

164-PAGE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL ISSUE

# AUTOSPORT

OUR TOP 50 OF 2016



## THE BEST DRIVER IN THE WORLD

Ricciardo reveals all  
about his stellar year

+ PLUS +

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# Picking the year's best always stirs debate

## WHO DO YOU THINK WAS THE BEST DRIVER OF 2016?

There is usually much office debate about our top 50 drivers list and there were several candidates for the top spot this year.

World champions Nico Rosberg and Sebastien Ogier, 10-time 2016 grand prix winner Lewis Hamilton and rising star Max Verstappen could all make a case for #1. But we reckon Daniel Ricciardo was the most impressive driver across the whole season. Fernando Alonso agrees, so we are in good company.

Ricciardo responded to the Verstappen threat and generally had the upper hand. He also didn't make the errors or have the odd off-form moments that the Mercedes drivers could be accused of.

The Australian is one of the most likeable drivers on the F1 grid and reveals many aspects of his approach and personality in his exclusive interview with Ben Anderson in this issue (page 29).

We've packed this bumper issue – our biggest since the 60th-anniversary special in 2010 – with a look back at the best moments of the year, plus some more fun and random pieces that we hope will help you through the festive period. Merry Christmas!

• Just before we closed for press, Ogier confirmed he will drive M-Sport's aggressive-looking new Ford Fiesta in the 2017 World Rally Championship (p40). Seeing how the French star gets on outside of Volkswagen as he tries to give M-Sport its first win since 2012 will be one of the main storylines of next year.



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COVER IMAGE  
Tee/LAT

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**THE TOP**

# **DRIVERS OF 2016**

By Ben Anderson, Phil Branagan, Jack Cozens, David Evans, Bruce Martin,  
Scott Mitchell, Marcus Simmons, Edd Straw, Kevin Turner and Gary Watkins



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XPBIMAGES

## STOFFEL VANDOORNE

4th in Super Formula; scored point in F1 one-off

### DOWN 45

#### What did you learn from your year in Super Formula?

Nobody was expecting me to win there, but it's been a good season with ups and downs. We won two races and had a pole position and we had some tough races. It's been good to understand the car, and to work with some Japanese people, which I will have to do more next year with McLaren. Just keeping sharp, fit, racing and having that thinking process about making the car better.

#### What were the challenges?

Communication was very difficult at the beginning because there were only one or two guys I could speak to – my engineer and team manager. It's difficult to build that relationship with the team. How they operate and set up the car is quite a bit different to Europe, so it was good to experience that.

#### How was it being the outsider in Japan?

It's a professional championship. I'm one of the youngest drivers in Super Formula, which was strange, and because everyone has so much experience it wasn't easy to come in. But that made me raise my game.

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KALISZ/LAT



## JAMIE WHINCUP

2nd in Australian Supercars

### RE-ENTRY

To say Jamie Whincup had a strong 2016 might seem odd. After all, he has won six Supercar titles, but the last of those was in '14 and this year – for the first time – he was beaten to the title by a team-mate, Shane van Gisbergen. But Whincup drove at a level never before seen, mainly because he had to; van Gisbergen's arrival and Red Bull Racing Australia raised the bar, and Whincup responded.

But things didn't go Whincup's way when he needed them to. At Bathurst he crossed the line first, but a time penalty over an on-track incident put him back to 11th place. While arguments raged about the penalty, what was clear is that Whincup and co-driver Paul Dumbrell dominated the 1000km race in a way not seen for years. A fair result would have been not just a win, but a win by 30 seconds. Whincup needed van

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## FELIX ROSENQVIST

Wins in Indy Lights and Blancpain Sprint Cup; points in DTM; pole in Formula E: Mr Versatile

### DOWN 10

#### How many different cars did Felix Rosenqvist compete in this year, and drive well? He reveals all...

##### 1 Prototype Challenge, Daytona 24 Hours

Unfortunately I didn't race because our car had too much damage before I had to jump in, so it was a weird experience, but it was a special car to drive. There were a lot of crashes in that category, especially among the amateur drivers, but it was cool to be there and I hope I can do it again.

##### 2 Indy Lights with Belardi

That was going to be the main programme this year. It was a bit up and down. I had some really tough weekends and some really good weekends. The ovals seemed quite tough for me. Overall it was really cool to spend time with Belardi Auto Racing. I had a nice time with my team-mate Zach Veach as well.

##### 3 GT3 with ASP Mercedes in Blancpain, plus one-off in ADAC GT Masters with Zakspeed Mercedes

Blancpain Sprint was the only full championship I actually did this year. It was fun. Mercedes helped me out by putting me there. The highlight of the year was definitely the Spa 24 Hours – one of the coolest races I've done. Such a nice race and we also did really well, finishing second. It was also good to win the last race of the season in Barcelona with Tristan Vautier. We developed a really nice relationship through the year.

##### 4 IndyCar test with Ganassi

That was definitely a memory for life. It's the quickest car I've driven and also something really special to drive – Scott Dixon's car with the same configuration as he was driving it, and also quite successfully. I'm still in contact with some teams over there. Maybe we'll do something in the future.



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Gisbergen to make mistakes in the final rounds at the Gold Coast, Pukekohe and Sydney's Olympic Park, but there were few to speak of. With one more race win and one more pole than Whincup, 'The Giz' won the title. Whincup congratulated him and sportingly moved into the background – but don't think he will stay there for long.

#### 5 Swedish Legends Championship at Karlskoga

My former team boss when I did Formula Renault in Sweden runs a team there. I have a lot of support from fans in Sweden, so it was nice to give something back. It was good – more than 30 cars and a fun race. I was leading, but I went off into the gravel on the last lap and finished second. It's one of those cars that when you drive it for the first time, you know there's nothing to complain about – it feels so bad anyway, but you just drive it!

#### 6 DTM with ART Mercedes

It was my target since 2011, when I joined Mercedes [as a Merc-backed F3 driver], to race there one day. Obviously it was very tough to join mid-season considering it's one of the hardest cars to drive technically. Also the fact that we had a lot of BOP or performance weight at that time of the season, but it went a lot better than expected.

#### 7 Formula E with Mahindra

From the first time I tested a Formula E it went very well. It's a very difficult championship to join – the level is more or less the same or maybe even better than DTM. You have one very short day and you need to nail everything. Qualifying is difficult and then the race is difficult in a completely different way. My pole in Marrakech was something none of us expected.

#### 8 Toyota GT86 on Nurburgring Nordschleife

When you drive around the Nordschleife, especially in the wet, you just don't go to the limit. One little twitch and you're in the grass and then the wall. It's like a different sport compared to every other track.

#### 9 F3 in Macau Grand Prix with Prema

It was my first time in F3 on Pirellis, so it was a little bit of a rush to get them working before Macau. The car itself I know very well. It's basically where I gained all my experience in my career. It's nice to be back and I can really confirm it's one of the nicest cars you can drive.

# 47

## JENSON BUTTON

15th in F1 World Championship

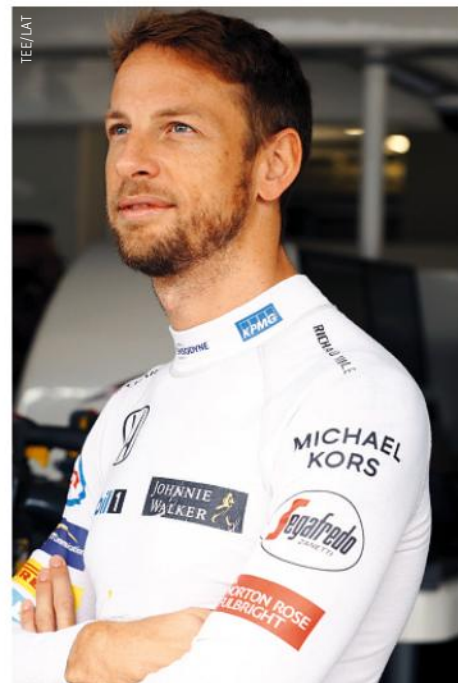
### DOWN 12

Jenson Button feels he needs a break. Seventeen unbroken seasons of Formula 1 competition have taken their toll. Being team-mate to a rival as relentless as Fernando Alonso for the last two of those can't have helped either.

Button admits he made his call to step back from racing in F1 in 2017 too early, and that the timing of that decision affected his mindset for the final third of the campaign.

That's a shame, because up to and including September's Italian Grand Prix he performed very well indeed. Button wasn't a match for Alonso, but was pushing him hard – particularly on Sundays – and felt he was driving better than ever.

Alonso reckons Button is "probably the best team-mate I've ever had" and on his day (Austria, Germany, Italy) Button is still capable of being right up there with the very best.



# 46

## ANDRE LOTTERER

5th in World Endurance LMP1;  
2nd in Super Formula

### DOWN 27

You'd normally expect to find Lotterer higher in this list based on his performances in the World Endurance Championship and Super Formula in Japan. It's true that he didn't win in either series in 2016 (although a WEC victory was lost in the scrutineering bay at Silverstone), but did he perform at a lower level than in the past? Not consistently so.

There were strong drives, as one would expect, but also there appeared to be some off days and even some mistakes. Interpreting what was going on at Audi isn't easy, however. Lotterer and his team-mates were effectively out of the championship equation early on, and weren't getting quite the same equipment as the sister car in the final races.

Lotterer was still picked up pretty quickly by Porsche for 2017, so it will be interesting to see how he gets on in a new environment.



