

AUTOSPORT

SPANISH GP

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ROSBERG'S REVENGE

How he turned the tables on Hamilton

"I believed the win was going to come"

Rosberg



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POLE POSITION

A vital development in the title mindgames

WINNING IS A HABIT; SO TOO IS LOSING. NICO ROSBERG had probably become a little too accustomed to defeat prior to the Spanish Grand Prix, but the question now must be whether this is only a temporary recovery.

Everything we have seen over the past year or so suggests that Lewis Hamilton will have the advantage more often than not. Spain was one of the most impressive of Rosberg's victories. But if he's only going to be able to beat Hamilton one time in five, that's not going to make it possible to win the title.

What it unquestionably represents is a vital confidence boost. Historically, some extraordinarily good drivers have ended up in a number-two role in support of a title-winning driver. Rosberg was probably dangerously close to becoming cast as that.

All elite sport is played out in the mind, and psychologically Rosberg will recognise how important that win is. But he has to go a lot further to destabilise Hamilton, who is driving better than ever and now seems close to impregnable.

Perhaps it's appropriate that the next race is in Monaco, given what happened last year.



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COVER STORY



“Everything has come together and it hadn't come together until now”

Nico Rosberg, p12

FIND US ON



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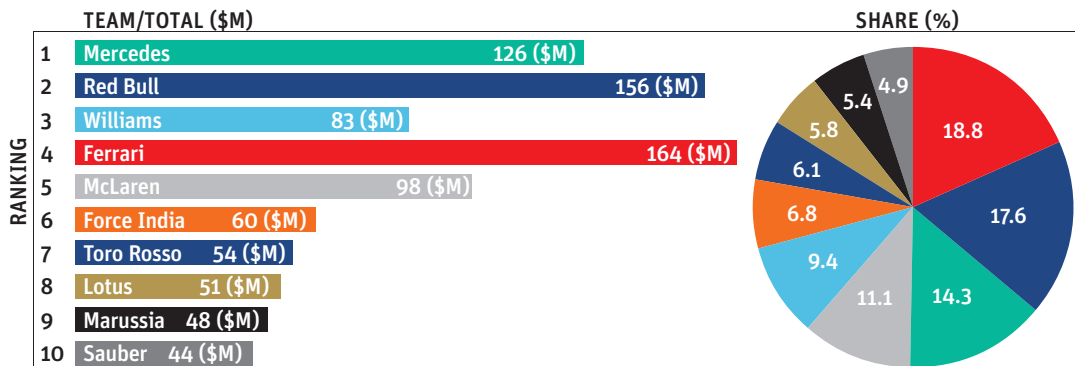
This week in F1

FERRARI TOPS 2014 PAYOUTS

Ferrari will receive the largest share of the money paid to teams by Formula One Management based on the 2014 season.

A total of 65 per cent of F1's total revenues – equating to \$884 million – is shared among the teams, with constructors' championship position and history among the factors defining payouts. For an in-depth analysis of the figures and the inequalities in F1 team revenues, read Dieter Rencken's column on AUTOSPORT's website.

2014 PAYOUT v CHAMPIONSHIP POSITION



Stevens targets F1-debut wheel

Manor racer Will Stevens is considering making a sentimental bid for his steering wheel used during his maiden Formula 1 race in Abu Dhabi as the defunct Caterham's assets continue to be sold.

"It would be a nice thing to have for the future, for the memories," he said.



Bottas future yet to be decided

Valtteri Bottas's manager Didier Coton says he will explore "all the different possibilities" for the Williams driver's long-term Formula 1 future.

Bottas is out of contract at the end of this season and has denied rumours that he has signed a pre-contract agreement with Ferrari, with Coton also insisting the speculation to be "completely untrue".

Coton told AUTOSPORT: "The complete

package is important, the driver has certain objectives, and in Valtteri's case he wants to win races and be world champion, and we need to work on that.

"That could be with Williams, it could be with any other team, a team that will have the means necessary to do that.

"We know the potential of Williams, what they have achieved in the past and the potential for the future."

BIG NUMBER

100

The number of starts Jenson Button has made for McLaren. He has scored 26 podium finishes, including eight wins.

For all the breaking news, visit AUTOSPORT.COM

Coin-toss on Force India B-spec debut

Force India hopes to have one of its B-spec cars ready for June's Austrian Grand Prix, with a flip of a coin to decide if Sergio Perez or Nico Hulkenberg will race it.

Deputy team principal Bob Fernley told AUTOSPORT: "It will be one car because, first of all, we have to make sure it works as it has to go through a crash test and it's obviously a chassis adjustment."

"Probably at the end of the day it will come down to the flip of a coin so it's completely equal for both drivers."

"There is not necessarily an advantage to be starting off in the car, because to dial it in requires quite a lot of work."

There would be some people who would want to be a little reckless



Pirelli motorsport boss Paul Hembery on the danger of allowing a free choice of tyres in F1.

FIA clamps down on fuel-flow rules

The FIA has sent the Formula 1 teams a new technical directive clamping down on fuel pressure and fuel-flow rates.

It specified that pressure must "remain constant above a flow rate of 90kg/hr", meaning it must remain in the 90-100kg/hr range.

The location of the previous fuel-flow sensor made it possible in theory to accumulate fuel between the sensor and the fuel injectors. That fuel could then be pumped into the engine at a greater pressure and/or flow rate, which is limited to 100kg/hr, to illegally boost power.

McLAREN RUNS NEW LIVERY

McLaren ran with a new livery described by the team as a "dynamic, predatory, graphite-grey colouration" in the Spanish Grand Prix.

The team hopes it will work better in both bright sunshine and floodlit night races.

The livery for McLaren's first season with Honda power since 1992 was the subject of much speculation over the winter, and there was widespread disappointment among fans when the team revealed colours relatively similar to its previous look.



McLAREN LIVERIES THROUGH THE AGES

1966

When McLaren made its Formula 1 debut with the M2B, a largely white livery with a green stripe was favoured.



1968

After a switch to papaya orange, McLaren secured its first F1 win with founder Bruce McLaren at the wheel.



1974

A move to the iconic red-and-white livery was dictated by sponsorship deals and coincided with a period of huge success.



1997

After more than two decades, new sponsors sparked another change with a silver-and-black livery being adopted.



2006

Tweaks meant silver became chrome with enhanced red dayglo stripes running down the car and up the engine cover.



Lotus: Maldonado must earn seat

Pastor Maldonado has been warned by Lotus that his seat is not guaranteed despite the considerable financial support he receives from sponsor PDVSA.

CEO Matthew Carter said: "They are part and parcel of what makes up our budget, so we're not looking to change. But no driver is in a position to not be dropped."



Barcelona signs new Spanish GP deal

The Circuit de Catalunya has extended its deal to host the Spanish Grand Prix up to and including 2019. The venue, whose deal was due to expire after '16, has hosted the race every season since 1991.



Smedley charity gala tickets available

Tickets are still available for the charity gala in aid of Zoe's Place Baby Hospice, hosted by Williams's Rob Smedley. For more information, or to book tickets, contact Elaine Dunning on 07584 324 460 or email Elaine@zoes-place.org.uk



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Ian Parkes

From the paddock

Developing all of the aspects of Formula 1 is a vital part of keeping the sport alive; let's not overlook what we've got in our haste to moan

During a conversation with a friend the other day I was asked a legitimate question: is Formula 1 dying? The friend, in this case, was not some casual observer, but a seasoned paddock figure. Their status underlines the fact that even someone with many years' experience can look at the future of the sport and not like what they see.

In my humble opinion the answer to the question is, of course, no, F1 is not dying, nor is it even on its knees. That is despite a Spanish Grand Prix at the weekend that left a lot to be desired given its lack of action.

It is, I would suggest, in reasonable shape, although there are understandably some areas where the occasional bit of surgery is required.

To many, F1's problems start at the summit, and the virtually faceless entity that is CVC Capital Partners and its figurehead in Donald Mackenzie. CVC are venture capitalists whose sole preserve is to make money, yet Mackenzie can rightly point to the fact that team revenues have increased fourfold since his company bought into F1. The 10 teams have almost £1 billion at their disposal, and yet this is deemed as not enough by some given the sharply escalating rise in costs over the years.

The cries last season from Lotus, Force India and Sauber of greater parity when it comes to revenue share fell on deaf ears, primarily as because chief executive Bernie Ecclestone is locked into unbreakable contracts with all parties.

So yes, F1 has major areas of concern at the highest levels off track, and as for on track, well, when have there not been problems regarding the show? Throughout the ages there have been constant tweaks to everything – the cars, qualifying, the races, points systems, you name it – all to satisfy the constant demands of an audience desperate for perfection.

That is a concept that will never exist in F1 because you cannot make all the people happy all of the time – not only the competitors, but also the fans.

Yet there is so much right about this sport, which sadly gets drowned out by the negative wave that continually flows. The bottom line is that the racing, from front to back, is more often than not – the likes of Spain aside at times – still a sight to behold.

Then there is the technology in F1, which on occasion goes over the head of most fans, but without which the sport could not claim to be the most advanced on the planet. The unheralded engineers within every team are geniuses for interpreting a complex set of regulations and translating that into machines that enthral and captivate.

We have the drivers themselves, of course, and yes, perhaps there are times when we do not see enough of their true characters. We would all love to see them be more effusive with their comments, as was the way in bygone years. But it has to be remembered that we live in a fast-paced social media-driven world where every

“Ecclestone is seen by some as F1's biggest problem, 84 and out of touch with the audience”

By his own admission, Ecclestone would gladly tear up those deals and start the negotiating process from scratch such are the problems that, for once, have left him searching for answers.

There are also those who see Ecclestone himself as F1's biggest problem, that at the age of 84 he no longer has his finger on the pulse of a sport he has presided over for the best part of 40 years. There is the suggestion that Ecclestone is out of touch with F1's audience, that while he may be able to negotiate deals with sheikhs and high-flying businessmen, he would not know a tweet from a vine.

And then we come to Jean Todt, the chalk to the cheese of former FIA president Max Mosley. As confrontational and belligerent as Mosley was, in contrast Todt has adopted a less-public approach, with the perception that he has buried his head in the sand at times when F1 required strong leadership from its governing body.

word and facial tic is analysed, and the drivers are heavily managed as to how to engage with a voracious media clinging to their remarks.

Finally, we have the venues, and again while Hermann Tilke has produced some sterile circuits over the years since he became the sport's primary designer, the majority of the tracks – both old and new – are stunning creations. We have lost some historic tracks over the years – Kyalami, Imola, Zandvoort, Estoril and Magny Cours to name but a few – and others such as the Nurburgring and Monza teeter on the brink.

We may decry the likes of a gaudy Abu Dhabi, and the introduction of Azerbaijan, but F1 is a business at the end of the day and market forces often dictate as to where the sport pitches up.

There is much to enjoy with Formula 1, which should be celebrated rather than castigated, as is often the case. ❧

This week in motorsport



Barbosa makes Le Mans return

Two-time Daytona 24 Hours winner Joao Barbosa will race at Le Mans for the first time in four years next month.

The Portuguese will drive the Krohn Racing Ligier-Judd/BMW JSP2 together with team owner Tracy Krohn and squad regular Nic Jonsson in the Le Mans 24 Hours on June 13/14.

CITROEN TIPPED FOR VIRGIN FORMULA E DEAL

Citroen is set to go head to head with Renault in the all-electric Formula E Championship next season as part of a tie-up with the Virgin Racing team.

The PSA Group manufacturer is understood to have agreed a technology and financial partnership with the British squad, which is one of the teams that

will be allowed to develop its own powertrain for season two. That will pitch it against Renault, which is also one of the eight manufacturers and has a relationship with the e.dams squad.

It appears likely that Citroen will choose to use Formula E to promote its upmarket DS brand.

Citroen Racing boss Yves Matton said: "We are looking at what will be the

motorsport disciplines that fit the three brands [Peugeot, Citroen and DS] the best," he said. "Formula E could be one of the disciplines, but nothing is decided."

● The Audi-supported Abt team has renewed its deal with Formula E points leader Lucas di Grassi, meaning the Brazilian will race on with the squad in 2015-16.

Turvey back in Jota line-up

Oliver Turvey will return to the Jota Sport squad for the Le Mans 24 Hours in an attempt to repeat his 2014 LMP2 class victory with the team.

He will make his third consecutive start in the blue-riband WEC event with Jota, alongside team regular Simon Dolan and Le Mans debutant Mitch Evans aboard its revised and renamed Gibson-Nissan O15S.

The Briton has been brought back into the Jota line-up for a second time after a deal for Nick Yelloly to race for the team in both the 24 Hours and the European Le Mans Series fell through.

8

MILESTONE

Bentley will celebrate its 2003 Le Mans victory in this weekend's Nurburgring 24 Hours with a British Racing Green retro livery for the #85 Continental GT3 to be driven by Guy Smith, Steven Kane and Andy Meyrick. A total of 156 cars are entered, with 31 in the headlining GT3 class, including seven each from Audi and Mercedes, six BMWs, three each from Aston Martin, Bentley and Porsche, and two Nissans.



Meeke & co get new rally colours

Citroen has unveiled an all-new DS 3 WRC livery for the rest of this season. In addition to the new colours, Kris Meeke's car also gets aero upgrades at the front to improve downforce and airflow to the engine.



GENE STEPS DOWN AT LM

Former Le Mans 24 Hours winner Marc Gene has stepped down from Nissan's driver line-up for this year's edition of the World Endurance Championship blue riband.

The Spaniard, who was due to race the #23 Nissan GT-R LM NISMO with Max Chilton and Jann Mardenborough, has opted to move into an advisory role.

Nissan has reshuffled its line-up as a result of the move: Olivier Pla moves into the #23 car, while Alex Buncombe steps up from the Le Mans-only #21 car to join Michael Krumm and Harry Tincknell in #22. Russian Mark Shulzhitskiy joins the line-up in #21.

● A decision will be made on Toyota driver Kazuki Nakajima's participation in the Le Mans 24 Hours ahead of the Test Day on May 31. Nakajima is recovering in the south of France from the back injury sustained in the Spa WEC round.

For all the breaking news, visit AUTOSPORT.COM

VERGNE EYES INDYCAR GIG

Ex-Toro Rosso Formula 1 racers Jean-Eric Vergne and Scott Speed are angling for IndyCar seat time with Andretti Autosport at some point this year.

Both drivers already represent Andretti elsewhere – Vergne in Formula E, and Speed in the US-based Global Rallycross series. Speed has admitted that his aversion to ovals and focus on rallycross would most likely only put him in the frame for a test, ideally using one of the two additional ‘rookie days’ available to each team.

But Vergne is working on securing an opportunity to race, and was close to a deal to be on the grid for the season opener at St Petersburg two months ago.

Team boss Michael Andretti said that he is currently trying to secure the funding to get one or both of the drivers into a car before the end of the season.



Hilmer rejoins the fray in GP2

Hilmer Motorsport is hoping to continue to run Johnny Cecotto Jr and Nick Yelloly after returning to the GP2 Series grid at Barcelona last weekend.

The German squad sat out the opening round of the series in Bahrain three weeks earlier, citing the inability to secure funded drivers. But GP2 race winner Cecotto and category debutant Yelloly (above) came on board on the eve of the Spanish event.

The team has confirmed that it intends to carry on with Venezuelan Cecotto and Briton Yelloly, although negotiations are still ongoing to finalise their deals. Yelloly scored the best result, 14th, in Spain.



FRANK MATICH 1935-2015

Frank Matich, one of Australia’s finest drivers and engineers, has died in Sydney, aged 80.

Matich was consistently the best of the local drivers in the mid-1960s Tasman Series, challenging and sometimes beating Formula 1’s finest.

He trained not as an engineer but as a mechanic, and started competing in hillclimbs in the 1950s. He raced whenever he could afford to do so, taking as much interest in the development of his cars as he did in driving him.

By the mid-1960s he was fighting with Jim Clark, Graham Hill and Jack Brabham, and such was his speed that he was offered F1 seats by no less than Brabham, Lotus boss Colin Chapman and leading privateer Rob Walker. He turned them down, valuing a long-term sponsorship deal with Total Oil to continue racing in Australia, and his devotion to his wife Joan and their children.

After dominating local sportscar racing in his Matich SR3 and SR4, he turned to Formula 5000. In McLarens he won at home and then in the US, taking the 1971 L&M Series opener at Riverside and leading the championship after taking second at

Laguna Seca. But, as planned, he returned to Sydney to complete the first Matich F5000, the A50, which dominated local racing and in which he took his second Australian GP win.

In 1974 sponsor Repco withdrew from racing and Matich retired. He continued as Australian agent for Goodyear racing tyres and Bell helmets, while his engineering business diversified into areas such as composite construction and solar energy.

Matich is survived by his four children Kris, Kim, Katrina and Lee.

● Phil Branagan



In brief



TAGLIANI'S 500 RIDE

Alex Tagliani, the polesitter for the 2011 Indy 500 (above), has secured a ride for this month’s running of the race in a third entry run by AJ Foyt Racing. The Canadian, who finished 13th last year for Fisher Hartman Racing, will carry an American Eagle retro livery and Dan Gurney’s #48.

JUNCOS PLANS INDY

Frontrunning Indy Lights team Juncos Racing plans to build a \$3 million, 41,000 square-foot new facility in Indianapolis with the aim of a future move into IndyCar. Construction of the Juncos Technology Center is scheduled for completion next spring.

NEW TURKISH ENDURO

A new endurance race at the former home of the Turkish Grand Prix has been launched by the organiser of the Gulf 12 Hours in Abu Dhabi. The Istanbul 12 Hours, which will be made up of two six-hour races, is the brainchild of British-based Driving Force Events and will take place at the Istanbul Park circuit on August 9 this year.

UNITED SET FOR ELMS

British squad United Autosports is to enter the European Le Mans Series, potentially in time for this season’s Estoril finale in October. The team, which contested last year’s BTCC and British GT Championship, has ordered two Ginetta-Nissan LMP3 cars.

MALJA'S PAU F3 BOW

Formula Renault 3.5 newcomer Gustav Malja (below) makes his European F3 debut at Pau this weekend. The Swede will race the EuroInternational Dallara-Mercedes passed up by Marvin Kirchhofer. The Italian team’s other driver, Nicolas Beer, misses Pau while he recuperates from his Hockenheim injury.

NO CHANGE FOR DTM

The DTM has decided not to switch its September Nurburgring date to July, to replace the vacant German GP slot, after discussions to that effect.

THOMPSON SPLITS FROM LADA SQUAD



Two-time British Touring Car champion James Thompson has split with World Touring Car squad Lada Sport, AUTOSPORT understands.

Thompson, who cited medical grounds for withdrawing from the Hungaroring round earlier this month, has been replaced for this weekend’s Nurburgring

event by Jaap van Lagen, who drove for the team in 2008-09.

The Dutchman tested the team’s Vesta car at the Hungaroring last week alongside Argentinian Super TC2000 champion Nestor Girolami, but is only confirmed for one round. Thompson was unavailable for comment.

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Karun Chandhok

The racer's eye

Rosberg needs to win in Monaco – or at least finish ahead of Hamilton – if he is to maximise his success in Spain and really rattle his team-mate

Nico Rosberg's win in the Spanish Grand Prix has been hailed as the start of the World Championship battle and the first sign of light at the end of the tunnel that it won't just be a Lewis Hamilton walkover. "This is where Rosberg comes roaring back," the optimists among the F1 fans say. But are they right?

Well, as I said after Sebastian Vettel won in Malaysia, one swallow doesn't a summer make. Granted, this was Nico's most convincing weekend in a very long time and also the first chink in Lewis's armour since he got on that winning streak at Monza last year. It was all the more impressive because of the pressure that Nico must have been under coming into Barcelona off the back of four clear losses to his double World Champion team-mate.

The dynamic between team-mates is so fragile at any level of motor racing, let alone two guys who've had a reasonable amount of dirty laundry washed in public and are battling for the sport's biggest prize. Every time your team-mate is ahead of you in a test or practice session, it stings a bit. When they outqualify you, it stings a bit more and when they beat you in the race it just pisses you off!

At the end of any of these sessions on track, the positions you first want to know about, apart from yourself, is your main championship rival and then your team-mate. If they happen to be the same person, then you pay twice as much attention to them.

You want to look at their best sectors, pick their best



less emotional Germanic mentality that guys like Nico, Sebastian – and indeed Michael Schumacher before them – have is a stronger asset in tough times.

I rewind the clock a few years to Shanghai when Vettel had a problem with his driveshaft, which meant he only had one run to nail pole position. Totally unflustered, he duly delivered, which I'm sure would have been a big psychological boost early in the season for him against Mark Webber.

It's imperative for Nico now to build on this win. Monaco was the scene for much controversy in

“When your team-mate outqualifies you it stings.

If they beat you in the race it just pisses you off”

times through a particular corner and analyse that. You want to know what they did on their out-laps, what their tyre temperatures were, what their brake temperatures were, what fuel loads they had. Basically you're looking for any reason to understand why they were faster than you. The smart guys – the Ayrton Sennas, the Alain Prosts, the Fernando Alonsos and Michael Schumachers – always keep something in their pocket to blindside their team-mate when it came to that crucial final run in the last free practice session or in Q3.

You used to see it with Kimi Raikkonen and Juan Pablo Montoya at McLaren, where the Finn would always wait until the final run to show Monty his hand and just take the psychological edge by playing the “whatever you thought I had, I actually had a bit more” card.

For someone like Rosberg to come off the back of a tough opening four races shows great strength in character. The 2015-spec Hamilton is a much tougher cookie than the pre-2012 version but I still think that the

qualifying last year, and as inevitably people will talk and ask about the infamous trip down the escape road, this will start to build the tension even before they turn a wheel. If Nico doesn't capitalise on his Barcelona win by delivering back-to-back success in Monaco, he would have lost the psychological edge and be back to square one. In this case, Lewis will write off Barcelona as a result of one mediocre qualifying and just carry on.

As I said, I think Lewis today is a much stronger and more mature character than before, but two straight defeats on track, not through bad luck or unreliability, could be enough to rattle him. Nico I'm sure was willing Sebastian on in Barcelona, hoping to have more cars between himself and Lewis for the sake of the World Championship, and this is something he will be hoping for in Monaco as well. To beat Lewis and have a Ferrari or two in between them will be his dream result.

The stakes are high as they head to the gambler's paradise. Now it's time to see if the optimists are right! ❧

SPANISH GP



ROSBERG BANISHES EARLY-RACE BLUES

After a thrashing at the hands of team-mate Lewis Hamilton in the first four grands prix, Nico Rosberg needed a big result on his return to Europe. And, as **BEN ANDERSON** explains, he got one

MAUGER/LAT



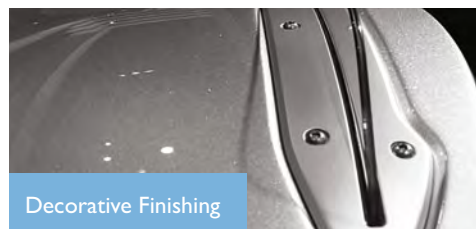
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After making a great start,
Rosberg never looked back



THE RACE 14:00, 10.05.2015



Nico Rosberg badly needed this result. More than he let on, probably. And in a Formula 1 race where Mercedes comprehensively asserted itself over a resurgent Ferrari, it was imperative that Rosberg took a big step towards arresting the incessant momentum that team-mate Lewis Hamilton had built up in the title race across the first four grands prix of the season.

So far this year Rosberg has looked a shadow of the driver who more often than not was faster than anyone else in the 2014 F1 field, and who led much of that world championship campaign on merit.

The advantage in that battle eventually slipped through his fingers, of course. But Rosberg came into this racing season determined to be better, faster and stronger than he was last year. He used the winter to focus on improving his weak points – namely too often conceding races from winning positions – while maintaining his strengths, chiefly a knack of often being faster than Hamilton on Saturdays.

But it hadn't worked out that way thus far. Hamilton too spent his winter brooding on how to become an even bigger force than he already was. Sure, he was world champion for a second time, and yes, he'd often been able to outrace Rosberg even when conceding the advantage of pole position, but Hamilton knew he needed to be better as well. After



Pressure was on
Rosberg to deliver

HOME/LAT

all, the holy grail of equalling his idol Ayrton Senna's tally of three world titles beckoned...

Up until the Spanish Grand Prix Hamilton had been utterly relentless. More focused, faster, totally in control. He'd claimed pole for each of the first four races, and won three of them. But for Ferrari's opportunism in Malaysia, it would have stood as a Hamilton clean sweep.

Meanwhile, Rosberg looked to be floundering. He is not one to hide behind excuses, and freely admitted he simply hadn't been good enough in

qualifying in Australia and Malaysia. In China he came agonisingly close to beating Hamilton, but in Bahrain he got his qualifying strategy wrong and again lost out.

By suddenly (and consistently) failing to deliver on Saturdays, Rosberg found himself badly compromised on Sundays. Ferrari's improved form also meant he (usually) could not simply focus on the car ahead, so missing out on pole in effect meant 'game over' in terms of his victory hopes.

After his most recent loss in Bahrain, where the compromise of being forced into a battle with Ferrari actually broke his brakes and meant defeat to Kimi Raikkonen as well, it looked as though Rosberg's season was fast unravelling already.

But in Spain Rosberg finally pulled everything together, beating Hamilton to pole (comfortably) and converting that into his ninth career victory. In fact, once Hamilton slipped behind Sebastian Vettel's Ferrari, after making a slow getaway from second on the grid, barring further incident the race was in Rosberg's pocket.

After the race, Mercedes non-executive chairman Niki Lauda reckoned Rosberg needed to get one over his team-mate to gain crucial ground in the mental battle that defines high-level sporting contests. "He did a perfect job," Lauda told AUTOSPORT. "He fought back and this is good for the team, and for Nico. ▶"



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Swap to three-stop strategy helped Hamilton pass Vettel



Hamilton couldn't get past Vettel on the road



Ferrari brought large upgrade for SF15-T



► “If he didn’t do it here then Monte Carlo would have become a very different race and he would have lost a little bit of momentum in his head. Thank God it’s back.”

Rosberg also conceded the significance of finally beating Hamilton this year, even if he didn’t feel there was any particular reason why he had an edge around the Circuit de Catalunya.

“It’s difficult when Lewis wins in a consecutive manner like that, but of course I’m confident in my abilities and in my approach, so I did believe the win was going to come very soon,” he said.



Sauber lacked pace for top-10 challenge

Rosberg: “It’s difficult when Lewis wins in a consecutive manner, but I did believe a win was going to come very soon”

“It’s just been a good weekend. Everything has come together and it hadn’t come together until now. There was no different approach. Of course I’m always modifying, I’m trying to optimise my approach, make small changes here and there, but fundamentally everything was the same.”

Except the final result. So if Rosberg did nothing special, why did Hamilton fail to reach Rosberg’s level here? The conditions were generally hot and windy and many drivers struggled to stop their cars sliding. Hamilton spoke after qualifying of his difficulty in dialling out oversteer from the W06 without shifting the balance too far the other way, while also suggesting Rosberg’s own driving style was helping him avoid such problems.

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff reckoned the difference between the pair was “difficult to see. When you are on such a level playing field, it’s about feeling comfortable in the car, comfortable on the track,” he explained.

“Before the weekend Lewis mentioned Barcelona was not his favourite – I don’t know if that was the reason, but it was very difficult for him to get the right set-up with the gusty winds and lack of grip from session to session. Obviously going into the race, the minute you are able to control it from the front it gives you a big advantage. This is what Nico did in a very controlled way.”

That utter control meant the focus shifted to the battle for second. Mercedes pitted Hamilton before Vettel (on lap 13) in an effort to vault him back ahead of the Ferrari, but a suspected problem with the wheelgun meant Hamilton lost almost three seconds to a slow left-rear change.

This delay gave Ferrari an opportunity to stop Vettel without losing track position to Hamilton, so it pitted its man on the next lap. Hamilton closed to within six tenths of Vettel by the end of lap 20, and used his DRS to get a run at the Ferrari into Turn 1, but couldn’t get close enough to pull a move.

“It’s been a long time since I’ve had such a bad start,” said Hamilton. “I was fortunate to keep third. I tried to fight, but this track isn’t very good for overtaking – it’s actually the worst for overtaking; it’s impossible to follow here. For the guys at the front, it doesn’t matter what you do, you can’t get close enough.”

At this stage Mercedes told Hamilton he would have to pass Vettel on-track if he wanted to get ►

► ahead, to which he replied: “That’s pretty much impossible. Find another solution.”

That solution was to switch Hamilton to a three-stop strategy, which would allow the world champion to leapfrog Vettel later in the race, provided he could clear the slower cars he would inevitably fall behind after pitting out of sequence.

Mercedes pitted Hamilton for a second time on lap 32 and he came out just behind Raikkonen’s Ferrari, which was running a long middle stint on hard tyres. With fresh hards fitted to his Mercedes, Hamilton breezed past Raikkonen using DRS at the start of lap 34 and retook third spot from the Williams of Valtteri Bottas on the inside line at Turn 1 on lap 39.

Vettel (on worn mediums) struggled to lap within a couple of seconds of Hamilton for much of that sequence, and Ferrari pulled its man in for his final stop on lap 40. Rosberg made his own final stop five laps later, allowing Hamilton to lead the race. Many (including Rosberg) wondered whether the #44 Mercedes might attempt a heroic 34-lap stint on its current set of tyres to try to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

Hamilton: “Nico was quite far ahead by the time I got on to the last stint – a huge amount of time to catch up”

But, as Rosberg put it, that “wasn’t do-able”. Hamilton pitted for the final time on lap 51, allowing Rosberg to escape to his well-earned victory. Hamilton rejoined with several seconds in hand over Vettel’s Ferrari, thus the Scuderia’s hopes of denying Hamilton and Rosberg their 14th one-two result in F1 were finally dashed.

“I thought it would be tricky to keep him behind,” conceded Vettel. “They were a fair amount quicker at the end of the race.”

“Unfortunately, I came out in traffic [from the last stop]. I lost two or three seconds, which might have been just enough to stay in front. But with the speed they have it’s fair to say they deserved to be in front.”

Having finally cleared the Ferrari, Hamilton set about hunting down Rosberg. The #6 Mercedes led by 20.648s with 14 laps to run, meaning Hamilton needed to outpace his team-mate by roughly 1.5s per lap to still have a (small) chance of challenging for victory.

Mercedes instructed Hamilton to hold position. “It’s impossible to catch him?” he asked. The team told him Rosberg would simply up his own pace in response. Hamilton gave it a go



anyway, but eventually realised the cause was lost and gave up the chase.

“Nico was quite far ahead by the time I got on to the last stint – a huge amount of time to catch up,” Hamilton said. “It was very hard to see if I could have the pace on him in order to close it. It was less than a second [difference in laptime] on occasions. I pushed until six laps to go and still had 13s [to make up], so I realised I should bring the car home and live to fight another day.”

In recovering to second Hamilton ensured

minimal damage to his championship lead (which Rosberg cut to 20 points with this win), while Vettel and the Ferrari camp were left to rue their heaviest defeat of the season so far.

Vettel’s 45.342s deficit to the winning Mercedes was bigger even than in Melbourne, where the world decried what it saw as the end of competition in Formula 1 as we know it.

Ferrari brought a significant upgrade to the SF15-T for this race, but Mercedes didn’t leave the W06 undeveloped either, and actually increased its pace advantage – to the tune of about three tenths in qualifying.

Perhaps Ferrari’s massive upgrade package, which included basically “everything around the monocoque” according to one insider, wasn’t delivering everything Maranello expected here... “It’s a good question,” conceded Vettel. “If you look at the gap to Mercedes in the race, it’s the biggest gap so far. It’s not so good but I’m confident we are going in the right direction.”

“For some reason, we are not so competitive here. Either this track doesn’t suit us, or the conditions really suited Mercedes.”

Ferrari boss Maurizio Arrivabene pointed out that his team was “losing half a second” in the final sector of the lap (Rosberg was 0.462s quicker than Vettel in qualifying in the section that incorporates Turns 10-16), suggesting that perhaps low-speed



Developments on the W06 boosted pace

STALEVILAT

QUALIFYING



What a difference a three-week break makes! After four consecutive defeats to Lewis Hamilton, 2014 pole-position trophy winner Nico Rosberg finally rediscovered the qualifying touch that had largely deserted him so far this year.

The updated Mercedes W06 enjoyed such an advantage in Spain that both drivers outpaced the entire field using a harder compound of tyre in Q1. Only Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel tried the same trick among the rest, and he was 1.2s slower than Hamilton in that first segment.

Rosberg came to the fore in Q2, as both Mercedes switched to the faster medium tyre. He was almost six tenths faster than Hamilton at that point, and went another half a second faster on his first run in Q3.

Rosberg admitted to learning a valuable lesson last time out in Bahrain, where he went slowly in Q2 to protect his tyres for the race and lost his feeling for the evolving circuit at the crucial moment in Q3 as a result. "For sure I learned from my mistake in Bahrain," he said. "I really got myself into the rhythm here in Q2 and from there I was just not catchable anymore."

His final run in Q3 was 0.073s slower, but still good enough for pole. This was Rosberg in top form, and Hamilton – unstoppable on Saturdays until now – had no answer on this occasion.

He halved his Q2 deficit at the start of Q3, but that was as good as it got for the reigning world champion, who team chief Toto Wolff reckoned got himself into a "messy set-up situation" in hot and windy conditions. Hamilton admitted to unsuccessfully chasing a lack of rear grip since the first free practice session on Friday morning.

"It's been the same all weekend – I've been chasing it, but you move the balance forwards, you move the balance rearwards, and it's like a seesaw: you put a little bit more weight on one side and it keeps going," he explained.

"The wind doesn't really help. Nico has generally not made a lot of changes all weekend. He's kept a balance and he's not really had to move from there so he's been comfortable from the get-go. Often most weekends that's how it starts off for me, but this weekend I'm just less comfortable with it.

"Naturally, driving style helps that as well; he drives slightly different [to me] – that seems to be suiting him well."

Wolff dismissed suggestions that Rosberg would gain a massive psychological boost from finally getting one up on his team-mate in qualifying this year. But there's no doubting Nico badly needed that one to stop the rot. And he deserved all the plaudits for a job well done.

Mercedes bosses hoped Rosberg would step up



ETHERINGTON/LAT



Hamilton bottled up as Rosberg escapes



Vettel finished 45s behind the winner



Bleachers were full; grandstands less so

downforce and traction is what's mainly lacking from the SF15-T, which doesn't bode well for the next race in Monaco.

"Barcelona was not an easy track, it was not easy for the others too," argued Arrivabene. "The gap to Mercedes is still there. We need to analyse the gap to understand it.

"If something was wrong, we have to do the work and take it with humility. We need to understand, we need to find out how to improve the new package, but it's clear the new package is better than the old one. We have done a comparison and the solution is good, but in reality it's not good enough."

Rosberg pointed out after this race that Mercedes has actually scored more points after five races this

season than it managed at the same stage last year (on account of not repeating Hamilton's rubber tube-induced retirement from the Australian GP of 2014). That could become ominous if Mercedes can carry the supreme form it showed in Spain through the next sequence of races and leave Ferrari trailing.

Rosberg's aim will be to build something similar to what team-mate Hamilton had accomplished prior to Spain. Monte Carlo has been a happy (home) hunting ground for Rosberg in the past. He doesn't like talking about 'momentum' in a title race, but he could undoubtedly do with building some of his own.

His performance in Spain has certainly given him some very solid foundations on which to do that.

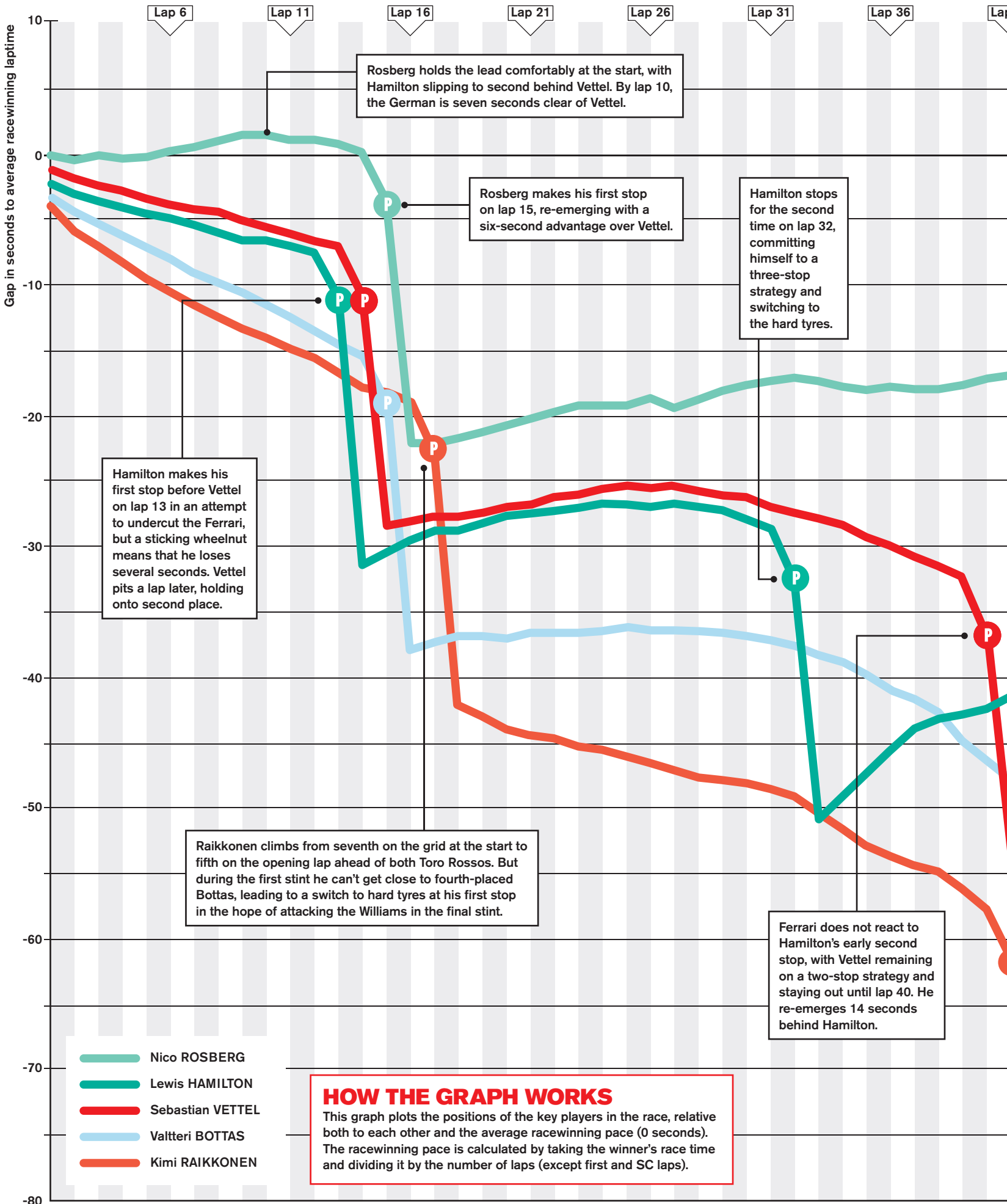
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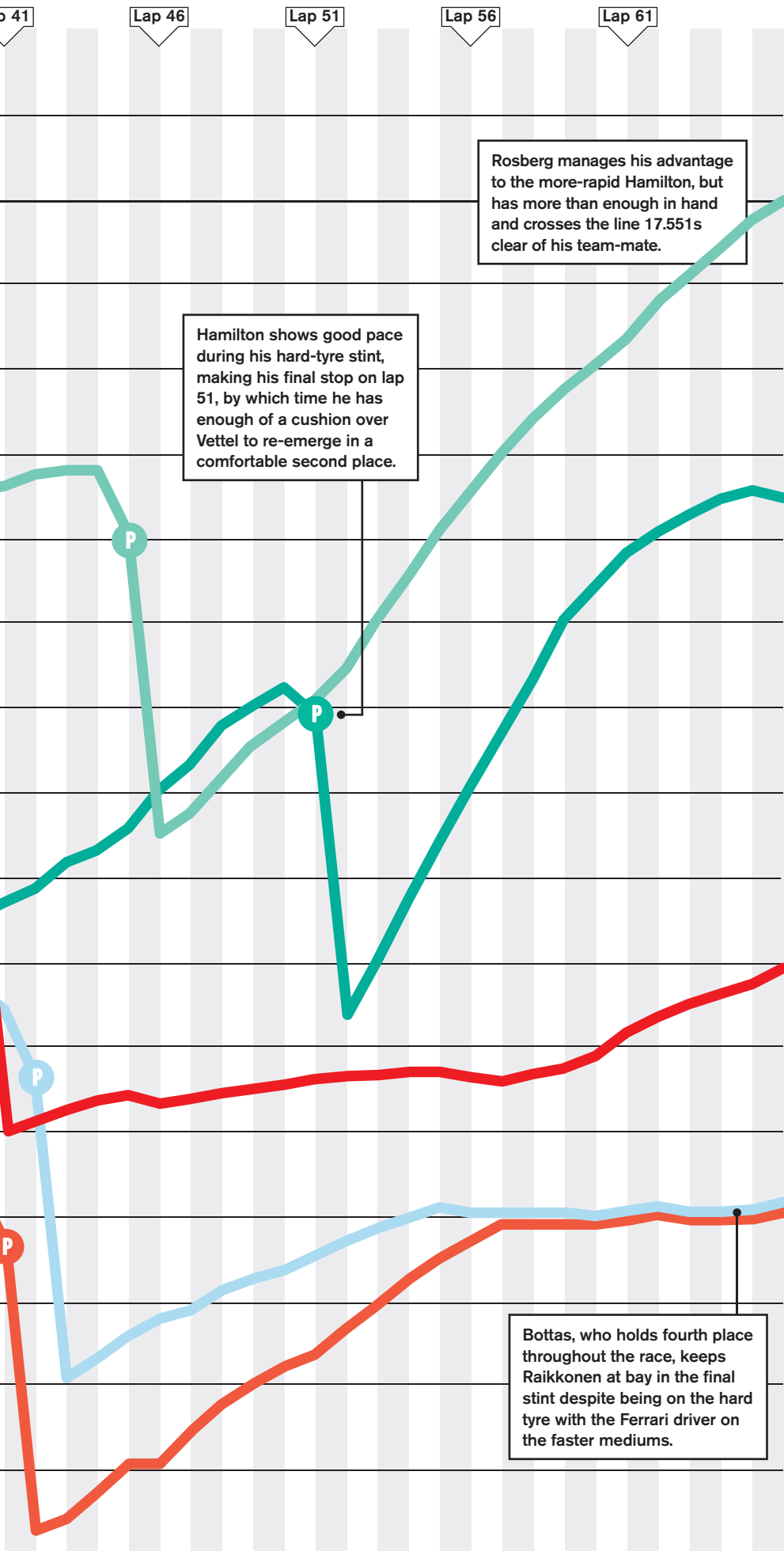
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HOW THE RACE WAS WON





Rosberg manages his advantage to the more-rapid Hamilton, but has more than enough in hand and crosses the line 17.551s clear of his team-mate.

