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MOTORSPORT NEWS ISSUE **MJ3148** SEPTEMBER 26 2018

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Russell could miss out on F1, Herbert

F1 NEEDS



Russell (r) leads the Formula 2 Championship but Norris (l) has the 2019 F1 seat

By Jack Benyon

George Russell – who “should be in Formula 1 next year” according to 1995 British Grand Prix winner Johnny Herbert – could miss out on an F1 chance as he believes the championship is short of “at least two teams”, an opinion backed up by ex-F1 driver Derek Warwick.

Mercedes Formula 1 junior Russell has been a player in one of the best British title battles at his level in recent memory, fighting fellow McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner Lando Norris for the Formula 2 Championship, one step underneath Formula 1.

Both have had to overcome severe reliability issues with the new-for-2018 F2 car – which has had engine and clutch trouble but appears to have improved in recent rounds – and both have excelled under the pressure.

ART Grand Prix's Russell has five wins to the one of Carlin driver Norris, which puts the former in a 22-point lead. There are two rounds remaining starting in Sochi this weekend, with 96 points still up for grabs including the Abu Dhabi finale in November.

But while Russell has outperformed Norris in F2, the latter has an F1 seat replacing Stoffel Vandoorne at McLaren. Russell, 20, is in a queue behind

Racing Point Force India driver and fellow Mercedes junior Esteban Ocon for a seat next year, with the only realistic option while he is a Mercedes junior is at Williams. Teams such as Toro Rosso have baulked at taking on junior drivers from other manufacturers, narrowing the options for Russell and Ocon.

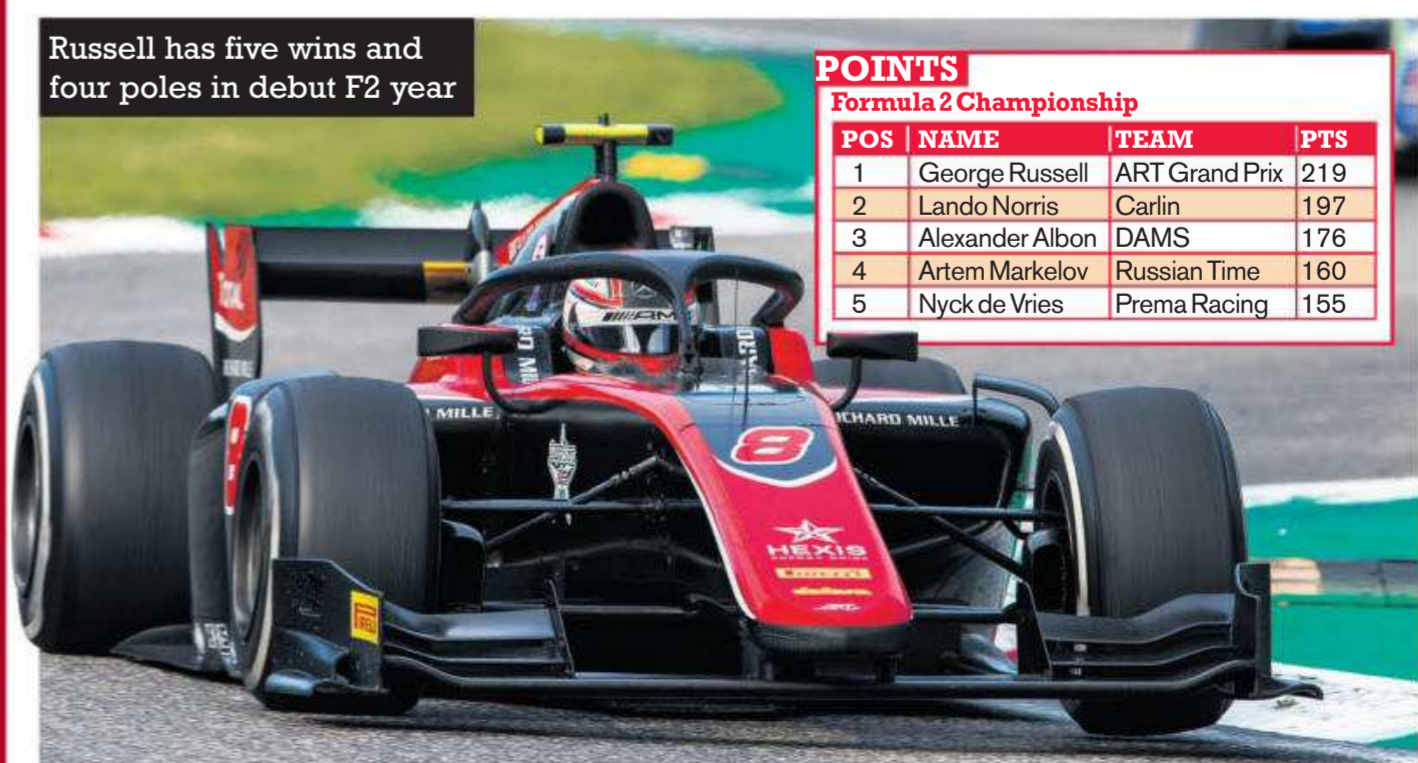
Three-time grand prix winner Herbert has been part of the Sky Sports commentary team observing F2 this year, and has been impressed by both drivers.

“If George goes on to win the championship, and personally I think he will, he should get an F1 drive,” Herbert told MN.

“It's good getting this experience

Russell has five wins and four poles in debut F2 year

POINTS			
Formula 2 Championship			
POS	NAME	TEAM	PTS
1	George Russell	ART Grand Prix	219
2	Lando Norris	Carlin	197
3	Alexander Albon	DAMS	176
4	Artem Markelov	Russian Time	160
5	Nyck de Vries	Prema Racing	155



HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: LAT

and Warwick call for youth chances and more cars

MORE CARS



Russell broke track record in Merc test in Hungary

from F2, in this tense battle that they have been in since race one. Hopefully they will be able to use that to their advantage in F1. That's where the hard work really starts, it's getting that momentum and carrying that through. The confidence that gives you is so, so powerful."

Unfortunately, Russell may be robbed of that opportunity even if he does win Formula 2, as his options appear bleak.

Mercedes has confirmed that it won't pay to put one of its drivers in another team, and team boss Toto Wolff has floated the idea of F1 teams having a third car specifically for juniors, which has been backed by Russell.

"We only have 20 cars on the grid, as a young driver trying to break into that 20 is extremely difficult," said Russell, who has proven his pace in multiple F1 tests.

"I think the idea of a third car, or something along those lines, is a very good idea.

"You sometimes see the pay drivers getting into Formula 1, and potentially they could come in for their home race: an Asian driver comes in for the Asian races, the American drivers come in for the American races and so on.

"It gives the likes of Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull the chance to throw their young drivers in without any major issues."

Derek Warwick, who is head of the McLaren BRDC Autosport Award judging panel that chose Russell (2014) and Norris (2016)

to win the honour, has put the pair on par with new Ferrari signing Charles Leclerc.

"I think that all grids – whether they be F1, MotoGP, F2, GP3 or F3 – need to have at least 26 cars on them otherwise it shows that the series is not working," he said.

"Grand prix racing is no different.

"The trouble is that we all know that F1 is political, and all the engine manufacturers are controlling the driver market, which means that the opportunities are limited. They are running the show – look at the situation that Esteban Ocon is in. He can't get another chance anywhere because there are no spaces in the Mercedes-engined teams and none of the other teams will have him because of his ties."

Warwick added that teams – like Mercedes – need to be more risky with their driver selection.

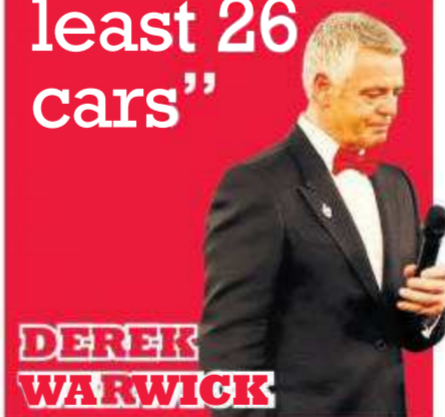
"One of the problems could be that teams are so reluctant to take chances these days: they don't want to take the punt," he added.

"Look at Mercedes: Valtteri Bottas is not going to be as good as Lewis Hamilton all the time he has a head on his shoulders – but he is a safe pair of hands.

"What the team should be thinking about is when Lewis retires in a couple of years? Why wouldn't you put a younger guy in alongside him now so that they can learn from the best? It would make perfect sense, but they don't want to do it for some reason."

Additional reporting by Matt James

"All grids need to have at least 26 cars"



DEREK WARWICK

"Russell should get an F1 drive"



JOHNNY HERBERT



Warwick got his break with Toleman in 1981 and 25 cars started the Las Vegas race



Herbert made his debut in 1989 with Benetton at Rio in Brazil, as 28 cars started the race

RACING NEWS

F1 ROUND-UP

Renault controversy

Renault technical chief Marcin Budkowski believes the controversy over him joining the Formula 1 outfit from the FIA last year was blown out of proportion by rival teams. Budkowski's signing last October caused uproar among Renault's rivals, which were concerned the former FIA F1 technical chief would be able to take secrets with him to his new employers. He had a six month period of gardening leave before starting work at Enstone. "I think it was way overblown," said Budkowski. "Yes, I can understand the [teams'] concerns, but it was a quiet time in F1. There was not much happening, so I think it took proportions that were a little bit too big for what it really was."

Ericsson's target

Marcus Ericsson believes he can use his team-mate Charles Leclerc's Ferrari Formula 1 move for 2019 to land a new Sauber deal. Kimi Raikkonen is understood to have agreed an independent deal with Sauber, which means Ferrari could still utilise its option on one of Sauber's seats to place Antonio Giovinazzi there. "They haven't really given me any specifics, but I know I need to perform now," Ericsson said. "I feel that I stepped it up the last five or six weekends. I scored more points than Charles [in the last five races before Singapore] and Charles has signed a contract with Ferrari for a few years so I think that says quite a bit."

Leclerc in a Ferrari

Ferrari's 2019 signing Charles Leclerc completed the equivalent of more than two race distances at Paul Ricard last Thursday, as part of Pirelli's 2019 tyre evaluation programme. Current Sauber driver Leclerc completed 129 laps behind the wheel of the SF71H at the French Grand Prix venue. It marked the first time Leclerc has driven for Ferrari since being announced as a race driver for the Maranello squad next year. Leclerc shared the track with the Mercedes of Valtteri Bottas, who completed 102 laps. The tyres were unbranded, so teams did not know which construction or compound they were running.

Mexican Bulls

Red Bull boss Christian Horner says the Mexican Grand Prix is "realistically" his outfit's only remaining shot at claiming another race win in 2018. Red Bull has won three races this year and challenged for victory last time out at Singapore, with Max Verstappen ultimately losing out to Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton. Verstappen won in Mexico last year, and Horner hopes the Austrian team can mount another challenge. "I think realistically Mexico is probably the only shot we've got left, under normal circumstances," Horner said. "Hopefully we can get a few more podiums in before the end of the year."

Briton wants to test 2019 parts this year



HAMILTON WANTS 2019 PARTS TO BE TRIALLED

F1 champion calls on Mercedes to bring tests forward

By Stuart Codling

Lewis Hamilton has called on his Mercedes team to bring forward developments planned for the 2019 Formula 1 season.

Mercedes was expected to struggle compared to Ferrari in the Singapore Grand Prix earlier this month, but Hamilton dominated the race from pole position while his championship rival Sebastian Vettel qualified and finished a disappointed third.

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff credited the team's upswing in performance to an intense period of soul-searching after a disappointing Belgian Grand Prix, as a result of which it brought forward an upgrade planned for Singapore to Monza.

Hamilton now wants to capitalise on the "energy"



Merc driver has momentum

within the engineering group to evaluate 2019 concepts in races this season rather than waiting for winter testing – by which time it might have lost the initiative.

"I had this meeting with the guys, and if you can see this energy with everyone, I find it really inspiring," he said.

"We started off the year, I felt great, then we tailed off and we had some struggles with the understanding of the car, how to utilise the equipment we had tyre-wise and balance-wise, we had a couple of so-so races, and

then luckily we found our footing. "We're going from strength to strength as a team in our understanding of the car, how to utilise the tools that we have. We are far more comfortable at our job right now – six races ago we were definitely questioning, but I think we've now figured the car out, we know where we are and we know what we have got to do.

"Also in those meetings I pushed them a lot about next year's car. I know what I need improving."

F1's technical rulebook will undergo a substantial refresh next year ahead of a more radical change for the 2021 season. While the changes are principally aerodynamic, they still provide an opportunity for the most creative engineers to exploit loopholes or simply find more competitive solutions in obvious areas.

Equally, as with previous

regulatory shake-ups, they can trip up frontrunning teams and set them back.

Red Bull's first effort for the current rules package, last season's RB13, was uncompetitive until the team introduced a major update at the fifth round of the season.

"I am pushing the guys because they have to sign off things now for next year's tests already," said Hamilton.

"And I'm saying, 'Can you bring things forward? Please make this component which takes a lot of work but I might get it to the race – because I want to feel it on a race weekend, rather than next year in February or March.'

"When we start testing it is too late, so I am keeping the pressure on these guys." Additional reporting by Jonathan Noble and Adam Cooper

Bottas admits confidence loss

Valtteri Bottas has admitted his disappointing 2018 F1 season is now starting to take its toll on his confidence.

Bottas took three grand prix wins, 10 other podium finishes and four poles in his first campaign with Mercedes last year.

He expected 2018 to be a step forward, given the short-notice nature of his call-up after champion Nico Rosberg's sudden retirement the previous year.

But he has not won a race since the 2017-closing Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, has just six podiums and is only fourth in the standings – 110 points behind team-mate Lewis Hamilton, who has won seven times in 2018.

"It is hard. It's always going to be hard, trying to beat him [Hamilton]," said Bottas. "And he's having a good run now. He's obviously really fighting for the championship and I'm not really anymore."

"I still want whatever is possible in the championship, I think third at least is possible so that's going to be the goal for me."

"I'll keep motivated and keep trying to bring good results. But I really feel like I need some good results now. So for confidence and everything, I need some results."



Photos: LAT

Vandoorne wants to emulate Magnussen and reset his career

Stoffel Vandoorne believes he can follow Kevin Magnussen's example and reset his Formula 1 career after being dropped by the McLaren team.

Like Vandoorne, Magnussen is a product of McLaren's young driver programme. He was let go at the end of 2015, after just one complete season in a race seat.

Magnussen rebuilt his career by moving first to Renault, then to Haas, where he has thrived in a less pressured and politically charged atmosphere.

"I feel a lot of support still from people high up in the Formula 1 paddock, let's say, and people realise what the situation has been here at McLaren," said Vandoorne, who will be replaced by Lando Norris next season.

"Ask Kevin [Magnussen], he's been in a kind of similar situation and I think he really benefitted from having a fresh start. It's something I'm quite looking forward to as well, to have a fresh start and see what the future holds.

"The driver market has been a bit strange; things are moving, and seats are closing down every day almost.

"The chances to be on the F1 grid next year are very slim, but until everything is fixed I guess you've got to keep talking, keep trying and give everything for it. That's all I can do at the moment."

Vandoorne has also been approached by Dale Coyne Racing about driving for the team in IndyCar next season.



Magnussen relaunched his career at Renault and Haas

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'Kjaergaard's
title hopes alive'
British F3 report, p24



Photos: LAT



Di Resta (l) with Paffett (r)

DI RESTA AND PAFFETT VIE FOR DTM CROWN

DTM title rages
on to last round

Paul di Resta and Gary Paffett are separated by just four points at the top of the DTM standings with only one race meeting remaining after the latest round at the Red Bull Ring last weekend.

Ex-Force India and Williams F1 driver di Resta took two fourth places last weekend which was enough to move the Mercedes driver to the top of the standings.

Despite taking pole position for race two Paffett could only manage third to go with his

10th place from race one.

Audi driver and reigning champion Rene Rast was the big gainer however, as he won both races for the second event in a row to close to within 30 points of di Resta at the top of the standings.

Rast had entered the last lap of race one in fourth position before Audi team-mates Nico Muller and Mike Rockenfeller allowed him through into second.

This became first after Mercedes' Daniel Juncadella

was handed a 30-second penalty for a restart infringement, dropping him from first position to 14th in the final results.

The Indy-style double-file restart came with three laps remaining, and Juncadella explained that his penalty came for accelerating too soon – and that he had also been investigated for going too slowly up to that point.

"I was focusing on my line driving at 80kph [50mph]," said Juncadella, who accused

the DTM of "digging its own grave".

"The rule is 60 to 80kph and I went down to 68, which is within the speed allowed, but the straight is really long, and I could see everyone wanting to go.

"I could see the white line ahead and they said I went too early."

Five-time WRC champion Sebastien Ogier also made his debut in the DTM aboard a Mercedes, finishing 12th in race one and 16th in race two.

QUICK LAPS THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP

Nissan e.dams has picked Formula 2 frontrunner Alexander Albon for its debut Formula E season, alongside 2015/16 champion Sebastien Buemi. Albon has already had an FE test with the team when it was running as Renault's works operation. The 22-year-old Anglo-Thai is third in the F2 standings with e.dams' non-electric arm DAMS... Super GT frontrunner and Nissan driver Jann Mardenborough will make his first Blancpain GT Series start in nearly

three years at this weekend's Endurance title decider at Barcelona. Mardenborough has been drafted in as a replacement for the injured Lucas Ordonez by RJN Motorsport, who broke his shoulder in a cycling accident. **G-Drive ORECA pair Roman Rusinov and Antonio Pizzitola secured the European Le Mans Series title with a round to spare despite a nightmare race at Spa. The duo, driving with part-time team-mate Jean-Eric Vergne last weekend, secured the championship despite**

finishing outside the top 10 and the car incurring a two-minute stop-go penalty that it could not serve... The latest hydrogen-powered GreenGT prototype has been demonstrated at last weekend's Spa European Le Mans Series round as part of an initiative to encourage fuel-cell technology. GreenGT's experimental LMP2HG led the formation lap at the Spa 4 Hours. It also took to the track on Saturday to mark the launch of the Mission H24 drive by the Franco-Swiss group and Le Mans 24 Hours organiser

the Automobile Club de l'Ouest... **Max Fewtrell took maximum points and two wins from the latest round of the Formula Renault Eurocup series at Hockenheim. The Brit now leads the standings by 30.5 points from Yifei Ye...** Joe Gibbs Racing's Kyle Busch climbed from last on the grid to win the NASCAR Cup Series race at Richmond, booking his place in the second round of the playoffs. This was despite being sent to the back of the grid because his team repaired damage picked up in qualifying.

Ticktum questions Schumacher's pace

Red Bull protege Dan Ticktum has expressed doubts about European Formula 3 title rival Mick Schumacher's recent upturn in form, but denied that he is accusing the German of driving an illegal car.

The Brit has slipped 49 points behind Schumacher, son of seven-time Formula 1 champion Michael, following the latest round at the Red Bull Ring last weekend.

Schumacher won the first two races before finishing second in the third and has taken pole for the last six races, including at the Nurburgring.

Ticktum, meanwhile, could only manage a best result of fourth in the third race, finished eighth in the opener and crashed in race two.

"Compared to the top two [Schumacher and Prema team-mate Robert Schwartzman] no one on this grid had a chance," Ticktum wrote on his Instagram page. "Even their other



Weekend to forget for Ticktum

team-mates who are good drivers were nowhere compared to them.

"Interesting is how I would describe their pace and I am confident many people in the F3 paddock will agree."

Ticktum moved to clarify his earlier statements saying he doesn't believe Prema is fielding an illegal car for Schumacher or Schwartzman.

However, he added fuel to the speculation by saying that the general public doesn't have access to "everyone's data" and that he's on the brink of losing the F3 title as his "last name is not Schumacher".

Carlin to expand IndyCar team in 2019

Carlin Racing expects to add an extra full-time entry in the 2019 IndyCar Series and will also enter two cars in Indy Lights next year.

Trevor Carlin explained that his team's progress, having joined IndyCar this season, and the series proving to be popular has resulted in several racers wanting to join the operation. He said: "IndyCar is going through a bit of a purple patch at the moment.

"We're having a lot of drivers speak to us about joining. It looks like there'll be a lot of demand for a third car, so we're gearing up accordingly.

"At this stage, I don't know who might be driving it, but we're getting ready to accommodate for that demand for a full-season car and I'd definitely hope by the end of October we'll know who it is. "Max [Chilton] and Charlie [Kimball] are staying on, or that's the plan at least. We're just in that contract stage of getting everything buttoned up.

"I've asked Chevrolet about an extra engine lease and they say there's no reason why they couldn't cover us for a third car."

AUTOSPORT EDITOR

KEVIN TURNER

"Sims deserves
his chance"



The news that Alexander Sims will be part of BMW's big Formula E assault for the 2018/2019 season is great on many levels.

Sims is a fine and underrated driver, whose single-seater career ended too soon.

He lost the 2008 Formula Renault UK title to Adam Christodoulou, but beat his rival (and four others) to win the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award at the end of the year.

Sims then became one of the top F3 drivers over the next couple of years, winning in the Euro Series and British F3, but coming up against ART team-mate Valtteri Bottas hurt his career momentum, despite the fact he finished just behind the future F1 winner in the 2010 Euro F3 standings.

A mixed GP3 campaign with Status the following year didn't help either, even though he was again a race winner. Backing dried up, though he was still highly regarded enough to become a supersub in F3 and GP3.

Sims took a GP3 win on a rare outing with Carlin as late as 2013 and was third in the '15 Macau GP with Double R. In between, he helped Marco Attard to the British GT title, only missing out on sharing the crown because he had to skip the Snetterton round.

Fortunately, Sims was too good to be ignored and BMW picked him up. In 2016 he won the Spa 24 Hours in an M6 GT3, then became a key part of BMW's American GT assault last year.

This season he has shared a Team RLL BMW M8 GTE in the GTLM works battlefield of the IMSA SportsCar Championship with Connor De Phillippi. They've won the last two rounds and BMW has now put Sims alongside Antonio Felix da Costa for its first major assault on FE.

It's a good choice because Sims is also already heavily into the electric vehicle scene and has a genuine interest in technology. Don't mistake that for a lack of 'old-school' motorsport passion: he also loved (and was quick in) a one-off Formula 5000 test at Silverstone when he was in F3.

