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HAMILTON TRIES
EVERYTHING
BUT ROSBERG
STANDS FIRM

PLUS

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TEENAGER IN A
FORMULA 1 CAR

HOW MARQUEZ
BEAT ROSSI AND
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Resilience and hard work are rewarded

CONGRATULATIONS TO NICO ROSBERG FOR TAKING the sport's ultimate prize. The story of how he came to the last F1 round with a points advantage over team-mate Lewis Hamilton will doubtless continue to stir debate, but Rosberg's perseverance in the face of being alongside one of the sport's greats and his resilience over the last couple of races – when it would have been easy to crack under pressure – make him a worthy champion.

Hamilton's approach to the Abu Dhabi finale certainly created one of the season's main talking points. Was trying to hold up Rosberg and force him down the order the right thing to do?

My personal preference would have been for Hamilton to simply disappear down the road, to underline his pace by winning by as large a margin as possible, then sportingly congratulate Rosberg on a job well done, in the knowledge that he'd taken 10 wins to Nico's nine this year and 12 poles to Rosberg's eight.

Having said that, it was hard not to admire Hamilton's total control of last weekend's grand prix. He was able to slow Rosberg massively at certain parts of the circuit, while being fast enough in all the key areas to ensure the second Mercedes never had so much as a sniff of an overtaking opportunity. It's also fair to point out that Hamilton did nothing untoward, no weaving or dangerous moves. This was *not* Suzuka 1990 or Jerez 1997.

In any case, there is no doubting Hamilton's will to win. Rosberg's title success could spark something rather special in 2017, when beefier and faster cars arrive.



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COVER IMAGE
Bearne/
XPB Images

COVER STORY

4 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix report and analysis

PIT+PADDOCK

20 Nico Rosberg's road to the title

24 Ogier tests 2017 M-Sport Fiesta

27 Feedback: your letters

29 Dieter Rencken: political animal

FEATURES

30 Palmer's McLaren F1 prize drive

36 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award revamp

48 MotoGP review: Marquez sees off Yamaha

RACE CENTRE

42 GP2; GP3; World Rallycross; Super TC2000; World Touring Cars

CLUB AUTOSPORT

67 Supercup and Carrera Cup for Cammish

68 Tordoff switches to British GT in Lambo

70 Castle Combe launches tin-top series

72 JHR: the team that took on Carlin

FINISHING STRAIGHT

78 What's on this week

80 From the archive: 1966 Italian GP

82 Top five active sons of drivers

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83 Sign up and get a FREE KitSound BoomBar speaker

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Rosberg crosses Hamilton's minefield

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor [@BenAndersonAuto](#)

DUNBAR/LAT





Hamilton easily converted pole into race lead

LEWIS HAMILTON CAME INTO THE ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX SAYING ALL HE wanted to focus on was taking pole position and winning the final Formula 1 race of 2016. But of course he knew that this alone wouldn't be enough. He also needed two additional cars to finish ahead of rival Nico Rosberg in order to steal the title away at the end of an arduous personal season.

Hamilton has seemingly made peace with the fact that poor reliability cost him the chance to dictate the terms of this season's F1 title fight, and he headed into the finale suggesting all he would do is what he does best — drive faster than everyone else.

"If I'm out ahead I want to be generally as far ahead as possible," he said. "It's more of an achievement than backing up your teammate." Some suggested Hamilton would be better served by doing just that — win the race by going slowly, to allow an opportunity for two cars to force their way ahead of Rosberg, and thus swing the points battle decisively back in his own favour.

Hamilton rejected this suggestion, describing the tactic as impractical, but that was never likely to settle the matter in a world where mind games often rule the roost. The question remained unanswered in reality — how would the three-time champion approach his seemingly impossible mission?

Hamilton refused to state which path he would choose after topping free practice on Friday, simply saying that his sole focus remained on securing pole, to give him the best opportunity to dictate terms in the race.

After securing that pole position, Hamilton continued to keep his cards close to his chest, refusing even to let Mercedes know

what strategy he might employ in his efforts to overturn Rosberg's 12-point advantage in the title battle.

"We weren't quite sure which direction he'd go — whether he'd go flat out, or choose the other way, but we calculated it," said Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. "As it was a highly probable scenario, there was lots of discussion around it. It was clear it was one of the possible ways for Lewis to win the championship, if Nico could come under threat from behind, and that's exactly what happened, so it didn't come as a surprise."

In fact, Hamilton's intentions became apparent from a very early stage in this race. Having converted pole into a lead with minimal fuss, ordinarily you would expect Hamilton to drive off into the distance, building a gap of several seconds to protect himself from attack at the first round of pitstops.

But instead of trying to put himself "as far ahead as possible," Hamilton barely broke a sweat through the short first stint on ultra-soft tyres, allowing the chasing pack — led by Kimi Raikkonen's fast-starting Ferrari — to remain in contention.

Hamilton enjoyed the strategic advantage of stopping first, which left Rosberg more vulnerable to dropping into traffic, or potentially being jumped in the pits by Raikkonen's Ferrari, or



XPB IMAGES



Verstappen hit
Hulkenberg and
spun to the back

Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull, which was expected to do a longer first stint on the (harder) super-soft compound.

Rosberg's vulnerability only increased when Mercedes was forced to delay his release from his first stop on lap eight of 55, to avoid compromising the incoming Ferrari of Sebastian Vettel.

But Raikkonen's in-lap was ultimately too slow to allow him to get him ahead of Rosberg, despite making an earlier stop, while Red Bull called Ricciardo in (to his bemusement) before he could really stretch the Red Bull's legs.

"We weren't convinced the super-softs were going to have the longevity they had," explained Red Bull boss Christian Horner. "Daniel picked up a flatspot on the first lap into Turn 1, and we were also looking at the pace Sebastian had on the out-lap, and what we

didn't want to do was concede a place to Sebastian. It wasn't totally clear that Daniel would be able to pull away and clear that group; even a one-stop wasn't in our thinking at that point."

Had Red Bull left Ricciardo out it would have made him a factor on Hamilton's chessboard, but as it was Ricciardo remained stuck behind Raikkonen's Ferrari, while Ricciardo's Red Bull team-mate Max Verstappen became Rosberg's first real headache.

Verstappen spun to the back of the pack on the first lap, after making a slow start from sixth on the grid and making light contact with Nico Hulkenberg's Force India through the first turn.

He picked his way through the slower cars relatively easily, and was already back up to 10th position before Hamilton triggered the first round of stops on lap seven. When those had shaken >>



Rosberg had a nervy moment with Verstappen

out, Verstappen found himself running between the two Mercedes in second place, but uncertain about what to do next.

"I was not convinced [the tyres would last]," Verstappen said. "But if you feel the tyres are holding on pretty well... At one point I said to the team, 'Guys, don't box me, I want to go as long as I can' and of course that means you are trying to do a one-stop."

Verstappen's pedestrian pace as he tried to eke out his tyre life meant Rosberg found himself bottled up behind the Red Bull, with Raikkonen, Ricciardo and Vettel lurking in his mirrors.

This looked to be a potentially fantastic scenario for Hamilton – Rosberg paddling in a sea of Ferrari and Red Bull sharks – but a couple of key developments helped Rosberg escape the trap.

Firstly Raikkonen struggled for speed on the soft-compound tyre, wearing out the front-right in particular, which dropped him back from Rosberg and into the clutches of Ricciardo, who botched an overtaking attempt into Turn 11 on lap 19.

This brought Rosberg some valuable breathing space as Mercedes told him it was now "critical" he find his way past Verstappen and back into second spot.

Rosberg complied, diving inside Verstappen at Turn 8 on lap 20 and almost colliding with the Red Bull as Verstappen hung on around the outside in a desperate effort to stay ahead.

Rosberg really showed his mettle here, flirting with disaster but not marrying it. He tightened his own line, straightened up for the exit onto the second back straight, and blasted his way past the Red Bull. It was risky stuff with so much at stake, but Rosberg held his nerve impressively.

"That was a not a nice thing to do," said Rosberg. "It's critical to pass Verstappen' – that's not a nice thing to hear, that was

really bad, a horrible feeling."

Verstappen pitted on the next lap, and not long afterwards Ricciardo and then Raikkonen were in too. Mercedes waited until laps 28 and 29 before bringing the title challengers in for their final pitstops, which left Vettel's longer-running Ferrari leading.

Again Hamilton refused to unleash the potential of his Mercedes, leading his team to question his lack of pace. Hamilton remained silent, as he tried yet again to lay a trap for Rosberg.

Despite driving a quicker car on fresher tyres, Hamilton only made slight inroads into Vettel's advantage, still trailing by more than three seconds when the Ferrari eventually dived for the pits to make its final stop at the end of lap 37.

Vettel emerged sixth, trailing Hamilton by 18.7s with 18 laps to run. He immediately began lapping almost 2s faster than Hamilton – no surprise, given Hamilton's desire to back Rosberg into trouble. Mercedes urged Hamilton to up his pace, asking for high 1m44s laps (instead of the

late-1m45s Hamilton was producing consistently) to ward off the "imminent threat" that Vettel might snatch the victory.

"At that stage it looked like Sebastian would win the race, and there was probably two seconds, a second and a half, more pace in the car," explained Wolff. "We felt we would not lose the race if we were to increase the pace. He had two choices – either to disappear off into the distance and show that he's the quickest guy on the planet, and win the race irrespective of what's happening behind him, or decide the other way and bunch them up behind him."

Hamilton quite clearly chose the second option, and as the race neared its conclusion Rosberg began complaining that Hamilton was driving too slowly. Of course, Rosberg was perfectly entitled

Wolff: "At that stage it looked like Vettel would win the race"



HONE/LAT



S BLOWHAM/LAT

to try to pass Hamilton himself, and win the championship by winning the race, but he felt Hamilton was managing the race too well from the front, leaving Rosberg pincered from each end.

"I was trying at times but Lewis was doing it really well," explained Rosberg. "He pushed flat-out from Turn 21 all the way to the first sector, and then halfway through the second sector. And that's where you overtake."

"I couldn't get close enough. He has the same car as me. Through the fast corners there's no way for me to get close enough. Then he backed off in the next part where I couldn't overtake."

Meanwhile Vettel was making rapid progress on his fresher super-soft tyres, passing team-mate Raikkonen with ease on lap 41, and then drafting past Ricciardo's Red Bull into fourth place on lap 46. With nine to go Vettel was less than 6.5s off the lead, with only one more car between his and Rosberg's...

Mercedes told Hamilton he needed to up his pace to 1m45.1s in order to guarantee victory, but the leader refused to comply, »

Hamilton's sedate pace left Rosberg open to a late-race charge by Sebastian Vettel

QUALIFYING



ETHERINGTON/LAT

LEWIS HAMILTON MIGHT NOT HAVE RELIED ON PURE SPEED to win the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, but amid the mind games and funny business we got to see his true potential unleashed in qualifying, as Hamilton crushed title rival Nico Rosberg on a circuit where Rosberg took pole in 2014 and '15.

Hamilton's first Q3 lap was a 1m39.013s effort that Rosberg failed to match across that entire segment of the session. The championship leader trailed by more than three tenths after the first runs in Q3, and Hamilton maintained a similar gap by pumping in the first sub-1m39s lap of the weekend to seal the deal.

Rosberg showed flashes of form during Q1 and Q2, but couldn't string his laps together properly in the build-up to Q3. He was actually quicker than Hamilton through most of his Q2 lap, before dropping almost three tenths by running wide at Turn 17.

In Q3 his big weakness was sector two. Rosberg just could not do better than a 41.7s split in any of his final three qualifying runs, whereas both of Hamilton's Q3 splits were in the 41.5s. Hamilton was slightly slower than Rosberg through sector one, but the only driver to go sub-40s through the twists of sector three.

Rosberg admitted that Hamilton's level of performance was simply beyond him. "It wasn't possible for me to do that time, even though I tried everything," he said. "It was feeling good out there, I had a great balance. As qualifying went on it felt better and better – I got a good lap in the end, but it wasn't good enough."

Hamilton's final lap wasn't perfect, containing a few wheelspinning moments, and a big steering correction through the penultimate corner, but it was still easily good enough to get the job done, even though Hamilton himself reckoned he undercooked Turn 1 a little at the very beginning of his attempt.

"It's kind of crazy to think I have 12 poles considering I didn't even compete in three of them [qualifying sessions]," he said. "It could have been the ultimate year of pole positions."

Sebastian Vettel's Ferrari unexpectedly topped final practice in the heat of the early afternoon on Saturday, but he and team-mate Kimi Raikkonen were narrowly beaten to third when it mattered by Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull, which was over half a second adrift of Rosberg.

Ricciardo came good in Q3, after struggling during the early part of qualifying, while Raikkonen looked the favourite to be third after another consistently strong showing, only to miss out to Ricciardo by less than two hundredths of a second after a brief sideways moment on his final lap.

Raikkonen still outqualified Vettel for the fifth consecutive race. Vettel admitted he was "too aggressive" in the cooler conditions of qualifying. He also felt he lost rhythm when Max Verstappen's Red Bull went off briefly in front of him.

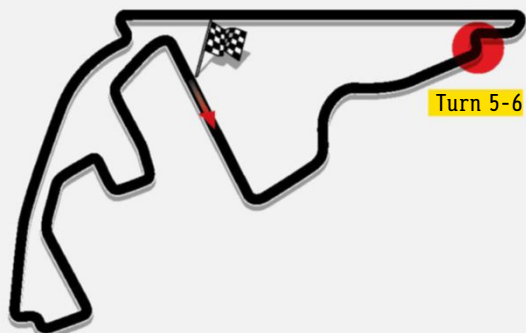
The Dutchman reckoned he would have been "easily P3" had he not twice locked up and run deep into Turn 11 at the end of the second back straight, costing him time.



Podium trio crossed the line less than a second apart



“SIGNIFICANT DESIGN FLAWS ARE OFTEN LOCKED IN”



THE CONSTANT PURSUIT of excellence in Formula 1 means those who fail to hit the mark technically in a given season are left brutally exposed.

Restrictive regulations on development means that significant design flaws are often locked in for the duration of the campaign too, which means teams and drivers must work with the blunt tools put at their disposal. A little in-season sharpening is pretty much all that can be done.

This situation is amplified at Renault, stymied by the

late takeover of the former Lotus operation at Enstone, which has meant shoehorning a Renault engine into an outdated and underdeveloped car, which was originally designed to use a Mercedes power unit.

All season the drivers have had to live with the consequent compromises and, although it is definitely not the slowest in the field, the car looks the most difficult to drive.

This is certainly the impression I get while watching from the approach to Turns 5 and 6 of Abu Dhabi's Yas Marina circuit, the tight left-right



Renault RS16's fundamental flaws make it hard to drive

complex at the far end of the track, before the straight.

Jolyon Palmer is doing his best to bend the RS16 to his will through the sort of short, sharp turns – with high kerbs – this car really hates. The front and rear don't seem properly connected, the car simply refusing to comply. Palmer has to partially avoid the aggressive apex kerbs, which requires a tighter and

slower line than rivals.

“In 5 and 6 you have to take the kerbs, otherwise you lose too much time,” he explains. “When we take them it's just unsettling our car probably more than other cars, so the car has a small transitional moment as you go over the kerb, whereas others don't even notice that. It's a really subtle difference, but it's that sort of thing that adds up.

“We were better last year, with the Lotus, at kerb-riding. This year we've lost a little bit in that area. It's not an easy car to drive generally, but it's been like this all year. After 21 races we should be able to get the most out of it.”

But not without a significant amount of personal effort...

BEN ANDERSON

Rosberg's joy
and relief
were palpable



suggesting his team should simply leave him alone to race as he saw fit. Mercedes even tried its nuclear option, deploying technical chief Paddy Lowe on the radio to urge Hamilton to reconsider.

"It was just to make it totally clear to him there was no bullshit to that point," Lowe explained. "There was a proper threat from Vettel.

"The objective for the team is to win the race, and ideally come second with the other car. We were very explicit about that. It's the same objective as the other 20 races. We don't distort our objectives in the context of the drivers' championship.

"We had some frustrations — we'd rather have some gap to mitigate against any possible risks. For whatever reason Lewis didn't show that pace."

Lowe's calls fell on deaf ears, with Hamilton fully aware that closing out a Mercedes one-two would leave him defeated in the ultimate battle. "I don't know why they didn't just let us race," said Lewis. "There was never a moment when I felt I was going to lose the race. I generally never try to do anything to harm the team or the brand or anything like that, but we've won the constructors' championship so it was down to me and Nico.

"I don't think I did anything dangerous. I don't feel I did anything unfair. We're fighting for a championship — I was in the lead, I control the pace. That's the rules."

Rosberg looked in real danger of losing second to Vettel as this race reached its denouement, but he was helped by the Ferrari failing in its first attempt to pass Verstappen's Red Bull. Vettel corrected a small slide coming out of Turn 9 on lap 50, which helped protect Verstappen from attack on the second back straight.

"Daniel was fairly straightforward to pass," Vettel explained. "But when I arrived behind Max the problem is you have car after car [to pass] and you begin to slide, so my tyres got worse."

Vettel got the job done on the next lap, leaving him another four to attack Rosberg, and maybe bring Verstappen with him. Both would need to pass to prevent Rosberg winning the championship, but ultimately neither could.

Verstappen felt he was struggling "a lot" on the straights, while Vettel reckoned that a combination of his burned-up tyres and Mercedes' formidable straightline speed prevented him from mounting a proper challenge.

"I tried everything but they were very, very quick down the straights," said Vettel. "The second straight was the spot I was having a look, but Nico defended well and closed the inside so I couldn't really go anywhere.

"I couldn't try something really stupid because Lewis was just ahead — if I really dived down the inside or outside I had a risk of hitting Lewis. The last laps were intense."

They certainly were for Rosberg, who stood firm under immense pressure from all sides to clinch his maiden world championship — 34 years after his father Keke conquered F1.

"I wanted to try and hold onto second because once I dropped one, who knows what kind of mess they are going to get into in front?" Rosberg said. "Verstappen was right behind — Verstappen right behind at the end, that was not something I wanted..."

Ultimately, the way Hamilton actually went about winning the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix proved his pre-race talk was nothing more than an attempt to play mind games with Rosberg, in the hope of destabilising him.

Hamilton may yet face consequences for the "precedent" set by his defiance of Mercedes' repeated instructions to speed up, according to Wolff. Mercedes said it would not interfere in the title battle ahead of this race, yet ended up trying to do exactly that, even if its intentions were simply to guarantee a one-two result for the team.

No-one can blame Hamilton for doing what he did. He was the rank outsider to win the championship, he needed at least two cars to finish between him and Rosberg to turn the title fight on its head; he gave it his best shot. Ultimately the others weren't quite quick enough to do Hamilton the favour he needed, while Rosberg showed a champion's resilience to cling on with everything at stake in the toughest race of his career. ❦

"There was never a moment when I felt I was going to lose the race"

Mercedes 'naive' not to expect Hamilton's go-slow

RED BULL TEAM PRINCIPAL Christian Horner believes Mercedes was "naive" not to expect Lewis Hamilton to back up Formula 1 team-mate Nico Rosberg during the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Hamilton received several radio messages during the race to speed up while setting a pace that allowed Red Bull and Ferrari to close on both Mercedes.

When asked by Autosport what he would have done with his drivers in that situation, Horner claimed he would not have interfered.

"With where they were at, it was just down to those guys, so it was only ever going to be that kind of battle between the two of them," said Horner.

"It was naive to think that there would be any different approach with what's at stake."

Horne added that Hamilton's tactics were legitimate and that there's no reason to criticise the outgoing world champion.

"He played completely within the rules – winning the race wasn't going to be enough for him today," said Horner.

"He needed cars between him [and Rosberg], and if he'd charged off into the distance that wouldn't have created that possibility.

"He didn't do anything dirty, he didn't do anything against the rules, and it would be unfair to criticise Lewis for the way that he drove."

Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff warned that Hamilton's tactics, against team instructions, set a dangerous precedent. "I'm in two minds: one half of me says undermining a structure in public means you're putting yourself before the team – that's very simple," said Wolff after the race. "Anarchy doesn't work in any team or any company.

"The other half says it was his only chance of winning the championship at that stage and maybe you cannot demand a racing driver to comply in a situation where his instincts did not make him comply.

"It's about finding a solution to solve the problem in the future, because a precedent has been set."



Button retires on F1 swansong with suspension failure



Button upbeat after possibly his last F1 race

JENSON BUTTON'S 305TH AND POTENTIALLY FINAL Formula 1 start was cut short by a suspension failure after just 12 laps of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Button was up to ninth after opting to run a long first stint on soft tyres, but suffered a failure of the front-right suspension after clouting the apex kerb at Turn 9 on lap 12 of the race.

The wheel buckled, and Button went off the road at the end of the following straight, before crawling back to the pits to retire.

Officially, Button is only taking a sabbatical in 2017, remaining as McLaren's reserve driver, with the option to return to racing if required in 2018.

But the British driver spent the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix weekend treating it as his final race in F1, and before the race he was given a guard of honour by friends, family and team members in the paddock as he walked to the garage.

The 2009 world champion said the suspension failure didn't dampen his weekend, describing what is likely to be his final race in Formula 1 as "really emotional" after a 17-year career at the pinnacle of motorsport.

"The race was short but I enjoyed everything else," Button said. "It was really emotional. I walked downstairs and a lot of people were lined up from the hospitality to the garage.

"I was very happy I had my sunglasses on. It's not what you want before the race but it was awesome all the same and I'm glad we had that moment.

"It's very difficult not to get emotional – I have had so many lovely messages. I've got to say a massive thank you to everybody who supported me, especially through the ups and downs. I take only good memories and experiences away from F1."



Ricciardo and Raikkonen slip back

DANIEL RICCIARDO AND KIMI Raikkonen both slipped out of the fight to put Nico Rosberg under pressure as the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix unfolded, despite qualifying strongly.

Ricciardo started third on the grid, but made a poor start and fell behind Raikkonen's Ferrari. Ricciardo began the race on super-soft tyres, but Red Bull abandoned the plan for him to run a long first stint to gain track position, which Ricciardo felt spoiled his race.

He eventually jumped Raikkonen in the pits, but then got stuck behind team-mate Max Verstappen, before getting passed by the charging second Ferrari of Sebastian Vettel late on.

"Obviously I tried to make some moves on him, but it was frustrating, we had the option to go long," Ricciardo told Autosport. "We should've done something different."

Raikkonen struggled to manage his front-right tyre through the longer later stints, eventually finishing a distant sixth behind Ricciardo.

"The car was OK but I struggled to keep the right-front alive and I was just really driving to keep it going," Raikkonen said.



Massa celebrated his 250th and final GP at Abu Dhabi

Massa bows out with points

RETIRING WILLIAMS DRIVER FELIPE Massa marked his 250th and final grand prix with two points for ninth place.

The Brazilian qualified 10th and ran ninth early on, before being passed by team-mate Valtteri Bottas on lap three. He reclaimed the position two laps later and then had a decent race, finishing close behind Sergio Perez's Force India.

"I'm really proud to have been fighting up to the last lap of the race in the same way I fought in the first lap of my career," said Massa. "I have finished my career with my head up, the same way I started."

Williams chief technical officer Pat

Symonds paid tribute to Massa's contribution to the team, admitting the performance in the race made him wonder why the Brazilian is retiring.

"Felipe has been really good for the team and when you see him drive the way he did today, racing Valtteri, racing Fernando Alonso, you sort of think, 'Why's he stopping?'" Symonds said.

"In 2014, he brought some prestige to the team and that was an important part of the restructuring. He's really built up the team's spirit. And he's raced well and got some points.

"A good guy, and I'm really sorry to see him go."

FORCE INDIA SEALS FOURTH PLACE

FORCE INDIA WRAPPED up fourth place in the constructors' championship with Nico Hulkenberg and Sergio Perez finishing seventh and eighth in Abu Dhabi.

The Silverstone-based squad – rebranded Force India in 2008 after racing as Spyker, Midland and, originally, Jordan – was almost certain of the

position going into the race given its advantage over Williams. But there was relief that a freak result in the race did not cost it the place.

Based on the prize money paid for 2015, finishing fourth rather than fifth is worth around \$3 million more, depending on the total revenues of F1 this year.

Q&A

BOB FERNLEY DEPUTY TEAM PRINCIPAL



What does fourth in the constructors' title mean?

"It's really the morale boost. What it does do is endorse what the team has been doing for the last three or four years.

You can never underestimate the enthusiasm that this will drive through the team to bring it to the next stage. While it's nice to have the extra funding coming in, that is incidental to the enthusiasm it will put and the commitment it will deliver for 2017."

How do you sustain this or take the next step?

"We continue to invest in and develop the team. There is a little bit more we can do to get efficiencies but the key element will be, if you're realistic about it, that there are four teams fighting for fourth place next year – Force India, McLaren, Williams and Toro Rosso. But it only takes one of the top three to make a mistake and then you have five teams fighting for third."

But are there bigger teams that have greater ultimate potential?

"Yes, but you have to look at other aspects. McLaren has the same tools we have, they also run in the Toyota windtunnel and have a similar CFD capacity. So it's about people, and I'd put our guys up against anybody that's there."

This was Nico Hulkenberg's last race for the team – what has he contributed?

"Nico and Sergio Perez has been a superb combination. He's been incredibly valuable and we never anticipated losing Nico, so our plans for 2017 were put in a bit of disarray. But we are very quietly excited about [new signing] Esteban Ocon."



Manor drivers blame each other for collision

MANOR DUO PASCAL Wehrlein and Esteban Ocon each blamed the other for not giving enough room after colliding while disputing 13th place in the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

The clash happened with six laps to go when

Ocon, on fresher rubber, tried to go around the outside of Wehrlein into Turn 11, the first part of a left/right/left complex.