Hamilton shows good pace during his hard-tyre stint, making his final stop on lap 51, by which time he has enough of a cushion over Vettel to re-emerge in a comfortable second place.

Bottas, who holds fourth place throughout the race, keeps Raikkonen at bay in the final stint despite being on the hard tyre with the Ferrari driver on the faster mediums.

TRACKSIDE VIEW

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The last time I stood on the outside of the fast right-hander of **Turn 3** at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya, the 2015 Formula 1 season was yet to begin in earnest and the cars were still very much in their infancy.

Two months on from that final pre-season test, four races have passed and many upgrades added to (most of) the cars. So I figured it would be useful to head back to that place for the first free-practice session of the Spanish Grand Prix weekend, to see whether eight weeks of hard work have made any discernible difference to the pecking order. Here's my ranking:

- Mercedes W06 (non-mover): looks as impressive as ever. The drivers can place it exactly where they want and build speed through the long arc of the turn without trouble.
- Ferrari SF15-T (non-mover): looks more 'Merc-like' than it did in testing, but the drivers cannot take the same tight entry into 3 without running out of road on the exit.
- Williams FW37 (non-mover): still looks a solid car, with no vices, but a slight lack of overall grip.
- Toro Rosso STR10 (up 1): looks quite capable; both drivers clearly have the confidence in it to attack straight away.
- Red Bull RB11 (down 1): mostly stayed in the garage (to protect its fragile Renault engine) but looked reasonably assured when running.
- Lotus E23 (non-mover): still suffering from the rear instability that was evident in pre-season, but less so.
- McLaren MP4-30 (up 2): looked very solid through this section – a significant improvement from winter testing.
- Sauber C34 (down 1): looked a bit livelier than it did in pre-season, now it's no longer fat with fuel.
- Force India VJM08 (down 1): the armfuls of understeer Nico Hulkenberg carried through here reveal the lack of downforce that is holding this car back.
- Manor/Marussia MR04 (new entry): looks like the knife in F1's gunfight.

"The Merc looks as impressive as ever, drivers able to place it where they want"

Ferrari: 'Merc-like' through fast Turn 3



STORIES OF THE RACE

Bottas beats Ferrari in improved Williams

Valtteri Bottas fended off a late charge from Kimi Raikkonen to finish fourth in the Spanish Grand Prix, meaning he has now beaten a Ferrari in each of the last two races in the improving Williams FW37.

Bottas started fourth, after qualifying 0.236s behind Sebastian Vettel's Ferrari. Raikkonen came through from seventh on the grid and closed down Bottas, but could not find a way past the Williams, despite being in DRS range and on the faster medium tyre for the final 10 laps.

"I just tried to make sure I was getting good exits for the straights, because it is difficult to overtake here so not making mistakes was important," Bottas explained.

"What is a little bit strange is that we didn't expect this one to be a particularly strong track for us, so I think it shows that we are definitely doing things right.

"The updates were small but they worked, so now we can run the option (medium) tyre in a better temperature window, which seemed to help in the first two stints. We struggled with [the] prime (hard) but everyone did."

Raikkonen had a difficult weekend. Struggling to get

the updated SF15-T working on Friday, they reverted back to some Bahrain-spec aero parts. He was faster than Bottas by the end of the race but couldn't get by.

"We tried to do our best. In the end we caught up with the Williams but it's difficult to overtake," Raikkonen said. "I could catch him quite easily, but somehow our car suffers more following them than other cars. Plus, they have good top speed so it makes it very difficult to get past.

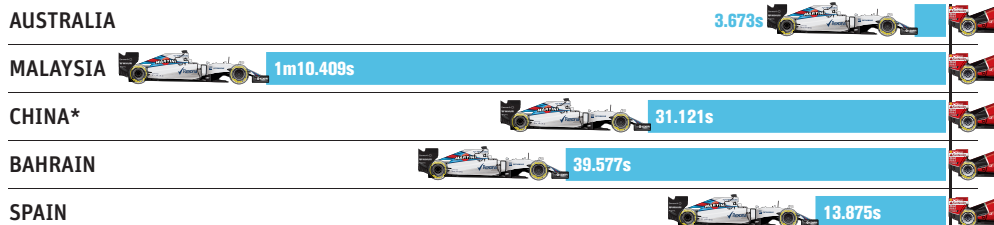
"It's been a difficult weekend overall, but at least we got something out of it."

Bottas finished less than 14s behind the lead Ferrari of Vettel in this race, which is the closest Williams has come to beating the highest placed Ferrari since the season-opening Australian GP.

"We're not too far away," added Bottas. "I think we closed the gap here a little bit. If we still want to fight with them we need more updates to the car, but they are on the way and we just need to make sure we improve more than Ferrari."



WILLIAMS DEFICIT TO FERRARI OVER THE FIRST FIVE RACES



*Race finished under safety car so gap is taken from final racing lap

22



Massa struggles to impress from ninth

Felipe Massa finished a distant sixth in the Spanish Grand Prix, over 20 seconds adrift of Kimi Raikkonen's Ferrari and the Williams of team-mate Valtteri Bottas.

He started a lowly ninth after going off at Turn 3 in qualifying, but made a strong start and was challenging the Toro Rossos, which started fifth and sixth, in the first sequence of turns, but got pushed wide and lost ground to both of them and Raikkonen.

He was back up to sixth by the end of lap four, but couldn't keep pace with Raikkonen and Bottas thereafter and slipped back as the race wore on.

"The race was good apart from the second stint. I was behind Kimi and lost a little bit of the tyres, and the third stint I was not in such good shape with the hard tyres, so we went for three stops," Massa explained. "The hards were not working so well, but the last stint was alright."

Lotus rues clash between team-mates

Lotus lost a likely double-points finish to an early clash between team-mates Romain Grosjean and Pastor Maldonado at the Spanish Grand Prix.

Grosjean started ahead of his team-mate but went off at Turn 1 on lap 4. As he rejoined at Turn 3 his left-front wheel made contact with the right-rear of Maldonado's car. The clash caused damage to the endplate on the right side of the rear wing. The damaged part was initially removed, but later led to his retirement.

The team's trackside operations director Alan Permane admitted the race was "a little bit messy" but he declined to apportion blame to either driver.

"Everyone has got a slightly different opinion of it [but] it could have been avoided," he said.

Lotus removed the damaged section of Maldonado's wing at an additional pitstop, but later chose to retire the car.

Grosjean finished eighth despite overshooting his pitbox at his second stop and hitting the jack man, who was not seriously hurt.

"Romain didn't have the cleanest of races," said Permane. "Hitting the pit crew is never nice; going off at Turn 1 was a little bit unfortunate."

"He lost fourth gear early on which hampered his race quite severely. He was having to shift straight from third to fifth from about lap 20."





Verstappen: tyre woes cost Toro Rosso

Max Verstappen believes problems keeping the rear tyres in shape cost Toro Rosso a better result in Spain.

Carlos Sainz Jr and Verstappen qualified an impressive fifth and sixth respectively for the Barcelona race, but lost out to Kimi Raikkonen's Ferrari, Felipe Massa's Williams, Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull and Romain Grosjean's hobbled Lotus in the race.

Sainz lost more ground early on but recovered to ninth with a strong final stint Verstappen ran inside the top 10 early on, but lost 10th place to his team-mate in the closing stages after losing time being lapped and locking up at the chicane.

Verstappen explained that a lack of straightline speed, a temporary loss of power and problems protecting the rear tyres made his life difficult.

"It was really hard; the car was not working so well in the race," he said. "I had a lot of problems with rear tyres – no traction, oversteering – we were killing the rears."

Horner urges Renault to take the risk

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner has urged Renault to prioritise performance over reliability, after another difficult race at the Spanish Grand Prix in which both his cars were lapped.

Daniel Ricciardo and Daniil Kvyat are already using the final engine of their permitted allocations for 2015, meaning grid penalties for going over that limit are inevitable later in the year.

Horner, however, feels Renault should shift its focus

from reliability to performance for the rest of the year.

"It's positive that Renault have got four engines to the finish without any white smoke," he said. "[But] the focus desperately needs to turn to performance before too long. Renault have got things in the pipeline but it's all a work in progress.

"We're so far on the back foot with reliability anyway that this year is pretty much a write-off, and you've just got to go for it even if you end up using 20 engines."

Q&A DANIEL RICCIARDO RED BULL RACER, WHO FINISHED SEVENTH

That looked the best result possible in the circumstances, but the gap to Williams and Ferrari is quite big...

It's the same scenario we've been in all year. The race was pretty much like Bahrain – we did all we could and got the maximum out of it even though we were running a pretty lonely race. I was pushing and trying to learn as much as we could. It was good to have that free air – it gave me a good understanding of where we need improvements. The knowledge we have is positive, but what's not positive is the pace. Even when I feel I drove a good race we're still more than 30s off Williams. That's tough.

Where is the car lacking?

The balance in general wasn't awful, but we're just trying to find more grip from the car. We had maximum downforce but it's not working.

Perhaps there's a problem operating the tyres correctly?

It wouldn't be out of the question, because our one-lap pace is not there at the moment. We can't put our finger on it. It's a bit like Bahrain – the balance wasn't bad, we just didn't have the grip, but we knew we were running less downforce. Here, we've put the downforce on but it just didn't give us the gain.

More to come from the chassis then?

Definitely. For the downforce we've got on, I don't think it's giving us what we expect.



STALEY/LAT

STORIES OF THE RACE

Tough race for Button in 'scary' McLaren-Honda

Jenson Button described the handling of his McLaren-Honda in the Spanish Grand Prix as one of the most "scary" experiences of his career.

Button started 14th in the Barcelona race, but lost several positions off the start and struggled to a lowly 16th place.

Points were unlikely despite some small improvements to the MP4-30's aerodynamics and engine, but Button recovered from his early dramas to finish on the tail of a close train headed by the 13th-placed Force India of Sergio Perez.

"The first 30-odd laps were the scariest of my life," said Button. "The rear just wasn't there. Any time I touched the throttle at any speed, the rear was gone."

"It just wasn't normal. The rear just felt like it wasn't connected to the front. It was pretty horrific. Switch changes and new tyres at the end helped a bit."

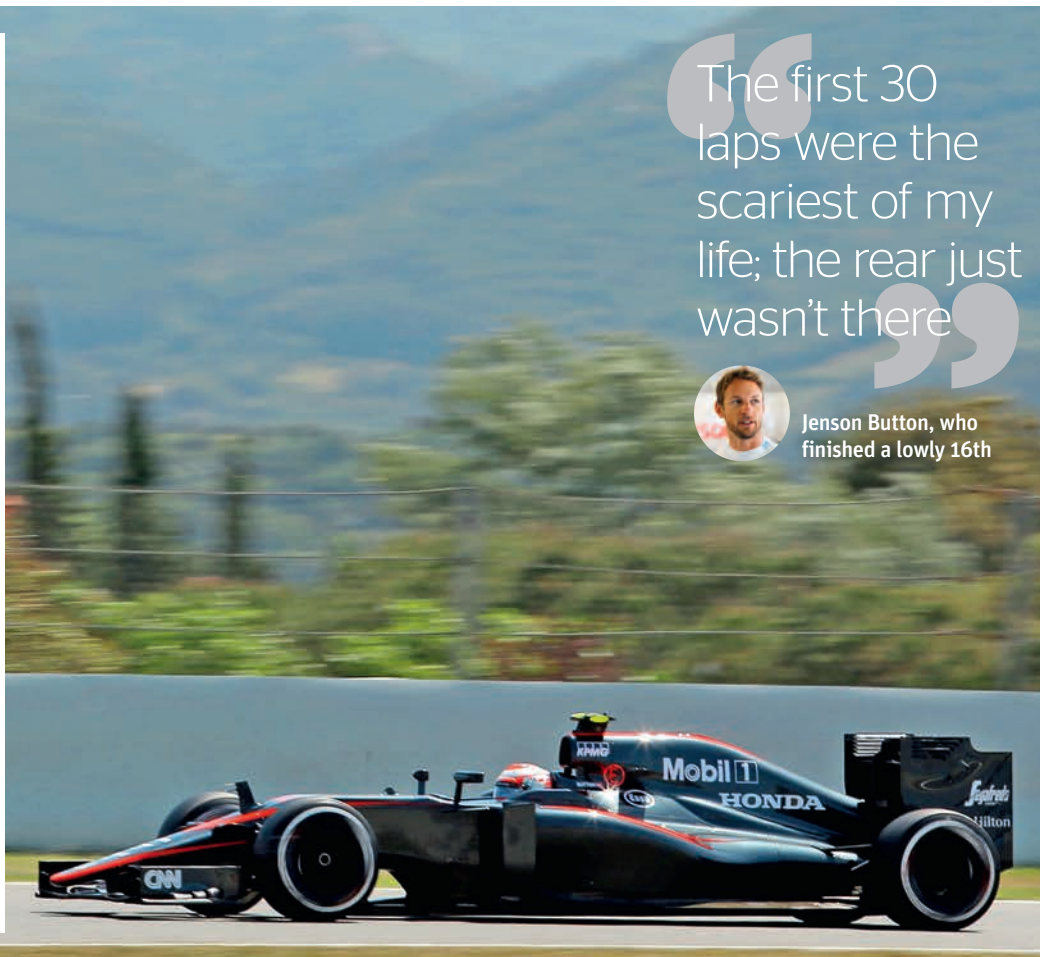
Button was not sure if the handling dramas were a set-up problem or a mechanical issue.

"After today I don't think I expect points at all this year, but hopefully it was an off-day," he added. "The weekend has been reasonably good for us and I've been happy with the way the car's been, but it was like flicking a switch in the race."

"The first 30 laps were the scariest of my life; the rear just wasn't there"



Jenson Button, who finished a lowly 16th



XPB IMAGES



COATES/LAT

No penalties after Kvyat/Sainz clash

Neither Toro Rosso's Carlos Sainz Jr nor Red Bull's Daniil Kvyat were penalised by the stewards following their clash on the final lap of the Spanish Grand Prix.

Kvyat and Sainz (left) were battling over ninth place on the run to Turn 1 when they touched wheels as Kvyat fought to defend the position.

The Russian made three moves, the last of which caused contact, while Sainz ran wide at the first corner before rejoining in front at Turn 3.

"The first two moves were not defensive, only the third move was defensive," the stewards said in a statement.

"The stewards agree with the assertions of the drivers and team representatives that this was a racing incident.

"The stewards accept the evidence of the driver [Sainz] that he slowed in rejoining the track and gave room at Turn 3, in order to avoid gaining a lasting advantage."

Kvyat also admitted that he slowed at Turn 2 to leave room for Sainz to rejoin the track.

Speaking about the incident before the decision was made, Red Bull boss Christian Horner said: "I thought it was good racing; it looked like a racing incident down into Turn 1. It's two youngsters going for it."

Alonso: brake failure cost chance of first points of 2015

Fernando Alonso reckons the brake failure on his McLaren-Honda in Spain cost him a chance of scoring his first points since his return to the team.

Alonso was as high as seventh after running the longest opening stint (21 laps) in the field, but he was forced to retire from his home race after

his brakes failed on lap 26 of 66.

As he brought the car back to the garage to retire, Alonso overshot his pitbox, and crew members had to jump out of the way as the car hit the front jack.

"It was scary. No brakes for the whole in-lap, and for the pitstop even less," Alonso admitted.

"Luckily we didn't hurt anyone."

He remained convinced points were within reach had he made the finish. "A two-stop strategy seemed to work better for us," Alonso added. "The race was going more or less as expected, so P9 or P10 was possible."



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DRAWING BOARD

by Craig Scarborough

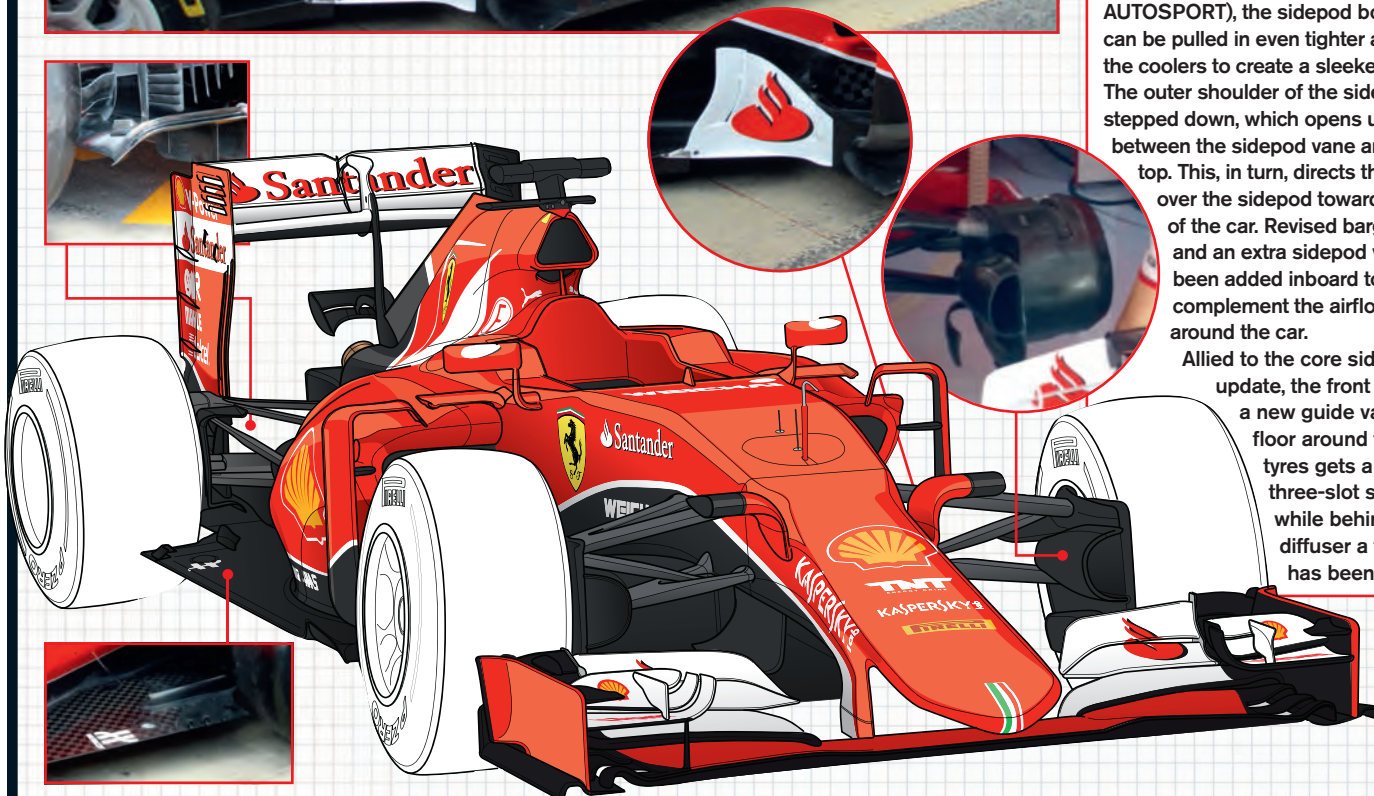


FERRARI'S BIG UPDATE

Ferrari brought a wholesale update to its SF15-T. Aside from the nose and wings, nearly every aerodynamic surface was revised, in particular the sidepods.

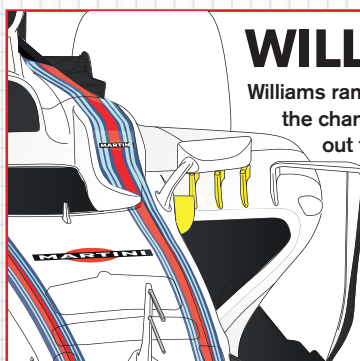
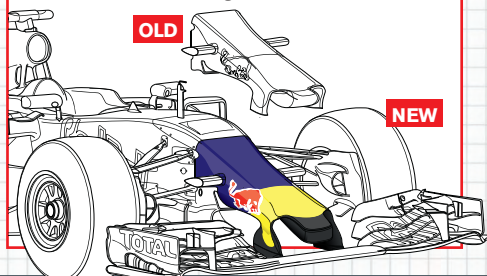
As the car has such well-placed and ducted radiators (see last week's AUTOSPORT), the sidepod bodywork can be pulled in even tighter around the coolers to create a sleeker shape. The outer shoulder of the sidepods is stepped down, which opens up the gap between the sidepod vane and sidepod top. This, in turn, directs the airflow over the sidepod towards the rear of the car. Revised bargeboards and an extra sidepod vane have been added inboard to further complement the airflow passing around the car.

Allied to the core sidepod update, the front ducts gain a new guide vane, the floor around the rear tyres gets a revised three-slot set-up, while behind on the diffuser a tiny winglet has been added.



RED BULL NOSE

Red Bull's much-anticipated updated nose finally appeared in Spain. The new shorter nose had been part of the car's initial design philosophy but was delayed due to problems passing crash tests. This new design brings the mandatory cross-sections – at 50mm and 150mm behind the nose tip – as far back as the rules allow. Having a shorter nose and adopting the arched front-wing mounts allow more air to pass under the nose to feed the car's rear aerodynamics. Red Bull has been particularly careful shaping these wing mounts, which twist and act as turning vanes, working with the other aero devices under the edges of the chassis.



WILLIAMS SIDEPOD VANES

Williams ran with new fins atop the sidepods, although less visible were the changes to the turning vanes under the nose. Williams pointed out that the under-nose area was influential for development, but no obvious changes were apparent in this area, therefore more subtle revisions have been put in place.

There are more vanes on top of the sidepods, with three vertical fins and a further revised fin under the wing mirror. These all help keep the airflow attached over the engine cover, which on the Williams sweeps down more aggressively than on other cars.



STR SPLITTER

Toro Rosso didn't introduce major updates, but one neat new detail was the fences on the STR10's splitter. Teams work with the vertical leading edges of the splitter to set up the airflows passing under the floor. In Spain, this area gained three vertical fins, each turned slightly outwards and aligned with the harder-working bargeboards and vanes further back near the sidepods.


DRIVER RATINGS

MERCEDES




NICO ROSBERG 
Desperately needed to turn the tables on his relentless team-mate and did so finally. Dominated qualifying and claimed his first pole position of 2015 on Saturday, after a clean run through free practice. Aced the start, and once Hamilton became stuck behind Vettel a ninth career win was almost a formality. A faultless performance from a driver who needed a big result.




LEWIS HAMILTON 
Team says he's probably driving as well as ever, but wasn't as strong here as across the first four GPs. Struggled to dial out oversteer on Friday and Saturday and ended up behind Rosberg on the grid for the first time this year. Chances of catching Rosberg evaporated after a poor start and delay at the first pitstop, which forced him to race Vettel. Second best this time.

RED BULL




DANIEL RICCIARDO 
Red Bull brought substantial updates to Spain, but fears over engine mileage meant Ricciardo spent most of Friday in the garage and the car didn't work as well as hoped when he did run. Admitted error at Turn 10 meant he qualified last in the top-10 shootout, but wouldn't have beaten the Toro Rossos anyway. Capitalised on Lotus and STR woes to take P7.




DANIIL KVIAT 
Finally enjoyed a clean Friday, but lost most of Saturday's final practice session to a water leak, so he did a decent job to qualify eighth – although Ricciardo's sector times suggested seventh was possible. Admitted to a "bad race" which included losing five places on the opening lap and getting bumped to 10th by Sainz at the end. Not one of his better grands prix.

WILLIAMS

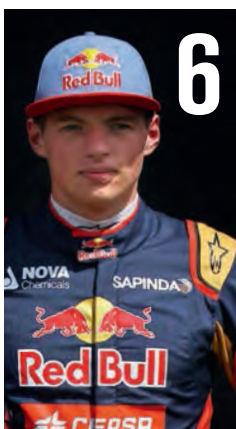



FELIPE MASSA 
Showed a remarkable speed over Friday's long runs, which raised hopes of a battle with Ferrari. Undone in qualifying by unnecessarily making two runs in Q2 and then going off at Turn 3 on his only Q3 run, which relegated him to ninth on the grid. Rose to sixth by lap four of the race, but wasn't quick enough to challenge Raikkonen so that was as good as it got.




VALTTERI BOTTAS 
The team credited some small suspension and aerodynamic updates for its improved form here, while Bottas reckoned better understanding of how to work the medium tyre was crucial. Qualified as high as could reasonably be expected and did well to split Vettel and Raikkonen in the race, in a car that has undoubtedly improved but is not yet at Ferrari's level.

TORO ROSSO




MAX VERSTAPPEN 
Toro Rosso added an updated floor and some other aero tweaks to the STR10 and confidence was high. Looked to have a small edge over Sainz after final practice, but a "95 per cent" lap in Q3 left him a tenth adrift. Fell back in the race with overheating rear tyres, while a lock-up at the chicane with four laps to run helped Sainz bump him from the points.




CARLOS SAINZ JR 
Was happy to finally get the chance to race on a circuit he knows well and looked fast straightaway in free practice. Was slower than Verstappen thereafter until he put together a stunning lap on sole Q3 run to qualify a career-best fifth in front of his home fans. The race was less rewarding, but made good progress on the medium tyre in his final stint to score points.

LOTUS



ROMAIN GROSJEAN 
Up against it after missing FP1 and watching his engine cover fly off and destroy the rear bodywork in FP2. Felt Lotus might struggle to stay ahead of Red Bull and STR and wasn't even close to Q3. The race should have been better after a strong start, but went off at Turn 1, hit his team-mate, lost fourth gear and almost ran over the front jack-man at his final stop.



PASTOR MALDONADO 
Lotus lost a bit of pure pace here, as updates did not work as hoped, while Maldonado wasn't happy with the E23's balance on Friday. Sorted things for Saturday to qualify within a tenth of his team-mate and had a strong start to the race. Rear-wing damage from an early collision with Grosjean spoiled points chances. Soldiered on until team decided it wasn't worth it.



BEN ANDERSON reviews and rates each driver's grand prix weekend performance out of 10

FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL 🇩🇪
Hoped Ferrari's upgrades would bring him closer to Mercedes here, but it didn't work out. The gap to in qualifying actually grew compared with recent races and Ferrari's long-run pace on Friday didn't look promising either. Got the jump on Hamilton for the first half of the race, but the Ferrari wasn't fast enough to hang on once Merc went aggressive on strategy.



KIMI RAIKKONEN 🇫🇮
Struggled with updated SF15-T and partially reverted to the Bahrain aero package. Couldn't make that work either and qualified almost 1s slower than Vettel – not good enough really, regardless of tyre-blanket malfunction that cost him an extra run in Q3. Strong first lap brought him up to fifth but he couldn't jump Bottas despite being on the quicker tyre at the end.

McLAREN

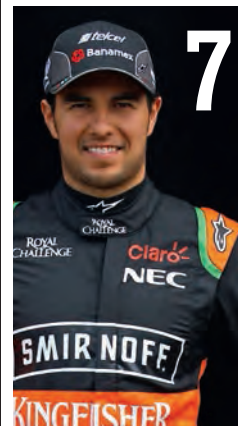


FERNANDO ALONSO 🇪🇸
More updates to the chassis, plus some small gains on the engine side, vaulted McLaren-Honda ahead of Sauber and Force India, but it was still adrift of the rest. Returning to the scene of the testing crash that sidelined him from the first race of the year, Alonso out-qualified Button but lost any hope of a decent finish when his rear brakes failed shortly after his first pitstop.



JENSON BUTTON 🇬🇧
After a disastrous outing last time out, Button was keen to get back on it here. Was faster than Alonso on Friday, but felt some strange behaviour from fresh brakes fitted for qualifying and ended up behind his team-mate. The team fitted fresh material for the race, but he spent most of it battling a "scary" throttle response that caused snap oversteer. Another race to forget.

FORCE INDIA



SERGIO PEREZ 🇲🇽
Expected his team would struggle at this circuit, where downforce is king, and that proved true as both Force Indias qualified slower than all bar the Manor/Marussias. The VJM08 was better in race trim, though, and after passing team-mate Hulkenberg at the start, Perez executed a mammoth 30-lap final stint on medium tyres to beat Ericsson's Sauber too.



NICO HULKENBERG 🇩🇪
The Force India looked slow over a single lap on Friday, but Hulkenberg produced a remarkable long run that suggested better form for the race. From 17th on the grid it looked tough to convert that into a decent result, though, and so it proved. Team felt getting stuck behind Maldonado's hobbled Lotus ruined any chance of the strategy helping with a better result.

"BOTTAS DID WELL TO SPLIT VETTEL AND RAIKKONEN IN THE RACE"



SAUBER

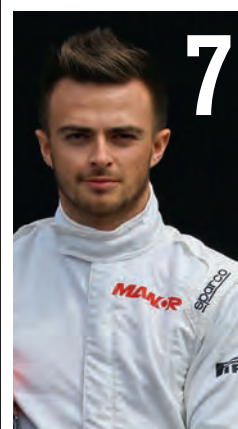


MARCUS ERICSSON 🇸🇪
Enjoys a decent record at this circuit from his GP2 days, but was almost 0.5s slower than team-mate Nasr in failing to escape Q1 for the first time since Australia. Tracked his team-mate in the early stages of the race but lost time at his first pitstop and found it difficult to overcome traffic in his second stint. This proved crucial in narrow defeat to Perez's Force India.



FELIPE NASR 🇧🇷
Felt a lack of updates would stymie Sauber here and he struggled with his rear tyres overheating all weekend. Did an excellent job to split the McLarens in Q1, but oversteer in Q2 meant he dropped behind them thereafter. Felt he did "everything possible" to climb to 12th in the race, thanks to both McLarens and Maldonado hitting trouble. Points were not on without more attrition.

MANOR

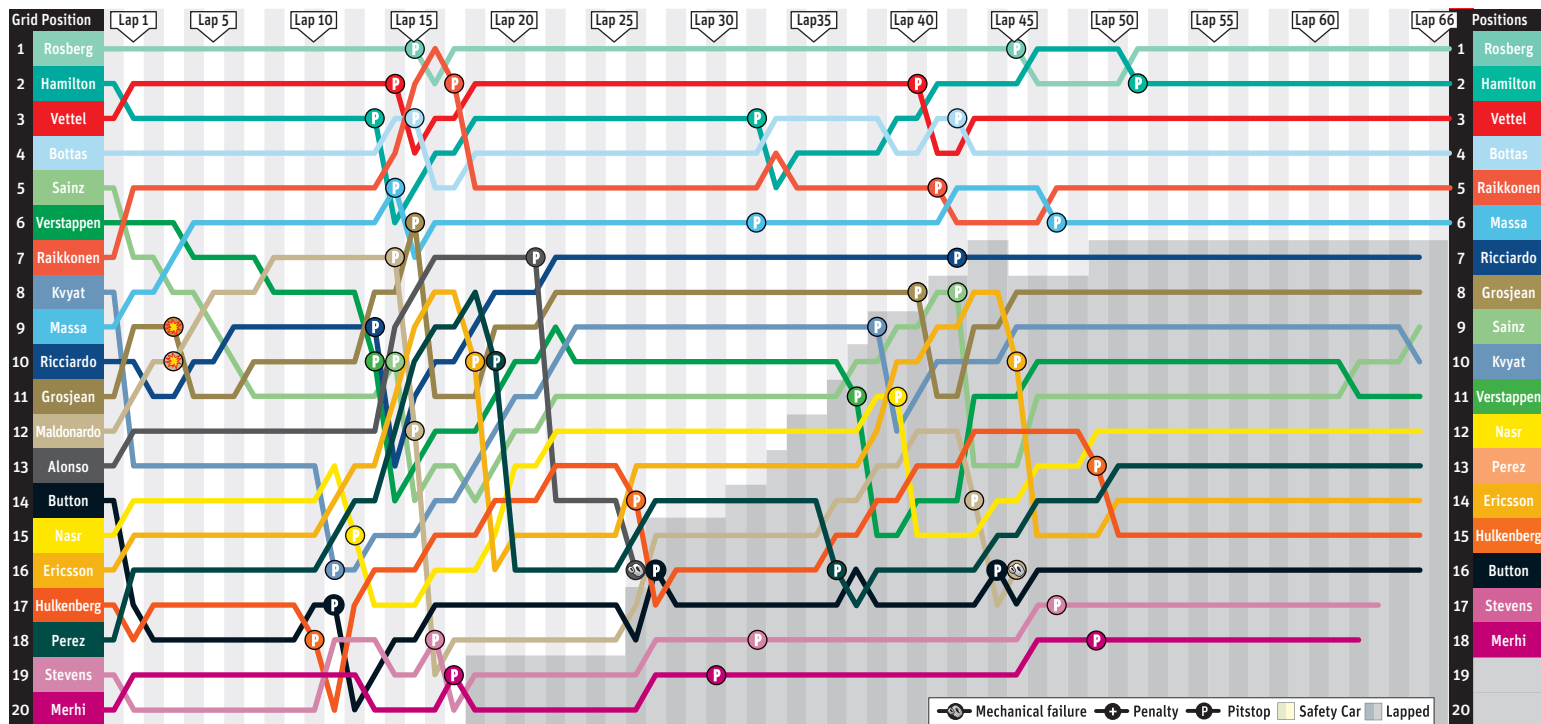


WILL STEVENS 🇬🇧
Another solid weekend from the Brit, who exists in something of a no-man's land while the MR-04 is so uncompetitive and his team-mate continues to struggle. Needs to improve his starts, though, because he spent the first 12 laps bottled up behind Merhi. His pace advantage means that doesn't matter so much, but that won't be the case if the other side of the garage improves.



ROBERTO MERHI 🇪🇸
A disappointing season continues for a driver with excellent junior single-seater pedigree. Plugged away at the deficit to his team-mate and was within four tenths on first Q1 runs, but suffered an ERS "false alarm" and couldn't make a second. Got ahead briefly in the race but couldn't stay there and flat-spotting his second set of tyres didn't help his vain chase thereafter.