Sims is intelligent and adaptable. One of the test cars for the 2008 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award was an Aston Martin Vantage GT4, which had various driver aids. The other five finalists were mainly concerned with its limitations and how the gadgets got in the way. But Sims took the approach of trying to work out how the gizmos could be made to work for him.

Given the challenges of Formula E, it's foolish to push expectations too high for any rookie, but the arrival of the new Gen2 car potentially levels the playing field a little and Sims deserves his chance.

He has all the ingredients to be highly successful.

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

RACING NEWS

IN BRIEF

Thorburn withdraws

National Formula Ford 1600 frontrunner Jamie Thorburn has withdrawn from the remainder of the season due to clashes with his university studies. The Cliff Dempsey Racing driver will sit out both the final meeting at Donington Park and the Formula Ford Festival. "Obviously this isn't how I had expected to end the year and I am more than devastated to miss," Thorburn wrote on Facebook. "I'm already counting down the days until I can get back out in a car, whenever and wherever that may be, but until then it's time to hit the books and focus on university."

Scottish Formula Junior

Some northern-based Formula Junior drivers have called for the championship to visit Knockhill next year after a pair of trophy races were held at the Scottish circuit earlier this month. Eight cars made the trip to the Fife circuit, while the regular Historic Sports Car Club championship raced at Spa. "We did some rough calculations and we think there are around 20 active cars in the north of the country," said Peter Anstiss, who was on pole for one of the races.

Carey's British F3 trip

F3 Cup championship leader Cian Carey is eyeing a full-time move to BRDC British Formula 3 next season after making his debut at Donington Park last weekend. The 23-year-old competed with Chris Dittmann racing and took a best finish of ninth in the second race. "Chris [Dittmann] has wanted to get me out all year," he said. "I'm trying to get a budget together for a full campaign next year but this weekend I've got a feeling for the car." Hampus Ericsson's third place for Fortec in race two was the best result for the handful of series debutants last weekend.

Ditheridge's 'brain fade'

Anthony Ditheridge won the Archie Scott Brown Trophy race at Snetterton in his Cooper Monaco, despite relinquishing pole to start from the pitlane due to "brain fade". Having qualified on pole, Ditheridge headed for the pits at the end of the warm-up lap, but not due to any technical problem. "I just happened to turn down the pitlane and then thought 'brain fade!'" Ditheridge admitted. "That was a stupid move, I didn't intend to!" Ditheridge nevertheless rose through the field to lead within three laps, and beat home Shaun Bromley's Elva by seven seconds in the 30-minute race.

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



TF and Optimum could run four cars next year

ASTON GT3 TEAMS PLAN GT4 EXPANSION IN 2019

TF Sport and Optimum squads both order new GT4 machines

By James Newbold

British GT championship-winning team TF Sport will expand into GT4 next year, as well as continuing in GT3, after acquiring two new Aston Martin Vantage GT4s.

The new GT4 machine completed its first shakedown at Turweston Airfield recently in the hands of factory driver Ross Gunn and will be homologated along with the new GT3 model next March. *MN* understands the car will begin testing next week.

TF, which has also ordered two GT3 models, has been joined by Optimum Motorsport, which won the 2016 British GT4 title with a

Ginetta before stepping up to GT3, and existing Aston GT4 customers Academy Motorsport in placing an order for the GT4.

"It looks lovely, a nice little bit of kit," TF Sport boss Tom Ferrier told *MN*. "It's an area we want to get into and it's nice to have a bit more presence on the grid in British GT, so we're looking forward to it and hopefully working with some youngsters."

"I would hope we have two GT3 cars in British GT, so it could be as many as four, but that will be the maximum. We'll see, we'd have to expand the workshop!"

Optimum boss Shaun Goff said he also hopes to run a maximum of four cars across

both classes, but had yet to confirm his plans.

"The ideal would be a maximum of four cars, two GT3, two GT4, but if it's two then so be it," he said.

"GT4 has been a big part of the business for quite some years and it's the first time we've not been on the grid in a GT4 car since 2012, so my intention was to always come back next year, it was just a case of finding the right partner."

"This year I've seen a great involvement from Aston Martin with the GT3 car and I'd like to just expand on that across both GT3 and GT4."

Ferrier hopes to debut the GT3 at the Gulf 12 Hours in December, and expects to take delivery of a GT4 in January.

Adam makes history and praises Haigh

Jonny Adam's record-breaking third British GT title confirmed him as the series' most successful driver in its history.

Fourth in the Donington Park season finale with Optimum Motorsport's Flick Haigh sealed the Aston Martin factory driver his third crown with as many co-drivers and teams, after combining with Andrew Howard at Beechdean AMR in 2015 and Derek Johnston at TF Sport in '16. Adam also accompanied Howard to his '13 series title, but was docked points for a driving infringement at Snetterton, meaning Howard was credited as a solo champion.

The Scot's second victory of the season at Brands Hatch, his 14th, already made him the championship's most successful driver in terms of wins.

"It's a nice feeling to do it with a third team and a third team-mate," Adam said. "Pro-Am racing is all about the Am, the Pro just makes the small difference, and some people don't get that, but that is what it's all about."

"We've put a lot of effort in with Flick, she's come on so much as a driver and as a person, you can see she's got the confidence to walk up and down the paddock as champion."



Adam won

Parfitt to take a sabbatical from British GT next year

Rick Parfitt has announced he will take a sabbatical from British GT next season.

The 2017 champion, who also won the '13 GT4 title, finished ninth in this year's standings in the previous generation Bentley Continental GT3 run by Team Parker Racing, managing a single podium at Spa.

Parfitt, who suffers from Crohn's Disease, explained that rising costs and increasing commitments of his eponymous band had contributed to his decision, as well as the need to have an operation on his gut.

"I have a massive passion for this, I just think I need a little bit of time off, so I wouldn't say it's retirement, I'll say it's a sabbatical just to gather my thoughts and put my energies into the band and touring," he said.

The 43-year-old retains the ambition to race at Le Mans and didn't rule out the prospect of one-off outings next year.

"I'm a quick Bronze and I know they are tough to come by nowadays," he said. "So there is always a need and if the right opportunity presented itself I would be an absolute fool to disregard that."



Parfitt won 2017 title but will now focus on his band and health

Howard wants different format

Andrew Howard has called on British GT to be "brave" with its format for the championship's first two visits to Donington Park next year, after the sale of Rockingham created a vacancy on the calendar.

The two-time champion hopes for the introduction of a longer into-the-night race to become an "ambassadorial round" alongside the category's flagship Silverstone 500, the only three-hour event on the calendar.

"The key is to mix up the format," Howard told *MN*. "If the championship can be brave, if we go to a longer format that perhaps starts at 1800hrs and went through to 2200hrs, that would be awesome."

"It brings a new dynamic without being massively expensive."

However, ERC Sport driver Lee Mowle felt it was a missed

opportunity to reduce costs by cutting the calendar to six rounds.

"Speak to most of the pointy end in GT3 and they are spending some significant amounts of money, it has got stupid," he said. "If you were going to question what you do with it, why don't you move it to a six-round series and take 50-60 grand out of the budget? I thought it was an opportunity missed to do something like that."

However, British GT championship manager Benjamin Franassovici says going back to six weekends would not be a viable option.

"It's a national championship, so I think six is a bit on the low side," he said. "I am working behind the scenes to get the format right and I think we're going to get something different."



Bushell will remain in BTCC with Team Hard after returning this year

Bushell is the first BTCC driver confirmed for 2019

Team Hard British Touring Car Championship racer Mike Bushell has become the first driver to commit to the team for the 2019 season, and will remain with the outfit in a Volkswagen CC.

Bushell, the 2017 Renault UK Clio Cup champion, stepped back into the BTCC at the beginning of this year with Team Hard, and has raced to a best result of fifth so far this season. He is 22nd in the points.

The 29-year-old said: "After the struggles early on this year, hard work and the determination to not give up has rewarded us with strong pace and several great points finishes."

"I always look up to the likes of Tom Ingram and Speedworks who stick together, keep making progress and are now fighting for the overall drivers' title. I see Team Hard as the perfect place to further my racing career."



On form: Eastwell (second r)

Eastwell impresses on US car debut

Formula Ford 1600 frontrunner Michael Eastwell bagged a pole and two podiums on his American car racing debut in the F2000 Championship earlier this month.

He qualified fourth, ahead of his Tumenas Motorsport team-mate Steve Jenks who wrapped up the title at New Jersey Motorsports Park, and finished third. For race two he slipped from pole to second, ahead of former FF1600 rival James Roe Jr.

"We definitely had the pace to win," Eastwell said. "I did everything I could have but there just wasn't the car beneath me at the start [because of much hotter temperatures in the race]."

Eastwell is targeting USF2000, on the IndyCar support package, next season via the Mazda Road To Indy shootout. He is second in the standings in the British Racing and Sports Car Club's National FF1600 Championship, 100 points behind champion Niall Murray.

BRDC BRITISH F3 RETAINS CURRENT CAR FOR 2019



No Regional F3 for MSV series

The BRDC British Formula 3 Championship will keep its current car for next year amid uncertainty surrounding the FIA's Regional F3 concept.

MotorSport Vision, which operates the championship, had explored the possibility of becoming an FIA Regional F3 series and switching to a new halo-fitted car for 2019.

But with the FIA yet to make a decision and time running out for teams to prepare for next season, MSV has made the decision to keep the current Tatuus-Cosworth car

that was only introduced in 2016.

Giles Butterfield, MSV's group operations and engineering manager, said: "It's unclear how F3 Regional is going to develop in Europe even though we've been talking to the FIA about the concept for two years or more."

"We have made the decision because we think it's the best thing for the teams and the championship."

"The teams can now make plans for winter testing and next season."

MN's sister-publication *Autosport* understands that the FIA will vote imminently on two proposals with

one becoming Europe's Regional Formula 3 series in 2019.

One bid is from Renault Sport – which plans to replace the traditional Formula Renault Eurocup – while the other is from Italian Formula 4 Championship promoter WSK.

Only one will be selected as the governing body does not want two Regional F3 series going up against each other until one is established.

Not becoming a regional series will likely mean that British F3 will lose the right to call itself Formula 3.

"It's not certain yet [on the name]

we don't know if its 100 per cent sure [if we can't use the F3 name]," added Butterfield. "In the next eight, nine, 10 months we'll evaluate what we will do in 2020. We should have a really strong grid next year. The driving ability in the championship this year is at a very high level."

"The British F3/British GT partnership with SRO works really well and we want to continue it. We'll be looking to announce a 2019 calendar shortly. We're very happy to be carrying on [with our current car]."



Billy Monger marked his first visit back to Donington Park since his life-changing crash which led to a double leg amputation last year by meeting and speaking with the circuit's marshals. "Between me and Carlin, it's a decision we decided to make before the weekend because without marshals we don't get to go racing," said Monger, who took two pole positions and a best finish of third in the BRDC British F3 series last weekend. "So I wanted to thank them and there was so many of them, I was handing out BillyWhizz stickers, signing their overalls and chatting with a lot of them."

Sir Chris Hoy back on track in Caterhams

Sir Chris Hoy made his racing return at Silverstone last weekend in a Caterham 420R double-header, and hopes to carry on in the series in 2019.

The decorated Olympic cyclist rejoined the championship for its final two races of the season, collecting two 12th place finishes in very different weather conditions.

Hoy, who has previously raced in Radicals and in the British GT Championship, said: "I've been learning new things almost every corner in the wet conditions. You notice the changes each time you go out on track."

"I haven't had the time that I'd have liked to give this a proper go, so hopefully if the time is there I'd like to do more races in this series next year."

"The most important thing for me is to keep learning, getting stuck in and having fun while you're doing it."

Hoy is one of numerous Caterham drivers coached by 2008 British GT champion Jon Barnes, who praised Hoy's performance in dreadful weather conditions.

"He's been doing a great job, because it's the first time he's raced the car in these conditions," Barnes said.

Tarling's title-winning Historic FF1600 Jamun returns to track with Stutely and could race full-time in 2019

Driving Richard Tarling's Historic Formula Ford 1600 title-winning Jamun T2, Linton Stutely made a racing return and could compete regularly in historics next year.

Stutely is the boss of single-seater preparation firm Enigma Motorsport which has run and prepared cars in

various Formula 3 and Formula Ford championships.

He hadn't competed since 2015, despite winning the Avon Tyres Clubman Formula Ford title a decade before. He has also competed in the likes of the F3 Cup.

Stutely qualified second in the wet

last weekend at Brands Hatch, driving the car in repayment for rebuilding it as Formula Palmer Audi champion Tarling took part in another series.

Stutely took fourth in the first race before a broken radiator put him out after a strong showing in race two.

"I've got a Mygale Formula Ford

which I'm building for myself, and I said to my dad 'lets get rid of it and get a historic car instead'," said Stutely.

"I'm not 100 per cent certain, but I enjoyed the weekend. Everyone was friendly and in most cases give you just enough room to race, which is what you want with those cars."



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'Adam/Haigh sealed the title'
British GT report, p24



Photos: Mick Walker, Jakob Ebrey, James Roberts



CALENDAR

Provisional 2019 GT Cup season

DATE	CIRCUIT
April 13/14	Donington Park National
May 11/12	Snetterton 300
June 15/16	Silverstone National
July 27/28	Snetterton 300
Aug 31/Sept 1	Brands Hatch GP
Sept 21/22	Donington Park GP
Oct 12/13	Silverstone GP

GT Cup racers sought additional track time

FOUR RACES PER GT CUP EVENT

The GT Cup will run four races per weekend next season after a survey of drivers and teams found that many wanted more track time.

This year the GT Cup has run practice, qualifying and two sprint races on a Saturday and then a warm-up, qualifying and a 50-minute pitstop race on the Sunday of its two-day meetings.

But for next year, there will be shorter practice and qualifying sessions, a 25-minute sprint race and a 50-minute pitstop

race on each day. This means drivers will now get three-and-a-half hours of track action each weekend.

"We had a huge response to our survey and people phoned us too," explained championship director Hannah Wilson. "We listened and took on board everything that everybody said and one of the main things the survey suggested was people wanted more track time."

"They said, over the weekend, Saturday was really good and

busy but Sunday fell flat a little bit. They didn't want so much practice but we have offered more track time.

"[The changes mean] Pros can now race on a Saturday but still won't be able to go out in the sprint races. We're also looking to book some dedicated testing on Friday."

The provisional 2019 calendar features seven two-day meetings, visiting Donington Park, Snetterton, Silverstone and Brands Hatch GP.

No calendar has yet been revealed for the GT Cup's sister series the LMP3 Cup. Organisers had to wait for the European Le Mans Series calendar to be released to make sure dates didn't clash. Wilson says that there is a contract with the ACO for the series to run again next year – despite its small entries this term – and that she is hopeful of more Radicals and CN cars joining the series after the regulations were opened up earlier this year.



British GT champ last raced Porsche in 2011

Caine to make Carrera Cup return

Former British GT champion Michael Caine will return to the Porsche Carrera Cup GB for the series finale at Brands Hatch this weekend at the wheel of a Motorbase Performance-run machine.

Motorbase rejoined the series this season with Valentin Hasse-Clot, who took part at Snetterton, but Caine will tackle the final two rounds in Kent. Caine, who was runner up in the Porsche one-make competition in 2010 behind champion Tim Harvey, last took part in the series in 2011.

Caine began the season racing a Team Hard VW CC in the British Touring Car Championship, but left the team after the rounds at Rockingham in August.

"David asked me to race and I jumped at the chance," said Caine. "I know it will put a smile on my face and I can really enjoy the weekend. I will not get involved with the title battle – I am just going out there to do the best job I can for myself and the team patron David Bartrum. The colour scheme will certainly get me noticed too, but I am not going to reveal details just yet."

Ex-Formula 1 driver Mike Wilds is another addition to the entry list for Brands Hatch with the Britcar regular competing with top team Redline Racing.

The championship will be fought between Dino Zamparelli, Tio Ellinas and Tom Wrigley this weekend.

CSCC to launch Mazda RX-8 class

The Classic Sports Car Club has announced its first one-make race class for the Mazda RX-8, which will start in 2019.

Called the RX-8 Trophy, it will cater for road-legal examples of the Series 1 Mazda coupe built from 2003 to '08 and will run as a class within the New Millennium series.

The RX-8 Trophy will join the field of post year 2000 production cars and share its 40-minute, mandatory pitstop and one/two driver format. Running to a heavily restricted set of regulations, it is intended to offer value, entry-level motorsport.

Club director David Smitheram said: "I am

aware of the barriers that stop people racing. It's usually a combination of time, money and space. Hopefully this is the answer to all three."

"Last year I ran in a one-make BMW championship and learned a lot. Since then I've moved house and don't have room for a dedicated tow car and trailer. I still want to go racing but I just haven't got the room."

Smitheram has built the first car himself, although he is ineligible to compete in CSCC events.

A sub 30-hour build time is expected and a total cost between £4000 and £5000 for a ready-to-race car.

All retain the road car's



New sub-class for 2019

231bhp rotary engine and rear-wheel drive configuration. Cars also have to keep the heater, air conditioning, and stereo to allow racers to drive to the circuit and back – negating the need for a trailer.

"The RX-8 as a road car has flaws," Smitheram added. "But these largely disappear as a race car, especially with the few reliability modifications the regulations allow."

Fiesta series honours Bateman

Tributes were paid to John Bateman by Fiesta Championship organisers and its drivers during the series' visit to Silverstone last weekend.

Bateman, a former competitor and official in Fiestas, died of a heart attack suffered while competing in a Puma Cup race at Donington Park earlier in September.

A minute's silence was observed by Fiesta drivers on the grid and members of Bateman's family before the start of their second race of the weekend on Sunday afternoon, all cars displaying special decals



Bateman was a regular Fiesta competitor and official

to mark further respect.

Series co-ordinator Maddy Dadson said: "He raced with us and most recently has been the championship's driving standards official, so it feels right to give something back."

Competitor John Cooper opted to change his number to Bateman's

trademark #42 for the weekend, and fittingly took victory in Class D in the third race.

"That's a fitting way to win it for me," said Cooper. "He'd have raised a glass to us. He wasn't always the fastest, but he was definitely one of the nicest and did a lot to help us over the years."

DEPUTY EDITOR

STEPHEN LICKORISH

"Unusually, all five BTCC support series are up for grabs"



Spectators at Brands Hatch this weekend are in for a real treat. While the British Touring Car Championship title battle will take centre stage (and you can read all about how that is shaping up on page 27), the support series are set to provide heaps of entertainment.

Unusually, all five championships are still up for grabs. In fact, since 2010, there has only been one other year where this was the case, in 2014. Usually, at least one series has already been settled and in 2013 three were already decided – with Dan Cammish romping to Formula Ford glory and Harry Woodhead strolling to the Ginetta Junior crown with two meetings still to go that year.

So there's a lot riding on this weekend. And out of all the title battles the closest is in the Renault UK Clio Cup. It's also the most controversial.

Tempers had already been frayed at times this year but things reached boiling point last time out at Silverstone. On the one hand it shows how much the drivers care about winning the title, but on the other there needs to be respect between the contenders and their teams. Sadly, we won't get a resolution to the title battle at Brands though, with Paul Rivett's controversial race-two exclusion and a penalty for Max Coates set to be reviewed by the National Court – after this weekend's finale.

As things stand, Coates heads Rivett by six points, with James Dorlin one point further back. But it would be a completely different picture if Rivett and his WDE team are successful in court. Given the propensity for a dramatic conclusion, don't completely rule out Dan Rowbottom even though he is 49 points adrift.

It's certainly a frustration that fans will be leaving Brands uncertain as to who the champion is, but there should, in theory, be more clarity in the other four series.

Another very close fight is in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB. Dino Zamparelli, twice the bridesmaid, leads Tio Ellinas by eight points, while Tom Wrigley still has an outside chance of triumphing. Last year Charlie Eastwood won the title with an overtake on Tom Oliphant with three laps of the finale to go – and it could be that close again this year.

There was a new Ginetta Junior points leader at Silverstone as Louis Foster's rich vein of form allowed him to usurp team-mate Adam Smalley. He now heads Smalley by 21 points, with third-placed Luke Browning just about in contention still, another 27 points further back. But with Foster having nine penalty points on his licence already this year, he needs to be inch-perfect to be sure of the title.

Charlie Ladell has a larger advantage in the GT4 Supercup with 42 points in hand over Carl Boardley, but most comfortable heading to Kent is Kiern Jewiss. The Double R driver has a 62-point gap to Ayrton Simmons in British Formula 4.

But there's always plenty of surprises at the Brands finale and, even in that commanding position, Jewiss is far from guaranteed title glory this weekend.

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HISTORICS

'Ghinn returns to the circuits'
F3 man is back, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence

DOWN THE PUB WITH

IAN SKAILES

Age: 71 Lives: Nottingham
Period: Chevron racer

He only raced Chevrons

"I started racing in 1967 and only raced Chevrons. I bought a second-hand B6, which wasn't really a good move as it was a fairly used motor car and by 1968 they'd brought out the B8 and the B8 was a better car and had wider wheels."

He raced across Europe

"I did about six races in the B6 and then bought a brand new B8 from Derek Bennett in British Racing Green and that was a terrific car and much more competitive. I think I did about 25 races in the year, all over the place. I did a lot of club races but also did Mugello, Vila Real, the 12-hour race at Barcelona, the 1000km race at Montlhery and Jarama."

A B16 came next

"Probably the most satisfying result I had was qualifying on pole for the Martini Trophy at Silverstone in the B8. I hadn't been racing for that long and I had a steep learning curve. The following year I had a B16, which did Le Mans and the BOAC 1000km at Brands. We nearly finished Le Mans, contrary to many people's predictions, and retired an hour and a half from the finish. That was a bit agonising. I was sharing with John Hine and Chevron supported us. They paid for the engine rebuild after the race, amongst other things."

Le Mans was a challenge

"It was a beautiful car to drive for 24 hours and very safe and stable, and it had a very slippery shape. We were clocked at 177mph on the Mulsanne Straight, which wasn't bad for 1970cc. There were no chicanes at Le Mans and you still had the old White House Corner and there were plenty of things to hit. So you had to drive with care and not have too much of a do-or-die approach."