# 45

## JOSEF NEWGARDEN

4th in IndyCar Series

### DOWN 14

The Team Penske race shop in Mooresville, North Carolina, is a 'Garage Mahal', with the IndyCar team on one side and the NASCAR squad on the other.

The team's newest driver is 25-year-old Josef Newgarden, who replaces Juan Pablo Montoya in 2017 after another superb season with Ed Carpenter Racing. He's the first driver from the US to race for Penske's IndyCar team since Sam Hornish Jr left in '07.

Newgarden bounced back from a huge crash in Texas before the race was rained off and delayed for a couple of months. By the time he returned to Texas, after recovering from injury, he'd already won at Iowa Speedway. He's a force on road circuits too, as two podiums on those layouts in 2016 attest.

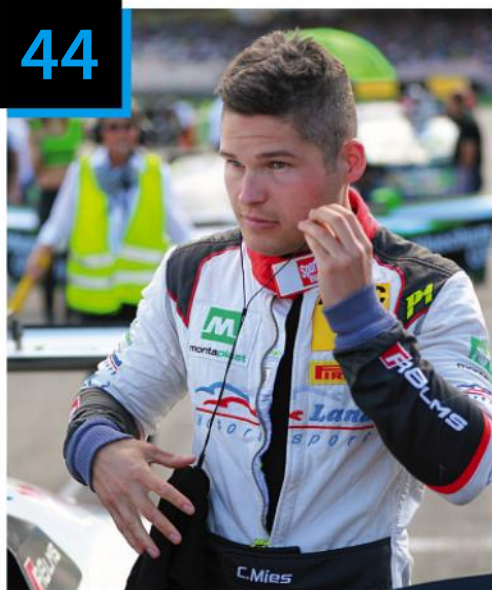
"It really is a privilege," said Newgarden of joining Penske. "You get to walk into the building, see all the people that work here, all the equipment and capability that we have – just to be a small part of the team working towards the bigger goal of success in racing, it's really an honour."

It's an honour he earned with some great drives during a fine 2016 campaign.





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## CHRISTOPHER MIES

2nd in Blancpain Sprint Cup; 1st in ADAC GT Masters

### NEW ENTRY

Mies has often been overshadowed by Laurens Vanthoor, Rene Rast and others in Audi's GT roster. The German finally emerged from those shadows in 2016 with two impressive sprint-racing campaigns that would have yielded two titles but for race-date clashes.

Mies played a key role in Enzo Ide's championship success with WRT in the Blancpain GT Series Sprint Cup, but wasn't able to take a share of the title on the final race weekend because he was racing on the same day in the ADAC GT Masters curtain closer, a series he did win with Connor de Phillippi and Land Motorsport.

Mies backed up his endurance credentials with another strong drive at the Spa 24 Hours with Phoenix.

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## OTT TANAK

8th in World Rally Championship

### NEW ENTRY

North of Elk, west of Olecko, there are 13.13 miles of road known as Swietajno – Rally Poland's fastest of fast stages this year.

It's a pretty fearful stretch, starting alongside a lake, then tearing between the trees to a hairpin left at Dobki before the dash to the finish.

Nine minutes and 54 seconds after he dropped the clutch at the start, Tanak flew across the finish line. He'd averaged 79.40mph – and such an average down that road made no sense. It was narrow, tight and tricky in places, and much of the quick sections was unseen and unsighted. And it was so slippery in parts.

Nobody came within 3.5s of Tanak there. In Finland, the season's other speedfest, he won six stages and was in the lead fight until he hit trouble. Then the trees.

The argument for Tanak being the sport's fastest on fast gravel grows with good reason.



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## GORDON SHEDDEN

1st in British Touring Car Championship

### UP 1

Things had started well enough for Gordon Shedden. There was no doubting the pace of the car and he had a very able team-mate to work with – a fellow multiple winner who had helped him to success the year before. But then there were some setbacks and suddenly it didn't look like he would be able to repeat his 2015 victory. Shedden dug deep, never gave up and, after some very tight tussles, came out on top. He crossed the line at Goodwood to take his second consecutive RAC Tourist Trophy in JD Classics' Jaguar E-type. Oh, and he also retained his British Touring Car crown with Honda by two points!



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## MATTIAS EKSTROM

1st in World Rallycross; 7th in DTM

### RE-ENTRY

Mattias Ekstrom became the first person to dethrone Petter Solberg as World Rallycross champion with his own Audi-blessed Team EKS operation. Ekstrom and the S1 Quattro won four events – including a run of victories at Hockenheim, Mettet and Lydden Hill early on – and his success was such that he skipped the DTM finale to prioritise his RX world title bid.

Ekstrom's main reputation comes from his time in the DTM, but he has prowess going sideways, having contested World Rally Championship rounds in the past. And he's not lost any of his conventional circuit speed – he won the second Hungaroring DTM race and was fifth in the points before skipping Hockenheim.





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## PIPO DERANI

1st in Daytona 24 Hours and Sebring 12 Hours; 4th in WEC LMP2

### NEW ENTRY

It would be easy to overlook the Brazilian's talents because his biggest achievements this year – and arguably his best drive – came right at the start of the season in the IMSA SportsCar Championship.

Derani impressed on the way to victory with the Extreme Speed Motorsports squad at the Daytona 24 Hours, but he truly starred at the Sebring 12 Hours. ESM had the car to win at Daytona in the Ligier-Honda JSP2, but the difference between

success and failure at Sebring was Derani. He kept the car in the hunt during an afternoon rain shower when he stayed out on slicks, and then came from behind in a classic US sportscar finish under the cover of darkness to take the win.

The driver line-up at ESM in the WEC was never going to afford Derani any more victories, but he still showed his pace on a regular basis. He put in a blinding performance at the Bahrain finale to remind of us of his talents.



38

## MARK WEBBER

4th in World Endurance LMP1

### UP 6

Webber saved his best until last in his three-year stint as a sportscar driver. The Australian drove better than ever in 2016, although a torrid start to the season meant there was never going to be a repeat of the previous year's title.

Perhaps most significantly, he mastered Le Mans for the first time. Webber was superfast as the #1 car came back from an early water-pump

change and lagged behind only Neel Jani in the averages – and then only by a whisker. Webber had Le Mans licked, but he didn't come to love it.

Had he fallen in love with the place, he probably wouldn't have called time on his career without winning the 24 Hours – or at least he'd have given it a couple more goes. As it is, second will stand as his best result.



39

## SAM BIRD

2nd in World Endurance GT; 4th in Formula E

### UP 8

In his first year as a full-time Ferrari GT driver the Briton was a match for Davide Rigon in the #71 AF Corse 488 GTE in the World Endurance Championship, and his pace compared strongly to star pairing Gianmaria Bruni and James Calado too. Bird and Rigon inherited wins at Silverstone and Spa after problems for their team-mates and, while they were not the faster pairing, still beat the #51 to second in the drivers' championship.

Bird was also a star in Formula E, winning brilliantly in Buenos Aires after holding off Sebastien Buemi. That was also the first of three poles in a row as he comfortably outperformed team-mate Jean-Eric Vergne with a compromised DS Virgin Racing package. Bird was robbed of a victory shot in the 2016-17 season opener due to a technical problem, but bounced back with a podium in Marrakech. He's marked himself out as a serious all-rounder.







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## KIMI RAIKKONEN

6th in Formula 1 World Championship

## + RE-ENTRY

It's been a long time coming, but it finally looks as though Kimi Raikkonen's second stint at Ferrari is starting to come good. After getting thoroughly thrashed by Fernando Alonso in 2014, and Sebastian Vettel last year, Kimi did a much better job this year.

He managed to tie with Vettel 10-10 in the

intra-team qualifying battle, discounting Vettel's suspension failure in Q1 in Singapore.

Raikkonen also accrued 88% of Vettel's championship points this year, a marked improvement on the 54% he managed in 2015, and the 34% of Alonso's score he achieved in '14.

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## LANCE STROLL

1st in F3 European Championship

## + NEW ENTRY

**We asked Felix Rosenqvist to talk about Stroll, the driver he helped at Prema Powerteam on his road to becoming a class act in Formula 3**

It's like any relationship. It starts and you don't think much of it and then it ends up as a friendship. Even as a rookie in 2015 he surprised me by how much talent he had. Every time we went testing somewhere to a new track, he was normally the one in the team apart from me who knew everything already. You could see he had very good potential – especially in braking he was very good – and he was very good in high-speed corners.

He comes from a rich background, which comes with a lot of pressure. People will always have a negative starting view of him. I think he went against that, went through all that, and nailed it.

He works harder than me. He's very committed. He's a really nice kid and everyone who gets a chance to sit down with him for 10 minutes would understand that. I think he'll do really well in Formula 1 and will surprise a lot of people.



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## CHARLES LECLERC

1st in GP3 Series

## + NEW ENTRY

**Charles Leclerc on the pressure of succeeding in such an unpredictable series as GP3, with three strong team-mates, a new place on the Ferrari Driver Academy, and the distraction of F1 practice work with Haas**

I had a lot of pressure on my shoulders because of the surroundings. It was my first year in FDA and I wanted to deliver because people expect the best from Ferrari and I need to be at the top. As for ART, they are the best team in GP3 so I had to do the job. I had three other team-mates who are really, really fast.

It's been a hard year and I did feel the pressure, so I'm very pleased to have won the series in these conditions. Now I know I can handle the pressure.