RESULTS



PRACTICE 1: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	ROSBERG	1m26.828s
2	HAMILTON	1m26.898s
3	VETTEL	1m27.806s
4	RAIKKONEN	1m27.832s
5	SAINZ	1m28.132s
6	VERSTAPPEN	1m28.529s
7	KVYAT	1m28.785s
8	MASSA	1m28.831s
9	RICCIARDO	1m29.075s
10	NASR	1m29.140s
11	HULKENBERG	1m29.409s
12	MARCIELLO	1m29.630s
13	PALMER	1m29.676s
14	WOLFF	1m29.708s
15	ALONSO	1m29.813s
16	BUTTON	1m29.817s
17	PEREZ	1m30.096s
18	MALDONADO	1m30.110s
19	STEVENS	1m32.471s
20	MERHI	1m32.647s

Weather: 19C, sunny



PRACTICE 2: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m26.852s
2	VETTEL	1m27.260s
3	ROSBERG	1m27.616s
4	RAIKKONEN	1m27.780s
5	KVYAT	1m27.943s
6	VERSTAPPEN	1m28.017s
7	BUTTON	1m28.494s
8	BOTTAS	1m28.525s
9	SAINZ	1m28.674s
10	MASSA	1m28.712s
11	ALONSO	1m28.723s
12	GROSJEAN	1m29.086s
13	RICCIARDO	1m29.098s
14	MALDONADO	1m29.217s
15	NASR	1m29.333s
16	ERICSSON	1m29.361s
17	HULKENBERG	1m29.601s
18	PEREZ	1m29.707s
19	STEVENS	1m31.929s
20	MERHI	1m32.751s

Weather: 27C, sunny



PRACTICE 3: Saturday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	ROSBERG	1m26.021s
2	VETTEL	1m26.177s
3	HAMILTON	1m26.222s
4	BOTTAS	1m26.682s
5	RAIKKONEN	1m26.944s
6	RICCIARDO	1m27.048s
7	MASSA	1m27.109s
8	VERSTAPPEN	1m27.132s
9	KVYAT	1m27.313s
10	SAINZ	1m27.809s
11	BUTTON	1m27.938s
12	HULKENBERG	1m28.082s
13	NASR	1m28.096s
14	ALONSO	1m28.304s
15	GROSJEAN	1m28.578s
16	MALDONADO	1m28.618s
17	ERICSSON	1m28.788s
18	PEREZ	1m28.996s
19	STEVENS	1m31.125s
20	MERHI	1m31.749s

Weather: 22C, sunny



FRIDAY TESTERS

	12 MARCIELLO	1m29.630s
	13 PALMER	1m29.676s
	14 WOLFF	1m29.708s



QUALIFYING TIMES

POS	DRIVER	QUALIFYING 1	QUALIFYING 2	QUALIFYING 3
1	ROSBERG	1m26.490s (2)	1m25.166s (1)	1m24.681s
2	HAMILTON	1m26.382s (1)	1m25.740s (2)	1m24.948s
3	VETTEL	1m27.534s (10)	1m26.167s (5)	1m25.458s
4	BOTTAS	1m27.262s (6)	1m26.197s (6)	1m25.694s
5	SAINZ	1m26.773s (4)	1m26.475s (8)	1m26.136s
6	VERSTAPPEN	1m27.393s (9)	1m26.441s (7)	1m26.249s
7	RAIKKONEN	1m26.637s (3)	1m26.016s (3)	1m26.414s
8	KVYAT	1m27.833s (14)	1m26.889s (10)	1m26.629s
9	MASSA	1m27.165s (5)	1m26.147s (4)	1m26.757s
10	RICCIARDO	1m27.611s (11)	1m26.692s (9)	1m26.770s
11	GROSJEAN	1m27.383s (8)	1m27.375s	-
12	MALDONADO	1m27.281s (7)	1m27.450s	-
13	ALONSO	1m27.941s (15)	1m27.760s	-
14	BUTTON	1m27.813s (13)	1m27.854s	-
15	NASR	1m27.625s (12)	1m28.005s	-
16	ERICSSON	1m28.112s	-	-
17	HULKENBERG	1m28.365s	-	-
18	PEREZ	1m28.442s	-	-
19	STEVENS	1m31.200s	-	-
20	MERHI	1m32.038s	-	-

Weather: 25C, sunny

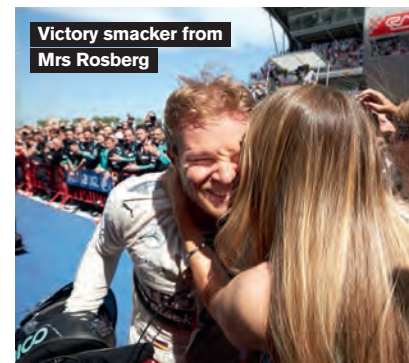
QUALIFYING STATISTICS

	HEAD TO HEAD	
ROSBERG	1	4
RICCIARDO	4	1
MASSA	3	2
VETTEL	5	0
ALONSO/MAGNUSSEN	1	3
PEREZ	1	4
SAINZ	3	2
GROSJEAN	5	0
ERICSSON	1	4
STEVENS	3	0



POLE POSITION TROPHY

HAMILTON	AUS	WAL	PRC	BRN	4
ROSBERG	E	1			



RACE: 66 LAPS - 190.826 MILES

POS	DRIVER	DRIVER NUMBER	TEAM	LAPS	TOTAL TIME	FASTEST LAP	PITSTOPS	TIME IN PITS	GRID
1	NICO ROSBERG	6	MERCEDES	66	1h41m12.555s	1m29.109s	2	44.322s	1
2	LEWIS HAMILTON	44	MERCEDES	66	+17.551s	1m28.270s	3	1m09.278s	2
3	SEBASTIAN VETTEL	5	FERRARI	66	+45.342s	1m30.737s	2	43.598s	3
4	VALTTERI BOTTAS	77	WILLIAMS-MERCEDES	66	+59.217s	1m30.711s	2	43.882s	4
5	KIMI RAIKKONEN	7	FERRARI	66	+1m00.002s	1m29.931s	2	44.412s	7
6	FELIPE MASSA	19	WILLIAMS-MERCEDES	66	+1m21.314s	1m30.374s	3	1m07.025s	9
7	DANIEL RICCIARDO	3	RED BULL-RENAULT	65	-1 lap	1m31.124s	2	47.324s	10
8	ROMAIN GROSJEAN	8	LOTUS-MERCEDES	65	-1 lap	1m31.945s	2	56.565s	11
9	CARLOS SAINZ	55	TORO ROSSO-RENAULT	65	-1 lap	1m31.156s	2	45.037s	5
10	DANIIL KVYAT	26	RED BULL-RENAULT	65	-1 lap	1m31.887s	2	44.940s	8
11	MAX VERSTAPPEN	33	TORO ROSSO-RENAULT	65	-1 lap	1m31.896s	2	47.003s	6
12	FELIPE NASR	12	SAUBER-FERRARI	65	-1 lap	1m31.928s	2	45.863s	15
13	SERGIO PEREZ	11	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	65	-1 lap	1m31.932s	2	44.894s	18
14	MARCUS ERICSSON	9	SAUBER-FERRARI	65	-1 lap	1m32.222s	2	48.144s	16
15	NICO HULKENBERG	27	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	65	-1 lap	1m30.888s	3	1m07.738s	17
16	JENSON BUTTON	22	McLAREN-HONDA	65	-1 lap	1m31.162s	3	1m09.982s	14
17	WILL STEVENS	28	MARUSSIA-FERRARI	63	-3 laps	1m33.655s	3	1m10.526s	19
18	ROBERTO MERHI	98	MARUSSIA-FERRARI	62	-4 laps	1m34.211s	3	1m11.901s	20
R	PASTOR MALDONADO	13	LOTUS-MERCEDES	45	-	1m32.912s	3	1m20.010s	12
R	FERNANDO ALONSO	14	McLAREN-HONDA	26	brakes	1m33.387s	1	23.728s	13

Weather: 25C, sunny. Winner's average speed: 113.127mph. Fastest lap: Hamilton 1m28.270s (117.967mph) on lap 54. Lap leader: 1-15 Rosberg, 16 Raikkonen, 17-45 Rosberg, 46-50 Hamilton, 51-66 Rosberg.

TYRE CHOICE

STINT 1	STINT 2	STINT 3	STINT 4
Medium U	Medium N	Hard N	
Medium U	Medium N	Hard N	Medium U
Medium U	Medium N	Hard N	
Medium U	Medium U	Hard N	
Medium U	Hard N	Medium N	
Medium U	Medium U	Hard N	Medium U
Medium N	Medium N	Hard N	
Medium U	Hard N	Medium U	
Medium U	Medium U	Hard N	
Medium U	Hard N	Hard N	
Medium N	Hard N	Medium N	
Medium U	Medium N	Hard N	
Medium N	Medium U	Medium N	Hard N
Medium U	Hard N	Medium N	Medium U
Medium N	Medium U	Hard N	Medium N
Medium N	Medium N	Hard N	Medium N
Medium N	Medium N	Medium U	Hard N
Medium U	Hard N		

N - new; U - used

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	PTS	AUS	MAL	PRC	BRN	E	MC	CDN	A	GB	H	B	I	SGP	J	RUS	USA	MEX	BR	UAE
1	HAMILTON	111	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	ROSBERG	91	2nd	3rd	2nd	3rd	1st	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	VETTEL	80	3rd	1st	3rd	5th	3rd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	RAIKKONEN	52	ret	4th	4th	2nd	5th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	BOTTAS	42	DNS	5th	6th	4th	4th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	MASSA	39	4th	6th	5th	10th	6th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	RICCIARDO	25	6th	10th	9th	6th	7th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	GROSJEAN	16	ret	11th	7th	7th	8th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	NASR	14	5th	12th	8th	12th	12th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	SAINZ	8	9th	8th	13th	ret	9th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	VERSTAPPEN	6	ret	7th	17th	ret	11th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	HULKENBERG	6	7th	14th	ret	13th	15th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	PEREZ	5	10th	13th	11th	8th	13th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	ERICSSON	5	8th	ret	10th	14th	14th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	KVYAT	5	DNS	9th	ret	9th	10th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	ALONSO	0	-	ret	12th	11th	ret	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	BUTTON	0	11th	ret	14th	DNS	16th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	MERHI	0	DNQ	15th	16th	17th	18th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	STEVENS	0	DNQ	DNS	15th	16th	17th	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	MALDONADO	0	ret	ret	ret	15th	ret	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	MAGNUSSEN	0	DNS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



Alonso failed to shine on home turf



Massa Sr and Jr



One way to improve the F1 'show'...

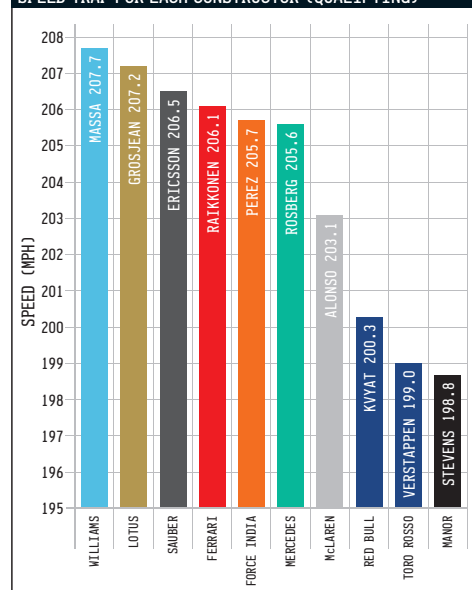


COATES/LAT

CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

POS	CONSTRUCTOR	PTS	AUS	MAL	PRC	BRN	E	MC	CDN	A	GB	H	B	I	SGP	J	RUS	USA	MEX	BR	UAE
1	MERCEDES	202	43	33	43	40	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	FERRARI	132	15	37	27	28	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	WILLIAMS	81	12	18	18	13	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	RED BULL	30	8	3	2	10	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	SAUBER	19	14	0	5	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	LOTUS	16	0	0	6	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	TORO ROSSO	14	2	10	0	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	FORCE INDIA	11	7	0	0	4	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	McLAREN	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	MARUSSIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

SPEED TRAP FOR EACH CONSTRUCTOR (QUALIFYING)



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Vandoorne textbook in Spain, as Lynn writes his own chapter

Championship leader Stoffel Vandoorne took a win and a second to further stretch his advantage, while Brit Alex Lynn broke his duck. By **EDD STRAW**



SBILOHAM/LAT

GP2
Barcelona
May 9-10



Round 2/11

ALEX LYNN WAS BULLISH ABOUT HIS CHANCES OF challenging for the GP2 title heading into the 2015 season, even though the category had a well-earned reputation as a rookie minefield and a very obvious championship favourite in McLaren junior Stoffel Vandoorne. It's fair to say that the opening round in Bahrain was a chastening experience for the Williams development driver.

But having headed back from the Middle East pointless, a consequence of his speed being undermined by hitting Alexander Rossi's car in traffic in the feature race, things went dramatically better in Spain. While Vandoorne drove immaculately to win the feature race and back it up with second in the reversed-grid sprint, giving him a 37-point championship lead, Lynn broke his duck by holding off the Belgian in race two.

It would be a stretch to say that Lynn has, with a single victory, now established himself as Vandoorne's leading challenger; after all, he's only fifth in the standings. But in qualifying, he has been, on average, the second-fastest driver over the two sessions so far. And while some sprint-race victories are cheap, after taking fifth in the feature race Lynn was justifiably proud of a Sunday win that he had to make happen by passing pole-position starter Norman Nato and then hold off Vandoorne.

"I'd say I maybe didn't realise what it took to put a race weekend together in GP2 compared to GP3," said Lynn after Saturday's race. "Speed is one thing, but putting it together is another — they are two different disciplines and Stoffel is a great example of how to do that. What he's doing is just textbook.

"As a rookie, you are always if not a session behind, a few laps behind and it has been going into the unknown for me. I'm happy that I'm catching up pretty quickly, but it's just not quick enough to catch up from what you lose just in terms of that bit of experience. I'm proud of the speed, I just need to get the results."

Sixteen hours later, Lynn's victory ensured that the results are starting to come. After passing Nato — who simply didn't have the speed to stay up front and ultimately faded to seventh — into Turn 1, he soon had Vandoorne on his case. On lap 16 Vandoorne got perilously close, crossing the line 0.670s behind and running on Lynn's tail in the

middle of the lap. This was a serious test of Lynn's credentials against a driver at the top of his game.

"The first couple of laps, I wasn't saving the tyres at all and was pushing for the lead," said Lynn. "Once you get it, you back off. Stoffel chose that portion of the race to attack. But he said after the race he was struggling in the final sector, which I thought he was doing on purpose to make me use my tyres more because he was closing on me in the middle of the lap.

"It ebbed and flowed and he did get dangerously close. My engineer said I controlled it well and I'm glad it looked like that because it didn't always feel that under control and I was nervous about the tyres.

"But I knew he couldn't keep up the pressure. If he had crossed the line a tenth closer on that lap, he would have been able to have a look using the DRS. But I could see what he was doing and he started to back off. I knew he would try again, so I backed off again and when he tried, I went again."

Lynn held on with just over two seconds in hand, a significant boost for his credentials.

"In Bahrain, there was so much potential but terrible results," said Lynn. "This weekend, we had great potential but it was important to bank points to get a solid ground. Now, we need to show Stoffel that we are going to fight him and it was important to do that in the race."

Not that ART driver Vandoorne will be too worried. Even when the DRS conspired against him in the feature race, he had everything under

GP3 BARCELONA (E), MAY 9-10, ROUND 1/9

Ocon delivers decisive debut victory



Vandoorne converted pole into feature-race victory



SBL/DHAM/LAT



How long before Ocon joins this list of names?

EVERYONE EXPECTED EUROPEAN FORMULA 3 champion Esteban Ocon to conquer GP3 this year. So when he jumped pole-position starter Luca Ghiotto's wheelspinning Trident machine at the start of the first race of the season and took a comfortable victory, it was no surprise. Not that the Frenchman took anything for granted.

"I wasn't that confident," he said after his consummate victory. "When you arrive at the first race after testing and you were never P1, you don't know..."

Now there can be no doubting ART man Ocon's credentials. A mid-race safety car, triggered by Seb Morris and Ralph Boschung colliding, eradicated his five-second advantage. But Ocon immediately dropped Ghiotto at the restart, winning by 3.3s while the Italian concentrated on repulsing the late challenge of Arden driver Emil Bernstorff.

While the top three remained unchanged throughout the race, things became increasingly chaotic behind as many struggled with tyre

degradation. Nissan protege Jann Mardenborough, 12th on the opening lap, drove a canny and incisive race to come through to fourth place ahead of Marvin Kirchhofer.

Further back, Ferrari Driver Academy prospect Antonio Fuoco charged from 21st on the grid, after binning his Carlin machine in qualifying, to eighth to earn himself reversed-grid pole for Sunday's shorter race. He converted that into the lead, but ran wide exiting the fast Turn 3 right-hander and was passed by Kirchhofer.

Kirchhofer held the lead comfortably to the end, while Jimmy Eriksson battled past Fuoco on lap two to secure second.

The real drama was further back, with Mardenborough running sixth early on before passing Kevin Ceccon into Turn 1 for fifth. He then closed in on Bernstorff as both reeled in Fuoco. When Bernstorff and Fuoco went side by side through Turn 3 on the last lap, Mardenborough hung back, held a tight line and passed both in one go to take a superb third place.



Lynn leads race-two poleman Nato

MAUGER/LAT



Evans (9) pipped Rossi for feature-race runner-up spot

control, demonstrating a blend of speed and immaculate racecraft. He started that race on the soft-compound Pirellis, as did DAMS duo Pierre Gasly and Lynn, who ran second and third. When they pitted early, they were unable to use the DRS to work their way through traffic.

But by the time those who had run long – Russian Time's Mitch Evans and Racing Engineering's Alexander Rossi – pitted, they were able to use the DRS. Rossi got within DRS range of Vandoorne briefly, only to fall back into the clutches of the rapid Evans and lose second, while Vandoorne held on.

That put him eighth on the grid for the sprint race, and Vandoorne was happy to bank yet more

points with second. Textbook indeed.

But while Lynn is coming on strong, the battle to be best of the rest is still very much on. Gasly is demonstrating similar pace to Lynn, and his tyre management will improve. Rossi has been a factor throughout and has three podiums in four races, while former GP3 champion Evans undoubtedly has the speed provided that the Virtuosi-run Russian Time squad can continue to unlock the kind of pace that allowed it to be a serious contender in Spain, with this year's most-improved driver, Artem Markelov, fifth in the sprint race in the sister car after Evans ground to a halt on a gridding lap.

Then there's the current second-placed man

– Campos Racing's Rio Haryanto. The 22-year-old Indonesian doesn't seem to have the one-lap pace to be right up front in qualifying, but he's a real force in the races and a top-six fixture.

One of those drivers will have to break free of the rest and give Vandoorne a hard time. Based on progress so far, it could be Lynn.

"At the moment, Stoffel is showing no chink in his armour," said Lynn. "That's the mark of a great championship run. We need to find the chink in his armour, find the mistakes, pressure him in the feature race and make things harder for him."

FOR FULL RESULTS, PAGE 52

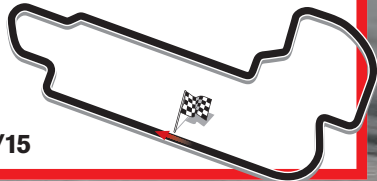
Indy prequel sees fifth different winner in Power

Five races, five different winners. But second-placed Graham Rahal's achievement was the story of the race, as **MARK GLENDEENING** explains

IndyCar Indianapolis (USA)

May 9

Round 5/15



32

THE CONFETTI WAS STILL BEING SWEEPED OUT OF Victory Lane at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Saturday when Graham Rahal retweeted a comment from a fan: 'Not sure if anyone has noticed but the Graham Rahal haters have been quiet lately.'

It's difficult to imagine Rahal polarising people enough to have a real corps of 'haters'; at least, no more than any other driver. That depth of feeling tends to be reserved for those who really impose themselves upon the psyche, either through success or by some other means. Fans don't tend to 'hate' a driver who finished the past two years 18th and 19th respectively in the points. They simply don't notice him in the first place.

But if 'haters' is too strong, he has certainly had his share of detractors. In a way, he set himself up for that with his early success. Rahal is one of the handful of drivers to have won on his debut – with Newman/Haas/Lanigan at St Petersburg in 2008 – but he hasn't won since, and only climbed onto the podium eight times in

the seven years prior to the start of this season.

Rahal is more than happy to share his version of what went wrong during all that time with anyone who cares to listen, but you'll also find people in the paddock who insist that his results are the consequence of good genes spinning into complacency, a taste for the trappings of being a professional race driver, and a lack of application. (It's not uncommon for similar criticisms to be levelled at Marco Andretti.)

But what he, and indeed the entire Rahal Letterman Lanigan team, has achieved in the first few races of the 2015 season deserves respect. This is a team that has made numerous major technical and engineering appointments over the past few years for relatively little return. It's a team that lost a major, lucrative sponsorship deal last year. It's a team that scaled down from two cars to one at the end of 2013. And somehow, it's the only team that can wrench anything out of the Honda aero kit on road courses.

Rahal's second place on the IMS road course

was his second in as many races, and puts him fifth in the championship going into the Indy 500. He's one of only two Honda-powered drivers in the top 10 in the standings, with NOLA winner James Hinchcliffe hovering a few places below him. And he did it on a weekend where only one Honda car qualified in the top 12.

Will Power won on Saturday, and that outcome was never really in doubt. He qualified on pole, won the start, and only relinquished the lead during the pitstops. But the one spell where the Team Penske driver appeared to be facing a potential threat, it was Rahal causing the problems. He'd been sitting in second place since the beginning of his second stint and, by going just a fraction longer on each subsequent stop, he returned from his final visit to the pits fuelled to the gills and on fresher tyres than Power.

What had been a buffer of well over 4.0s was slashed to just 1.5s in only seven laps before Power was able to pull away again, but the Australian admitted later that he'd been forced to



Newgarden (21) among the victims of first-corner melee



Montoya, Power and Rahal do the honours

Power's victory from pole was never really in doubt



LEVITT/LAT

“Dad is excellent at strategy but he gets pretty fired up. It's easier when he's not saying those things”

GRAHAM RAHAL

dig deep to see off the challenge. Which was impressive, because up until that point there had been no indication that anyone with a Honda kit should have been able to scare a hooked-up Penske, never mind a guy driving for a single-car team. Andretti, with its four cars' worth of data to draw upon, was nowhere to be seen.

“I don't know that there's any secret to it,” Rahal said. “I think what we're finding with the Honda, there's an inherent weakness, which is that the car is pretty pitch-sensitive. It likes to be sideways a lot. We've changed a heck of a lot, and it doesn't make a difference.

“I think we got to get a little bit more driveability out of the car. In the very flowing section, it's hard to flow-speed because it's always wanting to be sideways on you. You never know when it's going to do it. That's the difficulty of it. We're going to keep working hard, try to tame it. I know HPD, everybody is trying equally as hard.”

That doesn't explain why RLL should be the team that has come closest to unlocking the Honda road kit's secrets. The team has a recent history of aggressively trying to strengthen its technical and engineering side, but the real

Rahal silences his critics; another strong second place



LEVITT/LAT

off-season change was not about someone coming on board, but rather someone stepping back. Bobby Rahal no longer calls his son's strategy from the pitwall. In fact, he doesn't even watch from the pitwall. Responsibilities for race strategy have been passed on to team manager Ricardo Nault, and Rahal Sr watches from the stands. Graham is reluctant to attribute the recent upswing in fortunes to the change, although he admits that it has helped.

“Dad is excellent at strategy,” he says. “To not have dad... is not like it's a great bonus. Things are probably a little bit more calm. Dad is a pretty emotional guy, gets pretty fired up. When he tells me I need to pass people, I'm sitting out there driving at eleven tenths, it ticks me off a little bit. It's a bit easier when he's not saying those things.

“I think everything's just working smoother now. Again, there's a lot of factors to that. Having dad just watch the race isn't necessarily all of it.”

Perversely, the fact that Rahal was even in contention on Saturday had nothing to do with strategy at all. He'd started from 17th on the grid, and yet came out of the first corner in sixth place due to a fracas ahead of him.

“Honest to God, before the race my dad said, ‘What are you going to do at the start?’” said Rahal. “I said, ‘I'm going to go as far left as I can. When they all crash on the inside, I'll be on the outside, so I will have a great angle to cut to the apex. Worst comes to worst, I'll have to do the shortcut’. It worked perfectly.”

So an element of luck, but it had to be built on a foundation of something good to make it work. From Rahal's perspective, the bedrock of the whole thing is his new-found confidence in his equipment and the people around him.

“When you have a team that gels so well, that you're so confident in, and gives the driver a better car, it breeds confidence out of your driver,” he said. “You can drive better and harder.

“It's not that this person you see driving today isn't the same guy that drove last year. But the car I drove today is better than what I've had. I've been able to attack a lot harder.”

That hasn't gone unnoticed by his rivals, including those in the Honda camp who are still struggling to make the car work. (“[Ryan] Hunter-Reay already asked me about spring rates,” Rahal said. “I told him 4500 pounds.”)

And this sudden rise in form comes as the series prepares to break out the superspeedway aero kits for the first time in anticipation of the Indy 500. The recent open test suggested that there is far more parity between the manufacturers on ovals than on road courses, and Rahal has already finished on the podium at the Speedway once before. It would have seemed unthinkable a year ago but, this time around, it really wouldn't be a huge surprise if he wins it.

All hell breaks loose after HCN tagged Dixon



MONTOKA KEEPS TITLE LEAD

Juan Pablo Montoya extended his points lead after finishing third on Saturday. The Colombian was chasing Graham Rahal early in the final stint before backing off to save fuel and preserve his position.

DIXON AND HELIO DRAMA...

Two of Montoya's title rivals were dealt a blow at the first corner, when Helio Castroneves tagged Scott Dixon and put both cars into a spin. Dixon needed to pit for a new rear wing but still salvaged a 10th place, while Castroneves managed to recover to sixth.

...CONTINUES DOWN FIELD

The Dixon/Castroneves clash caused problems further back in the field, where James Hinchcliffe tagged Barber winner Josef Newgarden. Newgarden stalled and was never able to regain contact with the frontrunners.

WILSON'S TOUGH RETURN

Justin Wilson made his IndyCar comeback at IMS with the first of his two scheduled appearances with Andretti. The Brit suffered a broken front wing in the melee at the first corner, and was later forced to drop out of the race when he became stuck in gear.

FURTHER HONDA CONFUSION

Ryan Hunter-Reay managed to climb to 10th after starting near the rear of the field, but he admitted that the team's struggles to understand the Honda aero kit are ongoing. “It's kind of a product of the situation but we definitely need to figure this out,” he said. “We're struggling to understand where the rest of the speed is.”

ELECTRIC DNF FOR PAGENAUD

Simon Pagenaud's frustrating start to his Penske career continued with a DNF due to an electrical problem, although the Frenchman took some solace from the fact that he was running with the leaders when the issue arose. “It's a bummer to not put things together again, but I know with our speed we'll get there soon,” he said.

LOUSY RETURN FOR HUERTAS

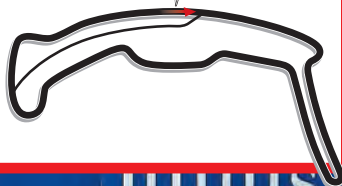
Carlos Huertas returned to Dale Coyne Racing last weekend after being sidelined for two races due to contractual problems. The Colombian suffered an engine failure late in qualifying, and finished the race in 19th.

FOR FULL RESULTS, PAGE 52

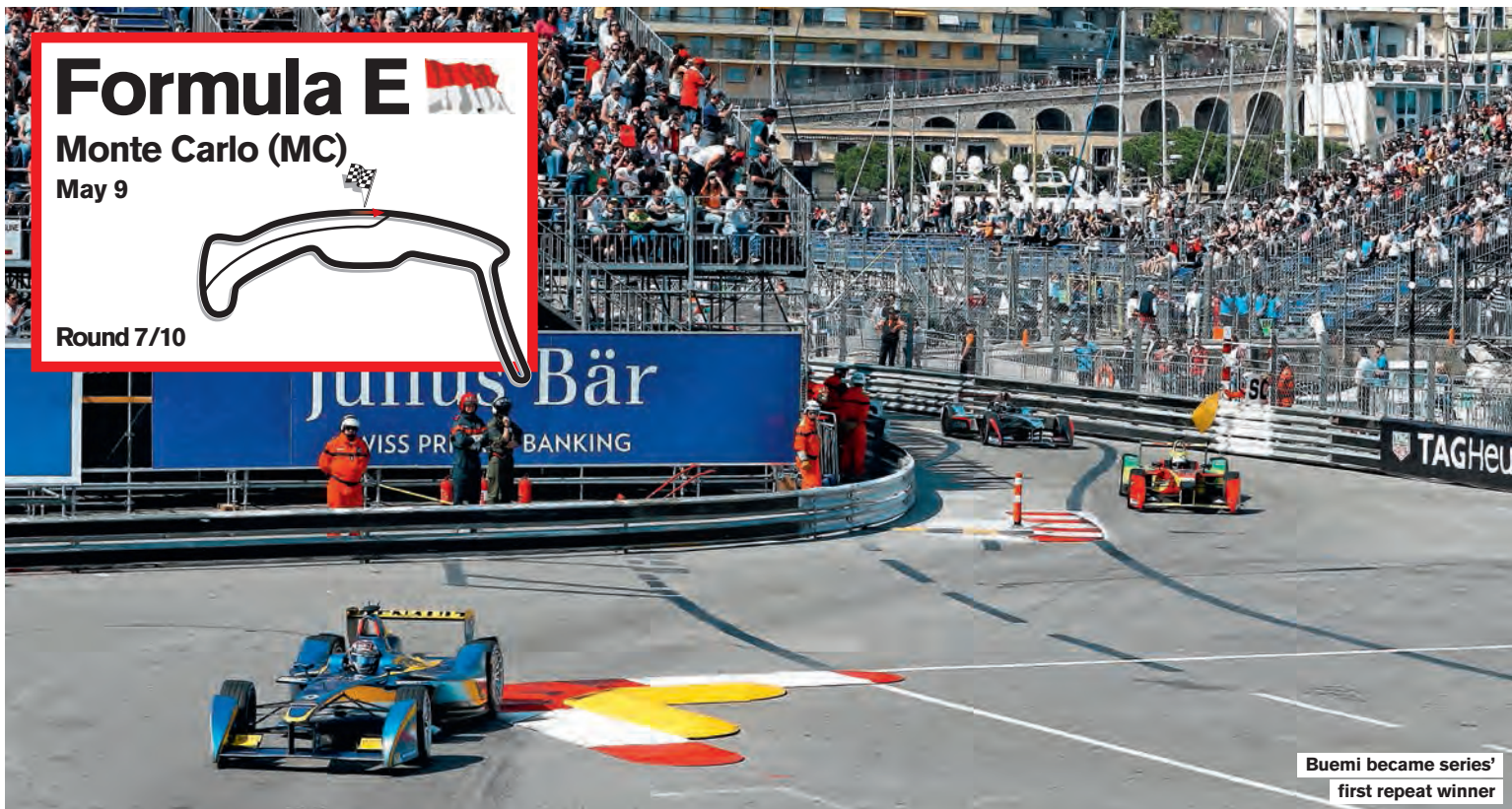
Formula E

Monte Carlo (MC)

May 9



Round 7/10



Buemi became series' first repeat winner

Buemi charges to second series win

SEBASTIEN BUEMI WON THE FIRST FORMULA E RACE around the streets of Monaco and became the first driver to convert a pole position into a win in the series' inaugural season. The reigning World Endurance champion also brought to an end a run that had featured six different winners from the first six races of the all-electric series to become the first two-time victor.

While his performance across the weekend was sublime, e.dams driver Buemi's biggest feat was to haul himself into the championship fight. This was the race in which Formula E made the jump from being a curious, new entity in the world of motorsport to an 11-race championship that will be won by whoever has done the best job after the double-header final round in London in June.

Behind Buemi were the duelling Brazilians who head the championship – Lucas di Grassi and Nelson Piquet Jr. Ahead of the Monaco ePrix, di Grassi held a one-point advantage in the standings. They were both drawn to run in the first of the four qualifying periods and lapped close together on track – a bit too close for Piquet's liking, who angrily accused di Grassi of

holding him up when he was on his fastest lap.

Running in a later group, Buemi grabbed pole from the Abt Audi machine of di Grassi, with Jerome d'Ambrosio and the Dragon Racing team making a step forward to take third from Piquet.

A championship fight in a one-make series is a difficult place to be in. Team and driver need to think outside the box to find the elusive advantage. Di Grassi thought he'd found an advantage that would get him ahead of Buemi by the finish so, when the charge began to run low and the car changeovers loomed, the Brazilian opted to pit early from his position a few tenths of a second adrift.

When the Swiss driver finally headed into the pitlane to change cars two laps later, di Grassi pushed hard and closed the gap. Buemi exited pitlane right in front of his rival, who knew the leader would have cold brakes in his Spark-Renault, but the nature of the hairpin at the harbour-front chicane means a driver just has to place his car on the inside and a passing move becomes impossible. Buemi did exactly that, and di Grassi's chance of winning disappeared.



Piquet completed the podium line-up

Just as in other series, driving a Formula E car is primarily about maximising energy and making sure your tyres last a stint. Piquet is proving to be a master of this and, with 10 of the 47 laps to go, the Campos-run China Racing car closed right up on di Grassi. Piquet had a considerable advantage of eight per cent greater battery life remaining, twice the amount that could be explained by di Grassi's earlier stop. He launched his attack, using his fanboost down the start-finish straight and then running around the outside into the harbour-front hairpin. But di Grassi defended with a heavy lock-up of the brakes.

That proved to be Piquet's only chance of taking the position, and so the top three was settled. Piquet had recovered some of what he felt he'd been denied in qualifying, while Buemi hauled himself into championship contention.

Di Grassi was left to reflect upon his attempt at finding an advantage. "It was a very risky strategy," he said. "We had to do two fast laps and it was very tight coming out of the pits. But it's the lead of the championship that matters." That lead is now four points, with Buemi a further six behind.



Di Grassi took second but extended his points lead

FERRARO/LAT

FOR FULL RESULTS, PAGE 52

IN THE PADDOCK

JAMES BOLTON
FORMULA E
CORRESPONDENT

@JPBo1ton



AH, MONACO. SOME SAY IT'S A terrible place to hold a motor race. Others say it's the jewel in motorsport's crown, a unique event. It may have a love-it-or-hate it reputation, but the challenge of driving quickly around the streets of Monte Carlo and La Condamine is one of the biggest in world sport.

Precision with steering and throttle inputs, and intense concentration, are more important than ever here, and have been ever since the principality's first grand prix was held in 1929. This year's GP is a week away, but the marshals and local residents had a quiet warm-up last Saturday when Formula E came to town.

Battery capacity meant the F1 circuit had to be shortened. The electric cars turn sharp



Cars are close but need to be louder

right at Ste Devote, and run at sea level to the famous harbour-front chicane, where they round a hairpin right. It's half the length of the F1 layout, at 1.1 miles compared with 2.1, yet the challenge of precision and concentration is undiminished, and the Spark-Renaults were spectacular to watch. The capacity crowd confirmed that.

One advantage that Formula E has in running on street tracks is spectators are

closer to the cars, meaning that they hear the volume of the tyres and the drivetrain louder than they would on a conventional track. Watching trackside is like going to your local kart circuit: the cars are fast, you see what the driver is doing, and you can hear it too. The louder the brake-squeal, the harder the driver is pushing the pedal; the louder the turn-in tyre-squeal, the more the driver is struggling with understeer. It gives

an insight into driving style that is totally masked when there's a loud, dirty, internal-combustion engine involved.

What you can't see is wheelspin under acceleration. There wasn't any in Monaco, but the series organisers are aware of that missing element and are working on making the cars faster for the 2015-16 season. But in Monaco, the art of driving a racing car provided a fascinating spectacle.

Drivers praise smooth track

TO MOST MOTOR RACING FANS, Monaco means a tight and twisty track, lots of bumps and maximum downforce. This approach to racing at the venue is turned upside down for the Formula E teams and drivers because it's actually one of the smoother venues on their calendar.

"For us this is probably the best track," said Antonio Felix da Costa, who raced there in FRenault 3.5 and GP3. "It has high grip, because a lot of the track has been resurfaced, and it's less bumpy. That means set-up changes are probably the opposite of what they are to F1 or GP2 drivers. The circuit they've put together for us works."



Da Costa was impressed



Agag (right), with Prince Albert, plans more races

Series plans expanded calendar

THE 2015-16 FORMULA E championship is set to include an expanded calendar.

Series chief executive officer Alejandro Agag said he would finalise dates and venues later this month and would then place the schedule before the FIA for ratification at its July World Council meeting.

"It is very likely that we will add two races," said Agag. "We're waiting for

Paris to conclude the process, but I'm optimistic we'll get the green light. It would be wonderful to race there. We're talking to three or four other venues."

Agag said it was likely that all 10 races on the first Formula E calendar would remain in the all-electric series for the second season.

"In principle, we'll keep them all from this year," he said.

GRID PENALTIES

Three drivers were hit by grid penalties in Monaco. Dragon Racing's Loic Duval qualified fifth but was relegated to 14th, Jaime Alguersuari was demoted from eighth to 17th, while Karun Chandhok dropped from 19th to 20th.

HAT-TRICK LOSS

GP2 Series runner-up Sam Bird was chasing a hat trick of wins in Monaco. The Virgin Racing driver, victorious on the streets in GP2 and Formula Renault 3.5, suffered reliability woes in practice one that put him on the back foot for qualifying, and he started the race 10th. After the first-lap accident he was up to seventh, and was on third-placed Nelson Piquet Jr's tail at the chequered flag.

CLOSING UP

The competition in Formula E is getting closer, according to Amlin Aguri driver Antonio Felix da Costa. "If you lose 0.5s it can cost you six or seven places. The tracks are short and the teams and drivers are understanding the cars to a very high level."

DAMS SUCCESS

The DAMS team, founded in 1988 by Jean-Paul Driot and Rene Arnoux, added the Formula E win to its two GP2 wins and FRenault 3.5 success at last year's grand prix to make it four in a row.



It's hilarious that he is the guy [who complains] night and day to the stewards about traffic in qualifying, and obviously he blocked my whole last sector



Nelson Piquet Jr was unimpressed with Lucas di Grassi's track etiquette in qualifying

Senna critical of first corner

MAHINDRA RACING DRIVER

Bruno Senna has slammed the layout of the opening sector of the Monaco circuit.

The Brazilian was caught out in a chaotic first-corner crash. Daniel Abt hit the wall on the exit of Ste Devote and Senna, with nowhere to go, was launched over the German's car. Both retired on the spot. Other cars lost wings in the concertina and pitted for repairs.

"The design of the first corner put us into this situation," said Senna. "Before the race



Alguersuari was also caught in a T1 crash

it was clear it would be tight there. I was accelerating out of the corner so it's hard to know what happened. It's something that needs to be looked at for next time."

Shedden on top as Plato hits 90

Honda's happy hunting ground offered Gordon Shedden a route to the top of an incredibly close BTCC points battle. **SCOTT MITCHELL** reports



BTCC
Thruxton (GB)

May 9-10

Round 3/10



THERE'S NOTHING NEW ABOUT A HONDA WINNING at Thruxton. As far as territories go in the British Touring Car Championship, Hampshire is very much Civic country.

With long-time Thruxton thorn Andrew Jordan now at MG, the works Team Dynamics squad comfortably led the Honda charge. Gordon Shedden top-scored and that, allied to the rejuvenated Matt Neal's first problematic weekend of the year, meant the Scot returned to the top of the table for the first time since his 2012 title win.

Reaching the summit was just reward for Shedden, and Dynamics in general. It is usually a happy hunting ground for the Civics – seven of the previous nine races there had been won by variations of the Japanese model – and that trend continued last weekend.

“We know what we need here,” Dynamics technical guru Barry Plowman said after qualifying. “The key thing is making sure you survive to start off with. Other people work on the basis that it's better to be strong at the start. We try to average it out more.”

That approach, combined with a qualifying set-up that could be carried into the race without a loss in performance, worked wonders. Aron Smith denied the Hondas pole but Shedden grabbed second with 57kg of ballast and Neal (75kg) third.

That was converted into a commanding one-two in the opener, as Smith wheelspun his grid advantage away and lost out to both Civics by Allard. Shedden duly eased clear for a second win of the season, and mused afterwards: “Here you're already thinking about the last lap by the time you've finished lap one, but the car was perfect.”

With 75kg on board the 2012 champion took a solid third in race two, before bagging fifth in the finale (with 57kg) having started eighth on the reversed grid. That earned him 47 points – the most of anyone so far this season, and much closer to 2014 levels.

Neal, by contrast, had to bounce back from his first real test of 2015. A misjudged move on Smith in race two, while fighting over fourth, meant he retired in the pitlane and was forced to start race three from 25th, in addition to receiving a verbal warning and a reprimand.

But there's a “sparkle in his eye again” this year – to quote new Dynamics boss James Rodgers – and Neal rammed home the point with a feisty drive to sixth in the finale, aided by a mid-race safety car appearance.

The three-time champion insisted after Donington he was riding luck to the top of the points, but that's to discredit his performances. Here, his experience was on full show as he grabbed

a solid points haul; a strong recovery in the face of (somewhat self-imposed) adversity. “I do rue a bit the points haul we could have had,” he admitted afterwards. “But hindsight is a wonderful thing.”

While the Hondas started the weekend strongly, it took a while for Team BMR's Volkswagen big guns to start firing. Smith's maiden series pole was, sadly for the Irishman, a false dawn. An easy third was taken from him in race one following a puncture at Village, and the clash with Neal left him with an ill-handling car in race two, dropping him to 11th. One top-10 result, eighth in race three, was a paltry return from a weekend that started with such promise.

“The hardest part is qualifying and we nailed it this weekend,” he said. “I'll go away knowing we were the quickest...”

Jason Plato's mood was the opposite, the double champion left to reflect on “a bloody good weekend”. A tyre failure right at the end of the first free-practice session, in which he was quickest, caused him to crash at the chicane and the damage to the steering limited him to just one lap in the second session. He reckoned that restricted the team's approach – not just in terms of tracktime, but in how aggressive they were on the set-up and how hard he would go on to push in the races.

Despite that sizeable set-back, and the caution it



Plato celebrates his 90th win in race two...



...after fending off Rob Collard's BMW

spurred, he managed fourth in race one after an early battle with Andy Priaulx, and having got back ahead of the fast-starting Rob Collard at the beginning of race two he survived sustained pressure from the WSR BMW to the end to record his 90th win in the BTCC.