They made light contact, sending both off track and bouncing over the 'speed bumps' in the runoff area. Ocon emerged

ahead after rejoining and went on to finish 13th, ahead of Wehrlein.

"I went to the outside but he didn't leave any space, so we collided and I had to go off track," said Ocon. "He didn't leave me space and he locked up."

Wehrlein was surprised

by Ocon's claim that he hadn't left him enough room, suggesting the Frenchman could have taken to the runoff area to avoid the contact.

"I didn't leave him room on the outside?" asked Wehrlein. "If we would watch to the right side,

I think there was more than 100 metres left for him. I think the guy on the inside maybe didn't have enough room."

Manor's failure to score in Abu Dhabi ensured that it finished last in the constructors' table behind Sauber.



Toro Rosso puncture nightmare

TORO ROSSO HAD TO stop running during the crucial second free practice session in Abu Dhabi while the FIA performed safety checks following a high-speed puncture on Daniil Kvyat's STR11.

Kvyat stopped on track with a left-rear puncture in FP1 and then spun at Turn 17 in the second session when his left-rear tyre deflated again. Back in the pits, the team and F1 technical

delegate Jo Bauer inspected the Russian's wheel.

While investigations were carried out, team-mate Carlos Sainz Jr was called back to the pits, with neither car returning to the track for the remainder of the session.

These latest incidents came after Sainz suffered two rear punctures during final practice at Austin, and Kvyat a similar failure during FP1 in Brazil.

Toro Rosso took measures

to counter the problem, which included trimming bodywork from the cars, and both drivers were able to run without further incident on Saturday and Sunday, though Sainz admitted Toro Rosso "don't know" the root cause of the problem.

The loss of track time hampered both drivers' preparations for qualifying, where they both went out in Q1, before suffering gearbox failures in the race.



Palmer penalised for Sainz clash

JOLYON PALMER WAS GIVEN A FIVE-SECOND penalty for rear-ending Carlos Sainz's Toro Rosso at Turn 17 while they battled for 13th place on lap 40 of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

The duo had just been lapped by Daniel Ricciardo when Palmer, who had been passed by Sainz earlier in the lap, hit the back of the Toro Rosso after locking up under braking.

Sainz spun and, after recovering, retired with a gearbox failure after completing just one more lap. Palmer rejoined after taking to the runoff area and went on to finish 17th.

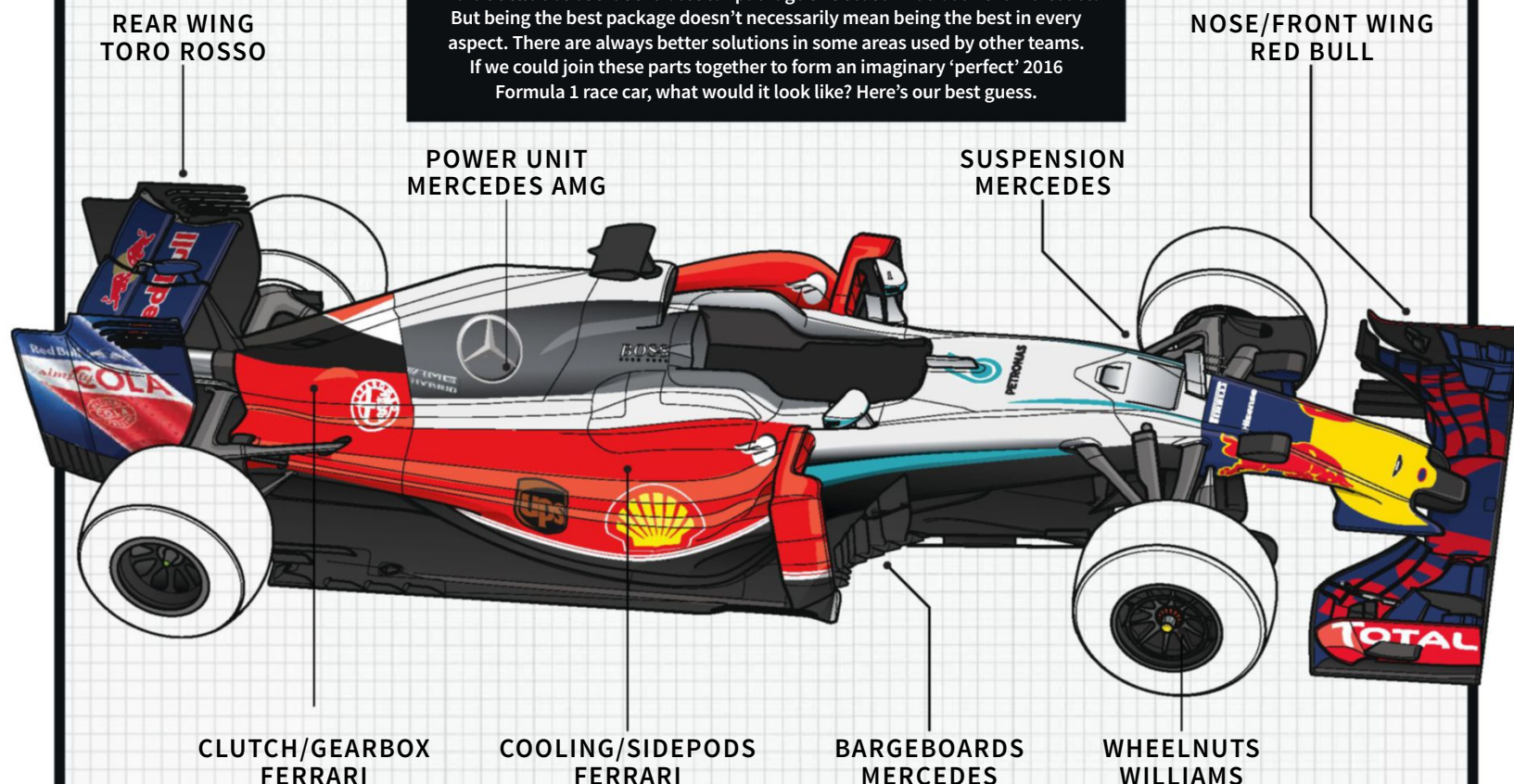
"He braked quite cautiously and I couldn't slow down as quick," said Palmer. "If you hit someone at the back, then it never looks good, but it was a mistake."

Sainz said: "I had a Red Bull in front of me so I had to be cautious. Sorry, you cannot blame me for that."



BEST OF 2016

There's little doubt that the best car package this season has been the Mercedes. But being the best package doesn't necessarily mean being the best in every aspect. There are always better solutions in some areas used by other teams. If we could join these parts together to form an imaginary 'perfect' 2016 Formula 1 race car, what would it look like? Here's our best guess.

**Red Bull front wing/nose**

Since the advent of the current aero regulations in 2009, Red Bull has had the ideal set-up, with a nose-down/tail-up raked attitude. This has the RB12's complex front wing skimming the ground and the nose starting to shape the airflow around the rest of the car.

Mercedes suspension

One of Mercedes' strongest suits for many years has been its understanding of suspension set-up, from FRIC to the current passive hydraulic pitch-control system. This gives the W07 Hybrid suppleness through turns for mechanical grip, then stiffer control for fast turns and preventing dive under braking. This solution, along with the innovative, shaped front wishbones, would be the optimum choice.

Mercedes powerplant

There is no doubting the choice of power unit. Since 2014, the Mercedes AMG hybrid engine has been the target for others to chase. It is a neatly packaged unit, with ideal lean-burn

combustion technology that is both economical with fuel and also able to deliver big horsepower. That provides 900bhp or more but still enables the drivers to race with under 100kg of fuel.

Mercedes bargeboards

If Red Bull has the ideal aero layout, then Mercedes is the king of the details. All the aero devices along the edge of the car are broken up into sharp-edged vortex-producing surfaces that shape the flow along the car. Most impressive have been the bargeboards. Most teams run a single surface with perhaps a few slots for finer airflow control. Mercedes boasts an aero device with six vanes and nine floor-level blades. These break up and redirect the airflow around and under the car, at a level of complexity not matched by any other team.

Ferrari clutch/gearbox

Mating a Ferrari transmission to the Mercedes power unit gives the best of both worlds. Not least because Ferrari mounts the gear cluster itself inside a

tiny carbonfibre cartridge unit that in turn sits inside the carbonfibre outer casing, splitting up the gearbox demands from the influence the outer case has on suspension geometry. Everything packaged together raises the hardware clear of the floor for better aerodynamics. The clutch is housed within the cartridge and clutch control has been key to such consistently great starts from Ferrari throughout the year.

Ferrari sidepods/cooling

The current power units create huge amounts of heat. This requires large coolers in large sidepods to manage the engine's thermal demands. Last season, Ferrari hit upon a series of louvres under and over the radiators to micromanage airflow through the cooler's core. This year, the rollhoop and engine cover form a third sidepod, which feeds not only the engine's airbox but also a twin intercooler set-up for the turbo. It both lowers air temperature going into the engine and keeps it consistently low.

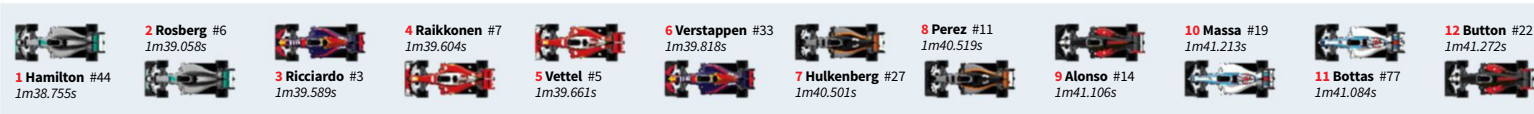
Williams wheelnut

Every team will chase tenths to be competitive in a race, and Williams has shown that whole seconds can be found by being consistent and fast with pitstops. Typically around the two-second mark for a full set of four tyres and holding the record for the fastest pitstop, Williams has developed its wheels, axles and wheelnuts to gain several seconds over a race distance.

Toro Rosso rear wing

Now and again, there's a new aero concept that every team soon starts to copy. This year, knowing it would have a power deficit over the course of the year with its year-old Ferrari engine, Toro Rosso found speed with its rear-wing efficiency, initially in the form of an open-louvred endplate. The louvres soon appeared on every car's rear-wing endplate, extending forwards to be open on the leading edge of the endplate. This design reduces drag and, along with some complex rear-wing profiles, creates downforce without excessive drag penalties.

F1/ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX RESULTS



Race results / 55 laps – 189.748 miles

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES	TIME IN PITS
1	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	1h38m04.013s	43		43.955s
2	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes	+0.439s	3		44.971s
3	Sebastian Vettel	Ferrari	+0.843s	8		43.583s
4	Max Verstappen	Red Bull-Renault	+1.685s			21.221s
5	Daniel Ricciardo	Red Bull-Renault	+5.315s	1		43.852s
6	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari	+18.816s			44.046s
7	Nico Hulkenberg	Force India-Mercedes	+50.114s			43.316s
8	Sergio Perez	Force India-Mercedes	+58.776s			43.320s
9	Felipe Massa	Williams-Mercedes	+59.436s			43.314s
10	Fernando Alonso	McLaren-Honda	+59.896s			44.676s
11	Romain Grosjean	Haas-Ferrari	+1m16.777s			45.365s
12	Esteban Gutierrez	Haas-Ferrari	+1m35.113s			44.134s
13	Esteban Ocon	Manor-Mercedes	-1 lap			47.061s
14	Pascal Wehrlein	Manor-Mercedes	-1 lap			56.344s
15	Marcus Ericsson	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap			22.991s
16	Felipe Nasr	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap			53.205s
17	Jolyon Palmer	Renault	-1 lap			1m09.514s
R	Carlos Sainz	Toro Rosso-Ferrari	41 laps-gearbox			43.696s
R	Daniil Kvyat	Toro Rosso-Ferrari	14 laps-gearbox			21.896s
R	Jenson Button	McLaren-Honda	12 laps-suspension			-
R	Valtteri Bottas	Williams-Mercedes	6 laps-suspension			-
R	Kevin Magnussen	Renault	5 laps-collision			27.068s

Fastest laps

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Vettel	1m43.729s	-	43
2	Alonso	1m44.495s	+0.766s	50
3	Ricciardo	1m44.889s	+1.160s	29
4	Grosjean	1m44.970s	+1.241s	45
5	Hamilton	1m45.137s	+1.408s	37
6	Raikkonen	1m45.163s	+1.434s	35
7	Verstappen	1m45.187s	+1.458s	36
8	Perez	1m45.249s	+1.520s	30
9	Rosberg	1m45.261s	+1.532s	33
10	Massa	1m45.675s	+1.946s	33
11	Palmer	1m45.715s	+1.986s	46
12	Gutierrez	1m45.928s	+2.199s	45
13	Hulkenberg	1m45.949s	+2.220s	31
14	Wehrlein	1m46.145s	+2.416s	26
15	Ocon	1m46.189s	+2.460s	46
16	Ericsson	1m46.216s	+2.487s	40
17	Nasr	1m46.287s	+2.558s	44
18	Sainz	1m46.591s	+2.862s	30
19	Bottas	1m47.837s	+4.108s	4
20	Magnussen	1m48.601s	+4.872s	4
21	Kvyat	1m48.752s	+5.023s	13
22	Button	1m48.753s	+5.024s	4

WEATHER Dry, dusk; track 29C, air 26C WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 116.087mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 119.773mph ● New ○ Used ● Ultra-soft ● Super-soft ● Soft ● Medium ● Hard ● Wet ● Intermediate

8

Haas claimed its eighth 11th-place finish of the season thanks to Grosjean

10

Hamilton set a record for wins in a season without winning the world championship

16

Stirling Moss retook the record for wins without a world championship after Rosberg's triumph

20

Mercedes set a new record for pole positions in an F1 season

33

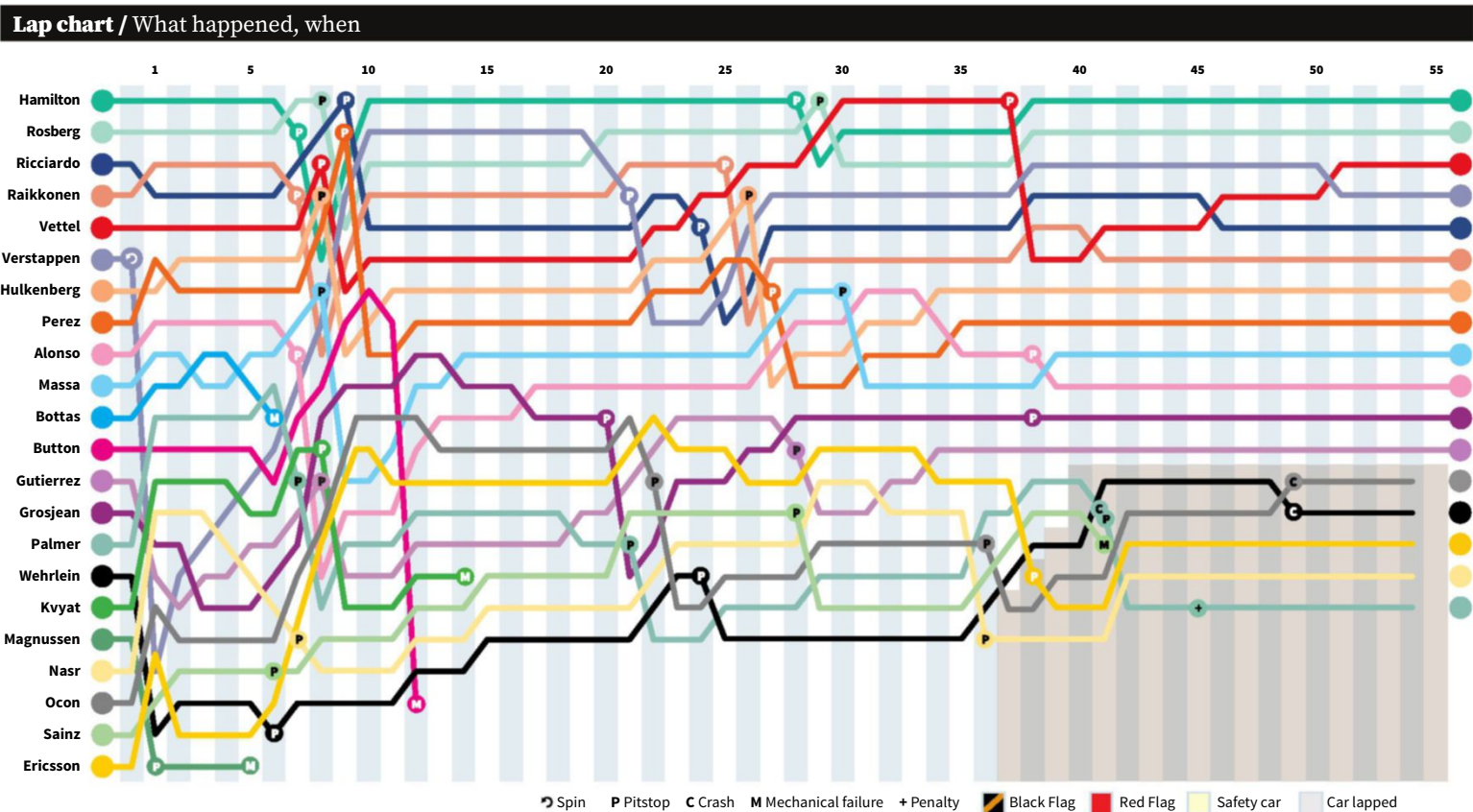
Rosberg is the 33rd driver to have won the world championship

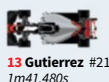
34

Rosberg won the title 34 years after dad Keke – the same gap as Graham (first title) and Damon Hill

250

Massa started his 250th grand prix before retiring from F1

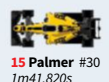




13 Gutierrez #21
1m41.480s



14 Grosjean #8
1m41.564s



15 Palmer #30
1m41.820s



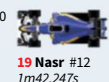
16 Wehrlein #94
1m41.995s



17 Kvyat #26
1m42.003s



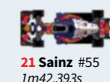
18 Magnussen #20
1m42.142s



19 Nasr #12
1m42.247s



20 Ocon #31
1m42.286s



21 Sainz #55
1m42.393s



22 Ericsson #9
1m42.637s

Qualifying 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m39.487s
2	Raikkonen	1m40.338s
3	Vettel	1m40.341s
4	Verstappen	1m40.424s
5	Rosberg	1m40.511s
6	Perez	1m40.864s
7	Hulkenberg	1m41.000s
8	Ricciardo	1m41.002s
9	Massa	1m41.157s
10	Button	1m41.158s
11	Bottas	1m41.192s
12	Grosjean	1m41.467s
13	Alonso	1m41.616s
14	Gutierrez	1m41.639s
15	Palmer	1m41.775s
16	Wehrlein	1m41.886s
17	Kvyat	1m42.003s
18	Magnussen	1m42.142s
19	Nasr	1m42.247s
20	Ocon	1m42.286s
21	Sainz	1m42.393s
22	Ericsson	1m42.637s

WEATHER Dry, dusk; track 29C, air 26C

Race briefing

FRIDAY PRACTICE

ALFONSO CELIS replaced Hulkenberg at Force India

JORDAN KING replaced Ocon at Manor

RACE PENALTIES

PALMER 5 seconds for causing a collision

Qualifying 2

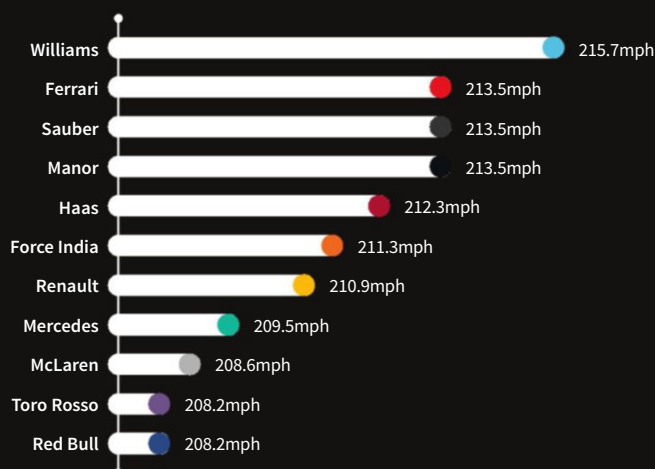
POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m39.382s
2	Rosberg	1m39.490s
3	Raikkonen	1m39.629s
4	Verstappen	1m39.903s
5	Vettel	1m40.034s
6	Ricciardo	1m40.429s
7	Hulkenberg	1m40.709s
8	Perez	1m40.743s
9	Massa	1m40.858s
10	Alonso	1m41.044s
11	Bottas	1m41.084s
12	Button	1m41.272s
13	Gutierrez	1m41.480s
14	Grosjean	1m41.564s
15	Palmer	1m41.820s
16	Wehrlein	1m41.995s

Qualifying 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m38.755s
2	Rosberg	1m39.058s
3	Ricciardo	1m39.589s
4	Raikkonen	1m39.604s
5	Vettel	1m39.661s
6	Verstappen	1m39.818s
7	Hulkenberg	1m40.501s
8	Perez	1m40.519s
9	Alonso	1m41.106s
10	Massa	1m41.213s

Speed trap

Fastest for each constructor in qualifying



Free practice 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m42.869s
2	Rosberg	1m43.243s
3	Verstappen	1m43.297s
4	Ricciardo	1m43.362s
5	Vettel	1m44.005s
6	Perez	1m44.155s
7	Raikkonen	1m44.556s
8	Sainz	1m44.685s
9	Massa	1m45.039s
10	Ericsson	1m45.168s
11	Celis	1m45.476s
12	Grosjean	1m45.600s
13	Nasr	1m45.778s
14	Gutierrez	1m45.925s
15	Bottas	1m45.940s
16	Palmer	1m46.219s
17	Magnussen	1m46.372s
18	Alonso	1m46.379s
19	Wehrlein	1m46.458s
20	Button	1m47.127s
21	King	1m47.558s
22	Kvyat	2m01.989s

WEATHER Dry, sunny; track 42C, air 29C

Free practice 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m40.861s
2	Rosberg	1m40.940s
3	Vettel	1m41.130s
4	Verstappen	1m41.389s
5	Ricciardo	1m41.390s
6	Raikkonen	1m41.464s
7	Bottas	1m41.959s
8	Perez	1m42.041s
9	Hulkenberg	1m42.264s
10	Massa	1m42.268s
11	Alonso	1m42.366s
12	Button	1m42.823s
13	Gutierrez	1m43.012s
14	Grosjean	1m43.108s
15	Palmer	1m43.272s
16	Ocon	1m43.600s
17	Wehrlein	1m43.754s
18	Nasr	1m43.903s
19	Ericsson	1m44.045s
20	Magnussen	1m44.117s
21	Sainz	1m44.478s
22	Kvyat	1m45.948s

WEATHER Dry, dusk; track 29C, air 26C

Free practice 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m40.775s
2	Verstappen	1m40.912s
3	Raikkonen	1m40.999s
4	Hamilton	1m41.065s
5	Rosberg	1m41.168s
6	Ricciardo	1m41.831s
7	Perez	1m41.885s
8	Hulkenberg	1m42.067s
9	Bottas	1m42.076s
10	Gutierrez	1m42.354s
11	Alonso	1m42.585s
12	Palmer	1m42.616s
13	Button	1m42.664s
14	Massa	1m42.683s
15	Grosjean	1m42.805s
16	Magnussen	1m43.057s
17	Wehrlein	1m43.145s
18	Sainz	1m43.301s
19	Nasr	1m43.417s
20	Ocon	1m43.733s
21	Kvyat	1m44.105s
22	Ericsson	1m44.238s

WEATHER Dry, sunny; track 34C, air 30C

SEASON STATS

Drivers' championship

1	Rosberg	385
2	Hamilton	380
3	Ricciardo	256
4	Vettel	212
5	Verstappen	204
6	Raikkonen	186
7	Perez	101
8	Bottas	85
9	Hulkenberg	72
10	Alonso	54
11	Massa	53
12	Sainz	46
13	Grosjean	29
14	Kvyat	25
15	Button	21
16	Magnussen	7
17	Nasr	2
18	Palmer	1
19	Wehrlein	1
20	Vandoorne	1
21	Gutierrez	0
22	Ericsson	0
23	Ocon	0
24	Haryanto	0

Constructors' championship

1	Mercedes	765
2	Red Bull	468
3	Ferrari	398
4	Force India	173
5	Williams	138
6	McLaren	76
7	Toro Rosso	63
8	Haas	29
9	Renault	8
10	Sauber	2
11	Manor	1

Wins

Hamilton	10
Rosberg	9
Ricciardo	1
Verstappen	1

Fastest laps

Rosberg	6
Ricciardo	4
Hamilton	3
Vettel	3
Alonso	1
Hulkenberg	1
Kvyat	1
Raikkonen	1
Verstappen	1

Pole positions

Hamilton	12
Rosberg	8
Ricciardo	1

Qualifying battle

ROS	9	12	HAM
VET	10	11	RAI
MAS	4	17	BOT
RIC	11	6	VES
RIC	4	0	KVY
PER	9	12	HUL
MAG	12	9	PAL
KVY	6	11	SAI
VES	3	1	SAI
ERI	13	8	NAS
ALO	15	5	BUT
BUT	0	1	VAN
OCO	2	7	WEH
HAR	5	7	WEH
GRO	12	9	GUT

Hamilton runs out of options

Very few drivers excelled on a day when even the winner was on a tactical go-slow

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

[@BenAndersonAuto](#)

MERCEDES



9 LEWIS HAMILTON
Mercedes questioned

Hamilton's tactics in this race, but really he had no other option if he wanted to be champion. You can't really give a driver who doesn't drive to his best full marks, but Hamilton gets credit for putting up a fight in the face of difficult odds, and pressure from his own team.



