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NOVEMBER 27 2014

**VICTORY IN
ABU DHABI**



CHAMPION!

Lewis joins legends with second title on 'the greatest day of my life'

PLUS

GP3
RED BULL JUNIOR
LYNN CLAIMS TITLE

FORMULA E
BIRD FLIES TO
ELECTRIC WIN

LE MANS
HERO KRISTENSEN
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POLE POSITION

Double points didn't taint the championship

WELL, THANK GOODNESS FOR THAT. NO, I'M NOT talking about Lewis Hamilton's world championship success, even if it is entirely the correct result after a brilliant season for the Brit. Instead, I'm relieved that Formula 1's ridiculous final-round double-points rule didn't affect the destination of the title, and its only impact was on the final spot in the drivers' top 10.

As it was, Hamilton proved the worthiest of champions, having won 11 races, and it was a nice touch for Prince Harry – 64 years after his great-grandparents were the 'guests of honour' at the very first world championship grand prix – to inform Lewis of his status as a legend over the pits-to-car radio.

Hopefully the prince is aware of other great British successes in motorsport. Also in Abu Dhabi, Alex Lynn wrapped up the GP3 title to add to Jolyon Palmer's GP2 crown, while in Malaysia Sam Bird – who used to coach Lynn in Formula Renault – dominated in Formula E.

So while Hamilton joins Jim Clark, Graham Hill and Jackie Stewart as a multiple British world champion, the country also has a very bright motorsporting future.



MS

MARCUS SIMMONS
DEPUTY EDITOR

marcus.simmons@haymarket.com
@MarcusSimmons54

COVER STORY

"You needed the double points in 2008!"

Hamilton reminds Massa how history could have changed. Report, p16



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Nico Rosberg takes pole position but his ambition to pressure Lewis Hamilton into making a mistake and giving up the world championship comes to nothing. Full report and analysis of the weekend, including the Red Bull flexi-wing controversy, plus technical updates, back stories and full results from Abu Dhabi

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THE BIG PICTURE

Pure joy. Having brought his Mercedes into parc ferme with Abu Dhabi GP victory and world title success in the bag, Lewis Hamilton greets his family and his team





BackBen

PETRONAS

This week in F1

Driver-market latest

FERRARI CONFIRMS VETTEL DEAL AND ALONSO EXIT

Sebastian Vettel's deal to replace Fernando Alonso at Ferrari was confirmed during last weekend's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Vettel, who will join the Scuderia from Red Bull on a three-year deal, said the lure of joining "the greatest team in the sport" was too great to resist, even though he was happy at Red Bull.

"It has been an incredible journey but at some stage you feel you want to take on a new challenge," Vettel said. "It was not a decision against Red Bull, but a decision for my future."

Alonso is expected to rejoin McLaren now that his Ferrari tenure has ended, but the Woking team has still to choose between Jenson Button and Kevin Magnussen for Alonso's team-mate, and has delayed a decision on its final line-up until December 1 at the earliest.

Speaking about his exit from Ferrari after five seasons, Alonso said: "I was in talks even last year [to leave], and we waited for this year, the new car, the new turbo era, and I felt around summertime/September that it was time to move, and I made the decision."

"Only time will tell if it is a good one or bad one."

Lotus confirmed ahead of the 2014 finale that Romain Grosjean would again partner Pastor Maldonado next season, after signing a multi-year contract, while Sergio Perez agreed a new multi-year deal last weekend in Abu Dhabi to remain at Force India.

There was no news as we went to press on who will partner F1 rookie Max Verstappen at Toro Rosso. Incumbent Jean-Eric Vergne and Formula Renault 3.5 champion Carlos Sainz Jr are understood to be the leading contenders.

2015 F1 FIELD SO FAR

Mercedes	Lewis Hamilton/Nico Rosberg
Red Bull-Renault	Daniel Ricciardo/Daniil Kvyat
Williams-Mercedes	Valtteri Bottas/Felipe Massa
Ferrari	Kimi Raikkonen/Sebastian Vettel
McLaren-Honda	<i>Fernando Alonso (tbc)/ Jenson Button or Kevin Magnussen (tbc)</i>
Force India-Mercedes	Nico Hulkenberg/Sergio Perez
Toro Rosso-Renault	Max Verstappen/ <i>Jean-Eric Vergne or Carlos Sainz Jr (tbc)</i>
Lotus-Mercedes	Romain Grosjean/Pastor Maldonado
Sauber-Ferrari	Marcus Ericsson/Felipe Nasr

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Engine-freeze row ramps up

Mercedes' rivals are ready to propose a radical engine-rule change for 2016, if the German marque does not concede ground on relaxing F1's engine freeze.

Red Bull boss Christian Horner even suggested F1 should switch to new twin-turbo V6 engines with standard energy-recovery systems, to reduce costs.

Outgoing Ferrari team principal Marco Mattiacci said the Scuderia would not settle for the rules remaining unchanged.

"Definitely we are not going to accept the status quo for 2016," Mattiacci said.

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff hit back by saying changes would increase costs and amount to "digging a grave for F1".

Discussions were planned in a Strategy Group and F1 Commission meeting on Tuesday, as AUTOSPORT closed for press.



McLAREN-HONDA RUNS IN ABU DHABI TEST

McLaren conducted the first proper testing of its new Honda engine during this week's post-season Formula 1 test in Abu Dhabi.

The development MP4-29H car broke cover for the first time during a filming day at Silverstone earlier this month, and the Woking team ran the car again at Yas Marina with reserve driver Stoffel Vandoorne.

Red Bull rewarded Formula Renault 3.5 champion Carlos Sainz Jr

with a day of running in the RB10, while GP2 champion Jolyon Palmer got his first taste of F1 machinery with Force India and GP3 king Alex Lynn was due his maiden F1 run with Lotus.

Ferrari had hoped to run new signing Sebastian Vettel alongside GP2 racer Raffaele Marciello, but this was blocked by Red Bull. DTM racer Pascal Wehrlein was also set to make his contemporary F1 debut with the championship-winning Mercedes team.

FULL TEST LINE-UP (November 25-26)

Mercedes	Nico Rosberg/Pascal Wehrlein
Red Bull	Carlos Sainz Jr/Daniel Ricciardo
Ferrari	Kimi Raikkonen/Raffaele Marciello
Williams	Valtteri Bottas/Felipe Nasr
McLaren	Stoffel Vandoorne
Lotus	Esteban Ocon/Charles Pic/Alex Lynn
Force India	Jolyon Palmer/Spike Goddard
Toro Rosso	Max Verstappen
Sauber	Marcus Ericsson
Caterham	Will Stevens

Narrow window to save Caterham



Caterham's administrator believes there are just a few weeks left to find a buyer if the team is to survive in 2015.

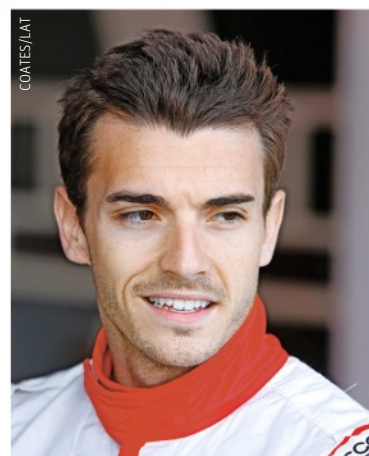
Although Caterham returned to racing at last weekend's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, acting team principal Finbarr O'Connell said time was running out to restart the project.

"When Caterham Sports Ltd went into administration, work on next year's car stopped," O'Connell told AUTOSPORT. "But I'm told by the technical team that if a purchaser comes along in the next few weeks, we will race next year."

BIG NUMBER

2,350,000

The amount, in millions of pounds, the Caterham crowdfunding project revealed it needed to get the team to Abu Dhabi. It was short of the target before the event, but exceeded the total before the start of the race, its website claimed.



Small teams promised cost-crisis solution

F1 bosses have promised the small teams a solution to the sport's costs crisis in the next few weeks. The bosses of Lotus, Sauber and Force India met with Bernie Ecclestone and CVC representative Donald MacKenzie in Abu Dhabi last Saturday. They are pushing for a fairer redistribution of commercial rights income, allied to cost cuts. Plans to introduce customer cars, third cars or a 'Super GP2' concept to boost grids if more teams drop out of F1 have been dismissed.



We decided to appoint Maurizio Arrivabene [left] because, at this historic moment in time for the Scuderia and for Formula 1, we need a person with a thorough understanding not just of Ferrari but also of the governance mechanisms and requirements of the sport

Ferrari chairman Sergio Marchionne on the long-time Philip Morris (Marlboro) sponsorship chief who replaces Marco Mattiacci as team principal next season

BIANCHI REPATRIATED TO FRENCH HOSPITAL

Jules Bianchi has been transferred to a French hospital and is no longer in an induced coma, nearly two months after he suffered serious head injuries in a crash at the Japanese Grand Prix.

Although he remains unconscious and is still in a "critical" condition, his family said he is now breathing unaided, and doctors agreed he could move from hospital in Yokkaichi to Le Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Nice.

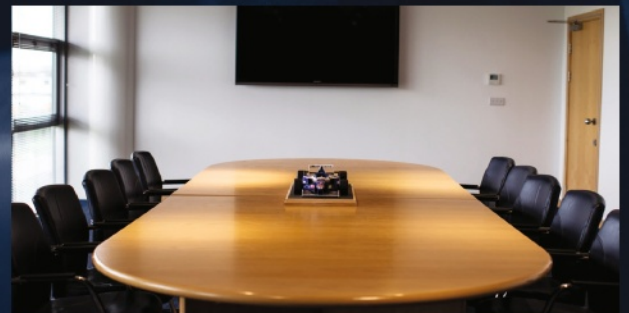
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Jonathan Noble

F1's newshound

The dominance of Mercedes power units has been a consistent thread in 2014 – and the margin could actually grow next season

While it's often said in motor racing that you're only as good as your last race, such is the competitiveness of Formula 1 that what really matters is how good you're going to be at the next one.

That's why, before the first champagne corks had been popped to celebrate Lewis Hamilton's world championship success in Abu Dhabi, thoughts for most in the paddock were already on what needs to be done to stop Mercedes in its tracks in 2015.

But while the optimists of the paddock may be full of confidence that the winter will allow Mercedes' rivals to close down what is a pretty significant gap, there are other voices offering darker predictions about what we should expect.

The word on the street – whether through the paddock grapevine or via engineers who have switched camps and spilled the beans on what's really going on at Merc's power-unit HQ in Brixworth – is that the German make could be even further ahead next year than this.

Engineers suggest that Mercedes' energy recovery systems are not actually the best on the grid, so it knows it has plenty of room for improvement in that area during the window for developments this winter.

Furthermore, potentially bigger gains could come from its exhausts. The concept used by the German car manufacturer this year did not deliver maximum power and, because it has managed to make improvements elsewhere in terms of aerodynamic compromises and



make in comparison to Mercedes, but was aware that the possibility was there for things to be even worse for his team next year than they have been in 2014.

"I think if you believe the numbers that are floating around, the gap could actually grow rather than diminish," he says. "It would be rather depressing if that were the case."

Mercedes' opposition also has to balance the fact that each push to go to the limit on power in 2015 could mean

"If you speak to rival teams, there are fears that Mercedes could unleash up to 70bhp more"

weight saving, it could unleash a better system in 2015 to lift its horsepower even more.

Mercedes itself admits that it won't be resting on its laurels after a dominant campaign, and its sights are set on a big leap forward in 2015.

Engine chief Andy Cowell told me after Abu Dhabi: "The way the sporting regulations have been set up, throughout the year, you develop and at the start of the next year you introduce a big upgrade. It's a big list of development opportunities.

"I'm sure Renault and Ferrari will be working as hard as we have. And so we have to make as big a step as we can."

The talk of Mercedes pushing hard will only add to the concern that some of its rivals have already. If you speak in private to rival team members, there are fears that the German behemoth could be unleashing as much as 70bhp more than it has at the moment.

Red Bull boss Christian Horner refused to expand on how big a leap he expected his engine supplier Renault to

more reliability risks ahead of a season where drivers are limited to just four power units for the campaign.

Such worries of F1's engine battle spreading out rather than getting closer certainly explains why there is such a concerted push by Mercedes' rivals to overhaul the power-unit regulations – whether through the relaxing of the development freeze or switching to different engines entirely in 2016.

But for Cowell, the claims from rivals that Mercedes could be even further ahead next season are nothing to get excited about.

Sipping a beer on Sunday night, as all around him Mercedes staff celebrated the end of a brilliant campaign, he was unmoved by chatter from the opposition.

"They're also suggesting a step back to V8s, so be careful what you listen to," he smiled.

For Mercedes' increasingly nervous rivals, there are just more than 100 sleepless nights until race day in Melbourne to find out who is right. ☼

ROSE/GETTY

This week in motorsport

LOEB JOINS CITROEN'S MONTE TEAM

Nine-time World Rally champion Sebastien Loeb is to return to the sport with Citroen on January's Monte Carlo Rally.

Loeb, who switched to the French make's World Touring Car team in 2014, will contest the Monte as team-mate to Kris Meeke to raise awareness of Citroen's DS rebranding.

As preparation, he will compete on this weekend's Rallye du Var in the French Alps, with wife Severine co-driving.

"It will be a personal challenge," said Loeb. "I haven't competed in that discipline for over a year. I will be able to find my marks with the car on Rallye du Var, but I have very good memories of the DS3 and I hope Monte 2015 can be added to those."

Ahead of the Monte, Loeb will also tackle the opening Andros Trophy round in a DS3 at Val Thorens on December 6-7.



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Fittipaldi back – in a Ferrari!

Two-time Formula 1 World Champion Emerson Fittipaldi will make a return to the cockpit at the age of 67 in his home round of the World Endurance Championship at Interlagos this weekend.

He is coming out of retirement to help boost the profile of a race that he promotes and will drive an AF Corse Ferrari 458 Italia. He will share the GTE Am entry with Alessandro Pierguidi and Jeff Segal after Belarusian Alexander Talkanitsa Sr stepped down to make way for the racing legend.

It will be the first time that Fittipaldi has raced a Ferrari.



ESM's twin assault for 2015

The US Extreme Speed Motorsports LMP2 squad will mount twin assaults on the World Endurance Championship and North American Endurance Cup in 2015.

The team has firmed up its WEC entry with a pair of HPD-Honda ARX-04b coupes after contesting this year's Austin and Shanghai rounds with its existing open-top ARX-03cs. It will not contest the full United SportsCar Championship and will instead focus on the NAEC components of the series, which like the

team is backed by the Tequila Patron drinks brand.

Team co-owners Scott Sharp and Ed Brown plus Ryan Dalziel and Johannes van Overbeek will make up two thirds of the WEC driver line-up.



Porsche up to three for Le Mans

Porsche will expand its assault on next year's Le Mans 24 Hours to three LMP1 cars.

The German manufacturer announced the decision after the expanded assault on the blue-riband World Endurance Championship event next June was given board approval. The additional car will also

be fielded alongside the two full-season WEC entries at the Spa round in May by way of preparation.

No drivers have been announced for the car, but Porsche GT drivers Frederic Makowiecki, Nick Tandy and Michael Christensen are known to be in contention.

Nissan LMP1 gets first run

Nissan's all-new LMP1 World Endurance Championship contender ran for the first time last week with Michael Krumm at the wheel.

The Nissan GT-R LM NISMO undertook its first test at the manufacturer's US test track in Arizona, approximately 50 miles from Phoenix, sources have confirmed. The car was driven by long-time Nissan driver Krumm during what is believed to be a multi-day test at the facility.

No confirmation of the test was available from Nissan, which is only saying that the LMP1 remains on schedule and that further details of the programme will be announced in the new year.

Nissan has a test scheduled for Sebring in the second week of December.

For all the breaking news, visit **AUTOSPORT.COM**

Villeneuve out under a cloud

Ex-Formula 1 star Jacques Villeneuve has been criticised by his World Rallycross Championship team amid doubts that he will return to the series in 2015.

Villeneuve, the 1997 F1 title winner, has decided not to contest this weekend's finale at San Luis in Argentina, and his place in Albatec Racing's Peugeot has been taken by 2007 British champion Ollie O'Donovan.

The Canadian failed to make the semi-finals in any of his seven events this year, while team co-owner Andy Scott made the semis five times in eight attempts.

"I'm disappointed that myself, the amateur driver, has made the semi-finals a number of times, whereas Jacques hasn't made the semi-final or final," said Scott. "He's a very talented driver, but I don't think he has dedicated himself to try and get the results."

"Jacques had moments of good pace but he just didn't seem able to put a weekend together."



Carlin returns to FR3.5 fold

British team Carlin is back in the Formula Renault 3.5 Series for 2015 after its sabbatical this year.

Carlin was one of the 12 teams announced by organisers last week, and is strongly tipped to run Formula 3 European Championship runner-up Tom Blomqvist and Sean Gelael.

Czech squad ISR (which ran Jazeman Jaafar, pictured, this year) has dropped out of FR3.5 after five years in the series, and will now concentrate on a Blancpain GT programme with Audi.

Lynn and Ocon test GP2

Alex Lynn and Esteban Ocon are among those who will get their maiden GP2 runs in this week's post-season Abu Dhabi tests.

While Lynn will test with Carlin – the team with which he won this year's GP3 title – and ART Grand Prix, European Formula 3 champion Ocon's (pictured) programme is with DAMS.

Formula Renault 3.5 runner-up Pierre Gasly, who added a late-season GP2 campaign, is also tipped to test with DAMS.

In the GP3 sessions, 2013 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner Matt Parry joins Seb Morris in the Status Grand Prix line-up, while George Russell gets his prize test with Arden for winning the BRDC Formula 4 title.



P15 INSIDE LINE



DAHLGREN OUT OF V8s

Swedish tin-top ace Robert Dahlgren will stand down from Australia's V8 Supercars series after just one year.

Dahlgren, the 2010 Scandinavian Touring Car champion, has had a difficult season with the Garry Rogers Motorsport-run Volvo Polestar team.

Rogers said: "As much as sheer race results may not indicate the true value of Robert's input, his off-track work has been very much appreciated. We wouldn't be where we are today without him."

Montagny, we all know he's slightly crazy, which normally is good for some entertainment and a good show



Poor old Nick Heidfeld got taken out of action again in a Formula E race last weekend, this time at the hands of the series' maverick Frenchman. Report: page 40

LATIFI MAKES GP2 DEBUT

Canadian Nicholas Latifi made his GP2 debut with Hilmer Motorsport in Abu Dhabi, one week after taking fifth in the Macau Grand Prix.

Latifi replaced Daniel Abt, who was committed to the clashing

Formula E race in Malaysia.

Kevin Giovesi returned to the series with Rapax to replace the indisposed Adrian Quaife-Hobbs, while Conor Daly was back in the cockpit with GP Lazarus.



In brief



KAHNE STAYS ON

NASCAR Sprint Cup star Kasey Kahne has completed a deal to remain at Hendrick Motorsports for at least three more seasons. The 34-year-old joined Hendrick in 2012 and has been a race winner and Chase qualifier each year since then.

TANAK CONFIRMED

Ott Tanak will return to the M-Sport World Rally Team next season. The Estonian will join Elfyn Evans for a full, 13-round programme aboard a Ford Fiesta RS WRC. He last drove for the Cumbrian squad in 2012, but was dropped after a difficult season.

KUBICA FOR MONZA

This weekend's Monza Rallysprint includes its usual complement of stars from the world of motorsport as Robert Kubica joins an entry list including fellow Fiesta RS WRC runners Valentino Rossi and Ken Block. The event starts on Friday afternoon and finishes on Sunday.

CONWAY IN TOYOTA

Briton Mike Conway will make his third race appearance with the Toyota World Endurance squad alongside Alex Wurz and Stephane Sarrazin at Interlagos this weekend. He again replaces Kazuki Nakajima, who was unable to secure the necessary Brazilian visa in time.

MARTIN JOINS BTCC

Ex-Carrera Cup, GT Cup and Ferrari Challenge racer Alex Martin has joined Motorbase Performance to contest next year's British Touring Car Championship. Martin, 27, has already tested a Motorbase Ford Focus at Snetterton and Silverstone.

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THE ULTIMATE REVIEW OF 2014

WHILE rivals come and go, AUTOCOURSE, the World's Leading Grand Prix Annual reaches its 64th year of publication as the indisputable leader in its field.

The 19-race Formula 1 World Championship season is covered with its usual meticulous attention to detail. The vastly experienced and much-respected Tony Dodgins and Maurice Hamilton, both long-time paddock insiders, bring you all the drama and intrigue that is Formula 1. Supporting their race commentaries are detailed results spreads that include specially prepared lap charts and tyre strategies.

The 2014 season was one of massive change, with new engine regulations altering the F1 landscape. The rise of Mercedes-Benz as a championship-winning force finally came to fruition, as Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg went head to head for the ultimate prize of being the World Champion driver.

As ever, politics cast a long shadow over the sport, and the end-of-year financial crises that engulfed many of the smaller teams are assessed, along with the implications for the future wellbeing of Formula 1.

Mark Hughes once more analyses the successes, frustrations and failures of each of the constructors in his Team-by-Team review, which includes key personnel, sponsors and technical specifications of the F1 cars, highlighted by the beautiful illustrations of Adrian Dean.

The sport's other leading categories are also given ample coverage, including the single-seat ladder from Formula 3 up to GP2, which showcases the pool of rising talent, all aiming to make their way into Formula 1. Also described is Audi's battle with Toyota and Porsche for sports car racing's World Endurance Championship, and the typical door-banging combat that is Touring Cars, in all their respective categories. Veteran scribe Gordon Kirby gives his no-holds-barred assessment of the racing year in the United States.

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Alex Lynn

The Inside Line



The GP3 champion on the secrets of success in the feeder formula, and what the future holds with Red Bull

Until I won the Macau Grand Prix 12 months ago, I'd been set for another year of Formula 3 at Prema Powerteam with Mercedes backing. There were a few murmurs of a Red Bull situation, but it wasn't until the Sunday night after Macau that I began to think that things might actually happen. Rene Rosin from Prema said to me, 'I'm so happy, but I've just lost my driver.' Literally a week later I was sitting in Helmut Marko's office in Graz. And that was it – it was all completely changed, it was decided within a day that they were going to sign me and I was going to do GP3 with Carlin.

In all honesty, at the time I was thinking, 'Ooh, are Carlin good enough?' because Arden had won it the previous two years on the bounce. That was until I had a meeting with Trevor Carlin. I said, 'This has to be all or nothing, we can't not win this, because with me being on the Red Bull programme there's massive pressure.' And all credit to Trevor: he threw everything he had at winning the championship. Right from the off I was preparing so hard with the team.

From the first test at Estoril I was singing off the same hymn sheet as the car. I was feeling really comfortable with the tyres and the car balance; the set-up was fantastic straight away. The Carlin cars of Emil Bernstorff and I were miles in front from the first test, and we put massive targets on our backs. It took quite a few people by surprise, including the team.



fastest lap. God knows what they do, but Carlin have an incredible car there – they even dominated in F3 there a few weeks later on a totally different weekend.

After that we went on a run of having three front-row starts but missing out on pole position by half a tenth every time. That was quite tough to take, but the important thing was it was always someone different. I think when my competitors look back and think, 'Where did we lose this?' they'll realise, 'Alex was

“Within two to three weeks I’m going to know what I’ll be doing next year. I’m very positive”

It's worked really well for both me and Emil being team-mates. It's difficult in GP3 with the small amount of running time you get; you might not get a new-tyre run in free practice, or some things might go wrong, but Emil has always been there, always in the top six. The data I've been able to look at from him has been fantastic and with me being there he raised his game as well. If we fast-forward to the end, Emil and I did the donkey work in outscoring a powerhouse team with three quick drivers like ART to win the teams' championship – that's a reflection of how hard we pushed each other.

We won at both the first two rounds. At Barcelona we had a tough qualifying session but we came out on top, and managed to win race one. The Red Bull Ring was by far our strongest circuit in terms of performance. We genuinely thought we were going to have to try pretty hard not to win! The team dialled it in really well, and I and Felipe Nasr in GP2 won our feature races with

always quick everywhere.' There was great consistency.

In GP3 it's always important to pick up the points. My engineer Matt Callaghan and I sat down before the season and worked out that the past champions in GP3 have won it on a 22-point weekend average, so we stuck to our guns and thought if we can better that then people are going to struggle to beat us. Even in Abu Dhabi – I was fifth in race one and second in race two – that's 22 points. It's nothing to shout about, but you're churning it out and people struggle to beat that.

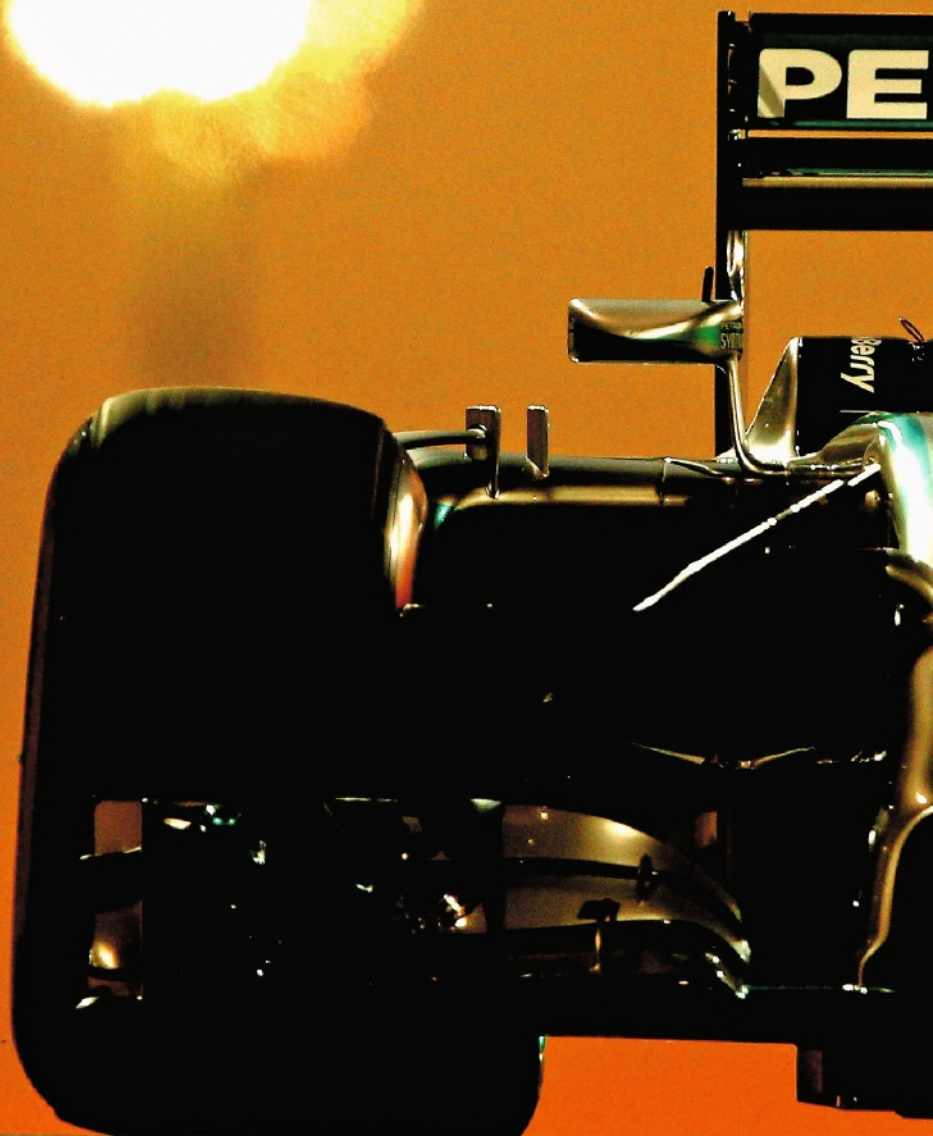
I'm very positive about my future. Within about two to three weeks I'll know what I'll be doing next year. Winning this championship has done me a world of good and I think there's a good chance that I'll be involved in something very exciting. I'm looking forward to testing GP2 cars this week and I'm also due to get my first F1 test with Lotus! I've got some nice prize money from winning GP3 if I go GP2. If it can coincide with some other cool things then GP2 is a very big option. ☘

THE RACE REPORT

QUALIFYING • TRACKSIDE VIEW • RACE HISTORY • TEAM BY TEAM • RESULTS

Hamilton strikes gold for the title

It was tense. Especially when title rival Nico Rosberg took pole. But once the lights went out and daylight faded, there was little doubt that Lewis Hamilton would prevail. By **EDD STRAW**



AT A GLANCE



"It was probably the best start I ever had. I knew from then on, straight away, that I was in the lead" **HAMILTON**

ABU DHABI GP
Yas Marina

ROUND 19/19

LAPS 55

WINNER
Lewis Hamilton
1h39m02.619s

POLE POSITION
Nico Rosberg
1m40.480s

FASTEST LAP
Daniel Ricciardo
1m44.496s

RACE RATING
★★★★★ Not full of wheel-to-wheel action, but title fight and Massa charge kept the interest

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

1 Lewis Hamilton	384pts
2 Nico Rosberg	317pts
3 Daniel Ricciardo	238pts



To keep pressure on
Hamilton, Rosberg
needed pole



QUALIFYING 17:00, 22.11.2014

18

Of all Nico Rosberg's 11 pole positions during a season in which he has excelled in qualifying, this was the one he needed most. The German knew very well that he needed to pile as much pressure on Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton as he could. By taking pole position by almost four tenths, Rosberg did exactly that.

During the first two segments of qualifying, Hamilton was faster, but come the Q3 top-10 shootout this was not the case. On the first runs in the 12-minute showdown, Rosberg was faster by a third of a second, but there was room for improvement. It would always come down to the final runs.

Hamilton was on the back foot from the start, locking his front-left wheel under braking for the first turn and missing the apex. This cost him time in the flat-out section that followed, and was responsible for half, possibly more,

of the eventual deficit to Rosberg. The German did seem to have a car that he was happier with on turn-in than Hamilton and that translated into an unusually big advantage.

Hamilton, who had a couple of other lock-ups during the lap, admitted that he "generally didn't have the best of laps" and lost a tenth to Rosberg in the two subsequent sectors.

"I'm not particularly disappointed with it," said Hamilton. "Of course, you always want to be on pole but I have had very good pace throughout practice and particularly on the long runs, which is comforting. Then in Q1, Q2 it was good. Q3 just wasn't, I didn't really put a comfortable lap together. But it wasn't really lots of mistakes or anything."

Fortunately for Hamilton, his disappointing pace did not cost him his place on the front row. Just as in the previous race in Brazil, the Williams drivers looked fast enough to be a

nuisance to any under-par Mercedes, with Felipe Massa just a tenth off Hamilton's first Q3 time. Unfortunately for Massa, he didn't improve on his second run and team-mate Valtteri Bottas grabbed third. Even so, Massa was just 0.253s away from Hamilton. Ironically, Rosberg was the one who inadvertently cost Massa an outside chance of splitting the two Mercedes.

"I had a problem on the out-lap because I was behind Rosberg and he was a lot slower," said Massa. "I couldn't warm up my front tyres so I got to corner five and locked the fronts."

The two Red Bull drivers initially locked out row three, but were subsequently excluded for a flexible front-wing infringement. That bumped Toro Rosso's Daniil Kvyat up to fifth, a great reward for his strong qualifying performance, although with a perfect lap he did have it in him to have got ahead of Vettel on pace alone.



Hamilton didn't
have a strong final
qualifying session

FERRARO/LAT



**P30 FULL
RESULTS
& POINTS**

STALEY/LAT



THE GRID

1 ROSBERG MERCEDES 1m40.480s Supersoft	2 HAMILTON MERCEDES 1m40.866s Supersoft	3 BOTTAS WILLIAMS 1m41.025s Supersoft	4 MASSA WILLIAMS 1m41.119s Supersoft	5 KVYAT TORO ROSSO 1m41.908s Supersoft	6 BUTTON McLAREN 1m41.964s Supersoft	7 RAIKKONEN FERRARI 1m42.236s Supersoft	8 ALONSO FERRARI 1m42.866s Supersoft	9 MAGNUSSEN McLAREN 1m42.198s Soft	10 VERGNE TORO ROSSO 1m42.207s Soft	11 PEREZ FORCE INDIA 1m42.239s Soft	12 HULKENBERG FORCE INDIA 1m42.384s Soft	13 SUTIL SAUBER 1m43.074s Supersoft	14 GUTIERREZ SAUBER 1m42.819s Supersoft	15 MALDONADO LOTUS 1m42.860s Supersoft	16 KOBAYASHI CATERHAM 1m44.540s Supersoft	17 STEVENS CATERHAM 1m45.095s Supersoft	PL VETTEL RED BULL 1m41.893s Soft	PL RICCIARDO RED BULL 1m41.267s Soft
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KEY
+20 20-place grid penalty
PL Started from pitlane



By Turn 2 the Mercs were leaving the pack behind

RACE 17:00, 23.11.2014



As the tension built during the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix weekend, Lewis Hamilton faced endless questions

about the pressure of this world championship decider.

When he qualified a sedate (by his standards) three and a half tenths off arch-rival Nico Rosberg, the interrogation gained momentum. Why had he struggled to put together good laps when it really mattered in Q3? Was the intensity getting to him? Would he crack in the race?

Hamilton's response to these lines of questioning was perfunctory and predictable. He wouldn't change his approach; he would race to win like he always did; he was in control.

But it sounded like he was trying to convince himself, simply saying the right things because he recognised the need to be in that place mentally. Could it be that behind Hamilton's eyes was

the turmoil of a driver whose desperation to clinch a second world title threatened to derail him in what was a relatively straightforward task – that of following Rosberg home?

It's very easy to say that you need to focus on the normal process of a race weekend, but to do it, to *really* achieve that and not let the fear of failure or the desperation to achieve the ultimate goal win out, is harder than most will ever realise. Hamilton has endured defeat snatched from the jaws of victory before, and even when he achieved his previous title success it was far from straightforward.

