should do. That's my advice to everyone in this room."

Verstappen's P2 was a better result

than Red Bull might have hoped for, as the RB13 had emerged as the third-fastest car around Ricard. Ricciardo could manage no better than fourth in his, but wing damage hampered his pace and left him incapable of holding off Raikkonen for the last podium spot.

Kimi's determined drive from seventh at the end of lap one showed a spark too often absent these days from the Iceman's driving, although predictably he was underwhelmed: "I was bit on the wrong side at the start," he said, "and I was left with nowhere to go. But I recovered quite well."

As Leclerc (who nabbed the final point for Sauber) is linked ever more strongly with Ferrari for 2019, Kimi's podium days for the Scuderia may nonetheless be numbered.

A younger generation is taking hold elsewhere in F1: Magnussen's charge to sixth for Haas further underlined how harmoniously he has gelled at this least political of race teams, while Sainz perhaps deserved more for his verve than an eventual eighth place, ahead of team-mate Hulkenberg. Carlos was fortunate, however, even to hold that position after a late MGU-K failure robbed him of power. But a VSC triggered by a Lance Stroll-Williams puncture and resultant shunt at Signes, saved Sainz from an invidious slide out of the points.

No ill-fortune, however, would have dragged him so low as his hapless compatriot Alonso, who trailed home 16th in a deeply uncompetitive McLaren. He was even denied the final flourish of a fastest-lap glory run: having prepped his car perfectly to manage tyre temperatures and electrical energy reserves, the VSC stopped play just as Alonso was set to 'unleash the beast'.

This double world champion Le Mans winner deserves better.



Sainz should have had sixth, but dropped back with a hybrid problem

RACE FACTS

Results © 2018 Formula One Administration Ltd

FRANCE

Circuit: Paul Ricard **Lap:** 3.630 miles
Race distance: 192.441 miles **Laps:** 53
Lap record: 1m34.225s (Bottas, Mercedes, 2018)
1990 winner: Alain Prost (Ferrari)

Date: June 24
Weather: Warm, dry

TYRE CHOICE

Option **ULTRA SOFT**

Option **SUPER SOFT**

Prime **SOFT**

RESULTS

FIA Formula 1 World Championship, round 8/20

POS	DRIVERS	NAT	CAR-ENGINE	TIME
1	Lewis Hamilton	GBR	Mercedes	1h30m11.385s
2	Max Verstappen	NED	Red Bull-Renault	+7.090s
3	Kimi Raikkonen	FIN	Ferrari	+25.888s
4	Daniel Ricciardo	AUS	Red Bull-Renault	+34.736s
5	Sebastian Vettel	GER	Ferrari	+1m01.935s
6	Kevin Magnussen	DEN	Haas-Ferrari	+1m19.364s
7	Valtteri Bottas	FIN	Mercedes	+1m20.632s
8	Carlos Sainz	ESP	Renault	+1m27.184s
9	Nico Hulkenberg	GER	Renault	+1m31.989s
10	Charles Leclerc	MON	Sauber-Ferrari	+1m33.873s
11	Romain Grosjean	FRA	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap
12	Stoffel Vandoorne	BEL	McLaren-Renault	-1 lap
13	Marcus Ericsson	SWE	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap
14	Brendon Hartley	NZL	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap
15	Sergey Sirotkin	RUS	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap
16	Fernando Alonso	ESP	McLaren-Renault	L50/suspension
17	Lance Stroll	CAN	Williams-Mercedes	L48/tyre
R	Sergio Perez	MEX	Force India-Mercedes	L27/power unit
R	Esteban Ocon	FRA	Force India-Mercedes	L0/collision
R	Pierre Gasly	FRA	Toro Rosso-Honda	L0/collision

Winner's average speed: 128.018mph Lap leaders: Hamilton 1-32; Raikkonen 33; Hamilton 34-53

FASTEST LAP | VALTTERI BOTTAS 1m.34.225s ON LAP 41 (AVERAGE SPEED: 138.69mph)

QUALIFYING

POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m30.029s	11	Ocon	1m32.075s
2	Bottas	1m30.147s	12	Hulkenberg	1m32.115s
3	Vettel	1m30.400s	13	Perez	1m32.454s
4	Verstappen	1m30.705s	14	Gasly	1m32.460s
5	Ricciardo	1m30.895s	15	Ericsson	1m32.820s
6	Raikkonen	1m31.057s	16	Alonso	1m32.976s
7	Sainz	1m32.126s	17	Vandoorne	1m33.162s
8	Leclerc	1m32.635s	18	Sirotkin	1m33.636s
9	Magnussen	1m32.930s	19	Stroll	1m33.729s
10	Grosjean	No time	20	Hartley	1m33.025s*

* required to start from the back for additional power unit elements used



Alonso, and McLaren, endured a nightmare

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS			CONSTRUCTORS		
POS	DRIVER	PTS	POS	CONSTRUCTOR	PTS
1	Lewis Hamilton	145	1	Mercedes	237
2	Sebastian Vettel	131	2	Ferrari	214
3	Daniel Ricciardo	96	3	Red Bull-TAG Heuer	164
4	Valtteri Bottas	92	4	Renault	62
5	Kimi Raikkonen	83	5	McLaren-Renault	40
6	Max Verstappen	68	6	Force India-Mercedes	28
7	Nico Hulkenberg	34	7	Haas-Ferrari	27
8	Fernando Alonso	32	8	Toro Rosso-Honda	19
9	Carlos Sainz	28	9	Sauber-Ferrari	13
10	Kevin Magnussen	27	10	Williams-Mercedes	4

NEXT RACE: AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX, JULY 1

RACING NEWS

Photos: LAT, Paul Lawrence

F1 ROUND-UP

Traffic action

Ross Brawn has promised that F1 will work to address the traffic chaos that afflicted the French GP at Paul Ricard. There had been huge queues both entering and leaving the circuit each day, and many fans lashed out on social media saying they had given up getting to the event, despite having tickets. F1's managing director of motorsport, Brawn, said: "It is physically limited: if you have a race in a beautiful part of the world, you won't have a six-lane motorway servicing it, but it's a question of if it is being managed as well as it could be. I know they [French traffic control] changed what they were doing after the first day. But I can understand the frustration [for the fans]. We'll look to see how we can improve it."

Clash marks

Both Esteban Ocon and Pierre Gasly were reprimanded after their tangle at the start of the French GP. Gasly locked up and hit the rear of Ocon at Turn 3 on the first lap after Ocon closed the door on his countryman. Both drivers were given a formal reprimand and a ticking off by the stewards after both were labelled "overly optimistic".

Saved by VSC

Carlos Sainz Jr reckons the late virtual safety car rescued his points finish after his Renault engine's MGU-K failed late in the race. Sainz was running sixth, but complained of having "no power" over the radio and fell to eighth before the VSC was called for Lance Stroll's damaged Williams. "I owe that [the VSC]... it saved us a points finish," said Sainz afterwards. "I know how hard it is to score points, and we deserved sixth."

Stuck in a spot

Sebastian Vettel said he had "nowhere to go" in his Turn 1 incident with Valtteri Bottas in France. The Ferrari driver nerfed the Mercedes out of second on the first lap, earning a five-second penalty and having to take an extra stop to change his front wing. Vettel said: "It was my mistake, I tried to brake and get out of it, but I had no room and no grip."

Saudi drives

Renault broke new ground before the Paul Ricard race when it invited a Saudi Arabian driver to handle an F1 car for the first time. To mark the country's lifting of its ban on female drivers, Renault invited Aseel Al-Hamad – a member of the Saudi Arabian Motorsport Federation board – to drive Kimi Raikkonen's Abu Dhabi-winning E20 in Renault colours. Al-Hamad became both the first Saudi Arabian female to drive an F1 car, but also the first from the country. Al-Hamad said: "It's a beautiful gesture to support a beautiful day in Saudi."

TOMMY BYRNE TO RETURN TO F1 AT THE BRITISH GRAND PRIX

Irishman to contest Masters Historic F1 events at Silverstone



Byrne made five F1 entries in 1982

By David Addison

Former Formula 1 racer and British F3 champion Tommy Byrne will mark a return to European racing at the British Grand Prix next month.

Byrne, now 60, will race Irishman James Hagan's Hesketh 308/1 in the pair of FIA Masters Historic Formula 1 races that will support the British Grand Prix.

Byrne graduated to Formula 1 in 1982 with Theodore Racing – the same season he won the British F3 title with the team – but he started just two of his five F1 races. He failed to finish in Austria and

Las Vegas (after a spin in each race) and didn't qualify in Austria, Dijon nor Monza.

A McLaren test followed but Byrne's personality jarred with the McLaren team boss Ron Dennis and his F1 dream was over almost as soon as it started.

Now Byrne is making a comeback, although it will not be an easy one. "I haven't even seen the car yet," he confessed. "My friend James Hagan asked me to drive the Hesketh and I was happy to oblige. My last race at Silverstone was in 1984 when I drove the Anson-Alfa Romeo in the European F3 race, which was the penultimate

time I drove in the UK. I raced in the 1986 Birmingham Superprix in an Eddie Jordan Racing March 86B."

Byrne finished 15th in that aborted, weather-affected F3000 race. Now, with a book on his career and a documentary to supplement it, Byrne will make a return to Silverstone, a circuit with happy memories.

"I am really excited," he said. "Silverstone has so many happy memories for me from my Formula Ford 1600 days, slipstreaming with Roberto Moreno, Rick Morris and Jim Walsh, to winning my best race in Formula 3 against Enrique Mansilla and Dave

Scott. It is also where I tested the McLaren. I lived in Milton Keynes for two years and had lots of parties with Eddie Jordan and Murray Taylor and all the guys. They were fun days for sure!"

Byrne will take on a stellar historic grid, marking a return to the British Grand Prix support bill for the first time since 1982 when he won at Brands Hatch.

He will race against F1 ace Adrian Newey (Lotus 49), former McLaren mechanic Warren Briggs (McLaren M29) and historic F1 stars Nick Padmore (Williams FW07C) and Jamie Constable (Tyrrell 011).



Tommy Byrne: a star in the 1980s

Button withdraws from making his historic racing debut at Le Mans Classic with decision 'out of his hands'

Formula 1 champion Jenson Button will no longer make his historic racing debut at next month's Le Mans Classic.

Button was set to race an ex-Tom Walkinshaw Racing

Jaguar XJR-9 Group C car that finished second in the 1988 Spa 1000km World Sportscar round.

It comes after the Williams F1 team announced he would

race its six-wheeled FW08B against motorcycle racer turned TV presenter Guy Martin for a Channel 4 show. The race is scheduled for the British Grand Prix which

falls on the same weekend as the Classic.

Button wrote on Twitter: "Unfortunately I now won't be competing at Le Mans Classic which is a shame but

out of my hands. The good news is I will be at the British GP at Silverstone instead. I've got some great things planned so hopefully see you there!"

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'Subarus were
back at the front'
BTCC report, p20



Photos: LAT



Alonso is pondering
IndyCar move for 2019

McLAREN BATTLES TO KEEP ALONSO

McLaren recognises that it will have to prove that it is making progress with its troubled Formula 1 programme if it is to keep hold of Fernando Alonso next season.

The Spaniard is thought to be close to giving up on F1 to instead focus on IndyCar racing – a move which could be facilitated by McLaren through a partnership with either Andretti Autosport or Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing.

McLaren produced its worst qualifying performance of the year in France, with its cars starting 16th and 18th. Neither scored points in the race.

However, McLaren F1 head Zak Brown said he was still hopeful Alonso would stay with the grand prix team. "He's yet to make a decision," said Brown. "We have a very good relationship with him, but it depends ultimately on what and where we race and how

our F1 car's developing. As long as he feels we can make a step forward I think it's something he'd like to continue to do."

Alonso, who after his Le Mans win only has to beat the Indy 500 to equal Graham Hill's achievement of winning world motorsport's triple crown, said: "Everybody is working flat-out and the results are not showing the feeling we have. We need to change that. I know everything seems very pessimistic but

the reality is that it's not."

McLaren Racing director Eric Boullier also had to face up to stinging reports in the national press about staff unrest at the team. He countered: "Obviously we are 800 people and I think it's a matter of a couple of people who are grumpy, and actually in some ways it might be good for us, because we've had a lot of feedback, and good feedback."

QUICK LAPS THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP

The World Touring Car Cup opener in Vila Real was marred by an enormous opening lap crash involving polesitter Rob Huff and team-mate Mehdi Bennani, which blocked the road. Both were taken to hospital and, although discharged, neither was able to restart. Yvan Muller went on to reclaim the points lead with a race one win, Peugeot driver Mato Homola then took his first series triumph as Thed Bjork dominated the final race... The LMP2 class-winning G-Drive Racing

team will appeal its disqualification from this year's Le Mans 24 Hours. G-Drive dominated the race's secondary class, with the #26 ORECA shared by Roman Rusinov, Jean-Eric Vergne and Andrea Pizzitola storming to victory by a margin of two laps. But it was excluded from the results for the use of an illegal device in the refuelling rigs to speed up pitstops... **Edoardo Mortara converted pole position for the DTM opener into a win, heading Mercedes team-mate Gary Paffett by just 0.6s at the flag. BMW retaliated in race two**

as Marco Wittmann trumped Mortara by 0.45s... Red Bull junior driver Dan Ticktum bounced back from a huge startline incident in the first European Formula 3 race at the Norisring to win in a photo-finish in the second. After stalling on the grid, Ticktum was hit by Ameya Vaidyanathan. Following checks, the Motopark driver was cleared to race and went on to beat Estonian Juri Vips. Vips and Marcus Armstrong won the other two races... **Ferrari Academy driver and Brit Callum Iott scored his first GP3 victory in Sunday's reversed-grid race at**



WTCR crash wreckage

Paul Ricard, leading from the first lap after a brief tussle with Pedro Piquet. Iott's ART team-mate Anthoine Hubert leads the series after inheriting the feature race win, as Dorian Boccia was disqualified for not having enough fuel to sample...



Leclerc (left) is linked with Raikkonen's Ferrari seat

Leclerc linked with Ferrari F1 move

Sauber boss Frederic Vasseur says the mounting speculation that his star driver Charles Leclerc could join Ferrari next year is "a great feeling".

Speculation intensified during the French Grand Prix weekend that Monegasque Leclerc has been lined up to replace Kimi Raikkonen at Ferrari.

Raikkonen has suffered a dip in form this season, and has yet to win a race since rejoining the Scuderia in 2014. In contrast, reigning

Formula 2 champion Leclerc has starred for Swiss team Sauber, getting the team into the final phase of qualifying for the first time since 2015 before racing to 10th.

When asked if the reported interest from Ferrari was an issue, Vasseur said: "It's a problem for the rich at the end of the day. It's better to have this feeling that you could lose something than you would like to have something. "I don't want to think too much about the future."

Red Bull swaps Renault power to Honda for 2019

Red Bull's decision to switch to Honda engines for the next two years was "pretty clear cut" according to team head Christian Horner.

The Milton Keynes team revealed it will end its long-standing relationship with Renault at the end of this year in favour of linking up with Honda.

The move ends an increasingly acrimonious relationship between Red Bull and Renault, which led to the French firm's engines being branded

as TAG-Heuer in recent years.

Horner said: "We've come to the conclusion that Honda are making good strides, good progress on both performance and reliability, and therefore we've made the difficult decision to change power units after 12 seasons [with Renault].

"It's a decision based on purely technically driven reasons. Based on [the back-to-back] data from Montreal, it was pretty clear cut in the end."

Russell wins but more car troubles affect F2 racers

The battle of British Formula 1 juniors intensified in F2 last week, but the series' new car continues to suffer problems.

The car features a tricky clutch, and six drivers stalled across two races including McLaren junior Lando Norris in the feature race, who had his title lead cut as Mercedes-affiliated George Russell (ART Grand Prix) won.

But another issue – a faulty throttle

sensor – hit Russell in race two, allowing Norris to eke out a 13-point lead.

"It's not even a championship, it's who is the luckiest guy having the least amount of problems," said Norris. "It's not a pure drivers' championship, it's not like this guy won because he drove better."

F2 technical boss Didier Perrin said: "We understand it can be a frustration for the drivers and we are on the case."

F1 RACING EDITOR

ANTHONY ROWLINSON

"Tempers and timescales were drawn thin"



"If you do not get off your bike you will go to prison. Jail – you understand? Vous parlez Francais, monsieur?"

Suitably chastened, I unclip from my trusty steed, de-Velcro my cycling shoes and jam on a pair of flip-flops. My chosen form of transport for the French Grand Prix has just been guillotined, so I prepare to walk the final five miles to the entrance of Circuit Paul Ricard, now fearful of missing FP3.

Turns out that 'bringing the bike' to a circuit notorious for soul-grinding traffic delays wasn't such a good idea after all. Not when police ban bikes from the access roads and get heavy at the first hint of transgression. Little matter that those cycling were attempting to make the congestion problem *better*, not worse. No, riding a bike to the French GP was an offence punishable by *imprisonment*, as many others, including luminaries such as Robert Kubica – forcibly barred while attempting entry in full Lycra – would also discover.

Needless to say, this moment was not the highlight of my French GP weekend, but my travails paled when compared to those endured by the masses trapped in traffic queues of 16-kilometre, eight-hour duration.

So to suggest that the race organisers had underestimated the challenge of funnelling thousands of vehicles through the picturesque-but-perilous routes serving this mythical track, would be to declare the Eiffel Tower a handy landmark. This was so much more than that.

Perhaps the promoters, led by former promoter-cyclist-turned-politician Christian Estrosi, had not anticipated the enthusiasm with which the return of Formula 1 racing to France would be greeted, after 10 years away. Though maybe not: the profitability of the event was predicated on strong attendance and most of the 150,000 tickets were sold in advance, so anything other than a bumper weekend crowd would have been a surprise (not to mention a financial sting).

Perhaps they had simply forgotten the sheer difficulty of staging a global sporting spectacle, played out before hordes of impatient media, whose tempers and timescales were drawn thin. [How did Bernie Ecclestone once describe the British GP at Silverstone back in the dark ages? Ah, yes: "A country fair masquerading as a world-class event."] And had they overlooked the small matter of this grand prix being the opener of F1's first-ever triple-header, which fact anyway heaped huge extra pressure on teams' slavishly toiling road crews? Grotesque *embouteillage* at both ends of the day did nothing to lighten their mood.

Maybe, indeed, our hosts simply didn't care that those who had driven, ridden, flown, sailed and schlepped in loyal pursuit of their sporting passion would suffer on their quest? And that, surely, was part of what was afoot at Paul Ricard: when you're drenched in such endless natural beauty, as are those who live and work in this most idyllic region of southern France, it must be hard to give too much of a **** about anything.

Unless of course you have to stop a man on a bike trying to get to a grand prix...



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

RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Ginetta series last went to Thruxton in 2015

BTCC SUPPORTS WELCOME 2019 CALENDAR CHANGES

GT4 Supercup and Carrera Cup could return to Thruxton after years away

By Stephen Lickorish

Both the Porsche Carrera Cup GB and Ginetta GT4 Supercup could make their first visits to Thruxton for several years as the British Touring Car Championship's support series have largely welcomed the changes to the 2019 calendar.

Next year's schedule was released earlier this month and, for the first time since 2006, does not feature Rockingham with there instead being a second visit to Thruxton in August.

This raised a number of questions for the support series as neither Carrera Cup nor GT4 Supercup have visited the Hampshire circuit for the last three

seasons. But both are now open to returning to the venue.

"It's fantastic that Alan [Gow, BTCC series director] and TOCA is able to get the calendar out so early – it really helps with our planning," said Porsche GB motorsport manager James MacNaughton. "We also welcome the fact the calendar has changed a little bit – it makes it more interesting for teams and drivers.

"We will continue to take part in seven of the 10 TOCA weekends but pending calendars and availability for our away race – which has become a regular part of our calendar – we haven't decided which of those we do attend. We are assessing all of our

options and a return to a circuit that we haven't visited for a few years is likely."

Ginetta motorsport manager Ash Gallagher added: "Historically, Supercup hasn't gone for the last couple of years mainly because there is no Friday test for the first visit.

"With there being two now it allows us to go along to one of them. I don't see why we couldn't send Supercup to the second Thruxton [visit] because it fits in. "We don't have the sort of tyre issues that some of the other championships have had there. Supercup had run at Thruxton for the first handful of years and we never had any issues with it."

British Formula 4 has already confirmed that it will continue to

support all 10 rounds of the BTCC.

"We are committed to the British Touring Car Championship and 10 rounds and are quite happy to follow the calendar wherever it may go," said championship promoter Sam Roach.

The uncertainty surrounds the Renault UK Clio Cup, which endured tyre troubles at its Thruxton round earlier this month – with race distances having to be shortened by a quarter.

At the time, championship manager Will Fewkes questioned whether the series would return to the track in 2019 but teams have suggested a possible return to Knockhill instead of visiting Thruxton twice.

Additional reporting by Dan Mason

Sutton and Plato insist Subaru needs to make more progress despite Croft wins

Subaru pair Ash Sutton and Jason Plato say they still need to make progress with their British Touring Car Championship Subaru Levorg machines despite setting the pace at Croft last weekend.

Reigning champion Sutton won his first two races of the season in North Yorkshire while Plato scored his first points of the campaign with a second place in the opening race before a jump-start penalty robbed him of a podium in race two.

Work done to the aerodynamics at the

front of the car, including a new cooling package, was allied to a small increase in boost for last weekend's rounds. That pushed the Subaru's performance forward and led to the results.

Plato said: "It is a big improvement from where we have been, but there is still some way to go. We need to improve our power, because we are a bit behind cars like the BMW. But now, at least, I have a chassis which talks my language. We have had that for a long time, actually,

but we have had engine problems so it has been masked. This is just the first signs of the progress we have made."

Sutton said: "We knew this would be a good track for us, because it is the strongest rear-wheel-drive track on the calendar so I would have been upset if we hadn't made progress. But still, this is a credit to the work Team BMR has done."

Sutton's result has moved him into the top 10 of the points in eighth place, and he is 51 behind table-topper Colin Turkington.



Subarus were back at the front

Edwards back on Clio grid despite major Oulton roll

Renault UK Clio Cup driver Jade Edwards praised the "incredible efforts" from sponsors and supporters which secured sufficient budget for her to race at Croft last weekend.