The middle part of the season was quite hard, having to jump from F1 to GP3. I had to work on my mental side because after three difficult race weekends we were not fighting for the win, which is what I wanted. It was hard to get back on top of things, but we did it and that's why I'm very happy with the way this season unfolded.

## TOP 10 RIDERS



Including nine in the premier class alone, a total of 25 riders won MotoGP, Moto2 or Moto3 grands prix in 2016. But who stands out as the best of the best?

## 1 MARC MARQUEZ

Peerless in winning his third world championship in four years, on a Honda that was far from class-leading.

## 2 MAVERICK VINALES

Moved from rising star to superstar in his second season in MotoGP, taking his maiden victory at Silverstone.

## 3 VALENTINO ROSSI

Showed there's still plenty of life left in the 37-year-old, winning races with renewed pace.

## 4 BRAD BINDER

Dominated the unpredictable Moto3 to win the championship, claiming seven wins and only finishing off the podium four times.

## 5 JORGE LORENZO

Title bid went astray during a mid-season slump in cold and wet conditions, but still had his dominant days.

## 6 JOHANN ZARCO

Graduates to MotoGP next year as a dual Moto2 champion after taking seven wins to defend his 2015 title.

## 7 CAL CRUTCHLOW

Recovered from a tough start to win a pair of races, including Britain's first since Barry Sheene in 1981.

## 8 ANDREA DOVIZIOSO

Unlucky at times, but proved an experienced hand at Ducati, getting his first win for the make at Sepang.

## 9 ANDREA IANNONE

Blindingly quick at his best, mayhem at his worst, the enigmatic Iannone broke Ducati's long MotoGP victory drought.

## 10 JOAN MIR

The 19-year-old Spaniard was the top rookie in Moto3, finishing fifth in the championship as a race winner.



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## PASCAL WEHRLEIN

19th in Formula 1 World Championship

### DOWN 25

Formula 1 is a funny old world. Pascal Wehrlein was its star rookie in 2016, yet couldn't secure promotion further up the grid for next year. Then Nico Rosberg retired, and suddenly Wehrlein is a leading contender to take potentially the best seat in the house for '17.

That goes a long way towards easing the pain of being overlooked by Force India, which preferred fellow Mercedes junior Esteban Ocon to become Nico Hulkenberg's replacement. But this should not detract from what was an excellent debut season in F1 for Wehrlein.

He put what was generally the slowest car in the field into Q2 five times, qualifying a superb 12th for

the Austrian Grand Prix, where he went on to score Manor's only point of the season by finishing 10th.

"Pascal's a very quick driver," says the team's racing director Dave Ryan. "He makes very few mistakes, he gives good feedback – we've really enjoyed having him on the team."

Ocon is rightly highly rated for beating Max Verstappen to the 2014 European Formula 3 Championship, for the job he did testing for Force India last year that played a key role in earning him promotion, and for generally performing well in the nine races he did as Wehrlein's team-mate in the second half of '16. But Wehrlein did the better job of the two overall.

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## EDOARDO MORTARA

2nd in DTM

### RE-ENTRY

He's the great charger of the DTM, the never-say-die Italian for whom nothing is impossible. As a result, Mortara is a huge favourite among the tin-top series' army of fans.

In six seasons he's not yet won the title, but Mortara's record of five wins in 2016 for Audi was unsurpassed. He fell just four points short of champion Marco Wittmann after a typically blazing performance over the final weekend at Hockenheim, which led Audi to pinpoint his mistaken drivethrough penalty at Zandvoort as the moment when the title was lost. But Mortara is also more likely to get involved in scrapes than the canny Wittmann, so you could also point to those.

It's not just in the RS5 DTM that Mortara starred. He was also a top-line import to the R8 LMS programme in blue-riband GT3 races such as the Spa 24 Hours, the Nurburgring 24 Hours and the GT World Cup in Macau. Pole position, followed by an unforced first-corner spin and crash, around the Far East Guia circuit kind of summed up his almost-but-not-quite season.

Can he win the DTM in 2017? If he does, it will be with Mercedes after a headline-grabbing move to the Three-Pointed Star was announced several weeks ago.



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## JAMES CALADO

3rd in World Endurance GT

### RE-ENTRY

This was the season that Calado announced himself as one of the world's top GT drivers. Promoted to the factory AF Corse team's lead entry on the back of an impressive second season in the WEC in 2015, the Briton continued to impress through his first season alongside Gianmaria Bruni. Calado pushed his illustrious team-mate hard through the year – and arguably propelled him to even greater heights. The ultra-high level at which the Anglo-Italian duo operated produced a run of six podiums over the post-Le Mans leg of the WEC. That propelled them into third position in the final points after two early-season retirements had thrown their championship challenge off course.





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## JOSE MARIA LOPEZ

1st in WTCC; two Formula E outings

### UP 2

Jose Maria Lopez's third consecutive World Touring Car Championship crown may have been utterly predictable, but it goes down as the most impressive of his dominant spell with Citroën.

While Lopez's winning margin was convincing, the level of competition he and Citroën faced in 2016 was the highest it's been since the introduction of TC1 regulations for 2014. At Paul Ricard, he dealt with the unusual prospect of being reeled in by Honda's Tiago Monteiro, nurturing his lead superbly, while he also proved his worth in wheel-to-wheel battle, most notably with Nick Catsburg at the Slovakia Ring, where he fought back past the Lada man at the start of the final lap to win.

Rule changes for 2016 also made Lopez's feat more remarkable. The Argentinian (plus his fellow Citroën drivers) was saddled with maximum success ballast all season. While that was nothing new, with 20kg more to carry this year (80kg), his task was inevitably made harder. A change to the ordering of the races also brought out the steely best in Lopez, who this year had to carry his car through the reversed-grid opener to preserve it for the main event.

That team-mate Yvan Muller won only once – a success handed to him by the champion – also proves how well Lopez did to drag eight victories from the C-Elysee.

On top of that, Lopez has shown flashes of speed, but not got the results, in his two Formula E outings for DS Virgin.



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## ROBIN FRIJNS

10th in Blancpain Sprint Cup; 12th in Formula E

### RE-ENTRY

There's a good reason the Dutchman was named Autosport's #1 Formula E driver over the 2015-16 season despite finishing outside the top 10 in the championship. With minimal pre-season testing, rookie Frijns was a star performer. He crabbed his way to an incredible third in Putrajaya over the final laps with broken right-rear suspension, delivered a brilliant sideways braking move

on Loic Duval in Berlin and came out on top of a fierce wheel-to-wheel fight with Antonio Felix da Costa in Paris.

He has started the 2016-17 campaign brightly, having now been joined by da Costa in the BMW-backed Andretti operation, and also impressed in his Audi GT appearances, including winning the Blancpain Sprint Cup finale and helping Enzo Ide clinch the title.



29

## TIMO BERNHARD

4th in World Endurance LMP1

### DOWN 5

Bernhard did what we've come to expect of him season in, season out: he was fast, consistent and didn't make mistakes (although there was a little off in the rain at Mexico City this season), and all in the understated way that he goes about his business.

There were some stellar performances too, most notably at Shanghai in November. Nor should we ever forget or underestimate the German's part in knitting together the fabric of a crew that claimed a WEC title and eight wins in a successful three-season stint together.

Do not doubt that Bernhard will assure a seamless transition when Earl Bamber joins the line-up in place of Mark Webber for the 2017 season.





## HISTORICS TOP 10



Historic racing once again provided some of the highlights of 2016. Here are the 10 drivers who stood out.

### 1 ROB HALL

A standout year for one of historic racing's top drivers, which included three Matra wins (above) at the Silverstone Classic and an inspired Aston Martin DB3 drive at Goodwood.

### 2 CALLUM GRANT

Took the title in the Historic Sports Car Club's Formula Ford series, probably the toughest currently in historic racing.

### 3 NICK PADMORE

The class act in the FIA Masters Historic F1 Championship, scoring 12 wins on his way to the crown in a Williams FW07C.

### 4 CHRIS WARD

Flew in a wide range of cars, most notably the Jaguar E-type in which he and Gordon Shedden took their second consecutive Goodwood RAC TT victory.

### 5 CALUM LOCKIE

Finally ended ERA domination with Maserati wins at Donington Park and the Goodwood Revival, as well as starring in Julian Thomas's Jaguar E-type.

### 6 SIMON HADFIELD

Stellar drives alongside Wolfgang Friedrichs and Leo Voyazides in a range of cars, and retained his RAC Tourist Trophy at the Silverstone Classic.

### 7 MARTIN O'CONNELL

One of the fastest of all, O'Connell flew in Sandy Watson's Chevrons and was a top performer at the Le Mans Classic.

### 8 ANDY WOLFE

Versatile racer finally scored his first Spa 6 Hours victory, sharing a Ford GT40 with Michael Gans and Jason Wright.

### 9 ANDREW HIBBERD

Engineer/racer dominated 1000cc F3 in 2016 and scored his first Goodwood win in front-engined Formula Junior bout.

### 10 DUNCAN PITTAWAY

Sensational SF Edge Edwardian victory at Goodwood Members' Meeting came against the odds in Curtis-powered GN and was an event highlight.

XPB IMAGES



# 28

## SHANE VAN GISBERGEN

1st in Blancpain Endurance Cup; 1st in Australian Supercars

### NEWENTRY

In Europe he won the Blancpain Endurance Cup with McLaren, winning two of the five rounds. Down under he won his first Supercars championship in the Red Bull Commodore, the first New Zealander to take the title since Jim Richards 25 years ago.