Whether Hamilton had any real doubts or fears – although he did admit to not sleeping as well as he should have done on Saturday night – is impossible to say. But what is beyond doubt is that the second the red lights went out, he had everything under control. Nico Rosberg proved a

Hamilton: 'That's when the driver comes in. It felt like the best start I've ever had'

worthy adversary, but Hamilton deserved this championship and he was not going to allow it to slip through his fingers after eight months of blood, sweat, tears and success.

THE FIRST HURDLE THE START

As has so often been the case in 2014, Hamilton reversed a disadvantage on Saturday so that it became an advantage on Sunday. Hamilton produced a stunning getaway, one that made Rosberg's pedestrian (but not disastrous) start look worse than it really was. In a matter of seconds, he had turned the tables.

"Very little is the athlete," said Hamilton when asked about his role in the launch. "We have a sequence that we have to go through and we have to perform at the right time, making sure that you prepare the clutch throughout the weekend, and prepare your tyres when you get to your spot."

"I work very closely with the engineer who works with my clutch. He came into my room before the race and asked, 'How do you want to approach this?'"

"I said the same as every time, we

don't need to do any more or any less. On the formation lap, you get a feel for how good the clutch is at that point. We hit it spot on. When you let out the second part and you feed the throttle, that's when the driver comes in. It felt like the best start I've ever had."

The start is usually the biggest pressure point of the race. Many drivers have come unstuck at this moment, even without titles at stake. It's so easy not to be smooth with the clutch operation, to replace progressive movements with imprecision. But not for Hamilton. The first seconds of the race were always going to be the hurdle most likely to trip him up, but he dealt with it perfectly.

While Rosberg encountered too much wheelspin, particularly on the upshift to second gear – which prompted him to bang it up to third quickly to calm the rears – Hamilton catapulted into the relative safety of the lead. Whether that dissipated the stress, banished the fear of failure, only Hamilton knows. Either way, he was in the box seat.

There was now no way back for Rosberg. During the brief early stint on the supersoft Pirellis, which degraded rapidly, Rosberg initially sat around a second and a half behind. By the time Hamilton dived into the pits at the end of lap 10, this gap had increased to around three seconds. All he needed was a clean stop and there was no way Rosberg, who pitted on the following lap, could jump him. ▶

Getting a perfect start set Hamilton up for win



► THE SECOND HURDLE RESISTING ROSBERG'S PRESSURE

But Rosberg wasn't in such a bad position. Yes, he was behind, but the equation wasn't so dramatically transformed. Even if he won, he needed Hamilton to hit trouble and not finish second, so the strategy was to try to pressure his team-mate into an error, or hope unreliability came into play. Rosberg, resolute, had made no bones about the fact that he wanted Hamilton to come unstuck in the race and was determined to do everything he could to make him crack.

"I wanted to push and fight and keep the pressure on until the last lap and the last corner and do what I can," said Rosberg. "I was burning for that."

Mercedes was hit with a technical problem, but from Rosberg's point of view it was the wrong car that was hobbled. Rosberg started the 23rd lap of the race 2.730s behind Hamilton. Things were going to plan. Rosberg's strategy was simply to keep a watching brief, protect the tyres and hopefully go longer than Hamilton before making

Rosberg: 'I wanted to push and fight and keep the pressure on until the last lap'

his next stop. There's no guarantee this would have helped, but it was better than simply following him around, pitting a lap later and still being behind. Rosberg still had hopes of making something, anything, happen.

But then came the ERS problem. The loss of hybrid power robbed Rosberg of 160bhp and he lost three seconds per lap. All was not lost, for Rosberg still knew that he only needed fifth place were Hamilton to fail to score. That scenario required his team-mate to be out of the picture, so if he could hold onto a top-six spot while the other Mercedes was still there, the title was still on, albeit remotely.

As always, Rosberg did a fine job of extracting what pace he could from the car, and by doing so there remained at least a chance he could keep himself in the mix. But he was always fighting a losing battle. To Rosberg's credit, he

rejected the call – or should that be the offer – from the pitwall to retire the car and insisted on finishing the race.

"I still believed in it for a long time because there was always the possibility that Lewis could also get a problem," said Rosberg. "So I believed until the end; on the very last lap I was still pushing."

Unfortunately, by then there was little left on the table for him. He was powerless to prevent even Romain Grosjean's Lotus overtaking him on the final lap, relegating him to 14th place. As Rosberg pointed out several times after the race, even if Hamilton had suffered a disaster, he would not have been able to capitalise on it.

THE THIRD HURDLE DEFEATING MASSA

With Rosberg fading from the equation, the complexion of

Hamilton's race was transformed. While there was still the threat that the sister Mercedes could finish in the top five if he encountered a mechanical problem, Hamilton played it conservatively.

Shortly after Rosberg hit trouble, Hamilton's pace also dropped off and for a few minutes it seemed that he too was facing symptoms of the same problem. But this was more through caution than imminent ERS failure.

"We managed the pace at that stage and then the tyres came to the end of their life," said Mercedes motorsport boss Toto Wolff. "We turned the engine down a bit, the tyres fell off the cliff and then you saw the drop in pace."

This brought a third driver into contention for victory: Felipe Massa. The Williams had been clearly the best of the rest throughout the Abu Dhabi weekend and, after jumping team-mate Valtteri Bottas, who suffered clutch slip at the start, it was the Brazilian who led the charge.

All weekend, Massa had looked the faster of the Williams drivers, but on his final Q3 run he had been held up by Rosberg on his warm-up lap. His front tyres weren't up to temperature, so he went off on what should have been his key lap, meaning that he started fourth behind Bottas. But in the early stages of the race he held a comfortable third place.

Before his problem set in, Rosberg had an advantage of around nine seconds over Massa. But with the ERS

gone, it took Massa no time to close up and breeze past Rosberg on lap 27. A lap earlier Hamilton's advantage over Massa peaked at just over 14 seconds.

By the time Hamilton headed for the pits four laps after Massa took second place, the gap had dropped to under nine seconds. But while Hamilton and Massa were originally on the same basic strategy, starting on the supersofts, then switching to the softs, Massa's first stint – three laps longer than Hamilton's – gave the Williams driver a shot at victory.

By then extending what had originally been planned as the first of two stints on softs, Massa was able to bolt on the supersofts for a short, maximum-attack, final stint.

"His pace was really good coming up to that first stop, so we decided to leave him out," explained Williams performance chief Rob Smedley. "It was only when we were getting to mid-thirties [in terms of laps] and there was no degradation whatsoever that we thought about it."

"There wasn't any big threat from behind; we knew if we dropped off it was not going to drop off dramatically and that we would probably get 13 or 14 laps out of it. So that's what we did, we put the supersofts on and started hunting it down. It was proper racing."

With the second Williams of Bottas holding fourth place, having lost time in the first part of the race following his bad start, Massa had carte blanche to attack. But first he had to ensure he



As one Mercedes driver celebrated, another limped home

GETTY

Long middle stint on softs enabled Massa to gamble on supersofts for late-race charge



TEE/LAT

Hamilton joined an exclusive club with second title



21

Rosberg showed great class post-race



ETHERINGTON/LAT

could go far enough to make the supersoft gamble work.

Massa went 12 laps longer than Hamilton on his second set of tyres. It was an outstanding stint, one that allowed him to stop and rejoin 11 seconds behind. With 12 laps to go the equation was very simple. And Massa pushed hard.

During that charge there were times when he was as much as 1.3s faster, but even an average gain of three quarters of a second per lap was not enough. There was always the feeling that Hamilton had enough in hand to respond.

Even though Lewis had stressed over the radio after his final stop that he was not interested in racing Massa – this was before Rosberg had definitely slipped out of contention for a top-five finish – it was clear that he was keen to close out the second title with a victory.

Massa ultimately fell two and a half seconds short of his first victory since the 2008 Brazilian GP, the race in which Hamilton had clinched his first title.

Once again the Williams was impressively quick, but not quite quick enough to beat the Silver Arrows.

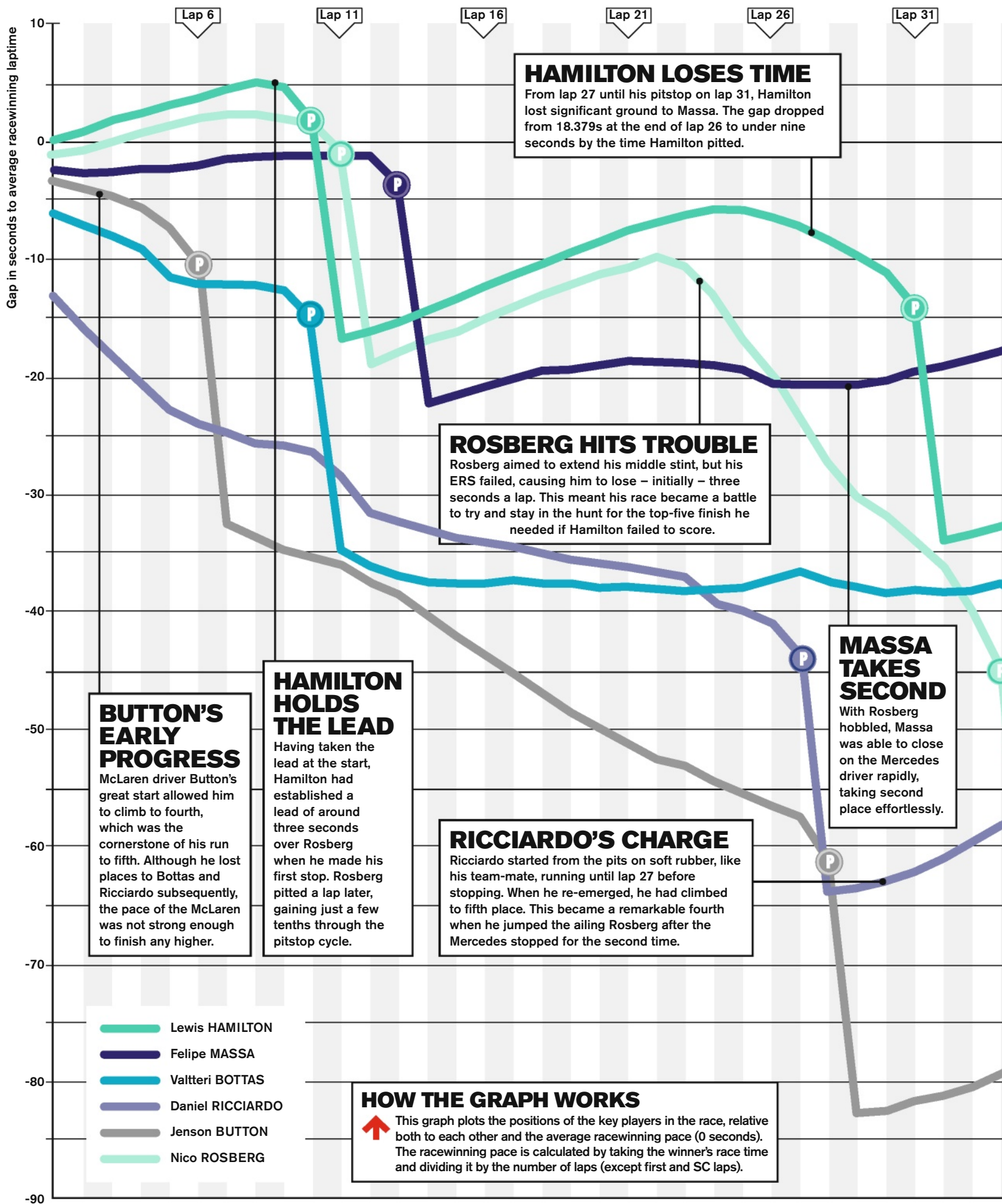
So Hamilton did it in style, claiming his 11th win of the season. Most importantly he did it while avoiding the myriad pitfalls along the way. He could so easily have buckled, but there was no sign of any error.

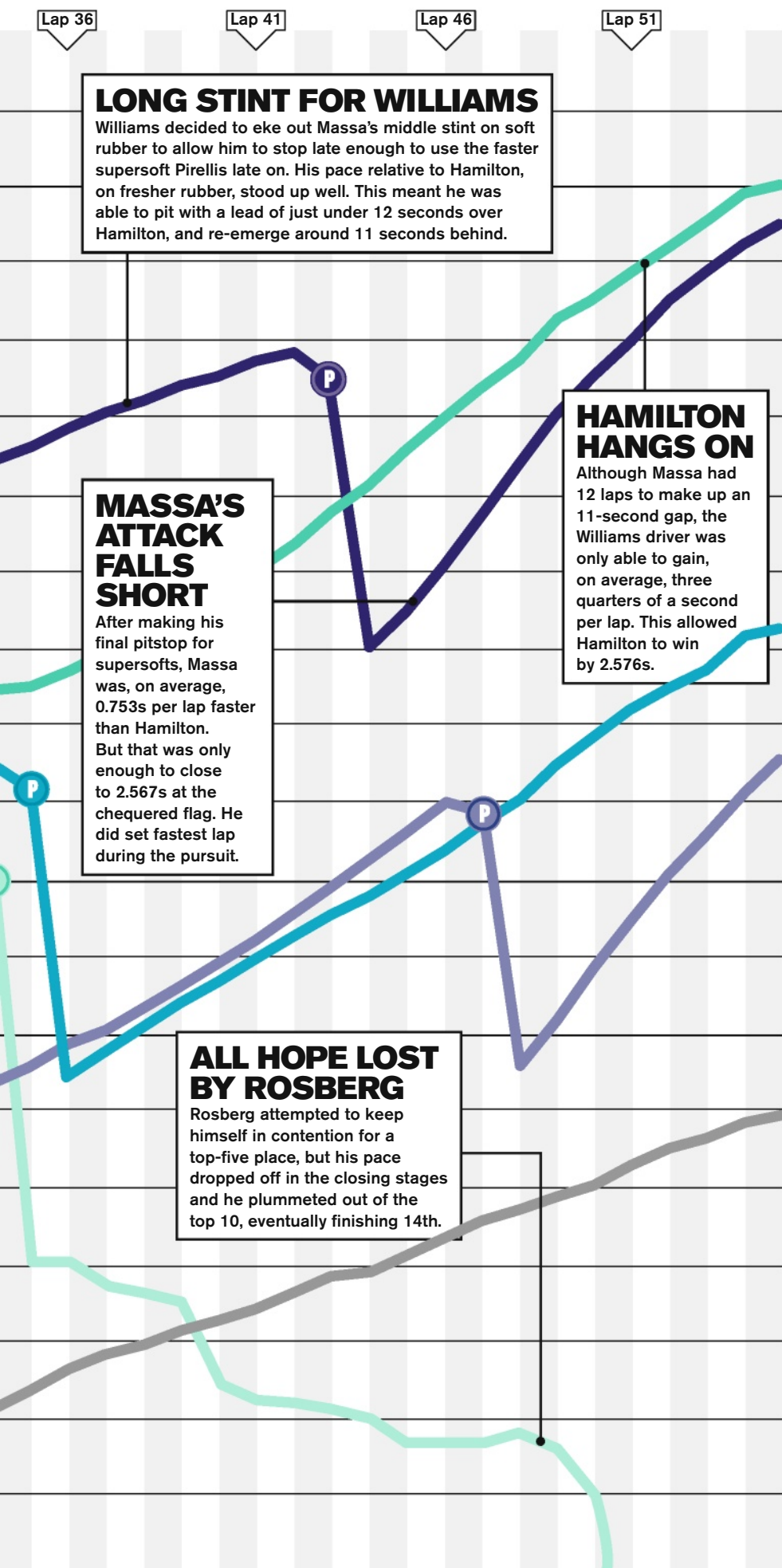
“When you are going through the race, coming here this weekend, there’s so much pressure around you,” said Hamilton. “You’re just trying to ignore it, trying to keep your eye on the ball.

“I didn’t sleep much last night. I went to bed at about 1am and woke up at 5am. I went for a run this morning and a massage and I thought I was going to be tired when it got to the race, but somehow I felt composed.”

This was Hamilton’s race, Hamilton’s weekend, Hamilton’s year. It was the perfect way to crown a remarkable season. As Rosberg said: “He deserved to win today and he deserved to win the championship.”

HOW THE RACE WAS WON



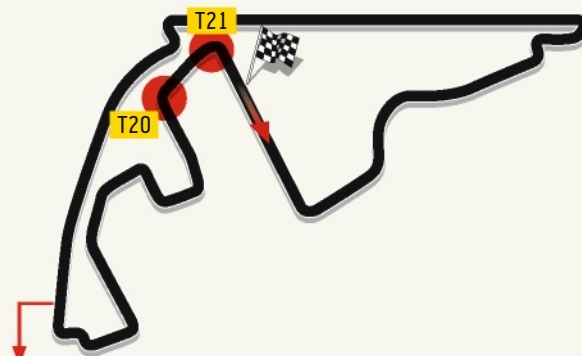


TRACKSIDE VIEW

EDD STRAW
GRAND PRIX EDITOR

edd.straw@haymarket.com

@eddstrawF1



The Mercedes is an easy car to underestimate. While the mighty power unit is at the heart of its success this season, it's a very strong car aerodynamically. Watching Saturday's free practice session from the inside of the track at the final two corners – Turns 20 and 21 – offers a clear reminder of just how good it is.

As the first set of soft-compound Pirellis went through thermal degradation, most cars really started to struggle, often with the rear end hanging out at the exit of the medium-speed Turn 20 right-hander and compromising the run in to the slower final turn. But the Mercedes drivers, while clearly losing overall grip, benefited from a rear end that remained relatively planted even when the Pirellis had plenty of laps on them.

After becoming attuned to seeing the rear stepping out on lesser cars, you'd see Nico Rosberg or Lewis Hamilton charging through, surely carrying too much speed. But every time it would stick. The only visible trouble either Mercedes seemed to have was, in the case of Rosberg, having to work the steering hard to get turned in for the final corner.

'The Mercedes drivers benefited from a rear end that remained planted'

The only car that came close was the Red Bull, although it wasn't quite as well behaved. Daniel Ricciardo proved that with a beautifully controlled, but imperfect, rear-end wobble.

During the qualifying simulations, with the extra grip of fresh supersoft tyres, the differences between the cars were less pronounced. Even cars such as the Force India and Toro Rosso, which were consistently suffering from the rear stepping out on older rubber, were relatively well-behaved. But the Mercedes looked even more mighty.

That's why the Mercedes has taken 18 out of 19 poles this year, and only been beaten in races when things have gone wrong. It's not just the best engine, but the best package.



STORIES OF THE RACE

Rounding up the action from the Abu Dhabi GP

EDD STRAW
GRAND PRIX EDITOR



Red Bull excluded over qualifying wing row

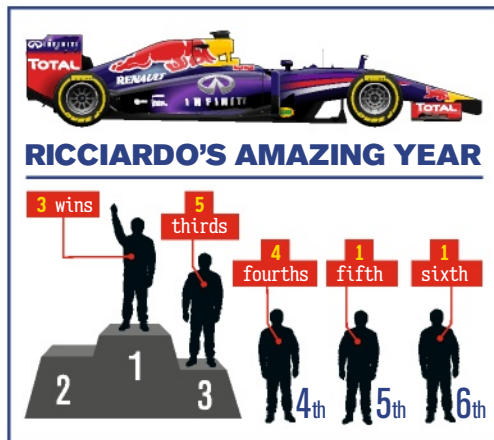
RED BULL DRIVERS DANIEL RICCIARDO AND Sebastian Vettel were excluded from qualifying after the FIA found their cars' front wings failed the rules outlawing flexible bodywork.

After qualifying, the FIA stewards checked the front-wing flexibility of a number of cars, and discovered that the Red Bulls RB10s did not comply with the regulations. Although they passed the mandatory deflection tests, the FIA is able to check the flexibility of bodywork by other means, which allowed this to be picked up. The flexibility was a consequence of the way the flap adjuster is designed. For more details on the wing, see Drawing Board (page 27).

Both drivers were sent to the back of the grid and subsequently had to start from the pitlane because the team fitted replacement front wings to the cars that were not to identical specification.

Red Bull did not appeal the decision, but did point to the fact that other teams were employing similar designs. But while Williams is understood to be one of the teams Red Bull is suspicious of, it too was subject to front-wing testing and the FIA raised no legality concerns.

"You can see very clearly all the teams' wings are moving, some more than others," said team boss Christian Horner. "We have taken things to the extreme in a particular area and the FIA are focusing on the upper element of the front wing, whereas others are taking advantage of other areas. As you can see, it had very little effect on performance."



From the back of the field, Ricciardo was able to climb to a remarkable fourth place. This was thanks to a strong first stint on soft rubber and running what proved to be the optimum strategy of two stints on that tyre before switching to supersofts.

"I've had a few good races this year and that was definitely one of them," said Ricciardo. "I don't think I could have done any more."

Vettel struggled in traffic, climbing to eighth place.



F3 champ Ocon was fast and gave good feedback

Ocon shines on maiden F1 weekend

EUROPEAN FORMULA 3 CHAMPION ESTEBAN Ocon made a great start to his F1 career by lapping just 0.355s off regular Lotus driver Pastor Maldonado during his Friday practice debut.

The highly rated Ocon, who is in contention for a Lotus reserve role for 2015, had previously only tested a two-year-old Lotus at Valencia. Although he had never driven the current car, he proved that he has the ability to have followed F3 rival Max Verstappen into F1 in 2015 had the chance arisen.

"Working with drivers like him is an absolute pleasure," said Lotus trackside operations director Alan Permane. "He's obviously very quick, we

didn't even need to put him in our car to know that. His feedback is excellent, he doesn't have any preconceptions about the car so will just tell you what it's doing."

Ocon was scheduled to drive the car again during the post-race test at the Yas Marina circuit and was pleased with his performance.

"It went great," he said. "I had to adapt from a 2012 car because the driving style is different. The first run wasn't easy but it felt much easier on the second run. I think the pace was quite good."

Chinese racer Adderly Fong also made his Friday-practice debut for the Sauber team. He lapped 1.8s off regular driver Esteban Gutierrez.

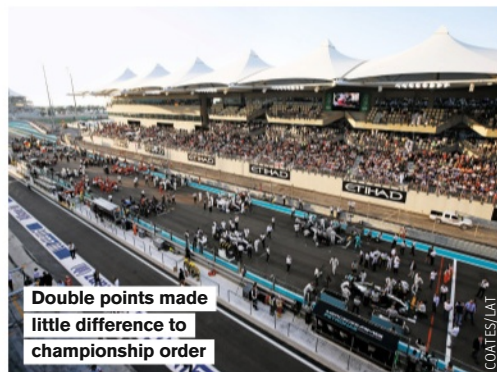
Double points make little difference

FORMULA 1 DODGED A BULLET DURING THE Abu Dhabi GP thanks to the controversial double-points regulation having little impact on the drivers' or constructors' championship order.

Several teams did benefit from their largest points hauls of the year. Williams picked up 66 points for second and third places, while Mercedes pocketed 50 for Lewis Hamilton's win. Force India enjoyed its most profitable weekend, scoring 28 points for Nico Hulkenberg and Perez taking sixth and seventh.

The only change came in the drivers' title race, in which Force India driver Sergio Perez jumped ahead of both Kimi Raikkonen and Kevin Magnussen to secure 10th.

The double points very nearly caused a reversal in the order of Magnussen and Raikkonen. The Finn picked up two points for 10th, moving level on points with Magnussen, but the Dane finishes ahead on countback to best result.



Double points made little difference to championship order



Hamilton made it 16 from 19 for Mercedes with Abu Dhabi win

Ricciardo (r) battled to fourth from pitlane; Vettel got up to eighth

Mercedes sets record for season victories

LEWIS HAMILTON RACKED UP THE 16TH WIN OF 2014 for the Mercedes team, breaking McLaren-Honda's 26-year-old record for victories in a single season.

MOST WINS IN A SEASON

TEAM	YEAR	WINS	RACES
McLAREN	1988	15	16
FERRARI	2002	15	17
FERRARI	2004	15	18
RED BULL	2013	13	19
MERCEDES	2014	16	19

Hamilton and Nico Rosberg only failed to win three races – Canada, Hungary and Belgium, where Red Bull driver Daniel Ricciardo won on each occasion – to set a record that Mercedes motorsport boss Toto Wolff believes will not be challenged for a long time.

"Winning 16 times in a season, the most any team has ever done, that is a record that is going to last for a while," said Wolff. "It's a great achievement, an achievement of many individuals."

Although Mercedes does have the outright record, it should be noted that McLaren's 1988 haul of 15 wins was achieved in 16 races. This year, 19 races were held. But that year McLaren only faced serious opposition from one other team with a turbo engine – Ferrari – whereas Mercedes achieved crushing dominance against deeper opposition.

Debutant Stevens finished the race



Stevens takes 17th on Caterham debut

FORMULA RENAULT 3.5 RACE WINNER WILL

Stevens made his grand prix debut in Abu Dhabi for the Caterham team, coming home in 17th place.

With the 23-year-old Briton's deal done only a week before the race, his superlicence was secured at the last minute off the back of his test at Silverstone with Caterham after July's British Grand Prix. Despite limited preparation, Stevens acquitted himself well, qualifying half a second off team-mate Kamui Kobayashi and bringing the car home just one lap down.

Stevens, who remained with Caterham for the post-race test and was due to run on Tuesday and Wednesday, is now targeting a full-time place in F1 after three years in FR3.5.

"We haven't done this race as a one-off; we came here to prove that I can do it and be ready for F1," said Stevens.

Q&A

WILL STEVENS F1 DEBUTANT



BATCHelor/XPB

How was your debut weekend?

It's been good. I wanted to take it easy to start off with so I didn't make any silly mistakes and then just get used to the procedures and get comfortable in the car before I started to push hard. I was happy with qualifying, but frustrated at the same time because the lap I did could have been a lot better, and I lost about four tenths in the last sector.

You qualified 0.5s off Kamui Kobayashi even with that mistake. Was that closer than expected?

Kamui's very experienced so he's the perfect team-mate to have. We wanted to get as close as we could to him. And in qualifying we could have been even closer.

What did it feel like heading to the grid knowing you were about to start your first grand prix?

It's an amazing day for me because I've worked my whole career to get to this point. We always dream of starting our first F1 race. I managed to do that and finish it. It's been a great opportunity for me and I've grabbed it with both hands.

It must have been a great moment to battle briefly with Fernando Alonso...

He pitted pretty early and came out behind so obviously he was faster and came past. We had a brief scuffle but nothing too exciting.

He did complain about you over the radio, saying you had a lot to learn. Any idea why?

I don't know which bit he is referring to, but he used his DRS, came past me and there wasn't really much to it.

STORIES OF THE RACE

Button (right)
outraced team-mate
Kevin Magnussen



Button excels again amid doubts over F1 future

IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE ABU DHABI Grand Prix will prove to have been Jenson Button's final start in Formula 1. If it is, he will have gone out on a high thanks to another strong performance in taking fifth position at Yas Marina.

Button started sixth, climbing to fourth on the opening lap. He could not keep at bay the recovering Williams of Valtteri Bottas and the charging Daniel Ricciardo, although he did benefit from Nico Rosberg's problems to take fifth place.

When asked if he was treating it as his last race, he said: "No, not really. When you are on the outside, it's a little bit different, but when you are on the inside you just focus on doing the best job you can on that specific race weekend.

"One race shouldn't change my career in terms of what people think of me or how far it extends my career in F1, but I did all I could today and I think that was enough."

I feel that I'm at the top of my game. I have proved that this year, and I can't do anything else

Jenson Button

Alonso ninth on Ferrari farewell

FERNANDO ALONSO'S FIVE-YEAR SPELL with Ferrari came to a conclusion with an unspectacular ninth place on another poor weekend for the Scuderia.

An engine problem cost him second practice on Friday, while an engine change following Saturday practice meant he was on the back foot in qualifying. An off on his final Q3 lap meant he ended up 10th, moving up to eighth when the Red Bulls were excluded.

His run to ninth after passing team-mate

Kimi Raikkonen was uneventful, but Ferrari lacked the race pace even of Force India.

"It was emotional," said Alonso. "The worst moment was on the grid when I jumped in the car, we fired up the engine and the mechanics stayed there with the blankets for the last minute.

"With 20 seconds to go, I saw the faces of the guys with the two front tyres and they were looking at me with eyes shining. It was tough to put it in first gear and start the formation lap."

Alonso has faced frustration often during Ferrari career



ROSE/GETTY

ALONSO AT FERRARI 2010-2014

S	Starts 96
W	Wins 11
P1	Poles 4
P	Podiums 44
F	Fastest laps 8
PTS	Points 1190



Lotus is now looking forward to a new era with Mercedes

Grosjean weekend compromised by engine penalty

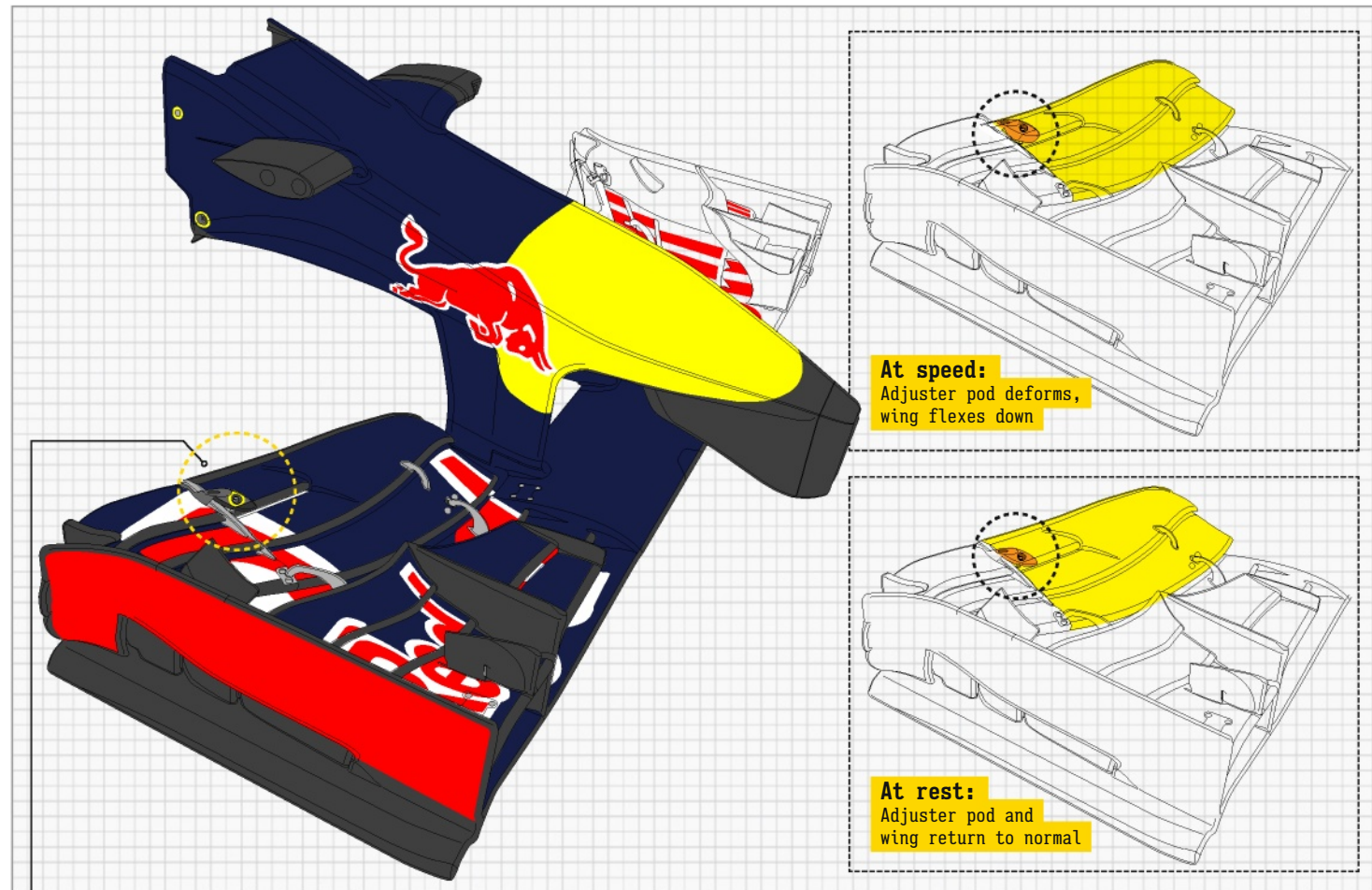
LOTUS DRIVER ROMAIN GROSJEAN HAD TO start at the back of the grid and then serve an early drive-through penalty for power-unit component changes.

The Franco-Swiss driver ran with his sixth V6 engine, MGU-H and turbocharger of 2014, accruing a grid penalty totalling 20 places. Since it was impossible to serve the full penalty, he started from the back and then had to complete a drive-through in the race.

Grosjean finished a lapped 13th, passing the ailing Mercedes of Nico Rosberg for the position on the final lap of the race.

Grosjean, who was confirmed as a Lotus driver for 2015 in the build-up to the race, is now looking forward to next year's Mercedes-powered car and "a great step forward".

DRAWING BOARD



Red Bull's controversial flexi-wing explained

➔ **Craig Scarborough:** Red Bull has employed a unique wing adjuster format since 2013, using a pod-shaped mechanism mounted above the wing on a short metal support. The screw adjuster that alters the front-flap angle then emerges from below this pod to mount to the wing underneath.

The Abu Dhabi inspection found that the cover surrounding this pod is flexible, although outwardly it appears to be a rigid part of the wing assembly.