8 NICO ROSBERG
Rosberg was the second best

Mercedes driver in Abu Dhabi, but that's all he needed to be. Showed steel to pull off a pass on Verstappen when asked, resisted a sustained late attack from Vettel, and generally stood firm in the face of Hamilton's go-slow tactics, refusing to crack under pressure. A job very well done.

FERRARI



8 SEBASTIAN VETTEL
A strong drive from Vettel, who

finished on the podium for the first time since Monza. Admitted to overaggression in qualifying, but his Sunday drive was decent. Was gunning for the win, but used up too much rubber charging past the Red Bulls, before reaching the Mercedes roadblock.



7 KIMI RAIKKONEN
Ultimately a disappointing race

for Raikkonen, who ran third at the end of the first lap but slipped to a distant sixth. Got shuffled back through the pitstop cycles, and struggled to keep his right-front tyre alive through the two major stints. The bright spot was outqualifying Vettel for the fifth race in a row.

WILLIAMS



6 VALTTERI BOTTAS
Disappointing to see Bottas qualify

behind both Force Indias, team-mate Massa and Alonso's McLaren, given he was quicker than the Force Indias in FP2. Started the race pretty well, passing Massa decisively into Turn 11. A few laps later the suspension gave out over a bump, so that was that.



8 FELIPE MASSA
After the heartache of Brazil

this was a good way for Massa to bow out of Formula 1. He was perhaps fortunate that Bottas retired after passing him, but did well to reel in Perez as the race wore on, while also just about managing to keep Alonso's charging McLaren at bay at the end.

RED BULL



7 DANIEL RICCIARDO
Ricciardo hoped to be the spoiler

in the title fight, and produced a superb qualifying lap to claim prime position behind the Mercedes drivers. Weak strategy was his undoing. He pitted too soon to ditch super-softs, and his second stint was also too short, costing track position to Vettel and Verstappen.



7 MAX VERSTAPPEN
A decent result for Verstappen, who

finished within two seconds of Hamilton despite a messy weekend. Made mistakes in qualifying and spun after hitting Hulkenberg at Turn 1, but carved through the lower order and capitalised on Hamilton's slow going to make a one-stop strategy work.

FORCE INDIA



7 SERGIO PEREZ
There was little to choose between

the Force India drivers again, with just 0.018s separating them in qualifying. Perez felt he could have done better but for overcompensating for understeer in the car. After an early battle with Hulkenberg, he tracked him through the second stint, but fell away towards the end.



8 NICO HULKENBERG
This was a very solid performance

from Hulkenberg, in his final race for Force India. Escaped contact at Turn 1 without it ruining his race for once. Felt he picked up some floor damage, but nevertheless quickly repassed Perez, and held him at bay to the flag, stretching well clear over the final five laps.

RENAULT



5 KEVIN MAGNUSSEN
Magnussen's stint with Renault

ended with a whimper. Was off the pace all weekend, and couldn't explain why. A near-enough four-tenths gap to Palmer in qualifying was too much. Picked up suspension and front-wing damage on lap one from a clash with Ocon's Manor. Tried to continue but had to retire.



7 JOLYON PALMER
Palmer did an excellent job to

make Q2 again, and started the race brilliantly too, rising to 11th on the opening lap. That was as good as it got though. Struggled with front-tyre wear and fell back into a battle with Sainz. Was penalised for hitting him, and finished last of those classified.

Felipe Massa bowed out of
Formula 1 with a points finish



TORO ROSSO



7 DANIIL KVIAT

A decent performance in tricky circumstances that went unrewarded. To almost make Q2, and beat Sainz by nearly four tenths, was no mean feat given the track time lost to FIA safety checks following punctures in FP1 and FP2. Kvyat rose to 13th on the first lap, but 13 laps later his gearbox failed.



6 CARLOS SAINZ JR

This was a bad way to end a fine second season in F1 for Sainz. Toro Rosso's FP2 safety concerns hampered him, as did a "3-5km/h" speed deficit in qualifying, where he failed to escape Q1 for the first time this year. Battled hard in the race, until Palmer rear-ended him at Turn 17. Retired with gearbox failure.

SAUBER



7 FELIPE NASR

Apart from FP1, where his car looked tricky to drive, Nasr was the fastest of the Sauber drivers through practice and qualifying. Made a "mega" start to the race to run 14th, before slipping back. Survived a brush with Ocon and might have beaten Ericsson without a front-wing change.



6 MARCUS ERICSSON

Qualifying has generally been strong for Ericsson this season but he underperformed here, apologising for a big mistake at Turn 17 on his final run in Q1, which left him slowest of all. Did a solid job with one-stop strategy in the race, which was more about spoiling Manor's day than scoring points.

McLAREN



6 JENSON BUTTON

Button has had a rough ride of late, but performed better here than at recent races, getting closer to Alonso in qualifying than at any time since Japan. What may turn out to be Button's final race in F1 ended before it really got going, the car's suspension failing after he clouted the Turn 9 apex kerb on lap 12.



8 FERNANDO ALONSO

Alonso was relentless as usual and exploited Williams's underperformance in Q2 (Bottas) and Q3 (Massa) to squeak his McLaren ahead of both on the grid. Dropped behind Massa at the first round of stops, so drove a long second stint to set up a charge, which almost paid off as he homed in on Massa and Perez.

MANOR



7 PASCAL WEHRLEIN

Wehrlein was the unsung hero of qualifying, making Q2 for the fifth time with a little help from Toro Rosso's woes. Got delayed on the first lap by Verstappen's spin, and lost 12s to a slow first pitstop, but drove well to recover ahead of both Saubers and Ocon, before the late collision with his team-mate.



7 ESTEBAN OCON

Faster than Wehrlein on Friday, despite sitting out the first session, but described qualifying as a "disaster" as he struggled with the ultra-soft tyre. Was battle-scarred in the race, colliding with Magnussen, Nasr and Wehrlein, but achieved a decent result in spite of all the paint-rubbing.

HAAS



7 ROMAIN GROSJEAN

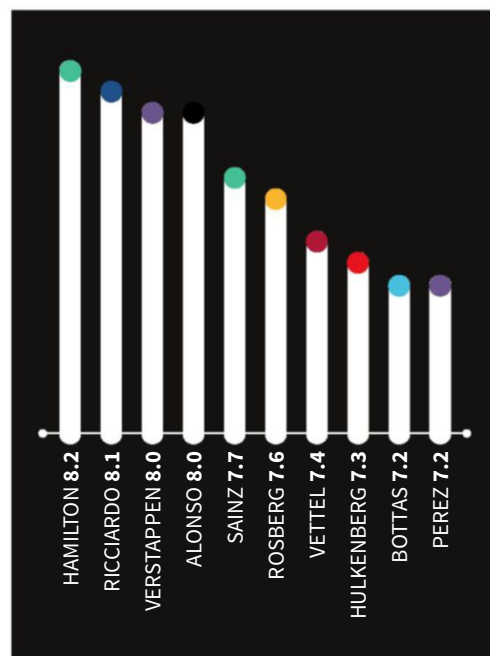
Grosjean suffered a lot of niggling problems that disrupted his Friday. He felt the tyres were always behaving out of sync, and couldn't repeat his qualifying heroics from Brazil. The early part of the race was tricky, but once things settled down his pace was strong, and he beat Gutierrez comfortably.



6 ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ

Did well to squeak ahead of Grosjean in qualifying, having trailed him in Q1. The race was messy early on, as Haas got shuffled back and Gutierrez was outmuscled by Palmer. Strategy compromised him, leaving him a lot of work recovering through traffic, but his pace was also patchy, requiring the team to chivvy him.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATING



Nico Rosberg's road to the title

From fresh-faced karting tearaway to Formula 1 champion of the world

By Edd Straw, Editor-in-Chief



2000 KARTING

Rosberg was a champion at national and international karting level, but it was his time alongside Hamilton at works CRG team MBM (Mercedes-Benz McLaren) that's remembered now that they've been reunited with the Silver Arrows. You may have seen their duel, available on YouTube, as 15-year-olds for the 2000 Karting World Cup in Japan, won by Hamilton...



2002 HIS FIRST SINGLE-SEATER CROWN

After making his single-seater debut with three races in the Formula BMW Iberia series the previous year, Rosberg moved into the competitive German Formula BMW Championship in 2002. Driving for father Keke's team, he dominated, winning nine times and beating Maxi Gotz, now in the DTM, to the title.

2002 FIRST FORMULA 1 TEST

As a prize for his Formula BMW success, Rosberg had his first taste of an F1 car at the age of 17 with Williams on December 3 2002. He completed 38 laps on his first day in the car at Barcelona and was delighted with the day, despite a late spin. "It was sensational, now I don't want to drive anything else," said Rosberg. "The first laps were like a game with a PlayStation – everything went so fast and seemed so unreal. My father had advised me not to attempt too much and just enjoy the whole experience."



2003 FIRST MEETING WITH HAMILTON IN CARS

Rosberg stepped up to the newly formed F3 Euro Series in 2003, driving for Team Rosberg. He took his first, and only, victory of the season at Le Mans and finished eighth in the championship behind, among others, fellow future F1 racers Christian Klien, Markus Winkelhock and Timo Glock. But it was in the season-ending blue-riband Macau Grand Prix, with Rosberg now driving for Carlin Motorsport, that he first came up against Lewis Hamilton in cars. Neither finished the race. They also contested the Korea Super Prix, this time with Hamilton failing to finish and Rosberg 11th – although Hamilton stunned by taking pole position on only his second outing in F3.



DUNBAR/LAT



DUNBAR/LAT

2003 FIRST 'PROPER' F1 TEST

Exactly one year after his first go in an F1 car, Rosberg was invited back to test for Williams as part of a driver-evaluation process alongside fellow son-of-a-world-champion-who-used-to-drive-for-the-team Nelson Piquet Jr – with both trying the Williams FW25 at Jerez. In these tests, and the ones that followed a year later in 2004, Rosberg made the best impression and by '05 he was a regular test driver.



IRI MEIER/LAT



EBREY/LAT

2004 BEATING HAMILTON IN F3

Rosberg returned to the F3 Euro Series in 2004, again winning one race and finishing fourth in the championship – one place, and two points, ahead of Hamilton. But Hamilton took revenge in the season-ending Bahrain Super Prix, which he won ahead of Rosberg. With Hamilton staying on for a second season and crushing the opposition the following year, and Rosberg moving on, their paths would not cross again before F1.



2005 INAUGURAL GP2 CHAMPION

Rosberg stepped up to the new GP2 Series in 2005. Driving for the ART Grand Prix team, he had a patchy start to the campaign, but a double victory in the season finale in Bahrain meant that he was able to overhaul Heikki Kovalainen to win the championship.



**2006
POINTS, AND FASTEST LAP, ON F1 DEBUT**
Promoted to a race seat at Williams-BMW in 2006 having tested regularly in '05, Rosberg stacked up well against the rapid Mark Webber, scoring two points and setting fastest lap on his debut in Bahrain. He only scored once more that season in what was a difficult year for Williams.



**2007/08
REUNITED WITH HAMILTON**

With Hamilton stepping up to race for McLaren in 2007, they were again sharing the grid. Rosberg finished ninth in that year's championship, but in the first race of the following season in Melbourne he shared a grand prix podium with Hamilton for the first time by finishing third.

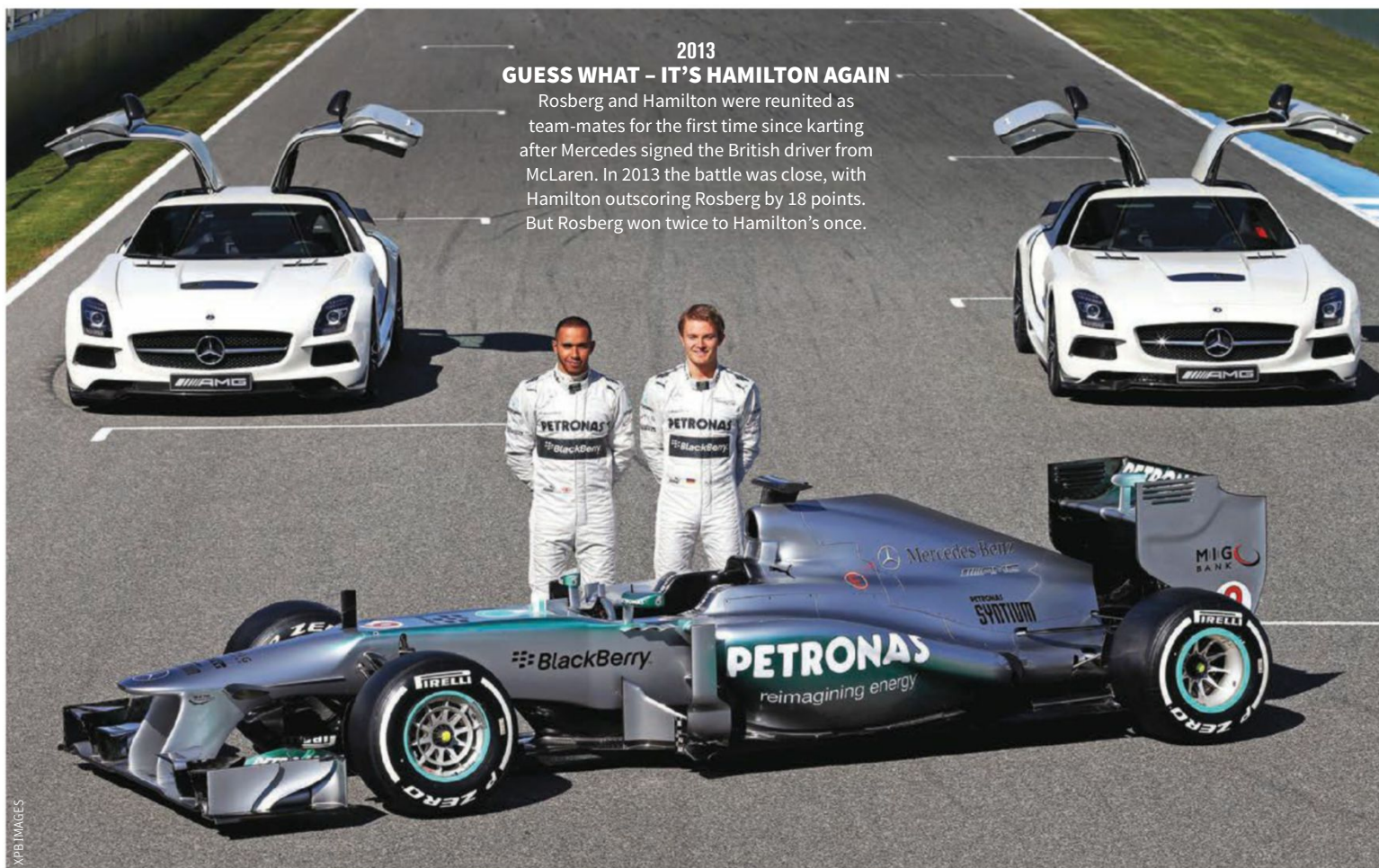


**2010
SCHUMACHER BEATER**

Having come close to a deal to join BMW Sauber, only for the plan to fall apart when the manufacturer decided to pull out of F1, Rosberg was signed by the new Mercedes team for 2010 after four years with Williams. In his first season he outscored unretired seven-time world champion team-mate Michael Schumacher 142-72 – although he only took three podium finishes.



**2012
WINNER AT LAST**
On his 111th F1 start, Rosberg took his first victory from pole position in the 2012 Chinese GP.



2013 GUESS WHAT – IT’S HAMILTON AGAIN

Rosberg and Hamilton were reunited as team-mates for the first time since karting after Mercedes signed the British driver from McLaren. In 2013 the battle was close, with Hamilton outscoring Rosberg by 18 points. But Rosberg won twice to Hamilton’s once.



2014 MASTER OF MONACO

Rosberg’s father Keke declared that winning the Monaco Grand Prix (he did it in 1983 with a stunning drive after starting on slicks in the wet) is one of the key boxes to tick in an F1 career. Rosberg ticked it in 2013 and kept ticking it, adding victories in ’14 and ’15. Only Ayrton Senna, Graham Hill, Michael Schumacher and Alain Prost have more Monaco victories.

2014/15 TITLE DEFEAT

Rosberg fought with Hamilton for the 2014 title. He went into the double-points Abu Dhabi finale behind and was hit with an ERS problem while trailing his team-mate. He won five times to Hamilton’s 11 and many suggested this would be his sole crack at the crown, especially as he had a difficult ’15 season and didn’t run Hamilton anywhere near as close.



2016 CHAMPION!

Rosberg won four races on the bounce at the start of the year, but it seemed all was lost when Hamilton came back to reclaim the points lead mid-season. But Rosberg was resurgent and Hamilton unfortunate, with Rosberg clinching the title in last Sunday’s Abu Dhabi Grand Prix by five points.



M-Sport is looking like Ogier's best option for 2017

GARY JONES

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Ogier tests 2017 Toyota and Ford

A MONTH AGO, SUCH A SCENE WAS inconceivable. Four Fridays earlier, Sebastien Ogier and his Volkswagen Polo had been destroying the opposition on day one of Rally GB.

Unexpectedly, the Frenchman was back in Wales last Friday. Even more unexpectedly, he was driving a Ford Fiesta RS WRC. And that was two days after he'd been to Spain to drive a Toyota Yaris WRC. Such is the life of a four-time world champion, wanted but no longer needed by his current employer.

The waves created by Volkswagen's departure from the WRC may have diminished slightly, but there's still a tsunami tearing through the middle of the driver market.

Despite speculation that Jari-Matti Latvala has done a deal with his countryman Tommi Makinen for a Yaris next season, Toyota is denying any agreements beyond Juho Hanninen's 13-round contract for 2017. Sources close to the Finnish squad have hinted that odds on Ogier joining the Japanese giant lengthened after he stepped out of the Yaris last week.

One seasoned observer said: "Have you seen the footage from the test? Take a look. It wouldn't matter how many zeroes were on the bottom line..."

Ogier himself has declined to comment on either test. With Citroen team principal Yves Matton now following a similar line, there's even speculation that he could be getting ready to run a C3 WRC.

But where? The team's hardware is all back in Versailles being rebuilt in time for a Monte Carlo test later this month.

It's almost impossible to imagine that Ogier will leave it until the middle of December before returning to the cockpit of a Citroen. More likely, he's simply not going to get the opportunity

— which would tally with stories of PSA chairman Carlos Tavares declining to sign-off on a multi-million-euro purchase order for the four-time champion.

And this leaves Ogier with two choices: M-Sport or a year off.

A season on the sidelines would, no doubt, be attractive to a man who's thoroughly enjoying family life. On the other hand, there's the opportunity to become the first driver to take the championship with two different manufacturers since Juha Kankkunen in 1993. And there's no shortage of desire from M-Sport to see him in one of the Cumbrian-built cars next season.

Talking to Autosport just hours after watching Ogier pounding around the Walter's Arena section of the Rheola stage, team principal Malcolm Wilson worked hard to contain his enthusiasm. He wasn't about to spill any details of negotiations, but suffice to say he was impressed with what he saw from Ogier.

"I was determined to make this happen before he came to test the car," said Wilson. "But now I'm more determined than ever. People had told me how straightforward and easy Seb was to work with and that's just how I found him.

"He and Julien [Ingrassia] were totally professional and respectful. I like that. And from watching, he looked like he gave the ball a very good kick. He came in and changed the car a little bit — he was keen to see how specific changes affected it. The test was pretty perfect."

Done deal? As Autosport closed for press, there was even talk of an announcement coming this week.

"There's nothing more to say on that one," said Wilson. "Negotiations are ongoing; the discussions continue."

DAVID EVANS



Standing restarts will replace current single-file system

FORMULA 1

Restart rejig for F1

FORMULA 1 TEAMS AND BERNIE Ecclestone have agreed in principle to introduce standing restarts after safety-car periods from 2017 onwards.

All 11 team principals met with F1 boss Ecclestone for a 30-minute meeting in the Abu Dhabi paddock last Friday afternoon. The idea was tabled and Autosport understands it met with agreement from all.

It is felt that standing restarts will improve the show, especially given the start of the race is the most watched part of a broadcast.

The details of the proposals still need to be

finalised. The FIA said any proposal would need to go through due process before being ratified at the World Motor Sport Council.

That means the Strategy Group and F1 Commission need to approve it before it is put forward to the WMSC, which was due to meet on Wednesday of this week in Vienna.

"It spices the show up and that's a good thing," said Haas team principal Gunther Steiner. "We all love starts. There is a risk, but when there is risk there can be a reward — some will win, some will lose."

LAWRENCE BARRETT

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Porsche champs axed

AUDI NEVER SACKED CHAMPIONS OR winners of the Le Mans 24 Hours. Sister marque Porsche has effectively done just that by failing to renew the LMP1 contracts of Marc Lieb and Romain Dumas for next year's World Endurance Championship.

Lieb and Dumas may have done the double with Neel Jani by winning the WEC title and Le Mans, yet they were rarely in the same class as their Swiss team-mate. As

a trio, they stacked up badly against the sister car driven by Mark Webber, Timo Bernhard and Brendon Hartley, three equally matched drivers who won four of the six races that made up the second leg of the series.

Releasing Lieb and Dumas to take new roles within Porsche can be regarded as a reflection of just how competitive the WEC is and will continue to be in Audi's absence next season. The days of a manufacturer retaining drivers based on their results rather than the stopwatch are probably over.

GARY WATKINS

● Three Porsche seats are open for 2017. Porsche GT drivers Nick Tandy and Earl Bamber, who drove the winning 919 at Le Mans in 2015, look certain to take two while Audi driver Andre Lotterer appears set to move over to sister marque Porsche following his long-term employer's departure from the WEC.



Jani (right) is the only retained champ

IN THE HEADLINES



FERRARI JUNIORS TO GP2 WITH PREMA

Ferrari juniors Charles Leclerc, the GP3 champion (right), and Antonio Fuoco (left) will graduate to GP2 in 2017 with Prema Racing. Macau Grand Prix podium finisher Sergio Sette Camara will also step up to GP2 with MP Motorsport.

ROSBERG: VERSTAPPEN NEEDS GUIDANCE

Ex-Formula 1 world champion Keke Rosberg thinks Max Verstappen is "throwing away great results" and needs more guidance to cut out mistakes. Verstappen spun at the first corner in Abu Dhabi's season finale, dropping to last before recovering to finish fourth.

TCR GETS MONACO GP SUPPORT SLOT

The TCR International Series will support Formula 1's Monaco Grand Prix next year. It will also support the Bahrain and Abu Dhabi F1 races, the World Endurance Championship at Spa and kick off the season in Georgia, international motorsport's first visit to the country.

DAYTONA DEBUT, DTM TEST FOR DUVAL

Audi's Loic Duval will contest the Daytona 24 Hours for the first time with the US DragonSpeed LMP2 squad next January. The future of Duval, who also races in Formula E, is unclear following Audi's withdrawal from the WEC, but he will test an Audi DTM car at Jerez this week.

HUGHES TIPPED FOR F3 SWITCH

GP3 race winner Jake Hughes is tipped for a switch to the Formula 3 European Championship with Hitech GP next season. The 22-year-old tested one of Hitech's Dallara-Mercedes cars at Silverstone on Tuesday and Wednesday.

PIGOT SADDLES UP NEW HORSEPOWER

Indy Lights champion Spencer Pigot had his first test in the Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing Dallara-Honda IndyCar he will race next season at Sebring last week. The 22-year-old will contest three races, including the Indianapolis 500.

CITROEN JOINS SUPER TC2000

Citroen will enter the Argentinian Super TC2000 category next season with a trio of C4s. It joins Chevrolet, Fiat, Peugeot, Renault and Toyota as works entries.

SAFARI COULD RETURN TO WRC IN 2019

A timetable has been put in place to return the Safari Rally to the World Rally Championship. The Kenyan classic (below) could be back on the calendar in 2019, if government backing comes to fruition.



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THE ULTIMATE REVIEW OF 2016

Whilst rival F1 annuals come and go, AUTOCOURSE – The World's Leading Grand Prix Annual – is proud to have reached its 66th year of publication as the indisputable leader in its field.

The 21-race Formula 1 World Championship season is covered with its usual meticulous attention to detail. The vastly experienced and much-respected Tony Dodgins and Maurice Hamilton – both long-time paddock insiders – bring you all the drama and intrigue that is Formula 1. Supporting their race commentaries are detailed results spreads that include specially prepared lap charts and tyre strategies.

The 2016 season once more saw the continuing domination of Mercedes-Benz as a championship-winning force, as Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg took their world Championship battle to the final round of a marathon season.

As ever, politics cast a long shadow over the sport, and the many crises that erupted throughout the year are assessed, along with the implications for the future well-being of Formula 1.

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

The sport's other leading categories are also given ample coverage, including the single-seat ladder from Formula 3 up to GP2, which showcases the pool of rising talent, all aiming to make their way into Formula 1.

Also described is the continuing rise of Formula E, sports car racing with Audi's battle against Porsche and Toyota for the World Endurance Championship, and the typical door-banging combat that is Touring Cars, in all their respective categories. Veteran scribe Gordon Kirby gives his usual no-holds-barred assessment of the racing year in the United States.

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FEEDBACK

Readers' verdicts on the F1 season finale



Dear Lewis, you might be a triple champion and a good driver, but you will never become a *great* champion with your dirty tricks on the track.

I'm not talking only about Sunday's Abu Dhabi race. Do you think that what you did goes unnoticed by your employer? Do you think you are bigger and more important than the company you are working for?