#### With victory in the Bathurst 12 Hour, you must have been pleased with your start to 2016...

It was pretty cool! We started really well at Bathurst and that was enormous, and we were able to start strongly in the Blancpain Series at Monza. That put us in good shape for the championship.

#### Did having the mileage in a similar McLaren at Bathurst help to get you into the GT frame of mind?

Not really. There was a pretty decent gap from then to the first Blancpain round, so the main thing was to get enough miles in the GT car. They are pretty easy to jump in and get the best out of them. That was all good.

#### Going from one car and one series to the other, do you need to focus on making that change, or does it come naturally by now?

I think that was always one of my strengths, adapting to different cars. A GT is pretty easy, with all the driver aids that they have. A Supercar is much harder.

#### In Supercars, it's your car and you put your set-up on it. In a GT there are other drivers, so you need to compromise. Are you used to that?

Exactly. This year I had Rob Bell in the car, and he and I have worked together before, from when I started at McLaren. I've learned a lot from him and I have grown as a GT driver thanks to him. With Come Ledogar, this was his first season with the team and he has come from Porsches, which are very different from the McLaren. It wasn't a compromise, but we did need to learn to work with each other to get the car set up in a way that we were all comfortable with.

# 27

## RENE RAST

5th in World Endurance LMP2; Audi GT star; points in DTM

### NEWENTRY

If there were any doubts about Rast's talents, they were well and truly dismissed over the course of a season in which the German impressed in every car into which he got his butt. He was quick in an Audi R8 LMS, but we knew that already, and then he starred in a couple of guest appearances in the DTM with his regular employer and a Formula E one-off with Aguri in Berlin.

It was in the WEC with the Jota-run G-Drive LMP2 squad that he really shone, however. There's no doubt that Jota got more out of the ORECA 05 than any other team, but Rast was imperious aboard the thing over one lap and a race stint. He put many other big names to shame.



XPB IMAGES





## 26 JOEY LOGANO

2nd in NASCAR Sprint Cup

### NO MOVE

Logano came so close to giving team owner Roger Penske something unique in the team's 50th year – a NASCAR and IndyCar title double. Logano was one of four drivers who went into the Homestead finale in the hunt for the Sprint Cup crown in the winner-takes-all finale.

But late in the race on a restart he went low to pass Carl Edwards, who threw a block on the Penske driver. Logano ran into Edwards's Toyota, sending it slamming into the wall. Logano's Ford was able to continue in the race before finishing fourth.

"This Championship Four was some really genuine people, and we knew we were going to have to race each other hard," Logano says. "We knew that. That wasn't a surprise."

"I understand why Carl had to throw the block, and he understands why I had to make the move, because that was for the win. That was the only shot that I had. That was for the race win. It's 10 to go; what do you expect? It's for a championship."



Logano finished the season with three wins, 16 top fives and 26 top-10 finishes in 36 races and was generally a threat for victory on almost every track.

Penske came so close to getting both championships in the same season. "Well, that would be a record, which would be amazing for the team," says the team boss.

"When we start and you get into the season and you have success in one series and you see you're competitive in another, believe me, it crosses my mind. But at the end of the day, it's a lot tougher to make it happen, to really execute that."

**In Supercars you race against 25 guys, and you know who they all are. Is it harder to get your head around that in GTs?**

Definitely! There are different levels of drivers, especially when you come up to a car with 'Pro-Am' on it. You don't know who's in the car and that makes it pretty hard. That's the biggest difference.

**What was the highlight of the year?**

Monza. It was such a huge battle. At Monza last year we were pretty slow, so we didn't expect to be in the fight for the win this year. We were prepared to take some pain and score some points, and come back stronger later in the year. The fight for the lead was a massive battle with Maxi Buhk, and crossing the line – and getting to stand on that famous podium – was a highlight for sure.

**How many boarding passes are you up to for 2016?**

The flight to Sepang [for last weekend's 12 Hours] was number 99 of the year!



## 25 ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI

2nd in GP2 Series

### NEW ENTRY



**Q&A with Prema Racing chief Rene Rosin on Giovinazzi's season in the GP2 Series.**

**When you signed Giovinazzi, did you think he would have such a strong rookie season?**

We all knew Antonio from F3. When we got the chance to sign him at the beginning of January I had nearly signed someone else, but straight away I said, 'OK, let's go with Antonio because he is the right one.' And it was fantastic from the beginning.

**He has always been very cooperative, working with Sean Gelaef since his early days and helping his Carlin F3 team-mates last year. Did you find that in GP2?**

Pierre [Gasly] and Antonio worked really well to put Prema at the top of the sheets, and what they achieved was incredible. It's part of his character – he's a very nice guy, very well educated. And Pierre really helped Antonio to progress.

**What about his racecraft? Was his Baku win without DRS the standout?**

What he did in Baku was amazing, but Malaysia was also something incredible – the overtake on [Sergey] Sirotkin. And consider also his last overtake on [Raffaele] Marciello at Monza. He's a very good racer.

## 24 MARCO WITTMANN

1st in DTM

### RE-ENTRY

A fantastic season for Wittmann, who wrested his second DTM title in three years despite a last-round surge from Audi's Edoardo Mortara. Wittmann not only led the BMW charge, but scored almost double the points of the second-best driver from the Munich manufacturer. Just take a look at these stats...

WINS	3
FINISHES IN THE TOP 6	12
TOP BMW FINISHER	12
POLES	3
QUALIFIED IN THE TOP 6	9
TOP BMW QUALIFIER	9



XPB IMAGES

## 23 BRENDON HARTLEY

4th in World Endurance LMP1

### UP 27

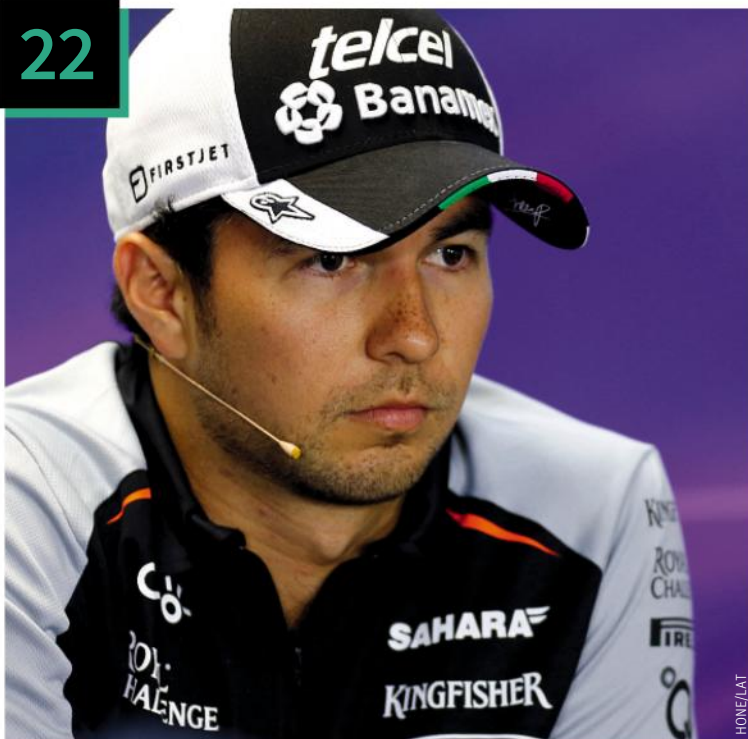
Hartley was, probably on average, the fastest Porsche LMP1 driver in 2016. But he lags behind Jani in this list courtesy of one error of judgement right at the start of the year. The GTE Am car with which he tangled had the right to use every bit of the road around Silverstone's quick Farm left-hander. It was a costly error, and not



just because it lost Hartley and the #1 a near-certain win. Do the maths, and you'll also find that it also cost them the title! It might be unfair to dwell on that, because Hartley had a phenomenal season in which he underlined his status as one of the top sportscar drivers.



22



## SERGIO PEREZ

7th in Formula 1 World Championship

UP5

Sergio Perez and Nico Hulkenberg were two of the most closely matched team-mates on the Formula 1 grid in 2016. True, Perez finished 29 points and two places better off in the championship, but Hulkenberg was taken out of several races through no fault of his own. In qualifying the average gap between the two across 21 grands prix was less than half a tenth of a second – equivalent to just over 0.1%.

Force India feels the two have learned much from one another since becoming team-mates ahead of the 2014 season, helping the whole team progress towards its best-ever finish of fourth in the constructors' championship this year. The partnership will end when Hulkenberg moves to Renault for '17, so Autosport sat down with the pair to discuss the end of an important chapter in both of their F1 careers.

**Sergio, you and Nico have been team-mates for three years, and in many ways it was quite an interesting pairing in the sense that you have different skills and push each other to improve. What did you know of Nico before joining Force India?**

**SP** I knew that he was quick – he's shown that before joining the team, so I knew I was against someone very highly rated. When I joined the team I found out straight away he was a very complete driver. He knew exactly what he needed, and was very clever as well, with a lot of experience. I think we complement each other really well. His weakness was tyre management, which is one of my strongest points, and I think he's come a long way with that. He's very quick in qualifying, and I think I learned a lot from him on Saturdays.

**What bits did you take from his qualifying – was it a technique thing?**

**SP** It was a bit of preparation – how to prepare the tyres, how to take the most out of them. Although he struggles sometimes in the race with that he's quite good at getting the one lap, because he puts a lot of energy into the tyre. I learned from that – setting up the car, getting

on with the lap, being consistent, not making mistakes. It just made me raise my game.