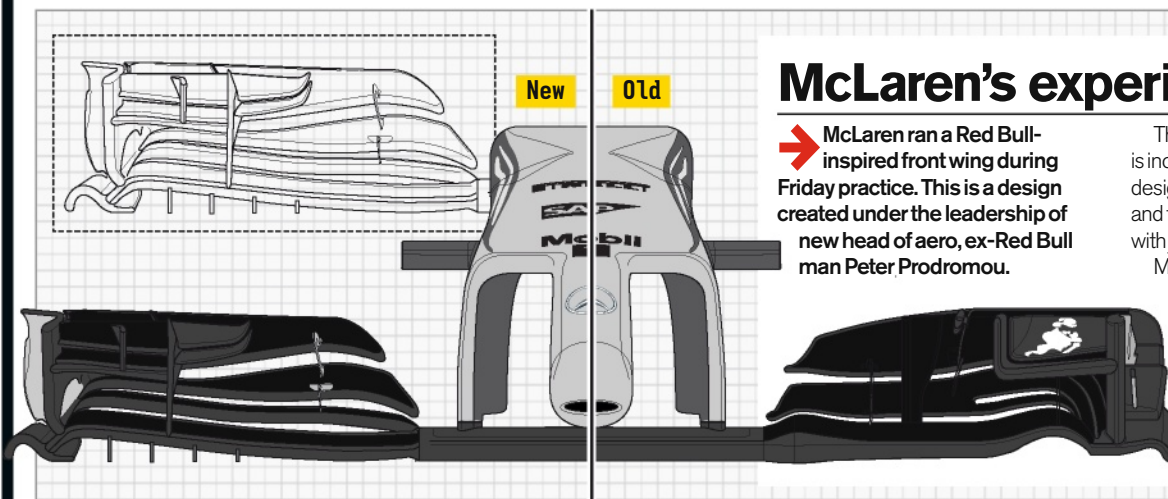
Somehow the flap below can deflect when subjected to a vertical load and the pod above deforms to allow this movement.

It is possible that the adjuster pod and its cover conceals a sprung mechanism, which allows the flap to be adjusted, but still deform above a certain loading.

Since other teams use a simple threaded rod between the adjuster and the wing, Red Bull's method of adding a spring between the two would appear to be in contravention of technical regulation 3.15.

This demands that bodywork must be rigidly secured to the car (not having any degree of freedom) and must remain immobile in relation to the sprung part of the car.

Although the shape of adjuster has been the same since 2013, the pod was painted and outwardly appeared to be a solid metal part. Only since the Chinese Grand Prix this year has the component changed to what appeared to be a metal-and-rubber construction.



McLaren's experimental wing

➔ McLaren ran a Red Bull-inspired front wing during Friday practice. This is a design created under the leadership of new head of aero, ex-Red Bull man Peter Prodromou.

The usual three/four-element wing is increased to a full-width five-element design. The endplates are straighter and fully joined to the wing/footplate, with just the cut-out on its lower edge.

McLaren does have a differently shaped main plane, with longer and softer curves leading up to the tip. McLaren had different flap adjusters and the underwing strakes are different to both the Red Bull and the old McLaren front wing.

Illustrations by **Craig Scarborough**

TEAM BY TEAM

RED BULL


RED BULL-RENAULT RB10

SEBASTIAN VETTEL

Start Pits **Finish** 8th
Strategy 2 stops
(soft/soft/supersoft)


DANIEL RICCIARDO

Start Pits **Finish** 4th
Strategy 2 stops
(soft/soft/supersoft)

There was only one topic of conversation related to Red Bull in Abu Dhabi. At least, that was certainly the case after qualifying, when the FIA decided to poke around with parts of the front wing outside of the set load tests and found it worryingly moveable. The result was that both cars were excluded from qualifying.

While off-track that raised eyebrows, it did lay the foundations for a great race drive from Ricciardo, who came from the back to finish a very creditable fourth.

As for Vettel, he closed out his Red Bull career with something of a whimper. The main difference between the two drivers was that, unlike Ricciardo, he ended up buried in traffic while trying to climb from the back.

MERCEDES


MERCEDES F1 W05

NICO ROSBERG

Start 1st **Finish** 14th
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)


LEWIS HAMILTON

Start 2nd **Finish** 1st
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)

The one thing that Mercedes did not want to happen was for reliability problems to decide the world championship showdown. While Rosberg did lose ERS and ultimately dropped to 14th place, as he himself pointed out these difficulties made no difference, since Hamilton would have done enough to be sure of the crown anyway.

Again, Williams posed more of a threat than was expected in both qualifying and the race, although Mercedes had enough in reserve to be able to stay just out of reach even of the charging Massa.

But after a dominant season, there is still pressure to relax the engine-freeze regulations, threatening an advantage that Mercedes has done well to earn.

FERRARI


FERRARI F14 T

KIMI RAIKKONEN

Start 7th **Finish** 10th
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)


FERNANDO ALONSO

Start 8th **Finish** 9th
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)

Alonso's final race with Ferrari passed with little of the drama of past championship showdowns, since the Scuderia found itself in the mix only for the most minor of points positions. The difficulty Alonso had clearing the Caterham of Will Stevens on a straight after his first stop underlined where the major area of weakness was.

The end of the Alonso era is one of unfulfilled promise, and it's somehow appropriate that it ended with a mundane ninth-place finish, backed up by Raikkonen's 10th. With the gap to the victorious Mercedes of Hamilton close to a minute and a half, it stresses just how much work Ferrari needs to do if newcomer Sebastian Vettel is to have a shot at wins.

SAUBER


SAUBER-FERRARI C33

ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ

Start 14th **Finish** 15th
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)


ADRIAN SUTIL

Start 13th **Finish** 16th
Strategy 3 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft/soft)

There was no reason to expect Sauber to break its points duck in Abu Dhabi, save perhaps for the fact that the Swiss squad has never gone through a year without scoring. But that's exactly what it has now done in 2014, with Gutierrez and Sutil finishing 15th and 16th.

It was the usual story. The car looked tricky to drive and, despite managing to outqualify the two Lotus entries, once in race conditions the Ferrari power unit's performance meant that neither driver could finish ahead of Grosjean, who served a drive-through penalty early on.

At the end of the race, the futures of both drivers were uncertain. But at least they will never have to drive this troublesome car again.

TORO ROSSO


TORO ROSSO-RENAULT STR9

JEAN-ERIC VERGNE

Start 10th **Finish** 12th
Strategy 3 stops
(soft/soft/soft/supersoft)


DANIIL KVYAT

Start 5th **Finish** DNF
Strategy retired
(supersoft/soft)

The tale has become all too familiar for Scuderia Toro Rosso, which has had too many weekends when at least one of its cars has qualified very well but then failed to collect on that promise in the race.

Kvyat started fifth following the exclusion of the two Red Bulls. He dropped to seventh, but was in points contention until an ignition problem was detected, forcing him out of the race. Vergne, who missed out on Q3 after a small mistake in the final sector on his best lap, had a feisty race, but couldn't quite get into points contention.

Considering the Toro Rosso has generally been the faster car over a single lap, for the team to finish 125 points behind Force India must be deeply frustrating.

WILLIAMS


WILLIAMS-MERCEDES FW36

FELIPE MASSA

Start 4th **Finish** 2nd
Strategy 2 stops
(super-soft/soft/supersoft)


VALTTERI BOTTAS

Start 3rd **Finish** 3rd
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)

For a while, it seemed that Massa might be able to snatch a famous victory. Not that a second and third-place finish can be any kind of disappointment for Williams, given that it has been nine and a half years since it has had two drivers on the podium.

As always, straightline speed was the great strength of the car, although it went sufficiently well in the twistier bits to be close enough to Mercedes to give the Silver Arrows something to think about in qualifying.

Bottas's race was compromised by clutch slip at the start, although he recovered well to take third, while Massa was never quite close enough to be in position to get within DRS range of Hamilton.

For the reasons behind the driver weekend ratings, visit AUTOSPORT.COM

LOTUS



LOTUS-RENAULT E22

8

8/10



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

Start 18th Finish 13th
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)

13

7/10



PASTOR MALDONADO

Start 12th Finish DNF
Strategy retired
(supersoft/soft)

The Enstone team benefited from a very modest renaissance in the closing stages of the season, but the characteristics of the Yas Marina circuit would always make this one difficult. But since this was Renault's final race with Lotus, there was irony in the power unit-related problems that compromised the team's weekend.

Grosjean went into the weekend with a 20-place grid penalty for using sundry sixth-power-unit elements, but he was never going to be able to qualify well enough to serve them and avoid the addition of a drive-through penalty. From there, he drove well but could never have made the points. Maldonado showed promising pace before a power-unit problem forced him into fiery retirement.

McLAREN



McLAREN-MERCEDES MP4-29

20

6/10



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

Start 9th Finish 11th
Strategy 2 stops
(soft/supersoft/soft)

22

8/10



JENSON BUTTON

Start 6th Finish 5th
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)

With question marks over McLaren's driver line-up and the eager anticipation of the new Honda power unit's first public outing in the post-race test, this was very much a weekend during which plans for 2015 were high on the agenda. Most significantly, the first runout for a new front wing created by ex-Red Bull aero ace Peter Prodromou.

This component was taken off the car after Friday practice, and McLaren continued its recent good form with Button finishing a very handy fifth despite a slightly underwhelming qualifying session. Magnussen, meanwhile, was in the wars on the first lap. There was some damage that perhaps accelerated tyre degradation and he failed to score.

FORCE INDIA



FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES VJM07

11

8/10



SERGIO PEREZ

Start 11th Finish 7th
Strategy 2 stops
(soft/soft/supersoft)

27

9/10



NICO HULKENBERG

Start 12th Finish 6th
Strategy 2 stops
(soft/soft/supersoft)

Having started the season strongly, Force India has struggled to get all of its aerodynamic upgrades to work. But recently, the team has taken a step forward in understanding why they weren't working, which perhaps explains why its cars were again strong points contenders and could defeat Ferrari in a straight fight.

The car wasn't Q3 material on Saturday, but only by a tiny margin, so given that it usually goes better in the race it wasn't a surprise to see both drivers going forward. Perez and Hulkenberg started on the softs and ended the race on supersofts, a strategic decision that paid off.

The double points finish ensured that Force India ended the season with a 'personal best' haul of 155 points.

CATERHAM



CATERHAM-RENAULT CT05

46

8/10



WILL STEVENS

Start 17th Finish 17th
Strategy 2 stops
(supersoft/soft/soft)

77

7/10



KAMUI KOBAYASHI

Start 16th Finish DNF
Strategy retired
(supersoft/soft/supersoft)

Even being in Abu Dhabi was a remarkable achievement for the team, which continues to be in administration with the hope that a buyer can be found. To its credit, the squad operated by what was – relatively speaking – a skeleton staff did a professional job.

But missing two races did not make the Caterham CT05 anything other than a tailender, particularly after Marussia's attempt to make the grid failed. Kobayashi retired from the race with a vibration suspected to be related to the suspension, while debutant Stevens did an accomplished job considering his lack of preparation.

What is next for Caterham is unclear. But time is short and the next three weeks will be crucial.



STANDOUT PERFORMANCE

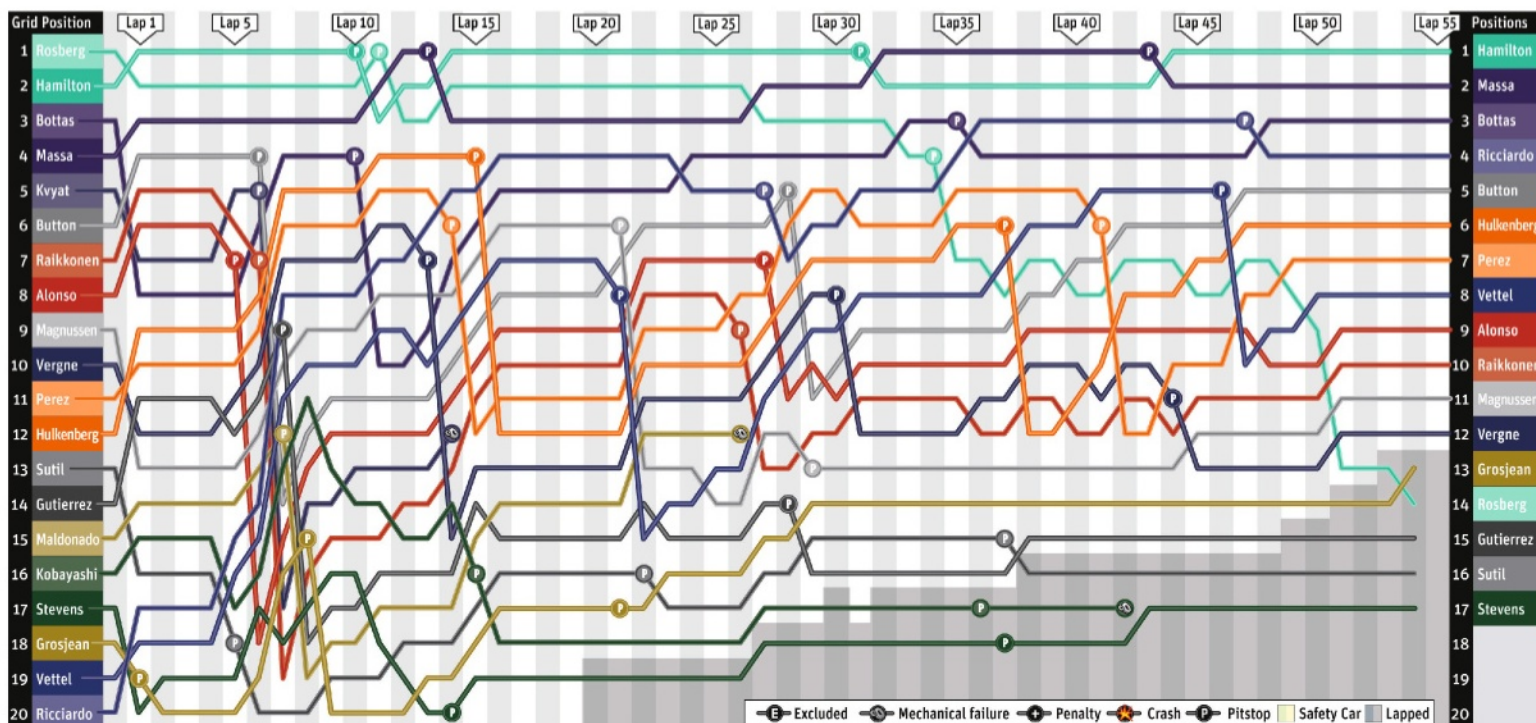
Felipe Massa

All weekend, the Brazilian looked to have the edge in the intra-Williams battle, only to hit traffic in Q3 and struggle to build the requisite front-tyre temperature, meaning he ended up behind Bottas. But in the race the Brazilian drove superbly. After moving up to third ahead of Bottas at the start, he hung on to the two lead Mercedes as well as he could and then capitalised on Rosberg's problems to move up into second.

As Hamilton lost time by switching to a more conservative approach, Massa did a great job in his second stint, giving him the platform to mount a heroic, if futile, attack.

"In the last four laps I didn't have enough of a gap compared to him to catch like I was catching before. But it was a fantastic job for the team"

RESULTS



PRACTICE 1: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m43.476s
2	ROSBERG	1m43.609s
3	ALONSO	1m45.184s
4	VETTEL	1m45.334s
5	RICCIARDO	1m45.361s
6	VERGNE	1m45.718s
7	KVYAT	1m45.835s
8	BOTTAS	1m45.913s
9	PEREZ	1m45.983s
10	HULKENBERG	1m46.030s
11	MAGNUSSEN	1m46.049s
12	RAIKKONEN	1m46.131s
13	MASSA	1m46.549s
14	GUTIERREZ	1m46.556s
15	MALDONADO	1m46.711s
16	OCON	1m47.066s
17	BUTTON	1m47.235s
18	KOBAYASHI	1m47.971s
19	FONG	1m48.269s
20	STEVENS	1m50.684s

Weather: 27C, sunny

PRACTICE 2: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m42.113s
2	ROSBERG	1m42.196s
3	MAGNUSSEN	1m42.895s
4	VETTEL	1m42.959s
5	BOTTAS	1m43.070s
6	RICCIARDO	1m43.183s
7	RAIKKONEN	1m43.489s
8	BUTTON	1m43.503s
9	KVYAT	1m43.546s
10	MASSA	1m43.558s
11	PEREZ	1m43.746s
12	MALDONADO	1m44.005s
13	HULKENBERG	1m44.068s
14	VERGNE	1m44.157s
15	GUTIERREZ	1m44.316s
16	SUTIL	1m44.763s
17	GROSJEAN	1m44.986s
18	KOBAYASHI	1m45.505s
19	STEVENS	1m47.057s
20	ALONSO	no time

Weather: 25C, sunny

PRACTICE 3: Saturday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	ROSBERG	1m41.424s
2	HAMILTON	1m41.793s
3	MASSA	1m42.429s
4	ALONSO	1m42.653s
5	VETTEL	1m42.679s
6	BUTTON	1m42.768s
7	RICCIARDO	1m42.773s
8	BOTTAS	1m42.794s
9	KVYAT	1m42.809s
10	RAIKKONEN	1m43.038s
11	MAGNUSSEN	1m43.112s
12	VERGNE	1m43.352s
13	PEREZ	1m43.360s
14	HULKENBERG	1m43.501s
15	GUTIERREZ	1m43.643s
16	MALDONADO	1m43.718s
17	GROSJEAN	1m43.778s
18	SUTIL	1m44.022s
19	KOBAYASHI	1m45.044s
20	STEVENS	1m45.959s

Weather: 28C, sunny

FRIDAY TESTERS

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	OCON	1m47.066s
2	FONG	1m48.269s



QUALIFYING TIMES

POS	DRIVER	QUALIFYING 1	QUALIFYING 2	QUALIFYING 3
1	ROSBERG	1m41.308s (2)	1m41.459s (4)	1m40.480s
2	HAMILTON	1m41.207s (1)	1m40.920s (1)	1m40.866s
3	BOTTAS	1m42.346s (8)	1m41.376s (3)	1m41.025s
4	MASSA	1m41.475s (3)	1m41.144s (2)	1m41.119s
DSQ	RICCIARDO	1m42.204s (6)	1m41.692s (5)	1m41.267s
DSQ	VETTEL	1m42.495s (13)	1m42.147s (9)	1m41.893s
7	KVYAT	1m42.302s (7)	1m42.082s (8)	1m41.908s
8	BUTTON	1m42.137s (5)	1m41.875s (6)	1m41.964s
9	RAIKKONEN	1m42.439s (10)	1m42.168s (10)	1m42.236s
10	ALONSO	1m42.467s (12)	1m41.940s (7)	1m42.866s
11	MAGNUSSEN	1m42.104s (4)	1m42.198s	-
12	VERGNE	1m42.413s (9)	1m42.207s	-
13	PEREZ	1m42.654s (14)	1m42.239s	-
14	HULKENBERG	1m42.444s (11)	1m42.384s	-
15	SUTIL	1m42.746s (15)	1m43.074s	-
16	GROSJEAN	1m42.768s	-	-
17	GUTIERREZ	1m42.819s	-	-
18	MALDONADO	1m42.860s	-	-
19	KOBAYASHI	1m44.540s	-	-
20	STEVENS	1m45.095s	-	-

Weather: 26C, sunny

QUALIFYING STATISTICS

	HEAD TO HEAD
VETTEL	7 12 RICCIARDO
ROSBERG	12 7 HAMILTON
RAIKKONEN	3 16 ALONSO
GROSJEAN	15 4 MALDONADO
MAGNUSSEN	9 10 BUTTON
PEREZ	7 12 HULKENBERG
GUTIERREZ	9 10 SUTIL
VERGNE	7 12 KVYAT
MASSA	6 13 BOTTAS
CHILTON	3 12 BIANCHI
ERICSSON/STEVENS	4 13 KOBAYASHI/LOT'ER



POLE POSITION TROPHY

ROSBERG WINNER	BRN MC CDN GB D H B J USA BR UAE 11
HAMILTON	AUS MAL PRC E I SGP RUS 7
MASSA	A 1

SUPERLICENCE PENALTY POINTS

Drivers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BIANCHI	X	X	X	X								
BOTTAS	X	X										
ERICSSON	X	X	X	X	X							
GROSJEAN	X	X										
GUTIERREZ	X											
MAGNUSSEN	X	X	X	X								
MALDONADO	X	X	X	X	X							
PEREZ	X	X	X	X								
SUTIL	X	X										
VERGNE	X	X	X									

Anyone who gets to 12 points will be suspended for one race

RACE: 55 LAPS - 189.810 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	LAPS	TOTAL TIME	FASTEST LAP	PITSTOPS	TIME IN PITS	GRID
1	LEWIS HAMILTON	MERCEDES	55	1h39m02.619s	1m45.599s	2	43.772s	2
2	FELIPE MASSA	WILLIAMS-MERCEDES	55	+2.576s	1m44.826s	2	44.094s	4
3	VALTTERI BOTTAS	WILLIAMS-MERCEDES	55	+28.880s	1m45.727s	2	43.676s	3
4	DANIEL RICCIARDO	RED BULL-RENAULT	55	+37.237s	1m44.496s	2	43.329s	20
5	JENSON BUTTON	McLAREN-MERCEDES	55	+1m00.334s	1m46.739s	2	44.669s	6
6	NICO HULKENBERG	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	55	+1m02.148s	1m45.777s	2	49.087s	12
7	SERGIO PEREZ	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	55	+1m11.060s	1m45.808s	2	44.356s	11
8	SEBASTIAN VETTEL	RED BULL-RENAULT	55	+1m12.045s	1m45.552s	2	44.705s	19
9	FERNANDO ALONSO	FERRARI	55	+1m25.813s	1m47.424s	2	43.687s	8
10	KIMI RAIKKONEN	FERRARI	55	+1m27.820s	1m47.736s	2	43.752s	7
11	KEVIN MAGNUSSEN	McLAREN-MERCEDES	55	+1m30.376s	1m46.824s	2	43.710s	9
12	JEAN-ERIC VERGNE	TORO ROSSO-RENAULT	55	+1m31.947s	1m45.686s	3	1m08.028s	10
13	ROMAIN GROSJEAN	LOTUS-RENAULT	54	-1 lap	1m47.897s	3	59.393s	18
14	NICO ROSBERG	MERCEDES	54	-1 lap	1m46.869s	2	45.824s	1
15	ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ	SAUBER-FERRARI	54	-1 lap	1m47.698s	2	46.398s	14
16	ADRIAN SUTIL	SAUBER-FERRARI	54	-1 lap	1m47.508s	3	1m06.995s	13
17	WILL STEVENS	CATERHAM-RENAULT	54	-1 lap	1m48.398s	2	47.689s	17
R	KAMUI KOBAYASHI	CATERHAM-RENAULT	42	vibration	1m47.431s	2	46.847s	16
R	PASTOR MALDONADO	LOTUS-RENAULT	26	engine	1m48.933s	1	21.998s	15
R	DANIIL KVYAT	TORO ROSSO-RENAULT	14	electrical	1m48.748s	1	24.169s	5


Weather: 28C, sunny. Winner's average speed: 114.986mph. Fastest lap: Ricciardo 1m44.496s (118.894mph) on lap 50. Lap leader: 1-10 Hamilton, 11 Rosberg, 12-13 Massa, 14-31 Hamilton, 32-43 Massa, 44-55 Hamilton. Ricciardo and Vettel excluded from qualifying for illegal front wings; both started from pitlane after parc ferme changes. Grosjean qualified P16; 20-place grid penalty imposed for power unit changes, incurs an in-race drivethrough penalty in lieu of undropped places.

TYRE CHOICE

STINT 1	STINT 2	STINT 3	STINT 4
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	
Supersoft	Soft	Supersoft	
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	
Soft	Soft	Supersoft	
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	
Soft	Soft	Supersoft	
Soft	Soft	Supersoft	
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	
Soft	Supersoft	Soft	
Soft	Soft	Soft	Supersoft
Supersoft	Supersoft	Soft	Soft
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	
Supersoft	Soft	Soft	Soft
Supersoft	Soft	Supersoft	
Supersoft	Soft	Supersoft	
Supersoft	Soft		

Option tyre in bold; new set in red; used set in black.

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

																					
POS	DRIVER	PTS	AUS	MAL	BRN	PRC	E	MC	CDN	A	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	RUS	USA	BR	UAE
1	HAMILTON	384	ret	1 st	1 st	1 st	1 st	2 nd	ret	2 nd	1 st	3 rd	3 rd	ret	1 st	1 st	1 st	1 st	1 st	2 nd	1 st
2	ROSBERG	317	1 st	2 nd	2 nd	2 nd	2 nd	1 st	2 nd	1 st	ret	1 st	4 th	2 nd	2 nd	ret	2 nd	2 nd	2 nd	1 st	14 th
3	RICCIARDO	238	ex	ret	4 th	4 th	3 rd	3 rd	1 st	8 th	3 rd	6 th	1 st	2 nd	5 th	3 rd	4 th	7 th	3 rd	ret	4 th
4	BOTTAS	186	5 th	8 th	8 th	7 th	5 th	ret	7 th	3 rd	2 nd	2 nd	8 th	3 rd	4 th	11 th	6 th	3 rd	5 th	10 th	3 rd
5	VETTEL	167	ret	3 rd	6 th	5 th	4 th	ret	3 rd	ret	5 th	4 th	7 th	5 th	6 th	2 nd	3 rd	8 th	7 th	5 th	8 th
6	ALONSO	161	4 th	4 th	9 th	3 rd	6 th	4 th	6 th	5 th	6 th	5 th	2 nd	7 th	ret	4 th	ret	6 th	4 th	6 th	9 th
7	MASSA	134	ret	7 th	7 th	15 th	13 th	7 th	12 th	4 th	ret	ret	5 th	13 th	3 rd	5 th	7 th	11 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd
8	BUTTON	126	3 rd	6 th	17 th	11 th	11 th	6 th	4 th	11 th	4 th	8 th	10 th	6 th	8 th	ret	5 th	4 th	12 th	4 th	5 th
9	HULKENBERG	96	6 th	5 th	5 th	6 th	10 th	5 th	5 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	ret	10 th	12 th	9 th	8 th	12 th	ret	8 th	6 th
10	PEREZ	59	10 th	DNS	3 rd	9 th	9 th	ret	11 th	6 th	11 th	10 th	ret	8 th	7 th	7 th	10 th	10 th	ret	15 th	7 th
11	MAGNUSSEN	55	2 nd	9 th	ret	13 th	12 th	10 th	9 th	7 th	7 th	9 th	12 th	12 th	10 th	10 th	14 th	5 th	8 th	9 th	11 th
12	RAIKKONEN	55	7 th	12 th	10 th	8 th	7 th	12 th	10 th	10 th	ret	11 th	6 th	4 th	9 th	8 th	12 th	9 th	13 th	7 th	10 th
13	VERGNE	22	8 th	ret	ret	12 th	ret	ret	8 th	ret	10 th	13 th	9 th	11 th	13 th	6 th	9 th	13 th	10 th	13 th	12 th
14	GROSJEAN	8	ret	11 th	12 th	ret	8 th	8 th	ret	14 th	12 th	ret	ret	ret	16 th	13 th	15 th	17 th	11 th	17 th	13 th
15	KVYAT	8	9 th	10 th	11 th	10 th	14 th	ret	ret	ret	9 th	ret	14 th	9 th	11 th	14 th	11 th	14 th	15 th	11 th	ret
16	MALDONADO	2	ret	ret	14 th	14 th	15 th	DNS	ret	12 th	17 th	12 th	13 th	ret	14 th	12 th	16 th	18 th	9 th	12 th	ret
17	BIANCHI	2	nc	ret	16 th	17 th	18 th	9 th	ret	15 th	14 th	15 th	15 th	18 th	18 th	16 th	20 th	-	-	-	-
18	SUTIL	0	11 th	ret	ret	ret	17 th	ret	13 th	13 th	13 th	13 th	11 th	14 th	15 th	ret	21 st	16 th	ret	16 th	16 th
19	ERICSSON	0	ret	14 th	ret	20 th	20 th	11 th	ret	18 th	ret	18 th	ret	17 th	19 th	15 th	17 th	19 th	-	-	-
20	GUTIERREZ	0	12 th	ret	ret	16 th	16 th	ret	14 th	19 th	ret	14 th	ret	15 th	20 th	ret	13 th	15 th	14 th	14 th	15 th
21	CHILTON	0	13 th	15 th	13 th	19 th	19 th	14 th	ret	17 th	16 th	17 th	16 th	16 th	ret	17 th	18 th	ret	-	-	-
22	KOBAYASHI	0	ret	13 th	15 th	18 th	ret	13 th	ret	16 th	15 th	16 th	ret	-	17 th	DNS	19 th	ret	-	-	ret
23	STEVENS	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17 th
24	LOTTERER	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ret	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

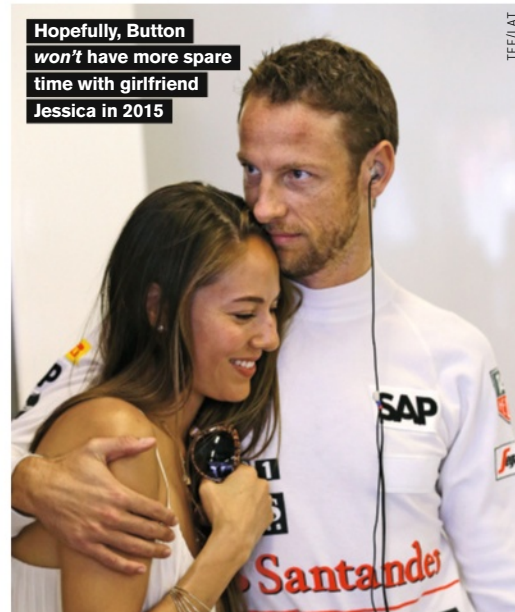


Prince Harry: delighted with Hamilton success



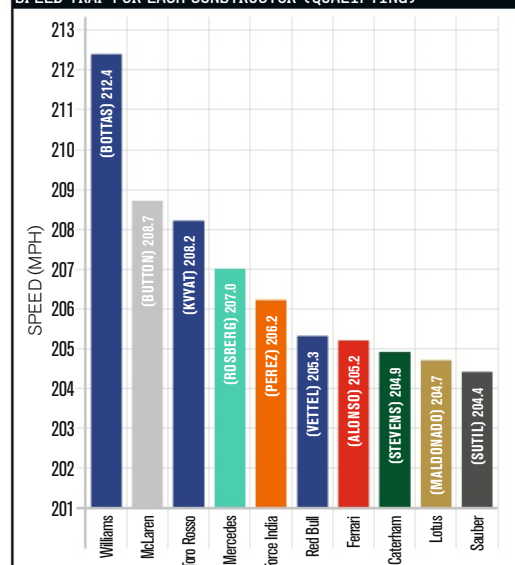
CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	PTS	AUS	MAL	BRN	PRC	E	MC	CDN	A	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	RUS	USA	BR	UAE
1	MERCEDES	701	25	43	43	43	43	43	18	43	25	40	27	18	43	25	43	43	43	43	50
2	RED BULL	405	0	15	20	22	27	15	40	4	25	20	31	35	18	33	27	10	21	10	32
3	WILLIAMS	320	10	10	10	6	10	6	6	27	18	18	14	15	27	10	14	15	22	16	66
4	FERRARI	216	18	12	3	19	14	12	9	11	8	10	26	18	2	16	0	10	8	14	6
5	McLAREN	181	33	10	0	0	0	9	14	6	18	6	1	8	5	1	10	22	4	14	20
6	FORCE INDIA	155	9	10	25	10	3	10	10	10	4	7	0	5	6	8	5	1	0	4	28
7	TORO ROSSO	30	6	1	0	1	0	0	4	0	3	0	2	2	0	8	2	0	2	0	0
8	LOTUS	10	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
9	MARUSSIA	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-
10	SAUBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	CATERHAM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0



Hopefully, Button won't have more spare time with girlfriend Jessica in 2015

SPEED TRAP FOR EACH CONSTRUCTOR (QUALIFYING)



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Hamilton: I drove my heart out in every race

The morning after clinching his second world title, Lewis Hamilton explained exactly how it felt. JONATHAN NOBLE was listening

Lewis Hamilton's six-year wait for his second Formula 1 World Championship came to an end in the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix as he grabbed the title with a victory for Mercedes.

Reduced to tears on the podium as the intensity of the season-long duel with team-mate Nico Rosberg overwhelmed him, it took him until the following morning to fully grasp what he had achieved.

Looking fresh after a quiet, celebratory dinner with his family and friends on Sunday night, Hamilton spoke about his joy at the title success, his rivalry with Rosberg and why he thinks he will be stronger in the future.

AUTOSPORT was there to hear what he had to say.



Q&A

What did you do last night to celebrate?

I had a great evening. It was obviously quite busy at the track with so much energy within the team. This team has been through a huge amount, even before I came here, and the happiness within the team was better than ever. It was amazing to

see, sharing that and really just embracing everyone.

"Then I came back with my family, had a nice dinner, we reminisced on all the different things we'd experienced over the years. Then we popped out to the party – that was the point Toto [Wolff] was all over the place!

All the team were there and just had the chance to go and mingle with everyone. We left quite early. I had one drink last night and that was more than good enough for me.

You have said that this title means more to you than your first one in 2008. Can you explain why?

For a lot of reasons really. The first one was exceptional; it was an incredible feeling to achieve your lifelong goal of getting to Formula 1 and to win the world championship. I don't know if I was in the place to really embrace it and absorb it in the way that I am today.

"Being part of this team today it's definitely a more satisfying achievement to win this with a young team that has

worked so hard to get to where it is. And to be a part of that is something really special.

What do you think the difference was between you and Nico this year? Was it technique or set-up?

I guess it comes down to many different things, not just pure pace, but utilising tyres. I can't pinpoint all the different things. All I know is that I drove my heart out in every race and really feel that, as far as I can remember, I maximised the time I had on the track. I would study, prepare with my guys, and the work that was done from the engineers was exceptional. I think having that year's experience with them last year made a massive difference for this season.