That's a tally that means little to the man himself at this stage, with the manner in which he achieved it much more significant. A masterclass in how to approach the 2015 grid procedure bagged him pole (his second race-one fastest lap in three rounds) and he was exemplary in keeping Collard at bay. "I was driving to where I thought the limit was,"

he said, with more than a small nod to the FP1 issue. "There's lots more potential we can't exploit because we'd kill the tyres."

With 75kg on board for race three Plato did well to run in the top six throughout – even though he lost out to Neal right at the end. "To have the weight and a gear cut problem and still be in the mix, that's good," he pointed out.

Of the BMR team's three leading lights, Colin Turkington had the most understated weekend – and yet he emerges from a podium-free round (his first since the 2013 finale) just eight points off Shedden at the top of the standings.



Neal spoiled his race two by hitting Smith

It's nice to come away with glory but that's not always possible in this championship

COLIN TURKINGTON

The champion blamed a lack of "feeling with the balance" for his lack of raw pace, but said he was "satisfied" to emerge with seventh, fifth and fourth under the circumstances. More importantly, he wasn't concerned.

"Whenever you're struggling to get the feeling you want with the car then it's harder to attack, go for wins and take risks," he mused. "That's where we've been this weekend. Just didn't get on top of the car all weekend."

"It's nice to come away with glory but that's not always possible in this championship."

One man who did bag glory was Adam Morgan, as the Ciceley Racing driver became the sixth different winner from the opening nine races with a faultless drive from pole in race three.

Reversed-grid victories have often been maligned in the BTCC. To say, though, that the Mercedes man did not deserve this success would be terribly unfair.

After a strong third in race one, Morgan's race two was compromised when he avoided a spinning Priaulx at the start (more on that later) by taking to the grass on the run to the Complex. He ended up eighth, and by his good fortune that gave him pole for the finale.

There was still plenty of work to do, though, with Jordan's MG lining up alongside, a BMW ▶

Thruxtonmeister Jordan took second in race three



► in third and Turkington fourth. So what did Morgan do? Dominate.

“The car felt great from the off,” he said having cruised to victory despite a three-second lead being wiped out by the safety car. “The car was on rails, I was so confident – the gap was wrecked by the SC but I knew I could get back on it.”

Morgan’s first win in the series came at Brands last year, but that was tempered slightly by the fact that he finished second on the road and was awarded victory via a post-race penalty for Plato.

“It was brilliant to get one at Brands that was through somebody’s error,” he said. “But it’s nice to take the flag first and be on the top step. I feel like this is my first proper victory.”

The man Morgan defeated in race three – Jordan – was not thrilled despite ending the weekend with a second podium for MG.

It’s not been a smooth transition for the 2013 champion, who complained this weekend of low-speed understeer and high-speed oversteer – hardly the perfect combination in Hampshire.

With Honda, he topped the past three qualifying sessions at Thruxton (half of his career poles have come there). But the MG6 has never won there and on his first visit with Triple Eight, Jordan was never in contention for victory – although dogged determination is keeping the Midlander firmly in the title fight.

A maiden MG win has eluded him thus far, but sixth, seventh and second meant he outscored

“As a package we’re not quick enough. It’s nice to get a podium but we need a better starting platform”

ANDREW JORDAN

Turkington and lies fifth in the points, only 15 adrift of the lead.

“As a package we’re not quick enough,” he conceded, pointing to the team’s trend of ending the weekend where it should really be starting. “We just need more from the get-go. It’s nice to get a podium going into a four-week break, but we need a better starting platform.”

Jordan’s team-mate Jack Goff was quick at Thruxton, improving on eighth in race one to take fourth in the sequel despite losing a second-place start for race two for a track-limits offence and having to rise from 10th on the grid. An off at Church while running fifth meant his weekend ended on a rather sour note in 11th, and he’s slowly losing touch in seventh.

Goff was reeled in slightly by the BMWs of Collard and Sam Tordoff over the Thruxton weekend, although WSR has yet to string together a complete weekend for any of its three drivers despite Tordoff bagging a first podium for the team in the day’s final race.

Collard did come close to making it a second win of the year with his hounding of Plato in race two, and at least he and Tordoff each stood on the podium; for Priaulx, this was another Sunday for the three-time world champion to rue.

It’s not quite happened for the Guernseyman since he grabbed pole and a podium at the Brands Hatch opener – and he admitted that he compromised his best chance of a good result here.

“I snagged the front left and thought it had done some damage,” he said after a series of lock-ups in the opening laps of the first race consigned him to a battling fifth. “I wanted a top three. That was the race to be had for me. I can only blame myself.”

Being helped into a spin through Allard at the start of race two and then biffed into eventual retirement at the Complex moments later didn’t help his cause – nor did contact in the finale, which ended a first-lap charge from 24th to 14th.

The rear-wheel drive BMWs could – should – hit back at Oulton Park, where Turkington won twice last year. It’s the first of a pair of meetings (completed by Croft) at which Dick Bennetts’ squad usually makes hay.

That could throw a spanner in the works of the five previous championship winners leading the points battle at the moment.

Plato’s loss of sixth to Neal in race three puts him only a point behind his rival in the standings, but crucially hands him 48kg of ballast – Neal will carry 57kg; Turkington 66kg and Shedden 75kg. That could play into their hands next time out.

“It’s really important to not be heavy,” said Plato – and Neal agreed. “It’s always nice to have bragging rights,” he said having ended a weekend knocked off the top for the first time this year.

“But if you’re going to carry less weight, Oulton is the place to do that.”

Morgan took first ‘proper’ win from race-three pole



FOR FULL RESULTS, PAGE 52

IN THE PADDOCK

SCOTT MITCHELL
FEATURES EDITOR

@ScottMitchell189



WHO NEEDS SOFT TYRES? THAT MAY be the easiest question to ask in the wake of an intriguing Thruxton round, especially as it followed three races at Donington at which the deterioration of the soft tyre was put in the spotlight.

The abrasive, tyre-chewing nature of Thruxton means the control Dunlops get enough of a pounding, so a soft option there is out of the question. The element of tyre management the circuit requires means that variables exist naturally and the way different cars manage their tyres make Thruxton an anomaly. So don't expect the soft tyre to suddenly be binned off.

OK, it probably wasn't as television friendly as Donington. But there were a few unhappy paddock figures because the final race was borderline chaotic. At Thruxton, people behaved better – maybe because the consequences are known to be much greater if they don't...

After Donington I wrote that the combination of variables in 2015 might be a step too far. That's not a straight criticism of the soft tyre. But with added ballast, a new race-two grid format and a reversed grid for race three, there's plenty of opportunity for an exciting raceday to unfold already.

I suppose the main thing for officials is that races don't stagnate, and at tracks where tyres won't degrade significantly the soft tyre can help spice things up.

Whether you agree with that or not is largely irrelevant. You can't really argue against 16 points separating the top six after three rounds and nine races.



BIG NUMBER

2008

The last time a BTCC race took place without a Ford on the grid

Motorbase set for test return

MOTORBASE WILL RESUME ITS British Touring Car Championship programme this week with its first on-track test since the team announced it would miss the first half of the year.

The breakdown of a couple of key sponsorship deals caused the race-winning team to announce in March that it would be sidelined until Snetterton in August.

Regular driver Mat Jackson and new signing James Cole were due to run at the two-car test at Brands Hatch on Friday, the first time the team has run both cars with their new Mountune-prepared Ford EcoBoost engines.

"If we weren't coming we wouldn't be still spending," said team boss David



Bartrum. "We've been testing quite a lot at Ford, very quietly, on the test track there. We still mean it.

"The frustrating thing for me is that we've got probably the best car we've ever had and the EcoBoost is definitely an improvement on the Duratec.

"Next Friday's test is quite important.

It's full-on to find out where we are.

"We'll see what comes from that. [The BTCC's] a very important paddock to be in, it's the right place to be."

Motorbase has won 12 races since joining the series in 2006, and it has retained its two TOCA BTCC Licences despite missing the opening rounds.



Bushell sidelined by leg injuries

MIKE BUSHELL MISSED SUNDAY'S races at Thruxton after suffering severe ligament injuries to his left leg and groin in a qualifying crash with Simon Belcher.

The AmD rookie was exiting the pitlane in the early stages of Saturday's session when he collided with Belcher's Handy Motorsport Toyota Avensis, which was exiting Allard on a flying lap.

Both cars sustained significant damage

after a heavy hit into the Armco barrier. Belcher was unhurt but Bushell was taken to hospital in Southampton, where it was revealed he'd avoided breaking any bones.

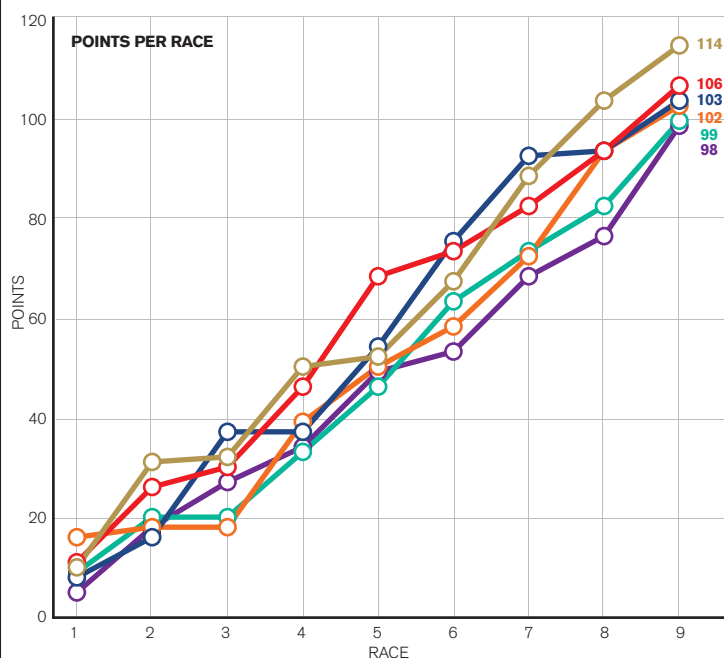
He returned to the paddock on crutches on Sunday but did not race. Nor did the uninjured Belcher, whose Toyota was too severely damaged. Bushell, who received a verbal warning for the incident, hopes to be fit to race at Oulton on June 7-8.

THE TITLE CHASE

Three drivers were tied for second after race two, but Shedden's strong weekend has launched him into the lead. Turkington and Jordan have made constant progress. Morgan's win means he is still in the frame

TOTAL NUMBER OF POINTS SCORED

SHEDDEN	114	
TURKINGTON	106	
NEAL	103	
PLATO	102	
JORDAN	99	
MORGAN	98	



DONNELLY HAMPERED

Martin Donnelly's BTCC debut was hurt by power-steering problems last weekend. The ex-Formula 1 driver did not run in qualifying after a failure of the system pitched him into the chicane barriers, but he scored a best finish of 19th in race two before retiring with more power-steering issues in race three. "This team just needs a break," he said. "If we can get two test days in the dry, we can take strides forwards."

MORE WELCH WOE

The Welch Motorsport team has been hit with a 10-point penalty for already exceeding the number of engine changes permitted. Engine problems have plagued the Welch team since the start of last year, when it opted to build its own power units. Dan Welch did not race after damaging his Proton's sub-frame in free practice. Other penalties included a verbal warning for Matt Neal, for his incident with Aron Smith, and Hunter Abbott for an incident involving Warren Scott.

INGRAM'S CHARGE

Series sophomore Tom Ingram stormed from 23rd to 10th in the final race at Thruxton. The Speedworks driver was 10th in the opener but retired from race two after contact.

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**MSA FORMULA THRUXTON,
MAY 9-10 RD 3/10**

Mitchell breaks series duck – then wins another

SCOT SANDY MITCHELL SCORED HIS MAIDEN car-racing victories at Thruxton, but it was a weekend of contrasting lows for Daniel Ticktum who lost his championship lead.

Arden youngster Mitchell, last year's British Junior Rotax karting champion, shone around the calendar's quickest circuit, qualifying for Saturday's opening skirmish 0.8 seconds ahead of the rest of the pack. Ticktum, who took his maiden win at Donington Park last month, was unable to mount a threat to Mitchell's pole. His weekend of woes began immediately. A loose bracket securing the fire extinguisher inside the Fortec-run car was pulling on the ignition cord, cutting the engine each time his Mygale racer hit a kerb. It meant a 17th place start and a recovery drive in which he would target the race two, reversed-grid pole position.

Without the threat of Ticktum, Mitchell had to focus on Double R Racing's impressive Matheus Leist. The Brazilian made the far better getaway, taking the lead around the outside into Allard with Lando Norris following him. But the early excitement was interrupted as Petru Florescu, Tarun Reddy and Ameva Vaiyanathan spun at the Campbell/Cobb complex with two stranded in the middle of the track.

Mitchell demonstrated his superior pace at the restart, setting the quickest lap and was later on the brakes to get past both second-placed Sennan Fielding and leader Leist. From there, Mitchell was able to pull away. Norris made a late, daring move for third, but tagged the rear of Fielding on the



Mitchell won twice for the Arden squad

exit of Cobb. Fielding was out on the spot, with Norris limping home 10th. That promoted Daniel Baybutt to the final podium spot. Ticktum finished an impressive seventh, securing the reversed-grid pole for race two. "It's a relief to take my first win," Mitchell said. "I've been unlucky so far this year but hope I can now push on."

Ticktum's woes continued in race two. He made a disappointing start, allowing fellow front-row sitter Rafael Martins into the lead around the outside with Carlin's Colton Herta following through. But four laps in, Ticktum's race was ruined. Following an overnight change of fuel pump, the car began to stutter, pump-surge causing his retirement. Fielding was impressively scything through the field from his 16th-place start to sit sixth but then began to struggle with an inexplicable lack of straight-line speed.

Martins was doing all he could to maintain his lead, and was involved in contact with rival Baybutt, who spun tagging the Brazilian's rear as he weaved to defend his advantage. Mitchell was making up places but Norris became Martins'

closest rival. The pair traded the lead until Norris made the decisive move up the inside at Allard. Mitchell took second from Martins through Woodham Hill on the final lap.

Ticktum's terrible weekend was complete at the start of the final race, as the day's earlier fuel-surge issue reappeared. But pole sitter Mitchell was once again able to pull away from the rest with new championship leader Ricky Collard ensuring he continued to bank points in second. Norris took third.

● Russell Hayes

RESULTS

Race 1 (13 laps) 1 Sandy Mitchell 20m54.035s (87.92mph); 2 Matheus Leist, +1.533s; 3 Dan Baybutt; 4 Ricky Collard; 5 Colton Herta; 6 Rafael Martins. **Race 2 (16 laps) 1 Lando Norris (112.36mph) 20m07.729s;** 2 Mitchell, +1.027s; 3 Martins; 4 Collard; 5 Leist; 6 Herta. **Race 3 (16 laps) 1 Mitchell 20m00.655s (113.02mph);** 2 Collard, +4.484s; 3 Norris; 4 Leist; 5 Petru Florescu; 6 Tarun Reddy. **Points 1 Collard, 130;** 2 Daniel Ticktum, 120; 3 Norris, 115; 4 Leist, 105; 5 Mitchell, 86; 6 James Pull, 78.

GINETTA JUNIORS THRUXTON, MAY 9-10 RD 3/10

Floersch unfazed by Thruxton for her maiden double

GERMAN YOUNGSTER SOPHIA FLOERSCH took her first car-racing wins with two commanding drives on her Thruxton debut.

HHC Motorsport racer Floersch made the better getaway from the front row in the opening affair alongside polesitter and championship scholar Stuart Middleton. She quickly extended a lead of several lengths as Dan Zelos, who began sixth, progressed quickly up the field to sit third.

The tussle between Middleton and Zelos enabled Floersch to pull further clear but her lead was cut short when a safety car was deployed after Lewis Brown, who had progressed well up the field, spun at the chicane and was then collected by the innocent Sebastian Perez.

Floersch made a great getaway from the



Floersch holds off Zelos and Monger

restart but was quickly reeled in by the chasing duo. Zelos took second with a move up the inside of Middleton at Church on the penultimate lap after an entertaining tussle. But that helped the leader advance enough to prevent a significant challenge from Zelos by the flag.

The second skirmish was highly disrupted by two safety-car interruptions with a number of cars out on the opening lap including Floersch's team-mate Patrik Matthiesen who went straight on through a congested pack at Allard.

Billy Monger vaulted the order to become Floersch's closest challenger at the restart, but the youngsters' fun was once again halted when Esmee Hawkey spun into the barriers at Noble. When racing resumed the order began to shuffle and Monger grabbed second as he caught Zelos napping at Segrave while Jamie Caroline also

made his way into third at Goodwood.

The top three came through the chicane side-by-side for the final time, but Floersch held on for a deserving double. "We've had good pace everywhere so far this year but we hadn't got it together," she said. "We did this weekend. It's been amazing."

● Russell Hayes

RESULTS

Race 1 (both 9 laps) 1 Sophia Floersch 16m29.566s (77.14mph); 2 Dan Zelos +0.187s; 3 Stuart Middleton; 4 Jamie Caroline; 5 Billy Monger; 6 William Tregurtha. **FL Matt Chapman 1m31.548s (92.65mph). Race 2 1 Floersch 16m32.803s (76.89mph);** 2 Monger +0.525s; 3 Caroline; 4 Middleton; 5 Zelos; 6 Kyle Hornby. **FL Monger 1m31.933s (92.26mph). Points 1 Senna Proctor, 148;** 2 Monger, 130; 3 Zelos, 120; 4 Floersch, 119; 5 Caroline, 112; 6 Jonathan Hadfield, 108.



Floersch got to share her double joy with Steve Rider

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RENAULT UK CLIO CUP THRUXTON, MAY 9-10 RD 3/9

Hand keeps Sutton at arm's length to nab Clio double

THERE WAS A SENSE THAT THE ENTIRE

Thruxtton round hinged on the final lap of the second race. Everything seemed to build up to it and it certainly didn't disappoint as two attempted moves at the Club chicane provided a nail-biting climax.

Before that, race one had been relatively tame compared with some of the non-stop action of the earlier rounds.

It was dominated by Team Pyro team-mates Ash Hand and the BMR-supported Ashley Sutton. The team had its tactics spot on as the pair were inseparable during qualifying to maximise the tow around the fast Hampshire track and they duly lined-up first and second.

Sutton briefly lost out to Paul Rivett at the

start but a safety car caused by a collision between Dan Holland and series returnee James Colburn at the complex gave him a chance to attack. The Formula Ford graduate soon dispatched the multiple champion but was unable to mount a serious challenge on Hand.

Rivett dropped to fourth at the flag but felt he could've finished higher. "I had the pace to keep with them in front but I was busy defending from Jordan [Stilp]," he said.

Then came the crescendo of the closing stages of race two. Hand and Sutton had again streaked clear with Sutton continually having a run on his team-mate into the chicane. On the final tour, Sutton made a lunge down the inside and the pair touched wheels, but didn't switch positions.

"I knew he would try it," Hand admitted, "he got such a good exit out of Church. Everything had to be perfect to pull that gap in both races and this is one of the hardest circuits to be perfect all the time."

Further back, Ant Whorton-Eales also wanted a piece of the action. The points leader endured a tough couple of days after losing his fastest time in qualifying for exceeding track limits.

He recovered to third in race one and wanted to match that result by making a second move on Rivett in as many races. But just as with the Pyro chargers, he only succeeded in making contact and failed to get through.



Sutton's last-lap dive failed to come off

Further back there was a gaggle of six cars fighting for fifth. It was Rivett's team-mate Charlie Ladell who clinched the spot with Cooksport rookie Jon Maybin repeating his race-one result with an impressive sixth.

● Stephen Lickorish

RESULTS

Race 1 (14 laps) 1 Ash Hand 21m20.671s (92.72mph); 2 Ashley Sutton +1.323s; 3 Ant Whorton-Eales; 4 Paul Rivett; 5 Jordan Stilp; 6 Jon Maybin. **FL** Hand 1m23.975s (101.00mph).
Race 2 (12 laps) 1 Hand 16m58.894s (99.89mph); 2 Sutton +2.067s; 3 Rivett; 4 Whorton-Eales; 5 Charles Ladell; 6 Maybin. **FL** Hand 1m24.143s (100.80mph).
Points 1 Whorton-Eales, 173; 2 Sutton, 160; 3 Hand, 149; 4 Rivett, 116; 5 Stilp, 114; 6 Jack Mitchell, 103.



Hand (left) held on for a double win

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP THRUXTON, MAY 9-10 RD 3/10

Caine's first win follows Breeze brace

THRUXTON PROVED TO BE A WEEKEND OF contrasts for the front-running HHC Motorsport team. While 2012 champion Carl Breeze dominated, title rival Jamie Orton struggled – retiring from race three – and Will Burns narrowly missed out on his maiden win.

Breeze began by claiming pole for the opener and proceeded to trounce the opposition, winning by eight seconds.

"I managed to get a good start and then pulled away," enthused Breeze. "It was nice to see a dot on the horizon behind me after the first lap.

"I backed off a bit at the end to look after the

tyres. If you make a mistake here you end up in Andover so I didn't want to risk it."

Team-mate Orton was preoccupied defending from Burns and had to settle for second. It proved to be the high point of his weekend.

He dropped down the order in race two as old tyres hampered his progress, while Breeze again grabbed the lead. The Supercup veteran was kept honest by Burns this time, and his winning margin was restricted to just two seconds.

Further back Century Motorsport driver Tom Oliphant claimed third after just fending off JHR's Michael Caine, with Orton fifth.

For the third race in succession it was former British GT champion Caine whose name was drawn out for the reversed-grid pole.

At the start, he lost out to Burns who quickly pulled away until the safety car appeared on lap seven when Oliphant stopped with engine woes.

This brought Caine back onto Burns's bumper and he began pressurising his younger rival. Each lap he was quicker out of the chicane but couldn't quite make the move into Allard until the final tour, when he dived through to win.

Caine admitted it still didn't make up for the "inexcusable" error that meant he failed a ride height check after qualifying and was relegated to the back.

"Each lap I was thinking a bit earlier on the throttle out of the chicane," said the 2012 British GT champion. "By the end I was ready to throw it in the wall to get the win!"

Breeze kept a watching brief in third – he didn't try to get involved as his car started to pull to the right towards the end. It was a significant podium because erstwhile points leader Orton retired, contact with Bradley Smith damaged his rear suspension when he was part of an entertaining five-car battle for fourth. Smith was fifth, behind a charging Mitchell Hale.

● Stephen Lickorish

RESULTS

Race 1 (11 laps) 1 Carl Breeze 14m09.583s (109.82mph); 2 Jamie Orton +8.199s; 3 Will Burns; 4 Tom Oliphant; 5 Bradley Smith; 6 Mitchell Hale. **FL** Breeze 1m16.024s (111.56mph).
Race 2 (16 laps) 1 Breeze 20m43.471s (109.13mph); 2 Burns +2.077s; 3 Oliphant; 4 Michael Caine; 5 Orton; 6 Reece Somerfield. **FL** Breeze 1m16.310s (111.15mph).
Race 3 (laps) 1 Caine 25m03.873s (101.52mph); 2 Burns +0.992s; 3 Breeze; 4 Hale; 5 Smith; 6 Ollie Jackson. **FL** Hale 1m16.572s (110.77mph).
Points 1 Breeze, 271; 2 Orton, 237; 3 Burns, 233; 4 Oliphant, 203; 5 Caine, 193; 6 Somerfield, 164.



Veteran Breeze won twice to take points lead

The #1 Audi was repaired after practice and took two wins

Blancpain Sprint

Brands Hatch (GB)

May 10

Round 2/7



HAWKINS

Audi duo pulls off a smash and grab

44

LAURENS VANTHOOR AND ROBIN FRIJNS NEEDED

a good result at Brands Hatch. And the WRT Audi duo did exactly what was required to put their Blancpain Sprint Series title challenge back on track by dominating both races last weekend. Yet the British event could very easily have been a repeat of their opening-weekend disaster.

Audi factory driver Vanthoor and sportscar newcomer Frijns failed to start the Nogaró opener after the Dutchman crashed in qualifying and damaged their Audi R8 LMS ultra's chassis beyond immediate repair. This time it was Vanthoor's turn to blot his copybook and put their chances in peril.

Vanthoor backed into the barriers during free practice approaching Sheene Curve after putting a wheel on the kerb exiting Westfield. He kept his foot in, clipped the damp grass and went off.

"It was a big hit, but I was lucky that I hit square on; the gearbox took the full force," said Vanthoor. "If I had gone in at more of an angle, it would have been over for us this weekend."

The WRT Audi team managed to complete the repairs with 10 minutes to spare ahead of

qualifying. But Vanthoor's and Frijns's chances still didn't look good. The shunt and an electrical problem in opening practice meant that they had only completed half an hour of running up to this point. Rather Vanthoor had – Brands Hatch newcomer Frijns had yet to drive!

The latter ended up sixth in the opening qualifying session before Vanthoor went out and set the fastest time of the weekend straight off the bat. He then needed only one more lap in final qualifying to go even faster to seal pole by nearly half a second. It was a qualifying masterclass from the 24-year-old Belgian on a track that separates the men from the boys.

"I could feel the peak of the tyres had gone and knew I couldn't improve," he said. "To be honest, it was the perfect lap; I can't think where I could have improved."

The domination continued the following day in the Qualifying Race. Vanthoor waited for a couple of laps for his Pirelli tyres to come in and then just drove away from Nicky Catsburg in the Reiter Lamborghini. He set the fastest race lap third time around – so that's still with a full fuel load – and

was nearly 20s up the road by the time the pitstop sequence began. The race was as good as over by the time Frijns climbed aboard.

Frijns eked out a gap at the start of the Main Race, first over Atila Abreu's BMW Team Brasil entry and then the Attempto McLaren with Kevin Estre at the wheel. His advantage stood at just over three seconds when the pitstops started.

Vanthoor was subsequently able to extend the gap, over Valdeno Brito in the BMW Z4, to 14s. The simple fact was that Vanthoor and Frijns were just too good for everyone else last weekend.

BMW Team Brasil proved that its Nogaró win with on-loan factory drivers Maxime Martin and Dirk Muller was no flash in the pan. Abreu and Brito had also taken second in the first race after the WRT Audi of Christopher Mies and Enzo Ide was docked 30s for a pitstop infringement.

Estre had charged from fifth through to second in an impressive opening stint in the second race, but a slow pitstop from the Attempto team dropped Rob Bell to third. The second Brazilian BMW, shared by Caca Bueno and Sergio Jimenez, took fourth in the Main Race from Catsburg and Albert von Thurn und Taxis in the Lambo Gallardo LP560-4 R-EX. The Lambo pair might have left Brands with some silverware, but for a penalty for pitlane speeding in the opening race. Before that, von Thurn und Taxis had looked equal to the challenge from Ide before being called into the pits.

Vanthoor was the star of the weekend. He was in top form on the race track even if he wasn't in peak condition off it. The 2014 Blancpain Endurance champion was suffering from a stomach complaint and had to be given the all-clear by a doctor to take part in race two.



WRT Audi pair was unbeatable at Brands



Bell/Estre McLaren took third in race two

HAWKINS

HAWKINS

FOR FULL RESULTS, PAGE 52

IN THE PADDOCK

GARY WATKINS
CONTRIBUTOR

@gazzasportscars



IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT I JUMP IN MY car and head for Brands Hatch with reservations. It is, after all, my favourite circuit. But I was concerned that the Blancpain Sprint Series hasn't really moved on this season. I shouldn't have been worried, because the two races proved that the series has the quality if not the quantity that it deserves.

Double race winner Laurens Vanthoor, his mistake in free practice aside, posted the kind of performance that reinforced his claim to be one of the world's top GT drivers. Ditto Kevin Estre, who would make my top 10 any day of the week. And special mention should go to Nicky Catsburg, who like Estre dispelled the myth that you can't overtake at Graham Hill Bend.

The layer of icing on the BSS cake is most definitely thicker than last year. There are more top-line drivers spread across the majority of the teams. Audi, for example, has six stars from its GT pool competing in the BSS this year.

It's a great field that's just lacking numbers. I'm not sure why and nor is series boss Stephane Ratel (as he explained – or rather didn't – in these pages a few weeks back).

But could you imagine the spectacle of 30 GT3 cars diving into Paddock at the start of each of the races? That would surely dispel my reservations about the BSS once and for all.



BSS has quality if not quantity

I'm glad I came because it really is an amazing circuit



Bernd Schneider on what it means to finally race on the Brands Hatch GP track 31 years after his first visit to the venue to race in the '84 Formula Ford Festival.



Sister car was left to uphold Bentley honour

HTP Bentley ruled out after heavy practice shunt

THE LEAD HTP BENTLEY WAS ruled out of the Brands Hatch event after a fifth chassis-damaging shunt since the German squad switched to the Continental GT3 last winter.

Former Blancpain Endurance Series champion Maximilian Buhk crashed the Continental he shares with Vincent Abril in Saturday's first free-practice session. The 22-year-old touched the damp kerb on the exit of Paddock Hill Bend and speared

across the track into the barriers.

The Bentley sustained major chassis damage that could not be repaired at the circuit. HTP could have requested permission from the other teams to bring in a spare, but the two fit-to-race Continentals from its five-car fleet not at Brands were already prepared for this weekend's Nurburgring 24 Hours.

The accident was the latest in a line of major incidents for HTP: two were

damaged in pre-season testing; Clemens Schmid crashed in the Oschersleben ADAC GT Masters round; and Mike Parisy in the Monza BES opener.

The chassis damaged at Brands was this week taken to the Cumbria headquarters of M-Sport, which has developed the Continental GT3 for Bentley, and will be picked up by HTP ahead of the Silverstone BES round later this month.



Nissan's GTR took two sixth places

MRS buoyed by Nissan pace

TWO TOP-SIX FINISHES FOR the MRS GT Racing squad at Brands Hatch proved that the Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3 can be competitive on the circuits that make up the BSS.

Craig Dolby, test driver for the JRM Nissan organisation that builds the GT-Rs, qualified fourth and then he and sportscar newcomer Sean Walkinshaw posted third and sixth-place finishes in the two races. They might have finished

higher each time but for a gearbox glitch and a slow pitstop in the Qualifying Race, and an incident at the start of the Main Race in which the car sustained a damaged splitter.

"Without the gearbox problem we could have finished P2," said Dolby. "The 2014 car was good on the endurance circuits, but I think we are proving that the '15 car is good on these kind of tracks as well."

Capacity entry for Ricard BES



Ricard BES event will have too many

THE ENTRY FOR THE PAUL

Ricard 1000Km Blancpain Endurance Series is set to be oversubscribed.

Series boss Stephane Ratel expects many of the additional entries that will swell the BES grid for the Spa 24 Hours at the end of July to attend the French event, round three of the BES, in June. But the inability of Ricard to accommodate more than 64 cars in its pit complex means that cars are likely to have to be turned away.

Ratel said: "We should have at least 70 cars for Spa; not all of the extra cars are going to come to Ricard, but we will be full for sure."

SCHNEIDER'S PRO-AM

DTM legend Bernd Schneider claimed Pro-Am honours in both races at Brands Hatch together with Russian Alexey Karachev. Their GT Russian Team Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG finished 14th in the Qualifying Race despite stopping on the final lap with fuel-pump failure, and Schneider was able to pass Marco Bonanomi's ISR Audi in the closing stages of the Main Race to take 10th overall.

OSBORNE QUICK

British GT star Joe Osborne qualified the visiting Triple Eight BMW Z4 seventh, before jumping to fifth at the start ahead of the two Brazilian-entered Bimmers. The car, co-driven by Lee Mowle, finished the two races in 15th and 16th positions.

HTP'S SILVER CUP JOY

Bentley Team HTP salvaged two Silver Cup class victories from the Brands weekend. Jules Szymkowiak and Olivier Lombard finished 13th and 12th respectively in the two races.

GRID SET TO GROW

The BSS grid is set to swell to over 20 cars for the first time this year with two extra race-by-race entries for Zolder, according to series boss Stephane Ratel.

PHOENIX DEMOTED

The Phoenix Audi R8 LMS ultra driven by Markus Winkelhock and Niki Mayr-Melnhof dropped from seventh to eighth in the final results of the Main Race courtesy of a five-second penalty for a track-limits violation.



EUROFORMULA OPEN

Konstantin Tereschenko (Campos) and Vitor Baptista (RP Motorsport) once more shared the wins as the pair dominated in Estoril. As Tereschenko won, a yellow-flag infringement in race one demoted Baptista to fourth, promoting Yarin Stern and Yu Kanamaru to the podium. Race two was dominated by Baptista (above) from Tereschenko and Tanart Sathienthirakul.

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

Ferraris triumphed in both Estoril races, with Raffaele Giammaria/Ezequiel Perez Companc (AF Corse) holding on for the win in race one, while Emiliano Lopez/Matias Russo (Baporo) benefited from a mid-race safety car to ease clear from a frenetic fight for second. Phil Keen/Shau Balfe made a strong seasonal debut, claiming race-one pole and a third-place finish on Sunday in their Ferrari.

JAPANESE FORMULA 3

TOM'S drivers dominated at Motegi, with Toyota protege Kenta Yamashita taking two wins and a second, and team-mate Nick Cassidy claimed one victory and a brace of thirds. Nissan-backed Mitsunori Takaboshi took a second in his B-Max Dallara-Toyota, as did Honda-supported F3 newcomer Nirei Fukuzumi.

PRO MAZDA

Malaysian Weiron Tan (Andretti Autosport), Frenchman Timothe Buret (Juncos Racing) and Uruguayan Santiago Urrutia (Team Pelfrey) shared the wins during a triple-header at Indianapolis. Urrutia now holds a 24-point championship lead at the halfway point in the 16-race series.

USF2000

Nico Jamin, from Rouen, France, took control of the championship after sweeping the Indianapolis road course races with Cape Motorsports with Wayne Taylor Racing. Americans Jake Eidson (Pabst Racing) and Aaron Telitz (Cape) shared the runner-up spoils.

SWEDISH FRENault 1.6

Now in his third year in the series, 16-year-old Oliver Soderstrom won both races at Skovde. In the first race he got a clear run from pole, with Finn Ilmari Korpivaara and Robert Svensson at a distance. In the second race, Svensson chased Soderstrom but retired with transmission problems. Korpivaara took over second, followed by German newcomer Laurents Horr.

NASCAR TRUCKS

Reigning champ Matt Crafton took the win in Kansas when long-time leader Erik Jones ran out of fuel with four laps to go.



Johnson (48) took third win of year

NASCAR SPRINT CUP KANSAS SPEEDWAY (USA), MAY 9 RD 11/36

Johnson fights back for victory

JIMMIE JOHNSON DIDN'T FEATURE for much of the NASCAR Sprint Cup's rain-interrupted and caution-littered Kansas Speedway night race, and was briefly even in jeopardy of being lapped by long-time leader Martin Truex Jr.

But anyone who's won six titles knows how to make the best of a not-quite-perfect situation, and Johnson was convinced that handling problems from earlier in the weekend were gone and he just needed clear air. When Ricky Stenhouse Jr brushed the wall and prompted a late caution, Johnson stayed out while the leaders dived in for fresh tyres, moved himself to the front of the pack for the first time all night, and kept his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet there

through the subsequent seven-lap dash to earn a third win of 2015.

Reigning champion Kevin Harvick, the best of the new-tyre runners, swiftly got his Stewart-Haas Chevrolet through from sixth to second but couldn't shift Johnson — although he did prevent an all-Hendrick top three by demoting Dale Earnhardt Jr and Jeff Gordon to third and fourth, with Joey Logano and Matt Kenseth next up.

While winner Johnson led just 10 of the 267 laps, ninth-place finisher Truex headed 95, and at one stage built a commanding six-second advantage. But Truex and Furniture Row's wait for a victory to validate their massive 2015 improvement continues, as he mirrored Harvick's pit call, then

got boxed in at the restart and fell back. Second behind Harvick in the 'normal' points shows how strong his season has been so far.

RESULTS

1 Jimmie Johnson (Chevrolet SS), 267 laps in 3h11m50s; 2 Kevin Harvick (Chevy), +0.487s; 3 Dale Earnhardt Jr (Chevy); 4 Jeff Gordon (Chevy); 5 Joey Logano (Ford Fusion); 6 Matt Kenseth (Toyota Camry); 7 Brad Keselowski (Ford); 8 Kurt Busch (Chevy); 9 Martin Truex Jr (Chevy); 10 Ryan Newman (Chevy). **Chase grid 1 Johnson, 3 wins/389 points**; 2 Harvick, 2/437; 3 Logano, 1/375; 4 Earnhardt, 1/360; 5 Keselowski, 1/343; 6 Kenseth, 1/331; 7 Busch, 1/292; 8 Denny Hamlin, 1/284; 9 Truex, 0/391; 10 Jamie McMurray, 0/328; 11 Gordon, 0/317; 12 Kasey Kahne, 0/313; 13 Aric Almirola, 0/312; 14 Paul Menard, 0/306; 15 Newman, 0/305; 16 Clint Bowyer, 0/272.

SCANDINAVIAN TOURING CARS SKOVDE (S), MAY 9 RD 1/7

Bjork heads Volvo one-two

REIGNING CHAMPION THED BJORK had no problems winning the first race of the season, but his second win of the day came after a rather more dramatic race.

On an all-new airfield circuit, Fredrik Ekblom took the first maximum-points score of the season by topping opening qualifying (the STCC awards full-race points for this session). Bjork topped the second session, for grid positions, and with his points

in the bag Ekblom did not seriously challenge his Volvo team-mate in the race. Dacia driver Mattias Andersson was a distant third.

Race two's grid was formed with the top 10 reversed from opening qualifying, so Bjork and Ekblom were on the fifth row.

A multi-car crash on the first lap halted Bjork, but he and Ekblom quickly carved their way up the remains of the 13-car field, until



Bjork made a great fist of it

Ekblom left the road with a puncture. Bjork passed the BMW of Fredrik Larsson for the lead towards the end of the race, with Andersson taking third again.

Thanks to the collisions, only six cars made the finish of the race. ● Tege Tornvall

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Thed Bjork (Volvo S60), 24 laps in 20m18.378s; 2 Fredrik Ekblom (Volvo), +1.454s; 3 Mattias Andersson (Dacia STCC Edition); 4 Daniel Haglof (Saab 9-3); 5 Fredrik Larsson (BMW SR); 6 Emma Kimilainen (Saab). **Race 2 1 Bjork**, 24 laps in 24m07.136s; 2 Larsson, +1.348s; 3 Andersson; 4 Erik Johansson (KIA Optima); 5 Haglof; 6 Roger Samuelsson (Saab). **Points 1 Bjork, 68**; 2 Andersson, 45; 3 Ekblom, 43; 4 Larsson, 38; 5 Haglof, 30; 6 Johansson, 16.



Reigning champ leads at Skovde



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The island of Malta boasts of clear blue skies and clear blue seas for most of the year. It is an idyllic location for tourists, especially those looking for a relaxing holiday by the sea, in a country with a rich history. And now an exciting business opportunity has arisen.

The Government of Malta has identified the need for a motor sport track. This objective is to develop a multi-purpose educational complex, hosting a wide variety of events from amateur and recreational competitions to national and international events.

The land available for creating a motor sport track should also be developed to create a commercial and recreational centre.

The facility needs to accommodate the motorsport fraternity that already exists on the island. Motorsport is quite popular in Malta, despite the small population, but enthusiasts have to travel to other locations in Europe to race.

New facilities should groom talent and potentially tap into the international market.

The facility would also educate and train drivers so as to improve their driving skills, especially controlling vehicles in emergencies. However given the extent of the land, other themes of utilisation can be explored in order to maximise activities and benefits of the facility and to generate more income.

It is proposed that the circuit operates all year round. Activities during off-peak months in the winter, including testing and car launches, are attractive for northern European users. These can be run concurrently given that the proposed design is within the parameters of international regulations.

Other proposals might include a motoring and transport heritage museum, exhibition and conference facilities, club member facilities, race engineering facilities and function facilities. A medium-sized hotel should also be considered.

The Government of Malta is in the process of issuing an Expression of Interest regarding the concession for the Design, Build and Operation of a Motor Recreation & Education Park. Interested parties should contact the Privatisation Unit (PU) on privatisation.meib@gov.mt.