The 28-year-old's participation in the meeting had been in doubt following her spectacular roll at the previous round at Oulton Park.

Edwards was helped onto the grid in the MRM team's spare car courtesy of a social media campaign run by sponsors Candeo Vision.

"After the crash at Oulton, we had basically no time to repair the car so we just had to make the decision to take the spare car and do as much work as possible to get the funding," Edwards explained.

"Candeo Vision decided to give £1 for every follower they had on social media which raised £2,000 in eight hours. The



Edwards received a lot of support

level of support has been incredible."

Edwards, who finished 16th in the standings last season after missing the final two races following damage, recorded seventh and 11th place finishes.

"I'm really happy with that result in the new car," she added. "To be fighting with James Dorlin was great fun and it showed that the pace in the car was there."

Onslow-Cole to make British GT return in Mercedes

Tom Onslow-Cole will make a return to the British GT Championship in time for the next event at Spa-Francorchamps.

The former British Touring Car star will share a RAM Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 with Dutchman Remon Vos for the two-hour outing at the Belgian track on July 21/22.

The pair regularly share the car in the European Creventic endurance series, and will use the British championship event to gain further mileage.

Onslow-Cole said: "British GT was my first introduction to GT racing back in 2014 and I'm really excited to return."

"Although there are a lot of familiar faces, there are some new ones too and the competition is tougher than ever. Spa is a favourite track of both mine and Remon's

and historically the Mercedes-AMG has always been good there.

"The biggest challenge for us will be the Pirelli tyres, which neither of us have driven on, but we'll have a test day beforehand to get a feel for them."

British GT could boast its largest GT3 grid of the season at Spa, with the RAM entry joining the returning Team ABBA Mercedes-AMG of Adam Christodoulou and Richard Neary. A total of 15 cars are expected in the class, with 36 entries overall across GT3 and GT4.



Onslow-Cole will share with Remon Vos at Spa next month

IN BRIEF

White's landmark

Ginetta regular Colin White ticked over 150 starts on the TOCA package at Croft last weekend. The 61-year-old – who raced in the original G50 championship back in 2009 – reached the magic number in the first of the three races in North Yorkshire. An Am class victory looked possible in the second race, until contact from Jason Minshaw put him into a half-spin. White has claimed three Am class victories in 2018, and is five points behind leader Michael Crees.

Jenvey's woe

OSS champion Mike Jenvey's wretched season continued at Rockingham when a heavy crash in race one ruled him out of the rest of the weekend. Jenvey had retired from four of six races at Silverstone and Snetterton, ending with an engine blow-up in Norfolk. He was delighted with a clean run in qualifying at Rockingham, lapping within 0.1s of pacesetter Josh Smith. But after leading from the start, suspected rear-brake failure pitched Jenvey's car into the gravel at Tarzan where he hit the tyre barriers head on. He was able to jump out unaided and uninjured.

Champion returns

Fiesta champion Jamie White returned to the series last weekend having skipped the previous round at Cadwell Park over concerns for the suitability of the championship's new tyres at the Lincolnshire venue. White was immediately back on the pace at the track where he finished on his roof last season, taking pole position and a trio of wins within the Zetec S class. Points leader Zachary Lucas was absent on holiday.

Roads' doubts

2CV racer Nick Roads had been dubious about racing at Oulton Park last weekend. "The last time I was here was three years ago and I managed to write the car off," he explained. He need not have worried, however, as he finished third on the road in the opening contest, and was promoted to second after post-race penalties were applied.

Donegan takes podium

Last year's Mazda Road To Indy Shootout winner Keith Donegan took his first podium finish in the USF2000 series at Road America last weekend, after swapping teams from ArmsUp Motorsport to BN Racing. The Irishman competed in the British Racing and Sports Car Club's National Formula Ford 1600 Championship last season, finishing runner-up in the Brands Hatch Festival.

Tickets on sale for new-look Autosport International

Tickets for Autosport International 2019 are now on sale with the event due to take place on January 10-13 at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre.

It will include an all-new layout in a new location within the NEC to offer greater access to all three elements of the show – Engineering, Performance and Tuning Car Show and Autosport International.

The 2018 show included Ferrari as the main headline feature alongside the launch of the World Rally Championship.

Autosport International show director, Kate Woodley, said: "We are very excited to announce a new look to Autosport International in our 29th year of running the world's biggest pre-season motorsport exhibition. This move within the Piazza layout at Birmingham's NEC will create the perfect hub to access all elements of our trade, engineering, motorsport and automotive show.

"After the success of our 2018 show, we have listened to visitors who have wanted more space, better transport links and a new look to the features and the show halls."

For tickets, head to the website at autosportinternational.com.

RACING NEWS

JACKSON MAKES RACE RETURN

Former British Touring Car Championship racer Mat Jackson had his first race of the season when he shared Stewart Lines' SEAT Cupra TCR at the Oulton Park Britcar Endurance Championship round last weekend.

Lines had been sharing the car with Ciceley Mercedes A-Class BTCC racer Adam Morgan, but the clashing Croft rounds last weekend allowed Jackson to step in.

It was Jackson's first outing since he was split with the Motorbase Performance BTCC team on the eve of the season opener, but he has not got any other races planned.

"I had tested the car the day before the race for the first time, I am just helping Stewart out at the moment, it's good fun, but I have no future plans," Jackson said.

"The TCR is more driver friendly than the BTCC cars and I think they are a good platform for endurance racing and definitely something for the future."



Jackson shared Lines' TCR SEAT

Jackson did the first stint in the race and was leading, but after 75 minutes he pitted and the team was disqualified for exceeding the maximum stint time for a single driver.

"I didn't feel rusty or anything, it was just like riding a bike but just nice to be back out again," Jackson added. "It was my first time in Britcar since I raced a Ford Focus in 2004/5."



Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Mick Walker, Steve Jones



Dawson was away for six years

Dawson returns to racing after coma

Former karter Jake Dawson completed a comeback from serious injury by making his car racing debut in the British Racing & Sports Car Club's Fiesta Championship last weekend at the wheel of a Class C Fiesta ST.

Dawson was involved in a horrific accident at the Sherington kart circuit in 2012, which left him in a coma for nearly a month.

"They were going to turn my life support off [but] they left it another night and I was just getting enough oxygen to breathe," said Dawson, who was told he would remain in a wheelchair all his life.

Against the odds, and although unable to hold a driving licence for two years, Dawson returned to his first love of motocross while continuing his recovery. A chance encounter with a Legends racer when returning from holiday in the winter convinced him to try circuit racing. Having acquired a Fiesta, the 26-year-old stripped and rebuilt it himself.

With a base set-up that gave him understeer, Dawson qualified 10th and finished eighth in class, but overnight tweaks allowed him to climb to sixth, setting the fifth fastest lap, before retiring with brake pipe failure in race two.



Classic machinery will race alongside the GT3 and GT4 runners

Equipe GTS series joins British GT at Brands Hatch GP

The popular Equipe GTS series will appear on the British GT Championship support bill for the first time later this year after another fixture has been added to the calendar.

A 30-minute race for Equipe GTS and its sister Pre '63 series will take place at the Brands Hatch British GT round on August 4/5, giving drivers a chance to compete on the rarely used Grand Prix circuit.

Entries are already

beginning to fill up, despite the event falling just a week after the series heads to Zandvoort.

"This is a big thing for us in a variety of ways," said series co-organiser John Pearson. "The GP circuit at Brands Hatch is the holy grail of tracks for everybody because so few meetings are able to use it. All of our drivers are keen to race on it."

"This is a bunch of historic racing cars at a British GT meeting and

that's something quite new. The people who go to British GT are car racing fans and we put out big grids that are really competitive and great fun to watch.

"We've had a good response and are looking forward to it."

The next Equipe Racing event is the three-hour relay contest at Donington Park next month in which around 30 teams are expected to compete.



King won, but lost the result after King dethroned after twin penalties at Croft

Ginetta GT4 Supercup rookie Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke felt justice was done after Harry King was penalised twice for incidents with the Century Motorsport man at Croft.

The ex-Monoposto racer was running third in the opening race before contact with King at the chicane left him in a spin, King picking up a six-place grid penalty for his part.

The pair collided again in the early laps of the third race - which King went on to win - at Barcroft corner, King was later excluded from the results while Gordon-Colebrooke retired.

Elite Motorsport appealed but the decision was upheld, Gordon-Colebrooke said "a bit of justice had been done", but that a podium finish was possible otherwise.

"It doesn't give me the result back," he said. "We had two new tyres so could have easily matched King's pace."

King later described the pair's race three collision as a "racing incident", as he was caught out by the extra grip of fresh rubber compared to his rivals after a tyre failure in the second race.

"It's a hard situation on the opening lap with better tyres," he said. "It gave me a lot of speed through Barcroft and we all concertinaed. Personally, I believe it was a racing incident."

Newey joins Masters Endurance at Paul Ricard

Formula 1 designer Adrian Newey had a weekend to forget in the Masters Endurance Legends races at Paul Ricard after colliding with the race leader while being lapped.

Newey was taking part in the races - which were supporting the French Grand Prix - aboard a Ferrari 430 GTC that he shared at Le Mans in 2007 with Ben Aucott and Joe Macari, going on to finish fifth in the LMGT2 class.

The 59-year-old collided with Kriton Lendoudis' Peugeot 908X on the penultimate lap at the right-hander of Sainte-

Baume in race two, sending both cars spinning into the run-off.

He would go on to be classified 17th, to add to his 14th place finish from race one.

Alex Kapadia took both wins aboard an ORECA Nissan 03, while the GT classification was won by Xavier Tancogne in a Panoz GTR1 both times.

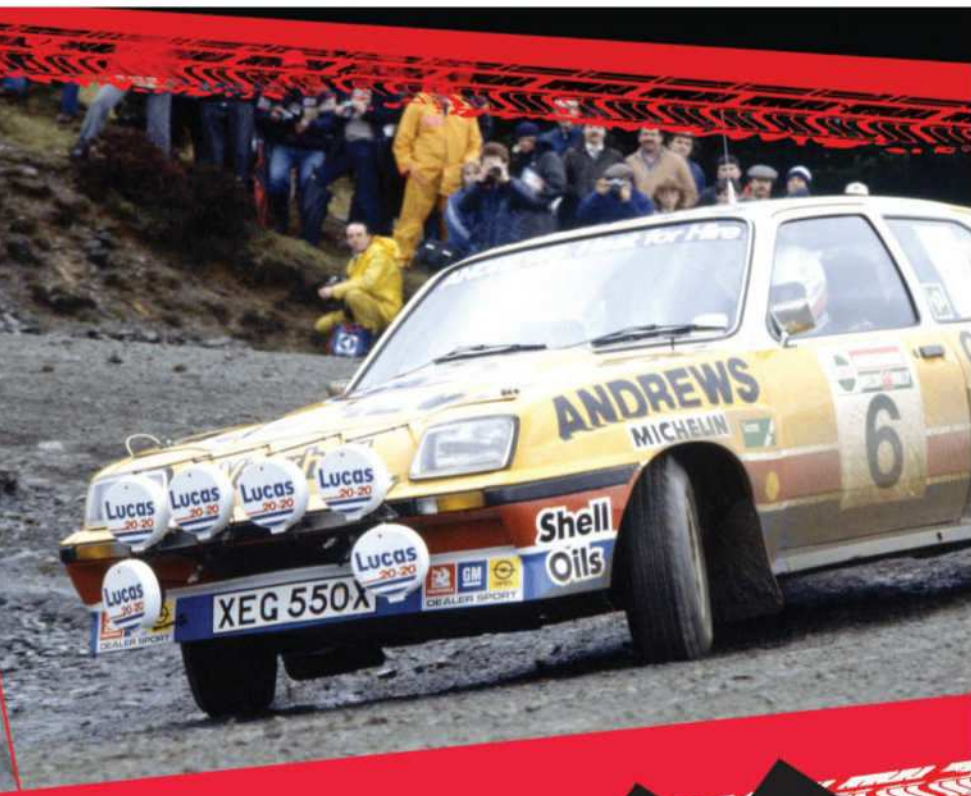
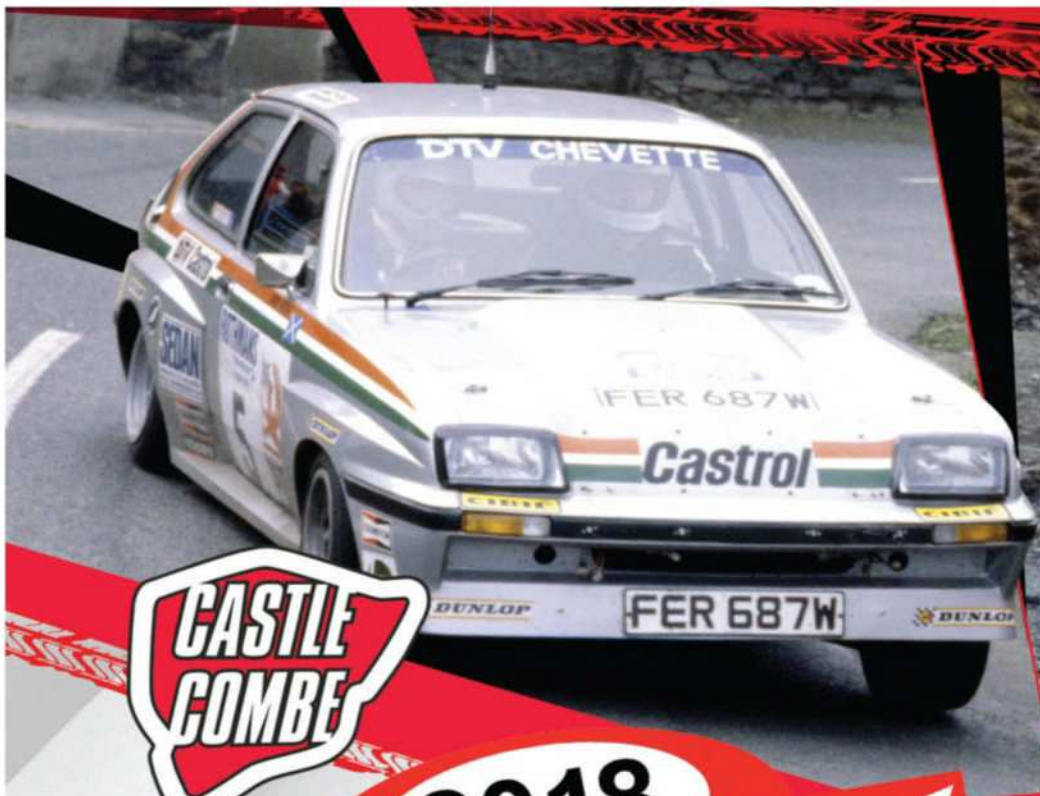
The Masters Endurance Legends series is new for 2018 and features cars eligible to compete in the Le Mans 24 Hours or any of its feeder series from 1995-2012, including the IMSA SportsCar Championship and the World Endurance Championship.



Newey had a tough weekend



Red Bull F1 man Newey handled the Ferrari 430 GTC that he raced at Le Mans



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HISTORICS

'David and Jo Roberts prevail'
Triumph duo's glory, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence

DOWN THE PUB WITH

KEN GRAHAM

Age: 59 Lives: Omagh
Rallying an Avenger

He started rallying over 30 years ago

"A friend of mine called Robbie McGurk and I started out with an Avenger and we owned the car between us. I started rallying in the early 1980s and rallied continuously in Northern Ireland until about 1993, always on gravel. I did do the Circuit of Ireland a couple of times and finished 11th in a Peugeot 205."

He had to stop

"Then I got a Sunbeam of my own but I stopped completely in 1993 and have done very little since. It was just the money was getting out of hand. I built a brand new Ford Escort Mk2 BDG but within two rallies I realised I couldn't afford it."

He got the Avenger

"I got good money for the Escort and bought this wee Avenger from Barry Jordan. I walked into his workshop, saw the car and said, 'I'm taking that home'. You have to go with what you can run. By selling the Escort, I got the car, a van and a trailer and still had money to run it. The first event with the Avenger was the Isle of Man last September and the car ran faultlessly. I'd not done anything really for 25 years."

The Isle of Man went well

"I loved it! I was a bit iffy about the asphalt but I really loved it. Paul McCann, who sits with Ryan Barrett: his son Rory is sitting with me, so there is a big connection with Ryan and Paul Barrett, who I know well."

The BHRC is this year's focus

"We went to North Wales in March and had a bit of a disaster when the coil packed up. We had a good run on the Pirelli but had brake problems on Carlisle and had a great battle on the Red Kite last weekend. We're taking it one event at a time but hopefully we'll do the Isle of Man again. I could do with another 100bhp but with that comes more expense and you need more tyres. I did the whole Pirelli on four tyres and there was still life in them."

He's hooked again

"I'm really enjoying being back, although I'm not as sharp as I was 30 years ago! I run alongside Paul and Ryan and we only live a few miles from each other. Over the last six or seven years I was always servicing for Paul and Ryan and it was tough when I wasn't competing. It is a disease that never leaves you."



Graham: Avenger battler

FOULSTON'S McLAREN TO COMPETE AGAIN

Rumbling M8F has a new owner and will hit the tracks



The mighty McLaren will make race return

By Paul Lawrence

Jamie Thwaites, the new owner of the ex-John Foulston McLaren M8F, says that owning the mighty Can-Am car is the realisation of a childhood dream.

Thwaites is the son of successful 1960 and 1970s sportscar racer Richard and remembers the eight-litre monster vividly from his

formative years. Now, he has bought the car from the JCB operation and plans to race it once he has upgraded his racing licence.

"My dad used to race against that car in historics in the 1980s and I've been in love with it since I was a kid," said Thwaites. "I spent my early life following my dad around racing."

Though he did some racing in

his youth, Thwaites has not raced for two decades. "I've spent 20 years earning money to go racing and that's the car I always wanted."

Thwaites will now do some other races to get licence signatures before he is able to race the McLaren. He has entrusted the car's preparation to Dean Forward and it was Forward who was intended to race it in the Pre '80 Endurance

races at Silverstone earlier this month. However, after he put the car on pole, it was sidelined by oil issues and did not race.

In the mid-1980s, Foulston raced the McLaren in the Historic GT Championship sponsored by his own Atlantic Computers firm. He clinched the 1987 title in the McLaren at Snetterton, two days before he died while testing a McLaren Indycar at Silverstone.

Chamberlain wins the first Ralli22 hillclimb showdown at Prescott

Stephen Chamberlain's ex-Freddy Loix Hyundai Accent WRC won the first event in the new Ralli22 series at the Prescott hillclimb on Saturday.

Ralli22 is a new competitive series for Group B, Group A and

WRC rally cars from 1982 to 2004 and the Prescott event was the first of three this summer.

Chamberlain grabbed victory on his second timed run to pare a second from his earlier time and set the mark at 50.06s, just clear of

Jason Lepley (Escort Mk2) and Tony Shields (Opel Astra).

Chamberlain has recently restored the Accent, which Loix took to sixth in the 2002 New Zealand Rally. It was later used in the UK by Stephen Simpson.



Chamberlain: uphill fast



The stunning Lancia Stratos of Steve Perez was seriously damaged by a fire during the Ypres Historic Rally in Belgium on Saturday. Perez suffered some burns and was taken to hospital, while co-driver Paul Spooner remained uninjured. It started when the car arrived at the designated refuel zone. Refuelling had not started but it still escaped from a filler cap and sprayed over the engine and cockpit area. MN wishes Perez a swift recovery from what was a nasty incident.



BTRDA runner Calvin Green wants to take a different route
Green maps out his future in historic cars

BTRDA ST Trophy rally winner Calvin Green will switch to the British Historic Rally Championship for 2019 in a Zakhm Engineering Ford Escort Mk2.

Green won his class on the Plains Rally in his first year in the ST. He will drive a Pinto-engined car next year, and believes the BHRC is the

place to promote his name.

"I looked at it and a lot of people my age, they move through the ranks and go from BTRDA to BRC," said Green. "I want to take a different route. I think that will give me a better chance to get my name out there rather than driving an R2 in the BRC."

IN BRIEF

Silverstone's show

At least 15 cars spanning 70 years of the British Grand Prix will take part in demonstration sessions at Silverstone during the 2018 race weekend (July 6-8). On-track will be cars ranging from an ERA dating back to the first British Grand Prix in 1948 through to the 2016-winning Mercedes W07 of Lewis Hamilton.

Brexit man's outing

The entry for Sunday's Formula Junior race at the Legends of Brands Hatch Super Prix includes the European Union's Brexit co-ordinator Guy Verhofstadt who is due to race a front-engined Elva 100 from 1959. Verhofstadt, 64, previously raced an Aston Martin at the Silverstone Classic and raced the Elva at Zolder at the end of May.

Atlantics on show

At least seven Formula Atlantic single-seaters will race at Brands Hatch this weekend in the Historic Sports Car Club's first step to promote a revival of the 1970s category. Notable cars are the March 79B of series promoter Iain Rowley, the similar car of David Mercer and the Chevron B49 of Keith Norris. The Atlantics will share the Derek Bell Trophy grid for a double-header.

Couple win in the US

A 1968 Triumph TR250 driven by long-time endurance rally campaigners David and Jo Roberts has won the Endurance Rally Association's Trans-America Challenge. The event ran from Charleston, North Carolina, to the finish in Seattle, Washington over 22 days, covering nearly 6000 miles. It was a first such victory for the husband-and-wife team from Yorkshire.

Magson's Merc

Seasoned rally driver Steve Magson contested his first hillclimb for 36 years when he ran his ex-Danny Snobcock Mercedes 190 in Ralli22 at Prescott on Saturday. "We're just out for a bit of fun," said the Yorkshireman who will now take the car to the rally stage at the Goodwood Festival of Speed.

De Cadenet tests

Xtech Engineering's Paul Knapton gave the ex-Alain de Cadenet/Chris Craft Lola-based De Cadenet its pre-Le Mans Classic test at Donington Park. Owner Henrik Lindberg has contested the last six Le Mans Classics with the DFV-powered car, which finished third overall at Le Mans in 1976. "Henrik went to Goodwood with it in 2016, but only uses it at Le Mans now," said Knapton.