He retired aged 23

"At the end of that year I called it a day for business reasons. Sponsorship was coming in heavily and I was pretty much self-funded. I've got some wonderful memories and a lot of good friends and I had quite a useful career in a short space of time, and didn't hurt myself. The circuits were definitely men's circuits in those days."



Skales: Le Mans challenge



Edwards hopes to challenge in the 131

EDWARDS TO TACKLE TRACKROD IN FIAT 131

BTRDA Gold Star winner swaps to Italian car for historic attack

By Jack Benyon

Newly-crowned BTRDA Rally Series Gold Star champion Matt Edwards will switch from his usual Ford Fiesta R5 to a historic-spec Fiat 131 Abarth for this weekend's Trackrod Historic Cup.

Edwards, who is also leading the British Rally Championship with one round remaining, has handed his R5 for the event to

prize-drive winner Mat Smith.

Edwards hasn't competed in the British Historic Rally Championship since Rally North Wales in 2016, when he finished fifth. He did infamously beat Trackrod legend Steve Bannister to win the Historic event in 2013.

"It's been the plan to drive the 131 for a while assuming we had the BTRDA title wrapped up," said Edwards. "I'll happily

go and drive anything with a bit of incentive. The plan is to try and give it a good showing against the Escorts. The car is from a bit before my time really! But obviously I'm aware of the history, being the bobble-hatter I am. I like a challenge."

The car is now owned by Pete Smith, who has backed Edwards through much of his career through his Swift Caravans concern. "We're still working on it,"

said Smith of the car's performance. "I thought we'd made some improvements but I really struggled with it on the Woodpecker. Matt will drive around the problems in the car because he'll drive anything quickly, but hopefully he can give us some feedback on where it can improve."

Darren Garrod, Edwards' regular co-driver, will join him in the 131.



Bannister will tackle Trackrod

Bannister and Oldfield reunited for another attack on Trackrod

Yorkshire rallying legend Steve Bannister will renew a partnership with co-driver Dave Oldfield on this weekend's Trackrod Historic Cup, after a 30-year gap.

Bannister and Oldfield rallied together in the 1980s and won

the Trackrod in 1984, '85 and '88. However, Oldfield retired from co-driving in 1999 on health grounds but has been tempted back into Bannister's Ford Escort Mk2.

"None of the two or three regular navigators I've used

could do the rally this year so I hadn't entered," said Bannister. "Dave's a lot better now and so we went testing and afterwards I said: 'that went well so you'd better do the Trackrod with me now'. He agreed, so after 30 years we are back together!"

Historic Rally dates for 2019 revealed

The MSA British Historic Rally Championship has dropped Rally Isle of Man from its 2019 schedule following the late cancellation of this year's rally.

Instead of the trip to the Isle of Man in September, the BHRC will return to the Ulster Rally for the first time in five years.

The Ulster's compact one-day format as the championship's sail-away event is expected to be attractive to competitors seeking a quality, closed-road challenge

SCHEDULE

Provisional dates, subject to MSA approval

DATE	EVENT
Saturday March 30	North Wales Stages
Saturday April 27	Pirelli Rally
Saturday June 8	Carlisle Stages
Sunday June 23	Red Kite Stages
Sunday July 28	Harry Flatters Rally
Saturday Aug 17	Ulster Rally
Fri/Sat Sept 27/28	Trackrod Historic Cup

without too much time away from businesses and families. The schedule takes in five gravel and two asphalt rallies.

Dee-Crowne takes over HSCC reins

Andy Dee-Crowne has been appointed to the role of chief executive Officer for the Historic Sports Car Club, starting in January 2019.

Dee-Crowne will bring wide-ranging experience to the role, both as a competitor and as a clerk of the course. He will succeed Grahame White, the club's CEO for over 20 years, who

will now switch to a new consultancy position.

"I'm delighted to be selected for the position and I look forward to guiding the club into its next chapter," said Dee-Crowne.

"Grahame has made a fantastic contribution to the HSCC and he is a tough act to follow."

Dee-Crowne: New boss



Clive Richards swaps his Caterham for an outing in Historic Formula Ford 1600

Caterham ace Clive Richards joined the Historic Formula Ford grid at Brands Hatch with the ex-Dan Pickett Merlyn Mk20 and hopes to contest a full season in 2019.

The Surrey-based tree

surgeon has raced Caterhams successfully for 20 years and was looking for a new challenge.

Richards: FF outing at Brands

"I had a test in a Formula Ford here at the racing school as I was 17," said Richards, 57. "If I enjoy it, we'll do a full season next year."

He tested the car for the first time on Friday and then took a stunning second place in Sunday's race.

He added: "I had my first ever race at an HSCC meeting in 1979 in my dad's Frazer Nash."



Gardiner in a Lotus Cortina

IN BRIEF

Whizzo's funeral

Stars from the sport including John Watson and Richard Attwood gathered in Bromyard last Friday for the funeral of Barrie 'Whizzo' Williams. A large congregation filled St Peter's Church in the Herefordshire town to honour the life of Williams, who died recently after a short illness. Outside the church was his Mini Cooper, 120 MNP, which he used to win the 1964 Welsh Rally.

Goodwood dates

Goodwood has confirmed the dates for all three of its showcase motorsport events for 2019. The Festival of Speed will run from July 4-7 in the grounds of Goodwood House, while the nearby race circuit will host the Members' Meeting on April 6/7 and the 21st Revival Race Meeting on September 13-15.

Charteris in F2

Classic Clubmans pacesetter Mark Charteris is planning a full HSCC Historic Formula 2 season next year in his March 742. In a couple of outings this year Charteris has shown strong pace on the switch to single-seaters and is keen to do more F2 races in 2019. The chance to race at major European tracks is part of the appeal of the F2 series.

Ghinn returns

Reigning Classic F3 champion Gaius Ghinn had his first races of 2018 when he returned to his Ralt RT3 at Brands over the weekend. Work commitments have kept Ghinn away from racing this season but he was quickly back on the pace in the Peter Sneller-run car and finished best of the two-litre F3 cars on Saturday.

Moon rises again

Darren Moon will return to gravel rallying on his local Trackrod Historic Cup with his daughter Nicole co-driving in their Ford Escort Mk2. Moon, a former BHRC event winner, has not rallied on gravel for several seasons while recovering from a back injury and trying his hand at racing a Mini Miglia.

Brabham found

The ex-Roy James Brabham BT2 Formula Junior has been found a year after being stolen from owner John Rapley in New Zealand. The rare BT2 was found 30 miles away from Rapley's base during a property search. "Everyone told me it wouldn't be seen again," said a delighted Rapley.

Gardiner's Lotus

After a season of success in Masters Historic Touring Cars with his Ford Falcon, Mike Gardiner returned to his Lotus Cortina for the Historic Touring Car double header at Brands Hatch on Saturday. It was his first run in the car since engine issues two years ago. "I love these one-day events," said Gardiner, who plans to return in the Guards Trophy next season.

RALLY NEWS

Photos: VW Motorsport, fiaworldrallycross.com

The Volkswagen Polo R5 has tested already



Solberg (l) will run on the same stages as returnee Loeb (r)

SOLBERG: I WANT TO ENJOY RALLY SPAIN

Former champion plays down pace expectations ahead of R5 outing

By David Evans

Petter Solberg has warned his fans not to expect too much when he returns to the World Rally Championship for the first time in six years at next month's Rally of Spain.

The former World Rally champion was confirmed for a one-off drive in a factory-run Volkswagen Polo GTI R5 in Spain last week. Solberg, who drove the Polo for the first time in Sweden at the start of the season, will return for a two-day test in Spain ahead of the rally.

"I am so happy to be back in this atmosphere and in the World Rally Championship," Solberg told *MN*. "But we have to remember that the rally car I have been driving recently [his own Ford Escort RS1800] isn't so much like the Polo."

Solberg left the full-time WRC when he departed Ford's factory team in 2012. Since then his only modern outing was at the 2014 Condroz Rally, where he competed in a Citroen C4 WRC, but retired with a broken gearbox.

"It will be a big fight in WRC2," said Solberg. "There's a championship

going on and these guys are in the cars all the time. I'm going to have fun and to show what this car can do; let me go and do the rally that I can do and then let's see what is happening. It's really nice to be asked to do this by Volkswagen and I'm really looking forward to being back there."

Solberg has been so impressed with the Polo GTI R5 that he has ordered one for himself – but he was quick to dismiss talk that he could be back in rallying long-term.

"I think my car should come next year," he said. "Honestly, it is so much fun, it's fantastic. When I tested in Sweden I just wanted to keep driving and this is the way to do that."

He will, however, have to fight his son Oliver for the keys.

"I am driving in rallycross now," he said. "The rally would be just for fun – but for Oliver it's more for the future. He will be testing with the Polo a lot next year."

Volkswagen team principal Sven Smeets admitted it was a 'dream' to land Solberg as a driver for the Salou-based October event.

"Petter is a true rally hero," said

Smeets. "We have already experienced his passion and professionalism working alongside him in World Rallycross. He tested the Polo GTI R5 and, from the beginning, it was our dream to have him in the car to give this new customer rally car its debut. Everybody in Volkswagen Motorsport is excited to be working on a rally and

on this special event with Petter and our second driver Eric Camilli."

Smeets has outlined more detail of the Polo GTI R5 programme to *MN*, including confirmation that the German firm will continue to build the cars for the next four years.

There had been speculation that once the planned 50 cars were built, that would be the end of Volkswagen Motorsport's commitment.

"That's absolutely not the case," said Smeets. "There is no limit of 50 cars. We hope to have 50 [built and sold] by the end of next year and 15 of those will be delivered by Christmas this year. In 2019, we build 35 and in 2020 we will, for sure, not build less than that. Beyond that, building more cars could depend on what other projects we have going on in-house. But we fully intend to build and sell through the four-year homologation cycle."

Once the car breaks cover with Solberg and Camilli in Spain, Smeets admitted the car might not be seen much more in 2018.

"That's simply because

there are not many rallies left in the end of the year," he added, "but from next year we will see them competing and some of them with the backing of local importers. We know from our customers that there is going to be a few of them going to the European Rally Championship."

The Polo will have carried out close to 6,500 miles of testing ahead of its homologation date on October 1. And Smeets added that all of the know-how from the team's ultra successful Polo R WRC had gone into the R5.

"With the regulations for the R5 and the parts so cost-controlled, it's hard to make a big difference [from the other R5 cars] in terms of performance," he said. "But what we have been able to do is use our knowledge and experience from the Polo R WRC. We have been testing in all of the same places we tested the World Rally Car before it came out, this gives us the chance to use the data we have from before. We have tried to find the right balance between competitiveness, reliability and performance and we are very proud of the car we will bring to Spain."

"Petter is a true rally hero"



SVEN SMEETS

▶ ALL THE ACTION FROM CASTLE COMBE'S RALLYDAY

▶▶▶ PAGE 17



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WALES RALLY GB 2 WEEKS TO GO

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

RALLY GB SHAKE-UP WILL BE A BRAND NEW CHALLENGE



More mileage in the north

Next week's revamped Wales Rally GB will provide a radically different challenge to previous years, according to event's route co-ordinator Andrew Kellitt, following his final inspection of the stages.

Motorsport News joined Kellitt to look at the roads which make up Britain's round of the World Rally Championship last week. This year's event will be the first in its history to include two days' competition in North Wales, with the mid-Wales mileage, usually run on days one and two, now concentrated on the Saturday.

"This year's route is going to feel a lot different," said Kellitt, "and I think it will catch a few out. Starting with Friday, it's got a very different feel and format to previous years. For many years we've been in the flowing roads in mid Wales, but



Ditches (bottom left) could be used more often on GB

now we're into some narrower stages in the north.

"The roads on the first day really vary quite a lot. Penmachno is different to anything in Brenig or Clocaenog. Brenig, for example, has so many surface and potential grip changes, the drivers will really have to be ready – there's mud, rock and even a bit of grass up the middle in some of them. What some of your more seasoned readers

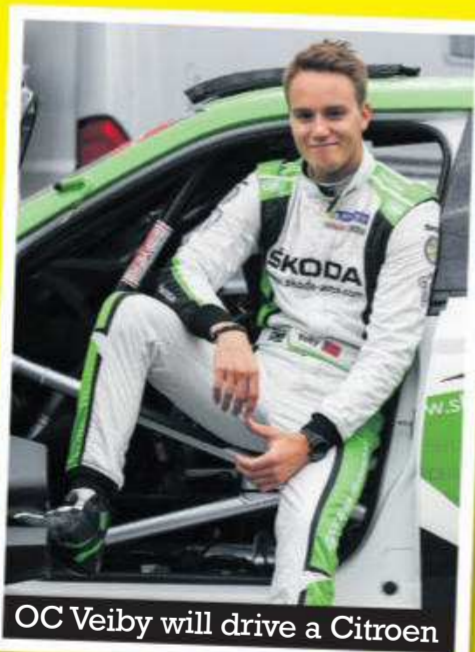
will remember as a bit of three-ply. But Penmachno is rockier, more mountainous and much narrower – but then you come out into another section and roads built up with rock." Kellitt expects the nature of some stages to force the drivers to widen the road for themselves.

He added: "There's potential to see the drivers using the ditches a fair bit more than in recent years, simply because

some places are that narrow. There is, of course, nothing new with drivers redefining what and where the road is on Rally GB – the ditches are regularly used to find grip or to slow the cars down. But the difference is that these ditches haven't been visited in a long time – most of these drivers will never have been in the north part of Penmachno – and who knows what's going to be found in the undergrowth."

Much of the mid-Wales mileage remains identical to previous years and the roads in the Dyfi and Hafren regions are as solid as ever.

"They're in very good condition," said Kellitt. "Of course, there's been the odd bit of harvesting here and there, but in general they're the usual mid-Wales motorways: good surface, hard base, wide and fast."



OC Veiby will drive a Citroen

Veiby dropped by Skoda, switches to Citroen for Rally GB

Skoda has dropped its Norwegian driver Ole Christian Veiby, leaving the 22-year-old to switch his Wales Rally GB entry to a Citroen C3 R5.

Veiby had been part of the Skoda factory team since the start of last season. He finished second to MRF team-mate Gaurav Gill in the Asia Pacific Rally Championship, but has been shown the door after failing to demonstrate the same WRC2 performance as fellow Skoda drivers Esapekka Lappi and Pontus Tidemand.

There had been speculation Veiby was dismissed for posting commercially sensitive images on social media, but neither Skoda or his management could confirm that.

Veiby hasn't won a WRC2 round this year and Skoda team principal Michal Hrabanek said Veiby's departure was part of a bigger picture.

"We will modify our motorsport strategy for 2019," Hrabanek said. "Based on this, Ole Christian Veiby and [co-driver] Stig Rune

Skjaeremoen will leave the team."

Only Kalle Rovanpera is understood to have a contract to drive a Fabia R5 next season, with Jan Kopecky and Tidemand unsure of their future with the Czech team. Veiby will test a C3 R5 for two days before Wales.

"It's a positive thing for me to get experience behind the wheel in another car," he said.

Welshman Tom Cave has also confirmed his WRC2 entry to Wales Rally GB. As expected, he will drive a Hyundai i20 R5.

Zip wire race for WRC title hopefuls

The three World Rally Championship protagonists are expected to take part in a race with a difference ahead of next week's Wales Rally GB.

Thierry Neuville, Ott Tanak and Sebastien Ogier are set to go head-to-head at Zip World in Blaenau Ffestiniog, the location for this year's all-new Slate Mountain stage. The three will ride the kilometre-long Titan zip simultaneously in Rally GB's first ever side-by-side competition. Ogier admitted he was looking

forward to the race. The Frenchman told *MN*: "Are you sure it won't be raining? Seriously, it will be fun. I think we should have some extra bonus points for the first to the bottom!"

Rally GB director Ben Taylor added: "It's going to be fantastic to see those three guys on the zip – it's so much fun. And we're pretty confident in the equipment, our sponsor Dayinsure sent a rally car down the same lines earlier this year."



Tanak, Ogier and Neuville will take part in unusual race

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"WRC needs Meeke back in action"



The Welsh woods are already alive with world rally stars and their cars, the WRC's coming home next week and another amazing Rallyday on Saturday. We'll get to those further down this page.

For now, I've got to get something off my chest which has been bugging me for the last four months.

Kris Meeke.

Enough's enough. The sport needs him back. I'm in the middle of writing the odd word by way of a preview to next week's festival of forest fever and it's just not right doing it without including Meeke and co-driver Paul Nagle.

Yes, it's been a great season and its building to a fascinating crescendo, but it would have been even better with Meeke having his say in things.

So Kris, it's time to get off your bike and back in your car. It's time to get back to work.

What are the chances of that? Well, the fact that he's spoken to Toyota team principal Tommi Makinen means there must be some sort of a spark there. We can be pretty sure the four-time champion wasn't calling to find out how the weather's been in Andorra since May.

And there's no doubt Meeke could do a job in a Yaris WRC. The prospect of him and Ott Tanak as team-mates is right up there with Markku Alen and Juha Kankkunen at Lancia in 1987.

One thing has to stop though: this talk about Jari Huttunen taking over from Esapekka Lappi. Really? I mean, really? Huttunen is, no doubt, a talented driver, but he's absolutely not the right man for the Toyota job. He's had a factory Hyundai i20 R5 this year, but hasn't troubled the top step of the WRC2 podium once. His countrymen Eerik Pietarinen and Teemu Suninen have both got more than double the number of WRC2 stage wins this year – and they've each started five times less rallies in an R5 car than him.

I'll revisit some of these topics in the coming weeks, but I couldn't let this week's paper pass without saying a huge thank you to a few folk. Firstly, to Tom Davis and Katie Howell for putting together another amazing Rallyday. And secondly, to Miki Biasion, Stuart Turner, Russell Brookes and Martin Holmes for taking me on a journey through history.

It won't surprise you to learn that I'm a real sucker for stories. I remember the first time I ever met Erik Carlsson, I sat totally transfixed and listened to him talking about the 1960 RAC Rally. It was just the same at Castle Combe last weekend. As the rain bounced off the marquee I was totally engrossed in 1987 and Lancia's decision not to allow Biasion to challenge for a first world title at the RAC Rally. Same manufacturer and same event, Brookes filled me in on his one-off Delta adventure. Stuart and Martin? They're both for another column on another day.

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

RALLY NEWS

Photos: Roy Dempster, Chicane Media

Giddings wins, Tindall gearbox woe

James Giddings has been crowned Fiesta ST Trophy champion following the withdrawal of main title rival Ewan Tindall from this weekend's Trackrod Rally.

Tindall, the reigning Junior Formula 1000 champion, has had a successful season, not finishing off the podium in his first season in the forests.

But a broken gearbox and low-funds means he misses this weekend's event, handing Giddings the title and the prize on offer, a year in the series' Castrol Ford Fiesta R2 car.

Welshman Giddings and co-driver Sion Cunniff bounced back from retirement on the Nicky Grist Stages to take their second win of the season on the Woodpecker Stages earlier this month, having stepped up to a first season of closed-road rallying in the forests from the GwynneSpeed Challenge title in 2016.

"It's been a tough season with some really close battles and the stage times going back and forward all year," Giddings said.

"I've had three rallies where I had some bad luck: at Plains I had a gearbox problem while third, Carlisle I had a puncture and on the Nicky Grist I slid off."

While Giddings has secured the use of the car, he still has to pay for the running costs, something he says he is working on.

"We have to consider the running costs [for the R2] and we are working towards getting the funds for next year," he added. "It's leading towards it happening."

The prize car would be eligible to compete in the R2 Rallye Trophy in the BTRDA, won this year by George Lepley.

Most of the major titles are wrapped up heading into the weekend. Matt Edwards and Lepley have topped the Gold and Silver Star titles. Russ Thompson sealed another Production Cup title, while Giddings takes the ST trophy and Dave Brick has sealed the 1400 crown.



Josh Moffett is the new Tarmac champ

MOFFETTS MISS CORK AS JOSH TAKES THE TITLE

Poor R5 entry for Cork '20' gifts Josh Moffett Irish Tarmac Rally crown

By Jack Benyon

A poor entry at the top of the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship on the Cork '20' Rally this weekend has gifted Josh Moffett the title, his second of the year.

The Irish Forest Rally champion joins fellow title fighting drivers Sam Moffett and Robert Barrable on the sidelines this weekend, meaning there are no ITRC podium finishers in frontrunning cars on the entry list.

Barrable broke his leg in June on the Donegal International Rally, which hampered his charge, while Sam Moffett has focused more on

business commitments this season.

With all three non-entering, Moffett takes the title having claimed maximum points on the first two rounds of the series; the West Cork Rally and the Easter Stages.

He adds that to the Irish Forest Rally Championship, but could fall short of Irish rallying's hat-trick, combining the Tarmac, Forest and National titles. His brother Sam was the first to achieve the feat last year, but Declan Boyle is favourite to scoop the National title.

Jonny Greer will start the event as car number one and, although he won the Down Rally earlier in the year and is a constant threat for top threes, he's yet

to score a podium in the ITRC this season.

Daniel Cronin – brother of four-time British champion Keith – and Meirion Evans in his second start in a Hyundai R5 make up the three leading R5 entries on the event. Evans debuted the car on the Wexford Stages earlier this month and took a second place overall.

In his fight to retain the Irish Tarmac Modified championship, Toyota Corolla driver Kevin Eves takes an eight point lead into the finale, with John Bonner still in with a shout in second in his Ford Escort Mk2.

Gary McNamee sealed the Junior title on the last round, but returns in his Honda Civic.