Remember that you are basically only an 'overpaid chauffeur'. Remember also that your employer has several options to punish you.

Ari Jakobson
Espoo, Finland

There have been a lot of questions after the last grand prix of 2016, mainly the following:

- 1) Is Nico Rosberg a deserving champion? Yes, he scored more points than Lewis Hamilton. Nothing to discuss.
- 2) Is it entirely because of mechanical failures? No, Lewis had some poor races; Baku, for example. Nothing to discuss.
- 3) Were Lewis's tactics 'dirty'? No, any other racing driver would have done the same. Nothing to discuss.
- 4) Was Mercedes wrong to interfere? Yes, they've let them race all year, why change

now? Nothing to discuss.

It's all about consistency through the year and a little luck as well; after all, Keke won it in 1982 with one win!

Well done Nico!

Richard Hargrave
Hitchin, Herts

I couldn't believe my ears when I heard David Coulthard suggesting that the tactics of Hamilton to back Rosberg up was acceptable.

Formula 1 is, and has always been, a team sport. The only reason for Hamilton to use these tactics was to stop Mercedes, his own team, getting a one-two or even a one-three.

Hamilton would do well to remember that Mercedes has provided him with a car to win two world championships.

As for Coulthard, would he really have done the same?

Paul Millward
By email

The final race brought the drama that a season-long championship should boil down to, and any interfering from the team is not sportsmanlike. And tactics of backing up your rival are spot-on in the circumstances, part of racing and

Fair play or gamesmanship?
Hamilton controls the pack in Abu Dhabi

accepted as part of the game.

There's always a fine line where interests of driver and team conflict. The trouble is, teams deem the constructors' title to be all-important as it governs money, but in reality the fans want to see drivers racing over and above teams' wishes.

There's too much emphasis placed these days on so-called team orders, and hopefully the sport's stakeholders can address this going forward.

Michael Brierley
Stalybridge, Cheshire

Congratulations to Nico for becoming F1 world champion and also for putting one over on his arrogant and petulant team-mate.

Roger Paxton
Hitchin, Herts

I'm afraid ever-petulant Lewis Hamilton did himself no favours in his treatment of his team-mate in the final grand prix of the season.

All Hamilton had to do was to win the race in style, by pulling away from Nico Rosberg to prove how brilliant a driver he is. But no, he chose to back Rosberg into the chasing Red Bull/Ferrari pack to keep the faint hope of his championship desires alive.

Many people may not agree with me, but I grew up with motor racing from the '50s and my heroes were people like Moss, Fangio, Stewart and Hill and they would not have conducted themselves in this manner. Unfortunately, gentlemanly conduct is a thing of the past now, I guess that makes me an old fart!

Peter Dean
Cricklewood, London

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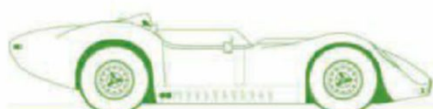
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Richer pickings

As Manor gears up to welcome its fourth owner in its short life, isn't it time F1 did more to spread the commercial wealth?

By Dieter Rencken, Special Contributor

[@RacingLines](#)

WHY ON EARTH WOULD ANYBODY BUY INTO A Formula 1 team, particularly a tail-ender? Well, somebody is, since Manor is in the process of completing the sale of a majority share to outside investors. But since current proprietor Stephen Fitzpatrick is the third owner in seven seasons (having rescued the team from imminent closure two years ago), it's well worth asking why.

I raise the question not to cast aspersions on Manor, its ownership, management or employees (indeed the fact that there is interest out there is a credit to them), but rather to interrogate the long list of sporting, technical and commercial challenges that face all the teams outside the top four. Indeed, the question applies as readily to start-ups; why would anyone start a Formula 1 team?

The easy and obvious answer is that F1 has never been easy, or everyone would do it. But this disingenuously overlooks the fact that the playing field has never before been as tilted against independents as it is under current agreements.

For proof look no further than the survival rate of teams since 2010, during which period no fewer than five new entrants' licences have been issued: USF1 was stillborn; two (HRT and Caterham) disappeared entirely; Manor has changed hands twice; while Haas, backed by a billionaire, interpreted the rules creatively simply to make the 2016 grid. Crucially, many of those loopholes it exploited are now closed...

It's possible to argue that approximately 130 'team names' have contested the world championship during its 67 years, making for a mortality rate of two per year. However, this overlooks sales and resales. For example, Mercedes F1 is rooted in Tyrrell, which became BAR, which begat Honda before mutating into Brawn, from whom Daimler acquired the team. Of the 11 on the current grid, only four teams – Ferrari, McLaren, Williams (which has roots elsewhere) and newcomer Haas – race under their original names. Force India has been through four titles in 25 years and the current Enstone-based Renault squad is under its fifth badge since 1981, when it was born as Toleman. Thus, the purified figure is approximately 65 company registrations in as many years, of which 11 survive – making for less than one team 'death' per year.

There is no denying that current barriers to entry are significantly higher than was the case in, say, the late 1960s, when a Frank Williams could buy a second-hand Brabham, fit used Cosworth engines and Hewland gearboxes, bolt on

off-the-shelf Goodyears, then (with a talented driver) finish second in Monaco. The new crop is vastly better prepared, having enormous factories, 200 staff and £100 million start-up budgets – yet still many teams fail spectacularly.

The battle between Sauber and Manor for 10th place in the constructors' championship, which makes the difference between receiving some prize money and nothing at all, epitomises the lot of tail-enders. Felipe Nasr's ninth place in the sodden lottery that was Brazil – propelling Sauber above Manor in the points – potentially unlocks \$15m, a sum that could spell the difference between life and death for independents. F1 folk stonily state "that's racing", but this simplification overlooks the fact that the prevailing results-based revenues structure was devised at a time when mechanical retirements were commonplace, and points-paying positions occasionally fell more readily to outsiders.

After long-life engines/gearboxes were introduced a decade ago, and five major teams (10 cars) started receiving significant premium payments in a sport in which money equals

performance, the chances of independents regularly finishing in one of the 10 points-paying places have fallen under 30%.

When a team such as Force India rises well above itself to finish fourth on a budget one-seventh the size of third-placed Ferrari (and two

slots ahead of McLaren on half the spend), does it qualify for premium payments or the right to nominate directors to the F1 company board, as the majors do? No it doesn't, while Ferrari is even contractually entitled to have input into the choice of F1's CEO.

Instead, Force India's only sop is a seat on the Strategy Group, where its motions are regularly blocked because they seldom fit the agendas of major teams. The most recent Strategy Group meet featured two such instances, which prevented crucial issues from reaching the F1 Commission, where they could be properly debated by F1's stakeholders, including all teams, sponsors, technical partners and promoters.

How often have luminaries such as F1 tsar Bernie Ecclestone spoken of the need for Ferrari and Red Bull to get on terms with Mercedes; why are the likes of Force India and Williams excluded from this scenario? In order to flourish, F1 needs to nurture fledgling teams, not knock them at every turn. Only then can fans enjoy action all the way down the grid. Only then will Manor have a stream of investors lining up. Only then will the values of teams increase – and with it the value of F1. ✎

Palmer* makes his Formula 1 mark





MAUGER/LAT



Jonathan Palmer (right) was on hand to watch Will's first F1 run

GRIFITHS/LAT

*Yes, another one!

A first Formula 1 test is always going to be something to remember – especially when you're the third in your family to experience it

By Scott Mitchell, Features Editor

[@ScottAutosport](#)

It's late in the year, on a chilly day at Silverstone. Palmer straps himself into the McLaren and a grin spreads across his face, the smile beaming out from behind his visor. This really is one hell of a prize. He fires up the engine and, for the first time, drives out in a Formula 1 car. When everything's finished, McLaren expresses a great deal of satisfaction. "Quicker than we expected and no mistakes at all," is the word from the team.

"It's such a genuinely excitedly and exhilarating experience to be able to do it, particularly in a car like a McLaren," says Jonathan.

Jonathan? Fire up the DeLorean! We've gone back 35 years by mistake – this is supposed to be a piece about Will: the 19-year-old son of former grand prix driver Jonathan. But you'll excuse the error, for the similarities are astonishing. So let's try again.

It's October 26, 2016. Overnight rain and a chilly start have left the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit covered in damp patches. Will Palmer is nervous, but excited – the smile is testimony to that – and he's not even gone on track yet. Intermediate tyres are used for a quick installation run, but the main event will take place with slick Pirelli tyres.

Now, 35 years after his father was gifted his first F1 test – in a McLaren, as a prize for winning the 1981 British Formula 3 title – it's Will's turn.

A McLaren Formula 1 test has awaited the winner of the McLaren Autosport BRDC

Award since David Coulthard picked up the first gong back in 1989. Every year it's the same, but the impact never diminishes. For Will, on the same track and with the same team as his father so many years ago, the chance to get behind the wheel of Jenson Button's 2011 Canadian Grand Prix-winning McLaren MP4-26 is obviously a special moment. And not because it means he's already driven a more competitive F1 car than his dad or his brother, current Renault driver Jolyon.

"The nerves were pretty high," Will admits. "There was a bit of a worry over whether the track would be fully dry, but luckily it was bone dry."

There's a popular Award story from 2011 winner Oliver Rowland's test, when he lit up the rear tyres exiting the garage for the first time. Will isn't quite so dramatic, and trundles down the pitlane tentatively. But when the limiter comes off, there's nothing tentative about it.

"I wasted no time," he jokes afterwards. "I thought I'd better make the most of it!"

A trio of five-lap runs on Pirelli show tyres is not quite a full day at Jerez, but there is still plenty to be judged on – and plenty to get wrong. Drive a Formula 1 car under the limit and under the limit you will stay. Achieving the right brake and tyre temperatures is key, and comes from following instructions – then pushing properly on track. And the feedback from McLaren is good.

"You want to see them start pushing on their first run," explains simulator engineer Alice Rowlands, who is on hand to help the Indy Lall-run McLaren F1 team and also provides data analysis throughout the remainder of the Award process. "He was definitely going for it on his first run!"

"He was making the car move. It's nice when you can see them taking sensible lines and being disciplined with the brakes – driving it like an F1 car. And, looking at the data, it was definitely someone driving an F1 car, not on a little Sunday afternoon drive."

Chairman of the judges Derek Warwick leads the throng of supporters on the sidelines, backed up by his judging panel

(including 'cameraman' Jason Plato, who later tweets "How lush is that?" along with a trackside video), Will's family and friends, and the four watching 2016 finalists: Ricky Collard, Sennan Fielding, Lando Norris and Toby Sowery.

Stood atop a small viewing gantry at the end of the pitlane, there's a collective 'ooh!' as Will gets a big wriggle exiting Club on his first run. And with each passing lap, the message the onlookers try to channel through to the driver is 'Take Abbey flat!'

"I was trying to," admits Will later. "But it was just a small feather... It was absolutely incredible, like nothing I've ever done before. The power, the brakes, the downforce... just how together the car seemed."

"It's unbelievable how much of a step it is. I had a bit of a problem with blistering the tyres, they were in pieces a bit!"

Part of the problem was Will's eagerness. Or perhaps, more fairly, it was his determination to just get on with it. "He built up quicker than I was expecting," admits Rowlands. That caused the blistering on the first run, but there was still plenty of performance to extract from the car, which had been driven in that trim on that track by Button not too much earlier in the year. »

"You could tell it was someone driving a Formula 1 car properly"

“You can see the smile through his helmet. He’ll remember it for the rest of his life”

“You can’t compare it to [the 2011] pole but he wasn’t far off, genuinely,” says Rowlands. “You’d be happy if that was his first proper F1 run at a test. He just shut up and listened. It’s not easy. He doesn’t know anyone, it’s a step up from before – five engineers instead of one. It’s quite different. He was happy to listen to what he was supposed to.”

And then put it into action. So, all smiles and a big thumbs-up. None more so than from Warwick. The purpose of the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award is to find the next British star, and making a positive impression in this short run is always a good sign.

“I want to see them make the most of the opportunity,” says Warwick. “I want to see them get sideways out of the garage! But I want four wheels to come back, obviously.”

“I remember every detail of my first test – everyone remembers it. You can see him smiling through his helmet. He’ll remember it for the rest of his life.”

Will agrees: “It’s an incredible thing to have done, a massive memory. A McLaren at Silverstone is an amazing combination.”

The prize test is always a family affair – Warwick talks with sincerity of how “incredible” and emotional it is “to see family and friends almost in tears and the excitement as their son or brother drive it out”. For Will’s father Jonathan, who has now watched both his sons sample F1 machinery, and follow in his wheeltracks in a grand prix car at Silverstone no less, it is particularly moving.

“I’ve never seen Will grin from ear to ear like this,” says Jonathan. “He was nervous this morning, but he’s loved it.”

“Will has won in F4, won a race in Eurocup and to have this opportunity and have done a good job, I’m very proud. There’s a lot of disappointment in motor racing and it’s very important when you get good times that you really enjoy it – that’s what fuels it.”

“On another level, any time you get in a car people are looking at how you get on and I’m absolutely delighted that he’s done a very professional job. He’s been quick, and not made any mistakes. It’s not been totally straightforward, but he’s demonstrated his intelligence. He’s come away from this having had a huge amount of fun and made a very professional impression.”

“It’s a fantastic contribution that McLaren makes as part of a great scheme. I can’t praise it enough. It’s a great opportunity.”



Warwick and 2016 finalists enjoy the spectacle

GRIFFITHS/LAT



School of hard knocks

SOMETIMES THINGS just don’t go your way. That’s as applicable to one of the best young British drivers of the year as it is anyone else. So Will Palmer would have been forgiven for getting to the end of the 2016 season and feeling like things could have gone better.

Stepping into the Formula Renault Eurocup as the winner of the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award and BRDC Formula 4 champion meant much was expected from Palmer this year. But before the season finale at Estoril, he

was looking at a winless season for the first time since his first full campaign in car racing in 2012.

In the end, victory in the first race in Portugal boosted him to seventh in the points after a year in which his pace was not in question but his races were often compromised by incidents. His bit-part Formula Renault NEC campaign, which ran in parallel in the early part of the year, was more encouraging – including a double podium at Silverstone – but suffered from fundamentally the same issue.

But these are Palmer’s learning years, and it’s easier to make a fast driver reliable than it is a reliable driver fast. He went through a similar process in BRDC F4, when after a rapid but rough-edged rookie season he blossomed into an all-conquering 2015 champion.

A second year in two-litre Renault racing looks unlikely, with Formula 3 calling. Palmer, a bright young man with a deft touch behind the wheel, could find it suits him almost as well as the McLaren.



HIGH-ACHIEVING AWARD WINNERS



SETTING THE BAR HIGH

David Coulthard was the first recipient of the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award. The 13-time GP winner was chosen after impressing in Formula Ford in 1989.



ANOTHER STELLAR SCOT

More than two decades after his 1992 Award triumph, one too many crashes forced Dario Franchitti to end his career after four IndyCar titles and three Indy 500 wins.



THE POSTER BOY

More than 300 grand prix starts and the 2009 Formula 1 title make Jenson Button the *grande fromage*. His run in the Nissan Primera Super Tourer is Award legend.



DTM KINGS

Gary Paffett was a McLaren test driver (and won the 2005 DTM title) after his 1999 triumph; 2004 winner Paul di Resta also has a DTM title (2010) and made it to F1.



Palmer's pace impressed
McLaren engineer
Alice Rowlands



The Award's facelift

McLaren's support of the most prestigious young-driver competition in the world went up a notch for 2016, making it more relevant than ever

By Scott Mitchell, Features Editor

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This year really put the 'McLaren' in the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award. The prestigious competition underwent something of a facelift for 2016, with McLaren heavily increasing its involvement in the initiative to find and assist the best of Britain's junior driving talent.

McLaren has backed the Award since the inaugural edition back in 1989, but the British manufacturer upped the stakes this year. A prize drive in one of its Formula 1 cars remains, but a role in the full-movement Driver In Loop Simulator and time alongside professional simulator driver and 2006 Award winner Oliver Turvey have replaced the £100,000 prize. The victor will also become part of McLaren's driver fitness programme, a package that's similar to that used by McLaren Formula 1 reserve driver Stoffel Vandoorne and includes regular physical assessment and targeting, and

access to the Woking squad's gym facilities.

McLaren will also provide a sponsorship masterclass and the chance to impress potential backers or reward established sponsors with use of the Technology Centre HQ, and arrange for the winner to spend a session with respected driver coach Rob Wilson. Full BRDC membership for the winner will remain.

McLaren racing director Eric Boullier says: "McLaren has been a proud part of this Award since its inception and many winners have gone on to great things, including Jenson Button.

"But we also realise the sport has moved on since 1989 and wanted to boost the winning package.

"We decided that the opportunity to be involved in our Simulator programme, as well as using McLaren's fitness and sponsorship expertise, would be more useful to up-and-coming drivers than the cash prize, which represents only a fraction of budgets that are now required to progress in motorsport."



ALL PICS: GRIFFITHS, MAUGER/LAT



Mercedes and McLaren runs add a different and crucial dimension to the Award process

McLaren's role in the selection process was also ramped up – it took over both the simulator and fitness elements of the Award, providing each finalist with multiple runs on its F1 simulator and physical assessments from its Human Performance team.

The on-track element of the process has remained, but is more focused than ever. Four drivers were selected instead of the traditional six, with the test cars remaining as Formula 2 (a car for each finalist), a DTM Mercedes (run by the crack HWA squad with Maxi Gotz offering the benchmark) and two McLaren 650S GT3 machines (with Rob Bell the benchmark).

The GT machines are another example of how the McLaren Group as a whole backs the Award, available thanks to the support of former Award winner-turned-judge Andrew Kirkaldy and his team. McLaren also provides a road car for each finalist to complete sighter laps before the testing process begins.

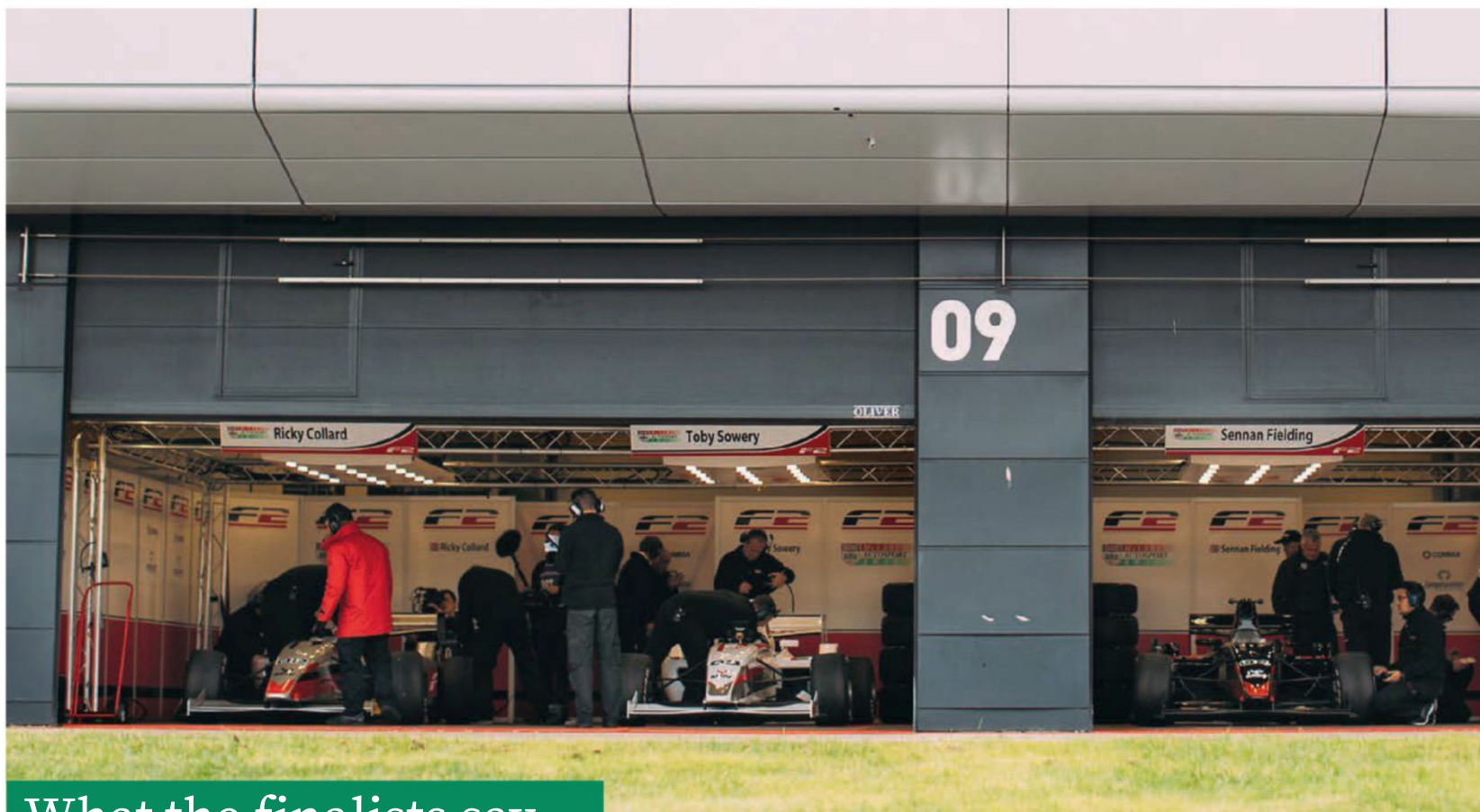
Slimming down the number of finalists allowed for greater

analysis of each driver and also afforded another on-track test in the form of an additional, much longer run in the F2 cars.

This was considered to be a very useful addition to the process.

"The excitement and enthusiasm from all four young drivers was great to watch," says British Racing Drivers' Club president and chairman of the judges Derek Warwick. "Having two GT3 cars at our disposal makes it easier to evaluate the drivers at the same time – the team looked professional and is 100% behind the competition. It was a pleasure working with MSV again, as usual the cars ran perfectly and looked simply amazing. Without these F2 cars this competition would be so much harder to judge.

"And a massive thank you to everyone at McLaren for their continued commitment. Having four drivers definitely worked, and I know all the drivers see that the changes to the Award are for the better. We have developed this in the right way, we have refreshed it again and made it more relevant to today." >>



What the finalists say...

RICKY COLLARD

**BRDC BRITISH FORMULA 3 RUNNER-UP
AGE 20**

The Award is so special because it gives a very select handful of drivers the opportunity to be on the same track in the same car, which means there's nowhere to hide; and with such a prestigious host of judges it's crucial you bring your A-game. The hardest element this year was proving to the judges that I have changed from the previous year. My goal was to show I had taken onboard their feedback and improved in all the areas they had highlighted. Winning the Award would change my life and catapult my career towards F1. I have tried so hard this year and my will to win is greater than ever.



TOBY SOWERY

**3RD IN BRDC BRITISH FORMULA 3
AGE 20**

This year there are more aspects – for example, the prize of becoming a McLaren simulator driver – but as part of the test days you also get the chance to drive some amazing cars and push them to their limit. It's a rare opportunity to drive cars with such credibility across just two days. For me the biggest challenge was having only five laps to adapt to a new type of tyre that we had never driven on before, and then having to push straight away for a fast lap. It's never easy to push that soon and be expected to achieve that ultimate pace, but it's good preparation for my future career.



SENNAN FIELDING

**BRITISH FORMULA 4 RUNNER-UP
AGE 21**

The Award has been around for a long time, and some of the greatest drivers of today have gone through it. It feels special to be able to say my name is now with theirs as a finalist. The Mercedes DTM is such a special car, from the way it looks to the way it sounds. Then when you get behind the wheel, it makes it even more 'wow'. The whole experience was amazing, even the fitness and simulator assessment at McLaren was fantastic. To use the Formula 1 simulator was such an eye-opener for me, and I learned a lot that will help me as a driver, from the physical and nutrition side.



ALL PICS: GRIFFITHS, MALGER/LAT



LANDO NORRIS

**FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP CHAMPION
AGE 17**

The part I was most looking forward to was driving the GT3 and the DTM cars, because they are very different to what I normally drive, and they are cars that everyone fantasises about driving. Winning the Award would really mean a lot to me in all areas. My aim is to be racing in F1, so this would be another step towards helping me achieve my goal. Getting to know some of the people at McLaren from the simulator, and also being able to train at McLaren and learn how to help myself to get to a level where I would be able to drive in F1, would be an amazing opportunity.



Brabham's key cameo

The McLaren Autosport BRDC Award judging panel was bolstered this year by the first of a series of guest judges. Ex-Formula 1 driver and Le Mans 24 Hours winner David Brabham talks through why he was brought in and his experience of the process



The McLaren Autosport BRDC Award has always been the highlight of Autosport Awards night. Who is the next star coming through? It's such a prestigious award for the drivers. If you look at the history, the majority of drivers have done well in the sport.

Now I've been on the inside, it's just opened up my eyes. I've had experience from the MSA young driver programme, so I know about the difficulty of picking drivers to be part of a scheme. There's a lot of good drivers and you're judging them in so many different ways – wins, accidents, which team they are with.

What was great to see is there was a lot of time spent on analysing everybody on the list. It's great – but it does create a lot of discussion and time to sift through it all. It was very complicated, and you don't

"It's a true test of talent; no favouritism. I can guarantee that 100%"

see that from the outside.

The pressure you feel knowing something like that is on the line is huge. So the drivers are really tested. I can relate to it – for me to get my Jewson/Bowman Racing drive in British Formula 3 in 1989, we had a shootout in a Formula 3 car and some interviews.

We're watching the way they interact with their engineers – it tells a story about the guys themselves. Do they get it? Do they get what they want to achieve? Or is it a bit of a mystery and they are trying to fluff their way through?