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INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Privatisation Unit (PU) on behalf of the Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport, is issuing an EOI regarding a Concession for the Design, Build and Operation of Motor Recreation & Education Park.

Interested parties are invited to communicate with the PU, at the email address shown below, expressing their interest in the EOI. Following this, the PU will forward a process letter to explain the procedure to be followed for the collection of the EOI document and submission of the Proposal.

The Chairman
Privatisation Unit
Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Business

privatisation.meib@gov.mt
www.privatisation.gov.mt





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**PORSCHE SUPERCUP
BARCELONA (E), MAY 10 RD 1/3**

Supercup field gets 'ammered and mullered

FORMER RED BULL JUNIOR DRIVER Michael Ammermuller took three years to claim his first Porsche Supercup victory, which he finally did in last year's Austin season finale. But he proved he has now developed a keen taste for winning by adding a second triumph in the 2015 season opener at Barcelona.

It was a dominant weekend for Ammermuller. The Lechner Racing driver claimed pole position, 0.229s ahead of reigning French champion Come Ledogar, who steps up full-time to the Supercup with the Martinet by Almeras squad that ran him last year. The duo held first and second at the start, but the safety car was soon deployed after Sven Muller dramatically overestimated the grip under braking on the inside line into the first corner, hitting Lechner team-mate Connor de Phillippi and ending up in the gravel.

De Phillippi, like Muller a Porsche junior, had qualified an impressive



Ammermuller leads Ledogar

third, but dropped to 12th as a result of the incident, eventually finishing only one place better off.

The biggest mover at the start was last year's Supercup runner-up, Kuba Giermaziak, who surged from ninth on the grid to run third under the safety car as he hurried to reassert his status as pre-season title favourite.

When the race got back under way on lap four, Ammermuller immediately checked out, eventually

winning by seven seconds and setting a fastest lap six tenths faster than anyone else could manage.

After the restart, Ledogar had Giermaziak right on his tail. He frustrated the Pole for a couple of laps, but eventually lost second place on lap six. Four laps later Christian Engelhart got past, with both Philipp Eng and Alex Riberas then fighting their way through to relegate Ledogar, visibly struggling for grip, to sixth.

Ben Barker finished ninth, with Supercup debutant and single-seater convert Cameron Twynham 12th.

● Edd Straw

RESULTS

1 Michael Ammermuller, 14 laps in 27m41.113s; 2 Kuba Giermaziak, +7.019s; 3 Christian Engelhart; 4 Philipp Eng; 5 Alex Riberas; 6 Come Ledogar; 7 Robert Lukas; 8 Jeffrey Schmidt; 9 Ben Barker; 10 Sam Power. **Points 1 Ammermuller, 20**; 2 Giermaziak, 18; 3 Engelhart, 16; 4 Eng, 14; 5 Riberas, 12; 6 Ledogar, 10.

TCR INTERNATIONAL ALGARVE (P), MAY 10 RD 4/11

Smells like Thiim spirit

TEAM ENGSTLER BORROWED TWO OF Audi's roster of GT3 aces for TCR's trip to Portugal, and the result was a dominant win for Nicki Thiim on his series debut.

Jordi Gene ducked inside the polesitting Dane at Turn 1, but Thiim immediately repassed and pulled away from the Craft Bamboo SEAT, with Lorenzo Veglia claiming his first podium in his Engstler SEAT.

Kelvin van der Linde was the other Audi interloper, and he emerged from a massive scrap with title contenders Stefano Comini, Pepe Oriola and Gianni Morbidelli to complete the top four.

Michel Nykjaer made it a double Danish success in race two. His Target SEAT sat on the reversed-grid front row alongside poleman Kevin Gleason's West Coast Honda,

and Nykjaer led all the way.

It wasn't easy though, as van der Linde and Thiim worked through in their Audis to sit on his tail, only for Thiim to stop with a puncture and van der Linde with electronics problems. That promoted Gleason and Gene to the podium positions, ahead of the battered car of Oriola.

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Nicki Thiim (Audi TT), 13 laps in 25m13.998s; 2 Jordi Gene (SEAT Leon Racer), +4.074s; 3 Lorenzo Veglia (SEAT); 4 Kelvin van der Linde (Audi); 5 Stefano Comini (SEAT); 6 Mikhail Grachev (SEAT). **Race 2 1 Michel Nykjaer (SEAT)**, 13 laps in 25m18.975s; 2 Kevin Gleason (Honda Civic TCR), +3.152s; 3 Gene; 4 Pepe Oriola (SEAT); 5 Jose Monroy (SEAT); 6 Grachev. **Points 1 Comini, 116**; 2 Oriola, 104; 3 Gianni Morbidelli, 91; 4 Gene, 90; 5 Gleason, 81; 6 Andrea Belicchi, 76.



Thiim escapes from the TCR hordes



Harvey took his first win of 2015

INDY LIGHTS INDIANAPOLIS (USA), MAY 8-9 RD 4/10

Rayhall and Harvey ahead

UNHERALDED AMERICAN SEAN Rayhall claimed an impressive win and a second for 8Star Motorsports from the Indy Lights double-header on the Indianapolis Grand Prix road course.

Ed Jones now leads Jack Harvey by just four points in the standings, although it could have been a different story had Harvey's car not faltered on the very last lap on Saturday.

The former British Formula 3 champion blistered the field on Friday for his first win of the year, and 24 hours later the Schmidt Peterson Motorsports man looked on course for a second-place finish. Cruelly, after eyeing an engine-temperature warning light

for much of the 35-lap race, Harvey's luck ran out on the final lap, dropping him to fifth.

Jones had his share of drama, Carlin's Emirati beaten to third in race one and fighting from last to fourth after a first-lap incident on Saturday, behind RC Enerson and team-mate Max Chilton.

● Jeremy Shaw

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Jack Harvey, 30 laps in 39m13.4976s; 2 Sean Rayhall, +4.7377s; 3 Ed Jones; 4 Max Chilton; 5 RC Enerson; 6 Scott Anderson.

Race 2 1 Rayhall, 35 laps in 48m08.2758s; 2 Enerson, +3.9438s; 3 Chilton; 4 Jones; 5 Harvey; 6 Kyle Kaiser. **Points 1 Jones, 166**; 2 Harvey, 162; 3 Spencer Pigot, 155; 4 Chilton, 126; 5 Enerson, 117; 6 Felix Serralles, 100.

RESULTS ROUND-UP



Lynn relishes race-two glory

GP2 SERIES

ROUND 2/11 BARCELONA, MAY 9-10 RACE 1 (37 LAPS - 106.944 MILES)

1 Stoffel Vandoorne (B) ART Grand Prix	1h00m31.992s
2 Mitch Evans (NZ) Russian Time	+1.957s
3 Alexander Rossi (USA) Racing Engineering	+4.639s
4 Rio Haryanto (RI) Campos Racing	+17.737s
5 Alex Lynn (GB) DAMS	+21.116s
6 Raffaele Marciello (I) Trident	+23.032s
7 Pierre Gasly (F) DAMS	+25.841s
8 Norman Nato (F) Arden International	+29.552s
9 Arthur Pic (F) Campos Racing	+30.438s
10 Richie Stanaway (NZ) Status Grand Prix	+31.535s
11 Nobuharu Matsushita (J) ART Grand Prix	+31.706s
12 Artem Markelov (RUS) Russian Time	+32.026s
13 Sergio Canamasas (E) MP Motorsport	+54.487s
14 Jordan King (GB) Racing Engineering	+55.477s
15 Daniel de Jong (NL) MP Motorsport	+56.905s
16 Sergey Sirotkin (RUS) Rapax	+58.303s
17 Zoel Amberg (CH) Lazarus	+59.720s
18 Robert Visoio (RO) Rapax	+1m00.163s
19 Marco Sorensen (DK) Carlin	+1m00.694s
20 Nathanael Berthon (F) Lazarus	+1m04.186s
21 Johnny Cecotto Jr (YV) Hilmer Motorsport	+1m07.785s
22 Rene Binder (A) Trident	+1m22.650s
23 Andre Negrao (BR) Arden International	35 laps-accident damage
R Julian Leal (CO) Carlin	14 laps-accident damage
R Marlon Stockinger (RP) Status Grand Prix	5 laps-gearbox
R Nick Yelloly (GB) Hilmer Motorsport	5 laps-accident damage

Winner's average speed 106.001mph.
Fastest lap Evans, 1m34.748s, 109.901mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Vandoorne, 1m29.273s; 2 Lynn, 1m29.680s; 3 Gasly, 1m30.051s; 4 Evans, 1m30.106s; 5 Rossi, 1m30.154s; 6 de Jong, 1m30.169s; 7 Marciello, 1m30.191s; 8 Haryanto, 1m30.291s; 9 Yelloly, 1m30.375s; 10 Leal, 1m30.402s; 11 Pic, 1m30.411s; 12 Nato, 1m30.416s; 13 Stanaway, 1m30.420s; 14 Matsushita, 1m30.649s; 15 King, 1m30.686s; 16 Visoio, 1m30.879s; 17 Sorensen, 1m30.891s; 18 Berthon, 1m31.029s; 19 Canamasas, 1m30.722s*; 20 Stockinger, 1m31.042s; 21 Cecotto, 1m31.049s; 22 Negrao, 1m31.390s; 23 Sirotkin, 1m31.394s; 24 Binder, 1m31.397s; 25 Amberg, 1m31.751s; 26 Markelov, no time. *grid penalty.

RACE 2 (25 LAPS - 72.234 MILES)

1 Lynn, 41m30.395s; 2 Vandoorne, +2.204s; 3 Gasly, +8.320s; 4 Rossi, +9.614s; 5 Markelov, +11.964s; 6 Haryanto, +13.686s; 7 Nato, +23.506s; 8 Pic, +25.090s; 9 de Jong, +32.003s; 10 Sirotkin, +33.552s; 11 King, +33.591s; 12 Berthon, +34.276s; 13 Amberg, +34.560s; 14 Yelloly, +38.041s; 15 Canamasas, +42.181s; 16 Leal, +42.742s; 17 Marciello, +43.110s; 18 Matsushita, +46.006s; 19 Stanaway, +53.190s; 20 Stockinger, +53.573s; 21 Negrao, +55.887s; 22 Sorensen, +59.535s; 23 Visoio, +1m01.886s; R Cecotto, 11 laps-brakes; R Binder, 0 laps-accident; NS Evans-engine
Winner's average speed 104.418mph.
Fastest lap Vandoorne, 1m34.628s, 110.040mph.

GRID FOR RACE 2

Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed. Yelloly forced to start from pits as penalty for hitting Leal in the first race.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Vandoorne, 86; 2 Haryanto, 49; 3 Rossi, 46; 4 Evans, 28; 5 Lynn, 25; 6 Berthon, 16; 7 Gasly, 16; 8 King, 12; 9 Visoio, 12; 10 Leal, 10.

GP3 SERIES

ROUND 1/9 BARCELONA, MAY 9-10 RACE 1 (22 LAPS - 63.556 MILES)

1 Esteban Ocon (F) ART Grand Prix	39m27.125s
2 Luca Ghiotto (I) Trident	+3.368s
3 Emil Bernstorff (GB) Arden International	+3.509s
4 Jann Mardenborough (GB) Carlin	+14.456s
5 Marvin Kirchhofer (D) ART Grand Prix	+18.771s
6 Jimmy Eriksson (S) Koiranen GP	+22.621s
7 Kevin Ceccon (I) Arden International	+23.386s
8 Antonio Fuoco (I) Carlin	+23.919s
9 Alex Fontana (CH) Status Grand Prix	+25.532s
10 Alfonso Celis Jr (MEX) ART Grand Prix	+30.304s
11 Zaid Ashkanani (KW) Campos Racing	+30.383s
12 Alex Palou (E) Campos Racing	+30.529s
13 Matt Parry (GB) Koiranen GP	+30.680s
14 Matheo Tuscher (CH) Jenzer Motorsport	+32.026s
15 Artur Janosz (PL) Trident	+32.555s
16 Oscar Tunjo (CO) Trident	+34.642s
17 Adderly Fong (PRC) Koiranen GP	+35.972s
18 Sandy Stuvik (T) Status Grand Prix	+36.967s
19 Alex Bosak (PL) Arden International	+40.274s
20 Samin Gomez (YV) Campos Racing	+46.219s
21 Pal Varhaug (N) Jenzer Motorsport	+51.827s
22 Mitch Gilbert (AUS) Carlin	21 laps-tyres
R Ralph Boschung (CH) Jenzer Motorsport	10 laps-accident
R Seb Morris (GB) Status Grand Prix	10 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 96.658mph.
Fastest lap Ocon, 1m38.997s, 105.184mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Ghiotto, 1m35.469s; 2 Ocon, 1m35.608s; 3 Bernstorff, 1m35.800s; 4 Palou, 1m35.846s; 5 Tuscher, 1m35.909s; 6 Kirchhofer, 1m35.934s; 7 Celis, 1m35.943s; 8 Tunjo, 1m36.047s; 9 Varhaug, 1m36.082s; 10 Eriksson, 1m36.134s; 11 Gilbert, 1m36.143s; 12 Boschung, 1m36.160s; 13 Fong, 1m36.213s; 14 Fontana, 1m36.284s; 15 Mardenborough, 1m36.305s; 16 Parry, 1m36.403s; 17 Janosz, 1m36.478s; 18 Stuvik, 1m36.534s; 19 Ceccon, 1m36.593s; 20 Morris, 1m36.634s; 21 Fuoco, 1m36.785s; 22 Ashkanani, 1m37.288s; 23 Gomez, 1m38.409s; 24 Bosak, 1m37.549s*. *forced to start from pitlane.

RACE 2 (17 LAPS - 49.094 MILES)

1 Kirchhofer, 28m35.765s; 2 Eriksson, +6.724s; 3 Mardenborough, +7.116s; 4 Fuoco, +9.654s; 5 Bernstorff, +10.417s; 6 Ceccon, +11.436s; 7 Ocon, +11.613s; 8 Ghiotto, +15.860s; 9 Parry, +17.190s; 10 Celis, +19.160s; 11 Tunjo, +24.640s; 12 Janosz, +28.589s; 13 Tuscher, +36.330s; 14 Boschung, +36.780s; 15 Ashkanani, +37.061s; 16 Fontana, +37.821s; 17 Stuvik, +38.377s; 18 Varhaug, +38.796s; 19 Gomez, +39.098s; 20 Palou, +39.631s; 21 Fong, +41.348s; 22 Gilbert, +46.872s; 23 Bosak, +48.233s; 24 Morris, +48.564s.
Winner's average speed 103.008mph.
Fastest lap Kirchhofer, 1m38.197s, 106.041mph.

GRID FOR RACE 2

Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed. Morris forced to start from pits.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Ocon, 29; 2 Kirchhofer, 27; 3 Ghiotto, 23; 4 Mardenborough, 22; 5 Bernstorff, 21; 6 Eriksson, 20; 7 Fuoco, 12; 8 Ceccon, 10; 9 Fontana, 2; 10 Celis, 1.



First blood to Ocon in 2015 GP3 season

INDYCAR SERIES

ROUND 5/15 INDIANAPOLIS, MAY 9 (82 LAPS - 199.998 MILES)

1 Will Power (AUS) Team Penske Dallara-Chevrolet	1h42m42.0940s
2 Graham Rahal (USA) Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing Dallara-Honda	+1.5023s
3 Juan Pablo Montoya (CO) Team Penske Dallara-Chevrolet	+7.1967s
4 Sebastien Bourdais (F) KVSH Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	+7.7336s
5 Charlie Kimball (USA) Chip Ganassi Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	+25.1179s
6 Helio Castroneves (BR) Team Penske Dallara-Chevrolet	+31.7352s
7 Tony Kanaan (BR) Chip Ganassi Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	+32.3191s
8 Stefano Coletti (MC) KV Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	+35.3853s
9 Takuma Sato (J) AJ Foyt Enterprises Dallara-Honda	+40.8267s
10 Scott Dixon (NZ) Chip Ganassi Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	+47.4715s
11 Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA) Andretti Autosport Dallara-Honda	+48.5410s
12 James Hinchcliffe (CDN) Schmidt Peterson M-sports Dallara-Honda	+49.5461s
13 Carlos Munoz (CO) Andretti Autosport Dallara-Honda	+54.2372s
14 Luca Filippi (I) CFH Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	+54.8713s
15 Gabby Chaves (CO) Bryan Herta Autosport Dallara-Honda	+1m01.3092s
16 Marco Andretti (USA) Andretti Autosport Dallara-Honda	+1m07.2448s
17 Sebastian Saavedra (CO) Chip Ganassi Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m09.2079s
18 James Jakes (GB) Schmidt Peterson Motorsports Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
19 Carlos Huertas (CO) Dale Coyne Racing Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
20 Josef Newgarden (USA) CFH Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
21 JR Hildebrand (USA) CFH Racing Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
22 Francesco Dracone (I) Dale Coyne Racing Dallara-Honda	-2 laps
23 Jack Hawksworth (GB) AJ Foyt Enterprises Dallara-Honda	-13 laps
24 Justin Wilson (GB) Andretti Autosport Dallara-Honda	68 laps-gearbox
25 Simon Pagenaud (F) Team Penske Dallara-Chevrolet	57 laps-ECCU

Winner's average speed 116.842mph.
Fastest lap Hinchcliffe, 1m10.8604s, 123.911mph.

Q2 Power, 1m09.6443s; Pagenaud, 1m09.7769s; Castroneves, 1m09.8773s; Kanaan, 1m09.9038s; Montoya, 1m09.9151s; Dixon, 1m09.9966s; 7 Bourdais, 1m10.0230s; 8 Saavedra, 1m10.1572s; 9 Filippi, 1m10.1969s; 10 Coletti, 1m10.3679s; 11 Hawksworth, 1m10.4558s; 12 Newgarden, 1m10.8321s.

Q1-GROUP 1 Dixon, 1m09.7798s; Castroneves, 1m09.8917s; Pagenaud, 1m10.0145s; Kanaan, 1m10.2264s; Hawksworth, 1m10.3971s; Newgarden, 1m10.4283s; 14 Kimball, 1m10.5031s; 16 Chaves, 1m10.5282s; 18 Wilson, 1m10.5776s; 20 Jakes, 1m10.6749s; 22 Sato, 1m10.7391s; 24 Andretti, 1m11.1636s; 25 Dracone, 1m12.5814s.

Q1-GROUP 2 Power, 1m10.0394s; Montoya, 1m10.2695s; Bourdais, 1m10.2779s; Filippi, 1m10.3168s; Coletti, 1m10.3840s; Saavedra, 1m10.5573s; 13 Hinchcliffe, 1m10.6273s; 15 Hildebrand, 1m10.6380s; 17 Rahal, 1m10.6480s; 19 Hunter-Reay, 1m10.8345s; 21 Munoz, 1m10.8786s; 23 Huertas, 1m12.5038s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Montoya, 171; 2 Power, 166; 3 Castroneves, 161; 4 Dixon, 144; 5 Rahal, 144; 6 Kanaan, 136; 7 Newgarden, 129; 8 Hinchcliffe, 129; 9 Bourdais, 123; 10 Pagenaud, 101.



Power leads from start at Indianapolis



Buemi dominated on iconic asphalt

FORMULA E

ROUND 7/10 MONTE CARLO (MC), MAY 9 (47 LAPS – 51.546 MILES)

1	Sebastien Buemi (CH) Team e.dams Renault	48m05.225s
2	Lucas di Grassi (BR) Audi Sport Abt	+2.154s
3	Sam Bird (GB) China Racing (Campos)	+4.634s
4	Sam Bird (GB) Virgin Racing	+4.801s
5	Jerome D'Ambrosio (B) Dragon Racing	+5.881s
6	Nicolas Prost (F) Team e.dams Renault	+11.032s
7	Stephane Sarrazin (F) Venturi (Signature)	+26.472s
8	Charles Pic (F) China Racing (Campos)	+49.538s
9	Antonio Felix da Costa (P) Amclin Aguri	+52.658s
10	Nick Heidfeld (D) Venturi (Signature)	+52.936s
11	Jarno Trulli (I) Trulli (Super Nova)	+58.984s
12	Scott Speed (USA) Andretti Autosport	+1m14.138s
13	Karun Chandhok (IND) Mahindra Racing (Carlin)	-1 lap
NC	Vitantonio Liuzzi (I) Trulli (Super Nova)	-11 laps
R	Jean-Eric Vergne (F) Andretti Autosport	33 laps-accident damage
R	Salvador Duran (MEX) Amclin Aguri	28 laps-accident damage
R	Loic Duval (F) Dragon Racing	24 laps-accident damage
R	Daniel Abt (D) Audi Sport Abt	14 laps-accident
R	Bruno Senna (BR) Mahindra Racing (Carlin)	0 laps-accident
R	Jaime Alguersuari (E) Virgin Racing	0 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 64.315mph.
Fastest lap Vergne, 55.157s, 71.581mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Buemi, 53.478s; 2 di Grassi, 53.669s; 3 d'Ambrosio, 53.702s; 4 Piquet, 53.712s; 5 Abt, 53.891s; 6 Prost, 53.909s; 7 Senna, 54.035s; 8 Sarrazin, 54.133s; 9 Duran, 54.175s; 10 Bird, 54.253s; 11 Vergne, 54.260s; 12 Trulli, 54.339s; 13 Speed, 54.347s; 14 Duval, 53.804s*; 15 Liuzzi, 54.462s; 16 Heidfeld, 54.502s; 17 Alguersuari, 54.021s*; 18 Pic, 54.652s; 19 da Costa, 56.938s; 20 Chandhok, 54.858s*. *grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 di Grassi, 93; 2 Piquet, 89; 3 Buemi, 83; 4 Prost, 77; 5 Bird, 64; 6 d'Ambrosio, 52; 7 da Costa, 45; 8 Vergne, 34; 9 Alguersuari, 30; 10 Senna, 28.



Monaco photo op for Formula E's finest

BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 3/10 THRUXTON, MAY 10 RACE 1 (16 LAPS – 37.696 MILES)

1	Gordon Shedden (GB) Honda (Dynamics) Honda Civic Type-R	21m05.473s
2	Matt Neal (GB) Honda (Dynamics) Honda Civic Type-R	+1.016s
3	Adam Morgan (GB) Ciceley Racing Mercedes A-class	+2.710s
4	Jason Plato (GB) Team BMR Volkswagen CC	+9.866s
5	Andy Priaulx (GB) WSR BMW 125i M Sport	+12.047s
6	Andrew Jordan (GB) MG (Triple Eight) MG6	+13.612s
7	Colin Turkington (GB) Team BMR Volkswagen CC	+14.159s
8	Jack Goff (GB) MG (Triple Eight) MG6	+15.631s
9	Josh Cook (GB) Power Maxed Racing Chevrolet Cruze	+15.719s
10	Tom Ingram (GB) Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Avensis	+15.977s
11	Sam Tordoff (GB) WSR BMW 125i M Sport	+16.207s
12	Martin Depper (GB) Eurotech Racing Honda Civic	+18.876s
13	Rob Collard (GB) WSR BMW 125i M Sport	+21.127s
14	Rob Austin (GB) Rob Austin Racing Audi A4	+21.835s
15	Aiden Moffat (GB) Laser Tools Racing Mercedes A-class	+26.963s
16	Hunter Abbott (GB) Rob Austin Racing Audi A4	+28.210s
17	Jeff Smith (GB) Eurotech Racing Honda Civic	+29.058s
18	Warren Scott (GB) Team BMR Volkswagen CC	+41.090s
19	Stewart Lines (GB) Houseman Racing Toyota Avensis	+50.467s
20	Martin Donnelly (GB) Infiniti (Support Our Paras) Infiniti Q50	+57.888s
21	Aron Smith (IRL) Team BMR Volkswagen CC	-1 lap
22	Andy Wilmot (GB) Welch Motorsport Proton Gen-2 Persona	-1 lap
23	Derek Palmer Jr (GB) Infiniti (Support Our Paras) Infiniti Q50	-1 lap
24	Kieran Gallagher (GB) Team Hard Toyota Avensis	-2 laps
R	Dave Newsham (GB) Power Maxed Racing Chevrolet Cruze	1 lap-acc damage
NS	Simon Belcher (GB) Handy Motorsport Toyota Avensis	accident
NS	Daniel Welch (GB) Welch Motorsport Proton Gen-2 Persona	accident
NS	Mike Bushell (GB) AmD Tuning Ford Focus	accident

Winner's average speed 107.23mph.
Fastest lap Plato, 1m17.388s, 109.59mph.

QUALIFYING

1 A Smith, 1m16.785s; 2 Shedden, 1m16.805s; 3 Neal, 1m16.858s; 4 Morgan, 1m16.916s; 5 Priaulx, 1m17.117s; 6 Plato, 1m17.127s; 7 Goff, 1m17.213s; 8 Cook, 1m17.308s; 9 Turkington, 1m17.327s; 10 Collard, 1m17.369s; 11 Jordan, 1m17.400s; 12 Tordoff, 1m17.460s; 13 Depper, 1m17.627s; 14 Scott, 1m17.639s; 15 Moffat, 1m17.750s; 16 Newsham, 1m17.772s; 17 Ingram, 1m18.197s; 18 J Smith, 1m18.402s; 19 Austin, 1m18.939s; 20 Abbott, 1m19.056s; 21 Gallagher, 1m19.806s; 22 Lines, 1m20.262s; 23 Palmer, 1m20.271s; 24 Wilmot, 1m24.992s.

RACE 2 (16 LAPS – 37.696 MILES)

1 Plato, 21m05.521s; 2 Collard, +0.442s; 3 Shedden, +3.475s; 4 Goff, +4.022s; 5 Turkington, +6.962s; 6 Tordoff, +10.385s; 7 Jordan, +10.833s; 8 Morgan, +12.963s; 9 Austin, +13.755s; 10 Moffat, +14.339s; 11 A Smith, +17.095s; 12 Newsham, +18.046s; 13 Depper, +20.161s; 14 Abbott, +27.429s; 15 Gallagher, +40.166s; 16 Lines, +40.667s; 17 Palmer, +47.743s; 18 Cook, +47.915s; 19 Donnelly, +58.602s; 20 J Smith, +1m02.093s; 21 Wilmot, -1 lap; NC Scott, 11 laps; R Ingram, 8 laps-differential; NC Priaulx, 8 laps; R Neal, 7 laps-accident; NS Belcher-accident; NS Welch-accident; NS Bushell-accident.
Winner's average speed 107.23mph.
Fastest lap Neal, 1m17.735s, 109.10mph.

GRID RACE 2

1 Plato; 2 Collard; 3 Morgan; 4 Shedden; 5 Priaulx; 6 A Smith; 7 J Smith; 8 Cook; 9 Neal; 10 Goff; 11 Depper; 12 Turkington; 13 Jordan; 14 Tordoff; 15 Austin; 16 Ingram; 17 Scott; 18 Moffat; 19 Abbott; 20 Gallagher; 21 Lines; 22 Donnelly; 23 Palmer; 24 Wilmot; 25 Newsham.

RACE 3 (19 LAPS – 44.764 MILES)

1 Morgan, 27m13.160s; 2 Jordan, +1.452s; 3 Tordoff, +2.641s; 4 Turkington, +3.131s; 5 Shedden, +4.531s; 6 Neal, +5.610s; 7 Plato, +7.734s; 8 A Smith, +7.944s; 9 Cook, +8.188s; 10 Ingram, +8.523s; 11 Goff, +11.683s; 12 Newsham, +15.279s; 13 Priaulx, +15.735s; 14 Collard, +16.022s; 15 Depper, +19.165s; 16 Moffat, +19.240s; 17 Austin, +20.692s; 18 Gallagher, +28.653s; 19 Palmer, +36.828s; 20 Wilmot, +37.109s; 21 Abbott, -1 lap; R J Smith, 15 laps; R Donnelly, 11 laps-powersteering; R Lines, 7 laps; R Scott, 6 laps-accident; NS Belcher-accident; NS Welch-accident; NS Bushell-accident.
Winner's average speed 98.67mph.
Fastest lap Morgan, 1m17.366s, 109.62mph.



EBREVILAT

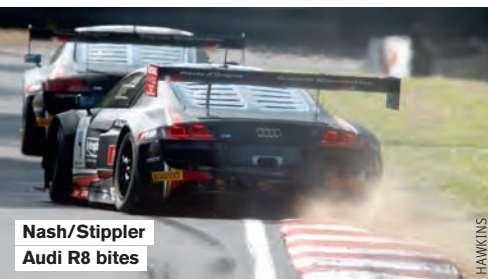
GRID RACE 3

Decided by result of Race 2, with top eight reversed.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Shedden, 114; 2 Turkington, 106; 3 Neal, 103; 4 Plato, 102; 5 Jordan, 99; 6 Morgan, 98; 7 Goff, 80; 8 Collard, 76; 9 Tordoff, 71; 10 A Smith, 64.

RESULTS BY FORIX



Nash/Stippler Audi R8 bites

BLANCPAIN SPRINT SERIES

ROUND 2/7 BRANDS HATCH, MAY 10 MAIN RACE (42 LAPS – 102.198 MILES)

1	Robin Frijns (NL)/Laurens Vanthoor (B) WRT Audi R8 LMS ultra	1h00m48.224s
2	Atila Abreu (BR)/Valdeno Brito (BR) BMW Team Brasil (AH) BMW Z4 GT3	+14.168s
3	Kevin Estre (F)/Rob Bell (GB) Attempto Racing McLaren 650S GT3	+18.444s
4	Caca Bueno (BR)/Sergio Jimenez (BR) BMW Team Brasil (AH) BMW Z4 GT3	+24.033s
5	Albert von Thurn und Taxis (D)/Nicky Catsburg (NL) Reiter Engineering Lamborghini Gallardo LP560-4	+27.682s
6	Sean Walkinshaw (GB)/Craig Dolby (GB) MRS GT Racing Nissan GT-R Nismo GT3	+31.656s
7	Stephane Richelmi (MC)/Stephane Ortelli (MC) WRT Audi R8 LMS ultra	+37.067s
8	Nikolaus Mayr-Melnhof (A)/Markus Winkelhock (D) Phoenix Racing Audi R8 LMS ultra	+37.373s
9	James Nash (GB)/Frank Stippler (D) WRT Audi R8 LMS ultra	+44.058s
10	Alexey Karachev (RUS)/Bernd Schneider (D) GT Russian Team Mercedes SLS AMG GT3	+58.906s
11	Filip Salaquarda (CZ)/Marco Bonanomi (I) ISR Audi R8 LMS ultra	+59.849s
12	Olivier Lombard (F)/Jules Szymkowiak (NL) HTP Motorsport Bentley Continental GT3	+1m07.646s
13	Alexey Vasiliev (RUS)/Marko Asmer (EST) GT Russian Team Mercedes SLS AMG GT3	+1m08.896s
14	Enzo Ide (B)/Christopher Mies (D) WRT Audi R8 LMS ultra	+1m09.450s
15	Anders Fjordbach (DK)/Thomas Fjordbach (DK) ISR Audi R8 LMS ultra	-1 lap
16	Lee Mowle (GB)/Joe Osborne (GB) Triple Eight Racing BMW Z4 GT3	-1 lap
17	Fabien Thuner (CH)/Philipp Wlazik (D) Attempto Racing McLaren 650S GT3	-1 lap
R	Marco Seefried (D)/Norbert Siedler (A) Rinaldi Racing Ferrari 458 Italia GT3	3 laps-damper
NS	Vincent Abril (F)/Maximilian Buhk (D) HTP Motorsport Bentley Continental GT3	accident

Winner's average speed 100.847mph.
Fastest lap Vanthoor, 1m24.522s, 103.640mph.
In each car, first-named driver started the race.

QUALIFYING RACE (42 LAPS – 102.198 MILES)

1 Vanthoor/Frijns, 1h00m56.259s; 2 Brito/Abreu, +26.711s; 3 Dolby/Walkinshaw, +27.054s; 4 Jimenez/Bueno, +27.515s; 5 Bell/Estre, +28.011s; 6 Winkelhock/Mayr-Melnhof, +35.062s; 7 Catsburg/von Thurn und Taxis, +47.249s; 8 Stippler/Nash, +56.429s; 9 Mies/Ide, +56.520s; 10 Siedler/Seefried, +1m06.458s; 11 Ortelli/Richelmi, +1m09.312s; 12 Bonanomi/Salaquarda, +1m17.436s; 13 Szymkowiak/Lombard, +1m17.946s; 14 Schneider/Karachev, 41 laps-fuel pump; 15 Osborne/Mowle, -1 lap; 16 T Fjordbach/A Fjordbach, -1 lap; 17 Wlazik/Thuner, -1 lap; R Asmer/Vasiliev, 24 laps-accident damage; NS Abril/Buhk, accident.
Winner's average speed 100.847mph.
Fastest lap Vanthoor, 1m24.902s, 103.176mph.
In each car, first-named driver started the race.

QUALIFYING RACE 3 1 Vanthoor, 1m23.269s; 2 Catsburg, 1m23.703s; 3 Mies, 1m23.713s; 4 Dolby, 1m23.727s; 5 Brito, 1m23.859s; 6 Jimenez, 1m23.905s; 7 Osborne, 1m24.018s; 8 Winkelhock, 1m24.053s; 9 Bell, 1m24.106s; 10 Schneider, 1m24.425s.

QUALIFYING RACE 2 Vanthoor, 1m23.592s; Jimenez, 1m24.064s; Mies, 1m24.068s; Winkelhock, 1m24.164s; Osborne, 1m24.185s; Brito, 1m24.207s; Catsburg, 1m24.353s; Schneider, 1m24.384s; Bell, 1m24.419s; Dolby, 1m24.450s; 11 Stippler, 1m24.476s; 12 Siedler, 1m24.532s; 13 Asmer, 1m24.634s; 14 Bonanomi, 1m24.843s; 15 Szymkowiak, 1m24.964s; 16 Ortelli, 1m25.012s; 17 Wlazik, 1m26.291s; 18 T Fjordbach, 1m27.157s.

QUALIFYING 1 Estre, 1m24.234s; Walkinshaw, 1m24.711s; Abreu, 1m24.901s; Bueno, 1m24.939s; Seefried, 1m24.946s; Frijns, 1m24.989s; Richelmi, 1m25.276s; Mayr-Melnhof, 1m25.349s; Lombard, 1m25.435s; Nash, 1m25.483s; Salaquarda, 1m25.616s; von Thurn und Taxis, 1m26.021s; Thuner, 1m26.119s; Karachev, 1m26.178s; A Fjordbach, 1m26.652s; Vasiliev, 1m26.793s; Ide, 1m26.803s; Mowle, 1m29.418s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Vanthoor/Frijns, 34; 2 Ortelli/Richelmi, 33; 3 Maxime Martin/Dirk Muller, 31; 4 Abreu/Brito, 24; 5 Mies/Ide, 19; 6 Estre/Bell, 17; 7 Bueno/Jimenez, 15; 8 Seefried/Siedler, 13; 9 Abril/Buhk, 12; 10 Walkinshaw/Dolby, 12.

M-SPORT'S

The new Ford Fiesta RS WRC will make its debut on next week's Rally Portugal. **DAVID EVANS** asks whether this is the car that will finally put M-Sport on top of the world

PHOTOGRAPHY: MALCOLM GRIFFITHS

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The volume is rising. The pitch hasn't changed, but at this point it should be falling, shouldn't it? The pitch *would* be falling if you or I were at the wheel. Instead, the noise is being conducted by safe hands. OK, we're taking a step back, but that's solely to get a better view.

And there it is:

M-Sport's all-new Ford Fiesta RS WRC. The car carrying Cumbrian hopes of a return to the top of the world slashes through an apparently flat-left in the middle of a deep, dark wood.

Down a gear in preparation for a right through a dip, the car almost looks like it's floating, the compression absorbed without hesitation, the acceleration through the corner constant, the grip seemingly endless. If it was a picture of modern-day World Rally Car efficiency you were looking for, this was it.

The last 30 balls-out seconds are interrupted by a junction: square right and left. It's here that we'll see the real benefit of the new car, which comes with a much bigger boot out of the slow stuff.

Except it's gone quiet. Silent in fact.

Seconds before had been another noise. Not the clatter of a corner being cut in top, but the slither of a braking point being missed. The fire's gone out.

Elfyn Evans gives a rueful smile, thumbs the starter and turns right not left at the second part of that sequence. Right means service, the boys, the trucks and the tea. Everything you'd find in the service park, save for the polish and shine saved for the corporate guests. This is the business end of WRC development. And it's just the way Evans and the team like it.

The Welshman steps from the Fiesta RS WRC and engages immediately with engineers. The Michelins beneath the car are shot. In fact, they were past their best a couple of laps ago. But it doesn't matter: this isn't a tyre test, this is a development test. The car will be tuned to its boots at a later date. For now, M-Sport's proposed VW Polo-beater is being run through its final UK test before heading for Portugal.

But first, back to Rally GB 2012 and the second run through Myherin. Unbeknown to Malcolm Wilson and everybody at M-Sport, Ford's decision to cull its support of the WRC programme is just days away. On that Friday afternoon, the ▶



Evans likes what he feels inside the all-new M-Sport-built Fiesta

NEW HOPE



► decision would have been nonsensical. The Fiesta was flying. Just 0.3s separated Jari-Matti Latvala and team-mate Petter Solberg through that mid-Wales test. Nobody could get close. And that includes Sebastien Loeb.

Two days later and Latvala celebrated a dominant win over the world champion Frenchman and his Citroen. The Parisians had come to Cardiff and been given a good seeing-to.

And then Ford upped and left, bringing to an end an alliance with M-Sport and world rallying that stretched back to 1997.

Ford's history in rallying goes back even further, to the start of the WRC as we know it. There is, however, a gap in the early-'80s when the RS1700T was quietly brushed under the carpet in favour of an RS200 that couldn't come soon enough, but for which time soon ran out. Then again in the early-'90s – ironically at a time when Boreham built the Escort RS Cosworth, a car that should have crushed everything in its path – when internal politics played their part and nobody really knew what to do with the WRC effort. But all that changed when Wilson was given the keys at the end of 1996.

With the onset of a cutting-edge facility at M-Sport's Dovenby Hall facility, trophy cabinets were soon expected to overflow with silverware. The reality is that it took a decade for the new alliance to lift the first of two manufacturers' titles. The drivers' championship still hasn't arrived.

Colin McRae not hearing Nicky Grist's advice not to cut a particularly rapid right-hander in Rhondda quite likely did for the 2001 crown, while the quickest thing to come out of Alsace scuppered Marcus Gronholm, Mikko Hirvonen and most of the noughties.

While M-Sport arrived with the Escort WRC, the real deal was the Focus. Ford's all-new world championship challenger was made ready in record time in 1999, winning by Kenya and round three. After the restraint and control shown to win the Safari Rally, McRae reached for the flat-out ability more usually associated with the 1995 champion to win a very different gravel rally next time out in Portugal. Just four rallies old, M-Sport's new Ford had won two.

Putting it to the strident Scot that he would finish just three of the next 16 rallies would have brought disbelief. But the wave the new-for-'99 partnership was riding was about to break.

The Ford's engine would break with it – again and again. It transpired that much of the trouble the Focus suffered through 1999 and 2000 was tethered in the homologation detail for the



Gronholm won on Ford debut in 2006 Monte



Second makes' title came in '07, helped by Mikko Hirvonen (l)



Hirvonen, M-Sport's most-winning driver, took '11 Sweden victory



Latvala, Rally GB 2012: M-Sport's most recent victory at the top level



“THERE ARE THOSE IN M-SPORT WHO THINK I'M CRAZY TO INVEST SO MUCH IN THIS CAR. BUT I HAVE TO” MALCOLM WILSON

TOP FIVE FORDS



Ford Escort RS 1600
Rally wins 5
Standout moment A 16-valve BDA engine mated to a ZF gearbox and Atlas axle was a near-unbeatable combination on gravel in the early 1970s. Roger Clark's RAC Rally win in 1972 came off the back of a Safari success for Hannu Mikkola, demonstrating the car's wide-ranging ability and speed on all kinds of dirt rallies.