SEEDING ENTRY LIST

Irish Tarmac Rally Championship, Cork '20' Rally, Cork, September 29/30

NO	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Jonathan Greer/Kirsty Riddick	Ford Fiesta R5
2	Roy White/James O' Brien	Ford Fiesta WRC
3	Daniel Cronin/Shane Buckley	Ford Fiesta R5
4	Meirion Evans/Jonathan Jackson	Hyundai i20 R5
5	Kevin Eves/Chris Melly	Toyota Corolla
6	Frank Kelly/Michael Coady	Ford Escort Mk2
7	David Guest/Jonathan McGrath	Skoda Fabia S2000
8	Brian Brogan/Damien McGettigan	Ford Escort Mk2
9	Colin Byrne/Stephen Quin	Ford Escort Mk2
10	John Bonner/TBA	Ford Escort Mk2

LEADING ENTRIES

BTRDA Rally Series, Trackrod Rally Yorkshire, Filey, September 28/29

NO	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Charles Payne/Carl Williamson	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
2	Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
3	Hugh Hunter/Rob Fagg	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
4	Thomas Preston/Dai Roberts	Skoda Fabia R5
5	Russ Thompson/Andy Murphy	Mitsubishi Lancer E9
6	Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence	Mitsubishi Lancer E9
7	Ian Joel/Graeme Wood	Ford Escort Cosworth
8	Matthew Hirst/Declan Dear	Mitsubishi Lancer E9
15	Mat Smith/Giles Dykes	Ford Fiesta R5
16	Peter Smith/John Millington	Ford Fiesta R5+

Payne (r) has three Trackrod wins to date



Payne goes in search of a record fourth Trackrod win

Charlie Payne says he has to treat Trackrod Rally Yorkshire 'like any other rally' in a bid to take a record-breaking fourth win on the event.

Payne has won the last three Trackrod events in a row, but has only competed sporadically in the last two seasons having taken the BTRDA Gold Star title in 2016. He has since switched to a Ford Fiesta RS WRC.

"It's just another rally, that's how you've got to

treat it," he said. "We've won it three times on the trot, I don't think anyone has won it four times. I'll try my best and see what we can do."

He won the event by just 0.2s last year over the similar car of 2017 Gold Star champion Stephen Petch, who will be one of his main rivals for this event. In a similar Ford Fiesta RS WRC, Hugh Hunter is expected to challenge.

Tom Preston returns to

action after an extended spell on the sidelines ahead of his Wales Rally GB National event defence, while Mat Smith is an intriguing proposition. In the 2018 Gold Star title-winning car of Matt Edwards, Smith has been given an R5 instead of his regular 1400 Proton thanks to a prize drive from Pete Smith (not related). Mat tested the car at Sweet Lamb last week, as did Payne.

MOFFETT TAKES WIN AS MCGARRITY IS NORTHERN IRISH CHAMPION >>>> **PAGE 18**

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**'British Championship
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Rallyday report, p17



Photos: pro-rally.co.uk, Black Mountain Media, Lindsay Photo Sport, Jakob Ebrey

NORTH WEST STAGES CLOSE TO CLOSED-ROAD MILES



Simon Bowen won 2017 event

The North West Stages has taken a step closer to running closed-road stages on its event next year, after receiving a permit from the Motor Sports Association.

The rally took a sabbatical in 2018 in order to prepare for its 2019 event. It has now applied to the Highways Agency, which grants final permission to the event and awards the necessary Motor Race Order.

The event will move from Blackpool to nearby Garstang and, while securing the next permit and with residents to survey in the coming months, it is not yet certain how many closed-road stage miles will be used. It is hoping that around 60 per cent of the 50 stage

miles will run on closed roads. If that is reduced, it still has access to a number of private venues used in the past.

As well as the switch to Garstang, central service and scrutineering moves to popular motorsport education establishment Myerscough College. It is scheduled to run on March 23.

"We have worked closely with Wyre Council for a number of years having run Special Stages on the Council-owned Fleetwood Waterfront in the past, so it made sense to seek their support for Closed Road Special Stages," said Dave Read, event director. "It was at the council's request that we moved the base of the event to their borough."

Bilham gets R2 prize outing for Wales Rally GB National with Peter Smith's Ford Fiesta

Sam Bilham has become the second driver to secure a prize drive in a Ford Fiesta R2 on Wales Rally GB, joining fellow John Easson Trophy award winner Tommi Meadows.

The 2016 Fiesta ST Trophy champion will drive the same car given to him by Swift Caravans' chairman Peter Smith for the Nicky Grist

Stages earlier in the year. "It was a little last-minute but we'll be giving it full steam ahead to make it work," Bilham said.

"I'm a little bit sceptical as to how it will go in terms of performance but the stages should suit my driving style.

"They should be similar to the Cambrian stages

which I have done so we'll see how I get on."

He finished second in class on the Nicky Grist Stages, his only outing in the car, and only his second rally of the year. Bilham has yet to finalise his 2019 plans but is keen to make the most of his GB appearance.

"We're close to sorting out a car for 2019. But the focus

is on GB and I just want to be able to say that I've done it."

Meadows and 2017 ST Trophy champion George Lepley – who won the BTRDA R2 Rallye Cup this year – are among the competition in the R2 class in the national event.

It uses the same stages as the international event, run only once, with over 80 miles of stages.



Bilham has secured another Fiesta R2 outing on GB's star event



Ex-Higgins car makes GB return

Scottish champion Gallacher to join National field at Rally GB

Scottish Rally champion Andrew Gallacher will give his ex-Mark Higgins Ford Focus RS WRC01 a Wales Rally GB return after 14 years at next month's event.

Gallacher has a free entry to WRGB alongside co-driver Jane Nicol, courtesy of his 2018 Scottish title win. He is the first son of a champion to win the crown, following his father and four-time champion Drew.

He believes the car can be

a threat on the Deeside event.

"The car is the one Mark Higgins won the British title with [in 2005], in Stobart colours, and it's been a good car to me this year," Gallacher said.

"I've done several of the stages before and they are normally pretty good for a car like ours."

It will be Gallacher's first appearance at GB since 2014, where he claimed second overall in the National

event driving a Mitsubishi Lancer E9.

Gallacher has yet to announce his plans for 2019 and is focused on securing a finish at GB.

"I don't know what we will do with the car for next year," he said. "But the plan is to keep it in one piece [on Rally GB] and aim for the top five."

Mike Faulkner (2014/15) and Bruce McCombie (2016) have won the event from the SRC.

Mull Targa and Time Trial launched

In the absence of the Mull Rally in 2018, for the second year in a row the organiser will run a time trial and Targa rally.

The event is unable to run due to insurance issues, which won't be rectified until Scotland is able to pass new legislation handing the power to award a Motor Race Order to the Highways Agency and the sport's governing body, the MSA.

The time trial features one stage – new for 2018 –

run six times. The Targa event will run on Saturday October 13, the day before the time trial, and has already attracted over 50 entries. The organisers are working on extending the stage mileage, aiming for 25 miles, with around 50 miles of regularity.

Last year's event was won by Andy Beaumont/Andrew Fish in a Sunbeam Rapier H120, while the Ford Focus WRC of Reay MacKay/Keir Beaton were fastest in the time trial.

Edwards sad at Manx loss despite benefit to him

Despite its cancellation helping him to edge closer to a dream first British Rally Championship title, Matt Edwards is 'disappointed' at the loss of the Rally Isle of Man.

Organisers and government have blamed each other for the loss of the event as politics has intervened and, despite confirming a date for next year's event, it won't be a round of the British Rally Championship.

"I'm really disappointed the Manx has fallen," said Edwards. "It's an event

I really like. There's reasons and politics behind it, but for me it's a key characteristic of the BRC. It's the one I really wanted to win all year, if someone would have asked me to choose to win one event it would be that one."

The M-Sport-run Ford Fiesta R5 driver now only needs a fourth place on one leg of Wales Rally GB to take a first BRC title in his second year in R5 machinery.

"It's in our favour that it isn't running in terms of points and the title, but

that's not something I'm thinking about," he added.

Wales Rally GB returns to the BRC calendar for the first time since 2008 this year, and has attracted 18 entries.

Edwards, title rival David Bogie and Rhys Yates lead the way, with six R5s on the list. Lawrence Whyte returns in his Ford Fiesta R5 after missing the Ulster.

Steve Rokland, James Williams and William Creighton will fight it out for the Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship.



Edwards' lead has grown in BRC thanks to event loss

RALLY NEWS

Photos: SMJ Photography, LAT, mcklein-imagedatabase.com, FIA ERC

DAVID RICHARDS MAKES RALLY RETURN

MSA chairman opens Motorsport News championship



Coffey gets a new navigator



Richards: back co-driving

By Jack Benyon

Motor Sports Association chairman and 1981 World Rally champion co-driver David Richards will compete in the opening round of the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship at Oulton Park in a Ford Fiesta RS WRC.

Richards, who took over at the sport's UK governing body on January 1 this year, has made a number of key regulation changes in rallying, such as allowing seeding by class and promising an investigation into safety regulations in a bid to reduce the burden on grassroots competitors. In his career he sat alongside Ari Vatanen for the 1981 title, and also co-drove for Tony Pond, Billy Coleman and Andy

Dawson before going on to set-up Prodrive. He headed the Subaru WRC programme through the McRae years and went on to run the BAR F1 team and the WRC Promoter afterward.

Richards will navigate the ex-Mads Ostberg Ford Fiesta of event sponsor Graham Coffey, who won the event in 2012 and 2013 in a Subaru.

"The idea of using race tracks at a time of year when they aren't used for motor racing is a superb initiative and one that's to be applauded," said Richards.

"I'm sure it's fantastic for not only competitors but for the spectators coming along as well.

"It's such an obvious thing, to create a championship of single-venue events, and one wonders why it hasn't been done before.

"It is making great use of a facility that would be dormant in the winter months, while also taking rally cars closer to the general public. It's an opportunity to expose rallying to a broader audience."

Richards hasn't competed in a rally since the Colin McRae Stages in 2008, and before that since 2003. But he competed on similar events in his early days of competition.

"I did a number of single-venue events in the early days," said Richards.

"The one we used to go to every year was Loton Park in Shropshire. More recently I attended a similar event at Boconnoc House in Cornwall.

"I've done some vintage and regularity events like the Flying Scotsman with a close friend of mine, but I'm looking forward to Oulton Park."



Tanak car is no shipwreck

'Titanak' reservoir crash car to take on MN Circuit Rally series

The car which Ott Tanak crashed into a Mexican reservoir will compete in this year's Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship.

Pete Smith, whose Swift Caravans concern supports British Rally Championship points leader Matt Edwards and gives R2 prize drives, has the car as part of his rallying collection and is hoping to

complete the MN Circuit Rally season.

Tanak - now with Toyota in the WRC - rolled off the road just under two miles into the Los Mexicanos stage on the Friday morning of the 2015 Rally Mexico. Smith bought the car in 2017.

It has a different number plate to the car that submerged in the water.

"I had no idea it was the Titanak car when I bought it, I didn't twig it was the one that went into the lake," said Smith. "The car was stripped to the bare bodyshell and repainted, it was basically like new. The history came out later, but I was happy about it because it's a more important car historically."

ERC REPORT

GRYAZIN WINS, INGRAM CAN TAKE TITLE

Lukyanuk crashes, Under 28 title goes down to the wire with Ingram and Gryazin. By **Graham Lister**

Alexey Lukyanuk probably hadn't planned to describe becoming European Rally champion for the first time as "strange". But after wiping off the right-rear from his Ford Fiesta on a Polish tree three stages in to the country's ERC counter last Saturday, the celebrations in the Mikolajki service park were far from raucous, despite the enormity of the achievement.

Lukyanuk had battled back from serious injuries sustained in a head-on crash during a driver coaching session last year, which has left him with a limp and an eagerness to sit as often as possible - plus a constant shortage of cash - to take the ERC crown with three wins and a second place from seven starts.

With the title effectively his when rival Bruno Magalhaes announced he'd be a non-entry here and on next month's Latvian finale having run out of funds, Lukyanuk was keen to show a bit more bravado in terms of his driving, having competed all season under the burden of giving his investors the title they yearned.

That decision could have had dire consequences had his title bid depended

on points in Poland. While it dealt another blow to his wallet, it wouldn't have any bearing on who would follow Kajetan Kajetanowicz as ERC champion.

"Something went wrong before the jump, the speed was not too high but before the jump the car reacted too well to my steering input and we had too much slide," said the Russian. "I understood I could touch the inside of the corner so I had to straighten up the car a bit and we jumped straight on this crest and unfortunately we landed too far from the proper line. The speed was OK but the line was not perfect so we hit a tree after landing. Not a good moment for us.

"It feels a bit strange [to be champion after a crash] but I'm happy for the team and for the sponsors. It's a really big step for us. We tried to be on the limit all the time but we don't have enough practice, enough testing and sometimes we lose control. But the party starts now."

Briton Chris Ingram could also be in party mode soon after he kept alive his ERC Junior Under 28 title hopes with second spot to outright Poland winner Nikolay Gryazin and one place ahead of erstwhile title leader Fabian Kreim.

Ingram will head to Latvia seven points behind Gryazin although the dropped-score rule will mean a class win next

month might not be enough for the crown. Gryazin's Poland win - his second in the ERC - was further confirmation of the 20-year-old Russian's pace and ability to drive with his head rather than his heart.

Throughout the three days of competition in Poland, Gryazin was adamant top points in class meant more than topping the final leaderboard. That meant Jari Huttunen was always in catching distance in his factory-supported Hyundai, although a time penalty and final-stage excursion left him 8.3s adrift at the finish.

Reigning ADAC Opel Rallye Cup champion Tom Kristensson won his first event in the ERC Junior Under 27 class previously won by Ingram. He is now succeeded by Martin Sesks who claimed the title and prize funds towards an R5 drive in the ERC next year.

Results

1 Nikolay Gryazin/Yaroslav Fedorov (Skoda Fabia R5) +1h53m43.5s; 2 Jari Huttunen/Antti Linnaketo (Hyundai i20 R5) +8.3s; 3 Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock (Fabia R5); 4 Fabian Kreim/Frank Christian (Fabia R5); 5 Miko Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk (Fabia R5); 6 Lukasz Habaj/Daniel Dymurski (Fabia R5); 7 Grzegorz Grzyb/Jakub Wrobel (Fabia R5); 8 Filip Mares/Jan Hloušek (Fabia R5); 9 Tomasz Kasperczyk/Damian Syty (Ford Fiesta R5); 10 Norbert Herczig/Ramón Ferencz (Fabia R5).
Class winners: ERC2: Marcin Słobodzian/Grzegorz Dachowski (Subaru Impreza STI); ERC3: Tom Kristensson/Henrik Appelskog (Opel Adam R2); Junior Under 28: Gryazin/Fedorov Junior Under 27: Kristensson/Appelskog.



Victory overall for Gryazin



Ingram must win last round



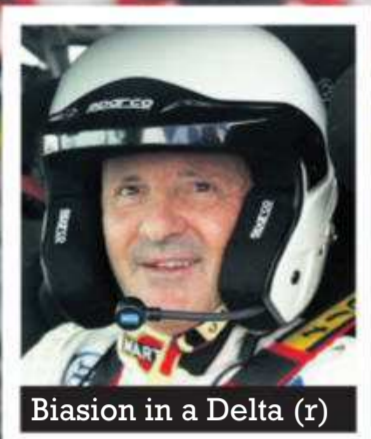
Kristensson: first U27 class win

REPORT: RALLYDAY 2018

Photos: rallygallery.com, Kevin Money

RALLYDAY EXTRAVAGANZA

Roger Clark, Miki Biasion, the British Rally Championship and the Ford Escort all celebrated at Rallyday. By **David Evans**



Biasion in a Delta (r)



The rain arrived at Rallyday on Saturday. Nobody cared. Everybody came. And everybody's coming back.

Including Miki.

Two-time World Rally champion Miki Biasion was the star of the show at Castle Combe on Saturday. Sorry Elfyn, but he was.

OK, you both were. Actually, the stars were everywhere and very much in alignment over the damp Wiltshire circuit.

Stuart Turner, Jimmy McRae, Russell Brookes, David Llewellyn, David Bogie, Ryan Champion. They were all there. Almost too much to take in. Certainly too many to talk to – sorry Mr Bogie. In my defence, it was your own fault. I'd spent so long watching the five-time Scottish champion delivering his fabulous Millington-engined Ford Escort Mk2 into chicanes at some of the wildest angles ever, it was impossible not to stay and watch one more lap.

This year's Rallyday had a celebration for almost every decade. Twenty years was no so much a

celebration as a commemoration, the Clark family attended to remember Roger, 20 years after his passing. His wife Judy and son Olly were interviewed and shared delightful memories of Britain's first ever World Rally Championship event winner.

And seeing Olly donut a stunning replica of LVX942J in its 1972 RAC-winning Uniflo livery stirred some serious emotions. Not least in Clark Jr. "That thing was a real beast," he says. "It's running a BDG, so it makes all the right noises and goes really well. It's been lovely to come down and see all these people again."

Rallyday brings some unexpected driver-car combinations and seeing Llewellyn at the wheel of Hannu Mikkola's Eaton Yale-liveried Mk2 was right up there. But again, what a treat.

Back to the anniversaries and it's three decades since Biasion's first world title. Thirty years on and the beautiful Martini overalls still fit. The face might have had an extra line of laughter, but the voice delivered just the same insight, charisma and fever.

And when he slid behind the wheel a Lancia Delta HF Integrale wearing that famous red white and blue Martini colour scheme, it was Sanremo

in the late 1980s all over again.

Except it wasn't. Miki had gone to Ford by the time this car came along.

"Yes," he says with a smile, "but don't forget I was the driver who did all of the development for this car. This was still a little bit my car."

And with that he disappeared in a plume of spray, off to entertain the masses. Over a coffee later in the day, the Italian admitted he was hooked on Rallyday.

"I know you are used to the rain here," he says, "but I can't believe how many people are out watching. It's fantastic. I love this. It makes me feel that rallying is still in the hearts of these people and that makes me happy. I want to come back. Do you think they will have me to come back?"

Er, yes, Miki. I think you've bagged yourself a return ticket.

The Vauxhall Chevette's 40th birthday was well celebrated with the help of the Droop Snoot Group, while the Ford Escort Mk1's golden anniversary was superbly marked by quite brilliant stories from Brookes and Turner. That pair were also on form when it came to the six-decade celebrations of the British Rally Championship.

Talking of the BRC, my personal highlight was from the 1993 vintage of the series. Junior WRC driver Tom Williams drove Richard Burns' Elonex-backed Subaru Legacy RS. The noise and utter splendour of that car going sideways in the rain again was a joy to behold. Less so from the inside.

"That was just a bit mad," says Williams, godson of Burns. "Just breathing on the throttle and it was all over the place."

His dad – and Richard's former mentor and very close friend – David Williams had done his bit to try to make life more comfortable.

"I had my old tyre cutter out," says Williams, "I cut some grooves into the fronts, just like the old days."

It didn't make much difference. The boots were past their best and bullet-hard, but it only made for a better show, not to mention a demonstration of Tom's ability in taming one of Group A's fiercest machines.

Once again, Castle Combe's day of rallying delivered on every level. Yes, we got wet, but when and where else do you get to see such an epic and eclectic mix of brilliant clubmen, world champions and rallying royalty from days passed?

Spirit of Rallyday: Howard Davies

Howard Davies isn't a man lost for words regularly. Or often. Or ever. He was at Castle Combe on Saturday afternoon, when he was handed the Spirit of Rallyday award. He'd come to Wiltshire to do the job he's done for the last 14 years – to talk to people – and he went home with a trophy.

British champion with Gwyndaf Evans in 1996, Davies came to the event for the first time in 2004 and hasn't missed one since. And he won't be missing one any time soon.

"It's brilliant," he says, "I love it. I think it was 2004 the first time I came. If you want to know for sure, tell you what, I'll get back to you – I've got the invoices at home I'll go through them!"

Davies genuinely fulfils the criteria for the Spirit of Rallyday trophy. Like Pauline Gullick, who took the award last year, the event wouldn't function without him.

But it's not a one-way street, Davies has had his moments down the years. Ask him for his best memory and he thinks. Thinks again and then comes back with...

"Colin," it's got to be. "The year Colin [McRae] came down here, it was fantastic. I remember talking to Alison [McRae's wife] after the event and she said: 'Wasn't Rallyday a lovely day...' and it was. And it is." Pause.

"Actually, I might have to say [Sebastien] Ogier coming. That was special. Seeing him drive that Audi quattro. I don't know what it is, but there was an aura about him, something special. We don't see him here that often, but he came here without any fuss and made the day."

That's that then. "Or... watching Dai [Llewellyn] go off the line in that [Audi] quattro S1. That was special. Standing behind it, I was. Feeling the heat and hearing the noise of that thing as it went was unbelievable."

Memories. Rallyday's good at making them.



Escort and Chevette were celebrated



BRC at 60: McRae Manta (l), Burns Legacy (c) and Brookes Chevette (r)

RALLY REPORTS

Photos: Roy Dempster, pro-rally.co.uk

McGARRITY TAKES EIGHTH TITLE

Moffett wins but Northern Irish title is decided with a record-breaking score for McGarrity

Bushwhacker Rally

By Jason Craig

Organiser: Omagh Motor Club **When:** September 22 **Where:** Omagh, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland **Championships:** Irish Forestry Championship and MSA Northern Ireland Rally Championship **Starters:** 110 **Finishers:** 87 **Stages:** 11

Despite having to retire from last Saturday's Bushwhacker Rally, results went Derek McGarrity's way and he was crowned Northern Ireland Rally champion for an eighth time.

Forced to call it a day at first service because of an oil leak that had developed on the engine of his Ford Focus, McGarrity still ended the day a record eight-time winner of the national series.

"I went to the rally with the intention of winning it and I firmly believe we would have done had the seal on the engine's crank not started to weep oil," said McGarrity, who has confirmed he will contest the last round of the series in a different car. Only Desi Henry and Alan Carmichael had a mathematical chance of prolonging McGarrity's wait for another few weeks,

but neither could land the win they needed. Instead, that honour went to Josh Moffett and Stephen Thornton, the Ford Fiesta R5 crew free to attack the County Tyrone forests having successfully sewn up the Irish Forestry Championship title, of which the Bushwhacker was a round, at the Lakeland Stages.

They recorded fastest or equal fastest times on seven of the 11 stages to win by 19s from the Ford Fiesta R5+ of Vivian Hamill. The only incident of note for Moffett came on stage five when he smacked a rock and bent a rim. For the final loop he decided to conserve his lead and raise the car's ride height as large stones and ruts began to appear along the route.

Hamill, meanwhile, made it back-to-back podiums on gravel, his movement up the leaderboard aided by the demise of McGarrity before Barry McKenna's Fiesta went off the road on stage five.

As for Henry, he came within two seconds of Moffett after losing ground early doors as his Skoda

Fabia performed road cleaning duties. A broken gear linkage on SS6 ended his charge but some quick cable tie repairs allowed him to battle back to third.