Stones for Moroney

Niall Moroney missed out on a chance to win the first Ralli22 hillclimb at Prescott on Saturday after planting his ex-Prodrive Subaru Impreza WRC in the gravel on his first runs. Moroney had set the pace in practice, over two seconds clear of his rivals.



A slip up for Niall Moroney

RALLY NEWS

Photos: Volkswagen Motorsport

GOODWOOD IS THE NEXT TARGET FOR VW

VW's I.D. R. set for an outing in West Sussex



The Volkswagen I.D. R has helped "make electric cars sexy"



New machine smashed the Pikes Peak record

By David Evans

After smashing Sebastien Loeb's Pikes Peak record, Volkswagen and Romain Dumas will turn their attentions to next month's Goodwood Festival of Speed and a potential shot at a second successive hill record.

Driving the German manufacturer's all-electric I.D. R at Pikes Peak, Dumas stunned world motorsport to deliver a maiden high-profile victory for an electric car in open-class competition. The 40-year-old Frenchman cleared the 156 corners and 12.42 miles in 7m57.148s, significantly under Loeb's 2013 effort of 8m13.878s – a time he set in a 3.2-litre twin-turbo Peugeot 208 T16.

The West Sussex event will form part of car and driver's celebratory tour, but Volkswagen Motorsport technical director Francois-Xavier Demaison admitted the firm would be interested in lifting a second record in Britain.

"I have to do some simulation for Goodwood," he told *MN*. "I think the electric vehicle record, we can go for this. But what is the record? It's Nick Heidfeld in a McLaren [MP4/13, who completed the 1.16-mile hill in 41.6s], so he had 800bhp and half of our weight. It could be difficult, but let's see."

Ahead of last week's Colorado event,

Volkswagen officials had refused to talk about the potential for beating Loeb's record. Instead their focus was on Rhys Millen's 9m07.222s EV record set three years ago. Team principal Sven Smeets admitted there was a change of focus after the first qualifying run on Wednesday.

"It wasn't a straightforward week for us," he said. "When we did qualifying on Wednesday we got hold of some things which we were struggling with – this was the day when things started to really work for us."

Those issues related to battery efficiency and getting the I.D. R to deal with the bumps in the final third of the course. The team decamped to Pikes Peak Speedway in nearby Colorado Springs to solve the problems.

"A racetrack is not the same," said Smeets. "We knew we had a good car, we knew we had a fast car. But we didn't know how good or how fast. This was a shot in the dark that all came together and I am very, very happy for that. The guys out here worked so hard, I'm really proud of them and everybody back in the factory. We walked out of the WRC at the end of 2016 and nobody in the team knew about electric and now look what we achieved – and we achieved this in nine months. Nobody ever did this in the world before."



Dumas took 16 seconds off record

"I also have to apologise to everybody in Hannover working on our other projects – they suffered for this. When people were coming to ask for something for the R5 car, the answer for the last two months has been: 'No! We concentrate to Pikes Peak!'"

Will VW come back?

Despite shattering what many saw as Loeb's unbeatable record, Demaison is confident there's more speed to come from the I.D. R if it returns to Pikes Peak.

Demaison said: "I hope somebody will come and say they want to beat Volkswagen because then we have to come back. It's possible to go quicker, but we need time and we have to reduce the weight. Now I can tell you, we were not at 1100 kilos – our weight was in three figures, but it wasn't as light as the Peugeot. I think we can go five per cent lighter again if we made a bespoke monocoque; this way we could improve the cooling for the battery as well. This would give us more speed."

Smeets said he would know more about the team's future direction in the next two months, with widespread speculation of a commitment to electric rallycross. The FIA needs a decision on its new eWRX concept by the end of next month. Going back to a season-long programme would complicate a return to Pikes Peak.

"This time has put a target on us and set a challenge down," said Smeets. "I wouldn't be surprised to hear somebody say in three months: 'Hey, we want to break that!'"

"But you know we look into electric rallycross and that could take our focus for the next 18 months. We could come back here next year with some improvements to this car, but we have

the record now. Let's see. We will talk about this one in the coming weeks."

Good news for rallying

Smeets admitted the recent developments in battery technology would strengthen the case for electric rally cars in coming years.

"What we did here was make electric cars sexy," Smeets said. "But at the same time we showed what's possible. What we have done proves this new technology has unbelievable potential. This is just the start. It will go further and further in the next five years and I'm sure battery manufacturers can add kilometres on top of the speed; I'm sure it will be possible to do a 40 or 50-kilometre stage in electric in some years."

Testament to the unrelenting progress is a change of specification of battery for the I.D. R back at the start of the year.

"When we started the project there was a prototype battery from the supplier," said Demaison. "We had this in January and then ran two battery development programmes in parallel. In the end we went with the new one, which gave an improvement in energy density – it gave us the same energy for less weight."

▶ HOW ELECTRICITY TRUMPED TURBOS AT PIKES PEAK

▶▶▶ PAGE 15



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"The only restrictions are your budget and your time"
Why VW targeted Pikes Peak glory, p15



NEUVILLE DOMINATES YPRES TO GIVE HYUNDAI R5 A BIG VICTORY



Neuville won in Ypres

World Rally Championship leader Thierry Neuville completed a hat-trick of international wins with victory on an event he'd been desperate to win for coming of his career – last weekend's Ypres Rally.

Neuville is on a hot streak right now, with his overdue Ypres Rally win coming on the back of WRC success in Portugal and that stunning final-stage victory over Sebastien Ogier in Sardinia earlier this month.

The Hyundai star swapped his

table-topping i20 Coupe WRC for a customer-specification R5 for his sixth start on the Ypres Rally. Fastest on 15 of the 23 stages, Neuville led the event from the second stage until the finish.

He said: "To win in Belgium after a performance like this is really good for me and shows how good the Hyundai i20 R5 is. When we started, I didn't have much mileage with it so I had to learn the chassis a little, but then we could make changes in service to the suspension and

handling to constantly improve the car as I got more confident throughout the weekend.

"This is one I always wanted to win and to do well on – in Belgium, it's our biggest [rally]. But before there was always something, some problem or a crash or something."

Neuville's Ypres win delivers the i20 R5's biggest result to date as well. Hyundai Motorsport's Andrea Adamo said: "Ypres is always an important event in the rallying calendar in Europe, and

this year was no exception.

There were top crews representing all the R5 manufacturers, so the level of competition was incredibly high. To win in such dominant fashion is obviously a great advert for the Hyundai i20 R5 on one of the most difficult rallies of the year."

Neuville now gets a break from competition until Rally Finland next month, where he will look to eclipse the lowly sixth place he managed last season.



Group B monsters will run in the town

Rally GB set to feature legendary cars in Llandudno

The World Rally Championship will take over the North Welsh town of Llandudno when Rally GB arrives on Sunday October 7.

As well as two stages of Britain's WRC round running through the streets of the seaside resort, the organisers will provide a moving display of more than 80 cars with historic significance to the sport. Some of the world's

finest examples of Group A, B and 4 machinery will drive the Great Orme Llandudno test through the day.

While the cars will only be driven on the final day, a Rally Legends display will be there over the weekend.

"This is a milestone weekend in British motorsport," said event director Ben Taylor. "This is the first time world championship action

comes to closed roads and the presence of these wonderful cars from yesteryear will be an integral part of an exciting rally festival in Llandudno."

As well as two stages which come off the Great Orme and into the town at competitive speed, the official podium and finish ramp will be on the seafront later in the afternoon.

Barcelona back on Rally Spain route

The city of Barcelona will make a competitive return to the World Rally Championship when Rally Spain kicks off with a street stage through the Catalan capital in October.

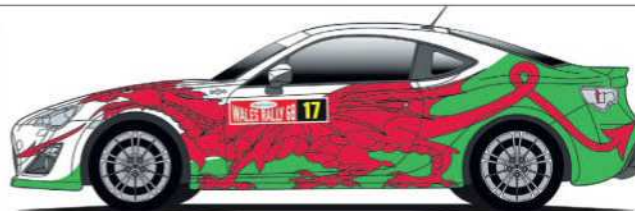
Missing from the itinerary for the Salou-based event last season, the crowd-pleasing run through the Montjuic area of the city will be identical in set-up to 2016.

The only other changes to the route for Rally Spain come on the first full day of gravel competition, with the challenging Terra Alta test being turned around,

renamed and changed towards the finish. Known as La Fatarella-Vilalba, the new test is the first 14 miles of Terra Alta in reverse, with the last seven miles completely new.

The predominantly gravel stage will still include the characteristic surface changes using asphalt link roads.

Rally Spain runs later in October this season, having switched its calendar position with Rally GB. The Tarragona event is now the final European action of the WRC season.



School children will get the chance to design the GT86 livery

Rally GB livery competition launched

School children from up and down Britain are being encouraged to design a livery for a Toyota GT86 rally car – with the winning design to be used on a car and the artist invited to meet Toyota Gazoo Racing stars at Rally GB in October.

Running for the second year, the competition is divided into four age-related sections with all

four winners being invited to the Rally Village in Deeside to pick up their prizes. The outright winner will see their design unveiled on a car, they will also receive a scale model and signed picture of their colour scheme.

Students wishing to enter can download an entry form as well as design templates from walesrallygb.com.

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"I'd have told them to shove it, and stay on gravel"



Devil's Playground takes your breath away. Sitting at 12,780ft that's a literal as well as metaphorical thing. Arriving two-thirds of the way up Pikes Peak for Friday's final practice meant an alarm call at 0200hrs. It was more than worth it.

Having caught my breath, I walked down to a hairpin right and stood there. Couldn't leave. Volkswagen's R brand director Jost Capito – a man who has travelled the world and seen pretty much all the amazings it has to offer – stood beside me. Equally transfixed. With the temperature hovering around zero, the sun was readying itself for another day by casting an exquisite orange glow over the clouds filling the thousands of feet beneath us.

No words were needed. Forget goosebumps, this was almost spiritual.

Shattering a silence only previously punctuated by the opening and closing of shutters, were five of world rallying's most recognisable cylinders. An Audi quattro, an E2 no less, was on its way. Still only about five hours old, it was hard for Friday to get any better. But it did.

My first experience of Pikes Peak International Hillclimb was the trip that just kept on giving.

But beyond the views, vistas and memories, it was the pure passion of the people behind the event that left me lost for words. All organisers love their event, but the folk of the PPIHC take that to another level.

That might be because they've come so close to losing something with a 102-year history – and in America, that's a lot of history worth looking after.

In February 1999, the city of Colorado Springs settled out of court with an environmental group which presented evidence that the gravel and dust from the Pikes Peak Highway was a major cause of pollution in the surrounding waterways. The city agreed to Tarmac the road. With the cost set at US\$1m (£755,000) per mile, it would take 10 years to make it all-asphalt. It brought the event to its knees.

All-American hero Bobby Unser offered some forthright advice for the organisers: "I would have told them [the environmental group] to shove it. Shove it where the sun don't shine and keep on running that race on the gravel."

Despite coming close to bankruptcy, this all-American institution came out of the dark and now lives in the most beautiful light.

One more Unser story, from a dynasty synonymous with Pikes Peak; Bobby's unique look at life and the mountain was revealed in a recent film of the event. The last of Bobby Sr's 10 wins came in 1986, 12 years after his start. The reason? Michele Mouton's victory 12 months earlier in an Audi quattro.

"Bobby Junior called me," said Unser. "He said: 'Daddy, you need to get up here, they got that Audi car and it's cracking records every time it runs.' I said: 'Yeah, who's driving it?' He said: 'They gotta girl driving it. Her name is Michele Mouton.' I said: 'A girl driving... that's enough to light me up, a girl taking my record!'"

Unser returned with a quattro of his own and beat Mouton by 16 seconds.

On Sunday, a new page of Pikes Peak history was written in German by a Frenchman and witnessed by an Englishman who will forever have a place in his heart for America's mountain.



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

RALLY NEWS

Photos: Chicane Media, Martin Walsh

JIM CLARK RALLY WON'T BE ON BRC CALENDAR IN 2019

Scottish event could return next year but won't form part of the BRC's schedule



Closed roads law change could pave event's return

By Jack Benyon

The Jim Clark Rally will not feature on the British Rally Championship calendar in 2019 if the event returns next year.

The rally had been included on a draft calendar for the championship in 2016. But it has not been able to run while a fatal accident inquiry into deaths on the 2014 event was concluded.

"We might have a look at it, but we won't be including it in the schedule," said BRC championship manager Iain Campbell.

"They haven't asked, although the organisers did a few years ago. We'd like to observe and see how it goes in 2019 with a view to looking at it for future calendars."

Transport Scotland is hosting a meeting this week with other government departments and interested parties to

discuss the next steps in processing the proposed closed road legislation through the Scottish Parliament, which would allow the Jim Clark Rally to run.

An insurance issue in the current Scottish legislation is preventing the Jim Clark and Mull rallies from running, whereas new laws – following England and Wales in granting the right to suspend the road traffic act to the Motor Sports Association and the local government authority rather than through an Act of Parliament – would fix it.

The hopeful outcome of the meeting is to draw up an anticipated timescale which will include a 12 week public consultation. If all goes to plan and there are no objections, the legislation could be passed by November of this year.

Additional reporting by John Fife

Greystoke Rally won't allow spectators

The Greystoke Stages Rally will be a non-spectator event this year as heavy felling continues in the forests the event will be using.

The rally – won last year by Greg McKnight and Heather Grisedale – is a popular one in the Cumbria region, using stages which help craft the latest World Rally Cars to run in the WRC by the M-Sport World Rally Team.

It is popular as it is one of the only gravel events in the country to feature zero road mileage for competitors as the service park is

maintained within the forest complex, and the 55 entries the event accepts are coveted.

Due to ongoing work, this year spectators are not welcome.

A statement from the organisers read: "It is with great regret that we must announce that this year's Greystoke Stages Rally is to be non-spectator. The extensive forestry work that commenced earlier in the year still continues and the forest operators have therefore required us to not permit public entry to the rally."

Bilham given prize drive for Nicky Grist

Reigning ST Trophy champion Sam Bilham has been given a prize drive in Peter Smith's Ford Fiesta R2 for the Nicky Grist Stages.

Smith has given a number of drivers of all ages chance to prove their ability in his R2 this year, and Bilham is the next to benefit. It will be his second outing of the year.

"It appeared out of the blue, I

wasn't expecting it and I don't think you can get much more generous than letting someone use your car for an event," said Bilham.

"It will be interesting to see how we do against the others. I want to finish, which is the main thing.

"We don't want to trail around at the back, but we don't want to push too hard and go too far the other way."

Cronin claims a strong victory

Raven's Rock Rally

By Martin Walsh

Organiser: Carrick on Suir Motor Club. **When:** June 24. **Where:** Waterford, County Waterford. **Championships:** Suirway Group South East Rally Championship & PlasticBags.ie Southern 4 Rally Championship. **Stages:** 9. **Starters:** 75.

Never troubled, Ballylickey's Daniel Cronin (Ford Fiesta R5) took a strong victory in the Raven's Rock Rally in Waterford. He dominated the opening loop. When local driver Andrew Purcell's second-placed Fiesta R5, stopped with a broken driveshaft on SS5, it made things even easier for Cronin.

He eased back on the final stage to win by 1m11.1s.

A late push from an off-form Enda O'Brien (Ford Escort) secured third spot from the Fiesta R5+ of Martyn England, who secured one of his better Irish results.

Although Tomas Davies (Escort) and Sacha Kakad



Cronin finished over a minute clear of the rest of the field

(Fiesta R5) impressed, the latter on his first Tarmac outing in an R5, both withdrew after the opening loop with clutch and gearbox failure respectively.

Mark Straker (Darrin) was another opening-loop casualty. Welsh ace Wayne Evans (Escort) won the two-wheel-drive award.

Results

1 Daniel Cronin/Shane Buckley (Ford Fiesta R5) 1h02m53.4s; 2 John Dalton/Gwynfor Jones (Darrin T90 GT) +1m11.1s; 3 Enda O'Brien/John Butler (Ford Escort Mk2); 4 Martyn England/Dawn England (Ford Fiesta R5+); 5 Wayne Evans/John Smithwick (Escort Mk2);

6 James Bradley/Maria Kehoe (Honda Civic); 7 Adrian Evans/Martin Hendry (Escort Mk2); 8 Simon Reid/Billy Ryan (Ford Escort); 9 Eddie Doherty/Kieran Rafter (Escort Mk2); 10 Jason O'Mahony/Jonathon O'Mahony (Escort Mk2).

Class winners: Barry Hennessy/Stephen Scallan (Civic); Kevin Dolphin/Martin O'Brien (Renault Clio ST1600); John Bagge/Ron Mackey (Peugeot 306); Eoin Neville/Tommy Hayes (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); Ger Power/Liam Fitzgerald (Vauxhall Nova); Pierce J Doherty/Elish Dunne (Opel Corsa); James Bradley/Maria Kehoe (Civic); Doherty/Rafter; Niall Fitzpatrick/Johnny Murphy (Escort); Simon Reid/Billy Ryan (Escort); Wayne Evans/John Smithwick (Escort); Anthony Breen/Jill White (Subaru); England/England; Andrew Blackburn/Laura Mulrooney (Subaru Impreza); Ian Davies/James Ryland (BMW M3); Michael Cumiffe/Barry Tait (Peugeot 206).

ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

The **PK Memorial Rally** was won for the second time in three years by Dale Furniss/Nick Bloxham. They emerged from a number of possible winners to finish with a victory margin of 43 seconds.

Positions at the petrol halt were tight as the leading crews had only dropped time at one control up to the break. At that point, George Williams/Daniel Stone led by one second from the eventual winners, with Andy Davies/Michael Gilbey three seconds further back.

After the restart Williams/Stone lost time, firstly with two overshoots and then with a likely solenoid problem which caused the car to cut out. They survived to take the runner-up spot. Welsh Championship leaders Davies/Gilbey had their challenge blunted when they lost over 30 seconds after they met a non-competing car on a tight section. They finished in third place.

Top seeds Mark 'GT' Roberts/Dylan Jenkins had a bad start to the night, losing time as their car cut out on the opening section. They recovered to take eighth at the finish.

Having won the rally, Furniss then rushed off to co-drive Osian Pryce to victory on the Red Kite Stages.

Ian Mills

Results

PK Memorial Rally

Organiser: Bala & District Motor Club **When:** June 23/24 **Where:** North Wales Championships: WAMC & ANWCC **Route:** 102 miles **Starters:** 70.

1 Dale Furniss/Nick Bloxham (VW Golf GTI) 43s; 2 George Williams/Daniel Stone (Ford Escort) +23s; 3 Andy Davies/Michael Gilbey (Subaru Impreza); 4 Carwyn Evans/Dylan John Williams (Escort); 5 Paul Morgan/Jamie Mills (Honda Civic); 6 Jon Bossen/Rob Bryn Jones (Escort); 7 Kevin Kerr/Huw Rhys Manion (Escort); 8 Mark 'GT' Roberts/Dylan Jenkins (Golf); 9 Deion Atkinson/Aron Jones (BMW 318Ti); 10 Robi Wood/Osian Davies (Escort). **Class winners:** Morgan/Mills; Craig Bowler/Chris Whittall (Civic); Bryn Jones/Cerys Elen Davies (Peugeot 206).

Junior rallying in Ireland set for a reshuffle as governing body plans changes to reduce costs

Motorsport Ireland bosses have released draft regulations covering Junior rallying in Ireland for 2019 and beyond with cost-cutting a priority.

The big changes centre on engine and transmission specifications – usually the two most expensive aspects of any new build.

For engines, only the standard inlet, throttle body and exhaust manifold can be used. Internals are free, as well as ECUs, though the intake and exhaust restrictions should help to quell the runaway power outputs seen in the Honda Civics that currently rule the class.

While gear ratios, final drives and

differentials are still free, sequential gearboxes are banned. Carbonfibre and Kevlar bodywork is also forbidden.

Suspension mounting points must remain as per original specifications, but three-way adjustable shock absorbers and quicker steering racks are allowed. A limited amount of

other suspension modifications will also be permitted.

The regulations are in draft form, and Motorsport Ireland is welcoming suggestions for further changes from interested parties. If anyone wants to have their say, they should email ralliescommittee1@gmail.com.

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PIKES PEAK

Photos: Volkswagen Motorsport

David Evans watched as VW took everyone's breath away

REACHING FOR THE CLOUDS AT RECORD SPEED



Dumas' run up the hill wrote history

The waiting was too much. Agitation was giving way to annoyance for Volkswagen Motorsport. Out of everybody Romain Dumas looked the most relaxed. Strapped tightly into the I.D. R, the Frenchman stared impassively into the distance. Every now and then he shut his eyes, mentally clipping one of the 156 apexes which lay ahead. Miss one and he might as well miss them all.

Miss one and the last nine months meant nothing. One shot.

Finally, a deeply harassed-looking official sought and found the right blue jacket. It was time.

Umbilical cords providing a charging lifeline to the car's cutting-edge batteries were pulled. Roof access hatch battened down, tyre warmers whipped off, Dumas rolled the car away. Flicking the regulatory siren on to warn spectators, deer, elk and even bears of his impending arrival, he stamped on the power and immediately jumped on the brakes, drawing broken black lines through a tunnel of slack-jawed Americans. The moment had arrived. Time to take that shot.

September 2, 2017. Hannover. Sven Smeets' phone gets a text message. It's direct from a Volkswagen board meeting and contains just a few words: it's a go for Pike's Peak.

Smeets called his technical director Francois-Xavier Demaison to tell him their dream had come true. They were going to Colorado to take a car up to the top of 12.42 miles of the road up America's mountain. They were racing to the clouds.

"When we walked out of the World Rally Championship at the end of 2016, we got a clear mission," says Smeets. "One was customer racing, and the other was electric. It had to be electric."

Pike's Peak fitted perfectly. Rhys Millen's electric record of 9m07.222s represented some relatively low-hanging fruit for a team of Volkswagen's world-class ability. Sebastian Loeb's outstanding 8m13.878s – set in a 3.2-litre twin-turbo, spaceframe Peugeot boasting one brake horsepower for each of



Demaison: attracted by no rules

the 850 kilos it weighed – was top of the tree stuff. Smeets wasn't about to be tempted by that particular apple.