Ford Escort RS 1800
Rally wins 17
Standout moment So many to choose from, including Bjorn Waldegaard's 1979 Monte win that never was after spectators put rocks in his path. Ending that '79 season with a Hannu Mikkola win on the RAC, with the drivers' title for Waldegaard and makes' crown for Ford, is hard to top for the glorious Group 4 car.

two-litre engine. Put simply, the job was done in too short a time and without sufficient testing mileage put on the motor. By the time the problems became apparent, it was too late to change anything; bound by homologation.

The 2001 season was a step, but it was 2003 when design chief Christian Loriaux's all-new, low-slung racer really made an impression. In Wilson's words, that car was made for Markko Martin. The pair were immediately on the pace.

But, the following year, Loeb had landed title number one and it would take another eight seasons and his retirement from the sport before another name was written on the only trophy that matters in world rallying.

Gronholm came to and went from Ford, taking manufacturer titles in both his seasons. He ran Loeb close as well, but the Finn simply couldn't match a metronomic Frenchman in a Citroen team whose budget was growing as quickly as Ford's contribution was shrinking.

It was only Wilson who kept Ford in the WRC in 2005. He famously landed in Japan in 2004, only to head straight back to Europe to stave off a communication detailing Ford's withdrawal, which already sat in the PR department's outbox.

What came in 2005 was a radically restructured agreement with Ford, offering less cash, but more incentive for M-Sport to build and sell rally cars of all classes fronted with a Blue Oval. It's in that deal that the current M-Sport business model is rooted. It's well known that Ford's input into the current set-up offers little more than technical support and use of valuable engineering resources such as the climatic chamber at Dunton. For more than two years, it's Wilson who has been funding the team, and he's still signing the cheques to fund the car that stands before us today.

"There are those in M-Sport who think I'm crazy to invest so much in this car," says Wilson. "I have to. It's my shop window."

He's not wrong. Sales of the firm's Fiesta R5 car are now counted into the hundreds, with hundreds more running around in other shapes and sizes of hardware originally built in Cockermouth. Why? Because of brand M-Sport. Granted, the Fiesta hasn't won in the WRC since 2012, but withdraw from the sharp end of competition and the rest of the business will die. Nobody will want an all-new R2 Fiesta if they can't see a direct link to the RS WRC via the R5. In terms of progression through the world rally ranks, M-Sport offers a one-stop shop from the bottom to the top. But not yet the very top.

The upside is that M-Sport's business model ▶



Updated Fiesta RS WRC presses on with Evans in mid-Wales test



Team works through a rigorous development programme before Portugal



Ford Escort RS Cosworth

Rally wins 8

Standout moment The real standout moment never came, but it really should have done. The Escort was lighter than its predecessor and came with a whopping blower to ensure power was never a problem. No active transmission, antiquated rear suspension and a road-car shunt for Francois Delecour in 1994 cost this car dearly.



Ford Focus RS WRC

Rally wins 44

Standout moment Rally Finland victory in a 2003-specification Focus was special for Markko Martin, as was a debut win with the team in Monte Carlo in 2006 for Marcus Gronholm. But it's impossible to look past Colin McRae's 1999 Safari success, when the Scot took victory on the all-new Ford's third event.



Ford Fiesta RS WRC

Rally wins 6

Standout moment Jari-Matti Latvala and Petter Solberg were untouchable through the first couple of days of Rally GB 2012. A pre-event test had further refined a very capable car and the pair thundered through mid-Wales, leaving a bemused Sebastien Loeb trailing in their wake. Latvala won with Solberg third; Ford's last win.

► is 100 per cent transferable. And, courtesy of current technical regulations in the sport, a manufacturer arriving in Cumbria cold could be on the stages with a hot World Rally Car in a matter of months. Which is nice. But it's not what gets Wilson out of bed in the morning.

"The worst thing for me is not winning rallies," he says. "I'm an ex-competitor, I want to be winning stages and rallies. Don't get me wrong, championships are great, but I really miss being in the thick of a fight to win a rally. That's the buzz and the boost we all get that we've got it right."

And has he got it right with the new car? "We know the product is still good enough to win," says Wilson. "We've got a Volkswagen-beater here, but what we don't have is an [Sebastien] Ogier. And this is absolutely no slight on Elfyn [Evans] or Ott [Tanak] – and I'm not about putting pressure on those guys, it's just the reality of where we are. If we had Thierry [Neuville], I know it would be different."

Wilson stops, lowers his head and smiles. He knows what he's just said: "This car would be made for Thierry, like the 2003 car was for Markko Martin. Sadly, right now, we're not in a position to exploit that."

But, as last week's AUTOSPORT revealed, Wilson is working on a plan to change all that for 2016. Evans agrees readily that he's a step behind the Belgian, but adds that his own learning curve is levelling out nicely – witness that first podium last time out in Argentina.

Evans says: "There would be something wrong if I was standing here thinking, 'Well, this is me...' We know the car's a good step and if I can keep finding a bit more myself then we'll get closer and closer to the result."

Development of the new Fiesta RS WRC has been phased. Without a huge dollop of cash parachuted in from Ford, it's a case of design and development being tailored to the financial capabilities. For the past 12 months, new parts have been evolving and running quietly in pre-event tests. It was only in January this year that the all-new Fiesta ran for the first time.

The headlines for the car include a new engine. Buoyed by the success of their own motor in the Fiesta R5, the M-Sport engineers have worked their magic on this new world-car powerplant.

"The engine's fantastic," smiles Evans. "How good? We'll have to wait for Portugal, but it's more driveable. The big thing is that there's a little bit more power, but a wider powerband with more at the bottom end. It's more responsive in the slower corners."

That ability to hold a higher gear for longer means more stability than ever from the Fiesta. "If you're not having to go down a gear, you're not generating extra wheelspin, the car's not sliding or moving about as much," says Evans. "It's just going forward."

And this Fiesta's going forward faster than anything before it. ❧



Engineers download
Evans after the young
Welshman's early runs

FORD FIESTA RS WRC

From the outside and from the driver's seat, nothing's changed on this year's Ford Fiesta RS WRC – yet Malcolm Wilson says M-Sport's latest World Rally Car is 80 per cent new from the cars we saw competing in Argentina last month. Here's his guide to what has changed

ENGINE

For the first time in M-Sport's history, we have carried out all the development and build work on the new engine. The cylinder block has been machined out of a single piece of aluminium. We're running a dry sump on the car – this is the first time we've been allowed to do this with a World Rally Car for at least 10 years. The dry sump obviously means there's no oil sloshing around in the bottom of the engine, so the crankshaft's not hitting the oil and creating drag. The head itself has been configured in a completely new way to ensure there's less friction in there – we have what's called 'finger followers' rather than the cams right on the buckets, which causes more friction.

With the FIA's 33mm restrictor in place on the air intake for the turbocharger, there's only so much you can do with the horsepower. You'll find all of these cars will be running around the same level of power. Which is why we've focused on other things like the efficiency of the engine. The engine will have a wider powerband and more torque lower down the rev range. I'm really proud of what the guys have achieved here – this is a completely new engine and it's all done by us.



AIRFLOW

By machining the block, we've been able to move the intercooler and the radiator closer into the engine. That's going to help with weight distribution. Moving these parts back into the engine bay means less overhang on the car and that's always a good thing. The regulations regarding the height of the engine stay the same, so we haven't been able to lower them at all. But the redesigning of the intercooler means we have new airflow into the front of the car and redesigned pipework.

SHELL

Obviously we introduced the latest-specification Fiesta shell to the World Rally Car last year and that remains unchanged going into 2015. We had thought about some small livery changes to the car for Portugal and this is still to be decided, but if the car for round five was sitting next to the Argentina cars, you wouldn't be able to tell the difference from the outside.



TRANSMISSION

We've had the steering column-mounted paddle shift since the start of the season and, in all honesty, that's not so much of a performance gain. It will – hopefully – preserve the life of the transmission a little bit, which is a benefit in itself. We have a new gearbox casing and new rear differential. On the inside of the gearbox, we have made alterations to the gear-change mechanism, on the dogs themselves – we're using lighter parts that will reduce inertia. The changes we've made will also make it easier and quicker to change the gearbox when we have to as well. The work done in the differentials is centred on running negative pre-load, which has really helped with the car's handling, especially on the turn-in to corners. The transmission work is all done by Xtrac, but obviously with our engineers' input.



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SUSPENSION AND BRAKES

We haven't done anything to the suspension and brakes on the car. Both areas have evolved recently and we're very happy with where we are with the Reiger dampers and the Brembo brakes, so these parts carry over from the 2014 car.



ELECTRONICS

The ECU is completely new, but still designed in conjunction with Cosworth – we have Cosworth staff permanently at Dovenby [Hall, M-Sport's base]. The new ECU embeds two units in one, which means less components, less weight, it's easier to use. Basically in this area we have faster microprocessors, which means data is being delivered to and from the engine in a faster, more efficient and more reliable way.

THE GREEN HELL

RETURN OF THE NORDSCHLEIFE

For the first time since 1983, world championship-level racing returns to 'The Green Hell'. **STUART CODLING**

looks forward to the World Touring Car Championship's races this weekend

“Come, peoples...” The man has identified himself as Wolfgang. With a thinning spread of tousled grey hair, a camera with a 70-210mm lens slung over one shoulder and a roll-up cigarette wedged over one ear, he has guided AUTOSPORT off the main road, bumping along a narrow, gravelled lane, to the threshold of a corrugated steel tunnel under the legendary Nordschleife. In broken English he has described his race exploits there – including class wins in the Nurburgring 24 Hours – right back to his first encounter in November 1979. “There was ice...”

Out of the van and on foot, traversing a muddy path through the tunnel and up, past a tree with a ladder propped up against a home-made viewing platform, we reach a partition in the outer security fence. A marshal frowns, scrutinises our media tabards, and nods us through. Now we stand by the guardrail, separated from the Nordschleife's hallowed asphalt by just this low but sturdy metal barrier and – at most – two metres of damp grass and some raked gravel.

It's hard to believe that world championship motor racing is returning here after a 32-year hiatus, harder still to imagine Formula 1 cars roaring through here in the 1970s, or the likes of Stefan Bellof grappling with mighty ground-effect Group C weaponry when the 'Ring bowed out of world championship sportscar racing in 1983.

The wind has the icy touch of late spring but the sunshine is creating a gentle heat haze over the asphalt. Conditions change from moment to moment; abruptly, it clouds over and you can smell the moisture in the air, if not quite feel it. Here you can experience at least three seasons not just in one day, but over the course of one 15.769-mile lap. ▶



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TAMING THE NORDSCHLEIFE

With Ron Simons, CEO and chief instructor of RSR Nurburg

FLUGPLATZ

“Most people think of this as the jump followed by the fast double-apex single-radius right-hander. It's actually the section after this [there used to be a small landing strip nearby]. There's a long 'almost' straight which is 'almost' flat-out – certainly flat-out in less powerful cars. It's high-speed so it's here where the quick cars build their lap times.”



RSR NURBURG





TAMING THE NORDSCHLEIFE

With Ron Simons, CEO and chief instructor of RSR Nurburg

BERGWERK

“A simple-looking late-entry turn where your focus is on the highest possible exit speed, because the 2km uphill stretch through Kesselchen to Klostertal follows. The braking zone is a challenge in cars without ABS. Heavy banking means the outside line is where the grip is in the wet. It’s magical compared with the slimy, greasy inside of the corner.”

► Heralded by the echoing growl of a highly strung four-cylinder engine rising and falling, the Citroen C-Elysee of Ma Qing Hua hoves into view over a crest, tyres chirruping as he stands on the brakes for the Schwalbenschwanz (or ‘little Karussell’). It bumps and bucks over the banked concrete slabs and, driver’s patience exhausted, the exhaust blares with the

application of foot to throttle and the left-rear Yokohama gives a piercing shriek of protest as the track’s camber abruptly shifts beneath it and concrete gives way to asphalt. Wolfgang is hopping from one foot to another with excitement, his enthusiasm undimmed by the passing of years.

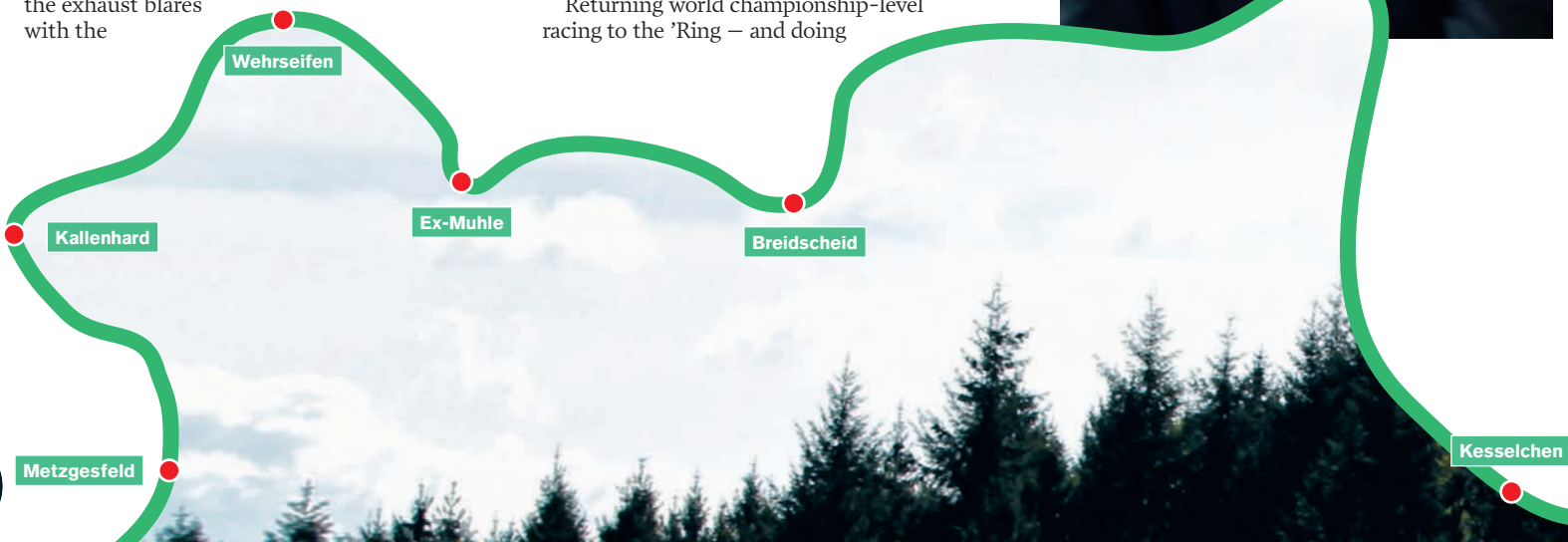
Returning world championship-level racing to the ‘Ring – and doing



Ribeiro has realised a dream with 'Ring race

Bergwerk

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so with *his* series – has been a long-held ambition for WTCC boss Francois Ribeiro. Making it happen hasn't just been a technical challenge, though; while the Nurburgring carries a mystical allure for most racing fans (and drivers) in Europe, the USA and Japan, Ribeiro learned that its long absence from the world stage means some territories aren't in tune with its significance.

"At the first WTCC round of the year," he says, "I was talking to some of the Argentine media about the Nordschleife and they really knew very little about it – they know it's there, they know the name, but very little else. During the conversation I took an iPad and Googled the Nordschleife to show them some images.

"They saw the forest, and all the writing on the track, and they said, 'Ah!' Because you don't see this type of thing in Formula 1, rallying or touring cars. The writing on the track surface has more in common with mountain stages in cycle racing, where the fans write the names of their favourite riders. We'll have to be a bit creative, and not just think about motorsport if we want to show how unique this event is.

"Sporting-wise it's a challenge to make it fit to the WTCC format but it's an even bigger challenge to make it a show on TV, because you cannot approach the Nordschleife as you'd approach, say, Monza. Covering four or five kilometres – it's nothing difficult. Covering 26km you have to completely change the mindset, and believe that you're covering a rally stage or the Tour de France."

Ribeiro dispatched his Eurosport team to secure interviews with drivers whom he describes as "legends of the Nurburgring – Stirling Moss, Jackie Stewart, Hans Stuck, Jacky Ickx, Niki Lauda" to add substance and context to the coverage of the forthcoming WTCC round there. Camera crews will roam the spectator areas and



RSR NURBURG

TAMING THE NORDSCHLEIFE

With Ron Simons, CEO and chief instructor of RSR Nurburg

KARUSSELL

"This is probably the best-known corner of the 'Ring, maybe even in the world. It's slow-speed and therefore not challenging from a mental point of view – just a combination of using the banking to its max, and coping with the crest in the braking zone at the corner entry and again the camber change at the corner exit. Where you can win is in how quick you can drive in and how fast you get the slingshot out. The middle section is slow for everyone. Most important is how you exit, which takes a special technique – it's not *steering* out of the corner but accelerating at the right moment and right angle. It is right when you feel like you're getting a slingshot onto the next straight."

campsites during the weekend too. You get the impression that this race is as important to the WTCC's status and credibility as it is to the financially embattled circuit itself, where the permanently becalmed rollercoaster by the front gate stands as a testament to the excessive optimism of previous regimes.

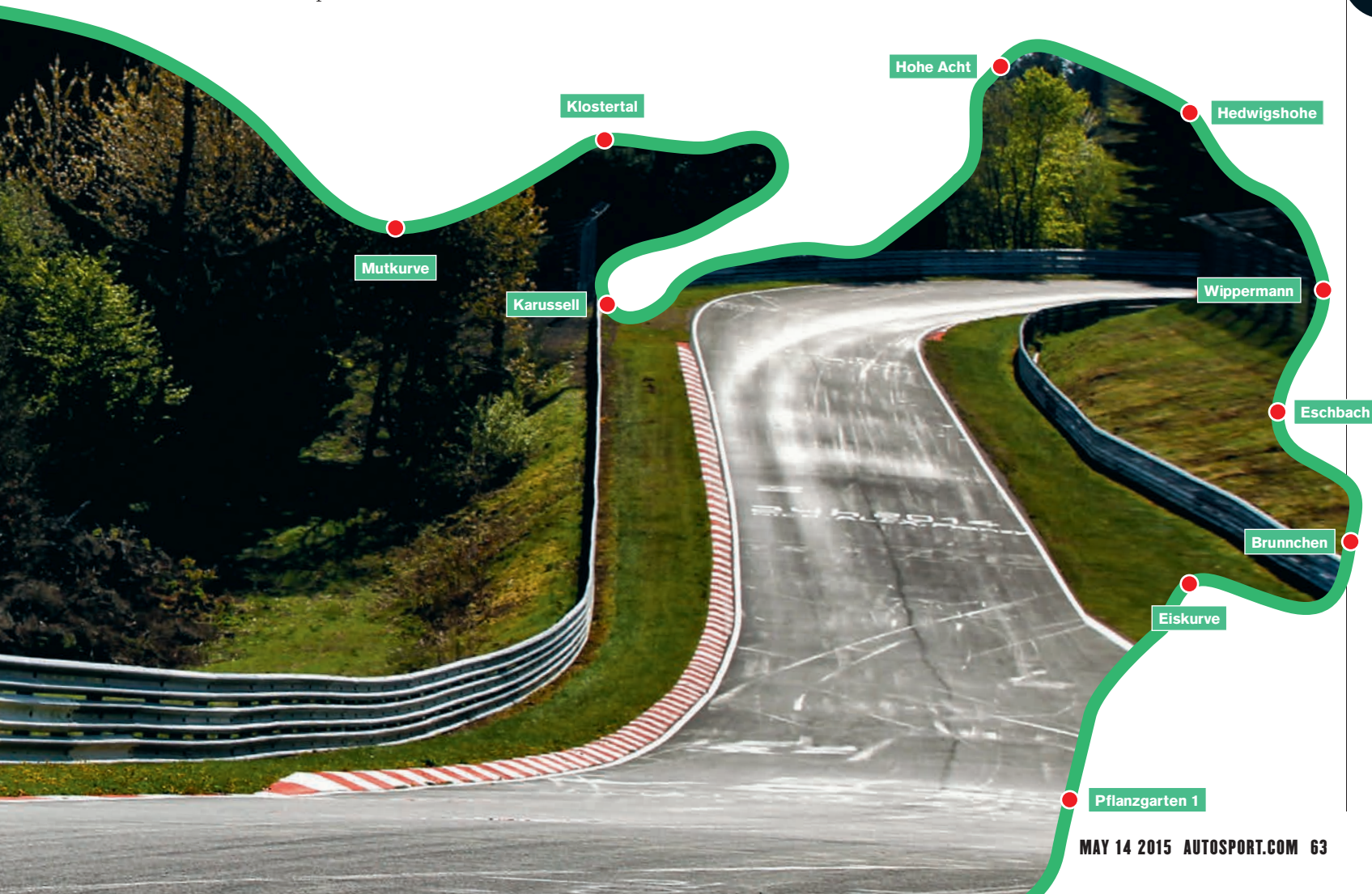
To what extent are the drivers looking forward to the event? Asking around the WTCC paddock yields a mixture of excitement, anticipation, and nerves. Few would call themselves Nurburgring experts, though most have attempted to gain experience here in recent months, mostly through entering VLN races, though Tom Chilton took a class win in the Nurburgring 24 Hours qualifying race just a few weeks ago.

Partly it's a generational matter – even the veteran professional drivers in the WTCC field grew up without *needing* to know the Nordschleife, especially after the southern loop was redeveloped in the 1980s for Formula 1.

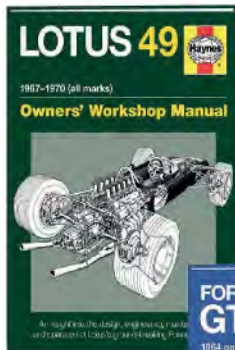
"I approach the Nordschleife with respect," ►



GT cars get regular VLN and 24 Hours slot

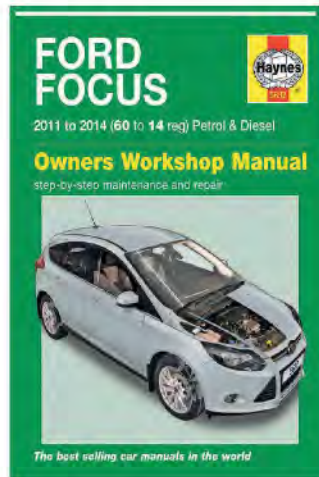
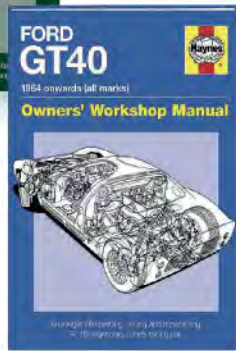


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TAMING THE NORDSCHLEIFE

With Ron Simons, CEO and chief instructor of RSR Nurburg

PFLANZGARTEN 2 AND STEFAN BELLOF 'S'

"This is what the Nurburgring is all about! A high-speed, very long, big-balls rollercoaster section of track. There are two jumps in between – a small one in the braking zone before the double right-hander and then the big jump over the crest going steeply downhill. This needs commitment, attack and full precision. It's also impossible to overtake here if there's no cooperation."



RSR NURBURG

► says Honda's Gabriele Tarquini. "As an Italian driver you grow up knowing not very much about it

– it seems very far away. And when you do formula racing, for people of my generation, you didn't race there. It wasn't allowed. So when it was announced on the WTCC calendar I thought, 'Well - now I must learn this track!'

"Young people can use games and simulators, but I'm not much of a gamer and after two laps in the simulator I feel sick, so the only approach to the Nordschleife was to go there and learn it in a real car. That's harder than you might expect. I started with some friends, renting a car to do a few laps. I spent a lot of money! And a lot of time too, because there you go on an open day and you think, 'Eight hours – I can do 20 laps.' Then someone has an accident and the track is closed for two hours. You can have sunshine for 10 minutes, rain, sometimes snow. In the end I went five or six times and did seven or eight laps."



Rob Huff approves of the WTCC at the old 'Ring

He also entered two VLN races in an old Civic, but both of them were held in wet conditions and hardly ideal. Testing in his WTCC Civic then helped cement his track knowledge and get a better idea of how the current-generation touring cars behave in comparison with, say, GT3 machinery. That in itself was risky, since the Budapest round came a week later; some drivers, including Lada's Mikhail Kozlovskiy and Citroen's Mehdi Bennani, drove Audi TTs on the WTCC test day so as not to risk their race cars.

"So now I know the corners but I'm far from the limit," concludes Tarquini. "When you've driven a Group N car with ABS they feel soft and safe. A proper race car like a WTCC car is more stiff, more fast, more brutal. When you jump, it's like a go kart. There are a lot of vibrations. Over the crest you have lots of wheelspin. You must know every centimetre of this track."

Set-up too is a challenge. VLN events use the Mercedes Arena section (airily described by RSR Nurburg 'Ring Taxi' CEO Ron Simons as "the pussy part of the track" as he took AUTOSPORT for a hot lap in a Porsche 911), but then shortcut the hairpin at the bottom of the hill, looping around the 'sprint' section and then on to the Nordschleife via the motorcycle chicane. The 24 Hours and WTCC format skips the Mercedes Arena but goes all the way to the south tip.

"We have quite a lot of simulation tools that we've evolved," says RML Chevrolet chief race engineer Duncan Laycock. "The key bit is to have a circuit map; a lot of teams use laser scanning to create a 3D map of the circuit and as you can imagine that's quite labour-intensive, especially for a circuit this long. We would normally take a lap of data and extrapolate the driven line but we struggled to get data for here for this configuration. Given the size and complexity, we didn't include the elevation, which is considerable – apart from the power-loss effect of the altitude.

And we've considered the likely compensation weight we'll be running.

"The main things we look at are gearing – that was more complicated in the old days when you had 20 ratios to choose from, now we've just got two sets. We also look at how fast we're going to end up going and how much limiter activity we're going to have, which here is quite a lot since there is quite a long straight. We do that in consultation with the engine department and they can change the rev limit if they choose.

"It's a racetrack but it's more like a fast road. The surface isn't particularly smooth, and generally if you come with something that's an established set-up, which you've tested at other tracks, it's not that transferable. You may have to pitch yourself somewhere else to deal with the bumps, crests and compressions, the banking – all the things that put a strain on the car.

"We've found there's a similarity between GT3 cars and WTCC cars. Aerodynamically the flat-floor area and wing size are comparable. You go up a little bit on ride height. It does make you nervous when you send your car out with something that's a complete unknown, but I think we're in the ballpark and we're just trying to fine-tune it."

It's going to be tough, but it's also going to be special. WTCC cars weren't designed with the Nurburgring in mind – but, with the engineering knowhow available today, that's not an insurmountable challenge. And plenty of the drivers are looking forward to conquering it.

"I like racing GT3 cars," says Lada's Rob Huff, who drives in the 24 Hours event after the WTCC race. "But they're lumbering and wallowy. A WTCC car is hard, skittish. It's going to be a hell of a race – something totally different, something nobody's ever seen – or at least not since the DTM raced here [for the last time in 1993].

"Ultimately – why not?"

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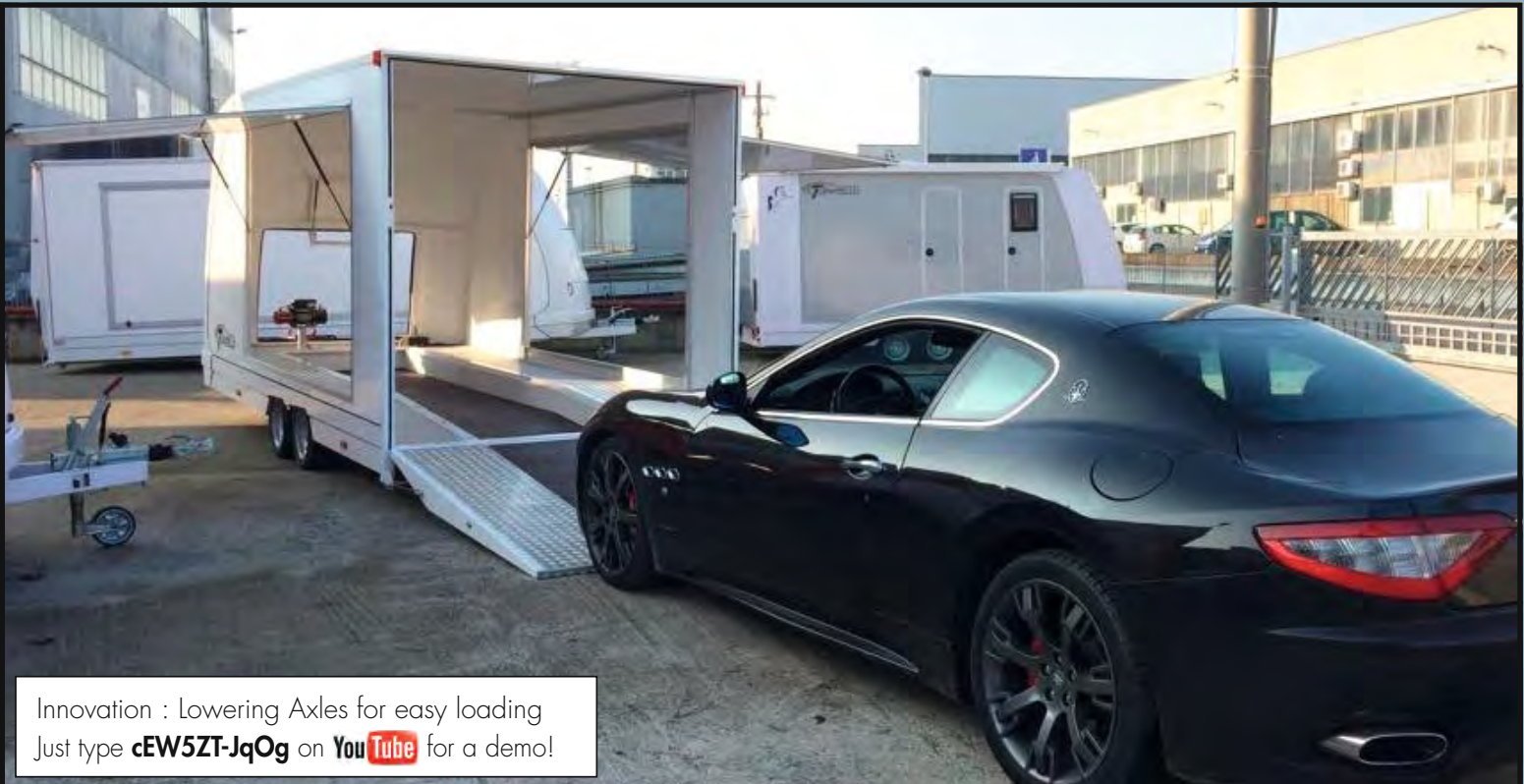
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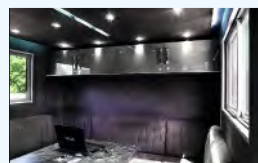
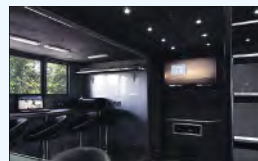
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BMR is rapidly increasing its motorsport plans



BMR sets up young-driver plan

BTCC team develops new karts and offers TOCA drives for champions

BRITISH TOURING CAR SQUAD

Team BMR plans to launch a new motorsport academy in 2016, with prize drives worth up to £210,000 and a shot at a touring car drive within five years.

The team has built a front-engined, front-wheel-drive kart alongside a more traditional rear-engined machine for its junior and senior classes. It plans to run its own non-MSA-permitted, 10-round championship from next season with the aim of developing its champions through the academy and ultimately racing in the BTCC within five years.

The winner of its junior class, for 12-to-15-year-olds, will win a free drive in the 2017 Ginetta Junior Championship worth around £60,000. The winner of the senior class will be handed £50,000

towards their budget for the '17 season, likely to be in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup. The winner of the FWD category will graduate directly into the Renault UK Clio Cup with the team, worth up to £100,000.

BMR boss Warren Scott said: "The goal is to bring the youth through. In the early stages of our racing careers, we didn't really get a direction of where we were to go.

"The BTCC paddock is a realistic goal for people in this country, whereas Formula 1 and GP2 aren't. People spend tens of thousands of pounds each year on karting.

"I'm not saying that this series will be cheap but it's a real opportunity for progression."

"There will be experienced drivers giving you advice and talking you through how to improve along with a full-motion simulator."

BMR BTCC driver Aron Smith, who has led the project since he joined the team in 2014, said the FWD kart handles like a touring car.

"The kart really is like a scaled-down car, with mini wishbones, caster, camber, toe, which is exactly what we could alter on the touring car," Smith said.

"It's phenomenal just how close the set-up of the two is. The driving style of the kart is completely different to what you would experience in the RWD kart.

"Making that transition from the kart into their first tin-top will be so much easier because they've already learnt the throttle application, lift-off oversteer and just being able to control the car properly.

"Motorsport needs something like this. A lot of money goes into getting youngsters on to single-seater grids, swept under the wing of a big team, with no dividend at the end of it.

"That's what we want to take out of motorsport and make it about getting a pool of talent together and bringing them up the ladder to make an even better touring car team."

Scott's team has expanded rapidly since joining the BTCC as a one-car squad in 2013, and this year it lured Colin Turkington and Jason Plato to its four-car Volkswagen CC set-up. It has won three races in 2015.

**RUSSELL HAYES
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THE CONCEPT OF A FRONT-

engined, front-wheel-drive kart sounds obscure. It flies in the face of the traditional, rear-wheel-drive method that has been the platform for so many world champions.

But Team BMR's project isn't looking for world champions. That's the whole point. It's looking to provide a realistic option for young British drivers, away from spending tens if not hundreds of thousands of pounds each year within top-level karting. The team is investing a huge amount of money into this academy project, with similarly huge prizes for winners of each of its classes. But the financial element is merely a small part. It's about finding the next generation of young tin-top talent, moulding them from a young age at a time when they've not become accustomed to rear-wheel drive, and can soak up the technical knowledge and driving techniques needed to become the next Jason Plato, Matt Neal or Andrew Jordan.

The front-engined kart does look odd, and the team's 2016 target will be tested with production only set to begin in December. But it's something that hasn't been attempted at this level. The passion and ambition for this project demonstrated by both Warren Scott and Aron Smith is admirable.

Why should the team have to look elsewhere for its next generation of touring car drivers when it can have a selected few itching at the opportunity? It already has young drivers in Clio Cup racer Ashley Sutton and Ginetta Junior Senna Proctor among its ranks. Getting a young hotshot into a touring car within five years is a bold claim, but the type of mentorship that the team is offering will be invaluable to any aspiring racer.

FWD kart is a BMR innovation



BMR is searching for BTCC proteges

Sowery tested with Falcon



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F3 CUP AND MRF CHALLENGE

champion Toby Sowery is set to switch to the Fortec Motorsports squad in MSA Formula, changing teams before he has made his debut.

The 18-year-old had planned a switch into the Auto GP championship before opting for MSA Formula, and drove with the Falcon Motorsport outfit at last month's pre-event test day at

Donington Park. But after an independent approach by Racing Steps Foundation co-ordinator Derek Walters, Sowery tested with Fortec in front of potential investors and could join the team ahead of the next MSA Formula round at Oulton Park on June 6/7.

"This is completely separate from the Racing Steps Foundation," said Walters. "I run my motorsport

management firm and helped set up an opportunity of a test for Toby with Fortec and a potential investor.

"People are working hard but nothing has been signed yet. If he did shine, he would certainly be one of a number of drivers eligible for the end-of-season shootout for RSF support. He's a talented young man with potential."

Fortec boss Richard Dutton added:

"Toby tested with us at Pembrey last week. He did a very good job. Derek invited Toby simply for an evaluation.

"You can't compare club-level F3 with a high-quality F4 championship like MSA Formula.

"He has to go up against drivers in the number-one single-seater championship in the UK and prove he can mix it."

Ginetta GT4 Supercup

Nissan's Paletou races GT4 as Ginetta link strengthens

NISSAN GT ACADEMY WINNER

Gaetan Paletou made a one-off appearance in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup last weekend at Thruxton.

The Frenchman competed in the championship in order to get enough signatures on his race licence so he can participate in a Le Mans test.

Paletou began the weekend on the back foot after suffering a differential problem in qualifying but battled through to take a strong fifth in the final race. However he was later demoted to seventh after unfairly gaining an advantage for straightlining a corner.

"It was really great," he said. "It was a new car, new track for me. I really like the championship - I've never fought like that before. I had a bad start to the last race

and dropped to 10th but it was good to finish fifth."

Paletou is racing in the European Le Mans Series and Blancpain Endurance Series. He also drove in the Britcar 24 Hour race at Silverstone last month as part of the LNT Ginetta LMP3 team.



WOOD/LAT

Mazda MX-5 Supercup

BRSCC eyes Supercup grid split as Mazda entries surge

BRITISH RACING AND SPORTS Car Club bosses may be forced to split its Mazda MX-5 SuperCup grid, as entries in the Mk3 category continue to grow.

The championship, which launched in 2013, only managed six entries at Castle Combe last year, but attracted a capacity entry of 34 cars at its latest round at Rockingham in support of the British GT Championship.

"There are more entries coming in so it is very likely we will have to split



EBREY

the grids or see what we can do with them at some point in the year," said competitions secretary Drew Furlong.

"The next round coming up is Castle Combe which has a 42-car grid, so we should be fine there. Our focus is Cadwell Park with its maximum grid of 28.

"It would be a nice problem to have and I think we would have the capacity to split the grid at Cadwell and we'll go from there. I don't want to get into the position of refusing entries."

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Rallying

Shedden and Meeke join McRae Knockhill rally event

FORMER BRITISH TOURING CAR champion Gordon Shedden and 2015 Rally Argentina winner Kris Meeke top the entry list for this weekend's McRae Challenge at Knockhill.

The new single-venue rally celebrates the 20th anniversary of Colin McRae's World Rally Championship title. As well as the competitive element there will be a collection of McRae's competition cars, a

gathering of co-drivers Derek Ringer, Nicky Grist, Robert Reid and Ian Grindrod, and a Group B rally-car display.

Meeke will drive a Citroen Xsara, with Shedden in a Ford Escort Mk2. Former World Rally champion Stig Blomqvist will compete in a Group B Audi Quattro, with McRae's brother, former British champion Alister, in a Proton Satria.

"We are going to showcase everything rallying has to offer," said Knockhill events and marketing director Stuart Gray. "We'll have displays and demonstrations from autotesting, road rallies, Classic Monte Carlo Rally, single-venue rallying, the Scottish Tarmac Rally Championship – and the list goes on. Every single part of Scottish rally sport will be here.

"McRae is a worldwide name and the fans love him. It'll be the perfect way to commemorate his greatest achievement."



Meeke will drive Xsara

MCKLEIN/LAT

CSCC

Porsche ace Bradshaw makes historic debut

FORMER PORSCHE CARRERA

Cup GB racer Tom Bradshaw made his historic debut last weekend, sharing a Lotus Elan with his father, John, at Silverstone.

Tom, 25, and John Bradshaw, 61, recently bought the Elan from a seller in Germany and took part in the Classic K endurance race that formed part of the Classic Sports Car Club's Silverstone meeting, finishing second.

Bradshaw Jr has been a regular in British Porsche racing in recent years as well as having outings in the European VdeV prototype class. John Bradshaw is a former Monoposto champion with experience in both Modsports and F3.

"The Elan was great fun," said Tom.

"You have to warn it about a corner a year or two in advance and you're much busier on the steering than I'm used to from cars with heavy aero, but it's a good laugh.

"We're looking to do more races around our schedules and the beauty of the Elan is that it's quite a versatile car because it fits into many series."



Bradshaw enjoyed Elan challenge

JONES

Ginetta GT5 Challenge

Palmer makes GT5 move

DOUBLE TOYOTA MR2 CHAMPION

Matt Palmer is mounting an attack on this year's Ginetta GT5 Challenge.