How excited are you about the 2015 season and challenging for a third world title?

"Well naturally, it's a dream to be able to go into next season and compete again

"It's definitely a more satisfying achievement to win this with a young team that has worked so hard to get to where it is"

Lewis Hamilton on title number two





MASON/GETTY

Moment of glory:
Hamilton celebrates
with a marshal's flag



**There was no walk of
shame for Rosberg after
such a strong season**

ROSBERG TAKES ENCOURAGEMENT

Nico Rosberg could not hide his disappointment at seeing his world-title dreams end with mechanical trouble in Abu Dhabi.

But, after a campaign in which he delivered his fair share of pole positions and race wins, there were plenty of reasons for the German to feel that 2015 could well be a different story.

With a return to testing action with Mercedes in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday allowing Rosberg to reset his mind, he knows there was very little separating him from Lewis Hamilton in the end.

"Every year you do, you come out stronger," he said. "I enjoy trying to become a better driver, a better person, a better everything. This was an unbelievable year. It's been such a great experience and I've been proud to be part of this team."

And the target for what he wanted next year was clear: not letting Hamilton beat him again. "I'll hunt him down. That's what I'll do," he said. "There are a lot of positives from this year, I've had the better qualifying and that's a very good basis to start from for next year."

"In the latter part of the season, he was ever so slightly better in the racing than me and that's the area I know I need to work on. So that's a great challenge and I'll find what I can to try and beat Lewis next year."

"This year he was the best driver on the grid and I was right up there with him fighting it out until the very last race and that's what I race for – for great battles. It's been a great battle with him, sometimes not so nice, but all in all a great battle."

and learn from this year to be even stronger – if that's possible. That will be the goal. I have absolute faith in the team that we will be very, very strong next year. That's what every driver dreams of. Back in 2009, after the first title, the McLaren was a lot different. We know that next year's Mercedes will be a lot more similar to this year's.

Watching past drivers who have won the following year, they seem to continue getting stronger. I'm on a positive curve of real strength and I hope that is the case for us next year.

What do you think you can achieve in the future?

You just have to take it one step at a time. Winning one championship was an exception. It was my dream. But you never really know when you will get another one. Not everyone gets to work with such great teams and to have the opportunity to have such a great car and dominate in the way we've been able to dominate this year.

So I very much embrace that and know it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I hope there is more for us. Again, getting a second one many years after feels like it's the first.

Of course, I am going to push as hard as I can. I'm grateful that I'm still young. I feel great; I still have a lot to learn and a lot to improve on. Definitely I'm not finished and I will come back stronger."

Your relationship with Nico has been turbulent this year. Will it change in 2015?

It's normal to have a fierce battle between team-mates throughout the year and there are always tensions, but I think between the drivers and with the team, I think we handled it better than anyone else could have.

There will be a lot of learning to be done from both me and Nico about how to handle things and I'm sure we will come back and handle it better next year. ☒



**Hamilton became only
the fourth Brit to win
more than one title**

Kristensen calls time on glittering career

With nine Le Mans wins to his name, Tom Kristensen is a sportscar legend. GARY WATKINS hears why he became such a great



Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich (left) joined TK for the announcement

Tom Kristensen, who this weekend at Interlagos brings the curtain down on an amazing career, has done it all as a sportscar driver over a career encompassing nine victories in the Le Mans 24 Hours with three different manufacturers, six more wins in the Sebring 12 Hours and a world championship title. But then he has it all – there are no weapons required of a top endurance racer that are missing from his armoury.

The long-time Audi driver, first and foremost, has the outright pace and consistency. He has the correct temperament, as well as an unrivalled focus and strategic ability. He is technically strong, easy on his equipment and tyres, and he could make the fuel last longer than his team-mates. He is a team player with a big-picture approach, who has been able to draw organisations around him like no other.

Joest Racing technical director Ralf Juttner is better placed to offer a judgement on Kristensen's abilities than anyone: he had an involvement in all nine of his triumphs at Le Mans with Porsche, Audi and Bentley and direct input into eight.

"Tom has an impressive ability to get into a rhythm – and a very quick one – and then maintain it," says Juttner. "At the same time he can come on the radio and tell us what the car is doing and give instructions



Last-minute Le Mans recruit in 1997, but cool and quick

on what the guy getting into the car next should do. And he'll be telling us all this, and his pace won't drop by one tenth. That is exceptional.

"He has an unusual spare mental capacity when he's driving. That means he can think about strategy while still driving bloody fast and then react to unforeseen circumstances correctly."

Part of that, of course, comes through temperament and a steely

focus. Kristensen has the same coolness in the car that he has out of it, something that was apparent to Juttner straight away in 1997 when the 29-year-old Kristensen was brought in to drive the Joest Porsche WSC95 at short notice. "He seemed ultra-cool the moment he climbed in and understood all the controls," he recalls. "There didn't seem to be any nerves at all, which was quite remarkable for a newbie."

Vital team role with Bentley in 2003



BLOXHAM/LAT

WHY HE'S LEAVING NOW

The thoughts of retirement, which culminated in Tom Kristensen's announcement last week that Interlagos would be his last race, only started during the summer. But only over the past couple of months was he actively contemplating stopping driving one season into his current two-year contract.

Kristensen reveals that "some great names in our sport had told me that I would know the right time to stop, and they were right". He insists that he had no thoughts of retirement before the summer and that he only began thinking about it over the second leg of this year's World Endurance Championship.

"I could easily have seen myself continuing," he says. "I am still in top form, physically and mentally, but the more I thought about it the more it made sense. I wanted to be able to

say that I stopped when I was still at the top of my game. I want to have people asking me why I have stopped, rather than people asking me why I haven't stopped.

"Age is a factor and so is my family – I am building a house right now. After 35 years of racing, it seemed the perfect time."

Stepping down to Audi's third car for a programme based around Le Mans and the pursuit of a 10th victory in the 24 Hours was never on the agenda, he says: "I wanted to add a full stop to my career. With me it is either yes or no – I work best when I am fully involved in a programme. That wasn't an option very early on."

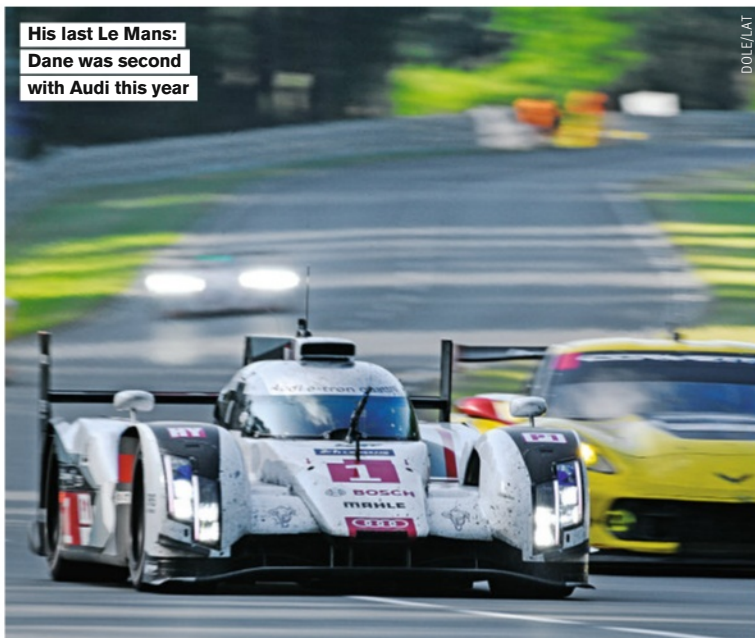
It was also crucial to him to make his announcement before Sao Paulo.

"It was important not to keep it secret," he says, "and do my race without everyone knowing."



Kristensen says he's still in top form physically

His last Le Mans: Dane was second with Audi this year



DOLE/LAT

TOM KRISTENSEN IN NUMBERS

1 WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

9 VICTORIES IN LE MANS 24 HOURS

6 SEBRING 12 HOURS VICTORIES

44 RACE STARTS TOGETHER WITH ALLAN McNISH

14 PODIUMS IN LE MANS 24 HOURS

31.6 PERCENTAGE WIN RATE IN AUDI SPORTSCAR STARTS

27 SPORTSCAR VICTORIES

Kristensen's ability to look after his tyres was also apparent the first time he raced at the 24 Hours. Joest opted to triple-stint the tyres in a bid make up for the WSC95 prototype's smaller fuel tanks compared with the rival GT1 machinery. The Le Mans rookie famously set a string of fastest laps during the night and then continued on the same set for another stint.

"Tom was due to hand over to Michele [Alboreto] after all those quick laps and had already loosened his belts when he arrived at the pit," recalls Juttner. "I asked him if he thought he could do another stint, and when he said yes, we strapped him back in. A triple stint at that time was unusual, a quadruple was unheard of."

Brad Kettler, who engineered Kristensen to victory at Le Mans with Champion Racing in 2005, talks about an unsurpassed ability to "dissect the set-up of the car

and understand what the tyres were doing."

"I had many fantastic moments with Tom, but some of the best were when we were doing something as mundane as tyre testing," recalls the American. "At the end of the day at the debrief, it was like talking to the ultimate professional golfer who could remember every shot he played: Tom could pull apart every lap on every different set of tyres. That was an unbelievable ability."

Juttner also confirms that Kristensen has been the master of eking out a tank of fuel longer than his team-mates: "He had by far the best fuel consumption of our drivers, especially in the American Le Mans Series where it was particularly important."

The talents that made Kristensen so successful on the racetrack were also evident off it. He understands, says Juttner, "that sportscar racing is

a team sport". Kettler describes the Dane as "a great motivator who helps everyone get the best out of themselves". This ability played a key role in two of Kristensen's Le Mans triumphs, 2003 and '04.

Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich reckons that Kristensen "made the difference by helping to bring everything together" when he won his fifth Le Mans in a row aboard the Japanese Team Goh squad's R8 LMP1 in '04. Juttner says the same is true of his success the previous year with Bentley. Kristensen played "a crucial integrating role", he says, in bringing together a disparate set-up made up of elements from Racing Technology Norfolk (which designed and built the SPEED 8), Apex Motorsport, Joest (which ran the car) and Audi Sport.

Kettler probably sums up the talents of the man best with one short sentence: "Tom Kristensen is the complete sportscar driver."



Victorious in 2008 with Allan McNish and Rinaldo Capello

DOLE/LAT

GP2

Yas Marina (UAE)

November 22-23

Round 11/11



RESULTS

RACE 1: 31 LAPS, 106.984 MILES

1	STOFFEL VANDOOORNE (B)	1h00m56.725s
	ART Grand Prix; Grid: 1st-1m48.088s	
2	JOLYON PALMER (GB)	+12.157s
	DAMS; Grid: 2nd-1m48.187s	
3	MITCH EVANS (NZ)	+19.159s
	Russian Time; Grid: 4th-1m48.709s	
4	FELIPE NASR (BR)	+22.205s
	Carlin; Grid: 5th-1m48.873s	
5	STEPHANE RICHELMI (MC)	+28.099s
	DAMS; Grid: 3rd-1m48.374s	
6	JOHNNY CECOTTO JR (YV)	+31.375s
	Trident; Grid: 11th-1m49.430s	
7	STEFANO COLETTI (MC)	+34.254s
	Racing Engineering; Grid: 8th-1m49.326s	
8	ARTHUR PIC (F)	+34.499s
	Campos Racing; Grid: 7th-1m48.985s	
9	RIO HARYANTO (RI)	+36.797s
	Caterham Racing (Status); Grid: 9th-1m49.338s	
10	DANIEL DE JONG (NL)	+46.613s
	MP Motorsport; Grid: 17th-1m49.667s	

Winner's average speed: 105.253mph. Fastest lap: Palmer, 1m51.185s, 111.741mph.

RACE 2: 22 LAPS, 75.853 MILES

1	COLETTI	41m37.752s
	Grid: 2nd	
2	NASR	+3.787s
	Grid: 5th	
3	PIC	+5.357s
	Grid: 1st	
4	RICHELMI	+9.288s
	Grid: 4th	
5	EVANS	+12.701s
	Grid: 6th	
6	VANDOOORNE	+13.764s
	Grid: 8th	
7	CECOTTO	+18.708s
	Grid: 3rd	
8	RAFFAELE MARCIELLO (I)	+19.217s
	Racing Engineering; Grid: 11th	
9	SERGIO CANAMASAS (E)	+24.383s
	Trident; Grid: 16th	
10	TAKUYA IZAWA (J)	+29.345s
	ART Grand Prix; Grid: 13th	

Winner's average speed: 109.326mph. Fastest lap: Vandoorne, 1m52.088s, 110.841mph. All drivers in Dallara-Mecachrome GP2/11.

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	PALMER	276	6	COLETTI	136
2	VANDOOORNE	229	7	PIC	124
3	NASR	224	8	MARCIELLO	74
4	EVANS	174	9	RICHELMI	73
5	CECOTTO	140	10	LEAL	68

TEAMS

1	DAMS	349	4	RACING ENGINEERING	210
2	CARLIN	292	5	RUSSIAN TIME	180
3	ART GRAND PRIX	255	6	TRIDENT	169



Cecotto (right) held off Coletti in race one

Stoffel stakes his F1 claim

McLaren junior Stoffel Vandoorne issued a timely reminder of his talent, while Stefano Coletti signed off (perhaps) with a win. By **MATT BEER**



ONE DOWNSIDE FOR JOLYON PALMER OF WRAPPING up the GP2 title one round early was that it cleared the way for Stoffel Vandoorne to hog the limelight in the season finale in Abu Dhabi.

He may not have been claiming the first-time championship that looked plausible when he won on his series debut back in April, but a crushing fourth victory of 2014 helped the Belgian secure second in the points, the best result for a newcomer since Nico Hulkenberg's first-year title in 2009 — an era prior to high-degradation Pirellis and before the fashion for top teams to sign third or fourth-year veterans really kicked in.

That Bahrain win had been followed by two months of point-less angst before Vandoorne's season clicked back into gear, which it did with a vengeance. The Formula Renault 3.5 convert outscored everyone — champion Palmer included — in the second half of 2014.

"I always kept believing in the team, even in the moments that were bad, and that was key to our success," he said. "The pace was always going to be there, and when you have confidence and the team trusts you and you trust the team, then it all goes a bit easier. I really feel at one with them now, and we've proved that in the last races."

The Vandoorne/ART combination was certainly the fastest thing around Yas Marina. A practice-topping start to Friday was followed by a fourth straight pole — a feat unprecedented in GP2. The bonus score for that immediately halved the eight-point gap to Felipe Nasr in the runner-up fight.

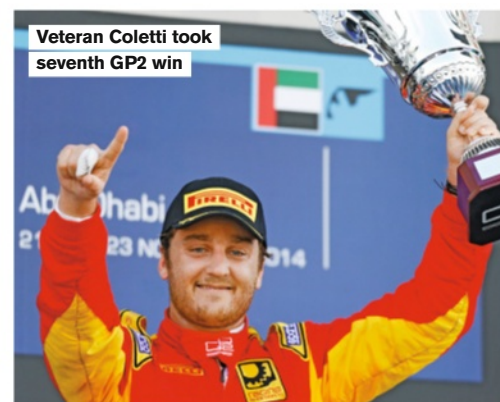
The Sauber-bound Brazilian qualified fifth, but matched Vandoorne by going for the 'hare' strategy of starting on supersofts while most began with the mediums. A superb start immediately gained Nasr

two places and, although the Carlin man ran out of space in a sandwich between DAMS team-mates Palmer and Stephane Richelmi, he was able to re-pass the champion further around lap one.

But by then, Vandoorne was already disappearing up the road. A brief safety car — required because Rene Binder was beached on a kerb following a clash with Jon Lancaster and Marco Sorensen — simply gave Vandoorne an opportunity to show his restart prowess rather than putting him under pressure, as he scampered away to lead by 2.4s after one flying lap.

He also coped better when it became clear that the supersofts were indeed as short-life as expected. Nasr was swamped by Palmer and Mitch Evans, while Vandoorne maintained his pace for just long enough.

Both Vandoorne and Nasr stopped for mediums at the end of lap six of 31, falling into the midfield and giving Palmer a chance to put the 'tortoise' plan into action, keeping Evans at arm's length as they



Veteran Coletti took seventh GP2 win

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Vandoorne (leading)
secured title runner-up
spot with crushing display

delayed the supersoft move as late as they dared.

But Vandoorne was clinical and incisive in traffic (surviving an accidental bump from Lancaster along the way) and rapid when in clear air. By the time Palmer finally pitted with nine laps to go, Vandoorne was back within 26s of the lead and had dropped Nasr by 16s.

Palmer's pit visit was a hairy one – he missed his marks slightly, only just squeezed out ahead of Evans in a manner that prompted an 'unsafe-release' investigation, and then locked up in the pit exit and nearly became the first person of note to have an embarrassing shunt in the tunnel. His pace on fresh supersofts briefly hinted at a late charge towards Vandoorne, but the rubber soon faded and he settled for easing clear of Evans for second.

With Nasr only fourth, Vandoorne's win put him nine points ahead – a useful but not comfortable margin with 17 available in Sunday's race, and one that looked less fragile when Nasr came out much better from a spicy first lap.



Nasr lost out on
runner-up position

IN THE COCKPIT

JOLYON PALMER
GP2 CHAMPION

It's strange to be racing in my final weekend of GP2 after four years, but I'm definitely ready to move on. I feel I'm driving at the top of my game, and I came here feeling quite relaxed because the championship was in the bag, so there was no pressure.

It was disappointing not to win in Abu Dhabi, but whatever the result I've won the championship and I've had an amazing year. Also, we still had the teams' championship to win for DAMS, and I'm pleased we were able to take that.

I've learned plenty in my four years in GP2. Firstly the tyres, because they're really tricky – to get the best out of the Pirelli tyres in qualifying trim and then look after them in the races is very different. That's the biggest thing I've learned, but there have also been things on the mental side, like putting together a complete weekend without making mistakes, and a championship run

and soaking up pressure.

The competition is incredible; this year has probably been the most competitive I've been in.

GP2 is the perfect place to learn because the cars are quick, near Formula 1 level. We have pitstops in the feature races and two compounds of Pirelli tyres to deal with, which is crucial.

Last year with Carlin I felt I was driving pretty well.

I struggled in the first half in qualifying, I had no pace and I was struggling to make the top 10. Then we changed the tub in Germany, and suddenly I was fighting at the front like this year. So I was confident coming into 2014 that I'd be strong, and this year DAMS have really helped me to get the best out of myself in terms of the mental approach, having confidence and doing my best all the time.

Jolyon Palmer was talking to Ben Anderson



GP2 champ Palmer
sealed team title for
DAMS in Abu Dhabi

Reserved-grid polesitter Arthur Pic got stuck in neutral on the dummy grid and, although he got going in time to regain first place, it wasn't the finest preparation for the real start. Front-row partner Stefano Coletti got away badly too, but went to the outside as Pic became over-focused on squeezing Richelmi's inside-line bid, braked late, took advantage of the generous asphalt run-off and emerged in the lead.

Pic then spent half a lap trying various ways to fend off Nasr before the Brazilian grabbed second, while Vandoorne was stuck in seventh place – and would've still been eighth had Palmer not ended his exemplary season in undignified fashion by spinning and stalling while dicing with Evans. That put Nasr on course to seal second back by one point.

As the race then settled into the sort of turgid accordion-effect parade that Yas Marina is prone to producing, Vandoorne prioritised the two bonus points for fastest lap, dropping back to get space to



Vandoorne (centre)
must surely figure
in McLaren's F1 plans

do so. That mission was accomplished, by four tenths of second, with six laps to go.

Nasr was unable to keep pace with Racing Engineering driver Coletti, who reeled off a seventh GP2 win in his 87th and most likely final start, and Vandoorne then tightened his hold on second in the points by moving up to sixth when he became one of many drivers to pass a fading Johnny Cecotto Jr late on. Since Richelmi had cut a chunk of the circuit when he did the same a few laps earlier – in a three-abreast move with Cecotto and Evans – he was given a 20s post-race penalty, bringing Evans up to fourth and Vandoorne to a very safe fifth place. Runner-up spot clinched duly by five points, and while Nasr shrugged that he didn't care because he'd only wanted to be champion (and, he could add, was the only man on the grid with a 2015 Formula 1 race deal in his pocket anyway), Vandoorne headed into the winter as the GP2 name on the F1 paddock's lips. If McLaren does guess wrong when it makes its 2015 F1 decision, its Belgian protegee has marked himself out as an excellent Plan B for 2016 – or sooner. 🏁

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B 14

C 16

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**Stoneman missed
out on title but
won the first race**

GP3 SERIES YAS MARINA (UAE), NOVEMBER 21-23 RD 9/9

Stoneman rolls on to runner-up

ALEX LYNN DID WHAT EVERYONE HAS expected him to for months by wrapping up the GP3 Series title in Abu Dhabi but, one way and another, this was a rather anticlimactic end to the season. For starters, Lynn was confirmed as champion because Dean Stoneman didn't grab the pole position he needed to keep himself in contention. Then Stoneman, after winning the first race in style, was virtually guaranteed second in the points when Marvin Kirchhofer failed to get away on the green-flag lap for the reversed-grid race.

After switching from the collapsing Marussia Manor team to Koiranen GP, Stoneman — who came close to joining the Finnish squad before the season started before it opted for perennial grid proper-upper Carmen Jorda — has shown remarkable form. But he had

no answer to the pace of ART Grand Prix ace Kirchhofer in qualifying, the amiable eastern German ending up nearly half a second clear. Carlin pair Emil Bernstorff and Lynn filled the second row.

It was Stoneman who was unbeatable at the start, taking the lead from Kirchhofer. Behind them, Lynn went to the outside of Bernstorff, but both ran wide, allowing Dino Zamparelli's ART machine into third place.

An early safety car made little difference to this race. Kirchhofer, indeed, made a mistake in the final sector on the first lap of the restart, giving Stoneman a cushion that he maintained most of the way. Kirchhofer brought the gap below a second into the final stages, but on the penultimate lap he made a mistake, braking too deep at the Turn 8 chicane and running wide.

With Patric Niederhauser taking seventh, behind fellow Swiss Alex Fontana, and thereby annexing a front-row spot for the reversed-grid race, this virtually guaranteed that he would win as long as he made no mistakes.

Why? Because somehow Arden International has turned its GP3 cars into rocketships away from the startline. And secondly, GP3 racing is processional enough at the best of times, but around the Yas Marina circuit it's particularly difficult to pass — or even follow.

So it proved. Poleman Nick Yelloly did his best to put the squeeze on Niederhauser down to Turn 1, but the Status Grand Prix-run Brummie was forced to give way. Already, Kirchhofer had as good as lost second in the points, and his stricken car was pushed into the pitlane before being fired up and taking the start some way adrift of the field. An early safety car (again) at least allowed him to catch up, but he finally ran out of steam when he reached 12th place.

That was just as well for Stoneman, who was forced to abort a move on Zamparelli on the opening lap, and as a result Fontana was unable to avoid him, shearing off Stoneman's rear wing and damaging his own front wing.

ART's disaster (Kirchhofer and Fontana delayed; Zamparelli its only scorer, in fifth on the road) allowed

Carlin to wrap up the teams' title, with Lynn running third throughout ahead of Bernstorff. They were promoted to second and third when Niederhauser was excluded a couple of hours after the race because his rear upper-wing angle was outside the regulations.

Yelloly therefore inherited what was, remarkably, his first GP3 win. Kevin Ceccon, who would have moved up to fifth, was another penalised, in his case for a track-limits offence, so he dropped to sixth behind Jimmy Eriksson. Richie Stanaway played catch-up after a gearshift electrical glitch in practice to take seventh after a sweet move on Jann Mardenborough, who lost the season's final point with a puncture, Robert Visoiu benefiting.

● Marcus Simmons

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Dean Stoneman (Koiranen GP), 14 laps in 29m10.173s; 2 Marvin Kirchhofer (ART Grand Prix), +0.800s; 3 Dino Zamparelli (ART); 4 Emil Bernstorff (Carlin); 5 Alex Lynn (Carlin); 6 Alex Fontana (ART); 7 Patric Niederhauser (Arden International); 8 Nick Yelloly (Status Grand Prix); 9 Kevin Ceccon (Jenzer Motorsport); 10 Jimmy Eriksson (Koiranen). **Race 2** 1 Yelloly, 14 laps in 28m29.039s; 2 Lynn, +2.778s; 3 Bernstorff; 4 Zamparelli; 5 Ceccon; 6 Eriksson; 7 Richie Stanaway (Status); 8 Robert Visoiu (Arden); 9 Pal Varhaug (Jenzer); 10 Matheo Tuscher (Jenzer). **Points** 1 Lynn, 207; 2 Stoneman, 163; 3 Kirchhofer, 161; 4 Eriksson, 134; 5 Bernstorff, 134; 6 Yelloly, 127.

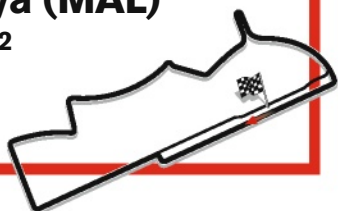


**Niederhauser (centre)
was excluded so Yelloly
(left) won as Lynn took title**

Formula E Putrajaya (MAL)

November 22

Round 2/10



RESULTS

31 LAPS, 48.16 MILES

1	SAM BIRD (GB)	51m11.979s
	Virgin Racing; Grid: 2nd-1m22.235s	
2	LUCAS DI GRASSI (BR)	+4.175s
	Audi Sport Abt; Grid: 18th-no time	
3	SEBASTIEN BUEMI (CH)	+5.739s
	Team e.dams Renault; Grid: 19th-no time**	
4	NICOLAS PROST (F)	+9.552s
	Team e.dams Renault; Grid: 11th-1m21.779s*	
5	JEROME D'AMBROSIO (B)	+13.722s
	Dragon Racing; Grid: 20th-no time***	
6	KARUN CHANDHOK (IND)	+17.158s
	Mahindra Racing (Carlin); Grid: 5th-1m22.612s	
7	ORIOLE SERVA (E)	+18.621s
	Dragon Racing; Grid: 1st-1m22.010s	
8	ANTONIO FELIX DA COSTA (P)	+19.926s
	Amlin Aguri; Grid: 10th-1m23.194s	
9	JAIME ALGUERSUARI (E)	+20.053s
	Virgin Racing; Grid: 17th-no time	
10	DANIEL ABT (D)	+45.663s
	Audi Sport Abt; Grid: 3rd-1m22.342s	
11	HO-PIN TUNG (PRC)	+55.833s
	China Racing (Campos); Grid: 15th-1m23.894s	
12	STEPHANE SARRAZIN (F)	+56.626s
	Venturi (Signature); Grid: 12th-1m23.240s	
13	MATTHEW BRABHAM (USA)	+1m05.036s
	Andretti Autosport; Grid: 9th-1m22.941s	
14	BRUNO SENNA (BR)	30 laps-accident
	Mahindra Racing (Carlin); Grid: 8th-1m22.816s	
15	FRANCK MONTAGNY (F)	-1 lap*
	Andretti Autosport; Grid: 13th-1m23.697s	
16	KATHERINE LEGGE (GB)	-3 laps*/**
	Amlin Aguri; Grid: 16th-1m25.823s	
17	JARNO TRULLI (I)	-3 laps*
	Trulli (Super Nova); Grid: 4th-1m22.347s	
R	NELSON PIQUET JR (BR)	22 laps-collision
	China Racing (Campos); Grid: 6th-1m22.620s	
R	NICK HEIDFELD (D)	14 laps-disqualified***
	Venturi (Signature); Grid: 7th-1m22.720s	
R	MICHELA CERRUTI (I)	7 laps-collision
	Trulli (Super Nova); Grid: 14th-1m23.857s	

Winner's average speed: 56.43mph. Fastest lap: Alguersuari, 1m24.429s, 66.24mph. All drivers in Spark-Renault SRT_01E. *10-place grid penalty for causing avoidable collision in Beijing; **car underweight; ***exceeded power usage. *23-second time penalty for causing a collision; **10-place grid penalty for next race for changing RESS system; ***excluded for not changing car within the box

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	DI GRASSI	43	6	CHANDHOK	18
2	BIRD	40	7	BUEMI	15
3	MONTAGNY	18	8	PIC	12
4	PROST	18	9	SERVA	12
5	D'AMBROSIO	18	10	PIQUET	4

TEAMS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	AUDI SPORT ABT	45	4	ANDRETTI AUTOSPORT	30
2	VIRGIN RACING	44	5	DRAGON RACING	30
3	E.DAMS-RENAULT	33	6	MAHINDRA RACING	18

POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top 10 finishers. Three points for pole position. Two points for fastest lap.



Field tackles Putrajaya street-circuit hairpin

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Bird was totally unflappable on his way to victory

Bird's-eye view for Brit

THAT THE FINAL GAP BETWEEN RACE WINNER Sam Bird and second-placed Lucas di Grassi was just 4.175s at the end of the Malaysian round does Bird's drive no justice at all.

The Briton was dominant on the streets of Putrajaya, beating the other 19 drivers hands down not only in outright pace, but in energy conservation. It was the sort of drive worthy of a double-digit-second win.

The reason the gap wasn't bigger was simply that it didn't need to be. The Virgin Racing driver did all the hard work in the first stint; it started with lining up and passing early leader Oriol Servia during a safety-car restart on lap five, and ended with Bird not only pulling out a healthy gap over the rest of the field, but still managing to use his first car longer than anyone else. He finally stopped on lap 19, and emerged second behind Daniel Abt.

The German actually had a massive lead by that stage, but it was destined never to last. Having qualified well, Abt dropped to the back with technical problems when the race got underway. On lap 10 he decided to switch cars, and then proceeded to suck through his second car's power in order to try to salvage something from the race.

It resulted in Abt winding up in a very healthy lead after the stops, but also having very little to play with in the closing stages of the race. Bird chased him down to the tune of three to four seconds per lap, and eased back into the lead on lap 27 of 31 at Turn 4. By the end of that lap his

lead was already almost five seconds.

From there, Bird could cruise to victory, with plenty of energy and pace up his sleeves. Abt, meanwhile, plummeted back to 10th during the last four laps.

"In the first stint I was able to get a very, very good gap and that made it easy in the second car to take it easy and not make any silly mistakes, do some lift-and-coasting, and coast to the finish," Bird explained.

"Lifting-and-coasting is extremely important in this championship, and we've come an awfully long way since testing. We've learnt a lot recently.

"There's been some changes in the team and this has really strengthened us as a unit. We're doing a good job on that now. If I keep driving at 100 per cent and we keep learning and improving, then we have a shot at more podiums."

Second went to Lucas di Grassi, who started from 18th after not setting a lap in qualifying. Between a reasonable level of carnage in front of him and a nice, clean first stint of his own, the Beijing winner came from nowhere to suddenly being in the top six after the car swaps had shaken out.

Jarno Trulli then did di Grassi a favour by taking both himself and Nelson Piquet Jr out of the race on lap 23, before Abt helped his team-mate by giving him plenty of space to cruise past five laps later.

And with that, the turnaround was complete — something that shocked the race winner when he looked in his mirrors on the cool-down lap: "I saw this green helmet and I was like, 'Oh my God, how, how, how has he done that?'" added Bird.

Sebastien Buemi's run to third was similar. The e.dams driver started from 19th, one spot behind di Grassi, but by mid-race was embroiled in a heated battle with team-mate Nicolas Prost inside the top 10. Their fate was ultimately decided by Abt, who let Buemi through with di Grassi, but held Prost up for a corner or two on his way back through the field.

That also gave Bruno Senna a chance to sneak fourth off Prost, which he promptly did with help of his extra FanBoost power... only to then bin it at Turn 9 on the very last lap.



Di Grassi charged from 17th to second

IN THE PADDOCK

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN
SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR
@av1melbourne



THE TIME WAS 7.50 ON SATURDAY morning, and the harsh Malaysian sun was just starting to break through the smog as I ventured out to watch practice trackside.

Between the jet lag and the early start I was feeling anything but fresh. And the last thing I needed was a DJ blasting dubstep at 4000 decibels through the circuit's PA system.

I lasted about 15 minutes. The sun and my heavy eyes I could deal with, and the unobscured view of Turn 1 was superb, but I just couldn't take that music.

Not that early. Not that loud.

The media centre, even with the Siberia-spec air-conditioning and Norah Jones CD on loop that I had initially tried to escape, suddenly seemed appealing.

Formula E has a noise problem, and it's got nothing to do with the cars.

Without wanting to sound like an old fogey, the trackside DJ music is horrible. It's music for a very specific type of dance-music fan, and if you're not into it it's zero fun to listen to.

I know I certainly couldn't do a whole day of sitting in the stands having it blasting away.

Music is subjective, and the DJ idea will ultimately alienate potential fans of all ages. If Formula E is desperate to have a soundtrack, it needs to at least be something with more universal appeal than what DJ Dubstep is pumping out.

Why not let the unique whir of the cars – which is quite cool – be the soundtrack?



Fans had to endure 'DJ Dubstep' trackside

The first decision we made was very bad. Oriol said we should do the track walk at 5pm, and we got caught in a storm



Karun Chandhok on he and Oriol Servia being appointed as Formula E drivers' representatives.

Drivers praise challenging Putrajaya track layout

THE FORMULA E DRIVERS WERE

full of praise for the Putrajaya circuit following the race, many saying that it offered much more of a challenge than the Beijing layout that opened the season.

"I definitely prefer this [track]," said podium finisher Sebastien Buemi.

"It's more like a proper circuit. You have proper corners; in Beijing basically there were a lot of straight lines and some tiny little chicanes. I definitely feel like this is a better track."

"It's a bit more challenging as well, because it's more bumpy. It was quite difficult to overtake, but in the end it was a great track."

Race winner Sam Bird agreed: "For all of us drivers it was extremely challenging, and a great layout. It made for some exciting racing, and I certainly enjoyed it."