"Loeb's time is in another world," Smeets said back then, in a tone that confirmed that part of the conversation was done.

Beyond boyhood dreams fired by footage of Ari Vatanen drifting a Peugeot 405 T16 inches from oblivion, America's second oldest motorsport event (the inaugural Indianapolis 500 ran five years ahead of Pike's Peak in 1911) offered a free hand. The unlimited class is just that. In precis, providing you had a roll cage and a wheel at each corner, you were good to go.

Demaison smiles at the recollection of that call from Smeets. He says: "Asking an engineer if he would like to make a car with no regulations is like asking a blind man if he would like to see. I wanted it. The only restriction with this class is your budget and your time."

With the Pike's Peak programme part of dieselgate redemption, the budget to showcase Volkswagen's credentials as green racers wouldn't be a problem. Time, however, was a problem.

"This was our biggest limiting factor," says Demaison. "Our first thought was to just 'electrify' the Norma chassis Romain drove last year; just the tooling to make our own chassis would have taken two months. We didn't have time."

The other limitation for the I.D. R was the more obvious one, finding a battery big enough to haul close to 1000kgs of car up a hill at lightning speed. While road cars look for high-energy density from their batteries, the I.D. R just needed power. It didn't



Frenchman set a stunning time

need range, it needed to be a rocket with just enough juice to get across the line at 14,115ft.

"Even in the days before the start of the race, we were still learning about the architecture of the batteries and how to cool them," says Demaison. "We had to have them in an operating temperature between 35 and 70 degrees to get the best performance. People ask why we only went with two 250kw motors on each axle providing four-wheel drive. We could have taken bigger motors, that was no problem. But that meant bigger batteries, more weight."

Given that Demaison grumbled about having to sew a Pike's Peak International Hillclimb badge on, rather than having it transferred to the Frenchman's super-lightweight racersuit, weight was at the very forefront of his every waking thought for nine months.

Aero wasn't far behind. To help solve that conundrum, it was time to beckon Volkswagen's most Formula 1-experienced engineer.

"I called Willy [Rampf, formerly of the Sauber F1 team] immediately," says Demaison. "He came straight to Hannover. I can make a rally car, but this was something different. This was a prototype. We benefited from having Willy involved – you can't buy experience."

But you can bring it out of retirement. And the aero really was something on the I.D. R. Headlined by a 2.4-metre rear wing, the thinking was simple.

"When you are up the mountain the air is 35 per cent less dense," says Rampf. "This means you have 35 per cent less downforce. We had to make



The I.D. R was designed to manage the thinner air towards the summit

it [the wing] big to make it work."

Thin air hurt the aero, but scored big for the battery. By the time Loeb crossed the line, he'd lost more than 300 of his 850 horses. When Romain saw the flag man up top on Sunday, he still had the 680 he'd gone green with 7m57.148s earlier.

That's right. Seven minutes. A sub-eight-minute run. The first ever. What's more, he did that with fog and a damp road through the middle sector. And he did it on his first and only flat-chat, bottom-to-top run up the entire course.

One shot, nailed in the most emphatic fashion. And, according to Dumas and Demaison, there's more to come from man and machine. But this wasn't just about Dumas' fourth Pike's Peak win. Or even about the latest page in Volkswagen's world-beating motorsport story. There was more to this.

Walking back to the pits after the Sunday morning service, I happened upon former race director Phil Layton. The silver-haired Pike's Peak disciple leaned in, beckoned me closer. He waved a hand in the direction of Volkswagen's multi-million pound effort and smiled knowingly.

"They," he says, "have done everything they can for the record. *Everything*. But they don't decide if they win or not. She does."

She does? "It's all about what she gives you on the day; she's the mountain. Will Volkswagen break this record? It's up to her... the mountain. Today, the mountain decides."

And she'd taken her time making her mind up. With a storm expected later on Sunday (it arrived after

lunch, forcing the organisers to shorten the course while allowing those who'd finished to enjoy a late June snowball fight at the summit...), cloud had blown in and out, the threat of rain ever-present. Even Dumas started to doubt. What would rain mean? He grimaces: "Put on the wipers and cry."

There were no tears on Sunday.

But 'she' did keep Smeets in suspense. The loss of mobile wifi connections is reckoned to be of the nuances of the electro-magnetic madness which comes at altitude when a storm's bouncing in. The upshot was no live stream. Once #94 had left the line, there was no data.

"We had no sector times – it was like we'd come to the last stage of the season to decide the championship and we had no splits," says Smeets. "I was staring at Romain's time at the bottom of the screen – because he was the latest car to go – and suddenly he disappeared. Just when I was thinking something was wrong I noticed F-X [Demaison] jump next to me... Romain had gone to the top of the screen as he was fastest."

A radio crackled into life: "Time for Dumas... Seven..."

The party started.

"Today," says Smeets, "we were lucky. The mountain was in our favour and said: 'OK, you can go to the top.' We did that."

What Smeets' men achieved in the Rockies on Sunday was from another world. Seeing the I.D. R in full flight rearranged the senses. It really was a rocket and Dumas a ground-breaking, history-rewriting modern-day Neil Armstrong.

The moon in nine months. Whatever next for Volkswagen? ■

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BHRC: RED KITE STAGES

Photos: Paul Lawrence

Osian Pryce and Dale Furniss swept all before them on their second outing in a historic specification Ford Escort Mk2 to take a resounding historic win on the Red Kite Stages.

"I've won a rally in a four-wheel-drive car, in a front-wheel-drive car and now in a rear-wheel-drive car, so I've got the full set and I'm very happy! It's been a good day," said a delighted Pryce.

While the World Rally Championship aspirant drove a perfect rally to win by 1m25s, there was the mother of all battles in his wake as just 42s covered second down to eighth in round four of the British Historic Rally Championship. Paul Barrett and Will Rogers scythed ahead of Simon Webster and Jez Rogers to score a last-stage victory.

Hot, dry and dusty conditions greeted crews as rallying returned to the Vale of Neath for the first time in four years and Pryce stamped his authority on the rally from the start, taking an 18s margin in the opening nine miles in Crynant. "I was very cautious in the first stage and I think it paid off," said Pryce. "That was one of the nicest stages I've driven in a long time," he added of the fast, flowing test.

In his wake, Barrett and Webster started their battle by setting the same time, but it was all change in stage two in the main Resolven complex. While Pryce bagged another stage win, Webster flew it to finish just 4s down on the leader. Barrett, however, suffered a front puncture and drove out on it, losing up to 20s in the process.

Rudi Lancaster/Guy Weaver also punctured, but up into contention came Steve Bennett/Osian Owen and the younger Barrett brother, Ryan, with Paul McCann on the notes.

After service came a single run at nine miles in the top end of Margam and Pryce took full advantage of running first on the road, and therefore clear of dust, to add to his margin. Despite some emotion over using the stage that claimed the life of his good friend Michael 'Beef' Park, Bennett was a strong second but

PRYCE ON THE MONEY AS HE TAKES RWD VICTORY

Welshman completes set of wins.
By Paul Lawrence



Pryce was in a class of his own

punctures struck Webster and both Barretts.

"What a shame: we lost a lot in there," said Webster who dropped a good 20s. Both Barretts lost 10-15s, so at the second service it was Pryce by nearly a minute from Bennett who had 4s on Webster and 10s on Paul Barrett. However, the charging Northern Irishman was not for easing back. "Two flats so far, but I'm happy enough," said Barrett. "We're going to have a push now," he added ominously of the second runs through Crynant and Glyn Castle.

True to his word, Barrett led the chase of Pryce in Crynant to take time out of all his rivals and was nearly matched by the Hillman Avenger-BRM of Ieuan Rowlands/Emyr Hall. After struggling through the opening stages with an electrical gremlin and lack of power, Rowlands was now right on it but the speed came too late for a big result.

The final showdown came on the second run of Glyn Castle and a bit of

breeze was starting to move the dust, which had been a major issue on the earlier stages.

Pryce duly collected a clean sweep of stage wins to complete a perfect day out, but it was all going on behind him. Starting Glyn Castle, three seconds covered the next trio and Barrett continued his attack to grab second and maximum BHRC points from Bennett and Webster as 10 seconds decided the BHRC top three. Paul Barrett joined the party by getting to within a second of Webster.

"We'll take that," said Paul Barrett after an important result for the championship. "We've had so much help to get here after the fire on Carlisle," he said. "It's great fun to drive these cars so fast," said Bennett after a superb drive and Webster deserved equal praise for running at the very head of the pace. "I'm quite pleased with that," he said with typical understatement.

Lancaster deserved more than sixth after a puncture and late clutch issue, and he was chased home by the leading two Pinto crews from class D3. Despite the driver feeling unwell, Stuart Egglestone and Brian Hodgson did it again but this time it was very close as Ben Friend and Cliffy Simmons were just 7s adrift after a mighty day-long scrap. Friend capped his day with third fastest time in Bryn.

RESULTS

British Historic Rally Championship, round 4/8, Resolven, June 23

POS	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Osian Pryce/Dale Furniss	Ford Escort Mk2	44m44s
2	Paul Barrett/Will Rogers	Ford Escort Mk2	+1m25s
3	Steve Bennett/Osian Owen	Ford Escort Mk2	+1m34s
4	Simon Webster/Jez Rogers	Ford Escort Mk2	+1m35s
5	Ryan Barrett/Paul McCann	Ford Escort Mk2	+1m36s
6	Rudi Lancaster/Guy Weaver	Ford Escort Mk2	+1m48s
7	Stuart Egglestone/Brian Hodgson	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m00s
8	Ben Friend/Cliffy Simmons	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m07s
9	Chris Skill/Tom Murphy	Ford Escort Mk1	+2m57s
10	Ieuan Rowlands/Emyr Hall	Hillman Avenger	+2m46s

Class winners: Bob Seager/Peter Littlefield (MG Midget); Malcolm Rich/Arwel Blainey (Ford Anglia); Ken Davies/Alan Jones (Volvo Amazon); Eliot Retallick/Tim Tugwell (Hillman Avenger); Barry Jordan/Paul Wakely (Hillman Avenger); Graham Patten/Pauline Hale (Datsun 240Z); Skill/Murphy; Barrett/Rogers; Egglestone/Hodgson; Pryce/Furniss.



Retallick won the C2 class in his Hillman Avenger after close battle

CLASSES ROUND-UP

The standout class battle was in the **C2** class for the 1600s, where just 11 seconds covered the top three after a fabulous contest.

After two shunts this season, Eliot Retallick and Tim Tugwell (Hillman Avenger) badly wanted a finish and battled back from a cautious start to grab the class over the similar car of Ken Graham/Rory McCann and the Escort Mk1 of Robin Shuttleworth/Ronnie Roughead.

Chris Skill and Tom Murphy (Ford Escort Mk1) took Category 2 overall as well as class **D5**.

"We had a clean run at last, but the diff is about to fall out," said a relieved Skill. They were chased home in the Category by class **C3** winners Baz Jordan and Paul Wakely after a fine performance in their Hillman Avenger. The other Category 2 class, **C4**, fell to the Datsun 240Z of Graham Patten/Pauline Hale. "We're really chuffed to finish despite a broken diff mount," said Patten.

Category 1 was a topsy-turvy affair



Rich swept to Category 1 win

and the result changed within sight of the end of the final stage. Rikki Proffitt and Graham Wild were nearly a minute to the good when a split nut on a ball joint allowed a front wheel to try and escape. With three corners to go, their rally was over.

Instead, Malcolm Rich and Arwel Blainey swept in to win Category 1 after another attacking drive in the flying Ford Anglia. "There's more dust in the car than outside and we had no throttle in the first stage, but I loved it," said Rich. Bob Bean and Miles Cartwright (Lotus Cortina) were half-a-minute adrift after a slightly off-colour rally.

Davies tops the National B rally with measured drive in Subaru Impreza

On a warm day in the forests of the Neath Valley that haven't been used for some years, Dylan Davies/Lion Williams delivered a measured drive to win the National B Red Kite Rally for four-wheel-drive cars in their Subaru Impreza.

After opening up an early lead they managed their tyre wear on the later stages before recording a comfortable victory.

Wug Utting/Bob Stokoe revelled in the stages, taking second place in their Impreza, while a stage-three spin cost Scott Faulkner/Gareth Parry about 30 seconds as they tried to regain the road in

their Mitsubishi. On the driver's first rally for three years, Graham Middleton/Steve McPhee were forced to retire their Mitsubishi Mirage with electrical problems.

In the modern two-wheel-drive National B event, Max Utting/Robbie Durant opened up an early lead before losing only two and a half minutes after rolling their Ford Fiesta ST Max on SS3. Following a determined run on the final two stages they pulled back to win the category, as a time penalty thwarted the challenge from Wyn Hughes/David Davies.

Class winners Andrew and

Jamie-Lee Box took a fine fifth in their BMW, as Dave and Freddy Brick put in another giant-killing performance to finish seventh in their Vauxhall Nova.

Simon Gronow

Results

1 Dylan Davies/Lion Williams (Subaru Impreza) 44m18s;
2 Wug Utting/Bob Stokoe (Impreza) +1m10s;
3 Scott Faulkner/Gareth Parry (Mitsubishi Lancer E10);
4 Max Utting/Robbie Durant (Ford Fiesta ST) 5 Andrew Fox/Jamie-Lee Box (BMW E30); 6 Huw Jeffreys/Avarina Connor (Impreza); 7 Dave Brick/Freddy Brick (Vauxhall Nova);
8 David Jones/Glyn Price (BMW E30); 9 Gary Thomas/Linda Thomas (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 Phil Jones/Clive Jones (Escort Mk2).
Class winners: Brick/Brick; Martin Walters/Marie Fletcher (Honda Civic); Aron Brown/Cal McElhinney (Escort Mk2); Utting/Durant; Fox/Fox, Thomas/Thomas; Jeffreys/Connor, Utting/Stokoe.

SRC RALLY REPORT

Photos: Eddie Kelly Photography

ROUND-UP



McKnight: First on road

McKnight wins
Greg McKnight ran first on the road in Dunoon. His Ford Escort Mk2 finished 11th overall nearly two minutes clear of Northern Ireland's Paul McErlean. "Three of the stages were very twisty and technical and I struggled to get traction out of the corners, spinning up the rear wheels," said McKnight. "I really enjoyed it though, it was good fun."

Riddick ridiculed

Once again, Keith Riddick put in a spirited performance finishing 13th overall and first in the 1600 class with his MG ZR. He punctured a tyre in SS5: "My own fault. Kirsty told me it was a 'don't cut', and guess what?" Second in class was perennial class frontrunner Barry Lindsay in his Peugeot 206. "All the stages seemed to start up hills that were so steep, you wouldn't want to walk up," he said. He was 18th.

Cowan is top 1400

Niall Cowan Jr was top 1400 runner in his MG, and the only one to finish. Scott Sloan's Corsa slithered off the road in the first test when "something broke at the front". Scott Peacock's MG ended its rally in a ditch with a broken wheel and Steven Crockett's class lead was shortlived when the Peugeot's distributor main shaft snapped.

Howie junior joy

Tom Howie was top Scottish Junior points scorer in 20th place overall in his Talbot Sunbeam despite finishing the rally with only first, second and fifth gears, and "no reverse!". Regular frontrunner Ally Currie retired his Ford Fiesta ST with a broken bottom arm and Grant MacRae inadvertently parked his Fiesta ST in a ditch when a wheel broke trying to pass another stricken car.

Pink jubilee

On their fifth rally, newcomers Nikki Addison and Rachel Matheson had their best result with 30th overall and third in class in their Peugeot 106. Addison also scored second-placed Junior points in her Peugeot 106, but was annoyed when she had to fit two new tyres and the service crew used the wrong wheel rims. Addison's Peugeot is always unmistakable with two pink rims and two white ones.

McIlwraith first

In the Subaru Cup, John McIlwraith took top points despite breaking a shock absorber for which he had no spare. His chief rival Brett McKenzie retired his Subaru after an off in SS5 even though he drove the car back to the service park.

GALLACHER TAKES A SECOND

Last-stage victory as Focus man claims SRC lead. By John Fife



Gallacher took second win in 2018

One word describes the 2018 Scottish Rally Championship: unpredictable. Last weekend's latest round, the Argyll Rally, was a case in point. Andrew Gallacher and Jane Nicol were back in the winner's circle for the first time since their victory on the series-opening Snowman Rally round four months ago.

Their Ford Focus WRC finished the 43-mile event just five seconds clear of the Ford Fiesta R5 of Donnie MacDonald and stand-in co-driver Jamie Edwards.

But that was all to come as the cars lined up for the ceremonial start at Dunoon ferry pier on the esplanade. A slow starter on last month's RSAC Scottish Rally, Rory Young was on the case from the word go in Argyll, six seconds faster than MacDonald through the opening test. Behind them three drivers tied on third quickest, Gallacher, Mark McCulloch and Fred Milne. However, the biggest shock was that Jock Armstrong was already out. Just a few hundred metres after the stage start in Glenbranter, there was a long, long left hander. Armstrong's Subaru drifted wide, got on to the loose gravel and swapped ends, smacking the car's nose hard against the outside banking.

It was Young again from MacDonald through the second test at Beinn Lagan, this time by seven seconds, followed by Milne, with Gallacher and Michael Binnie tied on fourth fastest. McCulloch was some 20 seconds off the pace with steering rack trouble, again.

In the spectacular and natural amphitheatre of forested glens which comprise Argyll, drama is never far away. The rally leader disappeared in the third stage at Coire Ealt. Both front tyres on Young's Fiesta R5 punctured. He switched to 'road mode' to drive out of the stage but "the car just

understeered off the road and beached out in a ditch".

Meanwhile, McCulloch's luck went from bad to worse when his Fiesta R5 suffered steering failure and pitched the car into a roll and out of the rally.

And if MacDonald thought he would assume the rally lead he hadn't reckoned on Gallacher who was quickest through there and again in the fourth test at Bishop's Glen to pull into the lunch halt with a two-second lead over his title rival.

Milne was lying third, first time out in a Subaru Impreza S12B WRC as opposed to his usual S14. "It drives and handles the same but I'm having trouble with the brake balance," he said. Only five seconds behind Milne was Bruce McCombie having a good run in his Mitsubishi Lancer E9. "We stopped at Jock's accident but he waved us on," said McCombie. "Then we stopped again at Mark's and reported the incidents at the finish but that cost us a few seconds each time."

The second half of the rally featured a re-run of the morning's four stages with most folk reckoning they were better second time through. The first three twisty and technical and the fourth one fast and flowing and the best of the day.

Although Gallacher was fastest again through SS5, the outcome was far from settled. John Wink pitched himself into the battle in his Hyundai R5 with second fastest ahead of MacDonald and McCombie, then in the next stage, Milne went quickest while Gallacher and MacDonald tied on the same stage time.

There was nothing to choose between the top two as MacDonald went quickest through the penultimate test from Gallacher, McCombie and Wink to set up a nerve-tingling finish.

Hugging the contours of Corlarach Hill, high above Dunoon, the townspeople could watch the speeding dust trails through the final six-miler. Going into that final test, Gallacher had



MacDonald a strong second

RESULTS

Scottish Rally Championship, round 5/7, June 23, Dunoon, Scotland

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Andrew Gallacher/Jane Nicol	Ford Focus WRC	41m 16s
2	Donnie MacDonald/Jamie Edwards	Ford Fiesta R5	+5s
3	Bruce McCombie/Michael Coutts	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+32s
4	Fred Milne/Abi Loudon	Subaru Impreza S14 WRC	+34s
5	John Wink/John Forrest	Hyundai i20 R5	+34s
6	Michael Binnie/Claire Mole	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+56s
7	Scott McCombie/Murray Strachan	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+2m09s
8	John McClory/David Hood	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+2m22s
9	Alan Dickson/Martin Forrest	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+2m25s
10	Ian Baumgart/Dave Robson	Subaru Impreza	+2m29s

Class winners: Niall Cowan Jr/Thomas Bruce (MG ZR), Tom Howie/Charlie MacKenzie (Talbot Sunbeam), Keith Riddick/Kirsty Riddick (MG ZR), Fraser MacNicol/Andy Brown (Ford Escort Mk2), David Cameron/Douglas Cameron (Escort Mk2), Paul McErlean/Niall McKenna (Escort Mk2), Greg McKnight/Harry Marchbank (Escort Mk2), Donald Carslaw/John Duke (Subaru Impreza), Binnie/Mole, McCombie/Coutts, Gallacher/Nicol.

a four-second lead over MacDonald, and MacDonald blew it. "I stalled it on the start line," he ruminated afterwards, "that's the first time I've done that. It cost us seven seconds."

Watching from behind, Gallacher was counting those lost seconds too. "I was sitting there thinking that he'll either go off or blitz a time," said Gallacher. "But then I had a misfire off the line which cost me a few seconds."

Milne was actually quickest through

the final stage, but Gallacher took a second out of MacDonald to score his second victory of the year. McCombie did just enough to secure third place overall from Milne with Wink in fifth place and Binnie rounded off the top six.

That means the championship points leaders have swapped places, Gallacher now has a one point lead over MacDonald with McCombie a further seven points behind.

YPRES REPORT

Photos: Jakob Ebrej

EDWARDS VICTORIOUS

Fiesta man profits from late Cronin woe. By Ben Buesnel



Edwards topped podium after Cronin's late puncture



Edwards battled ECU troubles

After leading for almost the whole event, a puncture on the last stage robbed reigning

British Rally champions Keith Cronin and Mikie Galvin of a class win, while Matt Edwards and Darren Garrod inherited the place to notch their second victory in a row.

Cronin and Galvin, in their brand new Hyundai Customer Racing i20 R5, led the BRC charge among the star-studded cast.

The Irish crew made a jump-start on the opening stage, giving them a 10-second time penalty. Despite this, they picked up where they left off last year, with the 2017 winner

commanding the event – leading the British section convincingly into the final stage, with the puncture disappointingly dropping him down to third at the Ceremonial Finish.

Edwards similarly had his fair share of problems throughout the weekend. On the opening day, ECU woes and a complete wiring loom change at the final service put the team on the back foot. The M-Sport mechanics went over the allotted 45-minute service time and the Welsh crew were given a 1m10s time penalty going into the last day.

Ever the optimist, Edwards punched in several impressive stage times to haul himself from fourth into victory contention.