Connor McCloskey – on his first outing since the Pirelli – bagged fourth from Cathan McCourt. Tied with Adrian Hetherington, McCourt got the nod courtesy of his quicker time on the first stage. Niall McCullagh triumphed in the Production Class at the wheel of a Mitsubishi Lancer E9, while Paul Barrett's Ford Escort Mk2 came out top in the two-wheel-drive scrap.

Results

1 Josh Moffett/Stephen Thornton (Ford Fiesta R5) 30m13s; 2 Vivian Hamill/Andrew Grennan (Fiesta R5+) +19s; 3 Desi Henry/Liam Moynihan (Skoda Fabia R5); 4 Connor McCloskey/Noel O'Sullivan (Subaru Impreza WRC); 5 Cathan McCourt/Barry McNulty (Fiesta R5); 6 Adrian Hetherington/Ronan O'Neill (Toyota Corolla WRC); 7 Patrick O'Brien/Stephen O'Brien (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 8 Jock Armstrong/Graham Henderson (Impreza N11); 9 Martin Cairns/Peter Ward (Ford Fiesta WRC); 10 Niall Henry/Damien Duffin (Citroen DS 3 R5).

Class winners: Gareth Deazley/Darren Curran (Honda Civic); Niall McCullagh/Ryan McCloskey (Lancer E9); Dean Humphrey/Nigel Brennan (Vauxhall Corsa); William Creighton/Kirsty Riddick (Peugeot 208 R2); Andrew Bustard/Stephen Griffith (Ford Escort Mk2); Paul Barrett/Gordon Noble (Escort Mk2); Shane McGirr/Liam McIntyre (Toyota Starlet); Moffett/Thornton; McCloskey/O'Sullivan.



Moffett was the rapid rally winner



Escort pair took the lead late on

Farrar is sick as he hands late victory to Roberts/Williams pair

Heroes Stages Rally

By Phil James

Organiser: Pendle & District MC; Carstang & Preston MC **When:** September 23 **Where:** Weeton Camp, nr Blackpool **Championships:** ANWCC, ANCC, SD34. **Stages:** 12 **Starters:** 37

Eric Roberts and Merfyn Williams took what proved to be an emphatic victory, bringing their Ford Escort Mk2 home 46 seconds ahead of the Subaru Impreza of early leaders Martin Farrar and co-driver Andy Ward.

Farrar had been quickest through the first stage before Peter Jackson and Craig Simkiss edged their Escort Mk2 ahead after stage two.

Jackson's lead was short-lived though as he retired on the following test when the

clutch exploded, handing pole position back to Farrar. The Subaru pilot looked to be on course for victory but towards the end of stage 10 he became violently sick, handing Roberts the lead he wasn't to relinquish.

Despite his increasing discomfort, Farrar completed the final two tests to finish second ahead of Brandon Smith and Dylan Thomas, who suffered a sticking throttle issue with their Darrian T90 GTR. James and Chris Ford steered their immaculate new Escort Mk2 home fourth ahead of Dave Hornbrook and Ann Forster's Mitsubishi Lancer E4 that had a recurring issue with its tyre valves melting. Steve Harvey and Nick

Colman finished sixth in their Impreza, a position they held for most of the day.

Despite a last stage misfire Chris McCallum and Stephen Clark brought their Escort Mk2 home seventh ahead of Gareth Hooper and Sam Bilham's Opel Manta 400R. Darren Martin and John Deegan rounded out the top 10.

Results

1 Eric Roberts/Merfyn Williams (Ford Escort Mk2) 1h19m47s; 2 Martin Farrar/Andy Ward (Subaru Impreza) +46s; 3 Brandon Smith/Dylan Thomas (Darrian T90 GTR); 4 James Ford/Chris Ford (Escort Mk2); 5 Dave Hornbrook/Ann Forster (Mitsubishi Lancer E4); 6 Steve Harvey/Nick Colman (Impreza); 7 Chris McCallum/Stephen Clark (Escort Mk2); 8 Gareth Hooper/Sam Bilham (Opel Manta 400R); 9 Darren Martin/Martin Steele (Impreza); 10 John Deegan/Shane Smith (Subaru Justy). **Class winners:** Andy Rose/Phil Shaw (Nissan Micra); Deegan/Smith; McCallum/Clark; Farrar/Ward.

Hunter becomes hunted

Albar Trophy Rally

By John Fife

Organiser: East Ayrshire Car Club **When:** September 23 **Where:** Kames Motorsport Complex, East Ayrshire **Championships:** Ecosse Challenge **Stages:** 16 **Starters:** 21

Ollie Hunter scored a surprise last-stage victory and carried off the top points at the penultimate round of the Junior 1000 Ecosse Challenge at Kames Motorsport complex in Ayrshire.

However, the youngster's late season turn of pace has come too late to fight for the title. That will be decided at the final round of the series at Cadwell Park in five weeks' time between two drivers, Lewis Haining and Johnnie Mackay.

Winner last time out, the on-form Haining led the field after eight of the day's 16 special stages but failed to shake off Hunter who was only two seconds behind at the lunch halt. Over the second half of the rally, the two were all but inseparable with Hunter refusing to give up the chase. His determination paid off with a one second victory over Haining as the pair went into the last stage tied on times.

Andrew Blackwood needed a win to put himself back into

contention for the title, but an overshoot on the second stage cost him dear. He dropped 10 seconds to the leaders and spent the rest of the day trying to claw it back. He just managed to squeeze championship leader Mackay out of third place by the finish.

For his part Mackay felt he drove well and was genuinely puzzled by his Suzuki's inability to match the pace of the Peugeot, Skoda and Citroen ahead of him. That means he has to finish ahead of Haining at the final round to claim the Scottish crown.

In the supporting 'senior' event, Colin Gemmell dominated a sparse entry, finishing over a minute clear of Graham Bruce, although sixth-placed Cameron Davies impressed many with his silent progress in the electric Renault Zoe.

Results

1 Oliver Hunter/Tom Hynd (Peugeot 107) 24m40s; 2 Lewis Haining/George Myatt (Skoda Citigo) +0.01s; 3 Andrew Blackwood/Richard Stewart (Citroen C1); 4 Johnnie Mackay/Gordon Reid (Suzuki Alto); 5 Peter Beaton/Dean Ross (107); 6 Cameron Davidson/Kenneth McRae (Nissan Micra); 7 Amy McCubbin/Brian McClelland (Citigo); 8 Jack Hall/Robin Nicolson (Micra); 9 Aaron Webster/William Pollock (Micra); 10 Erica Winning/Mark Runciman (Micra). **Senior event:** 1 Colin Gemmell/Derek Keir (Ford Escort Mk2) 21m58s; 2 Graham Bruce/Paul Toner (Ford Escort Mk2) +1m22s; 3 David McLeod/Eamonn Boyle (Talbot Sunbeam); 4 Alistair Cunningham/Jim Smith (Escort Mk2); 5 Lindsay Taylor/David Murie (Ford Fiesta ST); 6 Cameron Davies/Elysa Gold (Renault Zoe); 7 Hugh Murdoch/Ewan Murdoch (Escort Mk2).

ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

Andy Davies/Michael Gilbey put themselves into pole position to win the Welsh Road Rally Championship by taking first place on the **Autumn Rally** on Saturday night.

Petrol wasn't taken until almost two-thirds distance, but the leading order changed significantly after the halt. The winners only moved to the front on the very last section. Meanwhile the leaders at the break, Martin Curzon/Rob Thomas, dropped to eighth place at the finish after losing four minutes at one time control.

Their misfortune put Kevin 'Penclawdd' Jones/Dafydd Evans in the lead, but they fell behind Davies/Gilbey with two time controls to go. They beat a challenge from Huw Jones/Daniel Jones to secure the runner-up spot.

Top seeds, Mike Roberts/Dafydd Sion Lloyd, should have finished in second place but for an error when they failed to carry seconds dropped at the previous time control on to the next; the mistake cost them 33 seconds.

Ian Mills

Results

Organiser: Carmarthen MC **When:** September 22/23 **Where:** Welsh Wales **Championships:** WAMC **Route:** 100 Miles **Starters:** 87.
1 Andy Davies/Michael Gilbey (Subaru Impreza) 6m55s; 2 Kevin 'Penclawdd' Jones/Dafydd Evans (Toyota Corolla) +28s; 3 Huw Jones/Daniel Jones (Peugeot 206); 4 Mike Roberts/Dafydd Sion-Lloyd (Ford Escort); 5 Rhodri Evans/Jenny Evans (Escort); 6 Rob Stephens/Nathan Summers (Escort); 7 Craig Judd/Jon Hawkins (Peugeot 306 GTI); 8 Martin Curzon/Rob Thomas (Escort); 9 Martin Richards/Tom Bleackley (Vauxhall Nova); 10 Mark 'GT' Roberts/Dylan Jenkins (VW Golf GTI). **Class winners:** Evans/Evans; Daniel Williams/Shawn Richards (BMW 318Ti); Robert Davies/Daniel Harries (Honda Civic).

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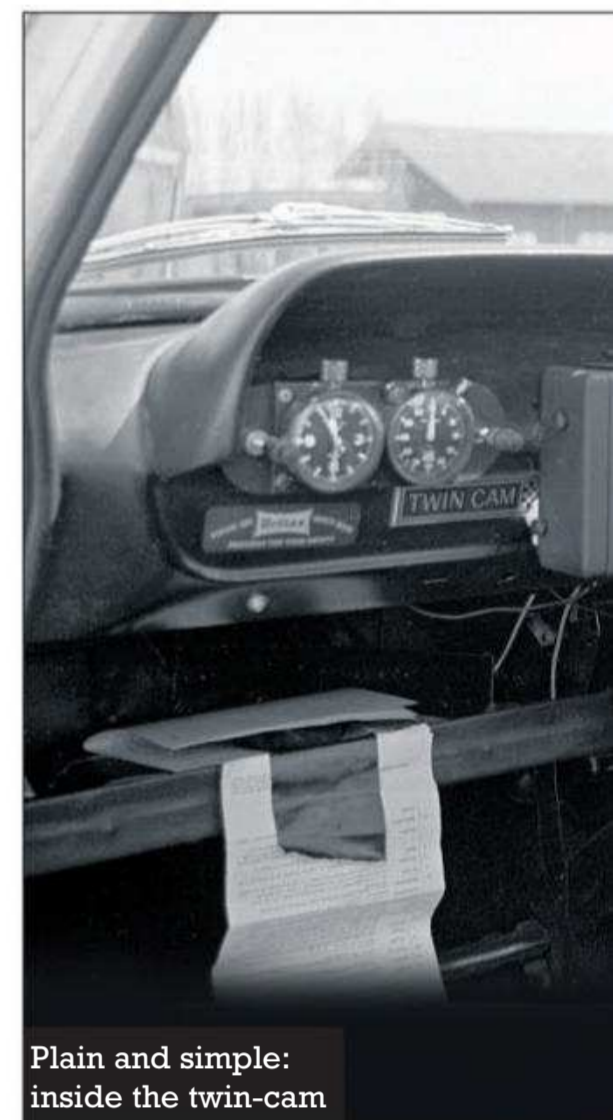
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INSIGHT

Fifty years after the Ford Escort was launched, it still has a place in motorsport hearts.



Mikkola's London to Mexico win in 1970



Plain and simple: inside the twin-cam

THE START OF A MOTORSPORT

When Ford launched the replacement model for the trusty but terribly out-dated Anglia in 1968, no one could have predicted the influence the new model would have on motorsport.

Half a century after the launch of the Ford Escort Mk1, the model and its younger brother the Mk2 continue to have a huge impact on the sport; rallying in particular. The cars have won global success, brought numerous major stars to the fore and given immense pleasure to thousands of drivers and millions of fans.

More than any other car in history, including the Mini Cooper and the Audi quattro, the Ford Escort changed the face of rallying. Little wonder that the Escort was once voted the best-loved competition car by the readers of *Motorsport News*, outscoring epic machines like the Lotus 72 and Porsche 917 in the process.

The Mk1 Escort was launched in 1968, as a flagship popular mid-range car to replace the ageing Anglia and sit beneath the larger Cortina. Seven years later along came the Mk2, firstly under the unexciting code-name of Brenda. Though repackaged in a squarer bodyshell, the Mk2 shared much with the Mk1 including basic underpinnings, drivetrain and engine options. Both models quickly showed their motorsport potential and, while the front-wheel drive Mk3 – which appeared in 1980 – had some rallying success, it was the Mk1s and Mk2s that

made the Escort a motorsport hero.

The Mk1 was an instant hit in the showrooms. In just six years from 1968, Ford produced two million Escorts and more than half of them were built in the UK at Ford's plants at Dagenham and Halewood. Right from the start, the Mk1's potential as a competition car was clear and, under the direction of former race and rally driver Henry Taylor, Ford's Advanced Vehicles Operation at Boreham put the Lotus Cortina into the Escort Mk1 bodyshell. A ZF gearbox and Atlas axle completed the package and the Escort was ready for racing and rallying. The strong engine, a wider track than the Anglia and a decent suspension set-up made it a fine package and that has helped it become a Peter Pan of rallying. Just as the Mk2, a well set-up Escort handles like a dream and begs to be driven on the lock stops. It seldom, if ever, bites back and few cars have ever delivered sideways motoring to rival the Escort.

The Mk1 was rallied by the Boreham-based team and was soon winning regularly, alongside an ever-growing number of smaller teams and amateur competitors who recognised that the rear-wheel drive, McPherson strut suspension concept was a winner. The Escort was successful in 1300GT, 1600cc crossflow and twin-cam variants. A very brief flirtation with the 2.3-litre V6 lump from the Granada proved that the extra 100kg hanging over the front of the car came at the cost of the car's natural balance and that idea was rapidly filed in the bin.

In 1970, the Mk1 took one of the most important rally victories in the sport's

history when Hannu Mikkola and Gunnar Palm won the London to Mexico World Cup Rally. This most daunting and challenging rally linked the venue of the 1966 World Cup with the host city of the 1970 tournament and Ford's team of bored-out 1850cc versions of the Kent engine were at the head of the 16,000-mile, 38-day marathon.

It was a rally that captured the public's imagination like few other motorsport events and it created massive global publicity, which was just as well as Ford competition boss Stuart Turner admitted that the rally budget was massively over-spent and only a victory would pacify the corporate bean counters. Four Escorts finished in the top six and the decision to use an enlarged version of the bomb-proof Kent engine rather than the more powerful twin-cam or BDA options was vindicated.

Mikkola's London-Mexico success was a huge boost for Escort sales and spawned a celebration model, the

much-loved Escort Mexico. The 1600cc Kent-engined model was ideal for sporting use and one-make series were established for both racing and rallying. The competition was fierce and drivers like Tony Pond, Russell Brookes, Gerry Marshall and Andy Rouse all enhanced their growing careers in Mexicos.

For three glorious years, from 1972 to 1974, the Mk1 triumphed in the RAC Rally, the forerunner of the modern day Rally GB. The RS1600 model was introduced at the top of the range, using the 1600cc Cosworth BDA engine and Roger Clark made history in 1972 as the first British driver to topple the Scandinavians and win the RAC Rally. It was widely held that no Brit would be able to beat the Scandinavians in the forests, but Clark and Tony Mason proved the pundits wrong in LVX 942J, resplendent in Esso Uniflo colours. Timo Makinen headed Clark and Markku Alen in an Escort clean sweep of the

podium in '73 and then won again in '74.

However, the victory for Makinen and British co-driver Henry Liddon in York in November 1974 was a farewell for the Mk1 as production of the Escort Mk2 was less than a fortnight away. Generally using the same mechanicals as the Mk1, the Mk2 gave the Escort a new lease of life without really moving the goal posts in terms of concept and design. Aside from the bodyshell, the proven package was retained and the rallying success story was just as impressive.

The Pinto-powered RS2000 and Cosworth BDG-powered RS1800 ruled the roost in rallying through the second half of the 1970s. For five years in a row, the RS1800 won Britain's round of the World Rally Championship with Clark, Makinen, Bjorn Waldegard and double-winner Mikkola. In all, the Mk2 RS1800 won 20 rounds of the WRC across seven years at the top of the sport. Ari Vatanen

MEMORIES OF A GREAT CAR

Stuart Turner

"The Mk1 Escort was a year old when I arrived at Ford and it was immediately successful. But we'd seen this coming. When I was at BMC, I said to them: 'We've got problems coming...' and those problems were triggered by the Lotus Cortina. My best memory is of a car whose general configuration made it so competitive. It was just a good package."

Russell Brookes

"Doing the [Ford Escort] Mexico Championship, I won a drive on the Jim Clark Rally in 1973. I went down to Boreham to try out the car – don't forget this was an RS1600 and the quickest thing I'd driven

was a Mexico with 86bhp! I rolled halfway through the rally and finished second, 20 odd seconds behind Roger Clark. After the rally, I went to Roger and told him I'd have won if I hadn't rolled. He said: 'F*** off. I'd have driven quicker if you hadn't rolled!'"

Martin Holmes

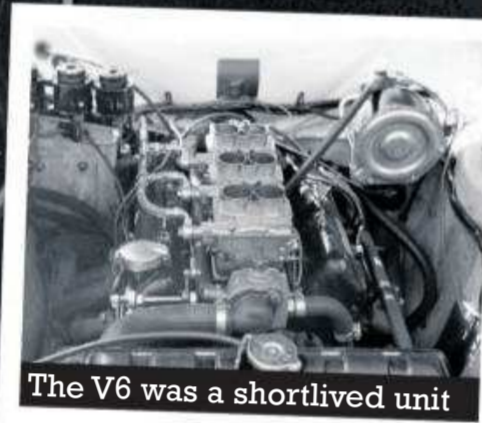
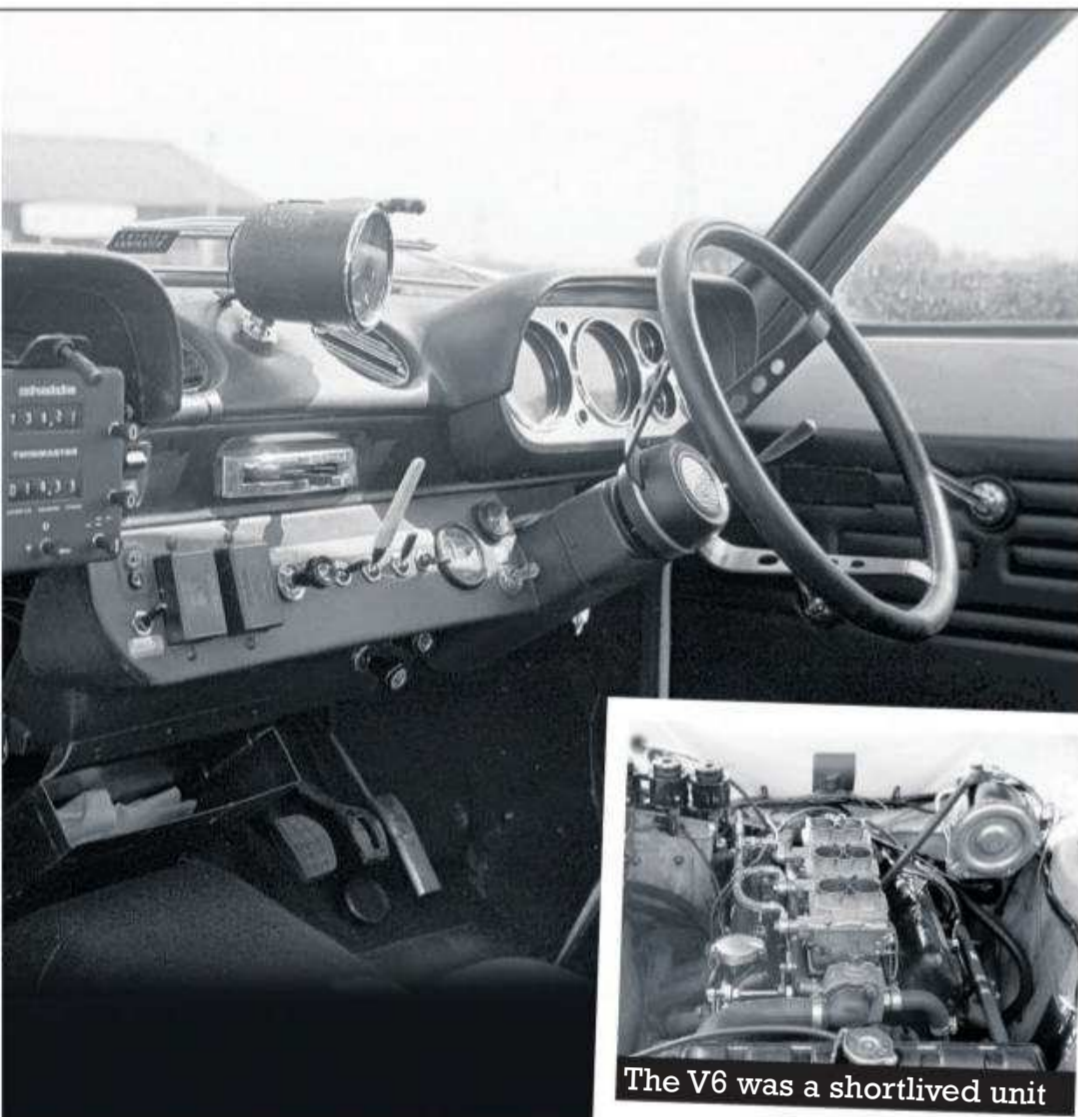
"Chris Sclater was the first driver to win a championship with a Ford Escort and I co-drove for him in 1971, when we won the British. The improved rear suspension on the Mk2 was great. Chris and I finished second on the Circuit of Ireland in 1971, but we were leading for a long, long way then we went off on the final morning. We went off into a bog and the only way for us to get the car back

was to actually roll the car back onto its roof, through the bog and onto the road. There's nothing like the noise of hearing a windscreen crack and smash when you're rolling the car over! We got going again and finished second to Adrian Boyd."

Judy Clark

"Roger seemed to win everything he started in LVX [RS1600]. He won the Scottish, so many events. Those times, the late 1960s into the 1970s were such lovely times, when Roger was right in the middle of developing the Escort. Roger and I got married just after he won the Shell 4000 Rally in Canada in an Escort. We went off to Greece for our honeymoon and he won the Acropolis!"