On the day you see first hand how they deal with the pressure, how quick they are, how well they jump in and out of the cars. The cream rises to the top, and that's what we saw.

I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and putting my two pence in. I was looking at everything; I was brought in to judge the drivers but also give my opinion on how I thought the whole process was handled.

They've created a very good judgement base for the drivers, but they are all experienced people so I wasn't expecting it to be a mess!

A lot of effort was made to make sure the cars – quick cars, run by quick teams – were equal. To see first hand how professional it's all being run is the main thing. It's very much a true test of talent; nobody's got any favouritism, I can guarantee that 100%.

All four guys did a good job, and kept it on the road – which was much to the relief of the guys behind the scheme! The winner is the deserving winner, I don't have any doubt about that. But they all did a good job. It was a great privilege to be a part of it.

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Gasly jubilation after winning the title...

Gasly turns tables on

GP2 SERIES
YAS MARINA (UAE)
NOVEMBER 26-27
ROUND 11/11

A PICTURE PAINTS A THOUSAND WORDS, so they say, and certainly the TV images after the GP2 Series cars had returned to parc ferme following the Yas Marina finale said a lot. There was a solitary, disconsolate Antonio Giovinazzi taking a lengthy trudge along the pitlane, ruffling his hair, just one friendly face – a chap from the Indonesian Jagonya Ayam scheme to which he owes his career – intercepting him to offer a gesture of support.

Down in front of the podium, Pierre Gasly was enjoying the best day of his life. Sprint-race winner Alex Lynn, the team-mate from 2015 he got on so well with he's like an older brother, walked over to give Gasly a congratulatory embrace, before a microphone was shoved into the new champion's face. "Antonio is a really great guy, a really talented driver," he acknowledged of his team-mate and beaten title rival. "I wish him a great future because he deserves it."

Giovinazzi went to Abu Dhabi leading fellow Prema Racing starlet Gasly by seven points, and only Russian Time's ultra-consistent Raffaele Marciello – 39 points adrift – was also in with a

mathematical, if forlorn, shot. After Gasly's poor showing in the preceding feature race at Sepang – a slump from pole to 11th – he reportedly had a new Mecachrome engine installed for Yas Marina. As a result, some in the paddock were predicting blistering qualifying speed from the Red Bull Junior; it would be up to Giovinazzi's audacious racecraft to swing things his way.

Gasly topped free practice narrowly from Lynn, who used an extra set of new Pirellis for which he would have to pay the price later in the weekend, and Giovinazzi. And then came his qualifying *tour de force*. Coolly, he sat in pitlane while everyone went on their first runs, then took to the track while everyone else was having their second sets of super-soft tyres fitted, and blitzed Sergey Sirotkin's existing provisional pole time by a staggering 0.988 seconds.

The tactic left a short turnaround for Gasly's second run, where he was on track with everyone else, and a lock-up at the Turn 8 chicane prevented an improvement. Meanwhile, Sirotkin was up on Gasly's previous effort after the first two sectors, but fell 0.328s short by the end of the lap. Giovinazzi's attack was scuppered when he was badly baulked by an inattentive Luca Ghiotto – for which Ghiotto would be given a grid penalty – in the twisty final sector. He went for a second lap, and that fell just 0.001s short of



MAUGER/LAT

Giovinazzi

his previous best, and on tyres that had serious dropoff characteristics this indicated how badly the Ghiotto incident had compromised him. He would start sixth, while Gasly's four points for pole had sliced the gap to three.

Both of the main title contenders started the feature race on super-softs, and it was a struggle to get them to last the six laps before the pit window opened. Gasly sprinted away into an enormous lead, while Giovinazzi remained sixth, but the gap wasn't enough for Prema to be confident of double-pitting its two drivers on the same lap. Giovinazzi would have to go round once again, and this proved highly costly, the Italian desperate for traction and being passed by four cars that had started the race on the medium prime tyre.

In the middle phase of the race, as Nobuharu Matsushita led on the mediums on which he'd started, Gasly was looking good. Giovinazzi had been nine seconds adrift of Gasly before the stops, but that extra lap on the super-softs had left him 17s behind as he emerged from the pits, and he was 7s back from Artem Markelov and Sirotkin, who had also pitted early, quick work from the Russian Time crew vaulting Markelov

"Giovinazzi's extra lap on super-softs left him 17s behind"

above the ART Grand Prix car of Sirotkin.

All Gasly had to do was methodically clear the slower late-stoppers, which he did comfortably, and keep an eye on the gap to leader Matsushita, who would be ultra-quick on his late run on super-softs. Sure enough the Japanese ART man emerged from the pits between Markelov and Sirotkin, quickly snaked his way past Markelov, but had too much ground to make up on Gasly, who finished 6.7s in front. Giovinazzi, meanwhile, claimed fifth place – he was sixth on the road, but moved up a position when Norman Nato was given a 5s penalty for speeding in the pitlane. Now the points gap was 12 in Gasly's favour...

Things again went wrong for Giovinazzi at the start of Sunday's sprint race. From fourth on the grid he didn't get a great getaway, then had to lift to allow Johnny Cecotto Jr to take the line he was entitled to at Turn 2, which also allowed Matsushita past. He was sixth, when he needed at least a top-three position.

Giovinazzi spent the first half of the race failing to pass fifth-placed Nato, and the second brusquely fending off Markelov, which led to a brief wheelbanging moment. All the while Gasly

...while Giovinazzi was devastated at loss



MAUGER/LAT

AT A GLANCE

RACE 1

- 1 Gasly Prema
- 2 Matsushita ART
- 3 Markelov Russian Time

RACE 2

- 1 Lynn DAMS
- 2 Cecotto Rapax
- 3 Sirotkin ART

 **P46 RESULTS**

Lynn drove away from field in final race



MAUGER/LAT

was sitting in eighth, knowing he was on the brink of being crowned champion, and it didn't matter when the champion-elect lost the final point on the last lap to Mitch Evans.

Lynn, meanwhile, found overnight changes to his DAMS car had vastly improved it. From reversed-grid pole, and on medium tyres already a few laps old from that extra free-practice run, he pulled away to take a fine farewell GP2 win.

With Marciello having a tough weekend, third place in the points was very much on for Sirotkin, and the Russian clinched it by the infinitesimal margin of 0.007s. That was the gap by which he beat Lynn to the bonus points for fastest lap, giving him the verdict on a wins tiebreak from Marciello. It mattered not to Sirotkin that Johnny Cecotto Jr – going great guns with Rapax on his umpteenth GP2 comeback – deprived him of second on the final lap.

So Gasly is champion, but are there more than a thousand words for a picture to paint? After all, it's the manner in which you perform in junior series that matters more than winning the title, and Giovinazzi has removed the blinkers from many F1 eyes this year. Back to Gasly on the microphone, regarding his plans for 2017. "That's a really good question," he mused. "Ask Helmut [Marko] – he's just there." Without question, he and Giovinazzi deserve something very good.



Bakkerud ends on a high

WORLD RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP
ROSARIO (RA)
NOVEMBER 26-27
ROUND 12/12

ANDREAS BAKKERUD SCORED HIS THIRD victory of the season for Ken Block's Hoonigan Division Racing team at the Argentinian season finale, as Mattias Ekstrom's EKS team added the teams' championship to the drivers' title Ekstrom secured at the penultimate round.

Bakkerud qualified his Focus on pole position thanks to winning the second semi-final and finishing higher than fellow semi victor Johan Kristoffersson (VW Polo) at the Intermediate Classification. Bakkerud beat Kristoffersson into the first corner at the start of the final, as Toomas Heikkinen shot from the back of the grid to third.

The leading pair were never troubled for their positions at the front, but Heikkinen had to defend hard from the sister Audi of team boss Ekstrom. But Ekstrom made a mistake while pressuring his team-mate and lost fourth to fellow Audi DTM champion Timo Scheider,

who had made it to a World RX final for the first time with Munnich Motorsport, driving a SEAT Ibiza alongside Rene Munnich.

Last year's Argentina winner Robin Larsson completed the final pack in sixth in his Audi A1.

Bakkerud's victory means he beats outgoing champion Petter Solberg to third in the drivers' standings behind Ekstrom and Kristoffersson on countback, with three wins to Solberg's one. Two-time champion Solberg had dominated the qualifying stages of the event but crashed his Citroen out in the semi-finals, having sustained steering damage in first-corner contact and later hitting a tyre barrier.

EKS secured the teams' championship before the semi-finals as nearest rival Team Peugeot-Hansen failed to get both its cars into the top 12.

RESULTS

1 Andreas Bakkerud (Ford Focus RS) 6 laps in 3m48.219s;
 2 Johan Kristoffersson (Volkswagen Polo) +1.991s;
 3 Toomas Heikkinen (Audi S1); 4 Timo Scheider (SEAT Ibiza);
 5 Mattias Ekstrom (Audi S1); 6 Robin Larsson (Audi A1).
Points 1 Ekstrom 272; 2 Kristoffersson 240; 3 Bakkerud 239;
 4 Petter Solberg 239; 5 Sebastien Loeb 209; 6 Timmy Hansen 178.

It's no Cruze for Canapino

SUPERTC2000
ALTA GRACIA (RA)
NOVEMBER 27
ROUND 12/12

BY CLAIMING THE POLE POSITION POINT, Chevrolet's Agustin Canapino put the title beyond the reach of Toyota Team Argentina's Matias Rossi before the final race even started. He then proved worthy of the accolade by leading from start to finish.

Renault team-mates Leonel Pernia and Christian Ledesma led the chase. After several

laps Ledesma edged past Pernia into second place and went after Canapino, stalking him continuously for the lead until seven laps from the end, when a punctured tyre sent him off the track. Pernia thus inherited second and also had a go at Canapino's lead. But the much-seasoned Canapino had all corners covered and his Cruze sailed on towards the chequered flag, celebrating his first Super TC2000 title in style.

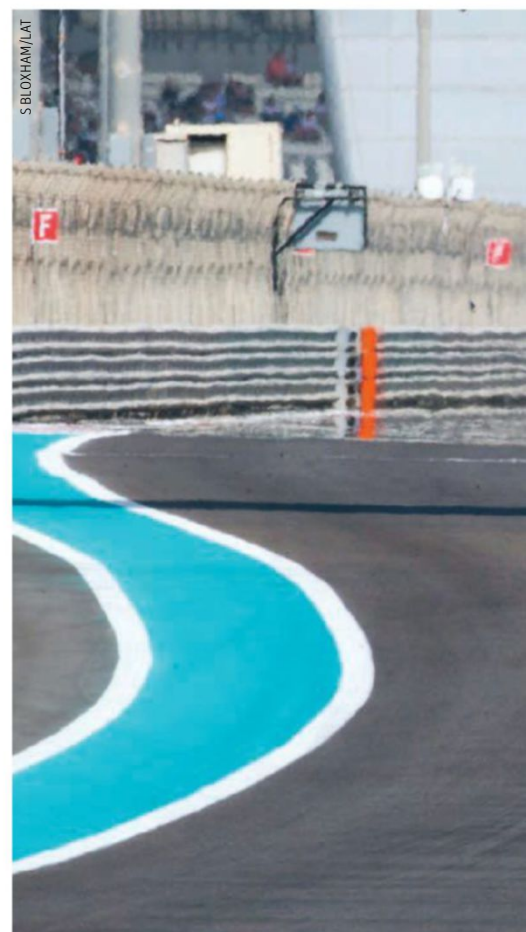
Further down the field, Mariano Werner was clambering through the pack from row seven with his Peugeot and soon after was up to fourth, vying for a podium place with the Fiat Linea of Carlos Merlo at the end, who he nearly caught and passed just before the finish.

Facundo Arduso (Renault) nearly pipped Rossi for second in the championship by claiming fifth in the race, just ahead of Rossi.

TONY WATSON

RESULTS

1 Agustin Canapino (Chevrolet Cruze) 32 laps in 53m27.740s;
 2 Leonel Pernia (Renault Fluence) +0.318s; 3 Carlos Merlo (Fiat Linea); 4 Mariano Werner (Peugeot 408); 5 Facundo Arduso (Renault); 6 Matias Rossi (Toyota Corolla).
Points 1 Canapino 248; 2 Rossi 196.5; 3 Arduso 195;
 4 Pernia 180.5; 5 Werner 160; 6 Emiliano Spataro 140.



Title rivals

GP3 SERIES
YAS MARINA (UAE)
NOVEMBER 26-27
ROUND 9/9

APPROACHING HALF DISTANCE IN the Abu Dhabi GP3 opener, Charles Leclerc's championship lead – 29 points pre-weekend – was set to be slashed right down to eight. Five laps later, Leclerc was walking away from his mangled car. But in between those moments, he'd become the 2016 GP3 champion.

That had looked the most likely outcome for most of the season, Leclerc's coolly executed two victories from the first two Saturday races having made clear both that the introduction of GP3's new car hadn't knocked championship-winning machine ART Grand Prix off its stride, and that Leclerc was marginally the most likely of its quartet to get the job done.

There were bumps in the road along the way, though – incidents and days when ART was undone by high tyre degradation or the advancing Arden and DAMS cars – and Abu Dhabi provided plenty of all the above for Leclerc.

He'd eschewed what should have been his final grand prix practice outing of the season when the Abu Dhabi timetable made clear that he'd have to alternate



Albon (right) battles Aitken, as de Vries, Dennis and Leclerc give chase

crash as Leclerc claims the crown

between his GP3 Dallara and the Haas Formula 1 car, unlike the European race schedules that allow plenty of hours to reset before GP3 practice's teatime slot. And even with just GP3 to concentrate on, Leclerc didn't get it together in qualifying. He could only put his fifth on the grid down to underperformance, and title rival Alexander Albon was on pole. The bonus score for that brought Albon's gap down from 29 points to 25 already.

But Albon was worried. He'd initially planned to try to get the job done with one set of tyres in qualifying to maximise fresh rubber for what everyone expected to be a festival of degradation in the hot temperatures of the midday race, then decided the pole points were too valuable not to chase. And he didn't much like the look of his post-qualifying press conference companions — Jake Dennis and Jack Aitken's Arden cars having been the kindest on their tyres since the middle of the year.

"It will be the highest degradation that we've had all year. It's a huge step," said Albon. "I think the next worst was Hockenheim. I need to pace myself."

"I know Arden are quite strong in the races. I know we're not fighting them as a team but I need to finish as high as possible with Charles much further down the order."

At first things went absolutely Albon's way as Leclerc dropped to sixth behind Albon, Aitken, Nyck de Vries, slow-starter Dennis and Santino Ferrucci. Leclerc wasn't making any progress either, though he said that was a case of playing it cool with tyre wear in mind rather than actually floundering.

And soon Albon found himself facing that 'how-to-handle-Arden's-race-pace' dilemma, as Aitken attacked after a safety car restart. Aitken got ahead, but used more of the track boundaries than the stewards approved of so was ordered to drop back. He grudgingly obliged then went back on the attack, first with an abortive look down the outside at the end of the back straight, then a neat outside-to-inside dummy and dive into the chicane complex at the end of the following straight. Albon saw him coming, gave enough room and tried to hang on alongside, but succeeded only in launching himself off the kerb at the second apex and over Aitken. Rear suspension smashed, title hopes over.

ART got on the radio to Leclerc: "They told me Alex had crashed. I tried to stay calm and not yell 'yeah!'; which was hard... Then they told me that I was champion no matter what so I was allowed to take risks to try and finish on the podium."

That didn't pay off spectacularly well

and Leclerc began his title celebrations with broken suspension from a high-speed brush with fellow Haas tester Ferrucci. But it didn't matter. Title secured, a 2017 GP2 drive with champion team Prema in the bag and Ferrari patronage continuing. Life felt good.

Leclerc signed off from GP3 with a 17th-to-ninth charge on Sunday, while Albon was fired into a massive first-lap impact after contact with Tatiana Calderon. The final title contender Antonio Fuoco's hopes had ended on Friday — he needed the pole bonus to stay in the hunt so an off-the-pace 11th on the grid was no good even before first-lap contact and a puncture on Saturday.

De Vries went on to win the title-deciding race ahead of Dennis and Aitken, who escaped the Albon assault with nothing worse than mild annoyance. An apology from Albon and a second place on Sunday helped ease that.

Jake Hughes was the season's final race winner, a result that looked highly unlikely on Friday when DAMS let him out of the pits with a fan still attached at the end of qualifying. The engine damage was compounded by an unsafe-release penalty and consequent pitlane start, but he surged through to seventh and then made perfect use of his reversed-grid front row on Sunday.

AT A GLANCE

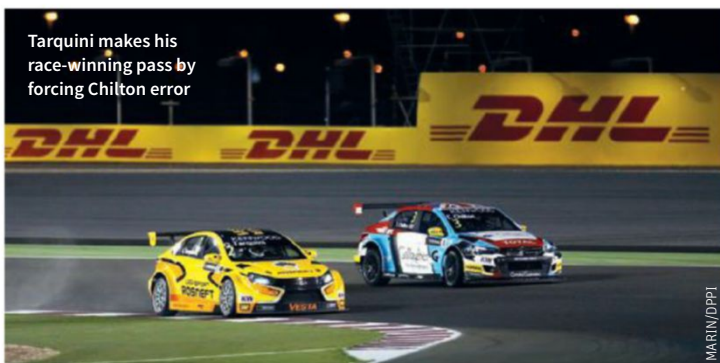
RACE 1

- 1 de Vries ART
- 2 Dennis Arden
- 3 Aitken Arden

RACE 2

- 1 Hughes DAMS
- 2 Aitken Arden
- 3 Fukuzumi ART

➔ P47 FULL RESULTS



Tarquini eats up last morsel from Lada

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP
LOSAIL (Q)
NOVEMBER 25
ROUND 11/11

WHILE MOST OF THE MOTORSPORT WORLD'S ATTENTION centred on events in Abu Dhabi last weekend, 210 miles across the Persian Gulf the curtain came down on the World Touring Car Championship season – and some of the series' leading lights – in Qatar.

The finale marked the end of a dominant spell – three years probably doesn't qualify as an era – for the Citroen team. Both of its multiple champion drivers – Jose Maria Lopez and Yvan Muller – were also participating in their final WTCC events, Lopez having committed his future to Formula E and Muller calling time on his touring car exploits.

Citroen's exit had long been expected, the French manufacturer's parent PSA Group having announced before last year's Qatar round that the works operation would be wrapped up at the end of 2016. But Lada's impending departure was more of a surprise, the Russian marque revealing only earlier in November that the Losail round would be its last event.

How fitting it was, then, that Gabriele Tarquini should commemorate Lada's final event with victory.

Lada's exit leaves the Italian without a 2017 deal, but Tarquini put "worries" about his future to one side in the opening race and showed sharpness that defied his 54 years. On a restart following a red flag, he sold Loeb Citroen-driving polesitter Tom Chilton a dummy into Turn 1 before swooping back up the inside to take the lead, as Chilton ran deep.

Tarquini scampered away from there, setting fastest lap in the process before coasting home on the final lap to win by five seconds ahead of Chilton and Rob Huff's Honda.

If that result had, like Lada's exit news, come as a surprise, the fact a Citroen won the second race probably didn't – although Mehdi Bennani might not have been the name expected to record it.

Bennani had taken an unlikely maiden qualifying pole earlier on Friday in his Sebastien Loeb Racing machine, and followed that up in the main race with his third WTCC win. The Moroccan was faultless, leading from lights to flag, although he was forced to work for his result, with Volvo's Thed Bjork stalking his every move in the closing laps.

What of Citroen's exiteers? Both were somewhat overshadowed, Lopez finishing third in the main event, having been unable to mount a challenge despite jumping Bjork at the start, and four-time champion Muller ending his decorated WTCC career with rather ordinary fourth and sixth-place finishes. The Frenchman relinquished fifth on the final lap of race two to Tiago Monteiro, the Honda star finishing behind teammate Norbert Michelisz and securing third overall in the championship in the process.

But even though the works cars weren't able to do the business at Losail, it was appropriate that Citroen left the championship as a manufacturer victoriously. Putting any comments about its effect on competition to one side, the French giant deserves praise for improving the standards of the WTCC during its three years in the series.

JACK COZENS

AT A GLANCE

RACE 1

- 1 Tarquini Lada
- 2 Chilton Citroen
- 3 Huff Honda

RACE 2

- 1 Bennani Citroen
- 2 Bjork Volvo
- 3 Lopez Citroen

P47 RESULTS

RESULTS

GP2 SERIES

ROUND 11/11, YAS MARINA (UAE), NOVEMBER 26-27

RACE 1 (31 LAPS – 106.913 MILES)

1	Pierre Gasly (F) Prema Racing	59m14.764s
2	Nobuharu Matsushita (J) ART Grand Prix	+6.737s
3	Artem Markelov (RUS) Russian Time	+11.309s
4	Sergey Sirotkin (RUS) ART Grand Prix	+14.111s
5	Antonio Giovinazzi (I) Prema Racing	+20.172s
6	Norman Nato (F) Racing Engineering	+23.686s
7	Johnny Cecotto Jr (VV) Rapax	+26.630s
8	Alex Lynn (GB) DAMS	+35.974s
9	Nicholas Latifi (CDN) DAMS	+39.007s
10	Raffaele Marciello (I) Russian Time	+41.589s
11	Luca Ghiotto (I) Trident	+43.486s
12	Sergio Canamasas (E) Carlin	+43.960s
13	Jordan King (GB) Racing Engineering	+46.090s
14	Daniel de Jong (NL) MP Motorsport	+1m04.814s
15	Mitch Evans (NZ) Campos Racing	+1m26.008s
16	Philo Paz Armand (RI) Trident	+1m27.892s
17	Emil Bernstorff (GB) Arden International	+1m42.538s
R	Louis Deletraz (CH) Carlin	7 laps-lost wheel
R	Oliver Rowland (GB) MP Motorsport	6 laps-puncture
R	Sean Gelael (RI) Campos Racing	6 laps-accident damage
R	Gustav Malja (S) Rapax	5 laps-accident
R	Nabil Jeffri (MAL) Arden International	3 laps-engine

Winner's average speed 108.273mph. **Fastest lap** Matsushita 1m51.175s, 111.751mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Gasly 1m47.476s; 2 Sirotkin 1m47.804s; 3 Markelov 1m47.901s; 4 Matsushita 1m47.997s; 5 Rowland 1m48.130s; 6 Giovinazzi 1m48.288s; 7 Nato 1m48.307s; 8 Marciello 1m48.368s; 9 Lynn 1m48.524s; 10 Evans 1m48.559s; 11 King 1m48.712s; 12 Cecotto 1m48.976s; 13 Latifi 1m49.075s; 14 Malja 1m49.206s; 15 Ghiotto 1m48.830s*; 16 Canamasas 1m49.779s; 17 Jeffri 1m50.135s; 18 Deletraz 1m50.234s; 19 de Jong 1m50.276s; 20 Armand 1m49.950s*; 21 Bernstorff 1m50.470s; 22 Gelael 1m50.827s. * grid penalty.

RACE 2 (22 LAPS – 75.853 MILES)

1 Lynn 41m36.580s; 2 Cecotto +4.945s; 3 Sirotkin +6.607s; 4 Matsushita +8.078s; 5 Nato +13.375s; 6 Giovinazzi +16.716s; 7 Markelov +17.807s; 8 Evans +22.609s; 9 Gasly +23.226s; 10 Rowland +30.312s; 11 Latifi +33.447s; 12 Marciello +37.784s; 13 King +38.848s; 14 Malja +38.996s; 15 Bernstorff +45.390s; 16 Canamasas +45.936s; 17 Deletraz +46.716s; 18 Armand +50.219s; 19 Ghiotto +1m08.896s; 20 Jeffri +1m10.410s; 21 Gelael +1m27.122s; R de Jong 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 109.377mph. **Fastest lap** Ghiotto 1m52.646s, 110.291mph.

GRID FOR RACE 2

Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Gasly 219; 2 Giovinazzi 211; 3 Sirotkin 159; 4 Marciello 159; 5 Nato 136; 6 Lynn 124; 7 King 122; 8 Ghiotto 111; 9 Rowland 107; 10 Markelov 97.



ROUND - UP

GP3 SERIES

ROUND 9/9, YAS MARINA (UAE), NOVEMBER 26-27

RACE 1 (18 LAPS – 62.048 MILES)

1	Nyck de Vries (NL) ART Grand Prix	38m06.651s
2	Jake Dennis (GB) Arden International	+1.012s
3	Jack Aitken (GB) Arden International	+3.881s
4	Kevin Jorg (CH) DAMS	+9.601s
5	Nirei Fukuzumi (J) ART Grand Prix	+10.618s
6	Steijn Schothorst (NL) Campos Racing	+14.369s
7	Jake Hughes (GB) DAMS	+15.225s
8	Konstantin Tereschenko (RUS) Campos Racing	+17.292s
9	Santino Ferrucci (USA) DAMS	+18.990s
10	Alex Palou (E) Campos Racing	+20.776s
11	Giuliano Alesi (F) Trident	+23.009s
12	Alessio Lorandi (I) Jenzer Motorsport	+26.262s
13	Akash Nandy (MAL) Jenzer Motorsport	+26.335s
14	Arjun Maini (IND) Jenzer Motorsport	+27.325s
15	Sandy Stuvik (T) Trident	+32.912s
16	Antonio Fuoco (I) Trident	+54.535s
R	Charles Leclerc (MC) ART Grand Prix	13 laps-accident
R	Matevos Isaakyan (RUS) Koiranen GP	12 laps-mechanical
R	Alexander Albon (T) ART Grand Prix	10 laps-accident
R	Tatiana Calderon (CO) Arden International	6 laps-spin
R	Matt Parry (GB) Koiranen GP	3 laps-accident damage
R	Artur Janosz (PL) Trident	2 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 97.685mph. Fastest lap Aitken 2m01.350s, 102.381mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Albon 1m55.274s; 2 Dennis 1m55.514s; 3 Aitken 1m55.604s; 4 de Vries 1m55.629s; 5 Leclerc 1m55.660s; 6 Ferrucci 1m55.678s; 7 Maini 1m55.683s; 8 Jorg 1m55.892s; 9 Schothorst 1m55.981s; 10 Fukuzumi 1m56.094s; 11 Fuoco 1m56.145s; 12 Janosz 1m56.154s; 13 Palou 1m56.155s; 14 Parry 1m56.256s; 15 Alesi 1m56.361s; 16 Tereschenko 1m56.563s; 17 Stuvik 1m56.570s; 18 Calderon 1m56.729s; 19 Nandy 1m56.732s; 20 Isaakyan 1m57.513s; 21 Lorandi no time; 22 Hughes 1m56.995s*. * made to start from pits.