The 23-year-old, who lifted the MR2 title in 2013 and '14, will compete in the GT5 Challenge for a family-run operation alongside his grandfather, Jack.

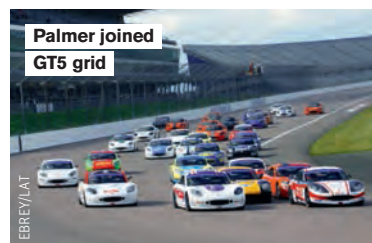
The Reading-based racer made his GT5 Challenge debut at Rockingham earlier this month, and said it is his first step towards his target of a GT career.

"The other teams have got their big artic lorries and awnings and we rock up with our van and trailer," said Palmer.

"It's a very professionally run championship on a high profile-weekend.

It really showcases the drivers and I just want to pitch myself against the best.

"We had a lot of success in club racing but this is a really good step up to GT racing, I see it as a good intermediate level."



Palmer joined GT5 grid

EBREV/LAT

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club racing



Ferte leads 1985 International Trophy

LAT

"THE INTERNATIONAL TROPHY NAME LIVES ON WITH THE HSCC"

Silverstone's International Trophy race, introduced in 1949, became a pukka non-championship Formula 1 event until 1978, although F5000 behemoths were invited to bolster numbers from '70-'74 and a European F2 championship round was substituted for '77, presaging a regular slot from '79 until the end of its days in '84. The one exception in this era was the Aurora AFX British F1/F2 counter in 1980.

My earliest memories of attending this British motorsport staple date back to the mid-'60s, when aces Jack Brabham, Jim Clark, Graham Hill, Denny Hulme and Jackie Stewart tasted victory in the feature, which attracted good gates thanks to Daily Express title sponsorship. Thirty years ago, however, I was among the drenched throng at Silverstone watching the inaugural race for F3000, F2's replacement which expediently rehomed Bernie Ecclestone's stock of Cosworth DFV engines corralled from F1 teams by then running 1500cc turbos.

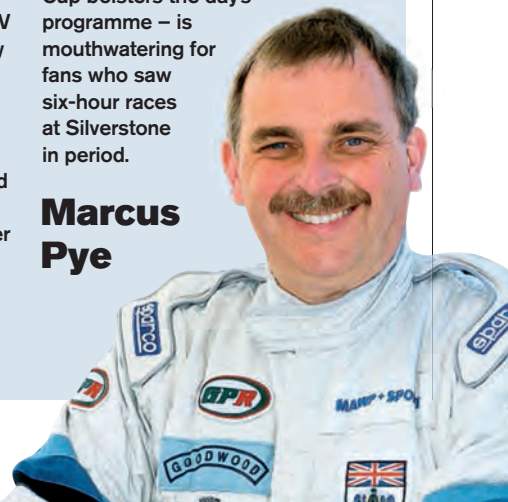
Mike Thackwell's Bridgestone wets were in tatters after a drier mid-section of the race but held together for the Kiwi to win his third International Trophy in five years driving a works Ralt chassis. Former AUTOSPORT editor Ian Phillips reported the feature race while I covered British F3 and Joe Saward the British Saloon Car Championship support races, won

by Russell Spence and Frank Sytner respectively. Tony Dodgins watched Mark Blundell pip Johnny Herbert to FF1600 honours and Mike O'Brien scoop the Sports 2000 prize.

Since '09 the fabled International Trophy name has lived on as an Historic Sports Car Cub promotion in which F1, F2 and F5000 cars from the old days go head-to-head in its Derek Bell Trophy sets. This weekend's seventh running embraces a massive entry ranged over 14 races on the GP circuit.

A 52-car field for Saturday's Guards Trophy counter (which itself recaptures the essence of pre-'65 GT and pre-'69 sports racing events) heads the domestic side, but the prospect of DFV-powered Lola and Toj prototypes and Porsche 935s in Sunday's inaugural Pre-'80 Endurance showpiece – co-promoted by Flavien and Vanessa Marcais, whose GT & Sports Car Cup bolsters the day's programme – is mouthwatering for fans who saw six-hour races at Silverstone in period.

Marcus Pye



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In brief

Online British GT title

British GT has announced an official tie-up with The Online Racing Association. The seven-round virtual racing series, which will be covered on Motors TV, will be run on the new Project CARS game on the Xbox One console, mirroring the real-life calendar, although a race at Zolder will replace Rockingham.

Smith skips Thruxton

Renault UK Clio Cup frontrunner Brett Smith made a late decision to skip the round at Thruxton last weekend to concentrate on his studies. The son of British Touring Car racer Jeff is in his final year at university.

No Ginetta for Ellis

Former British GT champion Bradley Ellis was unable to race in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup at Thruxton last weekend because the car he used at the previous round was unavailable. SV Racing team boss Danny Buxton said the car had already been booked to be used elsewhere by Ginetta, but Ellis should return at Oulton Park in June.

£8m of generosity

A speed hillclimber's extraordinary bequest could raise as much as £8 million for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution when two classic Ferraris are sold at auction in October. Richard Colton, who died in March, aged 83, instructed his 1960 250 GT Berlinetta (SWB) and 1967 275 GTB/4 to be sold to benefit the RNLI.

Sanger memorial

One of Castle Combe's most popular tin-top competitors of the 1960s, Terry Sanger, is to be remembered with an additional race for Historic Touring Cars at the circuit's fourth Autumn Classic on October 3. The race will be co-promoted with the HSCC as part of the build-up to its 50th anniversary season in 2016.

British GT

Banned Yoluc out of Brit GT

BRITISH GT CHAMPIONSHIP

racer Salih Yoluc is to assess a move to continental Europe after his UK licence was suspended.

Turkish racer Yoluc was handed six penalty points on his licence for ignoring blue flags in the opening round of the season at Oulton Park, and causing an incident involving the race leaders.

He was then penalised a further six

points for ploughing into Von Ryan Racing McLaren team-mate Ross Wylie on the opening lap of the second round at Rockingham earlier this month.

MSA rules state that a driver faces a three-month suspension upon reaching the maximum 12 penalty licence points. This ended plans for a GT Cup outing at Brands Hatch last weekend.

Yoluc's co-driver Euan Hankey said the

pair will consider a move overseas, with the International GT Open a possibility.

"The plan was always to move to European racing in the long-term," Hankey said. "But Salih wanted to get some experience in the UK first. Now that he has 12 points on his licence, he's restricted in what he can do. If Salih needs to take a couple of months off, then he will do to assess his options."

750MC

Club youngster to get £2k prize

THE 750 MOTOR CLUB HAS

launched a Young Driver Award, the winner of which will receive £2000 towards their 2016 race entry fees.

It will replace the John Miles Design and Innovation Award that ran in 2014. Ex-Formula 1 and sportscar racer Miles, one of the club's vice-presidents, will donate £1000 to the winner, with the 750MC matching the amount in credit against entry fees for the 2016 season.

It is open to drivers who compete in three 750MC rounds and are born after October 5 1985.

750MC competitions manager Giles Groombridge said: "John was very impressed with a couple of drivers who we saw at [last month's club round at] Brands Hatch. That sparked the idea of changing the prize to driving talent for this year instead."

EBREY/LAT

McKay had huge shunt



Porsche Carrera Cup GB

Crash victims recovering

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

racer Paul McKay has returned to Scotland to continue his recovery from a high-speed accident during the recent round at Spa.

McKay had to be extracted from his IN2 Racing-run car at the start of race two after he and Shamus Jennings collided having spun over

fluid that had been spilled on the track at Eau Rouge.

A spokesman for the series said McKay's return to a hospital in Glasgow "follows surgery for a back injury in Liege hospital which was deemed a success. We are obviously offering him our best wishes and support."

Jennings is also recovering in the UK.

Maybin was sixth twice



Renault UK Clio Cup

Ex-Hot Hatch man shines on Clio debut

FORMER 750 MOTOR CLUB HOT

Hatch driver Jon Maybin made a one-off appearance in the Renault UK Clio Cup at Thruxton last weekend.

The Team Cooksport driver coach replaced regular racer Paul Knapp, who had other commitments.

Maybin made a good impression in the races, picking up a brace of sixth places. "It couldn't have gone much better," said the 25-year-old. "It was my first time in the car and my first time round here so I jumped in at the deep end.

"I thought I might as well go for it; it's

good for me and good for the team as I will be able to help them even more."

Former Renault UK Clio Cup race winner James Colburn returned to the series with the BKR squad. Colburn targeted a podium but retired from race one and took seventh in the second.



CHESTER

BISHOPSCOURT, MAY 9-10 BARC/LMC

Mighty Quinn stripped of second win

NIALL QUINN THOUGHT HE'D MADE a dream start to the **SEAT Leon Supercup Ireland Championship** with pole position, two wins and two fastest laps. The double-header in Bishopscourt kicked off the manufacturer-backed series that will run over 10 rounds, but it ended with a twist as Quinn and second-placed James Turkington were excluded from race two after failing the post-race ride-height test.

Quinn took pole for the opening race by less than a tenth of a second from Turkington. Rod McGovern, John Farrelly, Michael Cullen and Barry English made up the front of the grid for the opening race, but English was unable to start after an incident in qualifying.

Turkington had the best start and passed Quinn off the line, but the lead was short-lived as Quinn gained the place back at Turn 1. Farrelly also made a place at the start, passing McGovern, but he



Parks took an FSheane win

CHESTER

was able to maintain the position. Quinn soon built himself a good margin over the chasers and was then able to manage the gap until the flag, taking the win from Turkington and Farrelly. Cullen fell foul in the battling and finished the race some 26 seconds adrift of the leader. All the SEATs were warned about cutting the kerbs and subsequently had five seconds added to their racetimes as a penalty.

Race two had a reversed grid with

Cullen on pole from McGovern, and they led away in that order with Turkington, Farrelly and Quinn behind. Quinn was soon on the move, passing first Farrelly and then McGovern before challenging the leaders. Turkington was quickly up to second place and putting Cullen under pressure. The field ran in close order over the opening laps and, after the penalties in the opening race, everyone was observing the track limits. Cullen defended from Turkington, but the young Northern Irish driver is getting used to the SEAT power and he squeezed past to lead.

Quinn made short work of passing the leading duo and he soon took the lead. He once again pulled a gap over a couple of laps and Turkington had to settle for another second place. Cullen had a great battle with McGovern and Farrelly but was able to hold on and claim his first podium in the class, which

became a win after the scrutineering decision on Quinn and Turkington. Farrelly fell back from the pair towards the end, leaving McGovern in a comfortable second place.

MOORE DENIED DOUBLE

Kevin Grogan and Ray Moore took a win each in **Formula Vee**. Moore had been leading the first race on Saturday, but contact with Kevin O'Hara knocked him down the order, leaving Grogan to take the win after a battle with newcomer Des Foley, who finished second. Moore then led all the way in race two, which was red-flagged mid-race. After the restart Moore came under pressure from reigning champion Adam Macaulay. Dan Polley was third in both races.

Sean Lillis scored an easy double win in **Formula Ford** from David Nicholls. The F3 Dallara of Tim Buckley was severely damaged after hitting a Formula Ford and the pitwall at the start of race one, leaving the Formula Renault of Cian Carey to take a win in the concurrent **Open Single Seater** field.

Formula Sheane provided great racing. Long-time leader Kevin Sheane was caught out by the lights at the restart after a stoppage, allowing Dave Parks to seize the initiative and take the win in race one. Keith Hogg had a great start to race two and held on for the win despite big pressure from Parks and Sheane.

Moore heads Macaulay in Formula Vee scrap



CHESTER

Turkington leads Quinn as Cullen spears off



SNETTERTON, MAY 9-10 BARC

Deeth claims glory from the back in Mini gripper



Deeth hits the front from Astin, Smith and Howard

RUPERT DEETH CLAIMED A remarkable win in the first **Mini Miglia** race at Snetterton, before Mark Cowan claimed a superb maiden victory in the second.

A sudden rain shower in qualifying caught out many of the frontrunners, not least reigning champion Deeth, who had to start the opening race from the penultimate row of the grid.

By contrast, the conditions were water off a duck's back for points leader Kane Astin, who timed his run just right to claim pole five seconds quicker than anyone else. Alongside him on the front row was Niven Burge, making an impressive comeback having missed most of 2014 after an early-season shunt.

These two set the initial pace, joined before long by Rob Howard, Aaron Smith and an inspired Deeth, who had charged through the pack.

With less than a lap to go, Deeth completed his fightback by sweeping round the outside of Astin at Riches to secure victory. In a dramatic finish, Astin claimed second place despite his engine self-destructing, while Howard and Smith collided at the



Wells claimed two BMW wins

Esses before recovering to take third and fourth respectively.

Cowan surged from fifth to first inside the opening two laps of race two, taking the lead around the outside of Riches. He held off persistent pressure from Astin – who paid tribute to his team's overnight efforts to install a borrowed engine – to win by a tenth of a second.

Smith chased the top two home ahead of the hard-charging Deeth.

Having grabbed the lead at Agostini on the opening tour, and stretched his advantage to three seconds in as many laps, Andrew Deviny looked on course for victory in the first **Mini Seven** race. But a thrilling chase saw Max Hunter reel him in on the final lap. Hunter's pressure told when his rival made a mistake into Brundle, and Hunter capitalised to wrap up victory. Paul Spark took third on the road, before a post-race penalty dropped him behind Jabez Dyer.

Deviny had a chance to make amends in the sequel, speeding clear of a six-way scrap for second. But a dramatic fifth lap redefined the race.

First Deviny lost drive and limped to retirement, then Hunter suffered a blown diff and retired. When the dust settled, Spark, Kieran McDonald, Ashley Davies and Gareth Hunt contested victory until a last lap sort-out saw Hunt and McDonald collide into the Esses complex, eliminating Hunt and making it a two-way fight between Spark and Davies. Spark edged his rival to the win, ahead of a recovering McDonald.

Polesitter Stephen Pearson's invitation-class M3 recovered from a slow start to overhaul Ian Crisp in the opening race for **Kumho BMW** Classes B, C and D. Second on the road ensured Crisp's Class B M3 headed the championship-registered runners ahead of Domenic Surdi. Further back, the Class D battle proved engrossing, with James Ford finally edging Gregory Marking for the place. Pearson came from behind to win again in race two, passing fast-starting Crisp.

Colin Wells maintained his unbeaten run in BMW Class A. In the first of two races, he recovered from a tardy start to pass James Card for second, before claiming the lead when James MacIntyre-Ure ran wide out of Murrays. Card followed Wells through to claim second. Wells headed Card and MacIntyre-Ure throughout the second race.

The **Radical Owners Cup Series** races were cancelled due to a lack of numbers.

● Oliver Timson

Historic double for Brandon



Eoghan Fogarty took the double win in the **Irish Touring Car Championship**. Kevin Doran led early on in his Civic, but the BMW passed him after he missed a gear on the back straight. Rob Savage came from the back of the grid to finish in third place. Savage was second to Fogarty in the reversed-grid race two, as the challenge of Doran ended with gearbox gremlins. Grzegorz Kalinecki took a pair of Touring class wins.

Alan Auerbach in his RAW Stryker had a double win in the combined **Stryker NI Sevens** race. Mark Francis and Trevor Allen in their 7s joined him on the podium each time, with Francis just defeated in a close finish to race two.

Peter Barrable and Barry Rabbitt took a win apiece in the **Fiesta** races. Barrable's win came from the front, while Rabbitt had to hop through the field after starting from the black of the grid, having blown a headgasket in qualifying. Paul Monaghan's Ginetta took a pair of **GT** wins as James Turkington won the Roadsports class, while Clive Brandon took both **HRC** races.

● Leo Nulty



Hunter (right) defeated Deviny

Dussault deprived of double win

PATRICK DUSSAULT WON BOTH Post 89 Formula Ford 1600 races on the road, but the Ray driver was one of five to be hit with track-limit penalties and excluded, which handed the second win to Chris Middlehurst.

Dussault had led from the start with Stephen Daly (Ray), Oliver White (Van Diemen) and Luke Williams (Ray) in close formation. Daly led into the Esses on lap two to start a duel with Dussault, which eased them clear of White's and Williams's scrap for third that also allowed Jonny McMullan's Van Diemen to close in.

Daly slipped up, allowing White to challenge Dussault for the lead, but the Canadian held on with White retaining a close second and Daly reclaiming third when Williams's engine blew.

It was another Dussault-and-Daly duel in race two, with McMullan ousting White for third on the second lap. Numerous place swaps followed between the lead pair, but a touch of wheels at Melbourne on lap nine dropped Daly to third behind McMullan.

Having regained second a lap later, Daly followed Dussault to the flag. But the stewards took a dim view of both repeatedly straying beyond track limits at the Esses and penalised both with time additions before removing both from the results entirely, citing 11 offences from the 12 racing laps. McMullan, White and Martin Short all received time penalties too, so fifth-on-the-road Chris Middlehurst was declared the winner in his Mygale from Tom McArthur's Van Diemen and Ray drivers Abdul Ahmed and Benjamin Spurge.

Reynard ace Jamie Jardine proved unbeatable in the **Pre-90** races. UCLAN Reynard teammates Jaap Blijleven and Andrew



Track-limit offences cost Dussault a win

Thomas were out front initially in race one, until Blijleven ran wide at Goddards and allowed Thomas through, before retaking at Redgate as Jardine followed for second.

Jardine had just taken the lead into Melbourne when his rivals collided and left him with a decisive advantage over new second man Andrew Cowley. Having consolidated second Cowley spun at Goddards, which promoted Colin Williams (PRS) and Christopher Stones (Van Diemen) as they continued their race-long duel.

With Stones off at Redgate on the penultimate lap, Williams was clear in second.

It was lights-to-flag for Jardine in race two, with Ben Tinkler a clear second until a safety-car intervention, which allowed

Blijleven to close in after starting at the back. Right from the green flag Blijleven attacked and had second into Redgate, with Thomas soon following.

Williams had been third until the green flag, but pulled off at the Exhibition Centre, leaving Tinkler to complete the top four.

CATERHAM THRILLERS

Both **Caterham Superlight R300** races featured race-long duels between David Robinson and Aaron Head. After swaps and changes throughout race one, Robinson led into Goddards but was hit by Head, who took the flag first, but was later demoted to second. Lee Wiggins took third after Sean Byrne had a last-lap spin. Head was in front for most of race two despite a late battle, with Robinson and Wiggins line astern at the flag.

Henry Heaton was a double winner in the **Tracksports**. He made a last-lap break in race one, to head home Timothy Dickens and Max Robinson, with fellow duellist Chris Hutchinson dropping to fifth at the end. It was another Heaton-and-Hutchinson scrap in race two, with Heaton sealing it at Melbourne with a lap to go and Dickens third. There were four different leaders



Richards leads the Supersport pack

in the first **Roadsport** race, but Paul Aram took a comfortable win over Anthony Barnes. With Aram's race-two lead wiped out by the safety car, Benjamin Wigg pipped him.

Clive Richards just held off Philip Jenkins to win both **Supersport** races. But he was lucky in race two when red flags intervened after Danny Killeen had overtaken both.

Fiesta Junior points leader Aaron Thompson took his second double win of the season. It was lights-to-flag in race one over Michael Higgs, but Higgs led as far as McLeans on the opening lap of race two before Thompson took charge.

JJ Ross led the first **Fiesta** 'senior' race into Redgate, but a tap on the exit left him chasing Scott Robertson for the rest of the race, with Simon Horrobin third from the back of the grid. Ross took the



Jardine won twice in his Reynard



BRYANT



JONES

Tomlin's Elan won the Classic K race

SILVERSTONE, MAY 9-10 CSCC

Tomlin spins and wins in his Classic K Elan solo run

DAVID TOMLIN EMERGED ON TOP IN the hour-long **Classic K** race despite a spin in the early stages that dropped him to fourth. Solo driver Tomlin (Elan) regained the lead by lap nine, but after the pitstops was being caught by the similar car of Tom Bradshaw (having taken over from father John), who in turn was being pursued by Kallum Gray (E-Type). But Gray spun at Brooklands (as father Michael had done in the first phase of the race) and called off the chase, while Tomlin matched Bradshaw's times and pegged the gap at 7s.

Tomlin added a couple more wins in the **Ferrari Formula Classic** races, the 308 driver twice defeating Gary Culver's 328. In race one, Richard Moseley snatched third from Chris Butler's similar 328 when they went either side of a backmarker through Woodcote for the last time.

Danny Winstanley led before the **Magnificent Sevens** pitstop window opened in his Caterham R300, but Peter Ratcliff (C400) emerged narrowly ahead. At first Winstanley reduced the gap, but Ratcliff eventually ran out a comfortable winner.

There was a dramatic finish in the first **Swinging Sixties**

encounter. Mark Davies, in the Lotus Cortina relayed to him by Alex Montgomery, had Adam Cunnington's Sprite slash the advantage he held after the stops, before the pair swapped places several times. Cunnington led by 0.8s going onto the final tour but Davies overturned the advantage. Cunnington, who should have served a 30s pitstop penalty after his Snetterton win, was relegated to fifth for failing to do so.

A penalised pairing suffered in the Group 2 race too. Mark Halstead had a torrid first lap in the Ginetta but blazed through the field, leaving his stop late but leading when he made it. Alas, the changeover to Stuart McPherson was too rushed, and a further penalty heralded retirement. That left Ray Barrow's Camaro a relatively clear winner over Richard Plant's Morgan.

Danny Morris shook off Matt Moore in the opening **Special Saloons/Modsports** race. Morris handed the Peugeot 309 to brother Ricky Parker-Morris for Sunday's race, and Moore (Escort) romped to victory. Ian Stapleton's Alfetta took second after scrapping with Paul Sibley's Elan, which then retired.

The Mark Smith/Dominic Malone



Price suffered a fiery accident

JONES

997 GT3 was an early retirement from the **New Millennium** bout, which was disrupted by the safety car. Tim Davis took the helm in his TVR Tuscan and scooted to a second Silverstone win in nine days.

The **Future Classics** race was abandoned after just eight laps when Alan Price's TR7 V8 crashed and burst into flames. Bill Lancashire's Tuscan won.

A three-way fight in the **Tin Tops** was all too brief. Nigel Tongue (306) and Russell Hird (Honda Integra) spun after contact at Brooklands, leaving Kester Cook's Fiesta ST well clear. The Fiesta lost more than two minutes in the handover to Craig Sampson, leaving Tom Mensley's Clio to win from Mark Livens (Civic). Hird climbed to third after pitting to deal with damage, while Tongue's stepfather John Hammersley retired the Peugeot.

Sam Clarke Jr completed a hat-trick in the **Jaguar Saloon & GT** race, adding Silverstone victory to his Snetterton double in his XJS.

After a sluggish start, Mark Smith led the BMW M3-dominated **Modern Classics** race by lap seven, before handing over to son James Moulton-Smith, who was relieved to take the chequer after retiring from the lead in the season opener.

● Ian Sowman



Witts won the first Production GTI race

BRYANT

race-two spoils when Horrobin and Robertson clashed at McLeans with a lap to go.

Once Jason Tingle had lost his first lap lead at McLeans in the first **Mk2 Production GTI** race, Tom Witts dominated. Tingle fought back to second for a while, but eventually lost out to Tim Hartland from lap six, before holding off Christopher Sanders for third. It was Witts playing second best in race two however, with Tingle taking charge from Melbourne on the penultimate lap, while Witts emerged from a tight battle with Sanders to grab second place at the flag.

Tingle made it three wins by taking a double victory in the **Mk5 GTIs**, over Martyn Walsh and Craig Fleming.

● Peter Scherer



Cortina driver Davies (15) leads Cunnington in Swinging '60s

JONES

Pattison took the opening Mini win



HAWKINS

BLANCPAIN GT SUPPORTS BRANDS HATCH, MAY 9-10 MSVR

Caudle bats away budget woes to win

LEE PATTISON, FORMER CHAMPION

Luke Caudle and Charlie Butler-Henderson each had a win when the **Mini Challenge** supported the Blancpain Sprint Series at Brands.

Plagued with problems at Donington, Pattison had a “reasonably easy” victory drive in race one after he broke the tow from those behind. With consistent points finishing in mind, star of round one Rob Smith was content in second place and William Phillips, another struggler at the east Midlands venue, was third.

A loss of power on his outlap left Lawrence Davey without a qualifying time, but after making progress he parked in the Surtees gravel trap when his clutch failed.

Pattison started back on the third row for race two and was tipped around in the pack heading through Paddock. He held the slide, but clipped Sam Osborne while doing so, sending him into the barriers.

Phillips then led after the safety car period but was struggling with a handling issue. He flirted with disaster a couple of times before



Scott (6) grabbed a GT Cup win

HAWKINS

beaching in the gravel at Sheene Curve. Caudle fell to fourth after a mistake, but recovered lost ground, passed David Grady and took over the lead when Phillips stopped. Despite the victory, Caudle is uncertain about his future participation due to budget issues.

Butler-Henderson was the lights-to-flag reversed-grid race winner, with Grady second. Bence Balogh took third after Davey’s car lost drive when a fuel pipe detached and Caudle was fourth after a tussle with Harry Vaulkhard. Pattison and South African Ryan Rhode left the road at opposite ends of the circuit while in contention.

The JCW class wins in the three races were shared by Jono Brown, Henry Duprey and Neil Newstead.

Two wins for Paul Bailey’s Aston Martin, one of them with able assistance from Andy Schulz, were highlights of a trio of **GT Cup** races that attracted a 30-plus entry.

The first of the three was a pitstopper featuring all the drivers,

and handed Richard Chamberlain’s Porsche 935 replica an early lead.

Then Glen Broster beached his Ginetta, bringing out the safety car. The caution period coincided with the opening of the pit window and Chamberlain stopped a lap after most of his rivals because of a problem with his radio, dropping well down the order.

At the resumption Schulz hit the front after a brush with Aaron Scott in the Arwyn Williams Ferrari, which finished second with Nigel Greensall/Darren Nelson third. A Ferrari 458 trio was completed by Jamie Stanley/John Seale, hounding Greensall despite running in GTC compared with their rival’s GT3 status. *Great British Bake Off*’s Paul Hollywood continued his quest for licence-upgrade signatures, helping co-driver Jonathan Adam to a GTA victory in the Beechdean Aston.

Bailey continued the success story with a solo drive in race two. Phil Burgan finished clear of Nelson, whose late charge took him ahead of

Wayne Marss. The Aston team was denied a hat-trick by Scott, one of the few professionals taking part in race three. Second man Bailey was hounded by Nelson, and Burgan was fourth. Chamberlain took no part in Sunday’s action after a steering problem put the Porsche into the Clearways barriers in qualifying.

Tom Stoten drove clear of Michael Gibbins in the first of this year’s **Sports 2000** mini-enduro races while polestarter David Croft fell back in the car he would hand over to Neil Burroughs. Patrick Sherrington led for a while during the pitstop phase, although Stoten and Gibbins soon took over again.

Once in the cockpit Burroughs climbed the order rapidly before beaching the car at Paddock. This brought out the safety car, and while Stoten safely protected his lead, Clive Hayes in the Sherrington car lost third to David Houghton in the final charge.

More than 60 **Mazda MX5** championship entries needed two qualifying sessions and three races. Stuart Symonds won the first in only his second race, grabbing the lead in a bunch of up to nine cars.

A hectic race two went to Darren Lewis despite a visit to the Paddock gravel trap and a wild ride over the grass at Graham Hill Bend. Race three came down to a two-lap dash after a caution period. Lewis led the rush, but Ben Short timed his winning move to perfection.

● Brian Phillips

Huge Mazda MX5 grid



HAWKINS

**RALLYCROSS PEMBREY,
MAY 10 LHMRC**

Godfrey hits back with Wales win

MULTIPLE CHAMPION JULIAN

Godfrey gave his aspirations of winning a fifth-straight British Rallycross Championship crown a boost by winning the third round of the series in south Wales.

The Ford Fiesta driver qualified on the front row of the grid, despite spending most of the heat races stuck in traffic. He lined up outside polesitter Kevin Procter and championship leader Andy Scott.

For the first time, the Welsh venue featured a joker lap. It was placed on the outside of the first corner. Godfrey was the first to take the extra route in the final, diving into the joker as Scott led around Turn 1 on the standard route.

Procter, who had been having a strong run in Wales, had problems getting away from the start line. He then retired after being hit by the Peugeot 208 of Supercar debutant James Grint.

Citroen DS 3 driver Steve Harris ran second on the opening lap, followed by the Ford Focus of Andy Grant, Godfrey and Grint. Ollie O'Donovan started on the second row and started well but ran deep into Turn 1, losing time on the



RIDGE

Godfrey runs ahead of points leader Scott

grass and dropping to sixth.

Grant took his joker on the second lap, dropping to the back of the field, while O'Donovan was making up for lost time and also took his joker on the second lap. He followed Grant as the pair passed the Ford Focus of Steve Mundy, who later retired.

Further ahead, Godfrey passed Harris to run second, while James Grint spun at the end of the third lap, dropping a wheel on the grass and rotating, before resuming composure and heading into the joker-lap section. That promoted Grant back to fourth, as Godfrey closed in on leader Scott.

When the Albatec Racing boss took his compulsory joker, Godfrey

had done enough to clear the 208 and seize the lead.

O'Donovan picked up a puncture mid-race and was forced to slow at the back of the field, while Harris was robbed of a second podium in succession with turbo failure in the closing laps. That handed the final place on the rostrum to a delighted Andy Grant, driving his ex-Will Gollop/Andrew Jordan Focus.

Grint finished fourth after an impressive debut from the former rally man as he gears up to race in the opening round of the European Rallycross Championship this weekend in Belgium.

Peugeot 206 driver Stuart Emery won the SuperNational final. Gareth Wood drove well to finish second as

he continues to learn his recently acquired Ford Ka, despite damaged steering in the final. Allan Tapscott finished third.

Tristan Ovenden won the Suzuki Swift final, while Bradley Durdin won the Junior Swift final, chased hard by debutant Sam Jones in second and championship protagonist Drew Bellerby.

Marc Scott spun while leading the RX150 final, allowing Chrissy Palmer to take his first victory in the category, while Craig Lomax beat rally man Mark Gamble in Super1600 and Tomasz Wielgosz won in Hot Hatch.

Ray Morgan won the Retro Rallycross category.

● Hal Ridge

HAREWOOD MAY 10 BRITISH HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP

Spectacular Moran still hillclimb's benchmark

WE ARE THREE EVENTS INTO THE season and Alex Summers continues to head the standings despite having yet to win a round in the Moran family's legendary Gould-NME, although last weekend he took his maiden Unlimited-class record.

Trevor Willis won the first round last weekend but could only finish fifth later on and remains second overall.

As so often in the past, it was five-time champion Scott Moran who was the man to beat. Even after missing Craigtantlet last week, he proved his pace as he won the second run-off, set a new record and moved up to third overall.

Moran had finished third in round five but then became the first driver to climb Harewood in under 49s with a flawless shot of the type that hillclimb fans wait for years to see.



WALDER

Willis took a run-off win

"I've been after a 48 since the first time I took the Harewood record in 2006," he said.

Moran has openly said that he will miss five events this year but insiders say that he could easily change his mind now that he has the record-breaking taste.

Craigtantlet winner Will Hall took fourth and second with his old tub and its new, mad-sounding AER turbo engine to begin the recovery from his Prescott noise exclusion, while Wallace Menzies was fifth before missing the top 10 in run two.

Devon driver Ed Hollier claimed a best-ever sixth position and later backed it up with eighth in the

nearly-new Empire Evo. Back in a brand new car and scoring points was Harewood specialist Richard Spedding in the third GWR Raptor to be built. Unfortunately he suffered a gear failure in round six.

Jos Goodyear had a minor off in Q1 but later came back with a fourth, while Dave Uren had his best showing at Harewood for some time with sixth in the second run. Former British number 10 Eynon Price went well in the works Gould GR59 and was seventh, quicker than Paul Haimes's turbo version.

● Eddie Walder



Moran smashed course record

WALDER

RESULTS ROUND-UP

BISHOPSCOURT MAY 9-10, BARC/LMC



LEON SUPERCUP IRELAND (10 LAPS) 1 Niall Quinn 15m34.934s (82.24mph); 2 James Turkington +6.156s; 3 John Farrelly; 4 Rod McGovern; 5 Michael Cullen; no other starters. **Fastest lap** Quinn 1m31.181s (84.33mph).

Pole position Quinn. **Starters 5. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)** 1 Cullen 15m48.655s (81.06mph); 2 McGovern; 3 Farrelly; no other finishers. **FL** Farrelly 1m32.246s (83.36mph). **P** Cullen. **S 5.**

ITCC (10 LAPS) 1 Eoghan Fogarty (BMW M3) 16m25.739s (78.00mph); 2 Kevin Doran (Honda Civic) +17.475s;

3 Robert Savage (Honda Integra); 4 Grzegorz Kalinecki (SEAT Leon); 5 Ian O'Driscoll (Honda Civic); 6 Nicole Drought (Honda Integra). **FL** Fogarty 1m35.111s (80.84mph). **P** Fogarty. **S 16. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)** 1 Fogarty 16m37.079s (77.12mph); 2 Savage +0.369s; 3 O'wain Drought (Honda Integra); 4 Kalinecki; 5 O'Driscoll; 6 Shane Rabbitt (Mazda RX7). **FL** Fogarty 1m35.254s (80.73mph). **P** Fogarty. **S 16.**

FORMULA VEE (10 LAPS) 1 Kevin Grogan (Leastone) 16m29.509s (77.71mph); 2 Des Foley (Leastone) +0.737s;

3 Dan Polley (Sheane); 4 Adam Macaulay (Sheane); 5 Colm Blackburn (Leastone); 6 Stephin Morrin (Leastone). **FL** Ray Moore (Leastone) 1m36.470s (79.71mph). **P** Grogan. **S 18.**

RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Moore 15m40.326s (73.59mph); 2 Macaulay +0.170s; 3 Polley; 4 Grogan; 5 Morrin; 6 Jimmy Furlong (Sheane). **FL** Grogan 1m36.358s (79.80mph). **P** Moore. **S 18.**

FORMULA SHEANE (10 LAPS) 1 David Parks 15m46.430s (81.24mph); 2 Enda O'Connor +0.432s; 3 Richard Kearney; 4 Keith Hogg; 5 Brian Hearty; 6 Kevin Sheane. **FL** O'Connor 1m33.923s (81.87mph). **P** Sheane. **S 14.**

RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Hogg 15m28.081s (82.85mph); 2 Parks +0.331s; 3 Sheane; 4 Robbie Allen; 5 Hearty; 6 O'Connor. **FL** O'Connor 1m30.345s (85.11mph). **S 14.**

FF1600 & OPEN SINGLE SEATER (8 LAPS) 1 Cian Carey (Formula Renault) 12m02.566s (85.14mph); 2 Sean Lillis (Ray) +41.004s; 3 David Nicholl (Reynard); 4 Jennifer Mullan (Reynard); no other finishers. **Class winner** Lillis. **FL** Carey 1m25.985s (89.43mph). **P** Carey. **S 7. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)** 1 Lillis 15m 41.788s (81.65mph); 2 Nicholls +14.250s; 3 James Graham (Mondiale); 4 Brendan Duggan (Van Diemen RF84); 5 Mullan; no other starters. **FL** Lillis 1m32.899s (82.74mph). **P** Lillis. **S 5.**

FORD FIESTA (8 LAPS) 1 Peter Barrable 15m08.818s (67.69mph); 2 Richard Livingstone +0.359s; 3 Adrian Finnegan; 4 Paul Magill; 5 Andrew Blair; 6 Barry English. **FL** Livingstone 1m 51.854s (68.75mph). **P** Barrable. **S 10.**

RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Barry Rabbitt 15m36.680s (65.68mph); 2 Finnegan + 0.606s; 3 Barrable; 4 Livingstone; 5 Blair; 6 English. **FL** Finnegan 1m54.879s (66.93mph). **P** Barrable. **S 10.**

HRCA (9 LAPS) 1 Clive Brandon (Lotus Europa Type 47) 16m27.086s (70.11mph); 2 Paul Gray (Porsche 911RS) +3.901s; 3 Will Corry (Sebring Sprite); 4 Wolfgang Schnitger (MG Midget); 5 Garth Maxwell (MGB V8); 6 Edmund Cassidy (Sunbeam Tiger). **FL** Brandon 1m47.382s (71.61mph). **P** Jackie Cochrane (Sunbeam Tiger). **S 10.**

RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Brandon 15m14.601s (67.26mph); 2 Gray +15.564s; 3 Schnitger; 4 Maxwell; 5 Bernard Foley (MGB GT V8); 6 Cassidy. **FL** Brandon 1m52.095s (68.60mph). **P** Brandon. **S 10.**

STRYKERS AND NI SEVENS (10 LAPS) 1 Alan Auerbach (Raw Stryker) 16m22.489s (78.27mph); 2 Mark Francis (GMS Honda) +4.753s; 3 Trevor Allen (GMS Honda); 4 Alan



Sibley leads
Modsports

Watkins (Sylvia Stryker) 5 Richard Francis (GMS Honda); 6 Graham Moore (GMS). **CW** Francis. **FL** Allen 1m36.065s (80.04mph). **P** Auerbach. **S 17. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)**

1 Auerbach 16m32.922s (77.44mph); 2 Francis +0.187s; 3 Allen; 4 Moore; 5 Dave Griffin (Stryker); 6 Mark Baker (Sylvia Stryker). **CW** Francis. **FL** Francis 1m36.057s (80.05mph). **P** Auerbach. **S 17.**

GT/NI SALOONS (10 LAPS) 1 Paul Monaghan (Ginetta) 15m25.002s (83.13mph); 2 Connare Finn (Ginetta) +0.334s; 3 James Turkington (SEAT Leon); 4 Stephen Traub (Honda Integra); 5 Richard Ryan (BMW M3); 6 Francis Allen (BMW E36). **CW** Turkington. **FL** Finn 1m29.631s (85.79mph). **P** Finn. **S 9. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)** 1 Monaghan 15m55.381s (80.49mph); 2 Finn +4.606s; 3 Turkington; 4 Traub; 5 Allen; 6 Aiden Vance (Honda Civic). **CW** Turkington. **FL** Turkington 1m30.424s (85.03mph). **P** Finn. **S 9.**

SUPERKARTS (8 LAPS) 1 Colin Menary 11m22.100s (90.19mph); 2 Alan Witherow +0.472s; 3 Eoin Buckley; 4 Jonny Wilkinson; 5 Stuart Coey; 6 Richard Dewart. **FL** Witherow 1m24.168s (91.39mph). **P** Witherow. **S 22.**

RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Menary 11m23.103s (90.05mph); 2 Liam Fox +0.559s; 3 Witherow; 4 Buckley; 5 Wilkinson; 6 Coey. **FL** Witherow 1m24.130s (91.40mph). **P** Menary. **S 16.**

2 Crisp +7.776s; 3 Surdi; 4 Simmen; 5 Gregory Marking (318is); 6 Ford. CW Crisp; Marking; Russell Dack (325i Compact). **FL** Crisp 2m12.037s (80.94mph). **P** Pearson. **S 16.**

KUMHO BMW CLASS A (10 LAPS) 1 Colin Wells (M3 CSL) 21m05.116s (84.48mph); 2 James Card (E46 M3) +1.538s; 3 James MacIntyre-Ure (E46 M3); 4 Richard Bacon (E46 M3); 5 Roger Lavender (M3 EVO); 6 Kal Ezzat (M3). **FL** Wells 2m04.279s (86.00mph). **P** Wells. **S 7. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)**

1 Wells 20m49.565s (85.53mph); 2 MacIntyre-Ure +10.806s; 3 Card; 4 Lavender; 5 Ezzat; 6 Colin Whitmore (E36 M3). **FL** Wells 2m03.121s (86.80mph). **P** Wells. **S 7.**

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1 Wells 20m49.565s (85.53mph); 2 MacIntyre-Ure +10.806s; 3 Card; 4 Lavender; 5 Ezzat; 6 Colin Whitmore (E36 M3). **FL** Wells 2m03.121s (86.80mph). **P** Wells. **S 7.**