By **Paul Lawrence**



The V6 was a shortlived unit



Roger Clark claimed the RAC win in 1972



The Escort Cosworth flew in the WRC



Roger Clark/Chris Craft in 1968



Gardner (r) leads the pack

How the Escort topped the UK touring cars

Alan Mann Racing was entrusted with putting the Ford Escort on track for the first time in the British Saloon Car Championship, and it took over the laurels from the much-loved Lotus Cortina. It had some big shoes to fill.

Alan Mann employed no-nonsense Australian Frank Gardner. He began the season in the older-specification Lotus Cortina Mk2, before the Escort made its debut in the British Saloon Car Championship in 1968 at Crystal Palace on June 3 and he was immediately a class victor.

He was joined on the grid for the next round at Mallory Park later on in June in a 1600cc supercharged version driven by Peter Arundell, but the extra power output meant it was in the top class against some of the brutish Ford Falcon Sprints.

That car was also driven by rally expert Roger Clark at the following round at Brands Hatch, although he ended up having a sizeable accident.

Jackie Oliver also joined the team in the supercharged Escort later on in 1968 and Graham Hill raced it at Oulton Park in August.

They were up against it battling with the American heavy metal, Gardner just kept on winning and eventually took the overall championship title with nine class victories.

Alongside the Alan Mann Racing cars, Broadspeed had switched from the Anglia to the Ford Escort 1300 GT and ran in the third class in the hands of Chris Craft and John Fitzpatrick. Other privateers appeared too.

The Escort's days of winning the championship were short, mainly due to the structure of the BSCC – the smaller-engined cars tended to dominate overall and from 1970-1972 Bill McGovern took three straight titles in his Sunbeam Imp.

The twin-cam version of the Escort was replaced with the RS1600 in 1971, while the lower divisions were populated by the 1300 GT through until 1973.

The car took many class wins in many classes, but its days at the head of the championship were over when the BSCC, which was run by the RAC Motor Sports Association, adopted Group 1B regulations, which altered the class structure based on engine size and mitigated against more success.

SPORT LOVE AFFAIR

David Richards famously won World title in 1981 in the Rothmans-sponsored car and the images of Vatanen tearing the doors off Escorts helped bring the Mk2 into rallying folklore. In motorsport terms, the writing was on the wall for the Mk2 as the 1980s ended when four-wheel drive, fronted by the Audi quattro, was changing the face of rallying. After the abortive top BRS200 era, Ford returned the Escort name to rallying in the mid-1990s with the Escort Cosworth. Based on the Mk5 Escort and equipped with the supercharged two-litre Cosworth engine, the four-wheel-drive car was developed with the prime aim of winning the World Rally Championship. That goal was missed, but the Escort Cosworth and later the Escort WRC did win eight times at the highest level notably in the hands of Francois Delecour and Carlos Sainz. The Escort finally bowed out of World Rally Championship rallying at the end of the 1990s to make way for the new Focus. However, Escort Mk1s and Mk2s remain at club and national level and continue to be hugely popular. The Escort dominates historic rallying and a network of businesses supply everything needed to keep them rallying. Earlier this month, 130 rally-enthusiast Escorts gathered in Belgium for the Escort Rally Special to mark the car's 50th birthday and Escorts have won all 12 editions of the Roger Clark Rally, the event that celebrates Britain's finest Escort. This weekend's Trackrod Rally features 58 Escorts in an entry of 140. The drivers love them, the fans adore them and the Escort lives on. ■



Vatanen and Richards took the WRC title in 1981



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BRITISH GT: DONINGTON PARK

Optimum prevails in tense championship decider. By **James Newbold**

HAIGH KEEPS HER COOL VICTORY NOT ENOUGH FOR MINSHAW/KEEN



The mark of a champion is to keep your cool when others lose theirs, and Flick Haigh's resolve was certainly tested by the chaos surrounding her at Donington Park.

Needing only to finish sixth to secure the British GT title for herself and Optimum Motorsport Aston Martin team-mate Jonny Adam, a cautious Haigh found herself being elbowed down to fifth by the pitstops, but championships are won by being sensible on your off-days and not by making rash moves that lead to contact.

Even with closest title rivals Jon Minshaw/Phil Keen (Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini) upholding their end of the bargain by taking victory, fourth was enough for Haigh to become the first female outright

champion in series history, while Adam claimed his third crown with as many different co-drivers and teams, after sweeping up in 2015 with Andrew Howard (Beechdean AMR) and '16 with Derek Johnston (TF Sport).

"I woke up this morning and it was a weird feeling, like 'this is an important day', but there was just a gut feeling that if we were sensible, then it could be ours," said Adam.

Even with a 27.5-point buffer heading into the weekend, Optimum only had to look to Minshaw and Keen's recent Donington track record to know that the job wasn't done yet.

The die was cast from the off, as Minshaw romped away from pole, while team-mate Sam De Haan set about defending second from a gaggle of Aston Martins including Graham Davidson (Jetstream), Haigh, Mark Farmer (TF) and Johnston

all tripping over themselves. It looked to many onlookers like clever team tactics from Barwell, but team boss Mark Lemmer insisted it was not the case.

"We joked that it really looked like a master tactic for Barwell, but it was absolutely not," he said. "He was very defensive, but the officials didn't see anything wrong with it."

Once Davidson did get through, he slid on oil at Turn 1 and hit a GT4 car, leaving the Scot with a bent steering arm and out of contention.

Farmer was the next man on the move. Having muscled past Haigh, he then took De Haan before setting about reducing the gap to Minshaw, which stood at 14s on lap 22.

As De Haan continued his resolute defence, Johnston demoted Haigh further, before a slow run through the chicane allowed Rick Parfitt Jr's

Team Parker Racing Bentley to swoop past the pair of them, 2016 champion Johnston then retiring after punting the back of Parfitt.

After following the Bentley for a few laps, an overwhelming sense of relief greeted Haigh when her stint was over.

"We still had a job to do today," she said. "Maybe I lost more places than I should have, but people were pulling some moves which weren't really on and I wasn't prepared to put the car in that situation, so I brought it in and I knew Jonny would be able to do the rest."

A 20-second penalty carried over from their victory at Brands Hatch complicated matters further and meant Adam rejoined in traffic, although an engine glitch for De Haan's co-driver Jonny Cocker on his outlap meant Adam had an easier job of passing the Lambo than Haigh had.

AMR stablemate Darren Turner

(Beechdean) was compliant when Adam came through for fourth, but Ryan Ratcliffe, who had taken over the Bentley from Parfitt, was not such an easy customer.

The Welshman stuck to his task for several laps until Yelmer Buurman's charging ERC Mercedes – which had driven around the outside of Adam at Goddards on the previous tour – took him by surprise at the Old Hairpin on lap 51, opening the door for Adam to follow through. Once there, Adam was content to drop away from Buurman, knowing fourth would do.

Up ahead, Nicki Thiim had taken over the TF Aston from Farmer and showed a lack of Donington experience was no impediment as he closed relentlessly on Keen, setting a new GT3 lap record in the process.

The Dane took the lead at the Craner Curves on lap 59 and looked set for

ROUND-UP

Linus Lundqvist's grasp on the **BRDC British Formula 3 Championship** suffered a huge blow at Donington Park as the Swede endured a nightmare weekend, while his main title rival Nicolai Kjaergaard took a brace of wins.

Coming into the meeting, Lundqvist held a 111-point lead and only needed to extend it by a further five points to seal the title, but instead his gap has now been cut to just 50 points with one round at Silverstone remaining and around 100 points still on offer depending on how many cars take part.

"It's been a disaster of a weekend, nothing has gone right," rued the teenager.

Problems with the engine in qualifying put the Double R driver in 14th for race one as Kjaergaard lined up second behind Carlin team-mate Billy Monger, who was racing at Donington for the first time since his life-changing British Formula 4 crash at the same circuit last year.

Kjaergaard grabbed the lead off the line in wet conditions and won comfortably

from fellow Carlin driver Jamie Caroline as Lundqvist – with a fresh engine – could only manage eighth, while Monger salvaged fourth after an excursion on to the grass had dropped him as low as sixth.

Although the full-reverse grid second race was held in the dry it provided even more drama to the championship battle.

After a restart following Manuel Maldonado's (Fortec) crash and damage to the Fogarty Esses' sausage kerbs, four cars were involved in a pile-up at Redgate including Lundqvist who retired on the spot with broken suspension. Kjaergaard, who'd taken avoiding action through the gravel but rejoined, finished 10th to further close the gap.

Carlin's Sun Yue Yang became the ninth different winner this season when he took the win ahead of Tom Gamble (Fortec) who had initially jumped from sixth and into the lead by Redgate on the first start.

It would all count for nothing though as Gamble was disqualified due to a technical

infringement – the requisite bolts and fixings on the car's undertray were not all applied as per series regulation following an engine change.

This promoted Pavan Ravishankar (Double R) to second ahead of Hampus Ericsson, younger brother to Formula 1 driver Marcus, who was making his debut in British F3 with Fortec.

Things got worse for Lundqvist for the third race as with the grid positions based off the fastest laps from either race one or two and the Swede missing the best of the dry conditions, he was forced to start from 16th and could only make it to 13th by the flag.

Kjaergaard meanwhile benefited from another Monger mistake – this time the polesitter ran wide at the Fogarty Esses – to snatch the lead and his fifth win of the year.

"That's what I said to myself, make sure you take the championship to Silverstone," said the Danish driver.

Monger salvaged third but was left to

lament his mistakes which he believed cost him two victories. "It's been an up and down weekend but the pace we have had has been incredible," he said.

"I didn't come here to finish third though and with the pace we have had all weekend I'm disappointed not to finish first and I'm disappointed for everyone here supporting me."

James Kelleth took a second **Ginetta GT5 Challenge** title to go with his 2015 triumph in the first of three races; third place enough to clinch the crown as Max Bird took the lead on the penultimate lap to win. Kelleth finished one place higher in race two but was still second best to Bird. The champion's moment came in the final race however as, after starting eighth, he worked his way through to take the lead on the last lap after diving up the inside of Ashley Marshall at the Melbourne Hairpin.

Like Kelleth, Ant Whorton-Eales also secured the **Mini Challenge** title in the series' first race of the weekend. The former British

Touring Car Championship driver surged through from fourth on the grid to lead by Redgate and was never headed.

"I kept an eye on during the green flag lap on the top three as I know how hard it is to get any rear tyre temperature and I was shocked how little work everyone did," he said.

In the second race Whorton-Eales finished second on the road but was given a five-second penalty for track limits and demoted to fourth as Nathan Harrison took victory.

Jamie Bond did just enough to win the **VW Racing Cup** title, despite finishing only 15th and 13th respectively. His main rival Ruaridh Clark took a sixth and second place but it wasn't enough. Josh Coggan and Mark Wakefield took the spoils.

In the **Ginetta G40 Cup** Tom Golding elected to sit out the final round having already wrapped up the title allowing Tom Sibley, Alistair Barclay and Jack Oliphant to take the wins.

Stefan Mackley

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Haigh/Adam finished fourth which was enough for the championship



Mitchell celebrates with Century team

GT4 TITLE GOES DOWN TO PENALTIES

Jack Mitchell left it late to seal the GT4 title, uncomfortably so.

Running fourth with 20 minutes to go, his Century Motorsport team delivered the news that a pit infringement – the earth cable had failed to connect when team-mate Dean Macdonald came in – would force him to serve a 10-second stop-go penalty and potentially swing the title the way of team-mates Ben Green/Ben Tuck, or Michael O'Brien/Charlie Fagg's Tolman McLaren.

Mitchell's BMW M4 rejoined ninth, needing to reclaim eighth from Jason Wolfe's Invictus Racing Jaguar to take the crown. But even then glory wasn't assured, as Finlay Hutchison's Equipe Verschuur McLaren, started by Dan McKay, and the pursuing Fagg still had to complete one more lap.

"It was tense because McLaren were 1-2 and we were all thinking 'they're going to swap places'," said Century boss Nathan Freke. "And of course, everyone passed the chequered flag apart from first and second, so we were watching the last lap waiting for the positions to change. But they didn't."

For his part, Mitchell could scarcely come to terms with the rollercoaster of emotions.

"Halfway through I had no clue

what was going on," he said. "I'm usually one to not go on the radio much and just keep quiet, but towards the end I was trying to figure out what I needed to do. It's all a bit of a shock to me to be honest. One point isn't much, but it just shows how hard and competitive this championship is."

Starting seventh, Mitchell had never really been in the fight for victory, unlike polesitters Green/Tuck, who came into the weekend 10 points behind Mitchell and carrying a 15s pitstop penalty from Brands Hatch.

Green initially slipped behind McKay, but regained the lead when the McLaren slithered into the Redgate gravel-trap on oil left by Will Moore's Academy Motorsport Aston Martin. But McKay was on a mission and soon worked his way back to the front, passing O'Brien and Green before the pitstops.

Tuck emerged in fourth, well within reach of Sennan Fielding's Steller Motorsport Toyota, until a drive-through penalty for passing under yellow flags relegated him to ninth. Although Tuck fought back to fifth at the flag, gaining another place from Mitchell's penalty, it was to no avail and the #42 crew missed out on the

title by a single point, with O'Brien/Fagg just two points behind Mitchell in third.

Up ahead, Joe Osborne snuck past Fielding at the Fogarty Esses to claim the final podium spot and Pro-Am victory with David Pattison two laps from home.

A "catastrophic" oil pump failure, as Martin Plowman put it, accounted for the RJN Nissan he shared with Kelvin Fletcher early on, leaving the Team Parker Racing Mercedes of Scott Malvern and Nick Jones free to claim the Pro-Am title – a first for Malvern since Formula Renault BARC in 2012.

But the outcome appeared anything but straightforward at the end of the first lap, when Jones spun onto the grass avoiding contact at the Craner Curves between the McLarens of Lewis Proctor and Adam Balon. Without damage, Jones brought it back to Malvern, who made good use of the shorter pitstop to finish third in Pro-Am.

"I'm gutted for [Nissan] because we've been really close all year," said Malvern. "It feels good to win again – it's not going to do me many favours for getting my driver grading down to Silver, but I'll take the championship over the grading!"



Minshaw leads from the start

victory – despite briefly losing the lead when baulked by Struan Moore's Nissan on the penultimate lap – until a 30-second penalty for exceeding track limits dropped the #11 car to second, Thiim only receiving the message after performing a victory celebration donut on the slowing down lap.

"It was a bit annoying, I got the message 20 minutes before the end that we were on the limit of track limits, so I completely backed off," he said. "It would have been nice to end it on the top but it was good fun."

Nonetheless, it was a fitting swansong for the V12 Vantage, which has racked up 22 wins in the championship since 2012. The ringing endorsement from Lemmer spoke volumes.

"I'm glad to see the back of the old V12 to be honest, it's more or less impossible to beat it here."

RESULTS

British GT Championship GT3 (73 laps) 1 Jon Minshaw/Phil Keen (Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini Huracan); 2 Mark Farmer/Nicki Thiim (TF Sport Aston Martin V12 Vantage) +29.594s; 3 Lee Mowle/Velmer Buurman (ERC Sport Mercedes-AMG GT3); 4 Flick Haigh/Jonny Adam (Optimum Motorsport Aston); 5 Andrew Howard/Darren Turner (Beechdean AMR Aston); 6 Sam De Haan/Jonny Cocker (Barwell Lamborghini). Fastest lap Thiim 1m28.196s (101.52 mph). Pole Minshaw/Keen. Starters 12. **Points (after 7/7 rounds)** 1 Adam/Haigh 167.5; 2 Keen/Minshaw 159.5; 3 Thiim/Farmer 148; 4 Buurman/Mowle 133.5; 5 Turner/Howard 102.5; 6 Marco Sorensen/Derek Johnston (TF Sport Aston) 98.

GT4 (70 laps) 1 Dan McKay/Finlay Hutchison (Equipe Verschuur McLaren 570S GT4); 2 Michael O'Brien/Charlie Fagg (Tolman Motorsport McLaren) +21.244s; 3 David Pattison/Joe Osborne (Tolman Motorsport McLaren); 4 Richard Williams/Sennan Fielding (Steller Motorsport Toyota GT86); 5 Ben Green/Ben Tuck (Century Motorsport BMW M4 GT4); 6 Patrik Matthiesen/Callum Poynton (HHC Motorsport Ginetta G55 GT4). Fastest lap McKay 1m36.102s (93.17 mph). Pole Green/Tuck. Starters 19.

Points (after 7/7 rounds) 1 Jack Mitchell (Century Motorsport BMW) 124; 2 Tuck/Green 123; 3 Fagg/O'Brien 122; 4 Poynton/Matthiesen 116.5; 5 Matt Nicol-Jones/Will Moore (Academy Motorsport Aston Martin) 87; 6 Pattison/Osborne 82.5.



McKay/Hutchison won GT4 battle

RESULTS

BRDC British Formula 3 (12 laps) 1 Nicolai Kjaergaard (Carlin); 2 Jamie Caroline (Carlin) +0.752s; 3 Krish Mahadik (Double R); 4 Billy Monger (Carlin); 5 Kush Maini (Lanan); 6 Ayrton Simmons (Chris Dittmann Racing). Fastest lap Caroline 1m38.939s (90.50mph). Pole Monger. Starters 20. **Race 2 (8 laps)** 1 Sun Yue Yang (Carlin); 2 Pavan Ravishankar (Double R) +3.743s; 3 Hampus Ericsson (Fortec);

4 Sasakorn Chaimongkol (Hillspeed); 5 Mahadik; 6 Simmons. FL Monger 1m25.832s (104.32mph). P Yang. S 19. **Race 3 (11 laps)** 1 Kjaergaard; 2 Mahadik +2.067; 3 Monger; 4 Jamie Chadwick (Douglas Motorsport); 5 Ericsson; 6 Max Defourny (Douglas). FL Kjaergaard 1m25.815s (104.34mph). P Monger. S 20. **Points (after 21/24 rounds)** 1 Lundqvist 496; 2 Kjaergaard 446;

3 Maini 346; 4 Mahadik 336; 5 Tom Gamble (Fortec) 316; 6 Monger 274.

Ginetta GT5 Challenge **Race 1 & 2:** Max Bird **Race 3:** James Kellett

Mini Challenge **Race 1:** Ant Whorton-Eales **Race 2:** Nathan Harrison

Ginetta G40 Cup **Race 1:** Tom Sibley **Race 2:** Alistair Barclay **Race 3:** Jack Oliphant

Volkswagen Racing Cup **Race 1:** Josh Coggan **Race 2:** Mark Wakefield

Saloon/Sportscar Trophy **Race 1 & 2:** Bill Henderson (Radical PR6)



Lundqvist (r) retires in race two as title rival Kjaergaard (l) avoids trouble

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FEATURE

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

Two drivers will go toe-to-toe at Brands Hatch for the ultimate prize. By Matt James

DESTINY CALLS FOR BTCC MEN



Ingram (l) and Turkington (r) will battle

POINTS

British Touring Car Championship

NO	DRIVER	TEAM	CAR	PTS
1	Colin Turkington	WSR	BMW 125i M Sport	300
2	Tom Ingram	Speedworks Motorsport	Toyota Avensis	266
3	Tom Chilton	Motorbase Performance	Ford Focus	236
4	Ash Sutton	Team BMR	Subaru Levorg	227
5	Adam Morgan	Ciceley Motorsport	Mercedes-Benz A-Class	227
6	Josh Cook	Power Maxed Racing	Vauxhall Astra	222

Points: 20-17-15-13-11-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. One point for pole for race one, one point for fastest lap and one point for leading a lap

The British Touring Car Championship is coming down to a two-way shoot-out at Brands Hatch this weekend. Three races will decide the destiny of the 2018 crown, and the main players will be Colin Turkington in the WSR BMW 125i M Sport and Tom Ingram in the Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Avensis.

Tom Chilton's Motorbase Ford Focus has a mathematical chance of overall glory, but he would require something seismic to happen to claim the silverware. Realistically, it's Turkington vs Ingram for the biggest prize in UK motorsport. Turkington heads to Kent in search of his third overall title and he has a healthy 34-point buffer at the top of the table, while Ingram, the reigning Independents Trophy holder, is gunning for his first.

The pressure-cooker environment of a three-race showdown at Brands is something unique in motorsport. Three races offer up 67 points, and the many factors at play in the BTCC – including success ballast, reversed grids and option tyres – mean that the path to silverware rarely runs smoothly.

That is something that three-time BTCC title winner Gordon Shedden knows only too well. He has been in all positions: he has been the hunter and the hunted in his dramatic successes in 2012, 2015 and 2016 aboard his Team Dynamics Honda Civic.

He knows this weekend will be a cauldron for those involved. He thinks, though, that Turkington is in the box seats.

"All Colin has to do is run around behind Tom and then the title is his; that would be my approach!" says Shedden. "But the BTCC always has a way of delivering some drama, as I know very well. Look at Andrew Jordan when he won it in 2013: he was 35 points ahead of me and 34 points clear of everyone else going into the showdown at Brands Hatch and, in the end, I finished only seven points behind him because he had a nightmare in race two. These things can happen.

"Colin and Tom could qualify on the front row, but it only takes one little thing. Imagine if someone hits Colin in race one and breaks his suspension. He will be at the back of the grid for race two with Tom up the front. Then it is all to play for."

"This title is their entire life"



TIM HARVEY



Turkington is a two-time champ

ITV commentator and former champion Tim Harvey thinks that Saturday afternoon will be vital for the outcome of the series. The 30-minute qualifying session will set the backdrop for the events to come and Turkington will go into it with 75kg of success ballast, compared to 66kg for Ingram.

"For Colin, it is probably the most important qualifying session of the year," says Harvey. "You can't really make a plan for what's to come until you've worked out where you are for the start of race one. Colin will have to see where Tom is and then play his cards from there. He just needs to keep Ingram in sight and then he can judge what to do. But the good thing for Colin is that he doesn't have to go on the attack. He can play a measured game and judge what his rival is doing. He doesn't need to take risks – and Turkington is superb at playing the game too. He was stressed going into the last rounds at Silverstone, but you wouldn't have known because he is a cool character. He never lets it show. He has been here



Ingram wants his first overall title

before, and he knows what it takes. That will give him an advantage."