RACE 2 (14 LAPS – 48.244 MILES)

1 Hughes 30m21.199s; 2 Aitken +2.825s; 3 Fukuzumi +7.191s; 4 Dennis +7.471s; 5 Palou +8.747s; 6 Tereschenko +8.774s; 7 Schothorst +9.158s; 8 Jorg +12.846s; 9 Leclerc +14.035s; 10 Alesi +15.909s; 11 de Vries +17.639s; 12 Parry +19.946s; 13 Nandy +20.467s; 14 Maini +20.925s; 15 Ferrucci +21.153s; 16 Isaakyan +23.085s; 17 Fuoco +23.266s; 18 Stuvik +24.506s; 19 Janosz +35.455s; 20 Lorandi +1m04.408s; R Albon 0 laps-accident; R Calderon 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 95.364mph. Fastest lap Dennis 1m59.847s, 103.665mph.

GRID FOR RACE 2

Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Leclerc 202; 2 Albon 177; 3 Fuoco 157; 4 Dennis 149; 5 Aitken 146; 6 de Vries 133; 7 Fukuzumi 91; 8 Hughes 90; 9 Parry 82; 10 Maini 50.



Hughes went from pitlane to victory in GP3

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 11/11, LOSAIL (Q), NOVEMBER 25

RACE 1 (14 LAPS – 46.802 MILES)

1	Gabriele Tarquini (I) Lada Sport • Lada Vesta WTCC	46m16.258s
2	Tom Chilton (GB) Sebastien Loeb Racing • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+5.321s
3	Rob Huff (GB) Honda Racing Team JAS • Honda Civic WTCC	+5.930s
4	Yvan Muller (F) Citroen Total • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+7.608s
5	Norbert Michelisz (H) Honda Racing Team JAS • Honda Civic WTCC	+9.070s
6	Thed Bjork (S) Polestar Cyan Racing • Volvo S60 WTCC	+9.675s
7	Robert Dahlgren (S) Polestar Cyan Racing • Volvo S60 WTCC	+10.255s
8	Nicky Catsburg (NL) Lada Sport • Lada Vesta WTCC	+10.871s
9	Jose Maria Lopez (RA) Citroen Total • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+11.591s
10	James Thompson (GB) Munnich Motorsport • Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1	+15.375s
11	Daniel Nagy (H) Zengo Motorsport • Honda Civic WTCC	+16.274s
12	Tom Coronel (NL) ROAL Motorsport • Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1	+16.721s
13	Ferenc Ficz (H) Zengo Motorsport • Honda Civic WTCC	+17.227s
14	John Filippi (F) Campos Racing • Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1	+21.173s
15	Gregoire Demoustier (F) Sebastien Loeb Racing • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+28.724s
16	Mehdi Bennani (MA) Sebastien Loeb Racing • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+30.548s
R	Hugo Valente (F) Lada Sport • Lada Vesta WTCC	4 laps-accident
R	Tiago Monteiro (P) Honda Racing Team JAS • Honda Civic WTCC	0 laps-accident/suspension

Winner's average speed 60.688mph. Fastest lap Tarquini 2m01.760s, 98.839mph.

GRID FOR RACE 1

1 Chilton; 2 Tarquini; 3 Dahlgren; 4 Monteiro; 5 Huff; 6 Michelisz; 7 Muller; 8 Lopez; 9 Bjork; 10 Bennani; 11 Catsburg; 12 Valente; 13 Coronel; 14 Thompson; 15 Filippi; 16 Ficz; 17 Nagy; 18 Demoustier.

RACE 2 (15 LAPS – 50.145 MILES)

1 Bennani 32m38.479s; 2 Bjork +1.176s; 3 Lopez +4.815s; 4 Michelisz +10.575s; 5 Monteiro +11.827s; 6 Muller +12.390s; 7 Tarquini +14.994s; 8 Huff +17.037s; 9 Coronel +18.379s; 10 Thompson +20.819s; 11 Ficz +21.758s; 12 Demoustier +31.109s; 13 Filippi +38.393s; 14 Catsburg +1m16.469s; 15 Nagy -1 lap; R Chilton 8 laps-accident; R Dahlgren 0 laps-accident; R Valente 0 laps-suspension.

Winner's average speed 92.173mph. Fastest lap Catsburg 2m02.550s, 98.202mph.

QUALIFYING

Q3 1 Bennani 2m00.456s; 2 Bjork 2m00.492s; 3 Lopez 2m00.895s; 4 Muller 2m01.632s; 5 Michelisz no time.

Q2 Lopez 1m59.798s; Muller 2m00.133s; Bjork 2m00.397s; Michelisz 2m00.529s; Bennani 2m00.852s; 6 Huff 2m00.892s; 7 Monteiro 2m00.965s; 8 Dahlgren 2m01.114s; 9 Tarquini 2m01.372s; 10 Chilton 2m01.771s; 11 Catsburg 2m02.343s; 12 Valente no time.

Q1 Lopez 1m59.788s; Bjork 2m00.256s; Michelisz 2m00.661s; Tarquini 2m00.844s; Huff 2m00.969s; Monteiro 2m01.024s; Valente 2m01.160s; Dahlgren 2m01.190s; Muller 2m01.220s; Bennani 2m01.382s; Chilton 2m01.465s; Catsburg 2m01.734s; 13 Coronel 2m01.827s; 14 Thompson 2m01.957s; 15 Filippi 2m01.997s; 16 Ficz 2m02.179s; 17 Nagy 2m02.468s; 18 Demoustier 2m02.491s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Lopez 381; 2 Muller 257; 3 Monteiro 214; 4 Michelisz 213; 5 Bennani 206; 6 Huff 199; 7 Catsburg 175; 8 Chilton 163; 9 Tarquini 147; 10 Bjork 117.



"Just like that!"
Bennani celebrates
Morocco-style



Honda legend

Far from the same old winners or an anticipated all-Yamaha title fight, chances are the 2016 MotoGP season surprised you on more than one occasion. Marc Marquez handled the chaos to win a third championship

By Mitchell Adam, International Editor

[@DrMitchellAdam](#)

If you worked backwards from the end of the 2015 MotoGP season to build a list of nine different race winners, you would have to go back more than 150 grands prix, to May 2007. Dominance has defined the championship since then.

Only one man – Ben Spies, and even then only once – had won this decade other than Jorge Lorenzo, Valentino Rossi, Marc Marquez, Dani Pedrosa and the now-retired Casey Stoner.

That status quo remained in place in the first third of 2016, even with Ducati and Suzuki making inroads, and the return of Michelin as tyre supplier and introduction of a simplified control ECU. After seven races, Marquez led Lorenzo and Rossi in the championship, the trio having split the race wins.

Then Jack Miller won the Dutch TT at Assen, becoming the first rider from an independent team to win in nearly 10 years. With that, somehow, unpredictable became the new normal.

By the end of an 18-race season shaped by those technical changes and some wild weather, nine different riders had visited the top step of the podium, including a run of eight in eight starts.

Through all of that unpredictability, one man was more predictable than the rest. Marquez rose to every challenge, as Lorenzo and Rossi could not. The young Spaniard wanted it, and won it, taking his tally to three in four seasons in MotoGP.

Marquez's first two championships looked relatively easy, one as a rookie in 2013 and the other on the back of 10 consecutive victories to start his '14 defence. Last year did not go plan,

Marquez overriding a Honda restricted by an overly aggressive engine.

Trying to make up ground that he was losing exiting one corner on the entry to the next one, he came unstuck just about as often as he won.

Last winter, after that tough campaign and his very public row with Rossi, Marquez hatched a plan to become more conservative and consistent. He would learn to pick his battles and, as a new trick, accept that some days second or third or even fourth was worth taking, over throwing his bike down the road chasing whoever was leading.

But the thinking and the saying are two different things. Even before you get to the doing, on a Sunday afternoon.

Honda's engine was still a handful, and MotoGP's new, less-refined electronics made life even harder. Without that change, Honda would have been able to overcome many of its problems by tuning the bespoke ECU it developed in-house. It wasn't even as though it started on a level playing field. Ducati, especially, got the jump and Yamaha and Suzuki were both happy enough. But Honda started work late and never really caught up.

Pre-season testing was dire. Honda was generally off the pace, answers weren't forthcoming and expectations were low. Yamaha's Lorenzo and Rossi started the campaign as firm favourites. But here we are, eight months later, with Marquez not only having won the title, but having romped his way to wearing the celebratory T-shirt at Honda's home track with three races remaining.

In a way, that mid-October Sunday at Motegi summed up the season. What Marquez had done over the first 14 grands prix gave him a 52-point



Marquez pushed his Honda to – and sometimes beyond – the limit in 2016

advantage over Rossi, with 100 still available. That put the pressure on Rossi and Lorenzo (66 adrift) to win in Japan. Later confessing to having felt under pressure himself this year, Marquez turned the tables to lead and then win, as his more-experienced rivals crashed, ending their championship hopes.

"In 2013 I didn't feel the pressure, but in this championship I cannot explain the pressure," he said that evening.

"It's something that maybe I didn't understand before this year. This year I felt it, and even my team said, 'Hey Marc, smile, you're not the same Marc, you must enjoy it.' Sometimes I forgot to enjoy it, because the pressure was too high. Especially at the start of the season. Last year we made a few mistakes, and I don't like to finish a championship like last year."

But if Marquez really felt that ➤

weight, it was not obvious. Honda did make a late, pre-season gain and Marquez started his season with third in Qatar, then victories in Argentina and the US, two of his happier hunting grounds.

The first real sighting of the 'new Marquez' came once back in Europe. Rossi showed he was going to be a factor by winning from pole at a hot Jerez, where management of 2016's new Michelins was key. He led home Lorenzo, while Marquez settled for third.

"Maybe last year was different, but this winter I learned a lot and before the race [HRC vice-president Shuhei] Nakamoto said to me, 'Please finish,'" Marquez said post-race.

"At Jerez, we know that for my riding style it's not one of the best tracks, we know that we're not at 100% with the bike. And when I saw that Valentino was in an incredible level and Lorenzo was a little bit faster than us, I said, '[take the] 16 points and be quiet for the next race.'

"It's a big fight inside me. But I need to feel well on the bike and I need to feel strong enough."

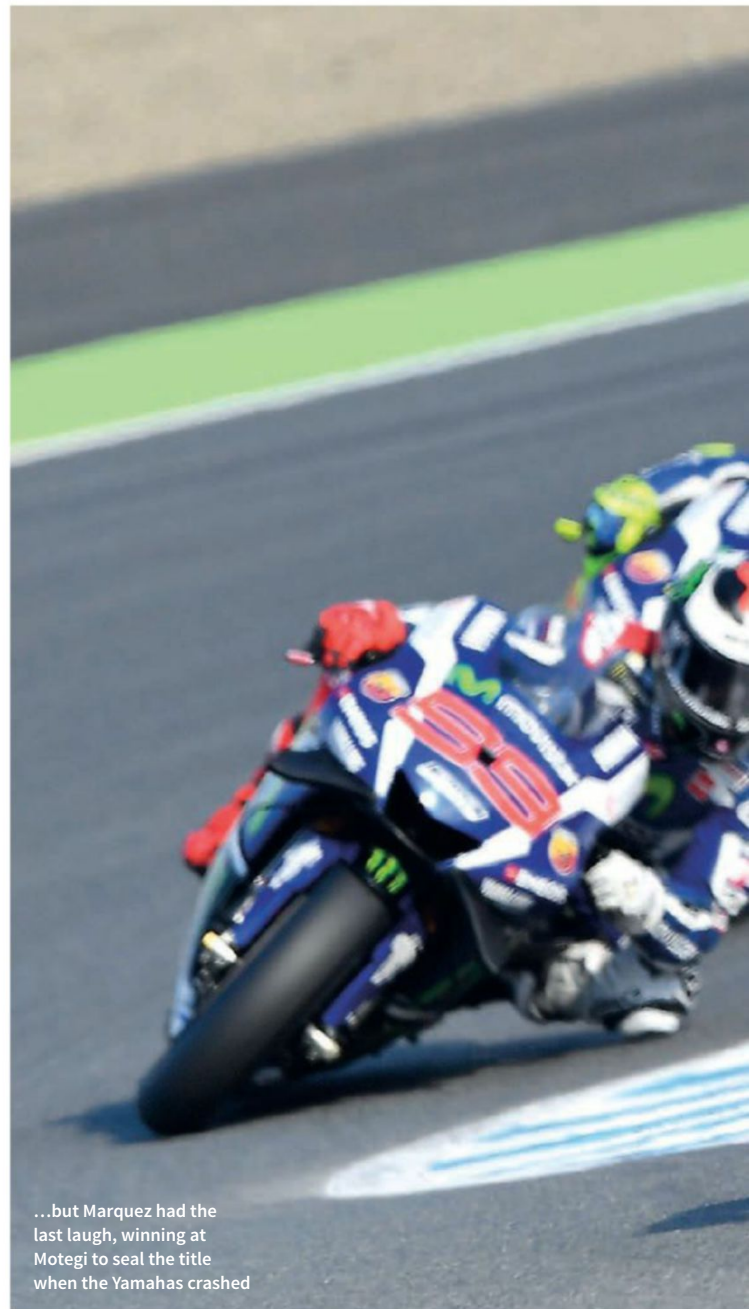
Truly emerging as a leader in the paddock, Marquez didn't have a lot to gain by talking about his new approach.

But it was working. When he won the title, he had only crashed in one race, at Le Mans, where he was able to remount and finish 13th. And he was not shying away from the big fights on track.

At Mugello he and Lorenzo brushed elbows at more than 180mph on the run into Turn 1 on the final lap, as they fought for victory. They traded top spot that lap, and Marquez was ahead exiting the final corner, only for his Honda to struggle up the hill, letting Lorenzo nip past to win.

A fortnight later at Barcelona Marquez was at it again, this time against Rossi. The pair had barely made eye contact since their clash at Sepang the preceding October, but engaged in another phenomenal scrap. Rossi emerged on top — his last win of 2016 — with Marquez second to take a championship lead he would not surrender.

Barcelona was the last grand prix before things got a little bit strange. Three of the next four races — Assen, Sachsenring and Brno — were shaped by wet weather, and this was where Marquez took control. Helped by a bold-but-correct switch straight to slicks in Germany, he scored 61 points from a »



...but Marquez had the last laugh, winning at Motegi to seal the title when the Yamahas crashed



Rossi beat Marquez at Barcelona...

ROUND BY ROUND

Losail

- 1 Jorge Lorenzo
- 2 Andrea Dovizioso
- 3 Marc Marquez

Lorenzo starts his title defence in perfect style, qualifying on pole and then withstanding an early Ducati fight to win. Iannone and Dovizioso lead at first, but squabble rather than pull away, and Iannone's crash while second leaves Dovizioso exposed to a Lorenzo challenge.



Rio Hondo

- 1 Marc Marquez
- 2 Valentino Rossi
- 3 Dani Pedrosa

Amid rear-tyre dramas, a flag-to-flag (mandatory bike-swap) format is adopted, with Marquez and Rossi slugging it out before the Honda rider nails his bike change and pulls away. Lorenzo crashes, and Iannone's final-corner error, which collects Dovizioso, costs Ducati a double podium.

Austin

- 1 Marc Marquez
- 2 Jorge Lorenzo
- 3 Andrea Iannone

Marquez makes it back-to-back wins in the Americas, maintaining his perfect Austin record with a dominant ride. Rossi is the Yamaha man to crash out of this race, while Dovizioso is skittled from a podium position for the second time in seven days, this time by Pedrosa.



Jerez

- 1 Valentino Rossi
- 2 Jorge Lorenzo
- 3 Marc Marquez

The first real sign that Rossi is going to be a genuine contender in 2016. The Italian winds back the years to take his first pole position in nearly 12 months, then balances pace and tyre management to perfection to beat Lorenzo in the race's hot conditions.

Le Mans

- 1 Jorge Lorenzo
- 2 Valentino Rossi
- 3 Maverick Vinales

Lorenzo dominates a weekend peppered with front-end crashes, including Dovizioso and Marquez in unison during the race. Marquez is able to get back on his Honda to finish 13th and bank points, while Vinales takes his maiden podium and Suzuki's first since returning in 2015.





BINDER SWIPES MOTO3 TITLE

BRAD BINDER WAS A CUT ABOVE IN MOTO3 in 2016, crowned champion in September with four races to go after dominating his fifth and final season in the class.

The South African started the year having not won a Moto3 race, but finished with seven to his name. Binder's first victory came in the fourth round at Jerez, where he charged from the back of the 35-rider grid after his Ajo Motorsport-run KTM was found to have run a non-homologated ECU in qualifying.

That summed up the supreme pace and judgement Binder displayed in a class that routinely features lead packs nudging double figures. He only finished off the podium four times in the 18 races, and became just the third motorcycle grand prix world champion from South Africa, the first since Jon Ekerold won the 350cc title in 1980. Binder graduates to Moto2 in 2017 with KTM, as the Austrian manufacturer enters that series as well as MotoGP.

Enea Bastianini finished the year in second, ahead of Jorge Navarro and Francesco Bagnaia, who took Mahindra's first two wins. Joan Mir was the top rookie in fifth, one spot ahead of Fabio Di Giannantonio and Nicolo Bulega, the latter from Valentino Rossi's team.

John McPhee became the first Scottish rider to win a grand prix since 1962, when he splashed his way to victory at Brno on his Peugeot-badged Mahindra. McPhee missed the end of the season after sustaining lung damage in a crash at Phillip Island, but will be back on a Honda in 2017.



Mugello

- 1 Jorge Lorenzo
- 2 Marc Marquez
- 3 Andrea Iannone

Lorenzo beats Marquez by 0.019s to take his third victory in six races, after *that* immense, last-lap battle. Rossi qualifies on pole and fights Lorenzo early, but local hearts break when his engine expires a third of the way into the race.

Barcelona

- 1 Valentino Rossi
- 2 Marc Marquez
- 3 Dani Pedrosa

In a weekend overshadowed by the death of Moto2 rider Luis Salom, Rossi beats arch-rival Marquez after another fierce late-race scrap. Lorenzo struggles and is then punted out of fifth place by Iannone, handing Marquez a championship lead he will never relinquish.



Assen

- 1 Jack Miller
- 2 Marc Marquez
- 3 Scott Redding

Marc VDS Honda's Miller becomes the first satellite rider to win a grand prix in nearly 10 years, in a chaotic, two-part, wet Dutch TT. Marquez takes second ahead of Redding, as Rossi and Dovizioso crash out from the front and Lorenzo flounders in 10th.

Sachsenring

- 1 Marc Marquez
- 2 Cal Crutchlow
- 3 Andrea Dovizioso

Another weather-hit race, this time with bike changes on a drying track. Marquez has an early off, but regroups and switches straight to slicks while others favour intermediates, and makes it work as Dovizioso, Rossi and Crutchlow stay out too long on wets.



Red Bull Ring

- 1 Andrea Iannone
- 2 Andrea Dovizioso
- 3 Jorge Lorenzo

Ducati ends a MotoGP drought dating back to October 2010 as Iannone beats team-mate Dovizioso. Iannone's gamble on a softer rear tyre is pivotal in his fight with Dovizioso, and Lorenzo starts the second half of the season with best-of-the-rest honours.

Brno

- 1 Cal Crutchlow
- 2 Valentino Rossi
- 3 Marc Marquez

Crutchlow becomes the first British winner in commanding style, built on picking hard rain tyres to suit the drying track surface. After some early pain, Crutchlow is "playing with them" by the end, as Marquez follows Rossi home to take another podium.



Dovizioso could not hold out against his 2017 Ducati team-mate Lorenzo in Qatar, but did win by year's end



MICHELIN

Silverstone

- 1 Maverick Vinales
- 2 Cal Crutchlow
- 3 Valentino Rossi

Another race, another new winner. This time Vinales breaks through for Suzuki's first victory since 2007. He pulls away at the front, while Crutchlow emerges on top from a mammoth fight for second with Rossi, Marquez, Pedrosa and the Ducatis. Lorenzo is an anonymous eighth.



Misano

- 1 Dani Pedrosa
- 2 Valentino Rossi
- 3 Jorge Lorenzo

Pedrosa grabs his first win of the campaign, becoming the eighth different victor in eight races. He picks softer tyres and makes them last to charge through from sixth. Yamaha riders spar post-race over Rossi's overtaking move on Lorenzo, and Marquez banks more points.

Aragon

- 1 Marc Marquez
- 2 Jorge Lorenzo
- 3 Valentino Rossi

Having built an imposing championship lead through sheer consistency, Marquez recovers from an early near-crash to take his second win since April. Vinales and Rossi both lead in the first half of the race, but have no answers for Marquez and then Lorenzo.



Motegi

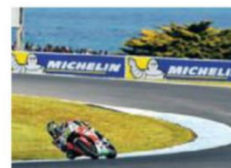
- 1 Marc Marquez
- 2 Andrea Dovizioso
- 3 Maverick Vinales

Marquez wraps up the title with three races to spare with his fifth win of 2016, as Rossi and then Lorenzo crash out of the race and mathematical title contention. Dovizioso and Vinales swoop for podium places. Pedrosa crashes in practice and breaks his right collarbone.

Phillip Island

- 1 Cal Crutchlow
- 2 Valentino Rossi
- 3 Maverick Vinales

Marquez's title celebrations are muted by a crash that hands the lead to the already-closing Crutchlow. The Brit then pulls away from Rossi – who has charged from 15th on the grid following a wet Saturday – to take a second career victory, as Vinales comes from 13th to third.



Sepang

- 1 Andrea Dovizioso
- 2 Valentino Rossi
- 3 Jorge Lorenzo

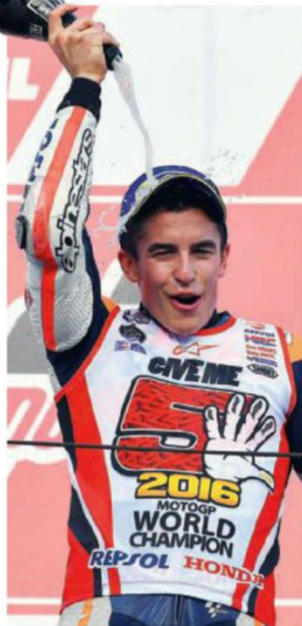
Dovizioso becomes 2016's ninth winner, taking his first victory for Ducati in another rain-hit race. Iannone leads a five-rider pack, but is passed by Rossi, then crashes, as do Crutchlow and Marquez. Dovizioso passes Rossi, as Lorenzo takes "lucky" podium.



Valencia

- 1 Jorge Lorenzo
- 2 Marc Marquez
- 3 Andrea Iannone

Lorenzo leaves Yamaha in style, dominating qualifying then leading the race from start to finish. Marquez reels in Lorenzo late on, but only after spending too long in the early scrap for second. Iannone holds off Rossi to grab a podium in his final Ducati start.



maximum of 75. Rossi scored 28, crashing at Assen and then making a mess of his bike swap at the drying Sachsenring. Lorenzo could only manage seven, as he battled low-grip demons.

Over the course of four events, Marquez's championship lead ballooned from 10 to 53 points. Around that time, with seven races remaining, it became apparent that Honda had also come to the party with, if not physical upgrades, then certainly gains in understanding of the new electronics.

In late summer, Rossi finished ahead of Marquez in four consecutive races, but not by far enough to do any real championship damage. Then Marquez was devastatingly quick on his way to victory in Aragon, despite nearly crashing early, setting up his chance to wrap things

At 23, Marquez keeps getting better and better. In his fourth season in the premier class, he managed to refine his approach without hurting what makes him such a special talent. His late-season crashes at Phillip Island and Sepang – when the title was in the bag – offered a more palatable final margin for those behind him, but for Yamaha it was scant consolation.

Four months after beating Rossi to the 2015 championship at the final hurdle, Lorenzo started the new campaign like nothing had changed, winning from pole in Qatar. And he finished it in a similar vein at Valencia.

Across the first six races Lorenzo won three times, built a little championship lead and signed a lucrative Ducati deal. But after that his season fell apart,

“Marquez keeps getting better, refining his approach without hurting what makes him special”

up in the first of the late flyaway races.

“Since the beginning, I believed,” he said of his title hopes. “After Argentina and Austin, I said, ‘We can [win]. It will be hard, but we can.’

“Valentino or Jorge, they never make any mistakes. But this year, they made a few mistakes and then I was able to create an advantage. After [the summer break] on the calendar we started to think, ‘Here finish P5, here P2’, make a kind of strategy.

“I won in Germany and when we started the second part of the season, I finished on the podium but also sometimes off the podium, [so] I started to become a little bit nervous.