Even a lack of power steering for two stages was not going to stop the

Swift Rally Team driver. Edwards was almost settling for second, but one last push and the misfortune for Cronin allowed him to clinch the result.

"It was a massive surprise: that is a massive understatement!" said Edwards. "When we put a stopwatch on any element of this event, something went wrong. We didn't get a qualifying time and we had a poor road position and things didn't get any better from there.

"Everybody was downbeat, but I knew on this rally, anything can happen and we kept at it and with fortune the result came our way."

David Bogie and John Rowan both put their 2017 early exits behind them to open their BRC podium account for the year with a fine second place.

The Skoda Fabia R5 ace got off to a cautious start, but building in confidence with every stage, the Flying Scotsman entertained the locals with his committed driving style including one dramatic two-wheeled excursion, which nearly cost them a stellar result.

Marty McCormack looked set to stand on the podium with Bogie in his Skoda, but steering failure on the final loop left him stranded on the roadside and spelled a cruel retirement for the Northern Irishman as Cronin sealed the podium spot.

Rhys Yates and Elliott Edmondson had become the first British pairing to win Rally van Wervick a fortnight earlier and arrived in Ypres full of optimism. That optimism continued when

Yates topped the Brits in the Thursday night qualifying stage with a strong sixth overall.

However, Yates' weekend was one to forget soon afterwards. Several overshoots into fields cost the English star too much time to challenge for honours on the opening day and with Edmondson suffering from illness on the final day, the pair had to withdraw from the event.

Results

1 Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod (Ford Fiesta R5) 2h34m20.4s; 2 David Bogie/John Rowan (Skoda Fabia R5) +18s; 3 Keith Cronin/Mikie Galvin (Hyundai i20 R5); 4 Alex Laffey/Patrick Walsh (Fiesta R5); 5 James Williams/Ross Whittock (Vauxhall Adam R2); 6 Josh McErlean/Aaron Johnston (Fiesta R2T).
Class winners: BRC 1: Edwards/Garrod; Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship: Williams/Whittock; National Rally Cup: John Morrison/Peter Carstairs (Mitsubishi Lancer E9).

Williams plays a joker as he wins Junior class

In the Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship, Welshman James Williams and English co-driver Ross Whittock lit up the stages in their Vauxhall Adam R2.

Williams broke his BRC podium duck in Ypres 12 months ago and a year on went two better to clinch his first Junior BRC victory. Despite a spin on SS11, thus losing his grip on the top of the timesheets, a spirited fightback allowed Williams to spray the champagne and claim the honour for the fastest R2 front-wheel-drive car on the event and the Junior Tony Pond Award.

Williams played his Joker Card in Belgium, giving him a further five points to catapult him to the top of the championship standings.

Second went to Josh McErlean and Aaron Johnston in their Ford Fiesta R2T. The Irish pairing couldn't contest the event last year due to the fact that McErlean was too young to drive on the public roads in Belgium. Despite their lack of European Tarmac experience the MH Motorsport crew set some rapid stage times in the turbocharged machine, even though the car cut out on the final two loops of stages.

Another new crew to climb the rostrum in the BRC feeder series was 2018 championship debutants James



Williams (on car, right) and Whittock recovered from spin to win

Wilson and Gavin Doherty. The Irish duo are in their first season in the BRC and after clinching fourth on the opening round, the Peugeot 208 R2 team made it three different marques inside the top three after two gruelling days of competitive action.

Steve Rokland and Tom Woodburn came to Ypres as MN Junior leaders and, despite a lack of recent asphalt experience, were gunning for another win. On stage five, however, their challenge unravelled with a heavy impact into a ditch. With the spectators hauling the car back onto the road, the Anglo-Norwegian pairing then had to change a puncture, dropping them several minutes behind the leaders. Never giving up, Rokland chipped away at the time sheets and as others faulted he chalked up fourth to help

bolster his 2018 title tilt.

William Creighton and Liam Regan clung onto Williams' coattails for the majority of the event but when Williams faulted with a spin, Creighton was ready and waiting to pounce in his Peugeot 208 R2.

Unfortunately, the thousands of fans stage-side were denied a battle royale as, on SS15, the crew from Northern Ireland slid into an infamous Belgian ditch and retired on the spot.

Bart Lang and Sinclair Young survived the Cadet Cup chaos to bring their Ford Fiesta R2 home in first ahead of Fred Field in an Opel Adam Cup and Johnnie Mulholland in a Fiesta R2. John Morrison and Peter Carstairs thoroughly enjoyed their Belgian adventure to take the National Rally Cup win in their Mitsubishi Lancer E9.

Neuville claims the overall honours

On a rare weekend off, World Rally Championship leaders Thierry Neuville and Nicolas Gilsoul returned home to contest the Ypres Rally.

The Belgian pairing endured a torrid 2017 event after rolling their Hyundai i20 R5 in spectacular fashion, but they returned to the Flanders region looking to make amends and to add their names to the impressive roll of honour.

Neuville got off to a steady start on the opening test with the sixth quickest time but by the second stage he showed his World Championship pedigree to leapfrog himself into the lead – a position he would never relinquish, eventually finishing 40.4 seconds clear of his nearest rival.

In second place and going one better than his 2017 result was Belgian Rally Championship star, Vincent Verschuere, in his Skoda Fabia R5. Verschuere enjoyed a ding-dong battle with the experienced Kris Princen throughout the 23-stage event. The Belgian Rally Championship leader got the better of Princen, who was also driving a Czech machine, by a mere 8.7 seconds.



Neuville led from second stage

Elsewhere, former Monte Carlo Rally winner Bryan Bouffier crashed his Skoda Fabia R5 out of the lead on the second stage while 2017 Ypres winner Kevin Abbring was putting the brand new Citroen C3 R5 through its paces. Abbring mixed it at the front but on stage three broke a wheel, forcing him into retirement.

Results

1 Thierry Neuville/Nicolas Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 R5) 2h29m09.2s; 2 Vincent Verschuere/Véronique Hostens (Fabia R5) +40.4s; 3 Kris Princen/Bram Eelbode (Fabia R5); 4 Cedric Cherain/Filip Cuvelier (Fabia R5); 5 Sébastien Bedoret/Thomas Walbreck (Fabia R5); 6 Adrien Féménot/Samuel Maillen (Fabia R5).
Class winners: Neuville/Gilsoul; Claudie Tanghe/Denis Squedini (Porsche 997 GT3); James Williams/Ross Whittock (Vauxhall Adam R2); Steve Becaert/Nico Beernaert (Mitsubishi Lancer E10); Frédéric Perrard/Francis Leclercq (Lancer E9); Thierry Boisdrion/Frédéric Preteuille (Renault Clio R3); Gregory Verfaillie/Steven Debreyer (Suzuki Swift); James Gruwez/Michael Pittellioen (Mercedes Benz 190E).

BTCC REPORT: CROFT

David Addison watched the champion return to the front



Sutton became the first driver to win twice in a day in '18

Sutton fought to twin wins



SUTTON BACK



TCR UK dominator Dan Lloyd celebrated his first BTCC win in finale



Colin Turkington didn't get a win, but did score some solid points



Both Stephen Jelley and Rob Austin's weekend started off badly

Boost. It was the word that spread across the Croft paddock all weekend, normally after an expletive. And much like last year, Subaru was in the same sentence.

A minor boost increase, coupled with some significant aero tweaks and reprofiled radiator and air intakes plus new brake ducting all added up to give the Subaru Levorgs pace unseen in 2018. The boost was reckoned to be a mere seven bhp at most, but added to the extra improvements the estates were bang on the pace with or without ballast.

Ash Sutton kick-started his season in a fashion mirrored only by England against Panama that same afternoon.

Race one

A fourth career pole put Sutton at the head of the grid and alongside on the front row Subaru lockout was Jason Plato. Memories of 2016 and the Plato-Colin Turkington clash were in some minds, but the team was determined that no internecine contact should come. "The team plan," said Plato pre-race, "is that the cars don't come into contact." Sutton bolted away from pole, his ballast-free rear-wheel-drive racer snatching the lead into Clerveaux for the first time with Andrew Jordan's BMW 125i M Sport beating Plato (running a new engine since qualifying) on the dash to the first corner.

Behind was drama as Josh Cook (Vauxhall Astra) tried to dive between Stephen Jelley's BMW and Rob Austin's Alfa Romeo. The gap was narrower than the Astra and the ensuing contact fired both Jelley and Austin into the gravel. "I made a mega start and got past Cook and was alongside Jelley when I got this whack in the rear," explained Austin. "It broke the right-rear toe-link and that was that."

It was poor reward after an encouraging qualifying but worse was to come later in the day with an engine failure in race three. Jelley, too, was disappointed after his best qualifying of the season, eighth, and more damage: "I just felt this bang in the back that pushed me across into Rob and through the gravel."

He limped back to the pits but with enough damage to render him a retirement, too.

The Turn 1 fracas led to a brief safety car period but on the restart Sutton was in no mood to hang around. He powered away from Jordan, whose BMW was looking as stable as a jelly in a high wind. Oversteer kicked in on lap three.

"I had no rear grip," explained A.J. "Once the tyres went off, I was struggling badly."

Despite the lack of grip, Jordan hung on to lap 10 when Plato finally surged past coming out of the Hairpin and then chased after Sutton, the gap coming down over the final few laps. Sutton, though, was running the harder option tyre which seemed to be the better bet in the high temperatures and, although Plato drew nearer, Sutton was able to hang on.

"The option tyre was going to make life harder to begin with but it paid off," explained Sutton. "I could see Jason was coming but I just opened the tap again and pulled away."

A winning margin of 0.8s was enough to give the reigning champion a first win of 2018.

Behind him, Plato was back to the buoyant style of old. "This is what we get out of bed in the morning for," he said. "I've got a car with balance and an engine, and although we are still not quick enough in a straight line, we've made a step forward and we are back at the pointy end."

Behind the two Subarus came an inspired Tom Ingram in the Speedworks Toyota Avensis. With 48kgs of success ballast, Ingram hunted down Jordan and ran alongside on the way to Clerveaux on lap 14, Jordan's BMW running wide

and snapping into a spin as the grip level went south. "It just went," explained Jordan. "I was really struggling by then and I ran a bit wide but I just couldn't hold it."

That put Ingram up to third as the leading front-wheel-drive entry with a ballast-free Sam Tordoff (Ford Focus) behind him as he bagged a fifth fourth place of the season. Turkington - 12 times a Croft winner - was fifth, losing points to Ingram with Rob Collard (BMW 125i M Sport) and Cook behind. Dan Lloyd was the best of the Honda pack in eighth for BTC NorlIn with Matt Neal ninth, another to benefit from Jordan's spin, which dropped the 2013 champion to 10th. The BMW had looked a handful in qualifying but equally seemed only to be the one of the three WSR BMWs with the oversteer. Jordan was set for a challenging afternoon.

Race two

'Ah', said the sages. 'Boost won't help now. Sutton has 75kgs and Plato 66kgs. Just you wait...'

Sutton was crushing. Ash won the race with ease, admittedly after having been beaten off the line by Ingram. From third on the grid, Ingram made what seemed to be a lightning start to head the two rear-wheel-drive cars, although modesty got the better of Tom.

"It looked amazing but we've been through the data and it wasn't that good," he said. "I'm not sure what the Subarus were up to." Ingram led for the opening lap, but with Sutton up behind him as he came into the Complex on lap two, Ingram received radio news from engineer Spencer Aldridge of a drivethrough penalty for Plato due to a jump start. Realising that there would be a gap soon to fill Plato's void, Ingram elected to let Sutton into the lead.

"I knew that car was fast and that Ash was desperate for another win, so I didn't want to fight. I knew of Plato's penalty so I slotted into that gap," said Ingram.

Sutton dived for the inside at the

Hairpin and grabbed the lead. One he was never to lose despite the weight, Sutton said, clear, his task eased by spending the final third of the race defending from Turkington: close, close, never over-zealous as Plato was glued to his tail. Turkington: close, close, never over-zealous as Plato was guaranteed to have

That he did, by now seconds behind Sutton. Ash to become the first driver to win twice in one day.

If Sutton's pace was so too was Plato's. Hairpin his drivethrough, JP to 28th place but was well clear. Even with no safety car, Plato got the Tea car to 14th by flag-fall.

Tordoff ran to a sixth of the season while Jordan netted fifth, still a hair's breadth behind. He spent the early part of the race challenging team-mate the Oulton Park winner, a puncture that spent a deflating. Jordan nipped worse was to come for the soggy rubber pits, a spin that rolled the tyre and a long limp home was classified 28th.

Tom Chilton's Motosport came sixth just ahead of Honda Civic, which closed a tight battle with Plato.

The two clashed at the end, although Lloyd got better there, Neal fought back and carved back up the track to get ahead of Senna P. Vauxhall Astra. Lloyd and 10th fell to Rory Byrne.

As Sutton's win marked contention in the championship top 10, others struggled.

Adam Morgan's Ci Mercedes-Benz A-Class on the grid after damaged. Brett Smith's Honda from race one. Morgan until he, like Plato, was jump start. "I went fr

“...But I really want to win!”
Chilton's charge, below



ROUNDS



Photos: Jakob Ebrex



Plato got his "mojo back" with pace

IN THE GAME

At the race lead, Sutton stormed to victory by Ingram. Third of the race, who was typical committed but as long as an error he was on. Over four laps, allowing the first driver to win this season. His impressive, having served re-joined in all wound up. Car to help team BMR-run.

in three laps and the car felt great and I reckon a top six was possible but then I was done for a jump start," said Morgan. "I was so far back I couldn't see the lights so I just went when everyone else did..."

Morgan recovered to 19th, out of the points, just one place behind Eurotech's Jack Goff, who was enduring a dire weekend with balance and set-up issues. The two drivers who arrived at Croft tied on points for second were seeing their championship hopes slip away as Sutton moved back into contention.

Another title fighter, Cook, was counting his blessings after a huge off at Tower on the opening lap. The Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall went farming at high speed, but thankfully Cook missed everything solid. "I hit the brakes and they just failed at 130mph," he explained. "I missed the cars ahead, missed the wall and headed to the field."

Cook brought most of the field back to the pits with him, not to mention a colossal laundry bill, but more exploratory laps did little to pinpoint the problem. A rather shaken Cook did well to commit to the final race of the day.

Race three

Double BTCC champion John Cleland's grid draw had offered pole position to Lloyd. After both BTC Norlin Hondas were severely damaged at Oulton Park, and repairs finished in the early hours of Saturday morning, Lloyd was aiming to repay the team's hard work with a maiden win, but had some tough opposition around him.

As the lights wet out, Lloyd bolted from pole to head a quick-starting Chilton into Clervaux, Proctor dropping behind Chilton for third. Neal grabbed fourth from Jordan and Sutton, but as the early laps ticked by so Jordan's BMW went back to its oversteery self and allowed Sutton to close. Ash drilled the rear of Jordan at the Hairpin on lap five with Turkington capitalising as well to move past.

Sutton, however, was destined not to keep the place as a post-race penalty switched the positions of the BMW and Subaru. Before the trip to the race officials, Sutton was rather busy with Neal.

He grabbed fourth place from Neal at the Hairpin on lap eight but Matt fought back at Clervaux at the start of the following tour. It was as late-braking a move as was seen all day and arguably an ambitious one, but he moved back ahead of Sutton by diving up the inside. Contact speared Ash over the gravel and he bounced off the Armco, rejoining in seventh behind Jordan. He set to work to recover the lost ground and battled back on to the tail of the BMW before grabbing sixth spot.

Up front, Lloyd was looking solid. He edged away from Chilton by tenths over the opening laps, but Chilton never stopped trying. Perhaps that determination was to his detriment because he asked too much of his prime tyre and started to lose ground mid-race. "He came on the radio complaining about his tyres," said Motorbase team manager Oly Collins. "We told him to look after them and he said: 'But I really want to win!'"

Chilton confirmed that the tyres were the cause of the loss of pace. "I was really struggling by mid-race and I was convinced I had a puncture towards the end. I could see Senna closing and I was really worried about him, but I just managed to hang on."

That loss of pace was perfect for Lloyd, who continued to edge clear to a maiden win.

"I'm so happy," said local man Lloyd of his home win afterwards. "I wasn't even sure that we'd be out this weekend after the damage at Oulton Park so this is amazing for the team. I knew I was quick and that I could do the job and I was really pleased about the way I won it because I kept pushing all the way to the end - I knew I would make fewer mistakes that way."

Lloyd also scored fastest lap

despite 15kgs of success ballast to complete a perfect race for team boss Bert Taylor.

Chilton fended off Proctor by just less than half-a-second for second, while Neal secured fourth from championship leader Turkington.

By his own high standards at the track, it had been a modest day, but he left with an increased championship lead, up to 19 points over Ingram. Mission accomplished. Ingram was unlucky in the final race as he was mugged by Tordoff on the run to the flag, the Speedworks Toyota struggling out of the last corner with its 66kgs of extra weight. Tordoff just bested the Buckinghamshire racer by 0.097s.

Tom Oliphant's Mercedes-Benz A-Class rounded out the top 10 - only to be pushed down the order by officials following contact - while Morgan got some positivity out of his weekend by grabbing 13th.

Goff, in contrast, retired his Eurotech Honda Civic with overheating issues, as he slipped from joint second to seventh in the championship, while the second BTC Norlin Civic of Chris Smiley had an engine change before race three and then clashed with Aiden Moffat's Mercedes, the contact sending the Northern Irishman across the grass opposite the pits and with a fair chunk of Yorkshire grass in the intakes, an overheated engine forced his retirement.

Sutton and Lloyd gave the championship 12 different winners at the halfway stage - the record for a 30-race season being 13 - and the championship is now more fascinating than ever as Morgan, Goff and Cook all endured a troubled weekend, while the likes of Ingram, Neal and Jordan have all advanced behind Turkington. Sutton, however, is just 51 points adrift in eighth place and can't be ruled out, especially if he can piece together more weekends like this.

From being almost a bit-part player two weeks ago, his championship hopes have taken a real, erm... boost.

RACE FACTS



CROFT

Where: Darlington
First BTCC round: 1968
Lap length: 2.125 miles
Qualifying lap record: Colin Turkington 1m 23.246s (2014)
Race lap record: Colin Turkington 1m 24.542s (2014)

RESULTS

Round: 13 Laps: 17

Weather: warm and dry

POS	Q	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	1	Ash Sutton	Team BMR Subaru Levorg (H)	2m50.484s
2	2	Jason Plato	Team BMR Subaru Levorg	+0.863s
3	5	Tom Ingram	Speedworks Toyota Avensis (H) ⁴	+8.897s
4	4	Sam Tordoff	Motorbase Performance Ford Focus RS	+11.293s
5	6	Colin Turkington	WSR BMW 125i M Sport ¹	+11.450s
6	7	Rob Collard	WSR BMW 125i M Sport ⁹	+11.696s
7	9	Josh Cook	Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra ⁵	+12.304s
8	11	Daniel Lloyd	BTC Norlin Honda Civic Type R	+16.247s
9	15	Matt Neal	Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R ⁶	+18.222s
10	3	Andrew Jordan	WSR BMW 125i M Sport ⁷	+19.114s

11 (14) Senna Proctor (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) +20.177s; 12 (12) James Cole (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus RS) +23.658s; 13 (13) Rory Butcher (AmD Tuning MG6) (H) +26.968s; 14 (16) Ollie Jackson (AmD Tuning Audi S3 Saloon) +30.579s; 15 (17) Tom Chilton (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus RS) (H) (21kg) +30.766s; 16 (18) Tom Oliphant (Ciceley Motorsport Mercedes-Benz A-Class) +31.436s; 17 (23) Chris Smiley (BTC Norlin Honda Civic Type R) +35.249s; 18 (21) Josh Price (Team BMR Subaru Levorg) +38.086s; 19 (20) Dan Cammish (Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R) (9kg) +38.381s; 20 (19) Mike Bushell (Team Hard Volkswagen CC) (H) +38.504s; 21 (26) Jack Goff (Eurotech Racing Honda Civic Type R) (H) (57kg) +38.769s; 22 (27) Matt Simpson (Eurotech Racing Honda Civic Type R) +39.812s; 23 (29) Michael Caine (Team Hard Volkswagen CC) +40.311s; 24 (30) Bobby Thompson (Team Hard Volkswagen CC) +47.813s; 25 (32) Sam Smelt (AmD Tuning Audi S3 Saloon) (H) +49.022s; 26 (31) Tom Boardman (AmD Tuning MG6) +57.132s; R (24) Aiden Moffat (Laser Tools Racing Mercedes-Benz A-Class) 14 laps/wishbone broken; R (28) Brett Smith (Eurotech Racing Honda Civic Type R) 14 laps/damage; R (22) Adam Morgan (Ciceley Motorsport Mercedes-Benz A-Class) (H) (57kg) 10 laps/damage; R (25) Jake Hill (Team Hard Volkswagen CC) (H) 2 laps/holed radiator; R (8) Stephen Jelley (Team Parker Racing BMW 125i M Sport) 1 lap/damage; R (10) Rob Austin (HMS Racing Alfa Romeo Giulietta) 0 laps/accident.

Pole position: Sutton 1m24.222s (90.83mph). **Winner's average speed:** 80.75mph. **Fastest lap:** Sutton 1m25.633s (89.33mph). **Lap leaders:** Sutton 1-17. (H) = hard tyre.

Round: 14 Laps: 15

Weather: warm and dry

POS	Q	DRIVER	TIME
1	1	Sutton ¹	21m56.436s
2	3	Ingram ³	+4.284s
3	5	Turkington ⁵	+4.604s
4	4	Tordoff ⁴	+5.147s
5	10	Jordan ¹⁰	+6.573s
6	15	Chilton	+11.754s
7	9	Neal ⁹	+13.653s
8	11	Proctor	+14.112s
9	8	Lloyd (H) ⁸	+14.387s
10	13	Butcher	+21.701s

11 (19) Cammish +22.310s; 12 (17) Smiley (H) +23.238s; 13 (16) Oliphant (H) +26.858s; 14 (2) Plato (66kg) +27.090s; 15 (32) Austin +27.391s; 16 (27) Moffat (H) +31.605s; 17 (22) Simpson +37.039s; 18 (21) Goff +40.730s; 19 (29) Morgan +41.010s; 20 (31) Jelley +41.025s; 21 (28) Smith (H) +41.341s; 22 (20) Bushell +43.776s; 23 (12) Cole (H) +44.404s; 24 (25) Smelt +44.943s; 25 (14) Jackson +50.843s; 26 (30) Hill +53.167s; 27 (24) Thompson (H) -1 lap; 28 (6) Collard (H) (33kg) -2 laps; R (18) Price 11 laps/overheating; NC (23) Caine (H) 9 laps; R (26) Boardman 6 laps/overheating; R (7) Cook (27kg) 5 laps/brake failure. **Winner's average speed:** 87.17mph. **Fastest lap:** Turkington 1m26.066s (88.99mph). **Lap leaders:** Ingram 1; Sutton 2-15. (H) = hard tyre.