Nick Heidfeld said that, despite having a personal soft spot for Beijing, he enjoyed the challenging layout in Malaysia.

"It's very difficult to be objective as a



Malaysian circuit got drivers' thumbs-up

WARNER/LAT

driver," he said. "In Beijing I had a chance to win, I had very, very good pace, and here I didn't. So I would not say that this circuit is my preferred circuit."

"It was definitely more challenging, more difficult, and it was a lot more like a

proper street circuit than Beijing was. They did a good job [in Beijing] having a very smooth surface, and maybe the chicanes there were a bit flat, a bit boring, whereas here the cars were jumping around a lot more."

Safety car appears twice

The race was interrupted by two safety-car periods, while eight drivers had their race affected by contact with a wall or another car.

Katherine Legge and Michela Cerruti came together just a couple of corners in and that, combined with Matthew Brabham trying to divebomb Bruno Senna and instead hitting Nick Heidfeld and spinning, led to the deployment of the safety car on lap one.

A second safety-car period came on lap eight, just three laps after the restart, when Franck Montagny

tipped a luckless Heidfeld into the wall at Turn 5, ending the German's race for good.

Later in the race Jarno Trulli spoilt Nelson Piquet Jr's chances of a podium, running the Brazilian into the wall on the main straight.



The safety car was busy during the race

Senna makes most of FanBoost

BRUNO SENNA BECAME THE

first driver in Formula E's brief history to successfully use FanBoost to pass somebody for position in Putrajaya.

Senna, Nick Heidfeld and Katherine Legge were voted to receive the five-second 30kW power boost in Malaysia, with the Brazilian becoming the first – and so far only – driver to put it to good use when he powered past Nicolas Prost late in the race.

"The first time I tried was against Nelson Piquet, and I didn't know how much the FanBoost would give me," Senna said.

"Nelson was running very low wing so I couldn't get properly close to him."

"When I came up to Nico I knew much better how to use it."

"I'm happy that it worked here in Malaysia, where everybody was afraid that the temperatures were going to be too high."



Senna used his extra power to good effect

EBREV/LAT

'BOX ISSUE SORTED

Formula E Holdings brought 20 spare gearboxes to Putrajaya, having run short of units in Beijing, where there were just five spares on hand.

SURGERY FOR CERRUTI

Michela Cerruti underwent minor back surgery between rounds. "It was nothing too serious, it was a herniated disc," said the Italian. "I needed a bit of recovery but now I'm completely fine."

FETA IS FORMED

The formation of the Formula E Teams' Association was announced in Putrajaya. FETA will be chaired by Virgin Racing's Alex Tai, with Jean-Paul Driot from e.dams and Thomas Biermaier from Audi Sport Abt acting as the two vice-chairmen.

LEGGIE PENALISED

Katherine Legge will carry a 10-place grid penalty over to the next round in Uruguay after Amlin Aguri had to change her car's RESS device.

PROST DEMOTED...

Nicolas Prost actually qualified fastest for the Putrajaya ePrix, but started 11th thanks to having to serve the grid penalty he received for crashing into Nick Heidfeld in Beijing.

... HEIDFELD EXCLUDED

Nick Heidfeld was excluded from the Putrajaya ePrix. After he was crashed out of the race by Franck Montagny, he walked back to the pits and rejoined in his second car, only to be excluded because the car swap didn't take place in the garage.



BRAZILIAN TOURING CARS GOIANIA (BR), NOVEMBER 23 RD 8/8

Last-lap Mauricio gets third in a row

RICARDO MAURICIO TOOK THE TITLE for the third year in a row thanks to a hard-fought third in the first race of the championship finale.

Mauricio's JLM Racing Honda Civic took pole and led the early damp laps, but as the track dried so his set-up proved far from ideal.

On the eighth lap of 19, Allam Khodair moved in front in his RZ Motorsport Toyota Corolla, and two laps later the Bassani Racing Toyota of Felipe Gama also passed Mauricio. The next lap, Mauricio's team-mate

Vicente Orige went through.

Orige then passed Gama, who came back under threat from Mauricio. Knowing that fourth place wasn't enough for the title, Mauricio went for it on the last lap. He forced Gama to go defensive off line at the first corner, and as the Toyota ran wide on exit the diminutive Mauricio completed a superb move.

It was just as well for Mauricio that he'd wrapped up the title, because he had to call it a day in the reversed-grid final race after seven

laps when his engine went into safety mode when the water temperature reached 150 degrees.

Orige made it a great day for the JLM team by taking his Honda from third to first in this race, a result that put him second in the championship, just three points behind Mauricio.

Orige was followed home by the C2 Racing Chevrolet Cruze driven by teenager Gabriel Casagrande, while Khodair's third place ensured Toyota of the manufacturers' title.

● Lito Cavalcanti

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Allam Khodair (Toyota Corolla), 19 laps in 32m00.377s; 2 Vicente Orige (Honda Civic), +4.523s; 3 Ricardo Mauricio (Honda Civic); 4 Vitor Meira (Ford Focus); 5 Felipe Gama (Toyota Corolla); 6 Tuka Rocha (Honda Civic).

Race 2 1 Orige, 20 laps in 32m43.445s; 2 Gabriel Casagrande (Chevrolet Cruze), +0.253s; 3 Khodair; 4 Meira; 5 Denis Navarro (Toyota Corolla); 6 Galid Osman (Toyota Corolla). **Points 1 Mauricio, 221**; 2 Orige, 218; 3 Khodair, 195; 4 Casagrande, 182; 5 Meira, 179; 6 Alceu Feldmann, 178.

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BRAZILIAN F3 GOIANIA (BR), NOVEMBER 22-23 RD 8/8

Piquet ends year in style

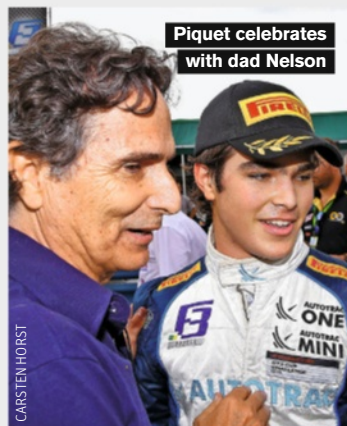
PEDRO PIQUET MADE IT 12 WINS from 16 at the series finale.

Fourth in wet qualifying, the 16-year-old passed Renan Guerra and Lukas Moraes on the third lap, then took the lead four laps later from Cesario Formula team-mate Sergio Sette Camara, who looks likely to join Piquet in European F3 next season.

The win put Piquet sixth on the grid for the reversed-grid second race. He took advantage of a crash between Camara and Moraes on the second lap to jump into second.

Piquet was lapping one second faster than Hitech-run Argentinian Bruno Etman, and had little trouble passing him on lap six and driving to another comfortable victory from Etman and Raphael Raucci.

● Lito Cavalcanti



RESULTS

Race 1 1 Pedro Piquet (Dallara-Berta F309), 21 laps in 32m02.070s; 2 Sergio Sette Camara (D-B F309), +15.024s; 3 Lukas Moraes (D-B F309); 4 Matheus Leist (D-B F301); 5 Bruno Etman (D-B F309); 6 Victor Miranda (D-B F301).

Race 2 1 Piquet, 21 laps in 31m36.869s; 2 Etman, +10.018s; 3 Raphael Raucci (D-B F309); 4 Matheus Iorio (D-B F301); 5 Fernando Croce (D-B F309); 6 Vitor Baptista (D-B F301). **Points 1 Piquet, 211**; 2 Moraes, 116; 3 Etman, 115; 4 Artur Fortunato, 83; 5 Raucci, 81; 6 Leonardo de Souza, 49.

LAMBORGHINI WORLD FINAL SEPANG (MAL), NOVEMBER 23

Pavlovic and Piscopo on top

SERBO-ITALIAN DUO MILOS PAVLOVIC and Edoardo Piscopo won Lamborghini's Super Trofeo World Final, which brought together the top drivers from the marque's European, Asian and North American series.

They could only finish second behind Mirko Bortolotti in race two, but in combination with their win in the opener this was enough for them to end the day top of the points.

Bortolotti, in turn, staged a magnificent fightback from 13th on the grid to win the finale.

Another solo driver, ex-Formula 3 veteran Richard Antinucci, finished the day in second place after taking

podium results in both races, while Alberto Viberi grabbed pole but could only take a best finish of third.

Welsh driver Jake Rattenbury dominated the Am class in both races.

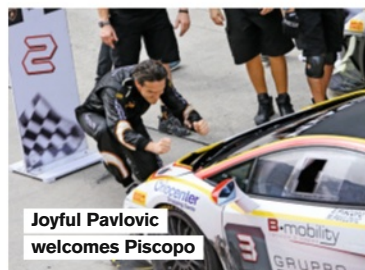
Pavlovic and Piscopo had already had a joyful start to the weekend, with second place in both races of the European championship finale on Friday giving them the title.

Andrea Amici recovered from a fever to win both races, with the cautious Piscopo letting his fellow Italian go in the second race and preferring to concentrate on the title.

Dutchman Jeroen Mul led the points into the final round, but a best finish of fourth wasn't enough.

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Edoardo Piscopo/Milos Pavlovic, 24 laps in 50m36.529s; 2 Richard Antinucci, +3.416s; 3 Alberto Viberi; 4 Gerhard Tweraser/Tomas Pivoda; 5 Jeroen Mul; 6 Hironori Takeuchi/Masami Kageyama. **Race 2 1 Mirko Bortolotti**, 24 laps in 50m33.689s; 2 Piscopo/Pavlovic, +1.433s; 3 Antinucci; 4 Mul; 5 Andrea Amici; 6 Jake Rattenbury.



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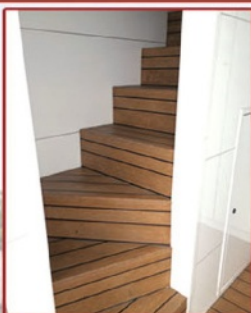
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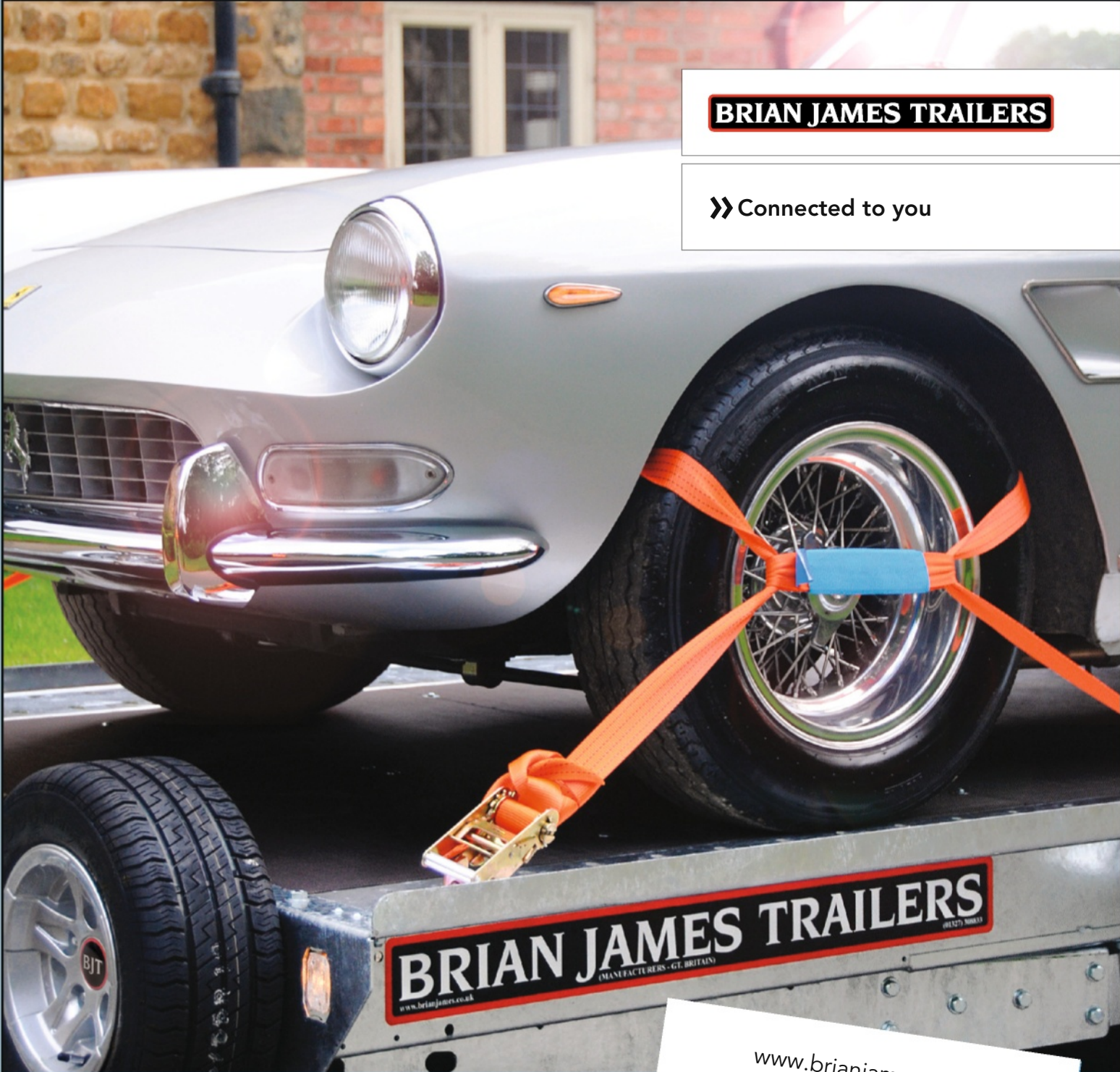
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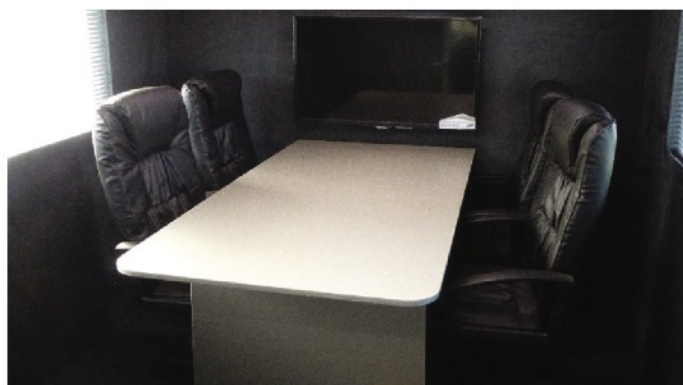
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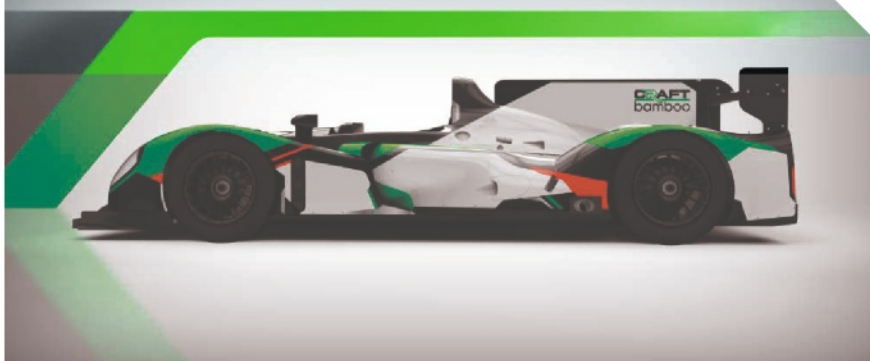
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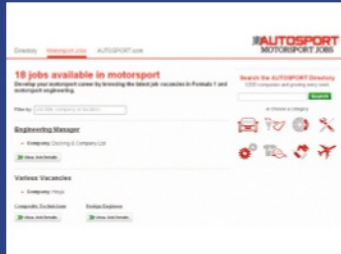
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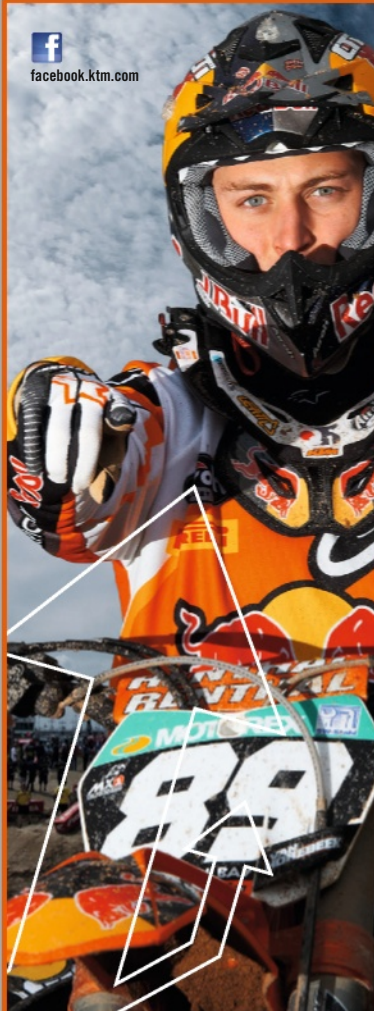
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Newey (right) with son Harrison

Newey concern for youngsters

Formula 1 tech chief fears young drivers are compromising education

ADRIAN NEWEY BELIEVES MORE needs to be done by motorsport's governing bodies to stop young drivers skipping school.

The Red Bull Formula 1 design chief's 16-year-old son Harrison recently made his single-seater debut and contested the opening round of the BRDC Formula 4 Winter Series at Snetterton, but skipped last weekend's Brands Hatch races due to school commitments.

Newey's family bought the car over the summer to test during the school holidays and his father is concerned that youngsters are compromising their education in the pursuit of a racing career.

He believes that world governing body the FIA, which allows drivers as young as 14 in some countries to race single-seaters, needs to set a

precedent by stopping "ridiculous amounts of testing" during term-time.

"The kids have to go to school," said Newey, who thinks it would be easy for ASNs such as the Motor Sports Association to limit mid-week testing. "The testing Harrison has done is over half-term. We're trying to balance it without compromising his school."

"I do feel very strongly that the FIA and the MSA need to get a hold on it. It would be very easy for the FIA to stop all this by saying circuits can only allow kids to test during school time on designated days. They could stamp it out overnight; unfortunately they don't seem to want to."

In Britain, 14-year-olds can compete in categories such as Fiestas and Ginetta Juniors, while the MSA has lowered the single-seater minimum age limit to 15 for next season.

That rule change was prompted by the FIA's Formula 4 concept, for which it is mandatory to be open to 15-year-olds, and brings the new MSA Formula category in line with the rest of the world.

An MSA spokesman said education should always be a driver's priority, and suggested it was not in a position to enforce any limitations on circuit timetables.

"The MSA has always stressed that education should take priority over racing, which is a message that we convey to aspiring young drivers through the MSA Academy," the spokesman said.

"There is no such thing as a race that is more important than education; indeed all the evidence shows this to be the case from a talent development perspective."

SCOTT MITCHELL
ASSISTANT
EDITOR

scott.mitchell@haymarket.com
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WHEN ADRIAN NEWEY SPEAKS, you listen. His record in Formula 1 sees to that. It is, therefore, interesting to hear his views on young drivers, obviously influenced by young son Harrison making the step out of karting and into single-seaters.

Newey Sr told me that the reason Harrison started karting in the first place was that it was a "life skill". It was supposed to help his son grow as a person. So the F1 technical guru is keen to ensure his son does not compromise his education now he has moved into car racing.

So far, that's been managed by keeping a firm cap on the number of days Newey Jr has spent in his BRDC Formula 4 car. Before the Snetterton rounds of the Winter Series, it was still in single digits – and the majority of these days had been during school holidays. The Neweys are attempting to lead by example.

The trouble there is it's not seen by the majority as a compromise. Testing is a means to an end and those who do it are motorsport career-focused; those who don't usually can't afford it. Not wanting to take too much time off school isn't usually top of the list of reasons you hear in the paddock.

It's tough to work out exactly whose responsibility it is to act. Motorsport has a huge career graveyard, so it stands to reason that if a driver limits his options outside racing when he is younger, it has a good chance of biting back later on in life.

Newey reckons it's a simple fix, but in motorsport it's difficult enough to get someone to admit responsibility, let alone take the requisite action.

British Formula Ford

Kruger confirmed British FFord champion

JAYDE KRUGER HAS BEEN confirmed as the 2014 British Formula Ford champion, after the Motor Sports Association's national court of appeal ruled in favour of the South African.

The JTR driver beat McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award finalist Harrison Scott to the title by six points after a final-round shootout

at Brands Hatch last month, but his success remained provisional pending an MSA court hearing.

The 26-year-old was stripped of his points from race two at Brands for "driving in a manner incompatible with general safety" following a clash with Scott, but they were reinstated when his JTR team appealed. Falcon's

subsequent appeal was dismissed last week (November 18).

"It's been a long season that's been dragged out a little longer," said Kruger, who won 13 of the season's 30 races. "But to think I'll be the last-ever Formula Ford champion, that's a big thing, and I'm happy to make it three titles for JTR as well."



Keen and Minshaw
will swap 911 for Z4



British GT

Keen, Minshaw in Barwell BMW switch

BRITISH GT RACE WINNERS
Phil Keen and Jon Minshaw will join the championship-winning Barwell Motorsport team for 2015.

The duo switches from a Trackspeed Porsche 911 GT3-R to the Barwell BMW Z4 GT3 campaigned by Marco Attard to this year's drivers' title.

Keen and Minshaw won three races en route to fourth in this year's championship, finishing 17 points behind Attard. They could

even have been champions had they not suffered a puncture in the closing stages of the Brands Hatch race while leading.

Keen, who will begin the year with a Daytona 24 Hours drive in the race-winning Action Express team after earning this season's Sunoco Challenge prize, said Attard's 2014 success convinced them the BMW was the car to have.

"I think we have chosen the best team in Barwell, and best car with

the BMW Z4, to give me and Jon a shot at the title," he said. "Jon has improved no end over the last year and proved he is one of the best Am drivers on the grid, plus he took to the Z4 really well and we have felt right at home with the team."

Barwell team boss Mark Lemmer believes that since the Z4 is a proven package, Keen and Minshaw will be contenders for the 2015 title.

"Phil and Jon tested the BMW at Donington earlier this year and got

to grips with it very well," he said. "I think they're one of the most complete driver pairings on the grid. They have consistency, speed, experience and familiarity on their side. They'll be in the mix no doubt."

"We found a real sweet spot with the BMW this year and there's no planned changes to the spec for 2015. That's good for us because it means that set-up data and performance will be there from the start of the season."

BRDC F4

BRDC Formula 4 to support British GT Championship

THE BRDC FORMULA 4

Championship will support all six of British GT's UK rounds next season as part of a revamped calendar.

BRDC F4 will replace British F3, which struggled for grid numbers in 2014 and looks set to be axed for next year, as the main single-seater championship on the GT programme.

The only BGT meeting that will not be attended by BRDC F4 is July's Spa round, while the junior racing series will also have standalone races at Snetterton and Brands Hatch.

BRDC F4's current three-race format

will be retained for all eight rounds, and the series will begin alongside British GT at Oulton Park on April 4-6.

The second round at Rockingham will be BRDC F4's first visit to the Corby track, while its finale moves forward from the end of October to the final weekend of September, and switches from Snetterton to Brands Indy.

Jonathan Palmer, boss of BRDC F4 promoter MSV, said: "Bringing the series together with British GT strengthens a package that is growing in popularity with spectators and recognises BRDC F4 as the country's leading single-seater series."

BRDC Formula 4
supported British GT
at Brands this year



2015 BRDC F4 CALENDAR

DATE	LOCATION
April 4-6	Oulton Park
May 2-3	Rockingham
May 30-31	Silverstone GP
July 11-12	Snetterton 300
August 1-2	Brands Hatch GP
August 22-23	Snetterton 300
Sept 12-13	Donington Park GP
Sept 26-27	Brands Hatch Indy

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Members' Meeting

Goodwood Capri for Austin

BRITISH TOURING CAR RACE winner Rob Austin will race his father's Ford Capri at next year's Goodwood Members' Meeting.

The Audi A4 driver will drive the three-litre racer in the Gerry Marshall Trophy for Group 1 touring cars alongside father Richard in the March 21-22 event.

Last year's inaugural race attracted a star tin-top cast and Austin is confident he will be able to compete at the front.

"I'm a huge fan of 1970s and 1980s motorsport and I guess the Gerry Marshall Trophy is me down to a tee," he said. "Gerry was an absolute legend and his way of going racing as someone who

first and foremost enjoyed motorsport is a philosophy I've always shared.

"The Capri was the car to have in the mid-to-late seventies and ours has been rebuilt beautifully to period condition, plus I know it's a very quick example with the work that has gone into it at our workshop in Pershore. I think we can be somewhere near the front."

A number of other cars have been confirmed, including Ian Cowley's Mazda RX-7, which will be co-driven by ex-BTCC racer Patrick Watts. A BMW 530i, Rover SD1, David Clark's Bastos Chevrolet Camaro, two Swiftune Minis and a Jagermeister-liveried Ford Escort RS2000 will also compete.

Austin will race his father's Capri



BRDC F4

Di Mauro set for F4 title tilt as Lanan eyes ace Ticktum

BRDC FORMULA 4 WINTER SERIES runner-up Gaetano di Mauro will contest the main championship for a second time in 2015, remaining with Petroball Racing.

After taking his maiden main-season win at Brands Hatch in August, the Brazilian secured second place in the Winter Series

last weekend at the Kent track behind champion Will Palmer.

"It's been a good year for me and I have learned a lot," said di Mauro. "We will move forward for next year and I expect to be fighting to the title."

Lanan Racing, which has run both BRDC F4 champions to date, hopes to field Dan Ticktum in the series next year after the 15-year-old went under the existing lap record during last Thursday's official test at Brands Hatch.

Team boss Graham Johnson said: "I'm hoping Dan will undergo further testing before joining us. The championship needs drivers of his calibre."

Di Mauro is an F4 race winner



Renault Clio Cup UK

Added Kick for Clio Cup UK

BRITCAR TEAM BUBBLE AND KICK Racing will enter the Renault Clio Cup UK next season, running Mike Bushell's 2014 title-winning car under the 'Team BKR' banner.

The Basildon-based squad recently acquired the car after Team Pyro's Mark Hunt brokered a meeting between Bushell and Bubble and Kick boss Nico Ferrari.

Bushell, who graduates to the British Touring Car Championship next year, has also agreed to act as a driver coach and technical advisor to the team, which will run as a one-car operation in its inaugural season of Clio competition.

"We've already had a lot of interest from several drivers of different experience levels, and having Bushell on board will only increase our appeal to prospective drivers," said Ferrari.

Champion Bushell will help new team



HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club racing

Pye thinks Hamilton is more popular than people give him credit for



Community right behind double champion Lewis

Not being involved in Formula 1, but doing what I do for a living, I've been astonished at the fervour surrounding Lewis Hamilton's world championship assault, which has ramped up in some unlikely places in the latter stages of his ultimately successful campaign.

Only last week I had to allay the fears of my daughter's GCSE French tutor at a parents' consultation evening. "I'm so concerned for Lewis I can't sleep," said Madame Winter. My reaction that she was more worried than he was brought a wistful smile. "It's what he does [brilliantly] every day. Given a fair wind it will be fine," I counselled. Of course, it was. Majestically so!

In Sainsbury's on Monday an assistant who has seen me buy an AUTOSPORT every Thursday gave a thumbs-up. "Yes, 'Lew' did it," she beamed with the joy of one who may never have been to a grand prix, yet has cared enough during the season to express disappointment when Hamilton has endured a bad weekend [a post-Spa grimace], pleasure when he's notched another victory, and angst that the risible double-points showdown in Abu Dhabi could rob him at the final hurdle.

If these examples from microcosms of Bournemouth society are typical of the population of Great Britain, Lewis clearly enjoys a greater folk hero status than I had imagined. Not since Nigel Mansell steamrollered the 1992 season, winning nine of the 16 races in his awesome Williams-Renault FW14B, can I recall such outpourings of excitement and interest. Twenty-two years ago, though, magazine sales were still the undisputed barometer of popularity.

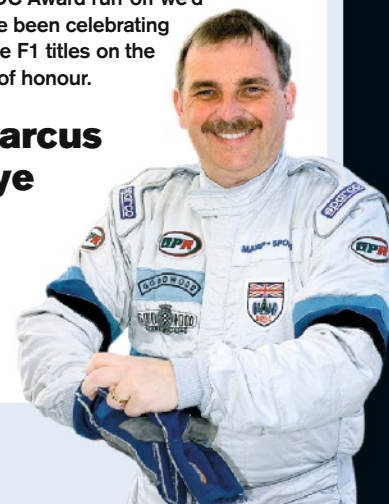
Domination of grand prix racing by

manufacturers/teams and drivers is nothing new. It has been around since the sport's birth and has coloured the world championship regularly since its foundation in 1950. But reliability – remarkably, given the rash of complex technologies with the new-for-2014 regulations – has transformed the races (if not the racing) since I first watched avidly in the 1970s.

"Hamilton clearly enjoys a greater folk hero status than I had imagined"

In saluting the record-shattering achievements of Lewis and Mercedes-Benz, much kudos is due to the Williams team (which topped a stellar campaign with second and third on Sunday, and third in the constructors' rankings on a fraction of the Silver Arrows budget), and to 2009 world champion Jenson Button for a ballsy fifth in his McLaren. Had Hamilton not been 'graduated out' of the 2003 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award run-off we'd have been celebrating three F1 titles on the roll of honour.

Marcus Pye



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MICK HILL: 1944-2014



MICK HILL, BRITAIN'S MOST PROLIFIC V8 saloon car ace of the 1970s with 96 outright wins on his CV, died last Wednesday after a lengthy illness.

Hill started racing with a Mini in 1966, but gained a fan following when he acquired Richard Scantlebury's Jaguar-straight-six-powered Ford Anglia 105E, which he turned into a winner in 1970.

He fitted a 4.7-litre Ford V8 engine and Lola T70 suspension into a Capri shell, which won on its debut and went on to score 32 victories in two seasons and win the Hepolite Glacier Special Saloon title in 1972. A new, six-litre Tricentrol Capri followed for '73 and both cars propelled Hill to the Esso Uniflo crown and Silverstone Driver of the Year honours, while Hill and

on-track rival Tony Hazlewood formulated plans for the inaugural Super Saloon championship in '74. Mick won it but Dealer Team Vauxhall and Gerry Marshall upped the stakes with the short-lived Holden-engined Ventora, Big Bertha.

Hill switched to F5000 in 1975 with the ex-Mike Wilds March 74A before his Trojan T102-based VW Beetle-Chevrolet appeared in '76.

Mick continued to race with the ex-Hazlewood seven-litre Jaguar-Chevrolet 'XJ8', the Lola T332-suspended Skoda Phoenix in which he landed the 1980 *Motoring News* Donington GT title, and the March BMW M1 built around the ex-Richard Scott F5000 Lola T400, which he shared with Kevin Riley in Thundersports.

An outspoken and gritty competitor, the former Derbyshire GPO engineer had been a staunch BRDC member since 2000. Hill, who was 70, had suffered serious health issues for years and AUTOSPORT offers its condolences to his wife Leo, son Greg and daughter Cathy.

● Marcus Pye



In brief

Lomax joins Super 1600

Newly crowned British Rallycross Hot Hatch champion Craig Lomax (above) will contest the series' Super 1600 division next year behind the wheel of a Citroën C2. "Super 1600 is very appealing," he said. "It's marketable for our sponsors and it means we can go into Europe and race there too."

Mygale for Middlehurst

BRDC Formula 4 race winner and former FRenault BARC champion Chris Middlehurst will contest selected Formula Ford 1600 events next year after buying one of Geva Racing's new Kent-converted Mygales. The ex-National FF1600 champion drove a Geva Mygale in this year's FFord Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy.

Ginetta GRDC+ plan

The G20 class of the Ginetta GT5 Challenge will be replaced next season by graduates of the Yorkshire marque's new-for-2014 Ginetta Racing Drivers' Club. GRDC+ will be open to those who competed in the entry-level GRDC this season, with frontrunner Gary Wager already confirmed.

FR NEC to Austria

The Formula Renault Northern European Cup will race at the Red Bull Ring in Austria next year for the first time. Its 2015 season starts on April 11-12 with a Blancpain Endurance Series support race at Monza, and ends on October 3-4 at Hockenheim after visits to Silverstone, Spa and the Nurburgring.

Dorlin in Clio test

Junior Saloon Car Champion James Dorlin took part in a Clio Cup Series test for the frontrunning Westbourne Motorsport team at Brands Hatch last week. The 15-year-old hopes to race full-time in the series next year, while Westbourne wants to expand its prize offer to the JSCC's top three.

Renault Clio Cup UK

Jackson to step up to Clio Cup

FORD FIESTA DRIVER GEORGE

Jackson will move up to the Renault Clio Cup UK series in 2015 with Jam Sport.

Jackson finished 10th in this year's Fiesta ST championship, his first season in car racing, and will remain with the Northamptonshire team as he graduates to the TOCA support series.

The 20-year-old said his switch was influenced by Jam Sport, which hopes to run three cars next year. It fielded Paul Knapp and Jackson's Fiesta rival Daniel Holland during the latter half of 2014.



Renault Clio Cup UK

SVR boss lauds Mitchell

SV RACING BOSS DANNY BUXTON

is hopeful his team can field Ginetta Junior champion Jack Mitchell in further Renault Clio Cup UK tests after being impressed by the youngster at Donington Park last week.

Mitchell, 16, returned to a front-wheel-drive car for the first time since his Fiesta Junior campaign of 2012 when he drove one of SVR's

race-winning Clios last Wednesday.

Buxton said there was a strong chance that Mitchell would continue testing with the team, even though he is unsure the youngster will commit to the series for 2015.