Turkington's 34-point advantage will be a crucial factor in determining the Northern Irishman's approach. Sometimes it is harder to drive to percentages. Ingram will have the gloves off and simply have to go for it, while Turkington can be more circumspect. Shedden says that he would rather be in the BMW man's shoes going to Brands. "I would rather be the hunted than the hunter in this situation, because that means you have been successful and you already have the points on the board," he says. "It means that you have already got that in your pocket to fall back on if the worst does happen – and it can."

While Turkington might be on the defensive, 25-year-old Ingram will have a totally different mindset. He has a huge task, but one that he will simply not give up on. For him, it will be the most important weekend of his already decorated career. His tactic will be to go for broke.

"I think that Tom has been

employing that tactic for the last few rounds anyway because he has had to keep himself in the picture," says Shedden. "But I think Tom will probably be the more relaxed of the two going into Brands Hatch. He knows it is a long shot. If he were a couple of points behind, then the pressure would be more. But because he is so far back, there really is nothing to lose. Deep down in his heart, he will know that he needs something unusual to happen to turn it around and win the title, so he can just do the job he normally does and let the rest take care of itself."

Harvey agrees that all-out attack is Ingram's key factor. The three-time race winner in 2018 has yet to experience the pressure of a title showdown, but his position means that he has a lot of cards in his favour.

"We know that Tom, without ballast weight in his car, is the fastest man out there at the moment," says Harvey. "He has got the tools to do the job. But we will really see what he is about this weekend. He is going up against Colin, and there are very few weaknesses in Turkington's armoury. Ingram will have to give it everything, push on to his maximum, and then let fate do the rest. If you haven't been in a showdown before, there can be an element of desperation that creeps in. This is what these guys live for: it is their whole life, it is the biggest thing they can achieve. They've worked for it for their entire careers and if you haven't won it before, it's massive. That is where the pressure can get to you. It will be fascinating to see how Ingram copes." ■

THE CONTENDERS



Colin Turkington has landed big points

Colin Turkington

Age: 36

2018 BTCC wins: 1

2018 BTCC podiums: 10

Track record: Serial points collector. When the car hasn't been at its best, Turkington has picked up what he can from each meeting and has kept the tally ticking over, despite some unreliability earlier in the season. Calm, clean and unflustered racer and he has been here and done it already.

Turkington says: "I am going to be better prepared for this weekend than I ever have been. That is my focus. No stone will be unturned. I will look at what Ingram's doing, but it is all about my performance. I need to be absolutely at my best, and I will try everything to make sure I am. I have a points advantage, but I want an even bigger one after race one. I will put everything into this, because I want it so much."

Tom Ingram

Age: 25

2018 BTCC wins: 3

2018 BTCC podiums: 9

Track record: A revelation in the Toyota. The Avensis, shorn of weight, is potent and Ingram has shown that he belongs among the BTCC elite. It is a long shot to win the title, but he has all the attributes at his disposal. His hunger for the title is clear and he will not leave anything on the table in terms of effort.

Ingram says: "All I can do is go for it, put the heat on Colin and hope he makes a mistake – even though this is Colin we are talking about! As long as I do the best job I can, I know I have had a good season and what happens from there, we will see. I need to just put it all on the line, and I am very prepared to do that. It's maximum attack from me, and that is the way I like it. I really want this title."



Tom Ingram was a winner at Silverstone

RACING REPORTS

BRANDS HATCH: HSCC BY MARCUS PYE
SEPTEMBER 22/23

Photos: Gary Hawkins

Platts (l) won the second Historic Touring Car race



HILLMAN IMP DEFY THE ODDS TO TAKE THE SPOILS IN THE RAIN

WINNERS
Historic Touring Cars
 Race 1: Adrian Oliver (Hillman Imp)
 Race 2: Steve Platts (Singer Chamois)

Classic F3/URS FF2000
 Race 1: Chris Lord (Van Diemen RF82)
 Race 2: Paul Smith (Ralt-VW RT3)

Historic Road Sports
 Race 1: Kevin Kivlochan (Morgan +8)
 Race 2: John Davison (Lotus Elan S1)

70s Road Sports
 Race 1: Will Leverett (Lotus Europa)
 Race 2: Jeremy Clark (Lotus Elan S4)

Classic Clubmans
 Races 1&2: Mark Charteris (Mallock Mk20/21)

Historic Formula Ford 2000
 Race 1: Paul Allen (Reynard SF79)
 Race 2: Andrew Park (Reynard SF81)

Historic Formula Ford 1600
 Races 1&2: Cameron Jackson (Lola T200)

Heritage Formula Ford
 Richard Tarling (Jamun M92)

Historic Formula Junior, front-engined
 Alex Morton (Condor-Ford S2)

Ford Escort 50th Anniversary
 Races 1&2: Daniel Brown (Mk2)

Hillman Imp derivatives ruled the roost on Brands Hatch's Indy circuit as Saturday's rain changed the Historic Touring Car championship's dynamic. Gunning for a fourth title, points leader Adrian Oliver and reigning champ Steve Platts (Singer Chamois) capitalised on their rear-engined cars' traction, winning once apiece as more powerful opposition was blunted.

When the forecast rain came Oliver and Mike Gardiner (Lotus Cortina) shot past front row qualifiers Rick Belcher (Cortina) and Bob Bullen (Anglia 105E) at the start of the opener and stayed there, with Platts awarded third when Larry Warr (Cooper S) was among three Mini men excluded for technical infringements.

Oliver fell off at Surtees on lap one of the sequel, advantaging Platts, but hurtled back to second behind Steve, retrieving his car from extravagant angles as he passed Gardiner. "Those two guys are so good, they deserved to win," said Gardiner. Bullen – with two wins in a more populous class, thus scoring higher than Oliver – is now favourite to land a first crown.

URS Formula Ford 2000 stalwart Chris Lord's torquier Pinto-powered Van Diemen RF82 outspurred the Classic F3s from P9 in Saturday's wet conditions, returning '17 champion Gaius Ghinn (Ralt RT3) and early

leader Richard Trott (Chevron B43) running the Devonian closest having shuffled impressive March 803 debutant Adrian Langridge back to fourth.

On Sunday's almost dry track, a stripe of damp asphalt after Clearways caught out Trott and Hugh Price (Chevron B38), spinning them into the pitwall. Paul Smith was on top form though. He steamed his Ralt RT3 through from fifth, passing Langridge on the outside at Paddock then blitzed Ghinn for victory. After fraught weekends, title protagonists Keith White and Pat Gormley's status quo remained.

Sunday's Historic Road Sports double-header featured Kevin Kivlochan growling his Morgan +8 away from John Davison's Lotus Elan in the wet morning race. It dried for the second stanza, however, thus Davison re-shod his car with Yokohamas and raced to both victory and the previously elusive title a round early. The Witchampton Garage Elans of Larry Kennedy and Robert Rowe had kept Davison on his toes in the opener.

Outdragged by second row starters Jim Dean (Lotus Europa) and John Williams (Porsche 911SC) at the start, Will Leverett (Europa) still won the '70s Road Sports opener in which outgoing champ Charles Barter – from the back in his Datsun 240Z – smote the tyre wall at Graham Hill Bend. Leverett's engine cut out at the start race two, but once under way he

rocketed up the order only to spin at Clark Curve when his electrics failed again. Up front, Jeremy Clark was mortified to tap leader Dean into a spin at Clearways, then win from Williams and Dean.

On elderly wets, double Historic FF2000 champion Andy Park rotated approaching race one's grid. Grippless, the Cumbrian was passed by ex-Caterham racer Paul Allen – second to him in the table, but not yet a podium finisher – and Jason Redding long before a safety car, deployed when Ian Pearson spun off at Clearways while pursuing meritorious winner Allen. Redding grabbed second from Park at the green. On new rubber, Park won Sunday's opener from Allen and Steve Glasswell whose rise from 20th to third was scintillating.

Cameron Jackson annexed the Historic FF1600 points lead with another double victory, matching Ben Mitchell's tally of six wins in tricky conditions, although shadow Mitchell was aggrieved when Jackson's lapping of Rudolf Ernst's Titan under waved yellow flags on Saturday went unpunished. Mitchell spun out at the foot of Paddock on Sunday, his first non-finish, leaving Jackson – who had spun at Clearways on the warm-up laps – to beat Caterham ace Clive Richards, who marked his HFF debut with a brilliant second, Ben Tusting and top qualifier Callum Grant.



Lord took the opening URS Formula Ford 2000 win in Van Diemen RF82

Classic Clubmans was the usual two-horse race in which Mark Charteris broke the 49 second barrier in overcoming John Harrison and FF1600-engined star Clive Wood kept the other A-Sport man Alan Cook busy. Sunday's outing on a drying track – watched by '70s champion Noel Stanbury – was hugely entertaining as the leaders carved through a train embroiling Barry Webb, Dave Facer, Adam Patterson, Brian Hunter and Philip Hart. Webb and Patterson were Wood's runners-up.

Guesting in Jamun boss Tony Mundy's M92, current HFF champion Richard Tarling worked hard to repel Oliver White (Van Diemen RF88) in Walter Hayes Trophy founder James Beckett's soggy Pre-'93 Heritage Formula Ford seasonal finale.

Pipped to pole in the wet by Elva-BMC 100-mounted Robin Lackford, Alex Morton (Condor S2) dominated the dry seven-car front-engined Formula Junior bout, beating Robin Longdon who joined-in post-practice with his New Zealand-bound Lola Mk2.

Browns to the fore as golden anniversary of the Ford Escort is celebrated

Billericay's Sean Brown has raced fast Fords for donkeys' years, and sons Daniel and Robert share his passion for their stunningly-prepared Brown & Geeson Escorts. Having finished 1-2-3 on Brands Hatch's GP circuit earlier this year they repeated on the Indy layout when the Escort's 50th Anniversary was celebrated close to home and Ford's Dagenham factory.

Presided over by factory drivers of the early '70s Belgian Yvette Fontaine and Ford competition manager Stuart Turner's protegee Gillian Fortescue-Thomas, the Escort races attracted 21 entries. During demonstrations, Henry Mann, son of the late Alan, drove XOO 349F, Frank Gardner's '68 winner, alongside Jackie Oliver's sister car XOO 347F with Paul Trotter up. An ex-works Mk1 rally car – victorious in

Ove Andersson and Roger Clark's hands – took to the track also, but an ex-Hans Heyer Zakspeed Mk2 ended in the gravel.

Current GT racer Dan Brown grabbed pole position for race one in the B&G team's 2.5-litre Mk2, but it was as much about the homologated RS1800s, RS1600s and lower-specced Mexicos and RS2000s. Dutchmen Jan Willem Oosterhagen and Marcel Frijlink were welcome visitors, the former's orange RS2000 Mk1 sounding glorious with its straight through exhaust.

Young Brown won both races, cutting a 57.395s best in the damp opener, in which he beat his dad and brother. "The Michelin tyres we use are just unbelievable, [it's] like driving in the dry at times," he said. He improved to 51.585s (84.30mph) later on an almost dry surface. "We've done low 50s on a

warmer day, but just being here was important to us."

Dan Minton charged to second then, splitting the Browns in the RS2000 Special Saloon which father Steve and uncle Dale built in 1979 – originally with a droop-snoot but now flat-fronted – sold in '98 and bought back. The race-long battle for fifth between Tony Paxman (Mk1) and Malcolm Harding (Castrol Zakspeed Mk2 clone), with Ben Gill's Jolly Club/Martino Finotto Broadspeed Mk1 in pursuit entertained spectators.

Mark Freemantle – who switched horses from Zakspeed Mk2 to Mk1 between races – and Classic Touring Car Racing Club racer Stephen Primett ran strongly in the chase, which featured Oosterhagen in the initial outing. Daniel Ryan just beat Iain Rowley for Class D honours in their Mexico versus RS2000 tussle.



Daniel Brown (c) took a pair of wins, battling with his brother and father

RACING REPORTS

SILVERSTONE: BRSCC BY DAN MASON
SEPTEMBER 22/23

Photos: Mick Walker

MURPHY MAKES A LAST-LAP WINNING PASS



Murphy took Roadsport title by a single point



McCormack (r) had close battle with Walters (l) in 270R, but Falvey took the title

If James Murphy did not have a favourite corner in motorsport, Silverstone's Club chicane may now hold that honour.

The finest margins separated victory from defeat in the **Caterham Roadsport** championship, Murphy's winning cushion just one point. A mere 0.02s was the margin of defeat for Daniel French while Tom Allen snatched his fastest lap point in race two, which French dominated by 26s.

Murphy's defining moment arguably came in race one, as he hunted down wet weather specialist French in inclement conditions and grabbed a last-lap victory with a bold lunge under braking for Club.

"Dan is the benchmark in the wet," said Murphy. "That's why making that move makes me so proud."

Murphy required second from a tense 12-car squabble in race two as French romped clear, but Daniel Halstead's late spin at Stowe delayed and denied him. Bizarrely, a season-worst result became Murphy's dropped score as a blessing, meaning winner French surrendered the title simply by not securing fastest lap.

Uncertainty also surrounded **310R** title honours after two entertaining contests. Gordon Sawyer fended off Chris Hutchinson in a damp opener and thought he was champion after taking the flag first again in race two, but a track limits penalty dropped him to fourth.

Hutchinson's third place in race two was enough, despite believing he'd lost the title after falling behind winner Lee Bristow and Speedworks youngster Tom Grensinger.

Fourth place in the opening **270R** race was enough to put Team BRIT's Jamie Falvey out of reach, beating nearest rival Jay McCormack. "It's been an awesome effort," said champion Falvey.

Chris Bates waded past the fast-starting Falvey to win the restarted

race, red-flagged initially to remove Matt Topham and John Styring's stricken cars. Mission complete, former Royal Marine Commando Falvey opted out of a thrilling second race where the narrative surrounded the fight for second in the championship.

That honour, and a hard-fought win, went to McCormack – coached by 2008 British GT champion Jon Barnes – as he narrowly edged rival Pete Walters.

Academy titles were also decided in favour of Justin Heap and Chris Moore. Heap recovered from a sluggish start on the damper inside line to clinch the Green group after dispatching Lars Alexander Hoffmann, also winning the non-championship Autumn Trophy race. White group spoils went to Moore who allowed the attacking Gregory Monks and race winner Dan Piper by to seal his own fate.

With the **420R** title already sealed by Danny Winstanley, his absence gifted John Byrne an open goal.

"In the wet I just feel relaxed – I love it," said Byrne as he left a five-car tussle 17s behind in race one before doubling up on Sunday. Sean Byrne and Richard Ainscough's last-lap race one collision handed William Smith third behind Stephen Nuttall, Smith going one better to trail John Byrne in race two.

In non-Caterham action, Harry Gooding did his **Fiesta** title chances no harm by concluding with a confident victory from Simon Horrobin, who recovered strongly after Myles Baker turned him around at Club.

Prior to that, Samuel Watkins started brightest with a wet triumph after a "terrible" start from polesitter Ollie Hunt, while Gooding inherited the race-two win after Jake Dawson was stripped of the victory post-race for contact.

WINNERS

Caterham Roadsports	Justin Heap
Race 1: James Murphy	Caterham 420R
Race 2: Daniel French	Races 1 & 2: John Byrne
Caterham 310R	Fiesta Championship
Race 1: Gordon Sawyer	Race 1: Samuel Watkins
Race 2: Lee Bristow	Race 2&3: Harry Gooding
Caterham 270R	Fiesta Junior
Race 1: Chris Bates	Race 1&2: Magnus Kriklywi
Race 2: Jay McCormack	Sports 2000
Caterham Academy	Tom Stoten (Gunn TS1)
White: Dan Piper	
Green: Justin Heap	
Autumn Trophy:	

SNETTERTON: CMMC/VSCC BY GRAHAM KEILLOH
SEPTEMBER 22/23

The latest British Automobile Racing Club **Intermarque** meeting at Snetterton was a topsy-turvy affair. Points leader heading into the weekend, Malcolm Blackman, missed both races with a valve guide problem, while Lewis Smith's Vauxhall Tigra led most of race one but got a puncture, letting Chris Brockhurst's Tigra triumph.

Brockhurst couldn't get to the race two grid with a battery problem and Smith won that race comfortably, rising from ninth to lead by Turn 2. "I thought it was going to be a bit greasy to start with but we seemed to make it work," Smith said. Steve Burrows' Peugeot 206cc finished second twice and takes the championship lead.

It was a fruitful meeting for **BARC Tin Tops** table leader Rikki Taylor. He finished third in class in race one when his Ford Fiesta stuck in fourth gear, but in race two's damp conditions he inherited the win when Dan Fisher's Honda Civic had a spectacular engine blow-up. Fisher had dominated race one from pole.

"It was an excellent day," said rain specialist Taylor. "I look at the rain and could have a party in the car! It's given me a nice jump in the points."

Alex Sidwell's Holden Commodore got both **Modified Saloon** wins while championship leader Rod Birley's meeting ended three laps into race one with wheel bearing failure.

The Vintage Sports-Car Club held its final 2018 Formula Vintage round the next day, in treacherous conditions.

MIXED WEEKEND FOR SMITH AT SNETTERTON

Photos: Richard Styles



Race-one puncture was followed by win

Gareth Burnett in an Alta 2 Litre won the race for **Pre-1961 cars**, and with it claimed the longstanding Historic Seaman Trophy. Simon Diffley was next home in his 1955 Connaught Type B and got the Flockhart Trophy for post-war cars.

"I've never driven a race that's been so slippery – in a car that isn't very good in the wet!" Burnett said. "I got the feel of the track very quickly."

The meeting also featured the **Mike Stripe Team** race, for teams

of three cars whose times were aggregated with a handicap then applied. Participants included a team of young drivers, two in Frazer Nashes and one in an MG. It was won by 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred' made up of Fred Boothby, Chris Cadman and Hamish McNinch, all driving MGs.

George Shackleton's Cooper MK11 took both races for **500cc Formula 3** cars, in the first one prevailing in a close battle with Stuart Wright's Cooper, passing on the final lap.



Brian Arculus took his Lotus Elite to a dominant win by over a minute in the FISCAR race for 1950s cars. It's a car well accustomed to beating those of its era and even from later ones. "It's just a delightful little thing on the track," said Arculus. "[Colin] Chapman did very well with this design because it's so advanced, when you put it in the category of 1950s and, even with 1200cc, it can beat the big stuff."



Julian Majzub in his 1927 Bugatti Type 35B won the Vintage Racing Cars and Special Pre-war Cars race and took the Williams Trophy for the third time. The prize is named after William Grover-Williams and it was highly appropriate as Majzub was driving the very car in which Williams had his first ever Bugatti works drive, in the 1927 British Grand Prix at Brooklands.

RACE WINNERS

Tin Tops/Modified Saloons	Andrew Wareing (Lotus Europa)
Race 1&2: Alex Sidwell (Holden Commodore)	Jaguar Challenge Guy Conney/ James Ramm (XJ6)
Intermarque Championship	Archie Scott Brown Trophy Anthony Ditheridge (Cooper Monaco)
Race 1: Chris Brockhurst (Vauxhall Tigra)	British Thoroughbreds Tyrone White (MGB Roadster)
Race 2: Lewis Smith (Vauxhall Tigra)	Motorsport School Sports v Saloons Andrew Wareing (Lotus Europa)
Pre-1961 Racing Cars	Standard & Modified Pre-war Sportscars Christopher Mann (Alfa Romeo Monza)
Gareth Burnett (Alta 2 Litre)	Short Scratch for Pre-war Cars Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (Frazer Nash Super Sports)
Mike Stripe Team Race	Classic Ferrari Race 1&2: Tristan Simpson (F355 Challenge)
'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred': Fred Boothby (MG J2)/Chris Cadman (MG Monlhère Midget)/Hamish McNinch (MG PA 2Str)	Short Handicap Race for Pre-war Cars Nick Hayward-Cook (Austin 7 Monoposto)
500cc F3	Motorsport School Modern Challenge
Race 1&2: George Shackleton (Cooper MK11)	
FISCAR & Pre 66	
Brian Arculus (Lotus Elite)	
Vintage Racing Cars & Special Pre-war Sportscars	
Julia Majzub (Bugatti Type 35B)	

FEATURE MN CIRCUIT RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP REVIEW

Photos: SMJ Photography

Peugeot driver West joins Panizzi and Delecour in the record books. By Jack Benyon



New champion was dominant



Mark Kelly impressed in first full season in faster Escort



Woodhouse won the Michelin Cup to salvage his season

FIRST CIRCUIT RALLY TITLE FOR WEST

This year, Chris West joined a very exclusive club. The Middlesex driver joined Gilles Panizzi and Francois Delecour in becoming a champion in the Peugeot 306 Maxi after winning the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship.

West's Peugeot 306 Maxi is powered by a few more horses than in Panizzi and Delecour's day thanks to an uprated engine, but given his opposition, the car still needed to be threaded between the tyres perfectly to have any hope of winning the title in the racing-track based series. And he did such a good job that he won it with a round to spare.

West's 306 is an ex-Panizzi and Delecour testing car and, although it has been heavily modified since then, it still has all the noise, explosive change of direction and the constant hum of a gearchange through the seven-speed box that it always has. Fans of the championship were in for a treat this year as the front-wheel-drive car mixed it with a host of high-powered Ford Escort Mk2 missiles. Having won the last two titles, this time the Escorts were all defeated. Co-driver Keith Hounslow didn't need to encourage the excitable West on, he didn't need any extra motivation to end Escort dominance.

The pair took maximum points on three events – the Neil Howard, Knockhill and Snetterton Stages, to wrap up the title early, becoming the first crew to do so in the championship's three-season history. He did it using scuffed, elderly tyres, worn driveshafts and a perennially empty pocket. But West's determination, will

and vigour were not to be defeated.

However, for all the praise of West, second placed-man Mark Kelly deserves almost equal credit. The Mk2 driver started with the top-spec car in 2017 for the first time and impressed with his mighty speed, winning the Brands Hatch and Alan Healy Memorial Stages at Cadwell Park respectively. More consistency next year and he will be a title threat, a 10th at Knockhill and a fifth at the earlier Cadwell event proving his undoing as West didn't finish outside of the top three in the points all year.

The real surprise was third-place man Ian Woodhouse, who wasn't the ever-present threat for victories he had been in the 2016-17 season, of which he was the overall champion. Without Paul Swift, Woodhouse's challenger last year, he appeared out of sorts and went winless despite two triumphs on his way to the title the season before.