RACE SUCCESS BALLAST

75kg ¹	66kg ²	57kg ³	48kg ⁴	39kg ⁵
33kg ⁶	27kg ⁷	21kg ⁸	15kg ⁹	9kg ¹⁰

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Colin Turkington	162
2	Tom Ingram	143
3	Matt Neal	127
4	Andrew Jordan	120
5	Tom Chilton	118
6	Adam Morgan	116
7	Jack Goff	112
8	Ash Sutton	111
9	Josh Cook	109
10	Senna Proctor	94

11 Sam Tordoff 94; 12 Rob Collard 86; 13 Dan Cammish 80; 14 Chris Smiley 60; 15 James Cole 59; 16 Matt Simpson 54; 17 Rob Austin 51; 18 Aiden Moffat 47; 19 Rory Butcher 46; 20 Daniel Lloyd 37; 21 Brett Smith 34; 22 Ollie Jackson 32; 23 Jake Hill 29; 24 Mike Bushell 29; 25 Jason Plato 19; 26 Tom Oliphant 19; 27 Tom Boardman 14; 28 James Nash 6.

JACK SEARS TROPHY

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Cammish	202
2	Butcher	177
3	Smiley	174
4	Jackson	158
5	Simpson	151
6	Hill	147
7	Oliphant	135
8	Bushell	128
9	Smith	127
10	Thompson	90

11 Caine 84; 12 Smelt 82; 13 Lloyd 77; 14 Josh Price 71.

Round: 15 Laps: 15

Weather: warm and dry

POS	Q	DRIVER	TIME
1	1	Lloyd ⁹	21m59.346s
2	4	Chilton ⁶	+5.835s
3	2	Proctor (H) ⁸	+6.326s
4	3	Neal (H) ⁷	+7.775s
5	7	Turkington (H) ³	+8.172s
6	5	Jordan (H) ⁵	+8.906s
7	9	Sutton ¹	+9.739s
8	6	Tordoff (H) ⁴	+14.330s
9	8	Ingram ²	+14.427s
10	11	Cammish	+15.602s

11 (28) Collard +19.657s; 12 (19) Morgan +19.797s; 13 (10) Butcher (9kg) +24.733s; 14 (13) Oliphant 24.804s; 15 (17) Simpson (H) +24.923s; 16 (20) Jelley (H) +24.955s; 17 (16) Moffat +25.208s; 18 (32) Cook (H) +25.228s; 19 (14) Plato (H) +28.177s; 20 (23) Cole +30.536s; 21 (27) Thompson +30.928s; 22 (25) Jackson (H) +35.055s; 23 (31) Boardman (H) +35.882s; 24 (29) Price (H) +36.361s; 25 (26) Hill +38.767s; 26 (24) Smelt +40.137s; 27 (30) Caine +41.919s; 28 (21) Smith +46.227s; R (18) Goff 10 laps/overheating; R (15) Austin (H) 7 laps/engine; R (12) Smiley 5 laps/overheating; R (22) Bushell 5 laps/holed radiator. **Winner's average speed:** 86.97mph. **Fastest lap:** Lloyd 1m26.213s (88.73mph). **Lap leaders:** Lloyd 1-15. (H) = hard tyre.



Ingram drove strongly to score big points

BTCC REPORT: CROFT



MOTORSPORT NEWS STAR DRIVER

ASH SUTTON

Stop worrying about the difference in boost level for a moment and rejoice that the Ash Sutton of old is competitive at the front again. Feisty in fight, serene in the lead, Sutton reminded everyone of his championship-winning class. Only a push to pass on Jordan blotted his copybook.

MOTORSPORT NEWS WOODEN SPOON

JACK GOFF

Eurotech seemed more at sea than a lost dinghy, all three cars struggling for a decent balance and set-up. Goff tried everything but to no avail and his championship hopes suffered a severe knock. Snetterton will be crucial to get back on track and bag decent points.



DRIVER ANALYSIS BY DAVID ADDISON

MATT NEAL

6/10

Dynamics Honda Civic

The Honda struggled in a straight line. He fought hard in race two with Lloyd, as he did with Sutton in race three. He raced very hard and also very fair to make progress. He was again top dog in the intra-team battle. Up to third in the points, it was a solid weekend for Neal, who is in title contention.



JASON PLATO

7/10

Team BMR Subaru Levorg

Plato was back to his feisty self in race one, battling past Jordan to second and halving the gap to race winner Sutton, but a jump start drive through compromised race two. His pace, with 66kgs, to get back to 14th was impressive and showed that he has lost none of his racecraft. Plato admitted to having his mojo back and it showed.



TOM INGRAM

8/10

Speedworks Toyota

Ingram did an outstanding job. A gutsy drive in the opener netted third and his defence of second in race two against Turkington was impressive. His decision to let Sutton by and bank points underlined Ingram's maturity and he has recovered ground lost at Thruxton.



COLIN TURKINGTON

8/10

WSR BMW 125i M Sport

Left Croft winless this year, but still leads the table and escaped the weekend with no dramas. Banking points in each race and keeping out of trouble was key to Turkington's weekend and while the trophy cabinet gained only modestly, titles are won by such weekends. He is looking mighty strong right now, but will be mindful of the threats coming.



SENNA PROCTOR

6/10

Power Maxed Vauxhall

Proctor turned around his Oulton woes with three solid drives that were topped by a podium in race three. A spirited attack of Ingram showed Proctor can run with the more experienced drivers. The Astra didn't seem as assured at Croft as it had earlier in the season. Proctor worked hard to overcome any deficiencies.



ANDREW JORDAN

7/10

WSR BMW 125i M Sport

Given that the BMW seemed to have all the stability of an excited gibbon on a rocking boat, AJ did a stellar job. He had a spin in race one but that was to do with a lack of grip disappearing rather than a lack of talent, and three points finishes have brought him up to fourth in the championship. It looked like hard work, though!



DAN LLOYD

7/10

BTC Norlin Honda Civic

He was the best of the troubled Honda pack through qualifying and race one and showed he wasn't fazed by the opposition in a robust race two battle with Neal. Used speed and tyre management in race three to pull away and take a win to become the 12th different victor of 2018.



TOM CHILTON

6/10

Motorbase Ford Focus

More podiums, more pace but frustratingly as yet no wins. Chilton's smile was on display after second in race three, his best of the season, and his commitment to go one better probably did for his Dunlops. With limited late-race grip, Chilton used experience to fend off Proctor and did so. Wins can't be far away.



SAM TORDOFF

6/10

Motorbase Ford Focus

Perhaps more was expected of Tordoff, especially in the opener with no weight, but a decent qualifying run and two fourth places showed good consistency. He races hard, too, grabbing a place from Ingram at the flag in the final contest and as he is racking up points, so he is creeping towards the top 10 in a season affected by reliability woes early on.



ASH SUTTON

9/10

Team BMR Subaru Levorg

Only contact with Jordan stopped a perfect score for the champion. He was stunning in qualifying, taking the top time, and he didn't put a wheel wrong in races one and two. Ballast-free or ballast-maximum he was a winner and looked strong and assured. Not only that but he has been catapulted into the championship fight. Top job.



STEPHEN JELLEY

4/10

Purviser BMW 125i M Sport

It promised so much as the older engine was given a boost break but contact in race one put him on the back foot. Damage repaired, 16th in race three showed potential but the day could have been so much better.

ROB COLLARD

5/10

WSR BMW 125i M Sport

But for a puncture and then a spin in race two, Collard would have enjoyed a better weekend. He qualified seventh and was involved in a race one battle but again it was race three in which he came into his own, leaping from 28th to 10th.

ADAM MORGAN

5/10

Ciceley Racing Mercedes

Mercedes, set-up and Croft aren't happy bedfellows. Morgan battled for little reward. His race two pace was exceptional until a jump start penalty, but Morgan is proving he can race better than ever. He is fast and adept at overtaking.

CHRIS SMILEY

5/10

BTC Norlin Honda Civic

Smiley was always on the back foot after struggling for grip in qualifying. Raced as hard as ever and was relieved just to be at the track after the damage sustained at Oulton: he didn't even book his flight until Thursday evening!

TOM OLIPHANT

3/10

Ciceley Racing Mercedes

The Merc always seems to struggle at Croft and it was Oliphant that managed to get the best set-up out of his car. A top 10 in race three was the highlight – but then he was slapped with a 9.5s penalty for contact, which dropped him back.

SUPPORTS

'Coates hit the front as Dorlin struggled'
Renault UK Clio Cup, below



Photos: Jakob Ebrey

Adam's advantage no longer small

Ginetta Junior

By Dan Mason

Two wins gave Adam Smalley breathing space in the Ginetta Junior Championship, sharing honours with Elite Motorsport team-mate Fin Green at Croft.

Smalley was promoted to pole position when top qualifier Ruben Del Sarte's 10-place grid penalty from Oulton Park was applied, and enjoyed a "perfect" lights-to-flag performance in races one and two.

Tyre damage ended Luke Browning's race one chase, releasing an intense four-car battle for the remaining podium spots.

Clio Cup Junior regular Gustav Burton was among those and thought a Patrick Kibble mistake "opened the door to a first podium" at Tower Bend. The pair ran out of room, Kibble continuing in second while Burton pirouetted to hand rookie James Taylor his maiden podium.

Browning and Del Sarte recovered to race two podium finishes behind Smalley, before Green grabbed a breakthrough win in the final contest, having been eased wide in the opener while defending third.

A rapid start and bold overtake on Browning propelled Green from fourth to first, hanging on for victory from Browning and Louis Foster.

Kibble's late dive at the hairpin pitched Smalley into a spin, and he recovered to sixth to cement a 38-point lead.

Coates retakes points lead on his home turf

Renault UK Clio Cup

By Stephen Brunson

Local man Max Coates returned to the top of the Renault UK Clio Cup standings for the first time since Donington Park following a win and a second place at Croft.

A poor start from pole prevented a double win for the Team Pyro driver as WDE Motorsport's Paul Rivett claimed his second win of the year in a largely processional opening encounter.

Coates' championship rival James Dorlin endured a torrid weekend. Sixth in the opening race following contact with third-placed Daniel Rowbottom and a first-lap retirement in race two was scant reward for the erstwhile points leader.

Race two was disputed in much the same fashion, with Coates beating Rivett off the line.

The pair remained close throughout the 12-lap race but Coates was never seriously threatened en route to his third win of the year by just 0.7s.

Another victim of the Rowbottom/Dorlin contact in race one, Lee Pattison secured the final spot on the podium in third.

"Once I got the better of Paul at the start, I was comfortable. It's mega to win at home and I just hope it continues," beamed an ecstatic Coates.

BOARDLEY PRODUCES A GINETTA MASTERCLASS

Team Hard driver takes a hat-trick of wins to close on leader Ladell



King was stripped of race-three win



Boardley was at the front for most of the weekend

Ginetta GT4 Supercup

By Dan Mason

A tyre management masterclass from Carl Boardley meant he tightened up the Ginetta GT4 Supercup title battle with a hat-trick of wins at Croft.

The championship lead narrowly remains with Charlie Ladell, despite Boardley completing the first treble since Tom Wrigley in 2016 after Harry King was stripped of victory in race three.

Tyre preservation in sweltering temperatures was the talking point of the weekend, a bold qualifying call from Boardley setting the tone.

"I only intended to do one flyer to save tyres" was the Team Hard man's joker card, his effort good enough for the front row. Angus Fender claimed a maiden pole but was beaten into the first turn by Boardley, who survived a mid-race scare when his car briefly lost power after a wide moment at Clervaux to win.

A lock-up for Fender resulted in a flat-

spotted tyre and subsequent tumble to fourth place, Ladell picking up the pieces to limit the damage in second ahead of King.

Boardley doubled up in race two as Ladell gave chase once more, Fender utilising fresh tyres to hold off Reece Somerfield's close attentions.

King fell victim to a left-rear puncture and would be next to opt for new rubber from ninth in the final race, a call that looked to have paid off handsomely.

The second of two collisions with Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke – who spun after contact with King at the chicane in race one – put the Century Motorsport man out and left King with a loose bonnet for the remainder of the final race.

Charging to third before a safety car interruption, King made light work of Jac Constable on the restart and moved to the front with a late lunge at Clervaux on Boardley. "We took the hit just to have a chance on new tyres," said King. "I was confident."

The earlier incident would rear its head however, and King was later excluded from the result.

Boardley was promoted to the top step after braving it around the outside of Ladell braking for Tower Bend, finishing a nervy last lap with a rapidly-deflating tyre.

Constable grabbed his first podium of the season ahead of Ladell, who slipped to fourth battling severe tyre degradation. It was the first time he failed to visit the podium all season, in what he described as the "slowest" race of the year.

Poleman Somerfield was another to suffer in ninth place, his chances of a first Supercup win since 2015 dashed by a lap-three mistake.

Michael Crees returned to the top of the Am class with two hard-fought victories, sandwiching Jason Minshaw's race two success. Crees fended off Minshaw in a tense opener, recovering from contact with Dave Brooks in the third.

Hauger takes a double as Jewiss extends the gap at the top of standings

British F4

By Stephen Brunson

Having inherited his maiden British F4 victory last time out at Oulton Park, Arden's Dennis Hauger claimed two out of three wins at Croft last weekend, while Kiern Jewiss extended his championship lead.

The Norwegian set his stall out on Saturday morning by edging out Jewiss for pole position by a mere 0.03s and securing a comfortable lights-to-flag victory in race one.

Hauger made the most of two new tyres to take a similarly dominant win in the final race of the weekend to now lie 85 points behind race two

winner Jewiss in the standings.

"I'm so happy to get the results this weekend. I now just have to keep focused and try to close the gap to Kiern in the championship," a jubilant Hauger said post-race.

Hauger's near-perfect getaway off the line was key to securing his first on-the-road victory of the season by under half a second from Jewiss, with Arden team-mate Patrik Pasma third.

Pasma was unable to repeat his podium in race two as the Finn clumsily collided with reversed grid polesitter Johnathan Hoggard. The Fortec man recovered to finish ninth as Jewiss claimed the win from Paavo Tonteri and Hauger.

Hauger and Jewiss remained the men to beat in the final race, having stretched clear of a frantic battle for the final step on the podium between Tonteri and the charging Jack Doohan.

Australian Doohan produced a sensational drive from the back of the grid to divebomb Tonteri at the hairpin to steal third on the last lap of the race.

Ayrton Simmons' title hopes took a knock following a series of engine overheating issues, which limited the JHR driver to two lowly fifth places. The Anglo-Spaniard had looked set to challenge for race two spoils but was denied by an opening lap engine failure.

RESULTS

Ginetta GT4 Supercup (10 laps) 1 Carl Boardley (Team Hard); 2 Charles Ladell (Rob Boston Racing) +1.065s; 3 Harry King (Elite Motorsport); 4 Angus Fender (Century Motorsport); 5 Reece Somerfield (Privateer); 6 Carl Shield (AK Automotive). FL Fender 1m24.287s (90.76mph). P Fender. S 16. **Race 2 (15 laps)** 1 Boardley; 2 Ladell +2.055s; 3 Fender; 4 Somerfield; 5 Jac Constable (Fix Auto Racing); 6 Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke (Century). FL Ladell 1m25.079s (89.92mph). P Boardley. S 16. **Race 3 (16 laps)** 1 King; 2 Boardley +7.656s; 3 Constable; 4 Ladell; 5 Shield; 6 Michael Crees (Century). FL King 1m26.175s (88.77mph). P Somerfield. S 16. **Points (after 11/23 rounds)** 1 Ladell 347; 2 Boardley 339; 3 King 224; 4 Tom Roche (Rob Boston Racing) 200; 5 Shield 188; 6 Constable 176.

Ginetta Junior (8 laps) 1 Adam Smalley (Elite Motorsport); 2 Patrick Kibble (TCR) +7.435s; 3 James Taylor (Richardson Racing); 4 Ruben Del Sarte (TCR); 5 Louis Foster (Elite); 6 James Hedley (Elite). FL Smalley 1m41.608s (75.29mph). P Smalley. S 19. **Race 2 (8 laps)** 1 Smalley; 2 Luke Browning (Richardson Racing) +2.866s; 3 Del Sarte; 4 Fin Green (Elite); 5 Kibble; 6 Taylor. FL Smalley 1m41.258s (75.55mph). P Smalley. S 19. **Race 3 (8 laps)** 1 Green; 2 Browning +0.516s; 3 Foster; 4 Kibble; 5 Taylor; 6 Smalley. FL Browning 1m42.464s (74.66mph). P Smalley. S 19. **Points (after 12/26 rounds)** 1 Smalley 332; 2 Foster 294; 3 Browning 273; 4 Del Sarte 238; 5 Kibble 233; 6 Green 193.

Renault UK Clio Cup (12 laps) 1 Paul Rivett (WDE Motorsport); 2 Max Coates (Team Pyro) +0.297s; 3 Daniel Rowbottom (DRM); 4 Michael Epps (Matrix Motorsport); 5 Dan Zelos (WDE); 6 James Dorlin (Westbourne Motorsport). FL Rivett 1m32.283s (82.90mph). P Coates. S 19. **Race 2 (12 laps)** 1 Coates; 2 Rivett +0.782s; 3 Lee Pattison (WDE); 4 Rowbottom; 5 Zelos; 6 Epps. FL Pattison 1m32.589s (82.62mph). P Coates. S 19. **Points (after 10/18 rounds)** 1 Coates 208; 2 Rivett 202; 3 Dorlin 177; 4 Rowbottom 138; 5 Epps 123; 6 Jack McCarthy (Pyro) 114.

British Formula 4 (15 laps) 1 Dennis Hauger (Arden); 2 Kiern Jewiss (Double R) +0.489s; 3 Patrik Pasma (Arden); 4 Paavo Tonteri (Double R); 5 Ayrton Simmons (JHR Developments); 6 Johnathan Hoggard (Fortec). FL Hauger 1m21.566s (83.79mph). P Hauger. S 14. **Race 2 (14 laps)** 1 Jewiss; 2 Tonteri +3.554s; 3 Hauger; 4 Jack Doohan (Arden); 5 Josh Skelton (JHR); 6 Manuel Sulaiman (JHR). FL Doohan 1m22.347s (82.90mph). P Hoggard. S 14. **Race 3 (14 laps)** 1 Hauger; 2 Jewiss +1.688s; 3 Doohan; 4 Tonteri; 5 Simmons; 6 Seb Priaulx (Arden). FL Hauger 1m22.289s (82.97mph). P Hauger. S 14. **Points (after 15/30 rounds)** 1 Jewiss 267; 2 Simmons 210; 3 Hauger 182; 4 Doohan 164; 5 Tonteri 149; 6 Priaulx 118.



Dennis Hauger doubled up in F4 races



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RACING REPORTS

KIRKISTOWN: 500MRCI BY RICHARD YOUNG
JUNE 22/23

Photos: Roy Dempster

MURRAY MAKES IT SIX WINS IN NATIONAL FF1600S AFTER KIRKISTOWN BRACE



Cooper (6) didn't get the better of Murray (5)

Niall Murray may or may not appreciate the music of Meatloaf but the singer's hit 'Two Out of Three Ain't Bad' certainly sums up Murray's visit to Kirkistown against the rest of the National Formula Ford 1600 contenders.

Having placed his Bernard Dolan-run Van Diemen RF99 on pole for the first of the three races, run on Friday evening, the championship leader made no mistakes once he found a way past Luke Cooper (Swift SC16), who had made a better start from the front row.

The safety car made an appearance when Nico Gruber's Ray had to be removed from the Hairpin run-off, but as soon as that was cleared Murray took control, shadowed by Cooper all the way to the finish. Michael Eastwell (Spectrum) completed the podium party, while local 'wild card' Alan Davidson had worked his '89 Mondiale into a strong fourth by the end, having started back in 14th.

Hugo Bentley-Ellis didn't have such a good time, as after starting third he got no further than Colonial on the opening lap before he fell foul of the inevitable shoving match and found himself off-piste and out of the party.

The following morning Murray did it

again in race two, with Cooper once more right on his tail and finishing even closer – just 0.101s behind. Eastwell just managed to keep Kevin Mills teammate Jordan Dempsey at bay for third spot as the two Spectrums crossed the line separated by just 0.04s.

This time though, Davidson didn't cross the line at all, and neither did Jamie Thorburn after the pair came together at Fishermans just after half-distance.

The third race, where the top eight finishers from the second started in reverse order, put Murray and Cooper back on row four while the front row contained the Medinas of Rory Smith and Matt Round-Garrido.

The charge down to Colonial produced the usual pushing and shoving but this time with Murray in the middle of the pack, he was tagged mid-corner and delayed. Up front Round-Garrido got ahead early on but behind him things had barely settled down when Cooper and Bentley-Ellis clashed at the Hairpin.

The Swift pilot ended up in the tyre wall while Bentley-Ellis continued to the finish but a meeting with stewards after the race resulted in his removal from seventh place. Meanwhile it was



Cochrane won both HRCA Historic Sports Car races in Sunbeam Tiger

safety car time again and it took six laps before everything was tidied away and the race restarted.

It didn't last long though, as Jonathan Browne and Carter Williams came together at the Hairpin. The resultant scattering match also removed Murray from the order along with Thorburn. Out came the safety car again, but this time it stayed out, taking the chequered flag ahead of Round-Garrido and the consistent Eastwell with Dempsey third and the hard-charging Davidson, who had started from

the back, claiming fourth place.