"It was really good," said Buxton. "I said to take it at his own pace, he was really solid and made zero mistakes. He was so good to work with."

Ginetta GT4 Supercup

Supercup winner Oliphant returns for '15

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP RACE

winner Tom Oliphant will return to the series next year after extending his partnership with Century Motorsport.

Oliphant took wins at Donington Park and Snetterton this year en route to fifth place in the standings, dovetailing his first

full Supercup season with a race-winning British GT campaign behind the wheel of Century's GT4-class Ginetta G55 alongside Rick Parfitt Jr.

The 24-year-old is now eyeing an assault on the title in his sophomore Supercup campaign.

"We had the pace where it mattered this season, and I'm certainly gunning for the title next year," said Oliphant, whose car-racing career began in Formula Renault BARC in 2013. "I'm looking forward to what promises to be a very busy year with Ginetta in 2015."

Oliphant won races as a series rookie



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BRANDS HATCH, NOVEMBER 22-23 MSVR

Palmer secures F4 winter crown

AFTER TAKING THREE OF A POSSIBLE

four wins in the first round of the BRDC Formula 4 Winter Series at Snetterton, Will Palmer arrived at a wet and gloomy Brands Hatch on the crest of a wave. But the task of wrapping up the title proved to be far from straightforward for the younger son of MSV boss Jonathan.

Indeed, Palmer virtually sank without trace in the opening race of the weekend. Having qualified down in fifth, he then dropped to the very back of the pack after a trip through the gravel at Paddock Hill on the second lap. The 17-year-old could only salvage a sixth-placed finish, though he narrowly missed out on overhauling HHC Motorsport team-mate Zubair Hoque for fifth.

To make matters worse, Palmer's closest rival Gaetano di Mauro – the winner of one race at Snetterton – led from the start and set a string of fastest laps, pulling away from second-placed Connor Jupp and sealing victory to take a six-point lead. Jordan Albert, meanwhile, survived a collision with Rodrigo Fonseca to complete the podium.

Di Mauro's advantage at the head of the standings was to prove shortlived, since the Brazilian was



Fonseca (leading) took two wins to claim third in the final standings

bundled into the gravel at Paddock Hill in the second race when Jupp made an ill-judged move at two-thirds distance.

That allowed Palmer to regain the championship lead with a solid third place and fastest lap as Fonseca secured his maiden F4 victory from Albert with a faultless drive from pole. The Douglas Motorsport driver repeated the feat in the third race, a revelation at the head of the field

after a year in the main series that was blighted by errors and incidents.

Five seconds back at the flag was a relieved Palmer, who stretched his points lead over third-place finisher di Mauro. The Brit was then able to secure the title in style in the final race of the series with victory, albeit only after Jupp threw away a comfortable lead.

Despite benefiting from the presence of Radical Euro Masters

champion Bradley Smith in a second Mectech car during pre-race testing, Jupp – whose mid-season switch to BRDC F4 from British Formula Ford with Meridian preceded a change of teams for the Winter Series – failed to score any more points after his second place in race one.

His race-two misdemeanour left him with a grid penalty in the third race and, after some aggressive passes on Albert and Petroball's second Brazilian, Enzo Bortoleto, Jupp's race ended in the barriers at Clearways as he chased down di Mauro.

He then proceeded to blow his chance to make amends in the final race of the day after spinning at Graham Hill Bend while holding a comfortable lead and beaching his car on the kerbs. That handed the lead to Palmer, who duly pulled away after the ensuing safety-car period to win from Albert once the SWR-Caterham driver slipped past a defeated di Mauro at the last corner.

"I had a shocking start and it's been a tricky weekend, but I was pleased to finish with a win," said a triumphant Palmer, the younger brother of GP2 champion Jolyon.

Martin Farmer was victorious in the Formula Vee final after swooping

Palmer (main and right) celebrates his BRDC F4 Winter Series title win



ALL PICS: GARY HAWKINS

RESULTS

BRDC FORMULA 4 WINTER SERIES (22 LAPS)

1 Gaetano di Mauro 20m50.832s (76.48mph); 2 Connor Jupp +0.925s; 3 Jordan Albert; 4 Rodrigo Fonseca; 5 Zubair Hoque; 6 Will Palmer. **Fastest lap** Fonseca 55.477s (78.38 mph). **RACE 2 (22 LAPS)** **1** Fonseca 20m29.609s (77.80mph); 2 Albert +3.340s; 3 Palmer; 4 Fernando Urrutia; 5 Paul Sijeljes; 6 Hoque. **FL** Palmer 54.770s (79.39mph). **RACE 3 (21 LAPS)** **1** Fonseca 20m10.828s (75.41mph); 2 Palmer +4.785s; 3 di Mauro; 4 Sijeljes; 5 Urrutia; 6 Enzo Bortoletto. **FL** Palmer 56.749s (76.62mph). **RACE 4 (20 LAPS)** **1** Palmer 20m52.307s (69.44mph); 2 Albert +6.296s; 3 di Mauro; 4 Bortoletto; 5 Urrutia; 6 Hoque. **FL** Palmer 56.329s (77.20mph).

POINTS 1 Palmer 239, 2 di Mauro 205, 3 Fonseca 175, 4 Albert 160, 5 Hoque 127, 6 Urrutia 113.

FORMULA VEE FINAL (8 LAPS)

1 Martin Farmer (GAC) 9m46.830s (59.28mph); 2 Craig Pollard (Bears GAC) +9.884s; 3 Stephen Morrin (Leystone JH004); 4 Jesse Chamberlain (AHS Challenger); 5 Ian Buxton (Daghorn GAC); 6 Adam Macaulay (Sheane FV01). **FL** Macaulay 1m11.247s (61.03mph). **HEAT 1 (10 LAPS)** **1** Pollard 12m50.585s (56.43mph); 2 Buxton +0.718s; 3 Farmer; 4 Paul Taylor (Bears GAC); 5 Daniel Pitchford (AHS GAC); 6 Morrin. **FL** Pitchford 1m11.096s (61.16mph). **HEAT 2 (10 LAPS)** **1** Pitchford 12m34.970s (63.35mph); 2 Taylor +22.825s; 3 Pollard; 4 Macaulay; 5 Buxton; 6 Farmer. **FL** Pitchford 1m06.822s (65.07mph).

MONOPOSTO (13 LAPS)

1 Graham Read (Dallara F301) 15m38.076s (60.26mph); 2 Chris Lord (Van Diemen RF82) +1.963s; 3 Julian Hoskins (Vector TF93); 4 Geoff Fern (JKS TFR11); 5 Matt Dunne (Croselle 33F); 6 George Fowler (Van Diemen FF2000). **FL** Robbie Watts

(Lola F106/03) 59.029s (73.66mph).

RACE 2 (15 LAPS) **1** Hoskins 15m13.409s (71.41mph); 2 Tony Bishop (Dallara F304) +0.776s; 3 Read; 4 Watts; 5 Lord; 6 Nigel Davers (Mygale-Zetec). **FL** Read 58.733s (74.04 mph).

RACE 3 (14 LAPS) **1** Bishop 15m36.692s (64.99mph); 2 Wil Arif (Mygale US1) +4.847s; 3 Lord; 4 Davers; 5 Hoskins; 6 Robbie Allen (Sheane). **FL** Bishop 1m00.473s (71.90mph).

TRACKDAY TROPHY (38 LAPS) **1** Tav Kirk/James Walker (Mazda MX-5) 45m01.936s (61.15mph); 2 James Bird/Andrew Stacey (Mini Cooper S) +18.963s; 3 James Birch (Vauxhall Corsa); 4 Dan & Ben Abbitt (Peugeot 306 Rallye); 5 Anthony Morris (Ford Fiesta ST); 6 Aaron Harding/Daniel Slater (Renault Clio). **Class winners** Birch; Morris; Adrian Timpson/Colin Tester (Toyota MR2); Gideon September/Jason Brooks (MR2). **FL** Morris 1m05.844s (66.04mph).

MSV TEAM TROPHY (51 LAPS)

1 James Britton (BMW M3) 1h00m38.501s (60.95mph); 2 Steve Cocker (Cooper S) +45.939s; 3 Tav Kirk/James Walker (MX-5); 4 Henry Curtis (Peugeot 205 GTI); 5 Perry Winch/Steve Rothery (Clio Cup); 6 Jonny Milner/George Wright (Porsche 944).

CW Kirk/Walker; Curtis; Jeremy Hayman/Mark Penny (Vauxhall VX220). **FL** Britton 1m05.597s (66.29mph).

VICTOR MELDREW CHALLENGE (BOTH 15 LAPS)

1 Barnaby Davies (Toyota Starlet) 17m39.379s (61.57mph); 2 Cliff Pellin (Ford Fiesta ST150) +8.218s; 3 Robert Taylor (Fiesta XR2i); 4 Kieron Lehanne (Citroen Saxo); 5 Wayne Crabtree (Ford Puma); 6 Edward Christie (M3). **FL** Davies 1m03.619s (68.35mph).

RACE 2 1 Jody Halse (M3) 16m11.281s (62.68mph);

2 Peter Osborne (Clio) +0.768s; 3 Trevor Buckley (Peugeot 106 Rallye); 4 Mike Collins (M3); 5 Davies; 6 Lehanne. **FL** Davies 1m03.509s (68.47mph).



around the outside of heat one winner Craig Pollard and Ian Buxton in dismal conditions.

Buxton, who narrowly missed out on taking the spoils in the first heat, had led away as poleman Daniel Pitchford, the winner of the second heat, stalled on the grid. But Buxton couldn't hold off a charging Farmer at Druids, before dropping from second to fifth at the finish after a spin at Clearways.

That allowed Pollard to take the runner-up spot, almost 10 seconds adrift of Farmer at the chequered flag, with Stephen Morrin a distant third. Buxton just missed out on beating Jesse Chamberlain to fourth place, while Adam Macaulay recovered from a trip through the gravel in the opening heat to round out the top half-dozen.

Three Monoposto races produced as many different winners, with Graham Read taking first blood in his Dallara F301 after Robbie Watts (Lola F106/03) and Tony Bishop (Dallara F304) both slid into the Paddock Hill gravel while disputing the lead in the opener. Chris Lord (Van Diemen RF82) took advantage of a four-way melee at Graham Hill Bend to secure second, with Julian Hoskins (Vector

TF93) completing the podium.

Hoskins took his Vector to victory in the second race after falling to sixth on the opening lap. Such was his pace that he was back in the lead by one-third distance after demoting Lord. As Lord dropped to fifth in his slower Van Diemen Formula Ford, Bishop followed Hoskins through to take second, with Read completing the podium ahead of Watts.

It was a similar story in race three, as Lord led but fell back to third behind the Dallara of a victorious Bishop and Wil Arif's Mygale.

Tav Kirk and James Walker sealed the win in the Trackday Trophy race in their Mazda MX-5 after Kirk seized the lead from James Birch's Corsa early on. Birch had to settle for third after dropping behind the Mini of James Bird and Andrew Stacey during the round of pitstops.

James Britton dominated the Team Trophy event, leading from the start in his BMW M3. Steve Cocker finished 45 seconds adrift in second, dropping behind the Kirk/Walker Mazda at the stops but making his way back ahead in the final five minutes of the one-hour race.

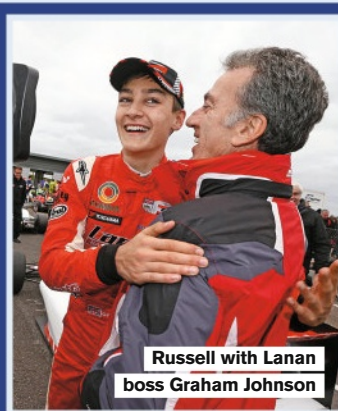
● Kerry Dunlop



Farmer (1) dominated a wet Formula Vee final



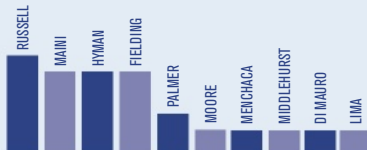
Hoskins (21) leads away the Monoposto field



Russell with Lanan
boss Graham Johnson

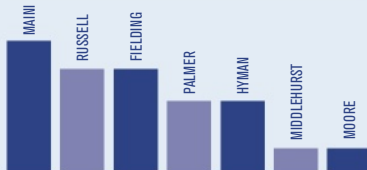
1	GEORGE RUSSELL	Lanan Racing	483
2	ARJUN MAINI	Lanan Racing	480
3	RAOUL HYMAN	HHC Motorsport	465
4	SENNAN FIELDING	HHC Motorsport	464
5	STRUAN MOORE	Lanan Racing	412
6	WILL PALMER	HHC Motorsport	356
7	DIEGO MENCHACA	Douglas Motorsport	327
8	GAETANO DI MAURO	Petroball Racing	301
9	CHRIS MIDDLEHURST	MGR	253
10	CHARLIE EASTWOOD	Douglas Motorsport	233

WINS



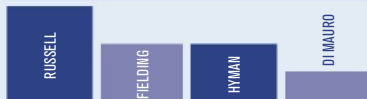
RUSSELL	5
MAINI	4
HYMAN	4
FIELDING	4
PALMER	2
MOORE	1
MENCHACA	1
DI MAURO	1
MIDDLEHURST	1
LIMA	1

FASTEST LAPS



MAINI	6
RUSSELL	5
FIELDING	5
PALMER	3
HYMAN	3
MIDDLEHURST	1
MOORE	1

POLES



RUSSELL	3
FIELDING	2
HYMAN	2
DI MAURO	1

Based on the best qualifying time

POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

In races one and three: 35-29-24-21-19-17-15-13-12-11-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 to the top 20 finishers. For reversed-grid races, for which grid order is determined by the top-eight finishing positions in race one, points are scored: 25-22-20-18-16-15-14-13-12-11-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 to the top 20 finishers.

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Rookie Russell turns the tables

George Russell emerged from an epic four-way shootout for the second BRDC F4 title as champion.

SCOTT MITCHELL looks at how he did it

George Russell looked like he couldn't lose the 2014 BRDC Formula 4 title. Then it looked like there was no way he could win it. And then, in a gripping final round, he snatched it back from Lanan Racing team-mate Arjun Maini in the very last race.

HOW THE TITLE WAS WON

There were moments in 2014 when Russell was quite clearly the class of the field. He won twice at Silverstone on his debut weekend. He blitzed the opposition in qualifying at Oulton Park and waltzed clear in race one. Despite crashing in qualifying at Brands, he fought through the pack in race one and clinched a podium in race two. And when he had to win the final race to take the crown, he pulled off a superb overtaking move on Raoul Hyman, a title rival and one of the grid's toughest racers.

Those were the peaks. Qualifying crash aside, two race-ending incidents with Hyman while

leading were his nadir. Hyman copped the blame for both, despite his protestations, but if the first incident at Oulton Park was the South African's fault – the HHC driver dived down the inside at Cascades but slid into his rival after getting on the damp part of the track – then both could have done more to avoid a repeat at Donington, when Hyman tried to pass Russell for the lead at the Old Hairpin.

So when Russell had to pass Hyman in the final race at Snetterton in order to win the championship, it's fair to say there were a few hearts in mouths.

He dived to the outside at Agostini, then cut back underneath his rival before forcing his way up the inside at Hamilton. It was a champion's move.

"I was so emotional when I came off the track – it's been such an up-and-down year," he confessed. "I thought I might have lost it."

Russell is referring to a difficult mid-season spell that threatened to unravel his title bid. He remained atop the points after three wins from the first nine races – he added a victory in race three at Brands to his Silverstone brace – but a podium-less return trip to Silverstone and shunt-affected second meeting in Kent gave his rivals a chance to close in.

Hyman emerged as the biggest threat initially, and his HHC team-mate Will Palmer was also in the reckoning after scoring a double victory in round three at Snetterton. Palmer's bid was derailed by bad luck in the second half of the year, while team-mate Sennan Fielding's came alive with a treble at Silverstone (the first in the series' short history) after a problematic first half of 2014 hindered by mechanical woe and racing incidents.

Hyman was there or thereabouts in the middle stages of the year,

Menchaca scored emotional first win





ALL PICS: JAKOB EBBREY

"I was so emotional when I came off the track. It was such an up-and-down year"

George Russell

although lost a bit of ground with just two podiums (including one win) across the races at Silverstone, Brands and Donington Park.

With Fielding playing catch-up and Hyman's charge stalling somewhat, Russell looked to have dodged a bullet – but it was the above trio of rounds in which Maini emerged as a true title threat.

The 16-year-old Indian looked a dark horse from the outset, though mistakes stymied his impressive pace. Reversed-grid wins kept him in the hunt, and when Russell faltered at Brands Maini clinched victory in race three to pile the pressure on his team-mate.

He was solid in the opening two races at Donington, finishing fourth twice, and inherited victory in the finale when Russell and Hyman

clashed to vault into the series lead – his 21-point margin with just three rounds to go was as big as any Russell had throughout the season.

Doubts remained, though. Maini's Brands victory followed an unnecessary error while leading in race two, when a spin dropped him to second behind Chris Middlehurst and handed the 2013 Formula Renault BARC champion his sole win in a campaign that would, in hindsight, end that weekend. Even when Maini led race three at Donington, with his main rivals having retired, he erred and skated across the gravel under no pressure at all. The threat of a mistake seemed ever present.

Relieved from the pressure of leading, Russell grabbed pole for the first race of the finale while Maini ended up seventh, Fielding was only ninth and Hyman 18th and last after a grid penalty. But Russell, in keeping with the second half of his season, made it tough for himself.

He botched the start in all three races and slumped to seventh in the opener, behind Fielding and a charging Hyman and one place ahead of Maini. Fortunately for Russell, his team-mate was enduring an even worse weekend.

Russell shadowed Hyman in the

reversed-grid race two after slipping back at the start, but Maini dropped from pole to third and another mistake at Montreal meant he fell behind Fielding and Moore. Russell went on the offensive in the final race as Maini played it cautiously, and fortune favoured the brave.

ONE-WIN WONDERS

The efforts of Palmer and Struan Moore ensured that HHC and Lanan drivers often occupied the top three rows of the grid, even if the two were unable to quite match their title-challenging team-mates.

Moore was unable to convert his often practice-topping pace into more victories; his race-three triumph at Oulton was his sole 2014 success. That tally was matched by four other drivers, though Hillspeed's Gustavo Lima and Middlehurst triumphed in the two Brands Hatch reversed-grid races.

Brazilian debutants Gaetano di Mauro and Petroball Racing were the most improved package, taking a first podium at Silverstone and a pole and race win at Brands. Douglas Motorsport's Diego Menchaca was a regular podium finisher and scored his maiden win at Snetterton, days after the death of a close friend from his native Mexico. ❧

TOP SIX WHO STOOD OUT

1 George Russell

His peaks were higher than anyone else's, though his challenge looked as though it might hit the skids mid-season. Rallied in fine fashion. Qualifying effort and race-one win at Oulton stood out.



2 Raoul Hyman

Flew out of the blocks initially and was probably the best racer on the grid. Tackled reversed-grid races with gusto and was never satisfied with anything other than victories. Clashes with Russell proved his ultimate undoing.



3 Sennan Fielding

Mistakes and bad luck hurt Fielding in the opening half of the year but his Silverstone hat-trick showed what he was capable of when it all came together. Very fast, but didn't quite have enough for the title.



4 Arjun Maini

There are a lot of positives about the young Indian. He's a likeable young man and tremendously quick on his day, but unprompted errors were the blots in his copybook. He made more than the other protagonists and it cost him.



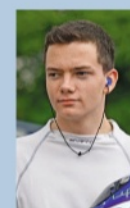
5 Struan Moore

Trouble-hit start to the season put him out of realistic title contention early on. Qualifying efforts didn't match practice or race pace – if he'd tied a few more sessions together he'd have won a lot more races.



6 Will Palmer

Had the inverse season you expect of a single-seater rookie. Adapted admirably and was a star early on, but bad luck blighted the next half of his campaign. The youngster's speed was undeniable, as evidenced by his Winter Series success.



Mid-season streak was key to Fittipaldi's title

2014 FORMULA RENAULT BARC SEASON REVIEW

Fittipaldi name wins again

The BARC's Formula Renault series reached its nadir this year in terms of quantity but the efforts of Pietro Fittipaldi showed that quality had remained for the category's final year. By **MARC ORME**

64

The 2014 Formula Renault BARC Championship was all about one driver – Pietro Fittipaldi – but the supporting cast of aspiring racers helped to provide exceptional action over the course of the 15-race season.

Joining MGR Motorsport for his second year in the category, the Brazilian star earned a dominant title triumph with 10 victories and a total of 12 podiums from 15 races, including a remarkable mid-season run of eight consecutive wins.

Although he started the campaign on the top step of the podium in round one at Rockingham, Fittipaldi didn't have things all his own way as the season began. MGR team-mate Matteo Ferrer emerged victorious in the second race and Fortec's Alex Gill bounced back from a costly puncture in the opener to make it three winners on the first weekend.

Incredibly, neither Ferrer nor Gill managed to chalk up another success all year and it was actually Piers Hickin who came through to snatch the vice-champion's position for Scorpio Motorsport with a great late-season run-in.

Producing terrific consistency all

year, Hickin matched Fittipaldi's tally of 12 podiums – four more than Ferrer and three more than Gill. After taking his first win at Croft on the penultimate weekend, where Fittipaldi wrapped up the championship, seven days later Hickin ended the season on the top step of the rostrum again having put in a terrific drive in the last race of the year at Silverstone.

The televised BTCC-supporting finale also delivered a maiden victory for first-year racer Colin Noble Jr, an excellent encounter with one of the closest finishes in the championship's history. He took the chequered flag a mere 0.060 seconds ahead of Hickin.

Silverstone was the only weekend where Gill wasn't on the podium, and this contributed to him missing out on a top-three championship finish by five points to Ferrer. One telling statistic for Ferrer and Gill, too, was the fact that they each secured five pole positions, while Fittipaldi only achieved three.

Noble, the inaugural Radical SR1 Cup champion in 2013, impressed in his debut year in single-seaters on his way to fifth in the standings. He



Hickin charged to second spot

secured his maiden podium during round six at Donington, and bounced back from a mid-season lull to deliver a sensational showing in the finale with that win and a second place.

One of the most improved drivers over the course of the year was American racer Travis Jordan 'TJ' Fischer, who was unfortunate not to collect silverware in his first season in the UK. Driving for Cliff Dempsey Racing, the Californian was especially unlucky not to climb the podium at Croft on the penultimate weekend after qualifying a season-best third fastest.

Fischer's team-mate, Canada's Patrick Dussault, ended his first season on British soil seventh in the standings behind his fellow North American and ahead of SWB Motorsport's Jack Butel and MTECH Lite's Hayden Edmonds, the last

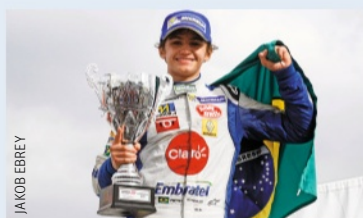
named of whom only contested four of the championship's six events. Dussault, like Fischer, was close to enjoying podium success – at Donington he was only 0.3s shy.

Indian rookie Tarun Reddy would almost certainly have finished inside the championship top six, had it not been for a mid-season ruling with regard to his non-UK racing licence which precluded him from scoring points after the second event of the year at Donington. Even so, Reddy secured three podium finishes and raced to a season-best second place at Snetterton in August.

Before beginning his Formula Renault Northern European Cup campaign, eventual NEC champion Ben Barnicoat made a one-off return to FR BARC for Fortec on the opening weekend at Rockingham. ❧

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER (TEAM)	POINTS	WINS
1	PIETRO FITTIPALDI (MGR)	258	10
2	PIERS HICKIN (Scorpio)	246	2
3	MATTEO FERRER (MGR)	204	1
4	ALEX GILL (Fortec)	177	1
5	COLIN NOBLE JR (MGR)	170	1
6	TRAVIS JORDAN FISHER (CDR)	128	0



2014 BRITISH RALLYCROSS REVIEW

Fantastic four for Godfrey

Small grids and the lack of a full-time challenger meant Julian Godfrey eased to a fourth straight British Rallycross title. HAL RIDGE looks back at yet another championship for the Fiesta ace

There are two distinctly different kinds of champion driver in rallycross racing.

There's the calculated thinker, the type of driver who knows exactly what he needs to do – when to push hard for victory or when to settle for second. On the other hand there is the all-out maximum attack driver who pushes for victory at all costs. Both can be

equally fast and can give sparkle to a championship campaign.

Sadly for the British Rallycross Championship in 2014 the maximum attacker, Ollie O'Donovan, didn't enter until halfway through the year, by which time the thinker, Julian Godfrey, had laid the foundations for a fourth consecutive title. That isn't to say that Godfrey didn't have great speed, but the story might have been

different and certainly more exciting had O'Donovan done a full year.

At rounds one (Lydden Hill), two (Valkenswaard) and three (Knockhill), Godfrey was the fastest driver and claimed maximum British championship points, but knew what he needed to do from the off. Finishing third at the season opener to Belgium's Koen Pauwels and Jochen Coox was a mark of Godfrey's calculated nature.

O'Donovan qualified on pole position at the four events he contested, but had mixed results in the finals. At round four, Pembrey, when O'Donovan and most of the Supercar field were removed through contact, Godfrey cruised to victory. O'Donovan claimed wins at the final two rounds at Lydden Hill and Croft, but by that stage the title had already gone Godfrey's way.

Steve Harris was the only other

Supercar driver aside from the champion to contest a full season and deserved second place in the standings on consistency.

Stuart Emery took the spoils in the SuperNational division, despite struggling in the latter part of the year with persistent engine issues. Jack Thorne won the Super1600 title at his first attempt, while Craig Lomax made up for last-round disappointment in 2013 to dominate in Hot Hatch. Marc Scott and Tristan Ovenden won the RX150 and Suzuki Swift titles respectively. ❧

Godfrey dominated a small Supercar entry



CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER (CAR)	POINTS
1	JULIAN GODFREY (Ford Fiesta)	124
2	STEVE HARRIS (Ford Focus)	73
3	STEVE HILL (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo)	69
4	OLLIE O'DONOVAN (Ford Focus)	61
5	SIMON HORTON (Subaru Impreza)	51
6	ANDY GRANT (Ford Focus)	36

2014 BRITISH HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP REVIEW

Magic Moran makes it five

A fifth championship never looked in doubt for the younger Moran, who clinched a dominant title in his trusty Gould as father Roger called time on his own successful career. By EDDIE WALDER

Scott Moran became champion for the fifth time, only the fourth driver to do so, but this year's British Hillclimb Championship was marked by the further development of growing talent.

While the younger Moran took out the last but one of the Martin Groves hill records and extended his position as the all-time number one run-off winner, ending the season on 122, the growth of talent came from a band of three drivers who tasted some success but wanted more.

Will Hall increased his career win tally by five, taking a double and the hill record at Wiscombe Park in July, a single at Prescott and a further double at Loton Park on the last day of the season. Alex Summers began the season with a double at the first meeting and led the table for six weeks until a disastrous engine failure at Gurston Down in late May. The trend of unreliability continued,

leading to a loss of fourth place at the finale. The family then made a decision to move on to a new car in 2015 – the championship-winning Gould GR61X.

Summers will be replacing retiring former champion Roger Moran, whose times sharing his Gould with son Scott are over. Late in the season he announced his retirement after 20 years at the top of the sport. Moran Sr cited the difficulty of remaining in the top six as his reason, though the competitive bug remains and he will make an occasional appearance in one of his many rally cars.

Another talent we can expect to see more of is Jos Goodyear. Though he had electrical and mechanical issues after his shift to supercharging, he eventually overhauled Summers with five wins, a new outright hill record and a never-say-die driving style loved by spectators.

While the efforts of the emerging talents were laudable, it was the



Moran Jr claimed another title, Senior retired

experienced Trevor Willis who clinched second place in the points after a marvellous season with nine wins. He had difficulty matching Moran at times and suffered at the hands of the band of three, but continued the battle at the top and did not concede the title until mid-September at Doune.

Wallace Menzies suffered two of the worst crashes in hillclimb history at Shelsley Walsh. The car may never

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER (CAR)	POINTS
1	SCOTT MORAN (Gould-NME GR61X)	262
2	TREVOR WILLIS (OMS-RPE 28)	236
3	WILL HALL (Force-Nissan WH)	231
4	JOS GOODYEAR (GWR-Suzuki Raptor)	186
5	ALEX SUMMERS (Force-Suzuki PT)	182
6	TOM NEW (Gould-Judd GR55)	125

reappear in any guise and Menzies is expected to return for 2015 in a completely new car. ❧

CHRISTMAS



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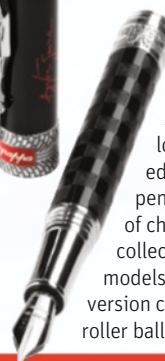
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MONTEGRAPPA – Italy's most-revered manufacturer of fine writing instruments

Montegrappa is pleased to announce the debut of new commemorative pens honouring Grand Prix racing legend Ayrton Senna.

The pens will be part of Montegrappa's popular 'Icons' series of writing instruments, which pays tribute to globally admired cultural notables who have achieved greatness in a variety of fields. Previously released pens in the 'Icons' series have honoured Muhammad Ali, Bruce Lee, Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley.

To honour Senna, in the year that marks the 20th Anniversary of his death at Imola, Montegrappa will issue a series of pens that encapsulate his spirit and his style. A yellow cabochon set in the top of the cap recalls the colour of his helmet, which was accented by green to match the hues of the Brazilian flag. Engraved in a ring surrounding the top of the cap and the cabochon is the inscription 'Ayrton Senna da Silva March 21, 1960 – May 1, 1994'. Senna's signature appears in flaming red on the side of



the cap. The rings at both ends of the cap are engraved with tyre-tread patterns. A pocket clip in the shape of an F1 race car has been fitted with its rear 'spoiler' bearing the 'Senna Double S' logo. The barrel ends with two crossed flags, while the rings bear the dates of his three F1 world championships.

Supplied in unique boxes, the Ayrton Senna 'Icons' pens will be offered as fountain pens, roller balls and ballpoints in jet-black resin, in the Legend Series of 1960 pieces each with sterling silver trim, to mark the year of his birth. The solid sterling silver Champion Series with cap and barrel engraved in low-relief will be available in a limited edition of 610 examples each – as fountain pens and roller balls, representing his tally of championship points. To complete the collection, both the Legend and the Champion models are available in an exclusive solid gold version comprising 20 fountain pens and 20 roller balls each, representing the 20th anniversary.



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GIFT GUIDE

2014

LINEAR EDGE – A global motorsport lifestyle company

Linear Edge, a global motorsport lifestyle company, is the leading designer of innovative and unique wall sculptures for motorsport enthusiasts.

The company offers high-quality track designs that embody refined style and meticulous craftsmanship. Linear Edge provides a comprehensive range of premium wall art for motorsport enthusiasts worldwide, including track designs from Formula 1, MotoGP, World Superbike, World Endurance Championship, IndyCar, among many others.

Linear Edge was born from an architect's love for motorsport and the essential need for an alternative

to posters, pictures and models. The result was exceptionally made wall sculptures that feature stylish designs, innovative functionality and a contemporary feel. From world famous tracks to local favourites, Linear Edge allows motorsport enthusiasts to display their passion in a unique, sophisticated medium.

The Linear Edge brand represents uncompromising quality, innovation and excellence in design. The company is dedicated to furthering racing fans' connection to the sport through high-quality products and maintaining the highest standard of customer satisfaction.



The tracks range in price from \$160 - \$250
www.linearedge.com



SPEEDKING – Speeding into stockings everywhere, the speeding seasonal gifts range



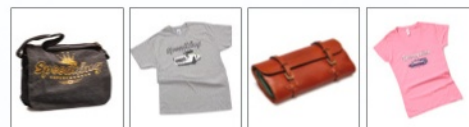
This Christmas, dare to be different when it comes to impressing friends and relatives, and choose from Speedking's range of retro clothing and gifts.

From cool collectables, an exclusive range of T-shirts, limited-edition art, and luxury leather goods, the UK brand has something to suit everyone, be it a hand-crafted leather overnight bag, or a Grand Prix print to treasure.

For the hard-to-buy-for relation who has everything, the stylish range of Speedking leather goods offers an element of handcrafted luxury, including best-selling hip flasks, stainless steel Thermos flasks encased in leather carrying cases, and – the ultimate accessory for that crisp Boxing Day walk – hunter flasks complete with four stainless steel cups for sharing tipples with friends.

Available in classic black, tan, and chestnut shades, the range has been crafted by British tradesmen from the highest quality Papaya leather, with highly polished stainless steel details completing each piece.

Fashion-conscious teens will love the branded range of T-shirts boasting retro and classic car designs.



As for Grandad, look no further. Speedking's stylish travel leather wet packs have been based on the design used by British Army officers in the First World War, crafted from high quality leather with English manufactured brass buckles holding all essentials in place.

And for that discerning Dad, uncle or son, the brand's range of limited-edition art will be a surefire hit. Stylish giclees featuring racing legends have been limited to a run of 100 prints, each being numbered and signed by the artist.

The brand also offers a range of official Volkswagen merchandise including bags, flasks, mugs and keyrings, and ideal stocking fillers including retro tin signs, cufflinks, cuddly toys and wine bottle stoppers.

Speedking

For seasonal gift inspiration
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MSV – Exhilarating driving experiences and great days out from MSV, owner of Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton, and Cadwell Park



Exhilarating driving experiences, great days out at motorsport events, exclusive motor racing merchandise, and reduced-price offers – this wide range of gift ideas, priced from £1 to £959, is available from MSV, the owner-operator of Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton, Cadwell Park and Bedford Autodrome. MSV's website makes it possible to spend minutes online and find a gift that the lucky recipient will remember for years.

The rush of a single-seater track-driving experience is certainly memorable, and that can be had as part of the RaceMaster activity at the reduced price of £165.