Alan Kirkaldy – in an R5 guest drive at Anglesey – and 'Juicy' Bruce Edwards were event-winning points-scoring interlopers, but didn't complete the full season and didn't get a chance to show off their pace all year. Honourable mentions go to Dane Walker and Paul Sheard for brilliant overall results (*see right*).

Edwards could return next season – which starts in November at the Neil Howard Stages at Oulton on the third of the month – but he'll face stiff opposition. Mainly from West – with fresh Michelin tyre backing and a new engine from Smith and Jones – and an ever-improving Kelly who, if consistent, will fight West all the way. And there's always another challenger or two who come out of the woodwork and take the regulars down to the wire. It will no doubt be another fascinating affair. ■

CLASS ROUND-UP



Giantkilling Ka of Aaron Rix



Mazda MX-5 of Paul Sheard



Dane Walker: Class C win



Carannante inherited D1



Stone's Fiesta S2500

Class A

Aaron Rix will never want to look at a TV again as his roll has made just about every video highlights reel from the championship this year. But the last laugh is on everybody else as the car was repaired adequately and steered brilliantly to class success. With Rob Cook alongside, the pairing took a phenomenal seventh in the championship in the 1400cc machine. David McMullan's Vauxhall Nova missed out by just seven points.

Class B

At the third time of asking, Paul Sheard finally sealed the Class B championship in his Mazda MX-5, despite giving his car up to touring car ace Paul O'Neill at Oulton Park and Anglesey. His fifth in the championship was all the more impressive after missing those two rounds in the 1600cc car. Because Sheard had different navigators through the season, Jamie MacTavish took the co-driver's Class B title, as his driver Ashleigh Morris took second in the class standings.

Class C

Dane Walker and Dave Boyes marked a first full season in the championship with some brilliant performances in Class C and fourth in the overall championship, with three class wins out of eight. The likeable pair of Cathy Sewart and Colin Stephens scored a best championship result with second in class. Josh Davey had been on course to challenge for the overall title as well as the class but an unsourceable replacement part for his Darrian ruled him out after Christmas.

Class D1

Chris West and Keith Hounslow topped D1 and Mark Kelly was second but were ineligible due to receiving top three overall awards, and Ian Woodhouse's Michelin Cup win also ruled him out. So the class win went to Ciro Carannante in his first season in his 2.9-litre Porsche Cayman, which ran near-standard as more updates will come for next season.

Class D2

John Stone topped the D2 class in his 2.5-litre Millington-powered Ford Fiesta after a ding-dong battle with John Marshall's Subaru. The latter's co-driver, Scott Crawford, won the D2 co-driver's championship, despite the pairing missing the last two rounds after an engine failure ruled them out of the Stone fight. Stone's co-driver wasn't registered.

SPORTING SCENE

Photos: ES Motorsport, Hal Ridge, Tony Adams, Colin Casserley

Doran joins GCK for remainder of 2018

Brit Liam Doran will complete the season with the GC Competition World Rallycross team on the back of strong results in France and Latvia in the team's Prodrive-developed Renault Megane RS RX.

The squad will expand to three cars for the final three rounds of the season, with 2017 European Supercar champion Anton Marklund also signing up.

While Marklund will join team owner Guerlain Chicherit in the two-car World RX effort this weekend in the series' first visit to the USA, at Circuit of the Americas, Doran will race in the final round of Americas Rallycross, having finished on the podium in the opening round at Silverstone in his LD Motorsports team's Citroen DS3. Doran will then join Chicherit and Marklund by racing in the final two World RX rounds in Germany and South Africa.

Doran said: "It's been a great experience so far and I feel I've been able to have a positive impact in developing the car alongside Guerlain. It's unbelievable for me."

AL-ATTIYAH LOOKS TO WORLD RX

Qatari looks to mixed-surface future after positive test session in Skoda Fabia



Al-Attiyah impressed

By Hal Ridge

Two-time Dakar winner and former World Rally driver Nasser Al-Attiyah is closing on a deal to race a Skoda Fabia in the World Rallycross Championship next season.

The Olympic medallist drove ES Motorsport's new Fabia Supercar at the Bikernieki circuit in Latvia last week alongside Kevin Abbring, the former Hyundai WRC driver working as test driver for the squad.

The team used the Latvian circuit for its first test to compare times with the World RX event from the previous weekend and was happy with its performance.

"To be honest it's gone better than expected," team manager Ramunas Fetings told *Motorsport News*. "Already from the very first laps I can tell you that we can get to the European Championship finals, so it's quite OK for us. We're really happy."

The Lithuanian squad is working with Al-Attiyah to finalise plans to contest World RX.

"Nasser is really good in other races and he's enjoying the rallycross car now," said Fetings. "We didn't sign the contract yet, but we are really confident that we will see a new face in World RX next year. I cannot officially announce that

Nasser is coming but he is really happy with the car, with the team and we are happy with his performance so we are doing everything to make a deal for next season."

Built between Czech firm Blue Engineering and French company Vaison Sport, the squad will continue testing in the coming weeks, but say Al-Attiyah's busy schedule is making that a challenge.

"We are dealing with Nasser because his calendar is really, really tight," said Fetings. "Maybe we will test after the World RX in Germany. If we will not succeed then maybe we will go to France. Now it's just to do everything to find more speed."

BRISCA F1

Harris makes it two at King's Lynn and puts himself in the F1 shootout hot seat

BriSCA F1

By Colin Casserley

Organiser Trackstar **Where:** King's Lynn **When:** September 22 **Starters:** 39.

Tom Harris dominated Saturday night's meeting at King's Lynn, winning both his qualifying heats and the final. It was Harris' second consecutive win at the Norfolk oval and he will go for an unprecedented hat-trick at the track in October.

Jake Harray, who had earlier

won his first race, took the early lead but was forced to retire with mechanical problems. Harris had made a quick start and took over the race lead before the halfway point opening up over half-a-lap advantage from his rivals.

As the laps wound down, Stuart Smith Jr began to close in but could not get near enough to launch an assault on Harris on the last lap.

"I got a great start; the car is

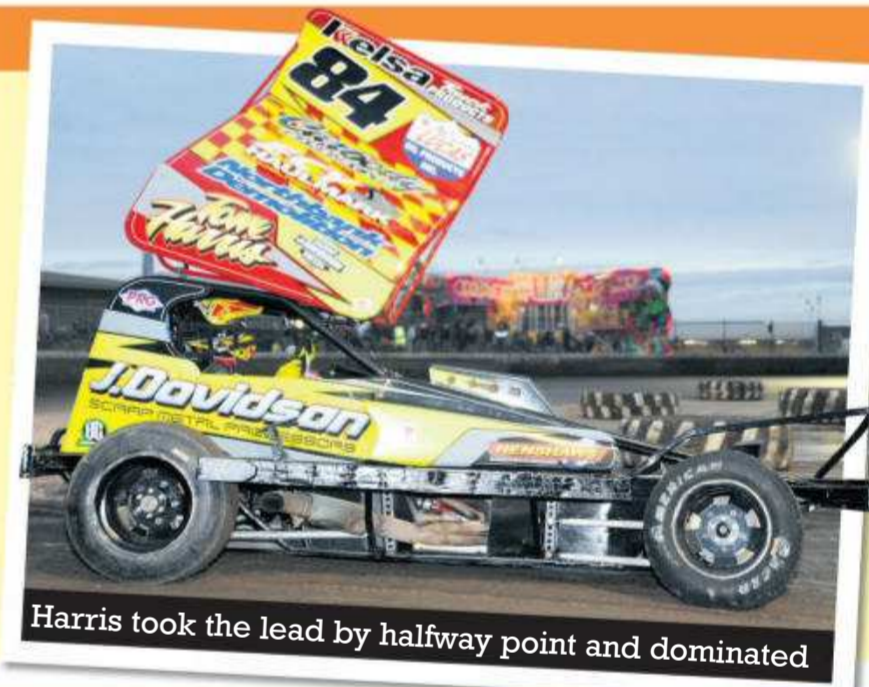
set-up to run when the track is a bit wetter as it is to begin with," said Harris. "I have had a great start to the shootout and I am starting at the front of the shootout drivers. I am going to try and take advantage of that before I move back in the grid. I have learnt some driving techniques from racing a sprint car in America, and I have finally got the car to handle to the different way of driving."

Second-placed man Smith

nearly did not make it out for the final. He said: "We had an oil leak during my heat race. The crew worked really hard to get me back out. Harris was a bit too far ahead of me, I had a lot of traffic to get through at the start and by that time he was a long way ahead. But I think I had the faster car at the end and was closing in on him, we just needed a few more laps."

Results

1 Tom Harris; 2 Stuart Smith Jr; 3 Nigel Green; 4 James Morris; 5 Karl Hawkins; 6 Bobby Griffin; 7 Patrick Tersteeg; 8 Bradley Harrison; 9 Joe Nickolls; 10 Danny Wainman.



Harris took the lead by halfway point and dominated

BRITISH RALLYCROSS

Godfrey's win crucial for title challenge

British Rallycross

By Hal Ridge

Organiser BARC/LHMC **Where:** Pembrey, South Wales **When:** September 23 **Starters:** 54

The best launch from second on the grid propelled Julian Godfrey to the lead of the Supercar final in the penultimate round of the British Rallycross Championship at Pembrey.

Having made it into the left-hand first corner at the head of the pack, Godfrey led the race throughout to claim his third maximum points haul of the year and lifted himself right back into title condition with just one round of the series remaining.

Godfrey didn't set a fastest time in qualifying however. It was three-time British Rally champion Mark Higgins who had been fastest in Q1 and Q2, before Ollie O'Donovan set the best time in Q3, Higgins having been spun at the first corner after contact with O'Donovan.

Manxman Higgins started on pole position for the final, but was beaten away from the line by Godfrey, using used slick tyres on the circuit that had transitioned from wet to dry over the day, and O'Donovan, on new slicks in his outside grid slot.

While Godfrey made the best launch, O'Donovan also edged ahead of Higgins into the first corner. The pair ran side-by-side before Higgins' Albatec Racing Peugeot 208 was rotated around the



Godfrey has pushed himself back into the frame for the championship

front of O'Donovan's Fiesta in the braking area.

The moment dropped Higgins to fourth, as O'Donovan's Team RX Racing team-mate, Tony Barty, climbed to third. In a bid to get his extra-route joker out of the way and leapfrog those ahead when they took theirs, Higgins was first to take his joker on the second lap. O'Donovan responded from second by taking his joker on lap three, the Irishman maintaining track position.

Leader Godfrey and third-placed Barty took their jokers on the fourth tour, Godfrey holding his lead, while Barty dropped behind Higgins into fourth.

Steve Hill had dropped down the order on the opening lap due to a poor start but climbed back up to fifth by the finish, ahead of Subaru pair Liam Manning and Nigel Burke.

While each driver in the series can drop their two worst scores of the season, the final round at Silverstone in November must count towards the final tally. With the dropped scores considered, O'Donovan leads the standings by four points from Godfrey, with Higgins just one point further back in third.

Tristan Ovenden won the Supernational class but such was the

rate of attrition in the two-wheel-drive final that Paige Bellerby managed to finish third, despite twice spinning her Lotus, losing her front brakes and almost being lapped by the end. Jack Thorne was second.

Luke Constantine inherited the Junior class win when brother Tom ran into gearbox troubles mid-race, while Patrick O'Donovan finished second. Simon Ovenden and David Bell claimed victory in the single-make Suzuki Swift and BMW Mini classes and Roger Thomas won the Retro category with his Metro 6R4.

Results

British Rallycross (6 laps) 1 Julian Godfrey (Mitsubishi Mirage) 4m32.309s; 2 Ollie O'Donovan (Ford Fiesta) +3.320s; 3 Mark Higgins (Peugeot 208); 4 Tony Barty (Ford Focus); 5 Steve Hill (Mitsubishi Evo); 6 Liam Manning (Subaru Impreza).
Supernational (6 laps) 1 Tristan Ovenden (Renault Clio) 4m50.063s; 2 Jack Thorne (Citroen C2) +7.851s; 3 Paige Bellerby (Lotus Exige); 4 Kirk Twyman (Renault Clio); 5 Scott Singleton (Vauxhall Nova); 6 Paul Coney (Vauxhall Corsa).
Junior Rallycross (6 laps) 1 Luke Constantine 5m26.035s; 2 Patrick O'Donovan +6.969s; 3 Tom Constantine; 4 Will Layton; 5 Eleanor Corner; 6 Morgan Wroot.
Suzuki Swift (6 laps) 1 Simon Ovenden 5m06.969s; 2 Morgan Bailey +0.693s; 3 Max Weatherley; 4 Tom Middleton; 5 Christian Hainsworth; 6 Joe Booth.
BMW Mini (6 laps) 1 David Bell 5m14.082s; 2 Drew Bellerby +1.384s; 3 Bradley Durdin; 4 Grant Rees; 5 Dave Ward; 6 Andrew Hawkes.
Retro Rallycross (4 laps) 1 Roger Thomas (Metro 6R4) 3m19.323s; 2 Derrick Jobb (Ford Escort) +8.596s; 3 James Harrold (Volkswagen Beetle); 4 Ray Morgan (Ford Escort); 5 Gary Dixon (Vauxhall Astra); 6 Steve Cozens (Citroen AX).

BRITISH HILLCLIMB

Willis holds his nerve for a third hillclimb title

British Hillclimb Championship

By Tony Adams

Organiser: BARC **Where:** Loton Park, Shropshire **When:** September 23 **Starters:** 16

Trevor Willis clinched his third British Hillclimb Championship title after his closest rival failed to score in the penultimate round at Loton Park in Shropshire last Sunday.

Willis, driving an OMS 28, only took fourth in the morning Top 12 run-off but closest rival Will Hall, in a Force WH Xtec, overran in wet conditions at the track's notorious Triangle Bend and failed to score, handing Willis the crown.

After taking a second place in the final round, Willis, who was also champion in 2012 and '17, said: "I am so relieved to clinch the title as I only had a fragile lead coming into these last two rounds and Will was closing fast, however I do feel for him as he and his team are always hard to beat."

Hall said: "I had high hopes coming here to Loton Park, but unfortunately I made a mistake in the first run-off which really scuppered my chances and then failed in the second one too, by simply trying too hard! I really

should have done better much earlier in the season, but finishing second in the championship is my highest placing ever so I am delighted with that, and have major plans for the car so I am already looking towards next season in a very positive manner."

Scottish driver Wallace Menzies, driving the latest Gould GR59 Cosworth, took second place in the first run-off and won the final run-off to secure a number three on his car for next year.

The highly competitive Midland Hillclimb Championship was won by Robert Kenrick, driving the latest GWR Raptor which is powered by a 1000cc BMW motorcycle engine and has been smashing class records at all three Midland venues of Prescott, Shelsley Walsh and Loton Park all year.

Results

Round 33: 1 Richard Spedding (GWR Raptor 2) 51.45s; 2 Wallace Menzies (Gould GR59) 52.08s; 3 Scott Moran (Gould GR61X); 4 Trevor Willis (OMS 28); 5 Adam Greenen (Empire Evo 2); 6 Dave Uren (Gould GR55); 7 Lee Mutch (GWR Raptor); 8 Zach Zammit (Empire Evo); 9 Matthew Ryder (Empire Evo); 10 Debbie Dunbar (DJ Firehawk).
Round 34: 1 Menzies 48.09s; 2 Willis 48.12s; 3 Spedding; 4 Alex Summers (DJ Firehawk); 5 Moran; 6 Zammit; 7 Uren; 8 Greenen; 9 Ryder; 10 Mutch.



Willis won title in first run-off

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

MN SAYS...

Russell needs his grand prix chance

Mercedes junior could miss out on a seat at the top table given driver market

There was, quite rightly, a fanfare when Lando Norris landed the McLaren F1 drive for the 2019 season. The Brit had been ripping up the lower formula on his way to the top and there was an inevitability about his progress.

But even Norris has been put in the shade by George Russell in the 2018 Formula 2 Championship. The Merc junior is in prime position to claim the crown with two rounds left but it appears that he will have a struggle to graduate to grand prix racing. It is not impossible, but it will be very tough, and it will be a crying shame if he is not able to step up as soon as he can, and he has pointed out how limited the seats are on the grid.

The problem is that up-and-coming racers have to become part of young driver initiative to make any real progress in single-seater motor racing. And the driver schemes are overloaded by talent, which brings it back to Russell's point: there needs to be more opportunities for talent to get a chance at the very top level. Even another three teams on the F1 grid, like he suggests, would be enough to offer fresh new drivers a chance to show what they are capable of.

Matt James, Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S
FAVOURITE OF
THE WEEK!

Matt Facey's BMW at the Taw and Torridge Classic Trial, taken by Duncan Stephens



Alex Ireland was on hand to enjoy the Formula Ford 1600 battlers at Knockhill recently



Sam Nudd's shot from Goodwood



Smile for the birdie: by Peter Atkins



Silverstone battles, by Neil Ormston



Rich Cranston's Renault Clio shot



Mike Bouts captured this shot of a new development for the Team BMR Subaru Levorg



Ian Sprott's impromptu watersplash photograph from the Promenade Stages Rally

GOT AN OPINION? LET US KNOW: LETTERS@MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK

TV GUIDE

The latest instalment of the **Great History of the Le Mans 24 Hours** comes from 2002 as Tom Kristensen, Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro aimed to become the first crew to win the great race three times in a row as Audi once again dominated (Thursday, 0900-1100hrs).
Catch the penultimate round of **TCR UK** from Croft (Saturday, 1800-1830hrs) as Ollie Taylor tried to whittle down Dan Lloyd's lead at the top of the standings before the final round at Donington Park.
Watch GT3 and LMP3 machinery from some of the world's top teams do

battle for two hours around Spa-Francorchamps in the **Michelin Le Mans Cup** (Saturday, 2000-2030hrs).
The final round of the **British GT Championship** comes from Donington (Sunday, 1100-1200hrs).
Flick Haigh and Jonny Adam went into the event as firm favourites for the title but Jon Minshaw and Phil Keen would try everything they could to stop them.
And finally relive this year's **Goodwood Revival** featuring the great and good from the world of historic racing (Sunday, 1930-2030hrs).



Audi dominated at Le Mans

LIVE 

Blancpain GT Endurance: Barcelona
Race 1: Sunday, 1705-1930hrs (delayed)

LIVE TV

- Formula 2: Sochi**
Race 1: Saturday, 1440-1600hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race 2: Sunday, 0915-1020hrs, Sky Sports F1
- GP3: Sochi**
Race 1: Saturday, 0810-0910hrs, Sky Sports F1
Race 2: Sunday, 0800-0850hrs, Sky Sports F1
- WTCR: Ningbo**

- Race 2:** Sunday, 0700-0800hrs, Eurosport 2
Race 3: Sunday, 0800-0900hrs, Eurosport 2
- Blancpain GT Endurance: Barcelona**
Race: Sunday, 1530-1715hrs, Eurosport 1
- NASCAR: Charlotte**
Race: Sunday, 1830-2300hrs, Premier Sports



Russell leads the Formula 2 standings for ART

LIVE F1



Bottas took his maiden F1 win last year in Russia

- Russian Grand Prix Sky Sports F1 HD coverage**
Drivers' press conference: Thursday, 1100-1130hrs
FP1: Friday, 0845-1055hrs
FP2: Friday, 1245-1450hrs
FP3: Saturday, 0945-1115hrs
Qualifying: Saturday, 1200-1440hrs
- Channel 4 HD highlights**
Qualifying: Saturday, 1630-1830hrs
Race: Sunday, 1845-2100hrs
- Race:** Sunday, 1030-1510hrs
Highlights: Sunday, 1830-1930hrs

LISTINGS

RACING SATURDAY

Donington Park, Leics BARC meeting: Junior Saloons, Track Attack, CNC Sports/Saloons, Classic Thunder/BOSS, Pre '66/ Pre '83 Touring Cars, Pre '93/ Pre '03/Pre '05 Touring Cars
Starts racing from 1200hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
Admission adult £16, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000

Oulton Park, Cheshire BRSCC meeting: FF1600, Fiesta ST-XR, Alfa Romeo, Cockshoot Cup, Karts **Starts** racing from 1320hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs)
Admission adult £16, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000

Snetterton, Norfolk MGCC meeting: Morgans, MG Cup, MG Metro, Midget and Sprite, MG Trophy **Starts** racing from 1135hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
Admission adult £16, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000

Kirkistown, N Ireland Martin Donnelly Trophy: FF1600, Saloon/GT, Roadsports, Fiesta Zetec, Formula Vee, Legends **Starts** racing from 1200hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
Admission adult Euro 15 child free **Web** kirkistown.com

SATURDAY/SUNDAY Brands Hatch, Kent BTCC meeting: BTCC, F4, Carrera Cup, Clio Cup, Ginetta GT4, Ginetta Junior **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1415hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1005hrs **Admission** adult £34, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000

Rockingham, Northants MSVR meeting: Radicals, Mini Challenge, Lotus Cup/Lotus Elise, F3 Cup, Racing Saloons, Trackday Trophy, Production BMW, Allcomers **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1145hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)



MG Trophy heads to Snetterton

Sunday, racing from 1035hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
Admission £16 **Web** rockingham.co.uk **Contact** 0870 1660438

RALLY SATURDAY

Filey, Yorks Trackrod Rally Yorkshire **Starts** 0901hrs **Admission** adult multi-stage £20, children under 16 free **Web** rallyyorkshire.co.uk

SATURDAY/SUNDAY Macroom, Cork CB Toolhire Cork '20' Rally **Starts** 0900hrs Saturday, 0830hrs Sunday **Admission** TBA **Web** munsterclub.com

SUNDAY Caerwent Training Area, Caldicot Patriot Stages **Starts** 0915hrs **Admission** TBA **Web** forrestersclub.co.uk

Weston Park, Shrops The Jasper's Bakeries AGBO Stages Rally **Starts** 0812hrs **Admission** TBA **Web** owenmotoringclub.co.uk

SPORTING SCENE SUNDAY

Northampton National Hot Rods **Starts** 1330hrs **Admission** TBC **Web** nationalhotrod.com

Buxton, Derbyshire BriSCA F1 **Starts** 1300hrs **Admission** TBC **Web** brisca.com

Details correct at time of press but please check before travel

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