“I was waiting for Aragon. When we got there, I said, ‘This will be the weekend to win again.’ I was really concentrating there, it was a key point, but especially the team – if they keep the same mentality as you, everything is easy.”

especially in wet and/or cold conditions as he struggled to get the feel and therefore confidence and speed he requires from a front tyre.

The nadir was those mid-year races in mixed conditions, finishing last of the riders who didn't crash at Assen and 77.7 seconds behind Marquez at the Sachsenring. After winning at Valencia, his first victory in nearly six months, Lorenzo rated his season as 6.5/10. At times he was a 10, other times barely a 1, but next year with Ducati he will be a must-watch.

Rossi was the more competitive Yamaha rider over the course of 2016, and beat Lorenzo to second in the points in their last season as team-mates. The Italian was, though, on the back foot after early crashes at Austin in April and Assen in June, the latter coming two races after an engine failure at Mugello. Lorenzo also lost a Yamaha engine that >>

day, but fortuitously at the end of the warm-up, rather than when it mattered.

That meant Rossi was never really close enough to pressure Marquez, especially after staying out too long on wets at the Sachsenring. Rossi said at the start of the year that it would require a special effort to match his 2014 and '15 form. But he did much more than that, and is showing no signs of slowing down.

Next year Maverick Vinales arrives as Rossi's team-mate, after excelling in his first two MotoGP seasons with Suzuki. Vinales showed more than promise in 2016, finishing fourth in the championship, and taking four podiums including a stunning victory at Silverstone, Suzuki's first since 2007. The 21-year-old is the real deal.

Ducati finished the year with two victories, finally ending a drought dating back to Stoner's last win in red at Phillip Island in October 2010. Andrea Iannone got the first at the Red Bull Ring, and Andrea Dovizioso the other at Sepang in the rain, conditions in which he and Ducati always fly. The Italian manufacturer made serious inroads this year, but it still lacks that little bit of something in getting the bike to change direction, especially in high-speed corners, as it welcomes Lorenzo.

The winless runs ended by Ducati,

“Crutchlow’s turnaround sums up the 2016 season”

Suzuki and satellite teams – Marc VDS Honda's Miller at Assen – were all noteworthy, but short compared to the wait endured by British fans for a premier-class winner. A whisker over 35 years after Barry Sheene's last 500cc grand prix win in Sweden in 1981, the Briton sporting #35, Cal Crutchlow, won at Brno. Crutchlow has always been strong in the wet, but on that Sunday in the Czech Republic the LCR Honda rider controlled proceedings, picking the correct rain tyres and then charging from 15th to first, winning by seven seconds.

The first stanza of Crutchlow's season was not far short of disastrous, including crashes in four of the first five races. But his massive turnaround included pole and a second-place finish at Silverstone and a second win, in the dry at Phillip Island.

That Crutchlow went from 20th in the standings after five races to a two-time winner – finishing with the same number of 2016 wins as Rossi, and behind only Marquez (five) and Lorenzo (four) – sums up the season in many ways. Unpredictable was the new predictable. 🌩

Crutchlow became Britain's first winner in 35 years with a masterful victory at Brno



RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	RIDER	TEAM	BIKE	1	2	3	4	5
1	Marc Marquez (E)	Honda	Honda RC213V	3	1	1	3	13
2	Valentino Rossi (I)	Yamaha	Yamaha YZR-M1	4	2	DNF	1	2
3	Jorge Lorenzo (E)	Yamaha	Yamaha YZR-M1	1	DNF	2	2	1
4	Maverick Vinales (E)	Suzuki	Suzuki GSX-RR	6	DNF	4	6	3
5	Andrea Dovizioso (I)	Ducati	Ducati Desmosedici GP16	2	13	DNF	DNF	DNF
6	Dani Pedrosa (E)	Honda	Honda RC213V	5	3	DNF	4	4
7	Cal Crutchlow (GB)	LCR Honda	Honda RC213V	DNF	DNF	16	11	DNF
8	Pol Espargaro (E)	Tech3 Yamaha	Yamaha YZR-M1	7	6	7	8	5
9	Andrea Iannone (I)	Ducati	Ducati Desmosedici GP16	DNF	DNF	3	7	DNF
10	Hector Barbera (E)	Avintia Ducati/Ducati	Ducati Desmosedici GP14.2/GP16	9	5	9	10	8
11	Aleix Espargaro (E)	Suzuki	Suzuki GSX-RR	11	11	5	5	6
12	Alvaro Bautista (E)	Aprilia	Aprilia RS-GP	13	10	11	DNF	9
13	Eugene Laverty (IRL)	Aspar Team	Ducati Desmosedici GP14.2	12	4	12	9	11
14	Daniilo Petrucci (I)	Pramac Ducati	Ducati Desmosedici GP15	DNS	-	-	-	7
15	Scott Redding (GB)	Pramac Ducati	Ducati Desmosedici GP15	10	DNF	6	19	DNF

16 Stefan Bradl (Aprilia RS-GP) 63; 17 Bradley Smith (Tech3 Yamaha YZR-M1) 62; 18 Jack Miller (Marc VDS Honda RC213V) 57; 19 Michele Pirro (Pramac/Avintia/Ducati Desmosedici GP15/GP14.2/GP16) 36; 20 Loris Baz (Avintia Ducati Desmosedici GP14.2) 35; 21 Tito Rabat (Marc VDS Honda RC213V) 29; 22 Yonny Hernandez (Aspar Team Ducati Desmosedici GP14.2) 20; 23 Katsuyuki



MONSTER

6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	PTS
2	2	2	1	5	3	4	4	1	1	DNF	11	2	298
DNF	1	DNF	8	4	2	3	2	3	DNF	2	2	4	249
1	DNF	10	15	3	17	8	3	2	DNF	6	3	1	233
6	4	9	12	6	9	1	5	4	3	3	6	5	202
5	7	DNF	3	2	DNF	6	6	11	2	4	1	7	171
4	3	12	6	7	12	5	1	6	DNS	-	-	DNF	155
11	6	DNF	2	15	1	2	8	5	5	1	DNF	DNF	141
15	5	4	DNF	10	13	DNS	9	8	6	5	9	6	134
3	DNF	5	5	1	8	DNF	DNS	DNS	-	-	DNF	3	112
12	11	6	9	EXC	5	14	13	13	17	DNF	4	11	102
9	DNF	DNF	14	DNF	DNF	7	DNF	7	4	DNF	13	8	93
DNF	8	DNF	10	16	16	10	10	9	7	12	7	10	82
13	13	7	11	18	6	12	14	14	DNF	14	12	16	77
8	9	DNF	DNF	11	7	9	11	17	8	9	10	12	75
DNF	16	3	4	8	15	17	15	19	9	7	15	14	74

Nakasuga (Yamaha Factory Racing Yamaha YZR-M1) 5; **24** Alex Lowes (Tech3 Yamaha YZR-M1) 3; **25** Hiroshi Aoyama (Honda RC213V) 1; **26** Nicky Hayden (Marc VDS/Honda RC213V) 1; **27** Mike Jones (Avintia Ducati Desmosedici GP14.2) 1.



MOTOGP

MOTO2: ZARCO GOES AGAIN

JOHANN ZARCO WILL GRADUATE TO MOTOGP as a two-time Moto2 champion after successfully defending his title. Zarco's season summed up the varied nature of the championship fight, with no rider really seizing momentum.

The Frenchman had a slow start, as Thomas Luthi, Sam Lowes and Alex Rins all spent time at the top of the standings. Zarco moved into the lead at Assen in June and then stayed there for the duration, but it was not that clear cut.

Zarco was second at Assen, amid a run of four victories in five events, but when that finished at the Red Bull Ring in August he did not win again until the penultimate round at Sepang, where he sealed the title. That mixed spell included a clash with local hope Lowes at Silverstone. Lowes showed impressive speed during the year, but crashed too often to mount a title bid.

Rins broke his left collarbone in a training crash between the Brno and Silverstone races, and was valiant to stay in contention. Luthi missed Brno after being concussed in a qualifying crash, then stormed back into contention with three wins.

Zarco's lead shrunk to just one point over Rins after Aragon, with four rounds to go. But he stayed strong and wrapped things up with victory in Malaysia, before also winning the Valencia finale to finish the year with seven victories.

Luthi wound up second in the points ahead of Rins and Franco Morbidelli, who claimed five straight podiums to end the season. Lowes fell to fifth, and will now step up to MotoGP with Aprilia, joining Zarco and Jonas Folger – who wound up seventh – with Tech3 Yamaha, and Rins (Suzuki) on the 2017 grid.

The 2015 Moto2 champion, Danny Kent, had a tough year in Moto2, finishing 22nd in the points with a best result of sixth in the season opener.

MOTOGP

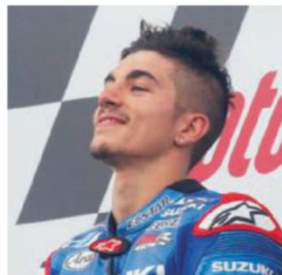


AUTOSPORT'S TOP 10 RIDERS



1 MARC MARQUEZ

Was there a better performer in world motorsport in 2016 than Marquez? Added a newfound consistency and maturity to blinding speed, and thoroughly outperformed team-mate Pedrosa. Marquez was able to throw the bike at corners and then defy logic and physics by making it stick, or finding the limit before the race. Until his Phillip Island crash, he was the only rider across the three classes to score points in every race. But Marquez wasn't just sensible, claiming seven poles – Lorenzo and Rossi's haul combined – with his five wins.



2 MAVERICK VINALES

If Vinales started 2016 as a future star, he finished it as a bona fide superstar. Set the agenda early with impressive pre-season testing pace on an improved Suzuki, and qualified on the front row in Qatar. The GSX-RR struggled for rear grip over longer runs in warm conditions, and in the rain, but Vinales only crashed once in a race all year, in Argentina. First podium came at Le Mans, and then a superb win at Silverstone. The 21-year-old more than vindicated Yamaha's decision to sign him as Lorenzo's replacement, and will give Rossi plenty to think about.



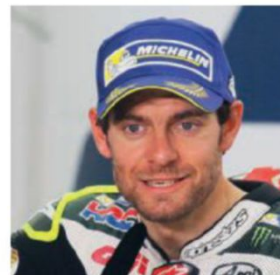
3 VALENTINO ROSSI

Should Rossi have won the title, or was it just good to see him looking very competitive, much more so than in 2015 when he narrowly missed out on the crown? He met his ambition of improving qualifying performances, aided by the return of Michelin tyres he knows from earlier in his career, and won two of the first seven races. A title bid looked on, even with his Austin crash and Mugello engine failure. Assen and Sachsenring errors gave Marquez too much breathing space, even as Rossi continued to rack up podiums elsewhere. Still, a fine season for the evergreen 37-year-old.



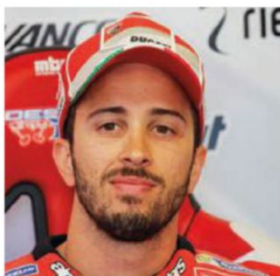
4 JORGE LORENZO

On the early-season Sundays in Qatar, France and Italy, there was a genuine touch of 'here we go again' about 2015 champion Lorenzo. He was peerless, especially at Le Mans, as a host of riders fell foul of the narrow margin offered by the front tyre. In hindsight, Lorenzo's crash in Argentina in cool conditions was a sign of what was to come, as he then had to battle his own tyre and confidence demons when the grip was low. Finished the year having led the most laps and with one last Yamaha victory at Valencia. Plenty of fine days, just not as many as recent years.



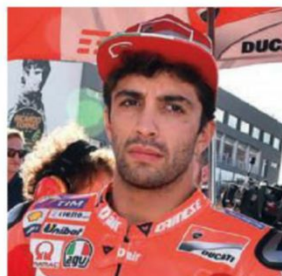
5 CAL CRUTCHLOW

To get back up to seventh in the points after a disastrous start would represent a fine recovery for most riders, even if they weren't on the troubled Honda, and a satellite bike at that. And winning a race, let alone two, would have seemed far-fetched. Crutchlow was superb to win in the wet and the dry, at Brno and Phillip Island. As he gelled with a different Honda chassis and found a rhythm, there was a big window in the second half of the season in which he was only outscored by Marquez. Shrewd in mixed conditions, but increasingly competitive in the dry too.



6 ANDREA DOVIZIOSO

Started 2016 as Ducati's experienced hand, albeit considered more likely to be squeezed out if he hired Lorenzo. But Dovizioso proved his worth early on. And unlike Iannone his problems were not self-inflicted. After finishing second in Qatar, he was taken out of the next two races, then had a water leak at Jerez, leaving there 11th in the points. He was dejected to not secure Ducati's breakthrough win, but took a well-judged victory at Sepang. Probably should have won at Assen and/or the Sachsenring, but did not waste as many chances as Iannone.



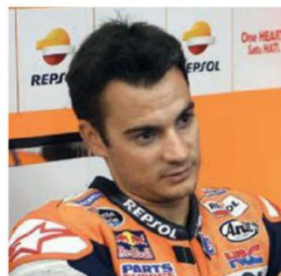
7 ANDREA IANNONE

The enigmatic Iannone would be a lot higher up a 'fastest 10' list. At his best, he outthought team-mate Dovizioso at the Red Bull Ring to end Ducati's victory drought, and beat Rossi in a race-long scrap for third at Valencia. Conversely, he crashed out of six races – from the top three on five of those occasions. That included taking out Dovizioso in Argentina, as Ducati considered Lorenzo's 2017 team-mate... Take out those errors and Iannone is fourth in the points instead of ninth, even having missed four races after fracturing a vertebra at Misano.



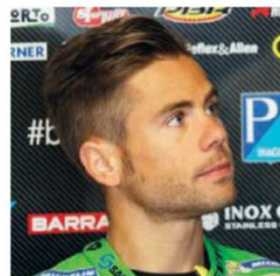
8 POL ESPARGARO

Before Crutchlow's march, Espargaro was 2016's best satellite rider, finishing in the top eight in seven of the first eight races, including qualifying fourth at Le Mans. He regrouped from a relative mid-season slump to finish the year strongly, including qualifying on the front row at Phillip Island. Could not have done too much more on a year-old Yamaha designed to run on Bridgestone tyres. Team-mate Bradley Smith never really found a way to make the Michelins work before injuring his knee, but Espargaro did, and his advantage was commanding.



9 DANI PEDROSA

If you take out Pedrosa's winning masterclass at Misano, it's tough to see how he could have endured a much worse 2016. He was one of those most affected by the new tyres, especially Michelin's stiffer rear rubber adopted after early-season scares. That made life even harder for the diminutive Spaniard to generate grip from the rear, exacerbating Honda's acceleration deficit. Third at Barcelona on a different chassis looked a potential breakthrough, but the situation remained challenging. Pedrosa only outqualifying Marquez once before fracturing his right collarbone and fibula at Motegi.



10 ALVARO BAUTISTA

Aprilia spent the year testing in public with its first real MotoGP bike, the RS-GP, its 2015 challenger essentially derived from a production bike. Delays in development meant it only made its test debut five weeks before the season opener, and that showed. It lacked power and was overweight, but gains were made, especially after the introduction of a new frame at Misano in September. While team-mate Stefan Bradl led qualifying 10-8, Bautista was the rider to get the most out of the Aprilia on race days, bagging six top-10 finishes in the last seven races.

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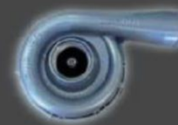
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Cammish has dominated in Carrera Cup GB



KEVIN TURNER
EDITOR

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Cammish attacks F1-supporting Supercup plus GB hat-trick bid

TWO-TIME PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB CHAMPION Dan Cammish will move up to the Porsche Supercup next season, while also attempting a hat-trick of British crowns.

The 27-year-old will race for the frontrunning Lechner Racing team in the Formula 1-supporting category next year. The team has won six of the past seven Supercup titles and Cammish has been targeting a move to the series for the past two seasons.

"This is massive, it's the biggest opportunity of my career," said Cammish. "It's amazing to think a couple of years ago I was close to being out of the sport – I didn't know where to move to next and thought about retiring altogether. Then I got picked up by Tim Harvey and my career started then."

"I tried to get into the Supercup last year but couldn't get the budget. This year I just focused on getting into the touring car arena and had some opportunities with big teams but it wasn't going to happen for me. I picked up the phone to Walter [Lechner] and he said, 'If you can get me this kind

of budget, I will get you in.' I worked on putting a deal together and I'm really looking forward to getting started."

Cammish is under no illusion of how big the challenge is, but has his sights on the title for the Lechner squad.

"I'm going there to win but I'm open and realistic about it," he said. "It's the biggest challenge I will have faced – it's at a level that's extremely high."

Cammish will again drive for the Redline Racing team in search of his third Carrera Cup GB, but there is a potential clash between the Snetterton rounds and the Hockenheim Supercup event, if the German GP goes ahead.

"I've won it the last couple of years not needing the last round but it's different knowing you've got to have a lead," said Cammish. "They [Redline] are such a great team – I feel part of the furniture."

"I've got the same mechanic and the same engineer so I have some good continuity there and I'm sure we're going to have a great season together."

DAN CAMMISH HAS BEEN ONE of the leading drivers on the UK scene for several years now.

The 2013 British Formula Ford champion has not always had the budget of some of his rivals, but his switch to Porsche racing gave his career new impetus. And a move into the F1-supporting Supercup is crucial.

Having a crack at taking a third Carrera Cup GB crown is all well and good, but after scoring 24 wins (to add to his 24 victories in his successful Formula Ford season) he has nothing left to prove – or to gain – by simply doing the same again.

The Supercup is a different prospect. It's a higher level and Porsche tends to pay attention to Supercup winners. Two of the three 2015 Le Mans victors – Nick Tandy and Earl Bamber – came via that route. With vacancies opening higher up on the Porsche roster, and hopefully Tandy and Bamber moving into LMP1 full-time, now is a good time to make an impression in the Supercup.

All Cammish has to do is deliver the results his UK form has suggested he is capable of.

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BRITISH GT

Tordoff to British GT in Lamborghini

BRITISH TOURING CAR RUNNER-UP SAM Tordoff will begin a career in sportscars after opting to join Barwell Motorsport for the 2017 British GT Championship, racing a Lamborghini Huracan following his switch from the BTCC.

Tordoff, 27, will share Barwell's second Huracan GT3 with British GT stalwart Liam Griffin, and also has his eyes set on some European outings.

Tordoff had the best year of his career so far in 2016, finishing second in the BTCC in his WSR-run BMW. But following his title loss to Gordon Shedden at Brands Hatch, Tordoff opted to leave and end his four-year stay in the BTCC.

"As much as I love the BTCC, I didn't want to be stuck in that bubble of only being a touring

car driver, so I want to show people that I'm versatile and can race in other disciplines, too," said Tordoff. "The BTCC also tends to be the end of a career path, not the start of one. You pay to drive there, regardless of if you finish second or 22nd, so it wasn't a sustainable option.

"My manager, Tim Sugden, knows Mark Lemmer [Barwell boss] well and when this chance came about it made complete sense. There's a career ladder in GTs and sportscars and there are multiple manufacturer programmes. I've never raced a pure-bred GT3 car, and I won't get my first test in the Huracan until next year.

"My experience of racing a rear-wheel-drive BMW will stand me in good stead and I have my background in the Porsche Carrera Cup to

fall back on, too, so it won't be completely alien.

"I've known Liam for a long time, having raced against him, and I know he'll be a great teammate and that the Lambo will be a very quick car. British GT3 will be a very high level for next season, but we're coming in aiming to win."

Tordoff and Griffin join Phil Keen and Jon Minshaw at Barwell for 2017.

"We couldn't be happier with our driver line-ups, and having Sam on board is hugely exciting," said Lemmer. "Liam struggled this season sharing his car with two different team-mates [Fabio Babini and Alexander Sims]. He's probably one of the most naturally talented Ams on the grid, but you need stability to make the full package."

BRDC BRITISH F3

Pull graduates to BRDC F3 with Carlin



JAMES PULL HAS BEEN announced as Carlin's first driver for the 2017 BRDC British Formula 3 Championship.

Pull, 17, contested the British Formula 4 Championship with Carlin this year, having raced in the category with JTR and Fortec, and finished fourth overall with two victories to his name.

He also raced with Carlin for the final round of the British F3 season at Donington

Park, scoring a best finish of eighth, and last month joined the Autumn Trophy at Snetterton with Carlin.

Singapore-born Pull becomes Carlin's first confirmed driver for the British F3 season.

"I can't wait for the upcoming season, racing in a higher category," said Pull. "Last year with the Carlin F4 team was a fantastic experience and they are a great group of people to work with."

CLIO CUP JUNIOR

Bradshaw gets Clio Junior prize

CIK-FIA KARTING ACADEMY TROPHY champion Callum Bradshaw tested a Renault UK Clio Cup Junior car at Snetterton last week as his prize for winning the Henry Surtees Challenge.

The 15-year-old is looking step up to car racing next year and had instruction from Phil Glew.

"The UK Clio Cup Junior test was a really good experience – the car was just brilliant," said Bradshaw. "A move to cars is on my radar and this is definitely a category I'm now looking at."

● The calendar for the first season of the UK Clio Cup Junior will mean the series features on the British Truck Racing Association Championship bill for four of the six rounds. The season begins at Thruxton, with visits to Rockingham, Donington Park, Snetterton, Brands Hatch and Pembrey.

Jones aims for F4 switch after test

FORMULA VEE DRIVER ALEX JONES HAS tested a British Formula 4 car for the first time with new squad GW Motorsport.

The 23-year-old tested last Friday, alongside the team's confirmed driver Jacky Liu. Jones previously tested in F3, although budgetary restraints stopped him from competing in the series full-time.

"The goal for next year is to get into F4 but the budget needs working out," said

Jones. "Although they've introduced a new [Challenge] cup for next year, which is supposed to be around £100,000, if you are competing for the whole year it'd definitely be into six figures."

Formula Vee is still an option for Jones next season, if he's unable to secure a move into F4. "There is the Formula Vee 50th anniversary championship, and that's something I'd like to be part of," he added.



MX-5 CUP

Gibaut prepares for US assault

BRITISH FORMULA FORD 1600 DRIVER Michael Gibaut will test a Mazda MX-5 in America next year with Fall-Line Motorsports, in preparation for a US switch.

Gibaut has raced in the Castle Combe Formula Ford Championship for the last couple of years, although he has raced just once in 2016 – having obtained a degree in motorsport management.

"I've always thought American racing is

a bit more exciting, especially the street circuits," said Gibaut. "The next season will be mainly testing in the MX-5 Cup.

"We'll be testing with them and maybe in 2018 we'll do a full championship season. Right now I have to get acclimatised and sort out sponsorship. We'll be doing a few races in the MX-5 Cup and then in 2018 we'll probably make a full entry into MX-5, maybe looking at the Road to Indy, too."



M3 CUP

Championship status for M3 Cup

THE M3 CUP HAS BEEN granted MSA championship status for the 2017 season.

The new-for-2016 M3 Cup struggled for numbers at times, but 750 Motor Club competitions manager Giles Groombridge acted on driver opinion to improve its health.

"We had 14 cars at the end of the season at Donington and it should've been more,"

he said. "Championship status was identified as important to our drivers, and we saw that some weren't willing to commit to races further away at places such as Croft in the current format."

The M3 Cup secured late approval for the new status, but Groombridge added it has led to further interest.

"We want to hit the ground

running with 20 cars on the grid and see some incremental growth from there," he added.

M3 Cup driver Carl Shield won the 750MC's John Miles Novice Driver award this year, winning £1000 from former grand prix driver Miles. The 750MC will match the donation, deducting it from Shield's 2017 entry fee.

IN BRIEF



VANTAGE GT3 FOR HUDSON AND WILCOX

GT Cup regulars Nigel Hudson and Adam Wilcox will switch to racing an Aston Martin Vantage GT3 in the series in 2017. The pair finished ninth in the 2016 championship – Hudson's first in GT3 competition – in an Audi R8 LMS with JMH Automotive, but next year will instead campaign the same Vantage that took Paul Bailey and Andy Schulz to the overall title in 2015. Hudson and Wilcox have begun testing their new machine, with two outings at Donington Park.

BARKER MOVES TO RADICAL CHALLENGE

Radical SR1 Cup runner-up and race winner Oliver Barker will step up to the Radical Challenge in the UK next season with Rob Wheldon's RAW Motorsport Team. Barker had his first run in a new SR3 RSX at Donington and hopes to be out again before Christmas.

TEEN BARR IN MINI CHALLENGE MOVE

Irish teenager Reece Barr is to contest the Mini Challenge JCW championship next year with the Excelr8 team. Barr, 16, made his debut in the championship at the final round at Snetterton in October, and will now enter the full championship with Excelr8. Mark Wakefield also joins for 2017, after finishing 10th overall in 2016.

HSCC IN SNETTERTON U-TURN

Snetterton has returned to the Historic Sports Car Club's 2017 calendar, after the club's visit to Brands Hatch in September was cancelled. The HSCC will now race on the 200 circuit layout, instead of the 300. It is hoped the move will help improve the number of entries at a circuit that has traditionally struggled to attract full grids.

AHLERS/BELLINGER AT THE DOUBLE

Keith Ahlers and Billy Bellinger have taken a title double with Masters Historic Racing by scooping the FIA Masters Historic Sports Car Championship in their Cooper Monaco King Cobra (below). They also won the Gentlemen Drivers Pre-1966 GT title in their Morgan SLR. Nearest rivals in both series were Graham Wilson and Nigel Greensall (Chevron B8 and Lotus Elan).





The Challenge could become a feeder series to the Saloons

HOTHATCH CHALLENGE

Hot Hatch series for Combe

CASTLE COMBE RACING CLUB HAS LAUNCHED a Hot Hatch Challenge for the 2017 season to cater for non-turbo saloon cars.