RaceMaster also includes high-speed track driving with instruction in a BMW M3, also accessible through M3 Master from just £89.

For those who like hanging the car's tail out, RallyMaster is an opportunity to powerslide through a rally course from as little as £89. New for 2015, RallyMaster adopts the lively, rear-wheel-drive Toyota GT86 sports car.

For the ultimate driving experience, PalmerSport is the world's best corporate driving event, but also open to individuals. With prices from £545, guests can go as fast as they dare in up to six high-performance cars, including the 250bhp Formula Jaguar single-seater and Jaguar

JP-LM sports-prototype, on four different circuit layouts at Bedford Autodrome.

Alternatively, trackday-taster sessions let you take your own car or bike on track from just £25.

There are gifts for children, too: for just £79, YoungDrive! enables those aged 11 and over to enjoy their first driving lesson in a new MINI One.

Tickets to car and bike racing events are available for as little as £10, 2015 Season Passes from £79, and circuit-themed merchandise from just £1. E-Gift vouchers let recipients choose their own race tickets or driving experiences.



For more information

visit www.msv.com/christmas or call 0843 453 1000

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SCUDERIA FERRARI

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Hidden Glory – The story of the world's longest-surviving constructor of customer racing cars

Acclaimed by Octane Magazine and Motorbooks.ie as Book of the Month, this elegant work tells the story of The Crosslé Car Company, perhaps the best-kept secret in motor racing.

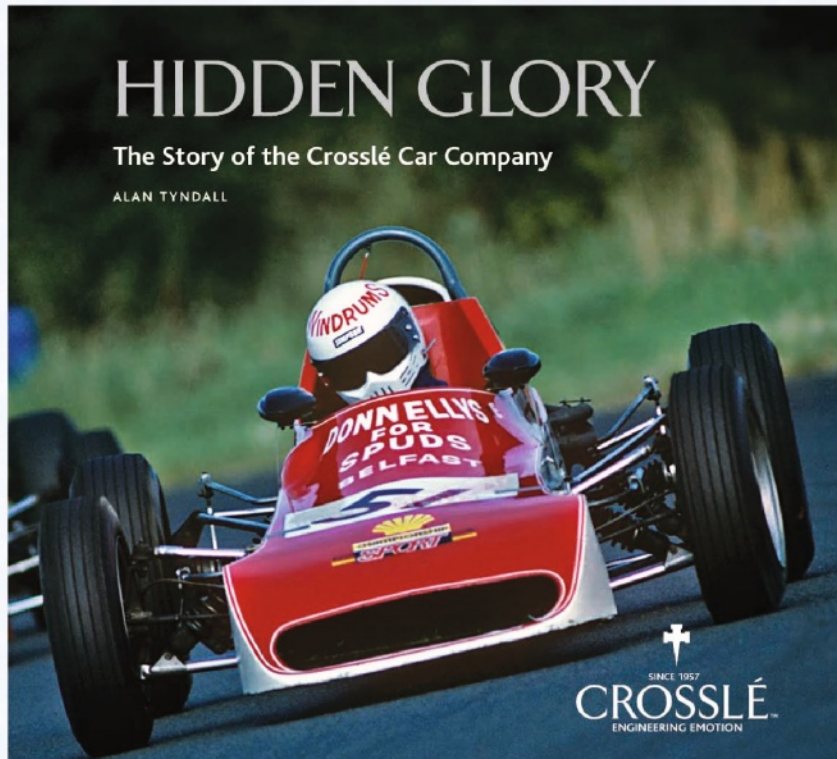
Over seven decades this reserved company, secluded on the outskirts of Belfast, has built a thousand racing cars and won countless championships across the British Isles, Europe and the USA.

John Crosslé's racing cars launched the careers of F1 stars Nigel Mansell, John Watson, Derek Daly, Martin Donnelly and Eddie Irvine, along with IndyCar aces Arie Luyendyk and Denis Firestone.

Written by journalist and TV producer Alan Tyndall, with assistance from Caroline Crosslé and company owner Paul McMorran, *Hidden Glory* uncovers a remarkable tale of engineering ingenuity and human tenacity. Undaunted by Northern Ireland's 'troubles', the Crosslé team overcame huge challenges to compete with the best on the racetracks on the world.

Tyndall's exhaustive research and closeness to the Crosslé family are evident in this 230-page book, lavishly illustrated and peppered with gems straight from the mouths of Tommy Reid, Brian Nelson, Skip Barber, Jim Vermeulen and other key players.

The result is an entertaining and absorbing read for anyone passionate about the sport. The perfect Christmas gift!



CONTACTS:

Paul McMorran,
The Crosslé
Car Company
Limited, 217 Old
Hollywood Road,
Hollywood,
BT18 9QS.
Tel. 028 9076 3332
paul.mcmorran@
btinternet.com

Alan Tyndall,
RPM-Motorsport,
58 Edentrillick Rd,
Hillsborough,
BT26 6PG.
Tel. 028 9268 9258
alan@rpm-motorsport.com



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E-mail: autosport@haymarket.com Website: www.autosport.com

DEPUTY EDITOR

Marcus Simmons ext.5807
marcus.simmons@haymarket.com

GROUP F1 EDITOR

Jonathan Noble ext.5810
jonathan.noble@haymarket.com

GRAND PRIX EDITOR

Edd Straw ext.5887
edd.straw@haymarket.com

F1 ASSISTANT EDITOR

Ben Anderson ext.5425
ben.anderson@haymarket.com

EDITOR AUTOSPORT.COM

Glenn Freeman ext.5309
glenn.freeman@haymarket.com

DEPUTY EDITOR AUTOSPORT.COM

Matt Beer ext.5811
matt.beer@haymarket.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Peter Hodges ext.5903
peter.hodges@haymarket.com

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Stuart Codling ext.5835
stuart.codling@haymarket.com

RALLIES EDITOR

David Evans
david.evans@haymarket.com

ART EDITOR

Lydney Row ext.5914
lydney.row@haymarket.com

SENIOR DESIGNER

Michael Cavalli ext.5381
michael.cavalli@haymarket.com

PHOTOGRAPHS

LAT Photographic

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Scott Mitchell ext.5370
scott.mitchell@haymarket.com

GROUP PICTURE EDITOR

Peter Mills ext.5918
peter.mills@haymarket.com

AUTOSPORT.COM**TECHNICAL TEAM LEADER**

Geoff Creighton
geoff.creighton@haymarket.com

AUTOSPORT.COM DEVELOPER

Tomasz Trznadel
tomasz.trznadel@haymarket.com

OFFICE MANAGER

Joanne Grove ext.5804
joanne.grove@haymarket.com

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Gary Watkins Mark Glendenning
Henry Hope-Frost Dieter Rencken
Marcus Pye Gary Anderson Pablo Elizalde
Andrew van Leeuwen

CORRESPONDENTS

ARGENTINA
Tony Watson
AUSTRALIA
Phil Branagan
AUSTRIA
Gerhard Kuntschik
BELGIUM
Gordon McKay
BRAZIL
Lito Cavalcanti
FINLAND
Esa Illoinen
GERMANY
Rene de Boer
GREECE
Dimitris Papadopoulos
ITALY
Roberto Chinchero
JAPAN
Iiro Takahashi, Len Clarke
NEW ZEALAND
Bernard Carpenter
RUSSIA
Gregory Golyshv
SOUTH AFRICA
Richard Asher
SPAIN
Raimon Duran
SWEDEN
Tege Tornvall
USA
Jonathan Ingram,
David Phillips, Robin Miller, Jeremy Shaw
UK & EIRE
Jack Benyon, Jonathan Crawford, Dan Cross, Kerry Dunlop, Leanne Fahy, Paul Healy, Linda Keen, Jamie Klein, Mark Libbeter, Stephen Lickorish, Marc Orme, Graham Read, Hal Ridge, Peter Scherer, Ian Sowman, Oliver Timson, Ian Trichmarsh, Matt Upton, Eddie Walder, Richard Young

ADVERTISING

Tel: +44 (0) 20 8267 5389
Fax: +44 (0) 20 8267 5850
E-mail: autosport.ads@haymarket.com

AD PRODUCTION

Tel: +44 (0) 20 8267 5588 Fax: +44 (0) 20 8267 5320

DISPLAY SALES**MANAGER**

Martin Lee
ext.5389
martin.lee@haymarket.com

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Gary Lee Hoebeck
ext.5576
gary.lee.hoebeck@haymarket.com

Luke Ricketts ext.5961
luke.ricketts@haymarket.com

Don Rupal ext.5244
don.rupal@haymarket.com

CLASSIFIED**SALES MANAGER**

Jonathan Whitehead
ext.5908
jonathan.whitehead@haymarket.com

CLASSIFIED**ADVERTISING**

James Hunter
ext.5367
james.hunter@haymarket.com

Jamie Brooker
ext.5271
jamie.brooker@haymarket.com

ONLINE ADVERTISING

Leah Mims ext.5846
leah.mims@haymarket.com

Matt Simpkin ext.5820
matt.simpkin@haymarket.com

SPECIAL PROJECTS**SALES**

James Robinson
ext.5384
james.robinson@haymarket.com

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Matthew Witham

LICENSING DIRECTOR

Jim James

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Ailsa Donovan
ext.5639
ailsa.donovan@haymarket.com

PRODUCTION

Abbie Gunner
ext.5588
abbie.gunner@haymarket.com

CONTROL

Simon Grayson
ext.5346
simon.grayson@haymarket.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

UK 0844 8488817
OVERSEAS +44 (0)1795 592 974
EMAIL autosport@servicehelpline.co.uk

BACK ISSUES

Tel: 0844 8488817

MARKETING MANAGER

Karen McCarthy ext.5658
karen.mccarthy@haymarket.com

LICENSING AND SYNDICATION**LICENSING MANAGER**

David Ryan ext.5024

AUTOSPORT, ISSN number 0269946X, is published weekly by Haymarket Media Group, Teddington Studios, Broom Road, Teddington TW11 9BE, United Kingdom. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named Air Business Ltd, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc, 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Jamaica NY 11434. Subscription records are maintained at Haymarket Media Group, Teddington Studios, Broom Road, Teddington TW11 9BE. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

MANAGEMENT**GROUP DIRECTOR**

Tim Bulley

GROUP COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Ben Guynan

GROUP EDITOR

Anthony Rowlinson

PUBLISHER

Stuart Williams

PUBLISHING MANAGER

Samantha Jemson

SPECIAL EVENTS MANAGER

Laura Coppin

DIGITAL SPECIAL PROJECT MANAGER

Simon Strang, ext.5093
simon.strang@haymarket.com

DIGITAL PRODUCT MANAGER

Simon Grayson, ext.5346
simon.grayson@haymarket.com

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THIS WEEK

LETTERS • BEST PICS • LATEST GEAR • ON TRACK & SCREEN • ONLINE

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week

Move over Formula 1,
WEC's time has come



EBREY/LAT

WEC rules motorsport roost

I was left fuming about Bernie Ecclestone's comments regarding Formula 1 not needing to attract young fans. However, after I calmed down a bit, I realised that he is correct! Why? Because the WEC is fast becoming the 'new' pinnacle of motorsport. Surely the rule diversity is more attractive to young engineers than F1 is at the moment?

Also, as a middle-aged trackside

fan (once young), I have always found it easier to identify and relate to sports-prototypes and GT cars than I ever could/can with single-seaters.

As for value for money, a trip to Le Mans always works out much better financially than a trip to Silverstone for the grand prix.

King F1 is dead: long live King WEC!

Rob King, by email

Well done, Lewis. Great to see those silly double points didn't affect the end result and the right driver clinched the championship.

Vettel is unquestionably a good racer, but I feel Alonso should have had at least one of those four titles, but that's motor racing for you.

Maybe McLaren can give Alonso the success he didn't achieve at Ferrari, and I hope they and the rest of the grid can close the gap on Mercedes, so that Lewis has more than just his team-mate to beat for the title next year!

Colin O'Callaghan
Runcorn, Cheshire

The president of FIFA has

decreed that, in all international football matches in 2015, any goals scored in the last five minutes will count as double.

He said it would "help to maintain the

fans' interest in the game until the very end". What a brilliant idea – I bet it'll go down a storm with the players and fans alike!

Mike Bland
Poole, Dorset

I am completely baffled at the letters in AUTOSPORT last week. Are there really people who think that those at the top of Formula 1 care about a sustainable form of motorsport?

They have made it clear that all they care about is getting as much money for themselves as soon as possible before it all collapses.

I am a bit confused as to why teams are so desperate to compete in a formula that doesn't want them when they could take their skills and huge depth of talent to a formula that they can afford.

The future for other series is bright and there are new money-making

opportunities that F1 has rejected. I didn't give money to Caterham, who are at a party they aren't wanted at begging the host to let them stay.

On the other hand I couldn't sign up to Team Brabham soon enough. I will be incredibly excited to see them get out on track and I hope there are other ways to be involved in future.

Sarah Hogg
Chesterfield, Derbyshire

So there will be no more money

for Lotus, Force India and Sauber; Bernie thinks they should manage their finances better; this despite a huge price hike caused by the new engine regs. F1 is in danger of pricing itself out of existence. Take a look at MotoGP, Bernie, and see how a world championship should be run!

Bob Ennion
By email

In pictures

Images around the globe, from the UAE to Germany and back to the UAE



LEWIS'S LIFE THROUGH A LENS

VIP guests in Abu Dhabi got a stunning view of world champion-elect Lewis Hamilton making a pitstop. All elected to film it rather than see it with their own eyes

COATES/LAT

HAMILTON KEEPS IT IN THE FAMILY
The new world champion is greeted by dad Anthony, brother Nicolas and girlfriend Nicole Scherzinger. And tons more cameras...



DUNBAR/LAT

VW TELLS OGIER: ON YER BIKE!

No, WRC king Seb Ogier isn't leaving – the Ayrton Senna fan was handed a limited-edition, Senna-branded Ducati 1199 Panigale S at a VW party in Wolfsburg



LOTUS-RENAULT TIE-UP ENDS WITH A BANG

Lotus bade farewell to Renault power with the wrong sort of fireworks when Pastor Maldonado suffered a big engine fire



TEE/LAT

In the shops

Desirable new releases

MARC MARQUEZ WATCHES

£55-£465 – lotus-watches.com

MotoGP sensation Marc Marquez has another world title in his pocket, and another line of watches bearing his name (and in some cases his #93) to celebrate. There are more than 30 to choose from, ranging from basic to 'special editions'.



McRAE SUBARU 1:18 MODEL

£86.99 – autosport.com/shop

Sun Star's 1:18-scale diecast replica of the #4 Subaru Impreza 555 that Colin McRae drove to victory in the 1994 RAC Rally is limited to 1998 pieces worldwide and its stunning detail is borne out by opening doors, bonnet and bootlid.



MIKE HAWTHORN BIOGRAPHY

£39.95 – autosport.com/shop

Reprinted in softback and fully updated with incredibly detailed new findings, particularly from the 1955 Le Mans disaster, this 284-page Tony Bailey/Paul Skilleter-penned book unearths superb gems about Britain's first world champion.



WHAT'S ON

ON TRACK IN THE UK

ANGLESEY

BRSCC

November 30

angleseycircuit.com

The BRSCC's traditional Winter Raceday at north Wales' picturesque coastal circuit takes place this Sunday. The meeting comprises Irish Global Lights, Sports/Saloons/Caterhams, Formula Ford 1600 and Enduro races.



Caterhams part of eclectic mix at Anglesey

EBREY/LAT

MONDELLO PARK

MPMC

November 30

mondello.ie

BTCC champion Colin Turkington (right) and race winner Aron Smith are among those heading to Mondello Park for the first-ever Patch Fiesta six-hour endurance race. The budget series has captured Irish motorsport's heart over the past two years and its inaugural long-distance race features a grid of 48 cars.



EBREY/LAT

AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL

8-11 January 2015, NEC

BBC commentator and ex-Formula 1 driver David Coulthard is the latest guest to be announced for January's AUTOSPORT International show at the NEC in Birmingham.

The Scot joins World Rallycross champion Petter Solberg, as well as British Touring Car champions Matt Neal, Andrew Jordan and Gordon Shedden, for the 25th running of

the event, having attended the first show back in 1991.

"I've got very fond memories of 1991, when I moved into Formula 3 and won Macau, and I've enjoyed attending the show over the years at different stages of my career," says Coulthard.

"There'll be lots to talk about from Formula 1, particularly following this incredible title fight between Lewis and Nico."



GILHAW/GETTY

ON TRACK AROUND THE WORLD

WORLD ENDURANCE

Rd 8/8

Interlagos, Brazil

November 30

fiawec.com

WORLD RALLYCROSS

Rd 12/12

San Luis, Argentina

November 28-29

rallycrossrx.com

SUPER TC2000

Rd 12/12

San Luis, Argentina

November 30

super-tc2000.com.ar

V8 STOCK CARS

Rd 12/12

Curitiba, Brazil

November 30

stockcar.com.br

NZ SUPERTOURERS

Rd 3/7

Pukekohe, New Zealand

November 29-30

v8st.co.nz



Interlagos hosts six-hour World Endurance finale

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world – plus TV and online

ON TELEVISION

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27

0900-1135 Motors TV

British F3 season review

1210-1340 Motors TV

Macau GP replay

1700-1730 Sky Sports F1

F1 Midweek Report

1855-2000 Motors TV

Formula Ford Festival

2100-2145 Sky Sports F1

Classic F1: 1982 Belgian GP

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 28

1600-1700 BT Sport 2

ELMS season review

2000-2130 Sky Sports F1

The F1 Show

2130-2345 Sky Sports F1

Classic F1: 2013 Chinese GP

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29

1040-1245 ITV4

BTCC season review

1230-1315 Sky Sports F1

Classic F1: 1994 Spanish GP

1340-1445 Motors TV

WRC GB highlights



...then watch the best bits of European F3

XPB/LAT

1515-1925 Motors TV

European F3 season review

1700-1800 Eurosport LIVE

World Rallycross: San Luis

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 30

1430-2125 Motors TV LIVE

WEC: Interlagos

1800-1830 Sky Sports F1

Classic F1: 1988 Monaco GP

1930-2100 Eurosport LIVE

WEC: Interlagos finish

MONDAY DECEMBER 1

2000-2305 Motors TV

WEC: Interlagos highlights

2245-0100 Sky Sports F1

Classic F1: 2007 Canadian GP

TUESDAY DECEMBER 2

2250-2325 Sky Sports F1

Classic F1: 1994 British GP

2300-2330 Eurosport

WEC: Interlagos highlights

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 3

2245-0100 Sky Sports F1

Classic F1: 2012 Spanish GP



Relive Rally GB 2014 on Motors TV...

MCKLEIN/DE

ONLINE

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube **TONY POND CRASHES ON OPENING RAC RALLY STAGE**



SEARCH FOR: 1984 RAC Rally from Tony Pond's Rover Vitesse (2:52)

Thirty years ago this week British rally heroes Tony Pond and Rob Arthur gave the big Rover Vitesse V8 its forest debut in the RAC Rally, having run it on the Circuit of Ireland and Manx asphalt rallies. They're in SS1 Knowsley Safari Park. Whoops!

AUTOSPORT+

How the F1 title was won and lost, plus Red Bull under

Reaction to the world championship decider and Red Bull's illegal front wing dominates the agenda for our experts this week. Edd Straw takes a deep look back at the Hamilton v Rosberg title fight, while Gary Anderson and our Secret Mechanic have their say on F1 rule breaches.

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Revved up over what's on the box

Like all season finales, Abu Dhabi was a weekend of farewells. Goodbye Seb, said Red Bull. Goodbye 'Nando, said Ferrari. Jenson... we'll call you, said McLaren. And goodbye Will Buxton, said GP2/GP3 television audiences, as the series' sometime press man-turned-world-feed commentator departed to focus on his Formula 1 role with US station NBC.

Buxton is a love/hate figure – but not one you either love or hate, one about whom your opinion can fluctuate between these polarities several times in a single commentary. Even when acclimatised, your brain still sometimes hits 'peak Buxton', when you overload on the level of bombastic mateyness coming out of your

telly and have to just hit mute until your eyes stop rolling.

His appraisals of particular drivers' awesomeness are best toned down by about 10 per cent. Some drivers look genuinely frightened by his attempt to be every podium finisher's best pal ever in



Buxton gets all matey with Romain Grosjean

the post-race interviews. His habit of describing single-make Dallaras 'THE Carlin'; 'THE Trident' as if the teams are constructors is responsible for severe dental damage through the amount of teeth-grinding it prompts.

But those are, ultimately, quibbles. In so many other ways, Buxton has been everything you could want for a junior-series commentator. Where some phone in their narration with no attempt to engage with their championship, the viscerally passionate Buxton not only knows GP2 inside out, he genuinely wants every single viewer to love it just as much. You'll never hear him talk vaguely about car number x as he flounders through an entry list trying to identify a

driver – he'll pinpoint the participants in a distant midfield shunt immediately and accurately, and then have a relevant anecdote about them. And he's not a sycophant. Like anyone with eyes, he's noticed that GP3 is seldom thrilling, and hasn't been shy about highlighting the series' room for improvement on air.

Critics call him an egotist, but he's a master at interacting with an expert at his side, knowing exactly when to let a Gary Anderson or Luca Filippi take the floor.

He's like a gregarious school friend who may have sometimes exasperated you, but who ultimately you were very glad you'd had in your life. A very warm goodbye, Will, your successor has a lot to live up to.

Revved Up

Neil Wilson

“The spectators put us back on our wheels as Henri hit the starter button”

■ Lombard RAC Rally ■ November 24-28 1985 ■ Victory with Henri Toivonen in brand-new Lancia



THE 1985 RAC RALLY VICTORY would prove to be my only win in the World Rally Championship, but what a one to win!

I'd got to know Henri Toivonen quite well — he used to come and stay with us in Chester and we got on OK. I'd done the Scottish Rally with him in 1980 and was actually asked by Talbot to do the RAC with him that year, but I'd already agreed to do it with Roger Clark in a Triumph TR7. My old friend Paul White ended up doing it with him and they won.

Still, five years later I got my chance. I'd done some pacenotes for Henri in Corsica on one occasion when [co-driver] Fred Gallagher was on the Safari and we kept in touch. He then asked me to do the RAC in '85 and I jumped at the chance.

We spent the day at Donington Park getting to know the brand-new Group B Lancia Delta S4, with Henri working out what he could and couldn't do with it. He was nervous about his future with Lancia so wanted a good result.

Once the rally started it was amazing how it all transpired: the battle with Markku Alen in the other S4 and Tony Pond in the MG Metro 6R4 holding third. There were three new cars running at the front.

So many things happened to us. We had a roll on the ice in Scotland. The spectators kindly put us back on our wheels as Henri hit the starter button! We hit trouble in Wales with

some sort of fuel-digestion issue and ran out. By a million-to-one chance a chap in a Land Rover appeared with a can of fuel and got us going!

The dramas continued in Kielder when the front differential packed up — and we also backed into Markku's car at a time control.

As the rally wore on Henri got quicker and quicker, but he was quite high maintenance about the notes.

“What's next?” he'd keep shouting, before adding, “put it away!” The cars were so quick, we both struggled to see down the straights at times.

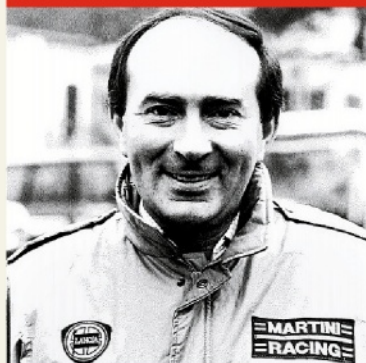
We thought our luck had run out when we got to Ambleside in the Lake District. We had a turbo let go and Lancia had engineers all over the car. Team manager Cesare Fiorio told me they'd flown in the actual guy who'd built the engine specially to sort it. It obviously worked.

One final twist came in Grizedale. We were 25th or so on the road, which meant a one-minute gap between cars. Back then only the top 15 on the road got two-minute gaps. Henri barked at the marshal: “I'm an A-seeded driver, I want two minutes!”

We landed a one-minute penalty for ‘not complying with a marshal’ but made it back to Nottingham under a minute ahead of Markku.

I remember so much of the detail, but winning the RAC, with Toivonen, in a Lancia, does that to you! ❧
Neil Wilson was talking to Henry Hope-Frost

PROFILE



ESTATE AGENT NEIL WILSON

began co-driving in the early 1970s. He made his WRC debut in '73 and would focus almost exclusively on his home event, the RAC Rally. He's best known for his victory with Henri Toivonen in the '85 edition and continued co-driving until 2000, latterly with Russell Brookes. He still works in property in Chester and competes, from the driving seat, in a Porsche 356 in historic rallying.

NEXT WEEK **BRITISH STARS OF 2014**
Plus: World Endurance finale; World Rally review

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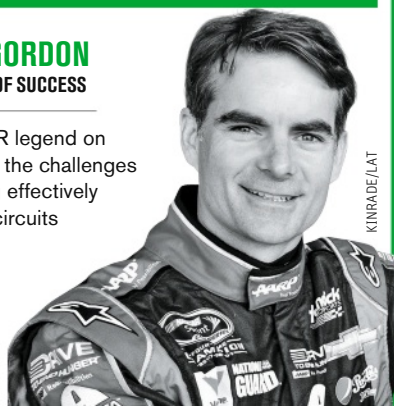


THE AUTOSPORT PERFORMANCE PANEL

DRIVER'S EYE

JEFF GORDON
SECRETS OF SUCCESS

NASCAR legend on cracking the challenges of racing effectively on oval circuits



KINRADE/LAT

TECHNIQUE

ROB WILSON
DRIVING MASTERCLASS

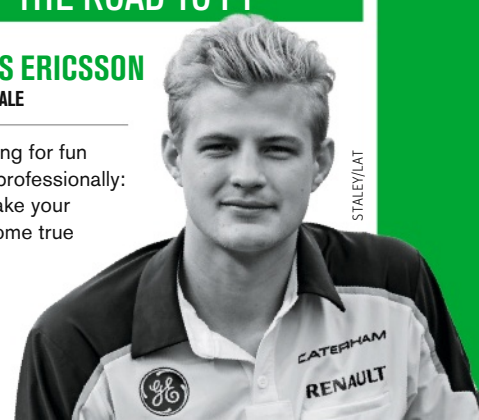
How small changes can add up to a race-winning speed advantage



THE ROAD TO F1

MARCUS ERICSSON
A ROOKIE'S TALE

From karting for fun to racing professionally: how to make your dreams come true



STALEY/LAT



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**Stuart Leonard & Paul Wilson,
Leonard Motorsport VLN and
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OUR EXPERTS' GUIDE TO MAKING YOU GO FASTER



I'VE BEEN AROUND THIS SPORT LONG ENOUGH (LOOK AT my hairline!) that whenever I hear someone talk of a rival having a 'trick engine' it's hard to suppress a chortle. There's more than one reason for a car being quick on a straight: yes, power helps, but equally important is corner-exit speed. Get your exit right, and you'll be faster all the way to the next braking point.

Actually, when I say braking point, I think I mean weight-transfer area. As you'll find on page 6, the semantics and subtleties of such terminology are explained beautifully by Rob Wilson. I always find our driving expert's lessons fascinating, and this time Rob explains how you can effectively minimise your fuel consumption, lower your weight or manipulate a geometric apex to buy crucial time.

One man for whom such practise is totally instinctive is Jeff Gordon. We're proud that the NASCAR legend was happy to talk to us in this issue for our Driver's Eye View. Turn to page 5 for Jeff's thoughts on driving the #24 Chevy, and why he believes some of the superstars from other forms of racing have not succeeded in NASCAR.

That's not all. We let our own Scott Mitchell out in a Ginetta Junior to test Racelogic's Video VBOX, we look at suspension requirements with AST, we learn of the importance of karting from Marcus Ericsson, and we take to the track at Clay Pigeon with Teesside Karting. We doubt the contract from Sauber's in the post though...



MARCUS SIMMONS
PERFORMANCE EDITOR

@MarcusSimmons54

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Driver's eye view Jeff Gordon

The NASCAR legend on the challenges of adapting your technique to suit top-level stock car racing, and the huge evolutionary steps NASCAR has taken since his debut.



PAGE 6

Driving technique Rob Wilson

How to take the next steps from basic competence to on-track superiority.



PAGE 8

AST Suspension Damper technology

A look at a company that provides dampers for many different branches of the sport.



PAGE 10

Racelogic Video VBOX

How data-logging can be used as a driver aid as well as an engineering tool.



PAGE 13

Marcus Ericsson The road to Formula 1

The F1 driver talks about his graduation from karting to single-seaters and putting together the support to reach the top.



PAGE 16

Teesside Karting

Arrive-and-drive is a great way to get into karting. Plus: kart circuit locator with major UK venues.



MIKE PETCH



BROOKE HOUSE COLLEGE *Motorsport Academy*



Brooke House College Motorsport Academy

Brooke House College Motorsport Academy is the first school dedicated to developing young racing drivers, from the age of 12 upwards, alongside a full academic educational programme; GCSEs, A levels and University Foundation Programmes.

The Motorsport course will provide classroom tuition on car control, engineering feedback, race craft, fitness, nutrition, psychology, simulators, PR and media training, as well as more than 200 hours of track time, driving a variety of race cars, starting with karts.

Instructors and guest tutors are drawn from all areas of motorsport including Le Mans 24 Hours, European Le Mans Series, DTM and of course Formula 1.

All drivers will earn their MSA competition licence, enabling them to progress on to whichever racing series they choose.

In addition to the basic package, drivers will have the opportunity of taking part in test days and competing in a full MSA racing series, such as karting, Renault Clio Cup, Formula Ford or even Formula 3. Our instructors will be on hand to help with race day preparation and mentoring at the circuit.

The Motorsport Academy will run alongside normal curricular activities held at Brooke House College in the afternoon, with students attending trackside classes at the circuit in the morning.

For enquiries, please contact:
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To make an application, please contact:
motorsport@brookehouse.com

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DRIVER'S EYE VIEW

JEFF GORDON

The four-time NASCAR Sprint Cup champion and series veteran reveals a few secrets to his longevity and success

People from outside NASCAR, whether they are car enthusiasts or not, are always fascinated with how we make a stock car go so fast.

You look at the size of the tyres, the amount of downforce, the weight, the amount of power, and then trying to put that power through the rear wheels... and you're racing on these high-banked ovals. Seeing the speeds that we are capable of reaching is pretty extraordinary for the sort of machine it is on paper. But it's really a testament to the engineering and the hard work that goes into understanding every aspect of the car from the mechanical and aerodynamic sides.

The technique involved in getting the most out of a stock car is almost the exact opposite to most other race cars. I compare it to when I drove the Formula 1 car, and the braking zone is much different! You're backing the car up several hundred feet before the corner. But that's the thing; you really can't afford to overdrive the entry of a corner in our cars because you reach the limit of the tyres so quickly. The brakes are actually really good, it's just a matter of how much grip you have. So you have to back the entry to the corner up, and when you do get back onto the throttle you have to really ease into it. Our cars can spin out very, very easily. It's just about a lot of finesse; being very smooth and finding the edge of the grip.



Gordon credits his "great team" Hendrick Motorsports for his successes...

Dario Franchitti, Danica Patrick or AJ Allmendinger... a bunch of them. They had full open-wheel careers and then tried to transition to stock cars, and it's a very, very difficult thing to do. And it would be no different than if I tried to leap to IndyCars now; I'd have a heck of a time.

There's a reason why I see guys like Marcos Ambrose or Allmendinger do so well on the road courses — they are super-aggressive; these guys drive into the corners deeper

"Guys like Montoya and Franchitti found it difficult to transition to stock cars. It would be no different if I tried IndyCars. I'd have a heck of a time"

It can be difficult for drivers from other series to adapt to NASCAR, and I think their success depends on when they make that move. I did it very early in my career when I was adapting to new conditions all the time, and I'd not really developed any habits in any one type of car. There were some growing pains in my first few seasons in the stock cars, learning the longer races and the heavier cars and how they change over a run, and for someone like Tony Stewart I think it's similar. Yeah, he ran one or two years in IndyCar, but he didn't build a career there and then try to make that change.

And that's what I've seen with guys like Juan Pablo Montoya,



...but it doesn't always go to plan for the multiple NASCAR champion (24)

than anybody. And on an oval, that doesn't do them much good. It hurts them. But on the road courses, that's what makes them a real threat. I guess it is something you can never change.

I'm fortunate to have been around for a while now, and NASCAR has changed a lot since my rookie year. We've definitely come a long way with safety: I feel far more safe knowing that the SAFER barrier is there. I've hit some walls in recent years that don't have a SAFER barrier, and there is a huge difference. And then there's the HANS device, and the carbon seat tubs. So all that has definitely come a long way. But also, I'm sitting right here in my transporter and I see computers everywhere, and graphs and charts that map out timing and scoring and our set-ups and what our competitors are doing, and I'm looking at photos and videos of their cars going around the race track and how we analyse that. All that is something that has evolved a lot in our sport.

I sometimes get asked about the secret to a 20-plus year NASCAR career, and the answer is a great team. I've been so fortunate to be part of Hendrick Motorsports from the beginning and I feel so fortunate to have been surrounded by such good people. Knowing that you have the best cars you can have and that you can go out there and compete for wins and championships almost every year is very special. ☼

DRIVING TIPS MASTERCLASS

ROB WILSON



Our resident expert coaches several current Formula 1 drivers. Here he offers some sage advice for newcomers looking to advance

So you've worked your way through the ARDS test; you've convinced the instructor you're not going to redesign the scenery on the outer edges of the circuit; you're the proud owner of a race licence; you've talked to your parents' neighbour's neighbour – who happens to be the CEO of a large multinational – and convinced him you deserve a small piece of the annual marketing budget; and you've managed to bluff your way through two seasons of racing already, which have gone reasonably well. You've even surprised yourself!