**That was your biggest weakness coming in. Your average qualifying position was 14th at Sauber, and that must have improved massively...**

[Hulkenberg arrives]

**Ah! We were just talking about you!**

**NH** [To Perez] Did you tell him all my secrets?

**No – he was just telling me what a good guy you are!**

**SP** How much I am going to miss him...

**NH** He likes looking at my data! [laughter].

**Welcome, Nico. Checo has just been explaining what he made of you before you came here, and how you've helped him as a driver. From your side, what did you know of Checo before coming to Force India?**

**NH** We go back to 2005, where we first met in Formula BMW, then more also – when was it? 2008/09 when you were in Oxford? He was in Oxford; I was in Oxford as well. He had a shared apartment there, and we had common friends, so we met for dinner. He was a bit of a mess; he's developed a hell of a lot since!

**What did you make of Checo when you got to Force India, and how has being together improved you?**

**NH** We're at similar positions in our careers. I think Checo has developed a lot as a human, as a driver – very skilful, very quick. I think we've both managed to learn from each other, picking up the strengths a little bit from the other guy, and using that to our advantage. It's normal. As team-mates you're quite transparent to each other – you see everything – and obviously if you see something that in that moment works better, you adapt and make it work for yourself.

**Have you always got on well as team-mates? The relationship is very particular – there's various**

21



## NICO HULKENBERG

9th in Formula 1 World Championship

UP4

**ways it can go. I know you're friendly with each other. Has that always been the case or has it developed through the years?**

**NH** From my perspective, yes. I think that's also because we've known each other for a long time. I think we respect each other, we know what we do in the car, and we just have the necessary attitude and brain as well – we know there's a life outside the car and away from the track. We compete on it, we like to beat each other, but at the same time we also need to work together for the team.

**SP** Nico described it well – we come here, we fight, we want to beat each other, but it's not like we hide something from each other or push the other to do bad. What we need is to go forwards and try to do the best for ourselves, and if that means I was able to beat him, or vice versa, it's just how it worked out. Away from the track we always respect each other.

**And of course next year you're breaking up the 'dream team'...**

**NH** We need a divorce settlement!

**Who gets the dog?**

[laughter]

**SP** We spent three years and they went really quick. I think we learned a lot from each other. It's time for Nico to move on to a new challenge. Nico had been longer than myself in the team, so he probably felt the need to work with new people, something different, to learn new things. It was great to learn so many things from Nico.

**And you, Nico – how do you see this 'end of an era'?**

**NH** I think that's just the nature of the sport and how it goes in life. I've had many good years here; we've come a long way together. It will be hard for this team to challenge further, to go the next step, so for me it all fits in terms of timing – to look for a new challenge, and to be with a factory team.

*Perez and Hulkenberg were talking to Ben Anderson*



20

## SCOTT DIXON

6th in IndyCar Series

## DOWN 8

After nine consecutive years finishing in the top three in the IndyCar Series – including three of his four titles – Dixon slumped to sixth this term with Chip Ganassi Racing. But his form was such that this is far from a case of a fading force.

Dixon's close friend and chief Ganassi engineer Chris Simmons talks of the woes on-track: "I think we found just about every way we could to have a problem this year, whether it was in the pits or overheating in the first race of the season at St Petersburg, or engine problems, car problems. Hopefully we got that all out of our system because it certainly wasn't indicative of Scott's talent.

"This year we let ourselves down and certainly let Scott down. The speed was there and clearly he still has the speed driving-wise in race trim; we just didn't make it happen. If you look at the race pace, he was strong everywhere. I think Scott will be back in the top three again in 2016 – hopefully it's a fifth IndyCar Series championship."

And Dixon talks of Simmons off-track (Simmons's wife has even taught Dixon's children at school): "It's funny how it all cycles and works out. We spend a lot of time together because our kids are similar ages. To me, it's a very easy relationship. When we were much younger and single we knew each other well. It's been fun to see our lives change and having kids and getting married. It's not too often you have a work counterpart that you spend so much time with that away from work you have a really strong relationship as well. We banter well; we work well together. It's kind of natural.

"Chris is very decisive; he knows what he wants and that's a very strong trait that you need as an engineer. He is very confident in himself and he has a lot of great attributes from the fact that he was a driver too [Simmons was an Indy Lights frontrunner]. There is a lot he can relate to that helps. He's probably one of the most competitive people I know alongside Chip Ganassi."



19



## NEEL JANI

1st in World Endurance LMP1; 1st in Le Mans 24 Hours

## UP 3

You need to look beyond that run of fourth, fifth and sixth positions that took Jani and team-mates Marc Lieb and Romain Dumas to the World Endurance title in order to assess the Swiss driver's season.

They had their problems in the post-Le Mans leg of the championship and there were times when they were off the pace, but when the car was up to the job Jani still

performed to the level that we have come to expect. The Fuji round in October was a case in point: after a change of nose transformed the car, Jani was the quickest Porsche driver.

It is also easy, in the light of the second half of the season, to overlook a blinding Le Mans performance from him.



18

## KRIS MEEKE

9th in World Rally Championship

## UP 18

Nine-time world champion Sebastien Loeb was never the biggest fan of Rally Finland. It's an event that asks questions of drivers – and to find the answers you have to dig deeper than anywhere else in the world.

When he won in 2008, the Frenchman emerged from his C4 ashen-faced and nine seconds ahead of local hero Mikko Hirvonen. "I had to drive outside of myself here," he said at the time. "I didn't like to go over the edge so much..."

That's Finland for you. You want it? You earn it.

Kris Meeke really wanted it this year. And he really did earn it in spectacular fashion. A couple of months earlier, he'd crafted a Portugal win out of a handy position on the road. Finland's so quick, your place on the road matters much less. What counts here is holding the throttle open as long as you dare.

The Northern Irishman did that for longer than anybody else. Fifth after Thursday night's city-centre dash, he was straight into the lead on Friday morning. Staying there meant being brave, and being brave to Meeke meant taking an astonishing 19s out of everybody on two runs at the legendary Ouninpohja stage. He built the advantage, opened the lead, kept his nerve.

Meeke's pace has never been in doubt; what was regularly questioned was his temperament and ability to hold it all together under the greatest of pressure. Jyväskylä in July answered those questions and created a new rallying legend.

17

## JIMMIE JOHNSON

1st in NASCAR Sprint Cup

## RE-ENTRY

**For the first time Jimmie Johnson made it into the final-four shootout of the NASCAR Chase this year. Success in the latest format, introduced in 2014, had previously eluded him, but he played it perfectly to claim title number seven. Here's Johnson on his first experience of the format**

I think the old format still does benefit me. But this format, I guess we've won here now, so we can scratch that off the list.

It's different for sure, to come in with equal points and know that you've got to beat the competitors. I don't know... in some ways it took a little stress off because it's pretty simple what you had to do, although I looked at their rear ends [his three title rivals] most of the night and wasn't able to mix it up with them.

I think this format creates a lot of drama and I'm sure the world felt like anybody but Jimmie Johnson was going to win the championship with 20 laps to go, and then it changed so quick with a green-white-chequer at the end. It's a pretty crazy format to say the least.

When I was coming to the chequered flag I had to really look closely at it going by to make sure it was there. Like, is this really happening? I don't know what I screamed on the radio, but I know it didn't sound like my voice. I was thinking, 'You'd better take your finger off the button'. Yes, that was as dramatic and as crazy as I've ever experienced in my racing career.





16

## PIERRE GASLY

1st in GP2 Series

## RE-ENTRY

## Premo boss Rene Rosin talks about Gasly's GP2 Series title-winning season

"Pierre was incredibly fast since day one, when he joined the team for the Abu Dhabi test last year. His capability in a one-lap qualifying run was a key point. But saying that, we worked a lot to make him able to show his potential through a complete race.

"At Barcelona, the first race, he had pole and led without any problem, but after the pitstop he destroyed the option tyres a bit too early. Consider also the mistake in Monaco that compromised him quite a lot, and at Baku he was compromised in traffic in qualifying and made mistakes in the feature race – and then

the Red Bull Ring, where he was leading and made a mistake when there were spots of rain.

"But he was always capable of putting it in place.

Even on his downside he was pushing forward.

Sure we helped him on that, and to help him keep his tyres working for a race distance, trying to achieve the results he was capable of. Then, over the next few events, he was outstanding.

"What he did at Silverstone was really incredible. We went on a different strategy, gave him a target lap time on the prime tyres, and he did what he was supposed to do, even having to pass slower cars.

It was something we were expecting from a few races before."

Once Gasly had found the key to winning, he was unstoppable...



TEE/LAT



15

## KYLE BUSCH

3rd in NASCAR Sprint Cup

## RE-ENTRY

At one time he was NASCAR's most controversial and divisive driver, but now he has established himself as one of its best. Busch entered the season as the reigning Sprint Cup champion after an incredible comeback from a brutal crash at Daytona in an Xfinity Series race in February 2015 that forced him to miss the first 11 Cup races.

"I think winning the championship last year definitely impacted us," Busch said after he finished third in the 2016 rankings. "It just gave us a greater sense of belief in ourselves and our team and confidence in being able to go out there and do it again. There's no reason to think

that what we accomplished last year is a one-time thing. We feel we're just as good as last year, if not better, and performed better throughout this Chase in order to get ourselves in the position we were in."