The Challenge will run across four of the club's meetings next year, with each event featuring one 15-minute qualifying session and a 20-minute race.

It will feature four classes, with all front-wheel-drive cars with 2.1-litre engines or below eligible.

With high interest in the club's Saloon Car Championship, the series has been launched to mop up any overflow and to give non-eligible cars for the Saloons series somewhere to race.

CCRC competitions director Steve Weston said that the series will also fill the gap vacated by the demise of the Sports Series, which had three cars for 2016's last meeting.

"The new series is an opportunity to try and encourage some of the older cars to return that don't necessarily have an opportunity to be competitive," Weston said.

Several current Saloon Championship entrants, such as MG ZR racer James Keepin, were enthusiastic about the proposed new series: "It should give the opportunity for the spectators to see some different kinds of cars racing."

Weston highlighted the possibility for the Hot Hatch Challenge to act as a feeder to the Saloons. "The main Saloons Championship this season has proved extremely popular, with reserves on several occasions, and we felt we could run the new series as almost a feeder to the main championship," he said. "It will be good to see some older cars return. The main thing is that the Challenge should be a fun, inexpensive series to enter."

USF2000

Murray targets US ahead of Road to Indy shootout

NIALL MURRAY IS TARGETING a place in USF2000 for 2017, regardless of whether he wins next week's Mazda Road to Indy Shootout victory.

The Irish driver has had a dominant 2016, winning the BRSCC FF1600 National title, the Walter Hayes Trophy, the

Formula Ford Festival and the Martin Donnelly Trophy.

The national title secured him a shootout entry, with the winner earning £160,000 towards a USF2000 season.

"I plan to try and do USF2000 in 2017 regardless of what happens," said Murray.

"It will be a lot more difficult if I don't win it - we've talked with some teams and they've approached me after some of the results this year. If I don't win I have plans in place to try and get the money."

Two Brits also head to the shootout at Laguna Seca:

Oliver White, who won last week's SuperSeries Shootout at iZone; and Neil MacLennan, who enters as Scottish Formula Ford champion.

The two-day event takes place next Tuesday and Wednesday, with around 20 young drivers expected.



Murray is targeting USF2000 move even if he doesn't win prize

SILVERSTONE CLASSIC

FORMULA FORD JOINS CLASSIC

The Historic Sports Car Club's Historic Formula Ford Championship will celebrate the category's 50th anniversary by joining the Silverstone Classic for the first time, as it aims for 50-car entries in 2017.

The Silverstone Classic will mark the midway point of the calendar, which starts at Donington Park on April 8 and ends on the Silverstone National circuit on November 14-15.

The HSCC is aiming to create twin double-header rounds at some venues, in order to run four Historic Formula Ford races over the course of a weekend.

HSCC CEO Grahame White said that Silverstone GP events will run one grid due to the circuit's capacity of 54 starting slots, and expects competition for entries.

"Even though we are permitted to start 54 cars on the full Silverstone Grand Prix circuit, we are still expecting to be oversubscribed at the Silverstone Classic, such will be the demand to be part of this wonderful event," said White.

Nick Wrigley, CEO of Silverstone Classic organiser Goose Live Events, expects Formula Ford to be a strong addition to the Classic.

"Formula Ford has played such a major role in global motorsport history and the careers of just about every young racing driver," he said.





Snetterton return is big HFF opportunity

By Marcus Pye, the voice of club racing

[@Autosport](#)

LAST FRIDAY'S NEWS THAT THE HISTORIC SPORTS Car Club would, after all, be returning to Snetterton in 2017 – on the September 23 date originally allocated by circuit operator MotorSport Vision to the club as a Brands Hatch Indy fixture – is interesting from a couple of perspectives.

Transferring from the 300 layout used in recent seasons (for the Autosport Three Hours-centred event, the retrospective element of which has been rested) to the 200 track may well encourage more competitors to come along to the well-run and popular East Anglian venue.

It also presents a tremendous opportunity for the club's booming Historic Formula Ford Championship (see last week's issue) to strengthen its links with the past.

In common with some other clubs – and there are notable exceptions, such as the evergreen 750 Motor Club and flourishing Classic Sports Car Club – the HSCC has struggled to fill grids at Snetterton for a while now. The financial aspects have made it increasingly difficult to justify. Using the shorter circuit, which is less costly to hire, may appeal to more competitors and make the event less reliant on numbers.

Importantly, it will also complete the set of MSV outposts in a season that will have already visited Cadwell Park (Wolds Trophy, June 17-18), Brands Hatch GP (July 1-2) and Oulton Park (Gold Cup, August 26-28).

The circuit switch means that Formula Ford, which celebrates its 50th Anniversary on the Sunday of the Legends of Brands Hatch Superprix, will not get a second trip to Kent to compete on the club track where it all kicked off in 1967.

Instead, and this is the big bonus, the Historic class (for cars built and raced up to 1971, with a derogation to 'grandfather in'

subsequent models that were essentially the same) gets to play at the place where the first Formula Ford class – comprising 12 Jim Russell Racing Drivers' School Lotuses – was run within a Formula Libre race on June 11 '67. And where the Formula Ford Festival was inaugurated in '72.

Back then, of course, 'Snett' was a pretty basic airfield track with the long Norwich Straight a feature. The first four Festivals ran there; Ian Taylor (Dulon LD9) and Donald Macleod (Van Diemen FA73) won the first two on this 2.7-mile course, albeit with Russell Bend installed between Coram corner and the pits, but Richard Morgan (Crossle 25F) and Geoff Lees (Royale RP21, after an utterly dominant season) achieved their subsequent victories on the shortened 1.9-mile version in which today's 200 track is clearly rooted.

Formula Fords have been the star turn at HSCC Snetterton in recent years, with three of the past six championship nailbiters decided by thousandths of a second and two more by tenths.

With entries in 2017 expected to exceed this season's record numbers, here is a real opportunity to promote a dedicated Historic Festival – to embellish the original at Brands and the popular Walter Hayes Trophy at Silverstone – in what promises to be an outstanding golden jubilee.

Competitor demand could easily sustain a multi-race format (a third 'fun' start was added at Snetterton this year, albeit on a two-day programme) but the best scenario might be to invite a Classic FF1600 double-header, for the cars of the Pre-1982 Ayrton Senna era. Now that would be a focused spectacle to bring fans through the gate, for future seasons if it is not practicable next time round. 🏁



SINCLAIR SEALS CLASSIC ENDURANCE TITLE

Briton Tony Sinclair has won Peter Auto's Classic Endurance Racing 2 title for 2016, driving US-domiciled Scot Grant Reid's Lola-BDG T292 HU55. Nephew of racing legend Bert Ray, the former Pre-'74 FF1600 champion and designer/constructor of the successful Jade sportscars has chased Cosworth DFV-powered opposition from Jarama to Imola this season. Surrey-based Jade Motorsport Engineering prepared the Crowne Racing car, Chris Craft's 1973 European 2-litre championship winner.



BULLOCK WINS THE RON TAURANAC TROPHY

Lotus 27 racer Marty Bullock has won the Australian leg of the Formula Junior Diamond Jubilee World Tour, contested at Barbagallo and Sydney Motorsport Park. The Western Australian, who has competed in the UK with the Lotus and an F2 Chevron B17C run by Bob Juggins, received the Ron Tauranac Trophy from the 91-year-old Lynx, Brabham and Ralt designer. The ambitious Australian will make his Historic F1 debut next season in a Williams FW06.

The minnow that almost beat Carlin

JHR doesn't have the single-seater experience of its British F4 rivals, but that hasn't stopped it fighting for the championship

By Stephen Lickorish, Special Correspondent

🐦 @sdlickorish



Carlin, Arden, Fortec, Double R and JHR Developments. There was an odd one out among the five teams to field drivers in every British Formula 4 race this year. Four were single-seater giants running cars in Europe and beyond, while one was a smaller British squad only in its second season of slicks-and-wings racing this century.

It was therefore natural to expect the four bigger teams to walk away with the championship. But they didn't. Arden's quartet mustered just four wins, the same as Double R, while for Fortec it was three. It was only Carlin that managed to beat JHR's tally of five with an impressive 14 victories.

Of the two drivers who fought for the title in the final race, one drove for the mighty Carlin, while the other was with that outlier, JHR. Though it was eventually Max Fewtrell who left Brands Hatch with the championship – ensuring yet another crown for Trevor Carlin's hugely successful team – it was JHR that had made the biggest impact with Sennan Fielding.

The Derbyshire-based squad is by no means tiny, but compared to Carlin's operation it is small. While the blue cars race in GP2, Indy Lights, European F3, Euroformula Open and BRDC British F3, besides F4 JHR's only other category is Ginetta Junior. So from the moment JHR decided to join the new FIA-regulated series it had its work cut out, its most recent single-seater competition being in Formula Renault back in 1995 under the Frepau Racing banner.

"It was a new challenge," says team boss Steve Hunter of the decision to branch into F4. "As the team has little experience in single-seaters, what we did was bring staff in from a high level of motorsport."

"The unfortunate side is the budgets – we were only able to do three tests"

"Our chief engineer, Paul Leach, was Fernando Alonso and Mark Webber's engineer in Formula 1, so we created a team with a whole lot of experience that produces the results."

Having worked with the outfit before, when it competed in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB, ex-Minardi F1 man Leach jumped at the chance to come on board.

"I think it's great working with junior drivers," he says. "It was the same when I was back in Formula 3000 with Mark, when you see someone come on and do well."

So with a small but knowledgeable group of engineers assembled, the team was ready to take on the big squads. And that is exactly what JHR did this year, although it wasn't plain sailing.

"The unfortunate side is the budgets – we were only able to do three tests during the year," admits Hunter.

Leach agrees: "It's a team that's run professionally but we have to be aware of the budgets – we haven't got some of the bells and whistles that some of the other teams have."

JHR's budget worked out at around a quarter of some of its rivals. "When you're looking at Carlin and Arden who can do copious amounts of testing, we're on the back foot," says Hunter. "The biggest problem was that we went from one weekend to the next not being able to check the car."

That was certainly the case between the Oulton Park and Croft meetings, where engine struggles dropped Fielding down the points table after a strong start to the year. When a new unit was fitted to try to rectify the problem, there was no chance to check if it worked, so there were still issues.

Once that was sorted during the summer break before Snetterton, Fielding and JHR really came on strong. >>



JHR and Ingram dominated the GT Supercup in 2013

“Then we were the dominant team in the second half of the season,” reckons Hunter. “Had we had the testing we would’ve wrapped the championship up a lot earlier.”

In the end Fielding missed out by just seven points as wet weather during qualifying – “a little chink in our armour,” says Leach – for the Brands Hatch finale left him at a disadvantage to eventual champion Fewtrell. But second in the drivers’ championship was still a very strong result.

“We had a good year – we finished third in the teams’ championship, so that was nice for a smaller team,” says Leach.

“For me, that’s massive. We’ve got a great respect for the bigger teams and it was a very nice acknowledgement that we were the only team that was able to compete with Carlin [regularly]. Third is no disgrace, and we’re very happy to beat Fortec and Double R.

“We built on our first season, and with the three cars there were 90 races and we didn’t have one non-finish due to a mechanical failure. That’s a tribute to the guys we have working with us.”

In some ways it should be no surprise that JHR got on the pace so quickly, as the team has been one of the most successful amongst the TOCA support categories. When Fielding triumphed at Oulton Park in 2015, JHR became the only team to have won in each of the current support series.

“It’s a very different ethos because it’s never been set up as a business”

Besides its strong track record in Ginetta Junior, it has also enjoyed successful stints in the Carrera Cup, Renault UK Clio Cup, and Ginetta GT4 Supercup – winning the title with current British Touring Car rising star Tom Ingram in 2013. And it also starred in the now-defunct SEAT Cupra Championship.

But it’s the current categories the team contests that Hunter picks as his highlights.

“I have to say Ginetta Junior and F4 have been the most challenging and most pleasurable because you’re working with younger drivers to help them improve,” he says. “At that age they hang on to every word you say. Some of our young drivers

are now becoming our instructors, like Tom Ingram and Sennan. It creates a more friendly and enjoyable environment.

“Professionalism is important, but we don’t want to be taking the fun

out of it. We believe that if people enjoy it they perform better.”

Having first raced with the team in Ginetta Junior in 2012, Fielding certainly believes that approach pays off.

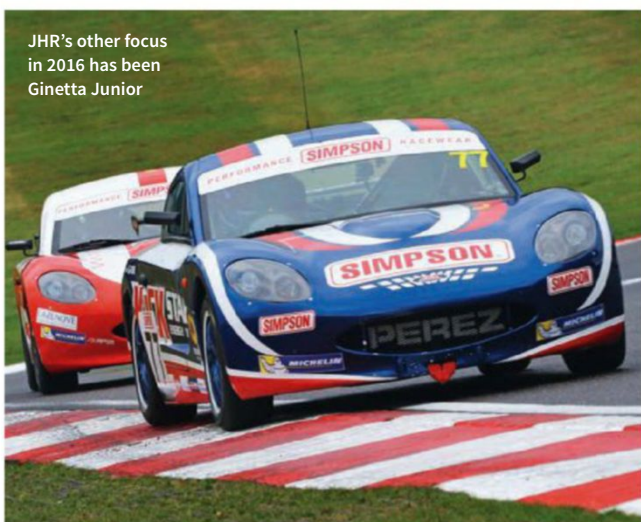
“They’re fantastic to work with, really look after the drivers and are a very family friendly team,” he says. “They do everything they can to make sure you feel happy and give you a quick car.

“They aren’t working with you just for the money, they work with you because they want to get the results too. JHR wants to win just as much as any driver out there.

Hunter set up the squad to honour his brother's memory



JHR's other focus in 2016 has been Ginetta Junior



"I've known the team for about six years now and would love to work with them again – they can't get rid of me! They are a great bunch and with the right driver and budget they can take the fight to Carlin. Even if I had the budget to go with another team, I would've still gone with JHR."

Hunter is also keen to stress how the team operates in a different way to others: "It's a very different ethos because it's never been set up as a business – it's been set up as a way to carry on my brother's name."

The letters JHR stand for Jamie Hunter Racing. Steve's brother Jamie competed in categories including Formula Renault and the Porsche Supercup before being killed in a road accident in 2001, aged just 29.

"The only point has been to go out there and win," adds Hunter. "Our intention was always to do that at the highest level."

Looking to the future, that is very much the goal. JHR has always competed in a variety of series and that is reflected by the team's desire to grow in two very different directions.

"Our connection with Ginetta has got stronger and stronger and the [GT4 Supercup] G55 is certainly something we would like to explore again," says Hunter. "That has to be high on the agenda."

But JHR is also looking to continue progressing in the world of single-seaters. "The challenge is moving up the single-seater ladder and I won't do that until I've completed that test [winning F4]," he states.

Considering the team's track record, and the way it has starred since moving into the category, that target looks achievable in the not-too-distant future. 🍀

SENNAN FIELDING: JHR'S CRUCIAL WEAPON

EVEN WITH ALL the effort JHR put into recruiting top engineering staff, it would have all been in vain without the right driver behind the wheel. Step forward Sennan Fielding.

The 21-year-old has had a very impressive 2016. He won five races and showed outstanding racecraft to regularly beat his better funded rivals.

It was an important year for him too.

This was his fourth consecutive season in UK junior single-seater racing, so he really needed to make an impression.

Achieving great results with a small team certainly made sure of that.

"A lot of people have recognised what

we've done with such a limited budget, so it's been good for me," says Fielding.

"It's been an amazing season but I think everyone in the paddock saw we had done a good job, and the determination we put in was unbelievable."

"Sennan's experience soon helped us get on top of the new cars"

That effort led to him being selected as one of this year's McLaren Autosport BRDC Award finalists, and also caught the attention of several

Formula Renault Eurocup teams. The series is undergoing a major revamp for next season, with a host of new incentives added by the French manufacturer, and is the target destination for Fielding.

Hunter has no doubt that wherever Fielding races next he will be successful, while Leach highlights just how important he has been to the team.

"It was nice to have someone like Sennan with a bit more experience as he can give better feedback," says Leach. "Having him on board was instrumental to us getting on top of the new cars so quickly."

Praise indeed from a man who has worked with Fernando Alonso.

Fielding's speed and experience were crucial for JHR



ALL PICS: EBREY

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MSV, owner of Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton and Cadwell Park, has a range of driving gifts and merchandise perfect for any petrolhead's Christmas, starting at just £1.

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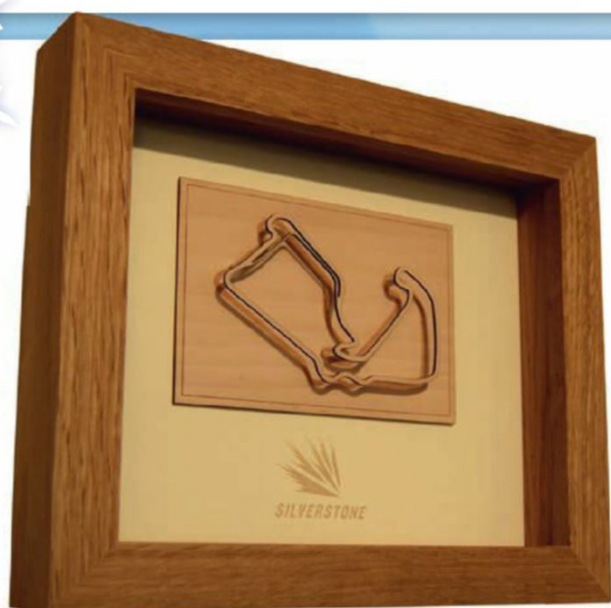
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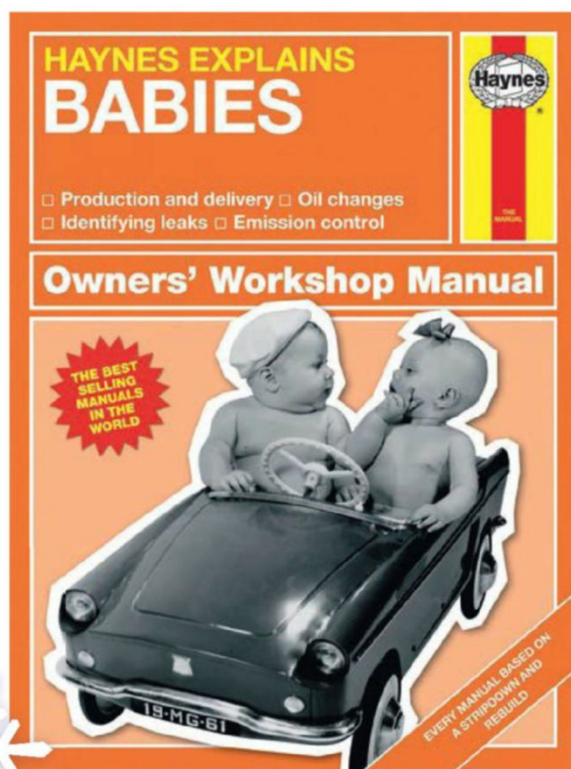
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WHAT'S ON

Club championships that should be on TV

WHEN IT COMES TO CLUB-RACING options on TV, pickings are often slim. Things have improved in recent years, with Motors TV offering more highlights packages throughout the year – but even these are often limited to big-occasion meetings. Whether it's championships and series that already have some airtime, or those that should have a shot at a slot, Autosport's contributors pick out their must-see races that should occupy your TV time.

SUPER TOURING TROPHY

The '90s were a high-water mark for the British Touring Car Championship, with scores of professional drivers and sophisticated tin-top racers. It made for great TV and the cars have returned in the Super Touring Trophy. Honda Accords tend to lead the way, but double champion John Cleland and Patrick Watts are often the old BTCC stagers taking on the historic racers.

KEVIN TURNER

WALTER HAYES TROPHY

The annual FF1600 knockout spectacular is surely one of club racing's greatest single events, with thrilling action and a tremendous atmosphere at Silverstone each November – yet there has been no TV coverage for years. There's plenty of material for a couple of hours of tightly edited highlights a week later; live coverage could keep the fans that add to the excitement away.

IAN SOWMAN

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD

How simply can it be spelled out? There's



great racing and nostalgic cars that have carried some of the greats of the sport to their big gigs. The HSCC's series invariably produces a good championship fight, and has garnered a reputation for promoting even closer racing at the front than modern machinery. It's doing its bit to encourage young drivers with a competitive junior crop too.

JACK BENYON

From the top, clockwise: Super Tourers, Historic FF1600, Legends and Walter Hayes Trophy

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH

Budget, mini-tin-top action with a nostalgic twist. If you look back fondly on Peugeot 205, Citroen AX, Vauxhall Nova and Ford Fiesta hot hatches, then Classic Stock Hatch would be something to behold on TV. The races are frantic and the driving level at the sharp end is strong in the 750 Motor Club series.

KEVIN TURNER



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JUNIOR SALOONS

A few years ago, the Junior Saloon Car Championship, then in its Saxmax guise, was ailing. But after both 750MC and the BARC struggled to boost its popularity it's been transformed by Dave Beecroft, with its biggest grids and evenly contested and policed races. Following and watching the series was almost a chore – that's not the case now.

PETER SCHERER

SPECIAL SALOONS AND MODSPORTS

Picking just one of the CSCC's series is tough, but Special Saloons and Modsports gets the nod for its eclectic mix of machines from thriving series of yesteryear. The club's trial run on Motors TV earlier this year following its maiden visit to Thruxton proved to be hugely successful, but perhaps that's little surprise when you see machines including Darrian Wildcat T98s being flung through Church.

JACK COZENS

LEGENDS

What's more appealing than close, competitive and tactical racing at a frenetic pace? They're all qualities guaranteed by the manic miniature Legends championship, which offers some of the closest racing in the UK. Regularly attracting capacity fields and occasionally guest stars, this series offers enough points per race to leave the title wide open to the last.

DAN MASON/DAMIAN MEADEN

COMPACT CUP

The Compact Cup has grown into one of the most entertaining championships on the calendar – so no wonder Motors TV has picked it up. The one-make BMW series' races rarely disappoint, and the formula is now equally successful in Scotland too. Sure, there are still a few rough edges in the quality of driving sometimes, but that almost adds to the attraction.

PETER SCHERER

CASTLE COMBE SALOONS

Castle Combe's four championships are perfectly designed for a TV package – although the jewel in its crown is the Saloons championship. Short, sharp races pack plenty of action, and the club's mantra of diversity is well demonstrated – where else would you find a frontrunning Mitsubishi Colt?

LEE BONHAM



HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube NICO GETS THE PARTY STARTED

Search for Nico Rosberg: WORLD CHAMP!!

This is the post-race message to the fans that Nico Rosberg has always wanted to make. The freshly crowned 2016 F1 world champion heads to his party venue of choice – "We're going to tear down the roof of the place!" – with Mrs R and his best buddies, and a little input from Kings of Leon.





TV PICK OF THE WEEK

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Stars of the past, present and future will flock to the Grosvenor House Hotel once again to celebrate the 2016 motorsport season in the heart of London. Motorsport greats will be honoured with prestigious awards as Motors TV brings the action from an unmissable event.




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THE ARCHIVE

A youthful Ron Dennis puts his back into his job in the Monza pitlane, prepping Jochen Rindt's Cooper-Maserati T81 at the 1966 Italian GP. Rindt finished fourth.

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TOP FIVE

ACTIVE SONS OF RACING DRIVERS OUTSIDE F1

Nico Rosberg's crowning as Formula 1 champion in Abu Dhabi last weekend got us thinking: there are loads of great sons of racing drivers – including five in F1 – but which ones are mixing it up outside grand prix racing? We've almost certainly missed someone you think deserves to be on this list. We've also been a bit cheeky – the fact each driver comes from a slightly different discipline is not a coincidence...

1 NELSON PIQUET JR

The only driver in this list to have made it to Formula 1, Nelson's son might not have become a three-time F1 world champion, but he's carved out a fine and varied career. Piquet Jr is probably best remembered for his role in the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix controversy, but he's also a bloody good racing driver. In addition to winning the inaugural Formula E title, Piquet has won races in NASCAR's second and third tiers as well as rallycross since exiting F1, and also showed well in two LMP1 privateer outings in the World Endurance Championship this year.



3 BRAD KESELOWSKI

NASCAR's 2012 Sprint Cup champion is the son of 1989 ARCA title winner and one-time top-tier starter Bob. Keselowski Jr has developed into a NASCAR powerhouse; a 21-time winner at the pinnacle of American stock car racing who has a long-time affiliation with Team Penske, which began in 2010 with the Nationwide title. Shades the likes of Dale Earnhardt Jr to nick the NASCAR spot in this list.



5 TIMMY HANSEN

The son of 14-time European Rallycross champion Kenneth was always destined for a career of going sideways. Timmy was a race winner in Formula BMW Europe and Formula Renault before switching to rallycross and finishing third in the 2013 European Championship. He's contested the three World RX seasons, winning at least once in each campaign in his family-run works Peugeot team.

2 WILL POWER

Will Power is the only IndyCar champion in his family, but he's not the only open-wheeler racer. Power's father Bob has been a regular competitor since Australian Formula 2 in the '80s, and is still active in Formula Ford, racing at Bathurst and in national rounds in recent years. Bob has also raced a car dubbed 'Mann Power', after buying a hillclimb special originally built by Barry Mann in 1966.



4 TOM BLOMQVIST

Stig's boy has done pretty well for himself... in a completely different discipline. In a copy of the Sainz family, a world rally legend has spawned a very good single-seater driver. The difference with Blomqvist is that, after his best season in F3 – splitting Esteban Ocon and Max Verstappen in 2014, he moved into the DTM with BMW. He's a race winner, and finished sixth in this year's standings.



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