Szaruta. **FL** Szaruta 1m 49.829s (81.53mph). **P** Hutchinson. **S 29. RACE 2 (17 LAPS)** 1 Heaton 31m 34.369s (80.28mph); 2 Hutchinson +0.344s; 3 Dickens; 4 Mike Evans; 5 Jack Sales; 6 Dan Gore. **FL** Sales 1m 49.801s (81.55mph). **P** Heaton. **S 29.**

CATERHAM ROADSPORT (11 LAPS) 1 Paul Aram 21m 02.338s (77.92mph); 2 Anthony Barnes +3.370s; 3 Damien Milkins; 4 Peter Rimer; 5 Benjamin Wigg; 6 David Webber. **FL** Aram 1m 52.012s (79.94mph). **P** Aram. **S 24. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)** 1 Wigg 20m 56.199s (71.17mph); 2 Aram +0.942s; 3 Milkins; 4 Barry Moore; 5 Graham Williams; 6 Paul Wells. **FL** Aram 1m 52.665s (79.47mph). **P** Aram. **S 24.**

CATERHAM SUPERSPORT (17 LAPS) 1 Clive Richards 30m 45.680s (82.40mph); 2 Philip Jenkins +0.328s; 3 Tony Mingoia; 4 John O'Brien; 5 William Smith; 6 Danny Killeen. **FL** Smith 1m 46.972s (83.70mph). **P** Richards. **S 30.**

RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Richards 21m 02.950s (70.79mph); 2 Jenkins +0.220s; 3 Smith; 4 Killeen; 5 John O'Brien; 6 Andros Sinclair. **FL** Smith 1m 48.115s (82.82mph). **P** Richards. **S 29.**

FIESTA JUNIOR (11 LAPS) 1 Aaron Thompson 21m 31.607s (76.15mph); 2 Michael Higgs +11.260s; 3 Nathan Edwards; 4 Richard Crisp; 5 Connor Grady; 6 Carlotto Mirracco. **FL** Thompson 1m 56.105s (77.12mph). **P** Edwards. **S 12. RACE 2 (11 LAPS)** 1 Thompson 21m 39.551s (75.68mph); 2 Higgs +7.553s; 3 Edwards; 4 Richard Crisp; 5 Ronan Quinn; 6 Grady. **FL** Thompson 1m 56.855s (76.62mph). **P** Thompson. **S 10.**

FIESTA (11 LAPS) 1 Scott Robertson 21m 11.290s (77.37mph); 2 JJ Ross +0.322s; 3 Simon Horrobin; 4 Samuel Priest; 5 Joshua Watkins; 6 Gareth Broadbent. **CW** David Abbott; James Styles; Stuart Robbins. **FL** Ross 1m 55.509s (79.58mph). **P** Ross. **S 27. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)** 1 Ross 20m 58.728s (71.03mph); 2 Jamie Going +9.308s; 3 Kevin Stirling; 4 Robertson; 5 Broadbent; 6 Myles Baker. **CW** Alistair Kellett; Styles; John Cooper. **FL** Horrobin 1m 52.554s (79.55mph). **P** Robertson. **S 25.**

MK2 PRODUCTION GTI (8 LAPS) 1 Thomas Wits 15m44.316s (75.71mph); 2 Tim Hartland +1.061s; 3 Jason Tingle; 4 Christopher Sanders; 5 Darren Bedford; 6 Josh Johnson. **CW** Craig Roberts. **FL** Sanders 1m 56.504s (76.85mph). **P** Wits. **S 29. RACE 2 (8 LAPS)** 1 Tingle 15m 42.817s (75.83mph); 2 Wits +0.665s; 3 Sanders; 4 Hartland; 5 Nick Porter; 6 Johnson. **CW** Roberts. **FL** Tingle 1m 56.005s (77.19mph). **P** Wits. **S 29.**

MKS PRODUCTION GTI (9 LAPS) 1 Jason Tingle 16m 41.064s (80.36mph); 2 Martyn Walsh +3.243s; 3 Craig Fleming; 4 Luke Schlewitz; 5 Simon Hill; 6 Andrew Aldridge. **FL** Tingle 1m 49.880s (81.41mph). **P** Tingle. **S 7. RACE 2 (9 LAPS)** 1 Tingle 16m 39.923s (80.45mph); 2 Walsh +0.544s; 3 Fleming; 4 Schlewitz; 5 Hill; 6 Chris Adams. **FL** Tingle 1m 49.962s (81.43mph). **P** Tingle. **S 8.**

2 Crisp +7.776s; 3 Surdi; 4 Simmen; 5 Gregory Marking (318is); 6 Ford. CW Crisp; Marking; Russell Dack (325i Compact). **FL** Crisp 2m12.037s (80.94mph). **P** Pearson. **S 16.**

KUMHO BMW CLASS A (10 LAPS) 1 Colin Wells (M3 CSL) 21m05.116s (84.48mph); 2 James Card (E46 M3) +1.538s; 3 James MacIntyre-Ure (E46 M3); 4 Richard Bacon (E46 M3); 5 Roger Lavender (M3 EVO); 6 Kal Ezzat (M3). **FL** Wells 2m04.279s (86.00mph). **P** Wells. **S 7. RACE 2 (10 LAPS)**

1 Wells 20m49.565s (85.53mph); 2 MacIntyre-Ure +10.806s; 3 Card; 4 Lavender; 5 Ezzat; 6 Colin Whitmore (E36 M3). **FL** Wells 2m03.121s (86.80mph). **P** Wells. **S 7.**

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Sports 2000 start
at Brands Hatch



HAWKINS

GOLD ARTS MAGNIFICENT SEVENS (38 LAPS) 1 Peter Ratcliff (Caterham C400) 40m 42.461s (91.88mph); 2 Danny Winstanley (Caterham R300) +7.268s; 3 Tom Eden (Caterham CSR); 4 Jonathan Pittard (Caterham Superlight R); 5 Tony Bennett (Caterham R300); 6 Kevin Williams (Caterham C400). **CW** Pittard; Richard Carter (Caterham R300); Danny Keenan (MK Indy); Steve Owen (Caterham Blackbird); Daniel Williamson (Caterham Supersports); John Benfield (Caterham 7). **FL** Ratcliff 1m 00.822s (97.09mph). **P** Winstanley. **S** 40.

SWINGING SIXTIES GROUP 1 (33 LAPS) 1 Alex Montgomery/Mark Davies (Lotus Cortina) 40m 19.489s (80.54mph); 2 Tim Cairns (Austin Healey Frogeye Sprite) +22.189s; 3 Matthew Howell/Julian Howell (Austin Mini); 4 Chris Watkinson (Rover Mini); 5 Adam Cunningham (Austin Healey Sprite); 6 Sam Polley (MG B). **CW** Cairns; Polley; Paul Wybrow/Gary Weston (MG B). **FL** Cunningham 1m 09.790s (84.62mph). **P** Cunningham. **S** 27. **GROUP 2 (35 LAPS)** 1 Ray Barrow (Chevrolet Camaro) 40m 13.685s (85.63mph); 2 Richard Plant (Morgan +8) +18.208s; 3 Steve Hodges (Lotus 7); 4 Ben Gough/Jain Daniels (Marcos); 5 Malcolm Johnson (Lotus Europa); 6 David Thomas (Ford Capri). **CW** Hodges; Gough/Daniels; Norman Davidson-Kelly (Jaguar E Type). **FL** Mark Halstead/Stuart McPherson (Ginetta G4) 1m 05.120s (90.68mph). **P** Hodges. **S** 20.

PIRELLI FERRARI FORMULA CLASSIC (18 LAPS) 1 David Tomlin (308 GTB) 20m 23.814s (86.86mph); 2 Gary Culver (328 GTB) +2.259s; 3 Richard Moseley (328 GTB); 4 Chris Butler (328 GTB); 5 Tim Walker (328 GTB); 6 Darren Wilson (328 GTB). **CW** Culver; Walker; William Moorwood (308 GT4). **FL** Tomlin 1m 07.060s (88.06mph). **P** Culver. **S** 17. **RACE 2 (18 LAPS)** 1 Tomlin 20m 18.821s (87.21mph); 2 Culver +1.729s; 3 Butler; 4 Peter Everingham (328GTB); 5 Walker; 6 Wilson. **CW** Culver; Everingham; Moorwood. **FL** Tomlin 1m 06.835s (88.36mph). **P** Culver. **S** 16.

SPECIAL SALOONS AND MODSPORTS (15 LAPS) 1 Danny Morris (Peugeot 309) 15m 16.841s (95.61mph); 2 Matt Moore (RSR Escort) +8.107s; 3 Ian Stapleton (Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV6); 4 Paul Sibley (Lotus Elan); 5 David Beatty (Honda Prelude); 6 Peter Stevens (Vauxhall Carlton). **CW** Stapleton; Tony Paxman (Ford Escort Mk1); Paul Chase-Gardener (Vauxhall Firenza). **FL** Morris 59.750s (98.83mph). **P** Moore. **S** 15. **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)** 1 Moore 15m 30.850s (95.16mph); 2 Stapleton; 3 Ricky Parker-Morris (Peugeot 309); 4 Beatty; 5 Stevens; 6 Paul Connell (Ford Sierra Cosworth RS500). **CW** Stapleton; Paxman. **FL** Moore 1m 00.853s (97.04mph). **P** Moore. **S** 12.

NEW MILLENNIUM SERIES (36 LAPS) 1 Tim Davis (TVR Tuscan) 40m 47.660s (86.86mph); 2 Barry O'Neill/Andrew Symanski (BMW M3 E36) +47.483s; 3 Dean Cook/Billy Thompson (TVR Tuscan); 4 Kevin Bird/Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird (BMW M3); 5 Gary Wardle (Ginetta G50); 6 Tom Holbrook/David Ball (BMW M3 E36). **CW** O'Neill/Symanski; Paul Black/Clive Bailie (Mazda MX-5); Lee Atkins/Sam Allpass (BMW M3 CSL); Nik Barton (Seat Leon); Andy Napier (Lotus Elise). **FL** Davis 1m 02.723s (94.15mph). **P** Mark Smith/Dominic Malone (Porsche 997 GT3 Cup). **S** 22.

ADVANTAGE MOTORSPORT FUTURE CLASSICS (8 LAPS) 1 Bill Lancashire (TVR Tuscan) 8m 54.816s (88.33mph);

2 Matthew Wurr (Morgan +8) +8.294s; 3 Paul Conway (Morgan +8); 4 Nick Olson (Lotus Esprit); 5 Matthew Lewis (Marcos Mantula); 6 Martyn Adams (Triumph TR7 V8). **CW** Olson; Lewis; Brian Robinson (Porsche 944); David Bryant (Toyota MR2). **FL** Lancashire 1m 05.981s (89.50mph). **P** Lancashire. **S** 33.

TIN TOPS/PUMA CUP (34 LAPS) 1 Tom Mensley (Renault Clio 172) 40m 20.193s (82.96mph); 2 Mark Livens (Honda Civic Type R) +16.856s; 3 Russell Hird (Honda Integra); 4 Andrew Windmill/John Allen (Peugeot 106); 5 Paul Masters (Renault Clio); 6 David Hutchins/Tom Hutchins (Honda Civic Type R). **CW** Livens; Windmill/Allen; Paul Mensley/Daniel Turner (Ford Fiesta ST); Paul Dolan (Ford Puma); Giles Billingsley (Fiat Punto); Nigel Hutton/Lindsay Hutton (Ford Fiesta XR2i). **FL** Hird 1m 06.279s (89.10mph). **P** Nigel Tongue/John Hammersley (Peugeot 306). **S** 34.

TOYO TIRES JAGUAR SALOON & GT (18 LAPS) 1 Sam Clarke Jr (XJS) 20m 37.487s (85.90mph); 2 Rodney Frost (XJS) +11.571s; 3 James Ramm (Jaguar XJS); 4 David Howard (XJ12); 5 Colin Philpott (Jaguar XJS); 6 Lawrence Coppock (Jaguar XJS). **CW** Frost; Howard; Alasdair Macgregor (X300). **FL** Clarke Jr 1m 08.238s (80.43mph). **P** Clarke Jr. **S** 22.

MODERN CLASSIC SERIES (36 LAPS) 1 Mark Smith/James Moulton-Smith (BMW M3) 40m 21.563s (87.79mph); 2 David Marcussen/David Cuff (BMW M3) +5.574s; 3 Tom Houllbrook/David Ball (BMW M3); 4 Andrew Szymanski/Barry O'Neill (BMW M3); 5 Daniel Wylie (BMW M3); 6 Paul Livesey (Porsche 968). **CW** Livesey; James Broad/Alan Broad (Porsche Boxster); Andy Napier (Lotus Elise); Richard Hayes (Toyota Celica); Luke Elkin (Porsche Boxster); Simon Green/Rob Barnett (Toyota MR2). **FL** Smith/Moulton-Smith 1m 04.181s (92.01mph). **P** Smith/Moulton-Smith. **S** 32.

BRANDS HATCH

MAY 9-10, MSVR



MINI CHALLENGE (12 LAPS) 1 Lee Pattison 20m 06.351s (87.116mph); 2 Rob Smith +1.531s; 3 William Phillips; 4 Ryan Rhode; 5 David Grady; 6 Charlie Butler-Henderson. **CW** Jono Brown. **FL** Phillips 1m 38.971s (88.483mph). **P** Pattison. **S** 25. **RACE 2 (12 LAPS)** 1 Luke Caudle 21m 10.201s (82.767mph); 2 David Grady +0.277s; 3 Smith; 4 Butler-Henderson; 5 Lawrence Davey; 6 Bence Balogh. **CW** Henry Duprey. **FL** Butler-Henderson 1m 39.042s (88.421mph). **P** Phillips. **S** 25. **RACE 3 (12 LAPS)** 1 Butler-Henderson 20m 03.856s (87.302mph); 2 Grady +0.867s; 3 Balogh; 4 Caudle; 5 Harry Vaulkhard; 6 Phillips. **CW** Neil Newstead. **FL** Butler-Henderson 1m 39.212s (88.297mph). **P** Davey. **S** 24.

GT CUP (31 LAPS) 1 Paul Bailey/Andy Schulz (Aston Martin Vantage 12) 50m 45.029s (89.167mph); 2 Arwyn Williams/Aaron Scott (Ferrari 458 GT3) +12.156s; 3 Darren Nelson/Nigel Greensall (Ferrari 458 GT3); 4 John Seale/Jamie Stanley (Ferrari 458 GT3); 5 Ivor Dunbar/Johnny Fowler (Ferrari 458 GT3). **CW** Seale/Stanley; Tom Webb (BMW E46 M3 GTR); Paul Hollywood/Jonathan Adam (Aston Martin Vantage GTB). **FL** Schulz 1m 26.827s (100.910mph). **P** Phil Burgan (Audi R8 LMS Ultra). **S** 32. **RACE 2 (16 LAPS)** 1 Bailey 25m 36.892s (91.217mph); 2 Burgan +3.626s;

3 Nelson; 4 Marss; 5 Seale; 6 Marcus Hoggarth (Ferrari 458 GT3). **CW** Marss; Ross McEwen (Porsche 997 GT3); Ben Tompkins (Ginetta G50). **FL** Nelson 1m 29.297s (98.114mph). **P** Bailey. **S** 29. **RACE 3 (15 LAPS)** 1 Scott 25m 08.218s (87.116mph); 2 Bailey +15.468s; 3 Nelson; 4 Burgan; 5 Gareth Downing (Lotus Evora GTE); 6 Marss. **CW** Downing; Webb; Rob Gaffney (Ginetta G50). **FL** Scott 1m 26.371s (101.408mph). **P** Nelson. **S** 27.

SPORTS 2000 (30 LAPS) 1 Tom Stoten (Gunn TS11) 50m 21.087s (86.992mph); 2 Michael Gibbins (MCR) +9.931s; 3 David Houghton (Van Diemen); 4 Patrick Sherrington/Clive Hayes (MCR); 5 Tony Halliwell/Paul Trayhurn (Van Diemen); 6 Mike Turner/John Owen (MCR). **CW** Halliwell/Trayhurn; Turner/Owen; Mike Fry (Lola T86/90); Clive Steeper/Chris Snowden (Tiga SC80); Scott Guthrie (Carbir); Steven Ugh (Crossle 9S). **FL** David Croft/Neil Burroughs (Gunn TS11) 1m 29.289s (98.114mph). **P** David Croft/Neil Burroughs (Gunn TS11). **S** 26.

MAZDA MX-5 CHAMPIONSHIP (10 LAPS) 1 Stuart Symonds 20m 40.270 (113.7kph); 2 Martin Tolley +0.219s; 3 William Stephenson; 4 Chris Hart; 5 Michael Fisk; 6 Paul Bateman. **FL** Symonds 1m 53.122s (124.6kph). **P** Symonds. **S** 40. **RACE 2 (11 LAPS)** 1 Darren Lewis 20m 35.060s (78.044mph); 2 Simon Baldwin +0.382s; 3 James Blake-Baldwin; 4 Ben Tuck; 5 Ben Short; 6 Will Blackwell-Chambers. **FL** Short 1m 50.633s (79.163mph). **P** Tuck. **S** 39. **RACE 3 (10 LAPS)** 1 Short 20m 35.071s (70.898mph); 2 Baldwin +0.165s; 3 Lewis; 4 Blake-Baldwin; 5 Blackwell-Chambers; 6 Tuck. **FL** Tuck 1m 50.471s (79.287mph). **P** Lewis. **S** 39.

PEMBREY

MAY 10, BRITISH RALLYCROSS



MSA BRITISH RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP (6 LAPS) 1 Julian Godfrey (Ford Fiesta) 5m25.170s; 2 Andy Scott (Peugeot 208) +1.177s; 3 Andy Grant (Ford Focus); 4 James Grint (Peugeot 208); 5 Steve Harris (Citroen DS3); 6 Ollie O'Donovan (Ford Focus). **CW** Godfrey **FL** Godfrey 52.392s **P** Procter **S** 11. **SUPERNAIONAL RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP (6 LAPS)** 1 Stuart Emery (Peugeot 206) 5m58.188s; 2 Gareth Wood (Ford KA) +6.523s; 3 Allan Tapscott (Vauxhall Corsa); 4 Steve Cozens (Renault Clio); 5 Daniel Rooke (Citroen AX); 6 Gary Simpson (BMW E30). **CW** Emery **FL** Emery 57.281s **P** Wood **S** 15.

SUZUKI SWIFT RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP (6 LAPS) (ALL 1.6 SUZUKI SWIFT) 1 Tristan Ovenden 6m21.662s; 2 Jack Brown +1.195s; 3 Darren Scott; 4 Rob Maynard; 5 Jake Taylor; 6 Aiden Hills. **CW** Ovenden **FL** Ovenden 101.235s **P** Ovenden **S** 13. **JUNIOR SWIFT CHAMPIONSHIP (6 LAPS) (ALL 1.3 SUZUKI SWIFT)** 1 Bradley Durdin 6m54.909s; 2 Sam Jones +3.447s; 3 Drew Bellerby; 4 Jennie Hawkes. **CW** Durdin **FL** Bellerby 107.007s **P** Durdin **S** 4. **RX150 RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP (ALL RX150) (6 LAPS)** 1 Chrissy Palmer 6m07.194s; 2 Marc Scott +0.915s; 3 Dave Bellerby; 4 Brett Harris; 5 Stephen Jones; 6 Mitchell Flaherty. **CW** Palmer **FL** Scott 56.510s **P** Scott **S** 9. **HOT HATCH (6 LAPS)** 1 Tomasz Wielgosz (Peugeot 106)



Summers is
leading BHC

WALDER

6m20.580s; 2 Jeff Hope-Davies (Citroen Saxo) +1.220s; 3 Mariusz Mehlberg (Citroen Saxo); 4 Paul Maybourne (Citroen Saxo); 5 Robert Potyra (Citroen Saxo). **CW** Wielgosz **FL** Wielgosz 100.947s **P** Wielgosz **S** 5. **SUPER1600 / BMW MINI (6 LAPS)** 1 Craig Lomax (Citroen C2) 6m07.194s; 2 Mark Gamble (Suzuki Swift) +27.962s; 3 John Clayton (BMW Mini); 4 Michael Boak (Citroen C2); 5 Phil Chicken (Citroen C2); 6 David Bell (BMW Mini). **CW** Lomax. **CLAYTON** **FL** Gamble 59.402s **P** Lomax **S** 6. **RETRO RALLYCROSS (4 LAPS)** 1 Ray Morgan (Ford Escort) 4m03.147s; 2 James Harrold (Volkswagen Beetle) +3.460s; 3 Lance Foster (Mini); 4 Jordan Bowes (Mini); 5 Paul Smith (VW Polo); 6 Daniel Greaves (Mazda 323). **CW** Morgan **FL** Morgan 59.124s **P** Harrold **S** 7.

HAREWOOD

MAY 10, BRITISH HILLCLIMB



ROUND 5 1 TREVOR WILLIS (3.2 OMS-RPE 28) 49.15S; 2 Alex Summers (3.5 Gould-NME GR61X) 49.17s; 3 Scott Moran (3.5 Gould-NME GR61X) 49.45s; 4 Will Hall (2.0 Force-AER/TEC WH) 49.72s; 5 Wallace Menzies (3.5 Gould-NME GR55) 50.58s; 6 Ed Hollier (1.6 Empire-Suzuki 00 Evo) 50.85s; 7 Richard Spedding (1.6 GWR-Suzuki Raptor 3) 51.52s; 8 Alastair Crawford (2.8 Gould-NME GR55) 51.58s; 9 Oli Tomlin (4.0 Pilbeam-Judd MP97) 51.63s; 10 Paul Haines (1.3t Gould-Suzuki GR59) 51.74s; 11 Tom New (3.5 Gould-NME GR55) 51.75s; 12 John Bradburn (3.5 Gould-Cosworth GR55) 51.86s.

ROUND 6 1 Scott Moran 48.81S OUTRIGHT RECORD; 2 Hall 49.08s; 3 Summers 49.34s; 4 Jos Goodyear (1.3 GWR-Suzuki Raptor 2) 49.48s; 5 Willis 50.03s; 6 Dave Uren (1.3t Force-Suzuki PC) 50.82s; 7 Eymon Price (1.6 Gould-Suzuki GR59) 51.48s; 8 Hollier 51.72s; 9 Haines 53.35s; 10 Tomlin 52.51s; 11 New 69.26s; Spedding DNF. **CW** Alisdair Suttie (1.4t Abarth 695 Biposto) 70.60s; Tony Bunker (3.8t Nissan GT-R) 64.80s; Roger Moran (2.4 Caterham-Duratec 7) 61.09s; Andrew Russell (1.1 Ginetta G15) 68.12s; Colin Satchell (2.0 Peugeot 205) 60.73s **RECORD;** Simon Dawes (3.8 Porsche 911) 63.28s; Ben Lovell (1.6 OMS SC4CF) 56.69s; Allan McDonald (2.4t Morris Mini Evo) 63.45s; Simon Fidoe (1.0 Empire-Suzuki Wraith) 54.99s; Hollier 51.76s; Goodyear 50.10s **RECORD;** Summers 49.57s **RECORD.** **POINTS 1 Summers 50;** 2 Willis, 42; 3 S Moran, 39; 4 Hall, 35; 5 Menzies, 27; 6 Crawford, 24; 7 New & Goodyear, 18; 9 Bradburn, 16; 10 Hollier, 15.



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Tel: +44 (0) 1733 555161. Printed in England by Wyndeham Peterborough Ltd.

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THIS WEEK

LETTERS • ON TRACK • TV PICKS • FROM THE WEB • AUTOSPORT.COM

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



Time to clip the wings of a dud

I have been a fan of Formula 1 since 1979 and while there can be some truly incredible racing, F1 does suffer many a boring race. The Spanish GP highlighted once again the problem of following a car closely enough through corners in order to be close enough to pass on the straight.

Nico Rosberg was accused of moaning about this a few races ago, but he has gained validation by his team-mate not doing any better this time around.

The front wings surely are the culprit here. They also break easily, and cause punctures far too readily. I guess that F1 has long been

guilty of taking some strange routes. We are told that the current engines are allied to modern road car technology – a friend of mine at a well-known car company insists everyone will go the way of three-cylinder engines, so that isn't entirely correct.

Can we remove the front wings but increase mechanical grip through the tyres, and possibly ground-effect once again? What does the percentage of downforce gained by a front wing look like compared to ground-effect? Does Gary Anderson have any thoughts?

Pete Effamy, Hampshire

Did Rosberg step up or Hamilton stumble? A mistake in qualifying, a bad start (new clutch) and two botched pitstops would explain Lewis's weekend; with Rosberg enjoying a trouble-free event, I believe that answers that question.

What should be asked is what the hell is going on in F1? Rule changes for this year introduced a new nose configuration that will not allow cars to follow each other, let alone overtake (how can a car that finished 40s in front of another not have the ability to overtake it on track?).

And to top it all my hero Lewis telling his engineer he had no chance of getting past Vettel without help – this is the man renowned for his ruthless overtaking.

Why are audiences and spectators disappearing? I can tell you: I watched on

TV Lewis taking two and a half seconds a lap out of Rosberg's lead, only to be told to back off. If I had paid good grandstand money and thought, 'Hang on, he's having a right ole go here' only to see Lewis back off under orders to preserve a one-two, I would think twice about paying out again.

Kevin Friday
By email

Realistically, Hamilton was not anywhere fast enough to catch Rosberg, hence the instruction Mercedes gave – ed

I was very disappointed to find that GP2 now uses DRS. In a formula where overtaking was always possible, now it's just too easy.

I suppose it's meant to prepare drivers for

F1, but do we need DRS at all? F1 2015-style is just so dull with 'Noah's Ark' finishes only altered by errors and, occasionally, strategy. There's plenty of passing, but it's not the same as overtaking as there's no change once the strategy unwinds.

Please don't let GP2 go the same way.
John Napper
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

I have suggested before the idea of success ballast for F1, as in the BTCC. Add a point or points for pole, fastest lap and maybe most laps led as well!

I don't think reversed-grids would be right for F1, but success ballast would, I'm sure, make for more exciting racing.

Keith Male
By email

BIG NUMBER

4 Record number of Pau Grand Prix wins, held by Jim Clark. He won twice in F1 cars (1961, '63) and twice in F2 ('64, '65).

MILESTONE

1985 This weekend marks the 30th anniversary of the NASCAR Sprint All-Star race. It was first held in 1985 under the title of 'The Winston'.



WHAT'S ON TRACK IN THE UK

EVENT OF THE WEEK



Rorty '60s GTs will star on HSCC bill

SILVERSTONE HSCC

May 16-17
The HSCC International Trophy meeting offers a brilliant opportunity to see an eclectic

mix of historic exotica over two days. The GT and Sports Car Cup offers the best of pre-'63 machinery, while supports include Historic

Formula Ford and Formula Junior plus the increasingly popular Derek Bell Trophy featuring F5000, Formula Atlantic and Formula 2 cars.

BARC



BRANDS HATCH MSVR

May 16-17
The F3 Cup headlines the usual collection of MSVR categories, with the Monoposto series in support.

CADWELL PARK BARC

May 16-17
A billing of Caterhams, MX5s and 2CVs are joined by the MG Owners Club in Lincolnshire.

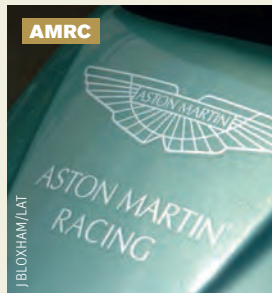
OULTON PARK AMRC

May 16
The Aston Martin Racing Club brings a range of cars from its illustrious history to Oulton.

ROCKINGHAM BRSCC

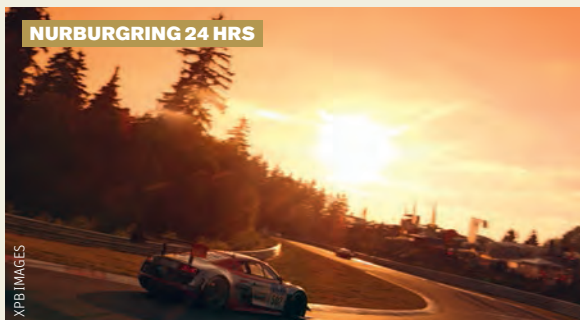
May 16-17
At Rockingham, 10 championships share a packed timetable, with Global Lights also travelling over from Ireland.

AMRC



WHAT'S ON TRACK AROUND THE WORLD

NURBURGRING 24 HRS



NURBURGRING 24 HOURS

Nurburgring, Germany
May 16-17
adac.24h-rennen.de

WORLD TOURING CARS

Rd 4/12
Nurburgring, Germany
May 16
fiawtcc.com

EURO F3



European F3 heads to the majestic Pau

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

Rd 2/5
Imola, Italy
May 17
europeanlemansseries.com

WORLD RALLYCROSS

Rd 3/13
Mettet, Belgium
May 16-17
rallycrossrx.com

NASCAR SPRINT ALL-STAR

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA
May 16
nascar.com

V8 SUPERCARS

Rd 4/14
Winton, Victoria, Australia
May 16-17
v8supercar.com.au

SUPER TC2000

Rd 3/12
Obera, Argentina
May 17
super-tc2000.com.ar

WRX



FROM THE SOFA

WHAT'S ON TELEVISION



Palmer is testing with Lotus this season

XPB IMAGES

GP2's NEW (COMMENTARY) STAR

HE MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE to turn his runaway GP2 title into an immediate Formula 1 race seat, but Jolyon Palmer's general career prospects look pretty good right now. A Lotus deal initially somewhat light on specifics has already turned into three straight grand prix practice runs. With MotorSport Vision as a family business, he's got a pretty fulfilling option for a post-racing occupation one day. But while he's going down well at Lotus, Palmer's most assured debut this season has been in the GP2 commentary box.

Although Jolyon's father Jonathan's BBC commentary stint has not been judged generously, few would've thrived in the immediate wake of James Hunt. Palmer Sr was also boxed into the 'explain-the-strategies' role as F1 revived refuelling, and had a pretty uninspiring era of the sport to talk about.

A huge number of drivers get invited into commentary roles. Very few of them thrive. Some exude an 'if I was out there, it would be different' bitterness. Many do little more than mumble disconnected asides, or only get involved when heavily cajoled into doing so by the main commentator. GP2's new main voice Alex Jacques doesn't have to give Palmer any encouragement.

The GP2 role had a hint of a 'silly season' about it, with long-time occupier Will Buxton stepping away to prioritise his NBC F1 commitments. Having grown up with the series in career terms, Buxton had moulded the GP2 role to himself. Being absorbed in the championship since its inception made him knowledgeable and passionate in equal measure, and his

rainbow wardrobe's podium interview appearances stoked his public profile too. Trying to slot in 'a new Buxton' with a similar style would've been a mistake, so the very different balance of BBC Radio Suffolk convert Jacques and Palmer is a successful solution.

GP2 would much rather its champion driver was on the F1 grid, but Palmer's lucidity and confidence behind the mic has actually made his sidestep into commentary something of a coup for the series. Even the championship's drivers have been impressed with the shrewdness of his analysis.

The key for any commentator is to make what they're talking about accessible and enticing for those encountering it for the first time, while being informative for those who want the extra in-depth insight that's beyond their reach. Even as a relative commentary novice, Palmer pulls this off well – and that was no mean feat in a Barcelona race with DRS sometimes working, sometimes not, and contrasting tyre strategies jumbling the field. He's spicy too, telling it like it is with Sergio Canamasas's 'racecraft'.

Palmer's probably not going to be the next Martin Brundle – that's clearly Jenson Button (check his impromptu Twitter commentary of the Bahrain GP he sat out), and Jolyon needs to have a fair shot at F1 first. But brilliance in GP2 could launch more than one career for its 2014 champion.

"To slot in a 'new Buxton' would have been a mistake"



Barcelona GP2 races were action-packed

S. BLOXHAM/GP2

TV pick of

Edited by Matt Beer



NURBURGRING WTCC - LIVE Eurosport 2

Saturday 1000-1230

When you've secured the legendary 14-mile Nurburgring Nordschleife, you can shrug off losing Macau – at least that's the World Touring Car Championship's stance. The drivers have only had a short test, which 2014 champion Jose Maria Lopez topped.

Will the field be big or competitive enough to do the venue justice in Saturday's two three-lap races? *Top Gear* favourite Sabine Schmitz making her series debut ought to add spice even if it's a Citroen demonstration up front.



MONACO GRAND PRIX - 1992

Sky Sports F1 Sunday 2030-2115

With Monaco the next race up on the Formula 1 calendar, Sky has a feast of classic Monte Carlo grands prix on offer through the week, including 1983, '84, '88, '93, '94, '96 and 2008. Our pick is 1992, when Ayrton Senna stole victory from Williams – which had won the first five races of the season – and Nigel Mansell. The Brit controlled the race up until the 71st of 78 laps, when fears of a puncture sent him into the pits and back out right behind Senna, whose majestic defence secured a famous upset victory.

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ONLINE

Top stories on AUTOSPORT.com in the last week

McLAREN REVEALS NEW MP4-30 LIVERY

The most popular story of the last week was McLaren moving away from the silver/chrome-based colour scheme it has used in some form since 1997.

HAMILTON HIS OWN 'WORST ENEMY'

Prior to his defeat by Nico Rosberg last weekend, the in-form Lewis Hamilton said that the only person capable of psyching him out this year is himself.

McLAREN 'SCARY' TO DRIVE, SAYS BUTTON

Jenson Button caught the eye on Sunday night, talking about "the scariest 30 laps of my life" after a difficult Spanish Grand Prix with a misbehaving McLaren.

FERRARI POWER GAP NOW 'ZERO' - LAUDA

Reflecting on the flyaway grands prix that started the F1 season, Mercedes' Niki Lauda declared that Ferrari is now matching Mercedes on engine power.

AUTOSPORT+

FERRARI FORMULA 1 TECH SPECIAL

Our technical expert Craig Scarborough delves under the skin of the Ferrari SF15-T, looking at its evolution over the early races of the 2015 campaign.

HONDA WON'T USE ENGINE TOKENS YET

Before the F1 paddock touched down in Spain, AUTOSPORT received confirmation that Honda managed to save its engine tokens for developments later in the year.

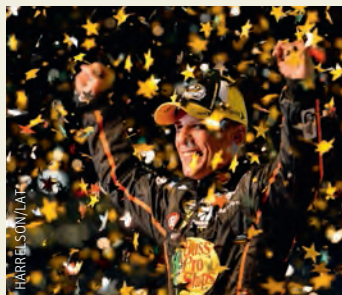
the week



PAU F3 - LIVE
Motors TV
Saturday 1005-1100
Sunday 1425-1515

The yearly treat that is a visit to Pau is on offer for the Formula 3 European Championship – though not all of the bulging 35-driver field will be able to qualify on the tight, twisty 1.7-mile street track in the French Pyrenees.

Last year's winner Felix Rosenqvist returns as the man to beat in 2015 after the departure of Formula 1, DTM and GP3-bound Max Verstappen, Tom Blomqvist and Esteban Ocon. Antonio Giovinazzi holds a narrow title lead.



CHARLOTTE NASCAR - LIVE
Premier Sports
Sunday 0130-0500

If the 30th running of NASCAR's \$1 million non-championship event doesn't get your pulse racing, nothing will – which is just as well since its Saturday night Charlotte slot translates to 2am in the UK.

The core appeal of it remains: a select field of NASCAR's top names in a short winner-takes-all dash for cash. Jimmie Johnson leads the way with four wins, while Jamie McMurray took a surprise win last year. It was Ganassi's only success of the season.



WINTON V8 SUPERCARS - LIVE
BT Sports 1
Saturday 0530-0815
Sunday 0430-0645

Teed up by a shock Erebus Mercedes victory at Barbagallo, the V8 Supercars pack rolls into Winton where absolutely anything is possible. The combination of long straights and tight bends makes the circuit a favourite of drivers and fans alike and definitely something to wake up early for, with bucketloads of overtaking likely and three different winners last year. Championship leader Craig 'The Kid' Lowndes is looking to score the landmark 100th win of his storied 16-year career.



BELGIUM WORLD RALLYCROSS - LIVE
Eurosport 2
Sunday 1400-1500

Belgium hosts the latest World Rallycross Championship battle between the flame-spitting 600bhp monsters from Volkswagen, Citroen, Audi, Ford, Mini and more.

The quality and size of the entry has stepped up a notch for 2015, but the two finals so far haven't quite had the drama of last year's Mettet round, where Toomas Heikkinen ended a brilliant race as 2014's sixth winner in as many events after beating a wounded Petter Solberg.

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube **McLAREN DUO IN AWE OF AN ICONIC FORMULA 1 CAR**



SEARCH FOR: Driving the MP4/4 – Jenson and Fernando reaction
 Behind the scenes of a promotional filming day at the Circuit de Catalunya, McLaren drivers Jenson Button and Fernando Alonso share their impressions of Ayrton Senna's famous MP4/4. Judge for yourself who sports the broadest grin.

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HAVE-A-GO HERO

When drivers crop up in unexpected places



Jarama was first of two Alfa outings

Massa's tin-top call-up

As a 20-year-old, he relished the chance to assist Alfa Romeo's 2001 title push, plus the bonus of his first motorsport paycheque

Back in September 2001, Felipe Massa was just another young Brazilian who had yet to make a name for himself. Well, that's not strictly true, as those following him closely in the junior formulas, which included Ferrari, were impressed with two seasons in Europe in which the 20-year-old had racked up the European and Italian Formula Renault titles, as well as the second-tier Euro F3000 crown. But it's fair to say that when he was drafted in by the works Alfa Romeo Nordauto squad for the final two European Super Touring Car Championship rounds, the majority asked, 'Felipe Who?'

A combination of Massa's impressive performances and his Ferrari links led to him earning the chance. The team's lead driver, Fabrizio Giovanardi, and Nicola Larini were battling to close out the title against the challenge of Gabriele Tarquini, who was spearheading the JAS Engineering Honda Accord squad's efforts. Both sought



DUNBAR/LAT

Massa doesn't rule out touring car return

reinforcements, and while JAS drafted in James Thompson, by then already a British Touring Car Championship winner, for the title run-in, Alfa team boss Mauro Sipsz went with Massa (with Yvan Muller then also joining for the final double-header).

"They needed extra drivers to help with the championship," says Massa, smiling at the memory of his brief tin-top career. "Mauro had been

watching me in Formula Renault and Formula 3000 and I met him, so he came to contact me.

"It was the first time I got some money to race, which is really nice. It was a very nice starting point!"

His first outing was in the penultimate round of the championship at Spanish circuit Jarama. He qualified fifth and best of the Alfas, 0.038s faster than Giovanardi. Things didn't go so well in the first race, as Massa suffered front-left damage to both the bodywork and the wishbone in a first-corner clash with the Audi A4 of Roberto Colciago. As a result, he speared off the track at a kink, spun across the track and almost wiped out Larini! He rejoined last and made the finish.

Race two started with a fully reversed grid. Massa started third and soon passed BMW privateer Paolo Zadra to take the lead. He later let Giovanardi past – and the chasing Tarquini – eventually

finishing a solid fifth.

In the season finale at Estoril, Massa notched up another fifth place in the first race, but didn't make the finish in the second. Most importantly, Giovanardi closed out the championship.

"I enjoyed it, it was completely different for me," says Massa. "It was the first time I drove a touring car. It was nice, I had some good races – and some touches with other cars – but it was good to be part of those races and to help Alfa Romeo win an important championship."

Massa clearly enjoyed his time in touring cars and doesn't rule out a return to the discipline some day. Perhaps even to take on old F1 rival Rubens Barrichello in the Brazilian Stock Car Championship?

"Yeah, why not?" he says. "I don't know if it would be Stock Cars or something else – WEC or DTM maybe, I don't know. I will have time to think about it later." *Edd Straw*

NEXT WEEK

Inside F1's newest team

The inside story of the American Haas squad

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