Busch was highly competitive in 2016, scoring four wins, 17 top-fives and 25 finishes in the top 10 in his Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota.

"We gave it everything we had," he said after the Homestead finale. "We didn't come to Homestead with the greatest race car, but we knew that we had enough of a one that we could run with those guys, and we showed that when the lights came on."

14

## WILL POWER

2nd in IndyCar Series

## RE-ENTRY

There was something amiss with the 2014 IndyCar champion even before he arrived at the season's opening race in St Petersburg. He was out of shape and just wasn't feeling well. To compound his health issue, a hard smack into the wall in the first practice session of the season left Power feeling loopy. After he won the pole the following day, his condition got worse and, when he displayed concussion-like symptoms, the Queenslander was pulled from the car and replaced by Oriol Servia.

After he underwent extensive testing at the University of Miami Concussion Program, it was determined that his ailment was not a concussion, but an inner-ear infection.

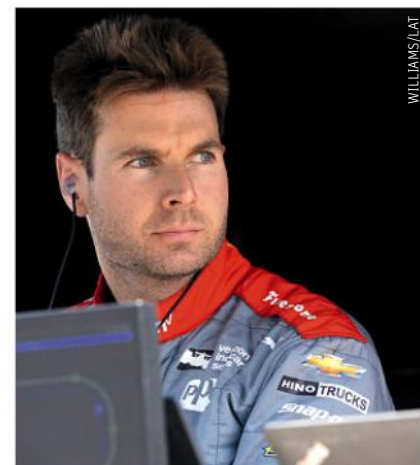
And what was the mysterious health issue that had prevented Power from undergoing his workout routine during the off-season? It was a simple food allergy.

"Detroit [in June] was the first time I had energy in the race after I got my diet sorted out," says Power. "The trouble was I was not fit at all when I turned up, so that's what I struggled with most of the year. You have to put in the hard yards during the off-season and then maintain it during the season. It was difficult to get back to fitness with all the races.

"I started my normal fitness routine in the off-season and started to really struggle and could only work out 30 minutes at a time, three times a week, and then it got to where I couldn't work out at all. It wasn't laziness; it was frustrating not being able to do it."

Power saw a doctor in New York who worked on his food allergy. Once he recovered, he drove to victory in the second Detroit double-header race. That started a six-race stretch where he won four times and finished second in the other two contests.

"It just really flowed well for me during that stretch," says Power. "It was nothing special. I just did my job. It was a great run but it was a good year. It started very slowly but I won on an oval, I won a 500-mile race, won four races and was able to compete all the way to the last round for the championship, so I was very happy. The final two races with two DNFs really hurt me in the points, but we were there."



WILLIAMS/LAT





DUNBAR/LAT

13

## VALTTERI BOTTAS

8th in Formula 1 World Championship

### DOWN 6

Valtteri Bottas has been one of the standout performers of Formula 1's V6 hybrid-turbo era. But his strength and consistency have been less easy to notice amid the competitive slump of Williams in 2016.

As the principal emphasis of development has gradually shifted away from the power units and back towards aerodynamics, Williams has been outmanoeuvred, fighting a losing battle for fourth in the constructors' championship with Force India, rather than challenging again for a top-three berth.

Consequently Bottas more often found himself fighting for lower Q3 qualifying spots and minor points finishes, rather than the regular podiums he enjoyed in 2014 and, to a lesser extent, last year.

But he still drove very well, absolutely thrashing team-mate Felipe Massa in qualifying (17-4) and splitting Force India pairing Sergio Perez and Nico Hulkenberg in the drivers' championship.

Bottas was 2016's sleeper hit – the mainstay of Williams's line-up, and a driver who certainly looks among the most accomplished in F1's ultra-competitive midfield.

"I think he's exceptional," says his race engineer Jonathan Eddolls, who rates Bottas more highly than retiring champion Nico Rosberg, and would like to see Bottas in a Mercedes "just to see how quick he really is".

"On his day he's awesome, he really is. He's rarely involved in accidents, very rarely makes mistakes, and if he does ever go off you can always find a reason in the data.

"He's bulletproof. You don't go into qualifying thinking, 'Shit, what are we getting here?' I have had that before – the car's capable of sixth but we could be 12th. You're confident he will deliver.

"There's not been a time this year where he's had his head down. He's got good mental strength. He's just been consistently very strong. Unfortunately the car hasn't necessarily shown his talent, but I think he's still driving at his best."

12

## SEBASTIAN VETTEL

4th in Formula 1 World Championship

### DOWN 10

The first season of Sebastian Vettel's new partnership with Ferrari couldn't really have turned out much better. He looked a driver revitalised at Maranello, after a difficult final season at Red Bull in 2014 when he struggled to cope with uncompetitive machinery following his quadruple title blitz of 2010-13.

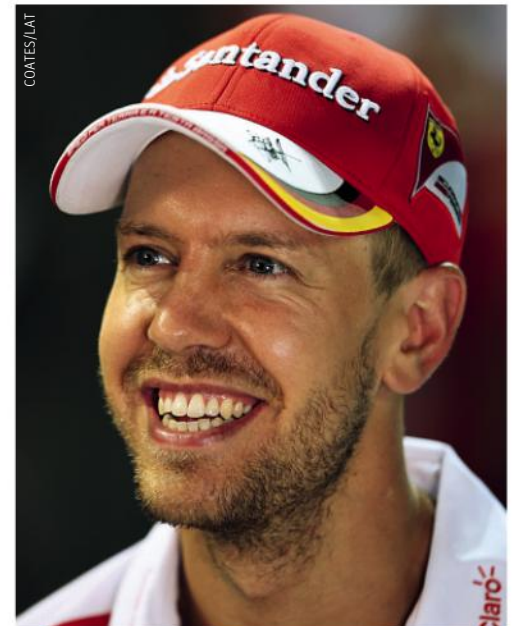
Joining the famous Italian team helped Vettel rediscover his mojo, and three opportunist race wins in much-improved Ferrari machinery suggested a potential title tilt was on the horizon for 2016.

That dream, while perhaps not becoming the stuff of nightmares, has certainly not been realised. Ferrari's SF16-H lacked downforce, its gearbox proved unreliable, its engine remained inferior to Mercedes', the car performed inconsistently with the Pirelli tyres, and the team made several strategic mistakes in races.

Vettel drove reasonably well at the start of the year, in spite of Ferrari's apparent shortcomings, but began to gradually lose his way, and from the midway point of the campaign began to overdrive and got regularly outqualified by team-mate Kimi Raikkonen.

The German still enjoyed the better season overall, but failed to win any races and stood on the podium just seven times, as opposed to 13 in 2015. Daniel Ricciardo convincingly beat Vettel to third in the drivers' championship and Red Bull comfortably overhauled Ferrari in the constructors' race.

Vettel put a brave face on the turmoil behind the scenes at Maranello, and on suggestions of a rift with team principal Maurizio Arrivabene, who said Vettel



CONTE/LAT

needed to continue justifying his place at the team and stop trying to involve himself in non-driving matters.

"I think the strongest point we have is the spirit inside the team," says Vettel. "You very often see it criticised, but I don't think it's justified. We are working very hard; we are very committed. Of course we wanted something else this year – for many reasons it didn't happen.

"Overall the car has been a good step from last year. I think our performance was actually better than the results showed at times, but circumstances weren't always the best. Nevertheless, we can't be proud of this year. We're not, because we went into this season wanting to fight for the championship and we did not."



EBREY/LAT

11

## GIANMARIA BRUNI

3rd in World Endurance GT

### UP 3

Some suggested that Bruni was going to be found out now that long-time partner Toni Vilander had been sent over to North America and he had a quick young team-mate at AF Corse in James Calado. The comfort zone in which he had operated for so long had been removed. Calado did push the established star of Ferrari's WEC line-up and push him hard, but it only made Bruni

appear even better – and perhaps even made him perform at a higher level. Some of the Italian's end-of-season performances with a car that didn't have a chance of winning thanks to the Balance of Performance in GTE Pro were phenomenal, though they were never going to yield the results they deserved. They have, however, made him our top Ferrari driver of 2016!



# 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.

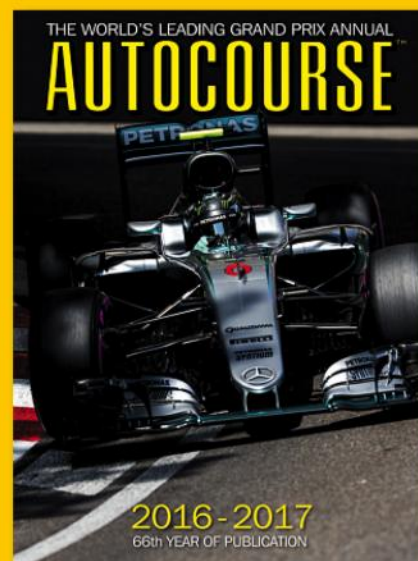
Mark Hughes once more analyses the successes, frustrations and failures of each of the constructors in his Team-by-Team review, which includes key personnel, sponsors and technical specifications of the F1 cars, highlighted by the specially commissioned F1 car illustrations of Adrian Dean.

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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10

## CARLOS SAINZ JR

12th in Formula 1 World Championship

## UP 29

The meteoric rise of Max Verstappen has somewhat overshadowed Carlos Sainz Jr, who has become a highly effective grand prix driver over these past two Formula 1 seasons. He sat down with Autosport to talk about breaking out of Verstappen's shadow, attracting interest from other teams, and making a name for himself with Toro Rosso.