The two other FF1600 races during the meeting, for Northern Ireland Championship honours also featured Davidson, who won the first from Noel Robinson and Round-Garrido after leader David McCullough coasted to a halt on the final lap when his tank ran dry. Having put more fuel in, McCullough was back for race two and finished this time, although he had to give best to Robinson, who beat him by a nose. Round-Garrido again took third spot ahead of Davidson.

WINNERS

Future Classic Saloons and Ford Fiestas	Armstrong (BMW M3)
Race 1: Anthony Kelly (Honda Civic)	National Formula Ford 1600 Championship
Race 2: Timothy Duggan (SEAT Ibiza)	Race 1: Niall Murray (Van Diemen RF99)
HRCA Historic Sports Cars	Race 2: Niall Murray (Van Diemen RF99)
Race 1: Jackie Cochrane (Sunbeam Tiger)	Race 3: Matt Round-Garrido (Medina JL17)
Race 2: Jackie Cochrane (Sunbeam Tiger)	Northern Ireland Formula Ford 1600
Libre Saloons	Race 1: Alan Davidson (Mondiale M89S)
Race 1: Ulick Burke (Honda Integra)	Race 2: Noel Robinson (Van Diemen JL012K)
Race 2: Andrew	

A brace of Libre Saloon races provided plenty of entertainment as Ulick Burke took the first in his Honda Integra ahead of the BMW M3 of Andrew Armstrong with series leader James Turkington third. Race two went to Armstrong while Burke just managed to hold Turkington at bay for second, despite having to cope without power steering for the closing few laps.

The Mondello-based Future Classics provided more tin-top action. Run in two classes, the faster 'Super Future Classic' section race one was won by Anthony Kelly (Honda Civic) and Timothy Duggan (SEAT Ibiza) claimed race two. Among the slightly less pacy group, leader over the line was Paul Flanagan's Fiat Punto in the first race while MJ Farrell's Toyota Levin did the business in the second.

A handful of Kirkistown Ford Fiestas ran on a separate grid and produced wins for Eorann O'Neill and Ricky Hull.

Meanwhile, the presence of Jackie Cochrane and his mighty Sunbeam Tiger put the results of both HRCA Historic Sports Car races beyond any doubt. John McCandless (Crossle 47S) and Bernard Foley (MGB V8) followed him home to complete the podium on both occasions.



Alan Stewart went for a spin in his BMW during the second Libre Saloon race



Future Classic Saloons race two win went to Duggan in SEAT Ibiza (119)

RACING REPORTS

ROCKINGHAM: BRSCC BY MARK PAULSON
JUNE 23/24

Photos: Mick Walker

Jack Harding narrowed the Mazda MX-5 Supercup's three-way title fight with a double success at Rockingham.

A lightning start, allied to opportunism, lifted Harding from fifth on race three's reversed grid to a second-corner lead. As the pack then concertinaed on the run to Yentwood, Harding's title rivals Luke Herbert and James Blake-Baldwin – the past two champions – made contact, and Blake-Baldwin was spat into the gravel. From there, he mounted a superb recovery and set the fastest lap while in traffic as he climbed from last to sixth at the flag.

Harding added his seven-second victory to a much closer win in race one, in which his battle with polesitter Blake-Baldwin allowed Herbert onto their tail and all three finished within 1s. The same trio battled in race two, Blake-Baldwin triumphing with Herbert left to fend off Harding in the closing stages. Herbert could manage only fourth in race three, as Steve Roberts and Aidan Hills completed the podium, cutting his points advantage to two over Blake-Baldwin and Harding who are tied.

In his third year of trying, Ryan Faulconbridge secured his first **Fiesta Championship** podium – doing it in style by winning the opener from pole position. “In all honesty, my podium's well overdue,” he said after withstanding constant pressure from Richard Ashmole, who eventually slipped to third behind Myles Baker. “Pole obviously gives you a massive advantage,” added Faulconbridge.

Championship leader Harry Gooding took a maiden senior victory in race two, passing Baker and Faulconbridge within half a lap. He then added a second in race three,

mugging Faulconbridge at Tarzan on lap two, then pulling clear for a comfortable win from Jamie Going and Tom Hutchins.

With his car up for sale, Rob Sayell scored a pair of wins on what he hopes will be his final outing in **F1000** before focusing on his son's karting career. There was little to choose between Sayell, Paul Butcher and champion Michael Watton in race one, the trio finishing in that order. Butcher broke his run of second places by winning race two, getting to the front quicker than Watton and Sayell from the reversed grid.

When Watton lost the back end at Gracelands on the opening lap of race three, he took Butcher with him, giving Sayell a clear run to the flag. Dan Clowes and Adam Walker completed the podium from debutant Rob Welham, as Watton and Butcher recovered to fifth and seventh.

James Waite and Magnus Kriklywi remain the only two winners in **Fiesta Junior** this year as the pair took a win apiece. Waite, who rolled at Cadwell Park, claimed the opener after on-the-road winner Kriklywi's robust move at Rockingham Curve earned him a 2s penalty. Pre-meeting championship leader Isaac Smith was able to keep pace with the leading duo in race two, after a broken driveshaft left him stranded on the grid for race one.

Jack Ashton had to share the **MG Metro** spoils with his brother Andrew after retiring from race two when the gear lever sheared off in his hand. Dick Trevett, second in both races, pressed hard but was unable to find a way past.

Traffic helped Paul Blackburn ease clear in the first **Production GTi** race from Simon Hill, who retired in a cloud of smoke early in race two, won by Martyn Walsh.

HARDING'S MX-5 BRACE NARROWS TITLE BATTLE



Harding (43) beat Blake-Baldwin (4)



Sayell making last F1000 races count

RACE WINNERS

F1000 Race 1: Rob Sayell Race 2: Paul Butcher Race 3: Rob Sayell	Nippon Challenge, Tricolore Trophy & Multi Marques Race 1: Tony Hunter (Renault Clio) Race 2: Tony Hunter (Renault Clio)
Fiesta Championship (ST) Race 1: Ryan Faulconbridge (ST) Race 2: Harry Gooding (ST) Race 3: Harry Gooding (ST)	OSS Race 1: Josh Smith (Radical PR6) Race 2: Josh Smith (Radical PR6) Race 3: Josh Smith (Radical PR6)
Fiesta Junior Race 1: James Waite Race 2: Magnus Kriklywi	Porsche Championship Race 1: Adam Southgate Race 2: Adam Southgate Race 3: Adam Southgate
Mazda MX-5 Supercup Race 1: Jack Harding Race 2: James Blake-Baldwin Race 3: Jack Harding	Production GTi Race 1: Paul Blackburn (Mk5) Race 2: Martyn Walsh (Mk5)
MG Metro Cup Race 1: Jack Ashton Race 2: Andrew Ashton	

BRANDS HATCH: MSVR BY MARK LIBBETER
JUNE 23

Photos: Gary Hawkins

Mark Holme recorded a memorable maiden **Equipe GTS** race win in his MGB at Brands Hatch, overcoming a safety car period that sparked a level of controversy.

Holme had been part of a five-way battle for third in the early laps, while the Triumph TR4 of Chris Ryan pursued Mark Ashworth's TVR Grantura Mk3 for the lead. Shortly before half-distance, Jonathan Smare spun his Lotus Elite into the barrier exiting Druids. Confusion followed in the ensuing caution period as Ryan suddenly appeared in the lead after Ashworth had slowed in the belief he had seen a safety car board. Amid the uncertainty, Holme and Marc Gordon were among a handful of drivers to make timely mandatory pitstops.

Ashworth was sidelined by a wheel hub problem when racing resumed, while any lingering doubts concerning Ryan's claim for the win were ended when he retired five laps from the finish. Holme was the grateful beneficiary, leading home Gordon's Lotus Elite SR and Rob Cull's Grantura.

Cull finished two places higher in his MGA in the **Equipe GTS Pre '63** contest following a dramatic conclusion to the race. Post pitstops, Cull joined Gordon's Lotus Elite S2 and the Jaguar XK150S of Paul Kennelly in a thrilling three-way lead tussle. Kennelly held the advantage heading into the final lap until a puncture sent him spinning off at Paddock Hill Bend, helping Cull seal victory. “I couldn't live with the pace early on so I decided to protect my tyres before going for it in the second half of the race and that's the result,” he said.

FIRST EQUIPE GTS SPOILS FOR HOLME



Holme (91) rose from sixth to win

After powering into the lead from the outside of the front row, Steve Watton proved unstoppable in the **Jack Fairman Cup** encounter in his Turner Sports. Mark Ellis claimed second in his MGA TC while in the battle for third.

Rob Newall's hopes of challenging Oliver Llewellyn came to a spectacular end when his Jaguar XK120 lost a wheel at Clearways. Llewellyn steered his smart-looking Allard J2 to the final podium spot thereafter despite having to serve a drivethrough penalty

for a safety car infringement.

In the first of two **BMW Club Car** races, Dave Heasman made a superb start from fifth on the grid to take the early initiative from polesitter Gary Hufford. Hopes of an exciting battle between the pair disappeared, though, when Heasman was forced into retirement as his car “went into limp-home mode” on lap seven. Hufford reeled off the remaining laps in relative comfort to win from Kirk Armitage. Former Kumho BMW class C champion

Paul Travers took third ahead of Hugh Gurney. Hufford's margin of victory over Armitage was tighter in race two, while Gurney tipped the third-place battle in his favour following a minor excursion for Travers at Graham Hill Bend.

Gavin Dunn was another BMW driver eager for success in the sole **AMOC Intermarque** race, having narrowly been beaten by Robert Hollyman's Porsche 964 in the Oulton Park opener last month. The duo ran close early on

but a trip into the Paddock gravel for Dunn led to an unscheduled pitstop, dropping him to fifth. Hollyman went on to secure his second successive win in the category, despite a valiant pursuit from Richard Higgins in his Porsche Club Championship-specification 996.

Grahame Tilley lapped the entire thinly-supported **GT Challenge** field on route to a crushing win in his Ginetta G55 ahead of the BMW M3 GT4 of Edward Leigh and Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird.

RACE WINNERS

AMOC Intermarque Championship Robert Hollyman (Porsche 964)
BMW Car Club Race 1: Gary Hufford (BMW E46 M3) Race 2: Gary Hufford (BMW E46 M3)
Equipe GTS Mark Holme (MGB)
Equipe GTS Pre '63 Rob Cull (MGA)
GT Challenge Grahame Tilley (Ginetta G55 Supercup)
Jack Fairman Cup/Jaguar XK Challenge Steve Watton (Turner Sports)

SILVERSTONE: MSVR BY GRAHAM KEILLOH

JUNE 23/24

Photos: Ollie Read

It was honours even between Radical SR1 Cup championship leaders James Pinkerton and Ryan Harper-Ellam as both took a win and second place from Silverstone.

Pinkerton led almost all of the opening race after taking the lead from poleman Harper-Ellam by having the inside line for Turn 1 at the rolling start.

Harper-Ellam nearly deprived Pinkerton on the last lap by getting on the inside at Luffield and looked set to outdrag him to the line – but was denied by just 0.006s.

“We came across some backmarkers and we bunched up,” said Pinkerton. “On the last lap, I threw one corner away and Ryan was there ready to pounce by luckily I held onto it.”

“Race one was the best race I’ve ever had,” noted Harper-Ellam. “I definitely thought I had it, we were rubbing all the way to the line. When I changed up to third it missed, I had to double pull the paddle and that lost me a centimetre!”

Harper-Ellam made amends in race two by squeezing past Pinkerton on lap one, again at Luffield, then leading him home comfortably.

“I learnt a lot from the first race; I knew I had to get the pass done early,” Harper-Ellam concluded.

“I think I was pushing too hard in the wrong places,” said Pinkerton. “I just got my thoughts together and went again and got some fast laps – managed to close the gap but not enough.”

As Harper-Ellam got two points for two pole positions and Pinkerton two points for two fastest laps, both took 77 points away from Silverstone. Harper-Ellam remains 27 points off Pinkerton

TENSE DUEL IN RADICAL SR1 CUP



Harper-Ellam (l) and Pinkerton

RACE WINNERS

F3 Cup Championship Race 1: Cian Carey (F308 VW) Race 2: Cian Carey (F308 VW) Race 3: Darragh Daly (F308 Mercedes)	Race 2: Tony Bennett (Caterham)
Heritage Formula Ford 1600 Race 1: Ollie White (Van Diemen) Race 2: Ollie White (Van Diemen)	MSVT Trackday Championship Classes S & A Jamie Gibbs/Ryan Gibbs (BMW M3)
Mini Challenge Cooper Pro/Am Race 1: Kyle Reid Race 2: Robbie Dalgleish	MSVT Trackday Championship Classes B, C & D Gary Burstow (BMW 328i Coupe)
Mini Challenge Cooper S Race 1: Will Fairclough Race 2: Jono Davis	MSVT Teams Trophy Ty Boothroyd/Michael Pensavalle (BMW M3)
MSVR All-Comers Race 1: Tony Bennett (Caterham)	Radical SR1 Cup Race 1: James Pinkerton Race 2: Ryan Harper-Ellam

at the head of championship table.

Kyle Reid’s clean sweep of **Mini Challenge Cooper Pro** wins ended at Silverstone. He won the opening race, heading a close fight with Simon Walton in second and Robbie Dalgleish in third. But Reid was beaten by Dalgleish in race two after starting from sixth on the reversed grid and being nudged sideways early on.

Alex Nevill continued his clean sweep of **Cooper Am** wins, beating Andy Godfrey

in both races by less than half-a-second.

Cooper S championship leader Will Fairclough took a win and a second place while Rob Austin – who entered the event two points off Fairclough – claimed second and fifth. Fairclough won the opener then followed Jono Davis home in race two after Davis passed at two-thirds distance. Davis had also battled with Fairclough in race one but suffered a puncture.

Cian Carey took the opening two wins

of the **F3 Cup Championship** triple-header. In the final race he collided with championship leader Stuart Wiltshire as he tried to defend the lead into Brooklands.

Wiltshire retired while Carey dropped to third and was classified fifth after a penalty for exceeding track limits. Darragh Daly inherited the win.

Championship rivals Wiltshire and Shane Kelly both took a second and third place from Silverstone, but Kelly missed

the final race after hitting engine problems on the grid.

Ollie White took both wins from the second **Heritage FF1600** meeting of the year, which included charging through from the back of the grid in the second race.

The opening race was red-flagged early on when Jack Clayton and Scott Guthrie left the track on oil at Copse, the former sustaining a broken pelvis in three places and broken ribs.

OULTON PARK: BARC BY PETER SCHERER

JUNE 23

Photos: Steve Jones

Kumho BMW champion Garrie Whittaker returned to winning ways with a double victory in his E36 M3.

In race one, Piers Reid had started to build a lead over Darren Fielding and Whittaker but, after a change for second on lap three, the gap gradually came down. Colin Wells also ousted Fielding into Old Hall a couple of laps later and the top three began to close.

Exiting Deer Leap three laps from home, Whittaker made his move as they lapped backmarkers and was ahead into Old Hall, soon making it decisive. Wells had shaken off Fielding, then closed on Reid and there was little between them at the flag.

Whittaker took charge from the opening lap in race two, with Reid settling in second, as Wells began a duel with Fielding again as the pair hunted down James Card in third.

Wells was soon into fourth as both he and Fielding demoted Card on lap seven, but both were also fighting to clear a 10-second jump start penalty.

As Whittaker sealed his second win, Reid slowed on the last lap, handing second and third on the road to Wells and Fielding, but the earlier penalties came into play. Wells retained second and Card was confirmed in third, from Fielding and the luckless Reid.

Although Pete Sparrow led for most of an action packed **2CV** opener, Ainslie Bousfield was ahead into Lodge for the final time when the pair made heavy contact. Sparrow still led over the line, but a post-race penalty dropped him to fifth and promoted Lien Davies to the top step of the podium. The race-long duelling Nick Roads and Mathew Hollis completed the podium, as Bousfield limped home fourth with a rear wheel hanging off.

Sparrow made amends in race two after a terrific scrap with Luca Proietti, which was finally settled at Shell

Hairpin on the last lap. It was just as close behind, but once Simon Clarke went agricultural at Old Hall, Tom Perry managed to keep Mick Storey at bay to complete the podium finishers.

It was a lights-to-flag win for Paul Rose’s Saker in the **CNC Heads Sports Saloons**, but team-mate Steve Harris retired from second with engine problems, which then promoted Paul Woolfitt’s Lotus Exige.

With four laps to go Woolfitt was out too, though, when the fuel pump fuse failed handing second to Danny Bird’s Spire and third to Luke Armiger’s Vauxhall Tigra.

Both **Britcar Endurance Sprint** races were won by Richard Neary’s Mercedes-AMG GT3. In the first, Ross Wylie’s Ferrari 458 GT3 sprinted clear and lead comfortably until handing to David Mason after 17 laps.

Neary soon relieved Mason of the lead, with Rose’s Saker and the Porsche 911 of Michael Igoe/Adam Wilcox following. But Rose had to serve a penalty for a pitstop infringement, which handed Wilcox a clear second and left Rose chasing Steve Harris’ Saker for third. Luck wasn’t on Harris’ side, as it “just stopped” on the final lap, handing Rose third. Erstwhile leaders Wylie/Mason completed the top four.

The second race became an early duel between Wylie and Neary, with both having a share of the lead. But after the stops, Neary took charge again to secure his second win over Igoe/Wilcox, with Marcus Fothergill/Dave Benett’s Porsche 997 third.

The six-car **Endurance** race was virtually a non-event, as Stewart Lines/Mat Jackson’s Seat Cupra TCR was disqualified as the team had exceeded the maximum time a driver could be in the car, handing a comfortable win to Mike McCollum/Sean Cooper’s KTM X-Bow.

WHITTAKER’S RETURN TO GLORY



Kumho BMW wins went to Whittaker

RACE WINNERS

Classic 2CV Race 1: Lien Davies Race 2: Peter Sparrow	Britcar Endurance Championship – Sprint Race 1: Richard Neary (Mercedes-AMG GT3) Race 2: Richard Neary (Mercedes-AMG GT3)
CNC Heads Sports Saloons Paul Rose (Saker RAFX S1-400)	Kumho BMW Race 1: Garrie Whittaker (BMW E36 M3) Race 2: Garrie Whittaker (BMW E36 M3)
Britcar Endurance Championship – Enduro Mike McCollum/Sean Cooper (KTM X-Bow)	



Neary claimed Britcar Sprint wins

REPORT: THUNDER 500

Photos: mkpics.net

Graham Brown saw the three-time world champ lay down a marker



Haird (115) led from the start to win the T500

RESULTS

National Hot Rod Thunder 500
When: June 23 Where: Foxhall Heath Laps: Final - 40

POS	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Chris Haird	Vauxhall Tigra	10m 13.044s
2	Carl Sloan	Vauxhall Tigra	+2.975s
3	Jason Kew	Ginetta G40R	+3.525s
4	Billy Wood	Vauxhall Tigra	+3.836s
5	Rob McDonald	Vauxhall Tigra	+4.794s
6	Colin Smith	Vauxhall Tigra	+6.682s
7	Gavin Murray	Vauxhall Tigra	+9.283s
8	Aaron Dew	Ginetta G40R	+10.004s
9	Jack Blood	Vauxhall Tigra	+11.239s
10	Terry Hunn	Mazda RX-8	+12.407s

11 Danny Smith (Vauxhall Tigra); 12 Paul Frost (Ginetta G40R); 13 John van den Bosch (Peugeot 206cc); 14 Bradley Dynes (Ginetta G40R); 15 Colin Hitch (Peugeot 206); 16 Alistair Lowe (Tigra); R Carl Waller-Barrett (Tigra) 33 laps/handling; R Lee Pepper (Peugeot 206cc) 30 laps/handling; R Jeff Riordan (Tigra) 17 laps/flat; R Lewis Shelley (Tigra) 17 laps/misfire; R Chris Crane (Tigra) 7 laps/clutch; R Dick Hillard (Tigra) 0 laps/crash. Heat one: 1 Sloan; 2 Hillard; 3 Riordan; 4 Waller-Barrett; 5 D. Smith; 6 Haird. Heat two: 1 Murray; 2 Wood; 3 Haird; 4 Kew; 5 Crane; 6 C. Smith.

HAIRD STAKES HIS CLAIM

Defending world champion Chris Haird won the traditional Hot Rod World Final warm-up event, eventually crossing the line around a quarter of a lap ahead of heat one winner, Ulsterman Carl Sloan.

Sloan did well to fend off challenges in the closing stages from Jason Kew and newly crowned points champion, Billy Wood.

Haird's form underlined the fact that he could yet take a fourth world championship in a couple of weeks, but, as Chris himself pointed out, many of the quicker drivers simply weren't in the Thunder 500 for him to compare himself against.

Indeed, as has become the norm, many world finalists gave preparation for the big July race priority over the T500, but the event still attracted a useful and

interesting entry of 21 cars.

The English contingent was bolstered by the return of honorary South African Dick Hillard, but an attempt to rejoin the class by Tony Moss in what looked to be a superbly prepared Vauxhall Tigra was thwarted by tyre legality issues.

Although not exactly overly familiar with the Foxhall track, Sloan's pole start gave him a decent shot at a win with which to kick off proceedings. And despite the front of the bonnet on the Tigra flapping about a trifle alarmingly, the Ulsterman went straight into the lead and within a couple of laps had begun building what was looking like an unassailable advantage at an early stage.

Hillard quickly settled into second from the second row of the grid but was not getting any peace with Irish racer Jeff Riordan virtually crawling all over him from the drop of the green flag. Their battle was slowing them up too, bringing the

Carl Waller-Barrett and Danny Smith dice over fourth place closer little by little.

The closing-up process got a big helping hand when Riordan misjudged the speed of his arrival on Hillard's bumper at one point, the Irishman having to check up suddenly. This allowed Hillard to escape for a while and also brought those behind Sloan a lot closer.

The rest of the placemen did eventually claw back the deficit to Hillard, but it was effectively all over by then, Sloan carrying a half-lap advantage all the way to the flag. The reversed grid for the second heat looked as though it could be something of a gift for outside front-row man Gavin Murray, who also won the second heat during last year's event.