Now, it's time to move up into a more professional category: Formula 4, a sub-British Touring Car Championship drive, or perhaps a season in GTs – Le Mans surely beckons? Your 'career' – a confusing title, because it usually means 'the only thing you've ever done' – is about to begin in earnest. It's time to get serious.

But what defines the difference between the good (yourself), the very good (yourself again), and the great (yourself again, but only during idle moments of dreaming)? The difference between people who drive racing cars (90 per cent) and racing drivers (the other 10)

is the ability of those in the latter category to embrace, maximise and perfect the small details of driving fast.

To illustrate, let's talk about some generally understood racing concepts.

RACING LINES

Everyone who races has a generic understanding of the racing line around a circuit. Racing schools talk endlessly about the 'racing line', or the 'perfect line', but there is more to it than that.

Occasionally, such as in the Parabolica at Monza, you'll want to follow the geometrically perfect line – because there's not a lot else you can do there once you're locked in. But usually a minuscule diagonal direction change in the middle or later in the corner will take weight out of the car for the ensuing car lengths on exit, and thus reduce speed-limiting tyre scrub and degradation.

There's a higher peak load, but the cumulative is lower because you've placed a premium on direction-change, rather than high minimum speed or the geometrically perfect line. As long as you haven't gone too slow to effect the direction change, the car will accelerate faster.

It will also go further on fuel. If you weigh that car dynamically over a lap, it

will be (on the acceleration-limiting loaded side) lighter, so you can effectively start with less fuel on board and thus a lighter car.

Looking for direction-change instead of high minimum speed can be a very, very positive thing. It's like putting your hand on a red-hot stove for a second and then immediately taking it off, versus holding your hand on a half-as-hot stove for five seconds. You'll be fine in the first instance, but fry your hand in the second.

REFERENCE POINTS

The point at which the car rotates in a corner is your apex; it's not necessarily the circuit's geometric apex. It may be close, and it may be in the same place, but by and large you are creating your own apex. To get that rotation we're not necessarily following a pre-agreed line from what we used to call the turn-in point to the apex.

We almost don't use the term 'turn-in point' any more – it's a 'weight transfer area'. I defy anyone to absolutely specify a 'turn-in point' or a 'braking point'. Of course you are taking a reference of some sort, but usually you need to focus on where you want to get to (and what shape you want to be in when you arrive) rather than the area you are coming from.

The Parabolica at Monza requires a geometrically perfect racing line



FLAMAND/DPP1



Mind management is important, but confidence can come from the car while you're driving it

CAR BALANCE

This is never purely about the way the car is set up. It is affected massively by the way the car is driven. If you know that every time you pick up the throttle beyond your point of rotation the car develops a bit of understeer, you should anticipate that – so the rotation you continue to build into the car will be of a greater degree in order to cope, using a greater slip-angle from the tyre to give you a neutrality of sorts for the exit, which is critical.

Equally, if you know the car is getting a little tail-happy then you would start transferring that weight slower, and attempt to arrive at your apex with a little bit of understeer, so the balance eventually arrives again at some form of neutrality.

All of this is connected with the rate you steer, usually with the rate you decrease your brake pressure – manipulation – all for what's coming next. Then you make your apex and off you go, 300kg less weight on your outside wheels than someone else, marvelling at your extra 15 horsepower – created entirely out of nothing. There we are, losing weight as we drive. Eating all we like!

MIND MANAGEMENT

Drivers aren't drivers until the car is moving, but psychology is so much a part of the industry now it cannot be ignored. You need confidence, but you can get that confidence from the car as you go.

We are only a product of what we feel back, and what we feel back is a result of what we do in the car, and it's either painted on the road, or it isn't. There are so many examples

of winning without the 'right preparation'. I took my first win in Formula Ford having spent all night sorting the engine because it blew up in qualifying. I didn't go to sleep, ran the engine in at 6:30am, and suddenly I pulled away and won the race. It had nothing to do with anything, other than I was getting the right messages. You are always just a product of yourself and the surface, relative to everyone else.

You have to drive three cars at once: your own, the one in front and the one behind. The guy in front needs to know he's a sitting duck, the car behind needs to know he's not going to find a way through, and that you're well within your capability to pull away if you want

to. That means giving them only the messages that you want to from your own car.

The 1965 British Grand Prix (pictured below left) is a great example: Jim Clark's oil pressure dropped while he was leading, and he was forced to ease off in the corners, but he made sure he always went flat-out down the pit straight so no one could sense his vulnerability. Otherwise they would have pounced. Despite what you may be told, it's important to have awareness of your rivals' perceptions of you.

If you're in the best-handling car on the day you'll win, but a season later – if all the other cars have moved on and you're in the same car, handling the same but you are trying to go

“Despite what you may be told, it's important to have awareness of your rivals' perceptions of you”



three tenths quicker while all the others are going six tenths quicker – suddenly you come sixth and it's a dog of a car, the worst you've ever driven. That's only because, relative to everyone else, it's being left behind. It's the same car, but your mentality can change completely, simply as a result of circumstance. It's important to recognise this.

It can be useful to have someone at the race track whom you can ignore, or unload on – someone there to just listen and understand. But that only gets you through the in-between bits. What happens on track is all that really matters. And there, you're on your own... 🏁

EBREVY/LAT

AST dampers are de rigueur
in the Mini Challenge...



KEEPING US IN SUSPENSE

Damper technology is crucial throughout all levels of motorsport. **PAUL LAWRENCE** learns more from leading firm AST Suspension

In every branch of motorsport, no matter the type and age of car, dampers are one of the absolutely key elements of the performance package.

Dutch-based company AST Suspension is at the forefront of dampers for the widest possible spectrum of competitors. The firm covers both AST Suspension and Moton Suspension Technology, and Curtis Woodman runs the UK arm of the operation from Cheltenham.

AST's philosophy is to provide top-quality and cost-effective dampers for a very wide range of applications, from fast road and speed events through to top-line international GT racing. The company has a growing range of dampers for rallying and also supplies the competitive off-road market.

The Moton brand offers a range of high-end two-, three- and four-way adjustable dampers, aimed primarily at the top end of GT racing. Meanwhile, AST covers an impressive spread of applications and has something to offer almost anyone competing in a saloon, sports or GT car.

"Here in Cheltenham, we are the UK distributor," says Woodman, who has more than



Kumho BMW ace
Garrie Whittaker has
taken wins on AST

15 years' experience in the performance-damper industry. "We're a close-knit company and I have a direct relationship with the factory. We work very closely together."

AST makes all its own parts in a machine shop in the Netherlands, with the focus on the AST range of non-adjustable, single-adjustable and two- or three-way adjustable competition

dampers. "We do testing and track support from the UK and work globally for the factory," continues Woodman. "We service and repair in the UK, and we even build some dampers in Cheltenham as well. We look after installation and set-up and we do a lot of trackside support. We also make one-off dampers to suit customer specification and supply dampers for historic



GARY HAWKINS



cars to meet the relevant regulations.”

The state-of-the-art Cheltenham facility allows AST to build prototypes, change dimensions, valve settings and completely overhaul and service AST dampers, using the same equipment as AST in the Netherlands.

The AST range is certainly diverse, starting with the fast-road market, including high-end applications such as Ferrari, Lamborghini, Porsche and the Audi R8. At the other end of the spectrum, the range goes right down to the hot-hatch market, with prices starting from around £1000 for what is still a premium product.

Beyond the fast-road market, AST aims to deliver outstanding performance and value for money from its competition dampers in endurance racing, sprint racing, rallying and speed events. Thousands of customers are now using AST dampers.

AST is the control damper for several UK race championships, including the Mini Challenge and Fiesta Championship. The brand has won the VW Racing Cup many times and is the most popular damper on the VW grid, while other customers compete successfully in series such as the Kumho BMW and 750MC Stock Hatch Championships. In the company's recent history are dampers for use in the BTCC and US Grand-Am sportscar series.

In the long-distance arena, AST is strongly represented across Europe in the German VLN endurance championship, which regularly competes on the Nurburgring Nordschleife, the Dutch Supercar Challenge and the Creventic 24-hour series, which takes in races at Dubai, Paul Ricard and Barcelona.

Rallying is an important part of the AST range

of activities, and a brand new rally damper is set to be unveiled at AUTOSPORT International in Birmingham in January.

“We’re developing a new rally damper at the moment,” says Woodman. “It’s different to the existing 6100 and 6300 units. We looked at every aspect of what people needed: high flow and low-flow pistons, hydraulic bump stops, hydraulic rebound stops and the design of the damper itself.” The new unit is currently in production and will be shown to the industry at the NEC exhibition in clubman and high-end versions.

The successful 6100 and 6300 rally dampers will continue to be produced to meet on-going demand. “This is a 50mm damper in single and three-way adjustable formats, so it’s very strong but budget-minded,” says Woodman. “We have customers who don’t want to spend several thousands of pounds on a set of rally dampers, but they have a Subaru or a Mitsubishi, for instance, and want to change to a more affordable but still high-quality damper.”

A lot of AST’s dampers go out to the hugely popular Irish asphalt rallying scene. “They love the 6100 series and often find that the single adjustable suits them very well, and it’s a robust damper,” says Woodman.

In hillclimbs and sprints, AST is a leading supplier of dampers for the incredible range of cars active in this branch of the sport, from mildly tuned road-going hot hatches to high-tech, purpose-built single-seaters. “We do a lot in the speed-event market,” says Woodman. “The single-adjustable 5100 series damper is popular – it’s a great product for the price and a lot of our customers say it’s the best product in its range for the price.”

Specialist work intended for E90 BMW



INSIDE THE DAMPER

All AST dampers feature mono-tube design, with high-quality, low-friction seals and bearings.

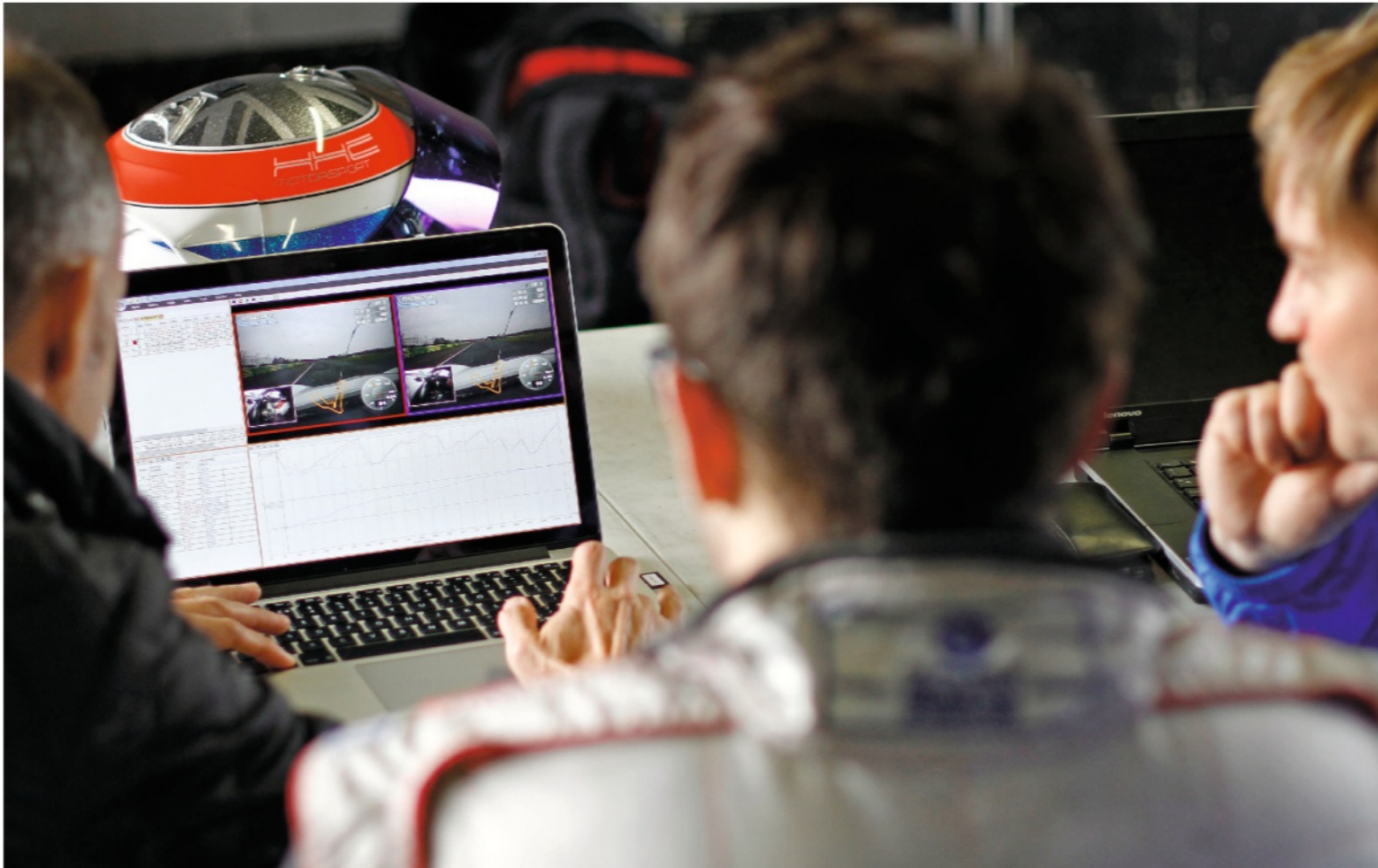
The dampers offer a lower frictional value, resistance to cavitation and a larger, more sensitive valve area, capable of controlling larger oil flow and control of damper movements. This also eliminates the problem of overheating under extreme conditions and ensures strength, reliability and performance.

AST dampers use a combination of 40mm and 46mm pistons, depending on application. The advantage of a larger piston is more oil flow, a greater sensitivity to small damper movements, a better adjustment range and increased lateral strength of a Macpherson strut.

All AST dampers are nitrogen-gas pressurised. The nitrogen gas and damper fluid is separated by a floating piston internally and the floating piston is sealed by a Teflon strip and o-ring, which keeps friction low and moves when the shaft displaces the fluid. The gas pressure eliminates oil cavitation around the piston faces caused by high-speed movements and, as a result, ultimate performance is consistent.

The AST external reservoir provides a platform to extend the range of adjustment. When installed it allows separate adjustment of compression and rebound damping forces: it also allows a larger capacity of fluid and nitrogen gas, to further add to the elimination of overheating and cavitation. It is available in a piggy-back mounting and remotely by a rotational hose.

ALL PICS: MIKE PETCH



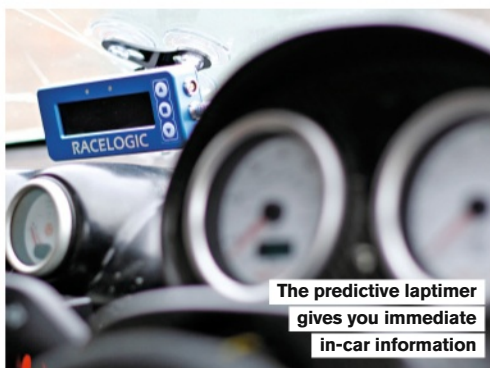
TICKING THE VBOX

Racelogic's Video VBOX helps drivers improve using simple technology. **SCOTT MITCHELL** went to Croft to put it through its paces

Every racing driver craves improvement. It doesn't matter what your ultimate goal is, it's a simple truth of motorsport that the better you get, the better your experience. Whether you're a rookie looking to lop seconds off your laptime or a frontrunner seeking those vital few tenths or hundredths, improvement is vital. It breeds confidence, arguably a racing driver's greatest asset. And while improvement, to a degree, is a natural process — practice makes perfect, to coin a cliché — there's plenty of room for acceleration.

When I arrived at Croft last month on AUTOSPORT driving duty, it was the fourth time I was sitting in a car outside of my ARDS test. I'd raced Ginetta G40 Club Car, Honda Civic and Renault Clio 182 machinery since June, but I'd never tested and I'd completed a grand total of three days of running. In short: the perfect guinea pig for this task.

There were three other non-circuit personnel at Croft: Racelogic managing director Julian Thomas and HHC Motorsport co-owners Charlie



The predictive laptimer gives you immediate in-car information

Kemp and Jody Hemmings. Thomas's company produces the Video VBOX, the reason we're here. It's a data-logging system targeted as a driver aid rather than just an engineering tool, with a simple aim and a simple motivation.

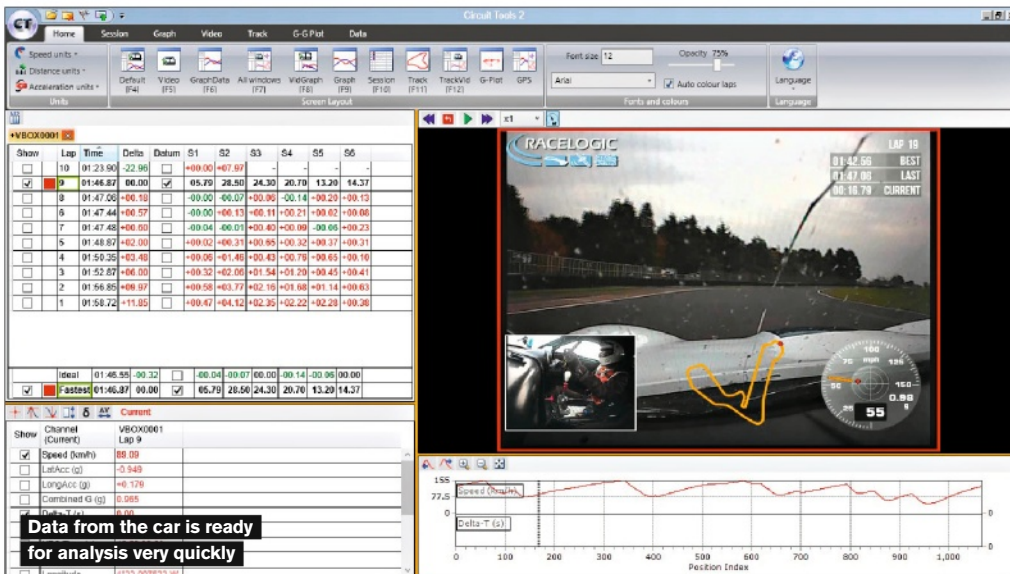
"The driver has very little time to look at the data," he says. "Sometimes there's a fast turnaround between sessions and in every situation you want to be learning. You want to maximise every opportunity. So we've

streamlined everything. It's all about concentrating on the key points, we cut out all the things that take time and aren't necessary for a human to do. It's designed to be used by a driver, not an engineer."

So how are we testing that? Kemp is no stranger to Croft. With HHC being based barely 40 minutes from the track this is the team's stomping ground when it comes to training, and the team's commercial director, a former racing driver, is certainly no slouch on the track. He's my benchmark. No input, no car tweaks — just me and the VBOX, and an attempt to establish how useful it is to the everyman, not just a professional racing team.

The weather's not great for this — overnight rain has left the track treacherously damp for the morning — but we have the perfect benchmark and the perfect car in Ginetta's restricted, Junior version of the G40. It's more than enough to get on with the task at hand, and the VBOX comes to the fore.

For me, data analysis is a completely new process, but even I can notice how simple and quick the process is. I'm not a typical racing



“By the time I’ve dragged my six-foot frame out of the car, the data’s into the laptop and translated into tables, graphs and onboard video within minutes”



rookie, but my time in national-level karting featured only the most rudimentary of data-logging and after half a day here I know I’ll be rueing that all the way back down the M1.

It’s no revelation that being able to watch your laps back and compare yourself directly with someone better is going to speed up the learning process. But the way the Racelogic software affords you that opportunity is spot on.

By the time I’ve dragged my six-foot frame out of the G40, caught myself from falling over in the pitlane and taken off my helmet, the data’s out of the car, into the laptop and translated into tables, graphs and onboard video – within minutes. It automatically loads your best laptime from the session and the ability to run side-by-side onboards offers an immediate contrast. Ten minutes later, 15 at a push, and I’ve been able to conduct a thorough debrief with the HHC boys. I’m far too early on the brakes into Clervaux. Hawthorns is actually quite good, but caution is holding me back through the chicane, where it is still a bit damp. Tower: this is awful. Too early on the brakes and I’m guilty of being sucked towards the apex early. The Jim Clark Esses are fine, but

I’m scaring myself through Barcroft – brake and grab fourth, third if required (cut me some slack, I’m learning) earlier so that I can concentrate on building speed through Sunny In, instead of just before Sunny Out. The Complex, to my delight, is actually rather good.

It’s not just video of course; I’ve got what is effectively corner-by-corner data breakdown on acceleration, braking and g-forces. My best laptime’s instantly on screen in data and video form and I can compare it with any given lap in that session, or any other session, with one click. It’s that easy, it’s that fast.

As I grow in confidence throughout the day, so comparing my times with Kemp (he’s going out throughout the day as the track conditions improve to keep it accurate) becomes a more pertinent part of what we do. And that means taking advantage of another part of the VBOX equipment that the two of us absolutely fall in love with on the day.

Via GPS, the on-board laptimer shows you to the hundredth a metre-by-metre comparison to a chosen benchmark. It’s addictive, but a brilliant tool – though it does directly contribute to a big

moment at Sunny Out. “I’ve seen that before,” notes Thomas, after I drop the rear (but avoid flying off the road) because I’m chasing a personal best having been 1.6s up already with a third of the lap remaining. “What I observed was it allowed you to make much faster progress than you would normally make, almost to the point where you’re going too fast. If you see a gain, it’s genuine.”

Once I calm down (and learn what I did wrong by going over the video and the data), I try again and the progress continues. After resetting the predictive laptimer each session before, now it’s on Kemp’s day-best 1m42.6s. Clervaux, I’m dropping 0.4s, but by Tower I’ve only lost a couple – then in one corner, I’m 1.65s down. Awful. By the end of the lap I lose another three seconds (and that’s on my best effort), but I know instantly that Tower and Sunny In/Sunny Out are costing me 2s. Easily. Now we can use the data to compare myself to the benchmark at these specific corners, the lessons become far more refined and my progress is clear to see.

On my way home I’m adamant that further analysis will reveal much more, so much so that when I wangle a copy of the software and the data files and spend far too much of the following weekend poring over my best session, I discover that I was still giving away far too much time at Tower. My lack of ability grinds on me, although I’m buoyed by the fact I can work this out myself.

The bottom line is I could run that software on a car and use it without any help. That’s not a bold statement (my technical skills are roughly on a par with my ability to negotiate Tower), it’s the truth. And it’s not a budget-breaker, either: the basic VBOX Lite is £995+VAT and for the laptimer included it’s an extra £200 plus taxes.

Depending on what set-up you require, you can access more intimate technical readings as well – if an input module is required it’s another £150+VAT – but Thomas confesses that the system isn’t built around that (not that it couldn’t accommodate it, something the HHC guys are keen on). As the Racelogic boss attests, the point here is that driver development is at the forefront. And for that, the VBOX is well and truly ticked. ☑

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LEARNING ON THE ROAD TO F1

MY START IN RACING

I have a very different background to many other drivers because I don't come from a motorsport family. It all started when I was very young, eight or nine years old, and in a shopping mall with my family. Looking around the shops, there was rental karting, so I went over with my dad and convinced him that I wanted to drive.

The guy who owned the shop was a Swedish Touring Car driver, [multiple champion] Fredrik Ekblom. He watched me drive and asked my dad how many years I had been driving because I was doing really well. Dad replied that I had never tried anything and Fredrik was shocked, and impressed. He said I was too good for rental karting and, if I have the interest, he should buy me a go-kart and start doing it properly.

JUST FOR FUN

In the first years of karting in Sweden, it was just for fun with me, my dad and sometimes my mum going around in an old caravan and camping at the track. It was at a very low level, a hobby, but the more I drove the more it went well. I was always fighting for wins and enjoying it. Then, when I was 13, we got the offer from my Swedish karting team to go to Italy, the home of karting, with them.

GETTING SERIOUS

For that first season in Italy, we had a deal from Tony Kart for free karts and engines, so only had to pay the travel costs. That was what made it possible to go there, which we did for three years. That's the point when I realised I wasn't only doing it for fun, because it was getting more serious. I always had a dream to be an F1 driver, but I didn't think that with my background and coming from Sweden it would be a realistic aim. So even then the most important thing was to have fun.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SEAT TIME

When I was really young I was at my local kart track at least three times a week. In karting, you can practice a lot without it costing a lot of money. When you come up through the categories, it starts costing a ridiculous amount of money, but up to 11 or 12 you can run a lot more.

PRESSURE

There was pressure in karting. You wanted to do well and it was really difficult going down



Karting is key to learning wheel-to-wheel racing, says F1 ace Ericsson

to Italy to go up against the best drivers in the karting world. But the pressure was mostly from myself because I wanted to win.

I finished third in the Italian championship. They didn't do World or Europeans at that time, so that was the main championship with all the factory teams. I was the only guy in the top 12 not in a factory team, so that was a good achievement.

EDUCATION

When I was karting professionally, I had to make sacrifices with school. I missed a lot of days at school, but I always brought a lot of schoolwork with me when I was out travelling. We never thought it was possible to do more than karting because it was going to cost us a lot of money.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

When I was driving in Sweden the competition was not great. There were good drivers but, when you're driving internationally against the best in the world, it's a different level.

The first year I was nowhere because it was a shock. But then you get into it and in the second and third year I was doing well and learned a lot, especially about wheel-to-wheel racing. You need to be aggressive and you need to show that you are strong on the track, otherwise they overtake

you all the time. In karting, you learn wheel-to-wheel racing.

GRADUATING TO CARS

It was a big step from karting to cars and a different way of driving, trying to understand the wings, the effect of downforce. I was fortunate enough to get picked up by Eje Elgh and Kenny Brack when I was karting and they helped me a lot. Kenny was with me for all the tests I did in Formula BMW; it was my step into cars so we did quite a few tests that winter before my first season.

But it took me quite a bit to understand that you need to carry the speed because otherwise you won't get the benefit of the downforce; that was the thing that was difficult for me to



British Formula BMW title was sealed in 2007



2015 Phil Keen
2014 Bradley Smith
2013 Ivan Bellarosa
2012 Felipe Nasr
2011 Ross Kaiser
2010 Derek Johnston

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Both Phil Keen and Oskar Krüger have been pushing themselves to win the 2015 Sunoco Challenges all season, but how will they handle the final prize drives out in Daytona in January?

The Rolex 24 At Daytona is the first big international race of the season and therefore you can expect to get up close to drivers such as Christian Fittipaldi, Sebastien Bourdais, Max Angelelli, Scott Dixon, Tony Kanaan, Brendon Hartley, Alex Brundle and Andy Priaulx and many more on the grid walk.



2015 Oskar Krüger
2014 Lewis Plato
2013 Lawrence Davey
2012 Aaron Steele



Just a few Rolex 24 At Daytona facts:

- The typical lap time on the World famous oval at Daytona is 1min 43 secs
- During the weekend you will see top speeds close to 200mph!
- It is a 24hr sprint race to the chequered flag - the winning margin in 2014 was just 1.46 secs after 695 laps!
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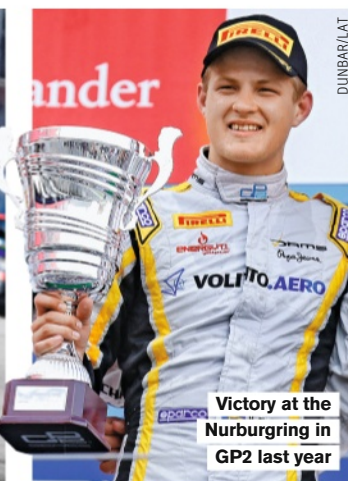
GIBSON/LAT

Pole at Macau
in 2009 after taking
Japanese F3 title...



STALEV/LAT

...but transition to
GP2 in 2010 was
tougher than expected



DUNBAR/LAT

Victory at the
Nurburgring in
GP2 last year

► understand in the beginning. Once you understand that, you get the feel for it and then it becomes more natural to drive the car.

HEADING TO JAPAN

After racing in Britain for two years, winning Formula BMW in 2007 and then finishing fifth in F3, the plan was to stay on and win the title. The idea was to stay on with Carlin, who I drove for in the Macau Grand Prix, as team-mate to Daniel Ricciardo.

After Macau, we got in contact with TOM'S and they showed an interest. One day, Eje called and said, 'You are moving to Japan: I couldn't believe he was serious, but I went there for a year. At first, I didn't understand. Why would you go to the other side of the world when you have a good opportunity to try to win it in the UK?

But in motorsport, you need to grow up quickly so for me to go to Japan and live there on my own in a completely different time zone meant you had to take care of everything in your life, not only racing. As a learning experience, it was fifty-fifty between the driving and maturing. I learned a lot about myself.

JAPANESE RACING IS TOUGH

It's a bit underestimated in Europe because when Japanese drivers come to Europe, it's always a difficult transition. But to try to beat them on their home ground is not an easy task. I learned a lot and I won Japanese F3. It was a great year, which I will always carry with me as a person and a driver.

WINS, BUT NO TITLE, IN GP2

GP2 was probably the toughest part of my career, a big step. The competition is hard and I underestimated it so the first year was tougher than expected. I'm still disappointed that I didn't manage to put together a complete season because I had the speed to be fighting for the title. But I had some very good races and wins and then got the chance with Caterham, and for next year Sauber, in F1. 🏆



HONE/LAT

Caterham F1 race seat
will be swapped for
Sauber in 2015



FUN ON THE CHEAP

Fancy starting a team for some racing fun? You can in the Elite Karting League. **GARY-LEE HOEBEECK** went to Clay Pigeon to try it out



Packed grids and close racing only add to the fun

Karting is about much more than shaping the future generation of motorsport stars. Instead, it's a sport in its own right to be enjoyed by people of all ages, from young drivers looking to further their careers in motorsport, to those who just want to race for fun. Ages can range from four years old in Bambino karts to those in their forties and fifties – or older – who want to compete for the love of the sport.

Even those who are professional racing stars continue to race karts outside their normal driving commitments, not only to keep themselves and their techniques sharp, but because they view it as pure racing.

It's pure racing that's accessible to all. There are a host of arrive-and-drive events at venues throughout the UK, and one of the most competitive is Teesside Karting's Elite Karting League. As you might imagine, Teesside Karting is based at its track up in the North-East near Middlesbrough. Company boss Bob Pope is very



LeCONT »





ALL PICS: GARY HAWKINS

decided to do a little experiment with the choice of the three drivers in our team, in order to find out exactly how widespread karting's appeal can be. On the one hand we had AUTOSPORT's senior sales executive Gary-Lee Hoebeeck, a keen motorsport enthusiast who has been karting for the past 15 years; in the middle we had Boyd Walton, a newcomer to motorsport who started karting only last year; and at the other extreme Craig Jones, a complete novice with no previous interest in motorsport!

Our trio faced a number of formats and different types of karting, from four short sprint races of around 10 laps, to an endurance race at the end of the day lasting two hours, with the driving shared between the three. There is a minimum number of pitstops in the endurance race, to ensure equality of time behind the wheel among each team's drivers, and at one of those stops the kart must be refuelled.

It's great fun for a price that isn't going to worry your bank manager, and gives you great experience of a proper racing event. "One of the issues with karting is the opportunity due to the costs involved," says Pope. "I feel there are many talented drivers who miss opportunities to



Ex-Ginetta Junior champ
Sarah Moore is a regular
on the Elite Karting grid

"The EKL very much positions itself at the top end of amateur, 'turn-up-and-drive' kart sport"

compete as the costs are just out of control in some championships and series.

"We want to make karting accessible to people, providing them with a fun, safe environment to enjoy competition and racing at an affordable price. People should be able to enjoy the level they are at – like amateur football or other sports people do as a hobby.

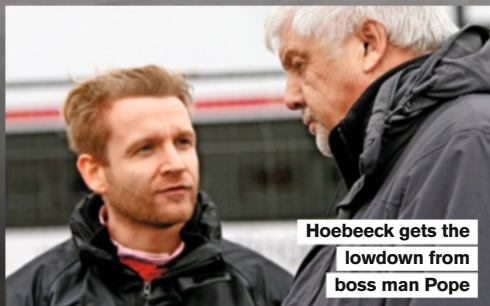
"This is good-quality racing that people from all levels and ages can enjoy. Also, being part of a team helps build relationships to keep people engaged, and excited about coming back again."

The concept is simple – with more people on each team, drivers still get a great amount of track time but it cuts the cost per driver. And it's competitive – there is battling all down the field, and the laptime spread between the field of 23 at Clay Pigeon was as little as eight tenths of a second. With such a small difference, you're bound to be having a scrap with someone.

How did we get on? Not bad – we had some top-10 finishes across the sprint races and all three of us improved our pace over the day.

But what did our novice non-fan think? "This was my first experience of karting," says Jones. "As a beginner it took a couple of races to get used to the circuit and karts, which are both great. I was able to go at a good speed thereafter and have some good battles on track.

"The rain on my first laps was not ideal as I



Hoebeeck gets the
lowdown from
boss man Pope

much regarded as a founding father of arrive-and-drive karting, right back to the Playscape Karting initiative he co-founded in the old Clapham bus garage in the 1980s that revolutionised this area of the sport.

The Elite Karting League very much positions itself at the top end of amateur, 'turn-up-and-drive' kart sport, with seven rounds featured on the 2014 calendar, two each at Teesside, Whilton Mill and Clay Pigeon, and one at Rowrah.

AUTOSPORT was invited along to October's penultimate round at Clay Pigeon, and we



AUTOSPORT holds
off 'Jenson Button'
during a fierce scrap

had my fair share of spins, but once it dried up the track got more grippy so it was fun. The whole day was enjoyable and the people in charge were very friendly and approachable.

"I will definitely be back again."

So there you have it – another convert. Fancy a go? Then turn over the page and check out the AUTOSPORT Performance 'Kart Locator' for circuits and championships you can be part of. 🏁



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KARTING UK GUIDE

Here are some useful contact details if you're thinking of getting involved in competitive karting – whether for fun or to start a career



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