**You had a good rookie year but were paired with Max Verstappen, so it was difficult for you to stand out. But it seems that this year you've been able to establish your own name...**

I think it's a good way of putting it. As soon as things stopped happening, I wanted to show my true potential. I still feel something more could've been achieved if it wasn't for those Monaco [pitstops] issues, or a couple more races where we lost out on bigger points, but I still can't complain. It has been a year where I had a bit of a breakthrough with reliability problems. So suddenly the race days, the strategy, started to come a bit more towards me. Some good moves, some good qualifying, altogether it's been a positive season.

**You had a great race in Spain after Max left the team, and from the outside it's hard to separate those events.**

I knew from the point I did a P6 in Spain that people would think, 'Now Max has left, Carlos is more focused on himself and suddenly a result comes', and I know even if I explain to you that it's not the case, still in the back of your mind you will still think that! Everyone will think that. I know inside me, I changed absolutely nothing from Russia to Spain. You can ask my dad, my sister, they were living with me. I did exactly the same preparation, approach, everything. It just clicked. I don't know why. It's not something that really bothers me. I think probably people started to look more at me individually, less comparing. It's always been the case with having him next to me.

**It did seem like tension was building in the team, with you both fighting each other for your futures...**

The perfect story for the press came with this rivalry, and a lot of pressure on the team, which was far from ideal; in the end this was probably the only thing that changed – that this team suddenly became a bit more calm, focused, but nothing massive.

**You've been very consistent this season, making fewer mistakes. Did you make a conscious effort to find that, or was it just the natural product of extra experience?**

A bit of both. The second year makes a huge difference [in the races] – how focused you need to be, tyre management, when you need to push, use your battery, or your DRS. But in qualifying I also told myself, 'After 2015 I've shown how fast I am. Now let's focus on building a weekend and not crashing, because I don't need to prove how fast I am. I am going to be fast more consistently.'

**You must feel as though you're establishing yourself, after such a good year, getting interest from other teams and re-signing with Toro Rosso so early?**

I cannot complain. To be a Toro Rosso driver, re-signed in Baku [in June], for me is one of the most important things that happened this year. I remember when they fired [Sebastien] Buemi [in 2011] – December 15. [To be] in June and already calm... It also helped a bit my establishment in the team, and to help them perform and go forward.

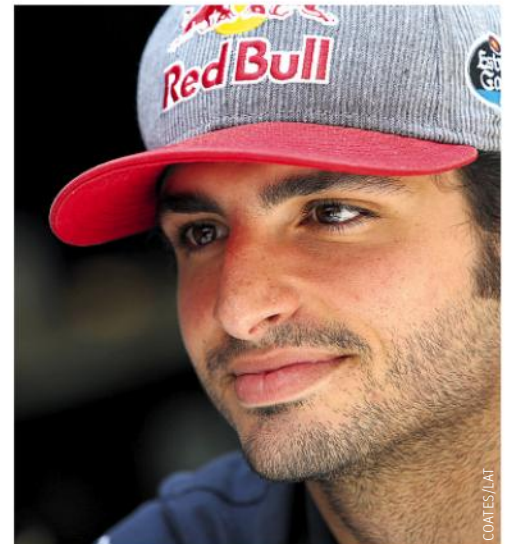
**Having interest from other teams, like Renault, must be good for your prospects...**

The important thing is that Red Bull knows this. Red Bull knowing they had Renault in the back of their minds before all this happened, and rumours of Ferrari – all this helped me to have this awesome motivation and

self-confidence. At the end you need it. In F1, even if you don't go to these teams, it's good to have the interest.

**What does the future hold for you longer term?**

It's not easy in Formula 1 to get consecutive good momentum like I managed this year. I insist I am the same driver as in 2015, with a bit more experience but the same approach. And suddenly, because these good things happened to me, I had the momentum and interest from other teams. I need this again in '17, because I don't want to be the third guy for Red Bull for another year. I want to take a step, either to Red Bull or another [top] team. It's not an easy situation because I still need that strong year in '17. After the first races next year, it doesn't matter if you had a good year in '16. The interest will go away. Everything, everyone, starts from zero.





9

## SIMON PAGENAUD

1st in IndyCar Series

## ➔ RE-ENTRY

When Simon Pagenaud and his longtime engineer Ben Bretzman joined Team Penske from Schmidt Peterson Motorsports for 2015, instant success was expected. They didn't even crack the top 10 in the standings. But the driver/engineer relationship was central to turning things around, learning 'The Penske Way' and claiming the '16 IndyCar title with five wins.

Bretzman's first experience with Pagenaud actually came as rivals over 10 years ago in the Champ Car Atlantic Series, when Bretzman was at Forsythe Racing. Three years later, in 2009, Bretzman was working on the Acura American Le Mans Series programme when Pagenaud was hired for '10.

"I had to interview him and I didn't know what to expect from him and he didn't know what to expect from me," Bretzman recalls. "We were both relatively young at that moment so we took it from there."

Since that time, the driver/engineer relationship has developed into a friendship.

"We are both good friends off the race track and at work – we both trust each other," Bretzman adds. "It's like a marriage – I know what makes him tick and what makes him upset and what buttons to push. What makes him and me work is we are very professional. He is by far the most professional race driver I've ever worked with. We have a great friendship because of it.

"We were lucky enough to win the ALMS prototype championship in 2010 – that was our first one together. It taught us how to win a championship together and be successful in multiple races over a season and build consistency. That was a good thing for him and me to both learn. We took that over to the IndyCar side."

So how did they get the best out of each other after a winless 2015?

"We got back to the roots of what we knew – what makes Simon Pagenaud tick, what makes him quick and what is important to him," Bretzman explains. "It's about building driver confidence and building the team around the driver to get the most out of them. We did that in 2015 but didn't get the results. We didn't have a very good car or we had bad strategy in the pits – it wasn't any one thing, it was a lot of little things. It was good to sit down and talk about it in the off-season.

"That is why having the relationship that Simon and I have is really good. We went back to how we used to do things and focused on him and what it took to make him successful. That made the season really go – it made it click."



8

## LUCAS DI GRASSI

2nd in Formula E; 2nd in World Endurance LMP1

## ➔ UP13

### In which series did you drive better in 2016, the World Endurance Championship or Formula E?

That's a tough one, but I would say the WEC. I think over my three full seasons with Audi, I have matured in terms of driving style and technique in traffic, and I had pretty much a mistake-free year. I felt I pushed my performance level forward all the time.

### How do you assess your performance in Formula E after taking three wins in season two?

We had the second-best car behind Renault and could not beat them in a straight fight, so to arrive in

London in such a close title fight was pretty amazing. I felt I did everything I could to win the title, but in the end I only missed it by a few points. The big miss was in Mexico City, where we lost all these points for one little mistake [an underweight car]. To win two times in a row after that when it would have been easy to throw in the towel was special.

### Will you return to endurance racing one day?

I hope so. I wasn't really in love with it in the beginning, but I want to go back to try to win Le Mans. That is one of my main targets.



7



## SEBASTIEN BUEMI

1st in Formula E; 8th in World Endurance LMP1

## ➔ UP9

### Buemi on... Le Mans heartbreak

I was pissed off, angry, and couldn't accept it for two days. I don't know if you can call it destiny or whatever... Why this thing held off for 23 hours and 55 minutes and not 24 hours I don't know. The day we win is going to be amazing. If next year I find myself in the same situation I don't know how I'm going to survive the last lap.

### The acrimonious FE finale with Lucas di Grassi

He was so desperate. He's an amazing driver, to do something like this I'm sad for him, sad for everyone.

### His dominant start to his FE title defence

In a way it's good another team [Techeetah] has the same car, and Nico [Prost] has the same car, because you have more guys to compare it with. It's a great car, but we worked hard to make it better. I'm part of it.





6

## FERNANDO ALONSO

10th in Formula 1 World Championship

### UP 7

It's a cruel waste of talent that Fernando Alonso remains mired in Formula 1's midfield while McLaren-Honda fights to get its collective act together. He hasn't won a world championship in 10 years, hasn't won a race for three, hasn't even reached the podium during the past two (except to pose for photos with Jenson Button), yet he remains committed, motivated and justifiably considered one of F1's true elite operators, in spite of his present circumstances.

#### Knowing you should have won more than two titles, how frustrating is it driving an inconsistent, midfield car?

It's very hard. There are two things here – one is the natural expectations for the McLaren-Honda team, which has to deliver, has to fight for the championship. These are two companies that have a lot of success in the past – McLaren is the second-best team in history in Formula 1, and when you are fighting for Q1 there is something that is not normal. I think everybody in the team feels this pressure, these expectations that we are not able to meet yet, so that frustrates all of us. Second is the personal frustration of not being able to fight for podiums, for victories, and sometimes not even delivering what you are able to because of problems. Maybe a Sauber overtakes you, and everyone cheers a fantastic overtake, but we have maybe 100 horsepower less. It's not that you forgot to drive, it's just there are situations that are out of our control.

#### How often in the past two years have you considered whether moving to McLaren-Honda was a poor career decision?

I'm happy, I'm with the best team of my career, probably. The level of knowledge and detail I found here is probably the best. The analysis, the work in

the factory, the philosophy of designing the car, is completely different to what I was used to. The driver input is much greater here, so we're just missing the competitive car. The team is just amazing. I had a fantastic five years at Ferrari, but at least when I was there I was fighting for the championship until the last race. Now they are fifth and sixth behind even Red Bull, so the situation could be worse. It was the right time to say 'bye bye' because I wanted to stop on a high.