Murray got away first and, with no immediate challengers, simply got his head down and worked at building a bigger and bigger lead. Chris Crane was the man trying to prevent that, although he wasn't being left alone to conduct the chase with Bradley Dynes attacking his position initially until he locked his brakes and dropped back. That brought Wood up onto Crane's shoulder with Haird right behind them too by half distance.

Wood and Haird both relegated Crane and were making great strides towards getting on terms with Murray, but Murray had seen it all before and wasn't easily flustered in any case.

Wood arrived on his tail with two laps to run, and Haird joined him soon afterwards, but the leader just stayed calm and in full control, the trio flashing under the chequers still in the same order.

The aggregate results formed a final grid with Haird on pole

position alongside Wood and heading up Sloan and Kew on row two with Riordan joining Waller-Barrett on the third rank.

Haird easily beat Wood down to Turn 1 at the off and that sealed the fate of the race right then and there, although Wood tried extremely hard to stay alongside throughout the opening lap, his determination only in the end allowing Sloan and Kew to overtake him.

The unfortunate Hillard got tagged by someone as the pack rushed the first turn, and got sent spinning into the marker tyres, making him an instant retirement.

In seemingly no time at all, Haird was off and running, the gap between himself and Sloan simply widening with each successive tour. Kew and Wood settled down to sparring over third, with CW-B and Colin Smith next up after they'd bypassed Riordan, who would soon be parked with a puncture. Haird was in fact suffering with a distinct lack of brakes but this problem seemed to have little effect on his pace, and he continued to draw further and further clear for the duration.

It became clear fairly early in proceedings that passing opportunities were going to be at a premium, but Rob McDonald still managed to move up several places as the laps dwindled, including one impressive manoeuvre which took him through an almost impossibly small gap between Waller-Barrett and a backmarker to snatch fifth place.

Waller-Barrett went out in any case as they neared the finish and, despite Kew's best last-minute efforts against Sloan, the rest of the placemen ran all the way to the flag in the same order.

CHRIS HAIRD Q&A



Haird again lifted the T500 laurels

Congratulations. How was that?

"Yes, fine really, apart from having braking issues all night. I have obviously bent one of the calipers so it doesn't sit square on the disc and keeps dragging on all the time."

You are fast with problems. How quick will you be when they are sorted?

"It will just make it a bit easier for me, hopefully! It was OK but if there had been someone on me then I might have been struggling, because I was pushing its brains out at the end, just with the brakes dragging on."

It is hard to tell your cars apart - is this the new one?

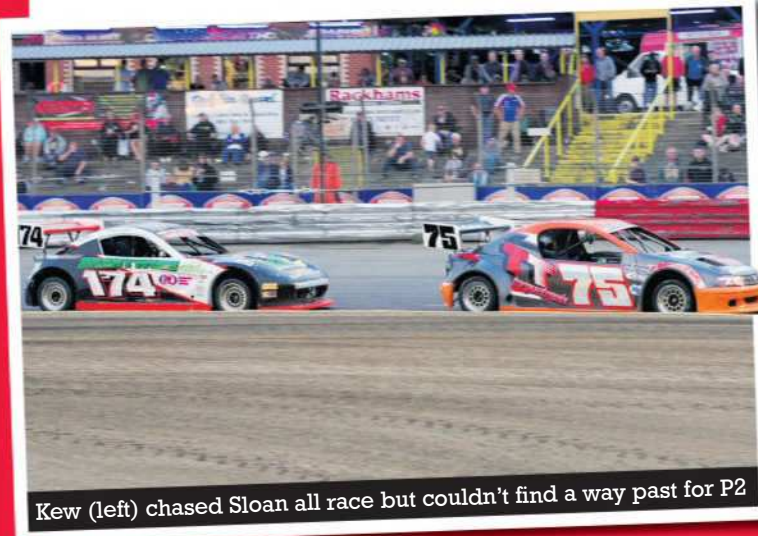
"No - this is the old one. It's the new-type wheels but on the old car."

Do you prefer the old one then?

"I'm comfy in this and that's the way I'll stay I think. It did it last year... and the little car is fast - it's a pleasure to drive it at the moment - apart from the brakes!"

Who do you think are going to be the men to watch at the World Final when we come back here?

"There's a lot of fast boys not here tonight, so you don't know do you? [Northern Irishman] Glenn [Bell] will be quick. Adam Hylands too: they're going to be fast. Every time I've raced against Glenn he's looked good - he's one of the best to come from over the water."



Kew (left) chased Sloan all race but couldn't find a way past for P2

SPORTING SCENE

Photos: Hal Ridge, Colin Casserley

Manning plots a RX comeback

Former British Rallycross Championship event winner Mike Manning is building a new Ford Fiesta Supercar to compete in British and European events, and plans to debut the car in September.

Manning left full-time rallycross Supercar competition to compete in European hillclimbs in recent years, but has returned in the Production 4x4 category of the BTRDA Clubmans Championship and this year with a Subaru Impreza in British RX Supercar.

"I'd like to do a few European events with the Fiesta, obviously we will mainly do the British but I want to have one last shot if I can go and do some big-time stuff before I pass it onto the boy [son, Liam]," Manning told *MN*. "We've been to watch a few events in Europe, the atmosphere is really good.

"We're never going to win anything in those events but it's just about going to be part of it."

The Ford Fiesta will use a longitudinally-mounted 580bhp Julian Godfrey engine coupled with Proflex suspension and a six-speed sequential gearbox.

Manning said: "I'm really looking forward to it, it should be a good car. There's a lot of big players in British RX but if we can be in the mix I'd be happy with that."

STARS JOIN AMERICAN RX

Block and Pastrana sign up for second round of new series

By Hal Ridge

American stars Ken Block and Travis Pastrana will race in the second round of the Americas Rallycross Championship at the Circuit of the Americas next month.

Block has teamed up with former Global Rallycross Championship race-winner Steve Arpin for 2018 and the pair will compete in the event driving the Ford Focus RS RX Supercars that Block and Andreas Bakkerud campaigned in the World Rallycross Championship in 2016 and 2017.

Block said: "I'm excited for a new rallycross series here in America. I enjoyed the last two years when I competed full-time in World RX, but to be able to take a short flight from my home in Utah and be able to race in my recently updated Ford Focus RS RX at COTA is just super convenient for me. We [Block and Arpin] have partnered on the technical and marketing aspects of

our respective rallycross programmes. It's going to be a lot of fun for both of us."

Arpin's Loenbro Motorsports team has been working on the redevelopment of the cars at its North Carolina base ahead of its first event in the US on July 14.

Pastrana, meanwhile, will race the Subaru Rally Team USA WRX STI driven in the ARX season-opener by David Higgins.

"I can't wait to get back into the 590bhp Subaru WRX STI rallycross car in Austin with the ARX series," said Pastrana, who will join ex-WRC drivers Patrik Sandell and Chris Atkinson in the Vermont SportsCar run team at COTA.

"Rallycross is a blast and fans are going to enjoy the track and all the action at COTA, I'm really looking forward to it."

The ARX series is led by former World RX racer winner Tanner Foust, who won the first round at Silverstone in Volkswagen Andretti Rallycross's Beetle Supercar.



New class started at Silverstone



Oliver took another victory in DS3

Solberg Jr continues his Rallycross hot streak with a fourth victory in Norway

Oliver Solberg claimed a fourth RallyX Nordic Supercar career victory and his second win of the season in round three at Grenland in Norway to take the points lead, as title rival Thomas Bryntesson retired in the semi-finals with broken suspension.

Solberg dominated the Norwegian round, setting the fastest time in Q1, Q2 and Q3 before winning both his semi-final and the final to score maximum points in his father

Petter's World Rallycross Championship-winning Citroen DS3 Supercar.

OlsbergsMSE driver Oliver Eriksson was second in a Ford Fiesta while the Hedstroms Motorsport Volkswagen Polo of Daniel Thoren completed the podium.

Solberg Jr said: "To win all of my races in such a dominant way is amazing. It certainly wasn't easy, I was working really hard to ensure I had clean races but I drove at my

best throughout. It's especially exciting to win like this in Norway. There are a lot of fans and Norwegian people here, so it is fantastic to have such a perfect weekend in front of everyone. It is great for the championship too."

Solberg Jr is entered for his 'home' round of the European Rallycross Championship at Holjes in Sweden this weekend but is fourth on the list of reserve drivers.

BRITISH RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

O'Donovan grabs a brace to boost title chances

British Rallycross Championship: Pembrey

By Hal Ridge

Organiser: BARC/LHC When: June 23/24 Where: Pembrey, South Wales Starters: 48/49

Ollie O'Donovan's hopes of fighting for a second British Rallycross title in 2017 ended with a substantial crash in practice at Pembrey. And, in the first of two visits to the South Wales venue this season, the Irishman didn't set a single fastest qualifying time across rounds four and five, with the revised circuit run in both clockwise and anti-clockwise over the two days.

A pair of brilliant starts in both finals elevated O'Donovan into the lead of the races and that resulted in a brace of wins that put him top of the standings.

It was Julian Godfrey – driving a rebuilt Mitsubishi Mirage following the huge roll that put him out of round three at Croft – who was fastest in each session on Saturday to claim pole position for the final and he was joined on the front row by Mark Higgins and O'Donovan.

Higgins made the best initial launch and nosed ahead of Godfrey into the first left-hander, but as the pair jostled for position, O'Donovan, who hadn't had such a good start, cut back to the inside and moved into the lead. Entering the next corner, Higgins' Peugeot 208 made contact with the right-rear of Godfrey's Mirage. That caused Godfrey to spin and gave both cars punctures.

Steve Hill climbed to second and Roger Thomas snuck into third on the opening

lap, the top three then ran to the finish.

With the circuit run in the opposite direction for round five, it was Higgins who dominated qualifying, fastest in Q1, Q2 and Q3 to secure pole for the final. Having chased Higgins all day,

O'Donovan was second on the grid.

Both drivers took new tyres for the final and O'Donovan made a better launch to take the lead around the outside at Turn 1. Higgins took his joker on lap two and lost track position to Godfrey while O'Donovan responded by taking his joker on lap three. The Irishman also returned to the main circuit behind Godfrey, but was crucially ahead of Higgins. When Godfrey later joked and dropped back to third, O'Donovan retook the lead. Forced to defend hard from Higgins in the second half of the race, O'Donovan held on to the flag. Godfrey finished third despite throttle pedal issues, with Hill fourth. Kevin Procter spun on the opening laps and lost time getting the car started again.

Supernational points leader Tristan Ovenden missed the first two qualifiers in round four with fuel pump issues, then retired from the final after contact with race leader Jack Thorne in the closing stages. Thorne survived the contact to take his second win of the season, and pressured Ovenden in the closing stages of the final in round five but finished second to the Renault Clio V6 driver.

Tom Constantine and brother Luke Constantine each won in the Junior



O'Donovan played it cool with wins

category, while Simon Ovenden and Max Weatherley claimed the spoils in the Swift Sport category. Kris Hudson and Drew Bellerby took a win each in the BMW Mini class.

Results (all six laps)

Round 4

British Rallycross: 1 Ollie O'Donovan (Ford Focus) 4m46.704s; 2 Steve Hill (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo) +6.668s; 3 Roger Thomas (Ford Focus); 4 Julian Godfrey (Mitsubishi Mirage); 5 Mark Higgins (Peugeot 208); 6 Liam Manning (Subaru Impreza).

Supernational: 1 Jack Thorne (Renault Twingo) 5m11.342s; 2 Darren Scott (Citroen C2) +3.059s; 3 Craig Lomax (Citroen C2); 4 Paul Coney (Vauxhall Corsa); 5 Guy Corner (Peugeot 206); 6 Kirk Twyman (Renault Clio).

Junior Rallycross (All 1.3 Suzuki Swift): 1 Tom Constantine 5m38.552s; 2 Marius Solberg Hansen +1.666s; 3 Morgan Wroot; 4 Luke Constantine; 5 James Constantine; 6 Patrick O'Donovan.

Suzuki Swift (All 1.6 Suzuki Swift): 1 Simon Ovenden 5m15.504s; 2 Morgan Bailey +1.361s; 3 John Ward; 4 Tom Llewellyn; 5 Rob Maynard; 6 Christian Hainsworth.

BMW Mini: 1 Kris Hudson 5m15.572s; 2 David Bell +2.682s; 3 Drew Bellerby; 4 Keifer Hudson; 5 Bradley Durdin; 6 Martin Hawkes.

Round 5

British Rallycross: 1 O'Donovan 4m34.120s; 2 Higgins +0.525s; 3 Godfrey; 4 Hill; 5 Kevin Procter (Ford Fiesta); 6 Thomas.

Supernational: 1 Tristan Ovenden (Renault Clio) 4m50.149s; 2 Thorne +3.094s; 3 Paige Bellerby (Lotus Exige); 4 Coney; 5 Corner; 6 Scott.

Junior Rallycross: 1 L Constantine 5m33.456s; 2 Solberg Hansen +2.819s; 3 Ben Sayer; 4 J Constantine; 5 Kristiane Hvala Engh; 6 T Constantine.

Suzuki Swift: 1 Max Weatherley 5m07.638s; 2 Ovenden +0.442s; 3 Llewellyn; 4 Bailey; 5 Hainsworth; 6 Maynard.

BMW Mini: 1 Bellerby 5m06.270s; 2 Keifer Hudson +5.342s; 3 Bell; 4 Hawkes; 5 Kris Hudson; 6 Durdin.

BRISCA F1

Harrison and Morris lead the BriSCA F1 qualifiers

BriSCA F1: Ipswich and Northampton

By Colin Casserley

Organiser: Spedeworth Incarace When: June 23/24 Where: Ipswich and Northampton Starters: 35/37.

Ipswich and Northampton played host to the final two qualifying rounds for the BriSCA F1 World Final at the weekend, the top 48 points scorers will now be split into two Semi-Finals at King's Lynn and Northampton.

At Ipswich, Ryan Harrison chalked up his first Final win of the year, while at Northampton James Morris etched his name in the record books as the first Final winner on shale at Brafied for over 50 years.

Stuart Shevill Jr took the lead early in the race at Ipswich. The Scotsman, who had won two heat races earlier in the evening, was caught just before halfway by Karl Hawkins while further back Harrison began to budge on his way through the field. When he caught the



Ryan Harrison: Triumph at Ipswich

leading duo, he punted them both wide to take the lead. Shevill retaliated snatching the lead back the following lap, but Harrison made a race-winning move one lap later.

"When I caught Shevill he must have seen me coming as he went deeper into the corner than he had been, but I was committed to hitting him and we both slid wide," said Harrison. "That allowed Luke Davidson through, on the next bend I did a sprint car slide job on him and put him wide. It was a hard race between us, but fair."

On Sunday at Northampton, the recent spell of dry weather and extreme heat gave the track officials a few headaches as the newly laid shale surface dusted up during the opening heats.

Sam Makim led the opening laps before Morris nudged him wide to take the lead. In the closing stages Morris fought his way through the backmarkers, briefly tangling with Neil Scriven, but he managed to break free to hold on to the win with Stuart Smith Jr closing in on him rapidly.

"I had to hang on at the end, my car got very loose, and I just had no grip," said Morris. "But judging how the backmarkers were around me, I guess everyone had the same problems. I have to thank Mat Newson for providing me with a car."

Results

Ipswich: 1 Ryan Harrison; 2 Stuart Shevill Jr; 3 Luke Davidson; 4 Tom Harris; 5 Frankie Wainman, Junior Jr; 6 Frankie Wainman Jr; 7 Mat Newson; 8 Michael Scriven; 9 Colin Goodsvin; 10 Ashley England.

Northampton: 1 James Morris; 2 Stuart Smith Jr; 3 Mark Woodhull; 4 Mark Gilbank; 5 Frankie Wainman Junior Jr; 6 Mat Newson; 7 John Dowson Jr; 8 Paul Hines; 9 John Thompson; 10 Billy Johnson.

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

MN SAYS...

Kimi needs to relight a fire to compete

Finn linked to a return to the WRC, and it could galvanise his love of motorsport

There have been denials and rumours have been played down, but rest assured that a Kimi Raikkonen return to the World Rally Championship is something that is firmly on the radar in the background.

His previous challenge in the WRC, which lasted just two proper seasons, yielded three top six finishes and plenty of bent metal, but Robert Kubica can tell you just how hard the competition can be in that branch of the world championship. But it is all about experience, and that doesn't come straight away. With knowledge of what to expect in his armoury, then Raikkonen could be the perfect fit for the WRC.

There are two enormous spin-offs that would come as a result, and they are both very welcome. Firstly, it would free up a seat at Ferrari alongside Sebastian Vettel, and gossip about who might occupy it has already begun to circulate. Who wouldn't want to see Charles Leclerc in that car? And secondly, Kimi has a huge profile, and he could help shine a very bright light on the WRC, which would help galvanise that championship too. From the outside, it is a win-win.

Matt James, Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



YOUR PICS



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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images



Adam Chamberlain's Oulton Park BTCC pic



Gary Hill snapped this Stock Car taking on the demands of Brands Hatch recently



Phillip Island GTs, from Trent Allen



Grzegorz Glinski's shot from Sardinia



Nick Murphy's shot of Aiden Moffat



A whacky Mini, from Peter Atkins



Billy Shealy shot of a Ford Escort Mk2



Ian Francis sent in this photograph of battling autograss racers at the Star meeting



Calvin Samuel captured this three-wheeling Ford Escort Mk1 at the Kemble Targa

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TV GUIDE

Enjoy highlights from the third round of the British Racing and Sports Car Club's **National Formula Ford Championship** from Brands Hatch earlier this year (Thursday, 1630-1700hrs). Featuring no wings and narrow treaded tyres, the racing is often some of the best in the UK with slipstreaming and pack racing the name of the game.

The latest instalment from the **Great History of the 24 Hours of Le Mans** series comes from 2007 (Friday, 2330-0030hrs), as Peugeot arrived at the endurance race with its 908 for the beginning of an intense rivalry with Audi.

And catch the best action from the **Classic Touring Car Festival** at Mallory Park (Sunday, 1230-1330hrs), which produced some scintillating racing.



Peugeot returned to Le Mans in 2007 with its 908

LIVE TV

Formula 2: Red Bull Ring
 1000hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race 1: Saturday, 1545-1715hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race 2: Sunday, 1015-1125hrs, Sky Sports F1

GP3: Red Bull Ring
Race 1: Saturday, 0910-1005hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race 2: Sunday, 0905-

LIVE F1



Ferrari's Vettel will be looking to fight back in Austria

Austrian Grand Prix Sky Sports F1 HD coverage
Drivers' press conference: Thursday, 1400-1430hrs
FP1: Friday, 0945-1150hrs
FP2: Friday, 1345-1550hrs
FP3: Saturday, 1045-1215hrs
Qualifying: Saturday, 1300-1545hrs

Channel 4 HD coverage
FP1: Friday, 0955-1135hrs
FP2: Friday, 1355-1600hrs
FP3: Saturday, 1055-1225hrs
Qualifying: Saturday, 1255-1545hrs
Race: Sunday, 1300-1730hrs



Norris still leads the standings in Formula 2

LISTINGS



Pither and Cowley will battle again

RACING SATURDAY
■ Oulton Park, Cheshire
MSVR meeting: Monoposto, Lotus Elise, Radical Challenge, Sports 2000 **Starts** racing from 1050hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs)
Admission adult £16, under 13 free
Web msv.com
Contact 0843 453 9000

■ Pembrey, SWales
750MC meeting: Clio 182, Locost, RGB Sports 1000, 750 Formula, Historic 750 Formula, Sport Specials, Classic Stock Hatch, Hot Hatch, MX-5 Cup **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1415hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0900hrs
Admission adult £15, child free
Web barc.net
Contact 01264 882200

SATURDAY/SUNDAY
■ Brands Hatch, Kent
Legends of Brands Hatch: HGPCA Pre '66, HGPCA Pre '61, Pre-1980 Endurance, Super Touring, Derek Bell Trophy, Classic Formula 3, Historic Formula 3, Historic FF1600, Historic Touring Car, Classic Clubmans, Formula Junior **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1330hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1120hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs)
Admission adult £25, under 13 free
Web msv.com
Contact 0843 453 9000

■ Snetterton, Norfolk
MSVR meeting: LMP3, GT Cup, Porsche Club, Trackday Trophy, Allcomers **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1225hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1015hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
Admission adult £16, under 13 free
Web msv.com
Contact 0843 453 9000

SUNDAY
■ Knockhill, Fife
SMRC meeting: Mini Cooper, Fiesta and Hot Hatch, FF1600, Classic Sports and Saloons, Legends, Sports and Saloons, BMW **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1100hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) **Admission** adult £15, under 12 free
Web knockhill.co.uk
Contact 01383 723337

RALLY SUNDAY
■ Anglesey Circuit, North Wales
JRT Enville Stages Rally **Starts** 0915hrs
Admission tba
Web warringtondmc.co.uk

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TV GUIDE



Ralf Schumacher won the 2002 Malaysian GP

Relive the 2002 Malaysian Grand Prix with **Classic F1** as Michael Schumacher and Juan Pablo Montoya came together allowing the younger of the Schumacher brothers, Ralf, the opportunity to win for Williams (Thursday, 2100-2300hrs, Sky Sports F1).
 Travel Stateside for highlights from round 10 of the **IndyCar Series** as championship leader and winner last-time out, Scott Dixon, tries to extend his lead (Friday, 1330-1430hrs, BT Sport ESPN).
 Reigning BRDC British F3 champion Enaam Ahmed heads to the Norisring leading the standings of the **European Formula 3** series,

but will face severe pressure from fellow Brit Dan Ticktum and others to stay there (Friday, 1830-1930hrs, BT Sport 1).
 And finally, catch-up on all the thrills and spills from the latest round of the **British Touring Car Championship** from Croft (Saturday, 1030-1200hrs, ITV4).

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OUT WEDNESDAY, JULY 4

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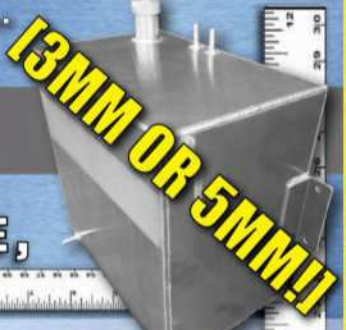
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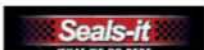
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