#### Do you miss being in the thick of a title battle?

Yeah, I miss it. I would like to win the title, hopefully next year. You train, do the simulator, go to the factory, do events, do media, do whatever to be competitive on Sundays and fight for the title, and definitely I miss it from the last four years – this feeling of arriving with possibilities. But on the other hand, I feel extremely lucky to have been able to feel that pressure and those emotions already five times, winning two, because there are many colleagues that have huge talent that never even have the chance to race in Formula 1. Some of them appear in F1, but never have the chance to experience the podium, press conference for the top three, never experience the feeling of starting on pole position, winning one grand prix, and they are very, very talented. So, of course, I feel very lucky.

#### Where does your motivation stand going into 2017?

It's high. This year is different from last year – the motivation is higher because there are expectations for next year, the rules change, which will mix things a little bit. There is the progress that Honda made this year, which is very positive and gives me confidence. I'm really looking forward to Australia in March. The hope is more real.

## RALLYING TOP 10



Nobody doubts Sebastien Ogier's supremacy in the World Rally Championship, but who else scored well in the rally world this season?

### 1 SEBASTIEN OGIER

Far from the easiest of years, but he still took the title with six wins and two rallies to spare. Class act. Again.

### 2 KRIS MEEKE

Landed the real deal then became the real deal this season. Fast and, more often than not, at the finish. Nice.

### 3 OTT TANAK

Tanak truly stepped up to the plate in 2016 with an inconsistent DMACK tyre. A puncture in Poland robbed him of a first WRC win in heartbreaking fashion.

### 4 ELFYN EVANS

Didn't fancy the revived British Rally Championship, but did the job. And would have won the WRC2 title had it not been for sensor failure in Argentina.

### 5 STEPHANE PETERHANSEL

Twelfth Dakar win was a drive of sheer genius. Biding his time, he attacked when he needed to.

### 6 SEBASTIEN LOEB

Just mega on his first ever week on the Dakar. Crashed later, but that does not matter. And he lit up RX this year.

### 7 OSIAN PRYCE

Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy winner, which was nice, but his pace in Finland after rolling on day one was world class.

### 8 DAVID HIGGINS

Blew what little competition America offered into the weeds again – this time with a part-programme.

### 9 KALLE ROVANPERA

Five wins from eight starts in a Skoda Fabia R5... and he only turned 16 in October. Harri's boy is a phenomenon.

### 10 OLIVER SOLBERG

Smashed all sorts of crosskart titles, then showed mindboggling speed in a World Rally Car with wooden blocks on the pedals.



5

## NICO ROSBERG

1st in Formula 1 World Championship

## DOWN 1

Nico Rosberg's shock retirement from F1 shortly after landing his maiden world championship title stands as testament to the enormous strain created by competing at the very top of elite sport.

It's to his great personal credit that he finally managed to achieve his boyhood dream, winning nine grands prix in 2016 and beating Lewis Hamilton to the title by five points. But his decision to now walk away from F1 entirely suggests the journey to reach that dream eventually took an enormous toll on his well-being.

Rosberg has always been a fighter, a driver able to recognise his own flaws while refusing to succumb to them, or submit to the inferiority complex that racing against a driver of Hamilton's calibre in the same

restored his battered confidence, and Rosberg attacked 2016 by upping his training (including spending more time karting between races), upping his intensity, and – as he famously repeated throughout the season – taking it ‘one race at a time’.

“The head is an important part of the sport, so I looked into that,” he says. “For me, that [mantra] just seemed the best way. If you think too much about the big picture, it will just make you nervous.

“There is so much at stake and the desire to be world champion can weigh on the shoulders. It worked well for me to keep it simple, stay right in the moment, and not go into any desires.

“The desire to be world champion is gigantic, so it's better to stay away from that. It's been a big part

“The desire to be world champion is gigantic. I gave it everything this year, didn't leave a stone unturned”

machinery undoubtedly created in his mind.

In the build-up to this year's Chinese Grand Prix, Rosberg was asked about the impact of Hamilton's impending five-place grid penalty (for an unscheduled gearbox change) on his own race. “A Hamilton that starts sixth is still going to challenge for the win,” Rosberg replied, suggesting he came into the weekend expecting Hamilton to be the faster driver and take pole.

It takes massive resolve to fight Hamilton, and Rosberg had to dig deeper than ever this year, after getting pummelled into submission by his Mercedes team-mate in each of the past two seasons. In the immediate aftermath of the second of those defeats, in last year's US Grand Prix, Rosberg decided enough was enough.

A three-race winning streak at the end of last season

of the success this year. I gave it everything, didn't leave a stone unturned.”

But the extra work required to raise his level enough to just beat Hamilton (with a bit of bad fortune on his team-mate's side thrown in) drained Rosberg of energy and the pressure increased after he won October's Japanese GP – a pivotal race that took the destiny of the title race out of Hamilton's hands, allowing Rosberg to clinch the championship regardless of Hamilton's subsequent results.

“The changing moment for me was Suzuka, when I had the 33-point lead, as it became my title to lose,” Rosberg confirms. “That was when the pressure started for me – the chance to win the championship was real. I started to think that if I do achieve my childhood dream, then I think it would be great to end there.”



COATES/LAT

Rosberg says the clarity of this position in his mind helped him to cope with the strain, which increased by the race in the face of a furious fightback from Hamilton, who won each of the last four races from pole and did everything in his power to wrest the crown from Rosberg's grasp.

“The last couple of races, especially the last one, that's not the real Nico,” adds Rosberg. “The pressure slows you down. For sure that's difficult. I'm happy to have come through in the way I did. Lewis on the other hand had nothing to lose.

“The last races have been the best Lewis we have ever seen – no pressure, super-motivated, super-concentrated, working as much as he has ever worked before and nothing to lose. I had the pressure of being in front, against Lewis, and that made it even more difficult. I've never had that sort of pressure before.”

Rosberg found the experience of the Abu Dhabi finale – battling with Max Verstappen and Sebastian Vettel to secure the podium finish needed to seal the deal in the face of Hamilton's go-slow tactics – “really, really horrible”, and an experience he wishes never to repeat.

“I put absolutely everything into it and it was very, very tough,” Rosberg says. “Lewis is an amazing driver, one of the best out there, and to beat him is just extremely tough, especially the last race – unbelievable mentally, crazy stuff.

“I've achieved what I set out for. It's unbelievable how clear it was for me. When I was six years old, starting off in go-karts, I remember that was my dream already in those days – winning the world championship. Of course there it was more of a childhood thing, but in later years it became more and more serious as a proper target, and I've done it.

“I'm so happy and, at the same time, it was a very, very tough year. I don't want to do that again.”

Does that mean he's ruling out a Kimi Raikkonen or Nigel Mansell-style comeback later down the road?

“Definitely. Finished. Done. End of story.”

Great personal sacrifice and mental anguish. This is the downside of succeeding at the best job in the world.



ETHERINGTON/LAT



## TOP 50 DRIVERS OF 2015



- 1 Lewis Hamilton
- 2 Sebastian Vettel
- 3 Sebastien Ogier
- 4 Nico Rosberg
- 5 Stoffel Vandoorne
- 6 Daniel Ricciardo
- 7 Valtteri Bottas
- 8 Nick Tandy
- 9 Pascal Wehrlein
- 10 Max Verstappen
- 11 Oliver Rowland
- 12 Scott Dixon
- 13 Fernando Alonso
- 14 Gianmaria Bruni
- 15 Graham Rahal
- 16 Sebastien Buemi
- 17 Juan Pablo Montoya
- 18 Romain Grosjean
- 19 Andre Lotterer
- 20 Jamie Green
- 21 Lucas di Grassi
- 22 Neel Jani
- 23 Kevin Harvick
- 24 Timo Bernhard
- 25 Nico Hulkenberg
- 26 Joey Logano
- 27 Sergio Perez
- 28 Kazuki Nakajima
- 29 Nelson Piquet Jr
- 30 Felipe Massa
- 31 Josef Newgarden
- 32 Nick Catsburg
- 33 Jose Maria Lopez
- 34 Laurens Vanthoor
- 35 Jenson Button
- 36 Kris Meeke
- 37 Alexander Rossi
- 38 Felix Rosenqvist
- 39 Carlos Sainz Jr
- 40 Jari-Matti Latvala
- 41 Mark Winterbottom
- 42 Matthieu Vaxiviere
- 43 Gordon Shedden
- 44 Mark Webber
- 45 Nicki Thiim
- 46 Jason Plato
- 47 Sam Bird
- 48 Daniil Kvyat
- 49 Esteban Ocon
- 50 Brendon Hartley



4

## SEBASTIEN OGIER

1st in World Rally Championship

### DOWN 1

For a moment, Sebastien Ogier was lost. Quite confused. Where was he supposed to go? Left or right? Not the middle. Not this time.

The post-Rally Australia press conference caused this momentary bewilderment. As well it might. For three years, Sunday's centre seat had been Ogier's – just as it had on 31 rallies in the previous four World Rally Championship seasons.

This year... well this year was different. Statistically, it was Ogier's second-worst campaign as a professional World Rally Car driver – his worst being 2011, when he 'only' won five rallies for Citroen. He won six in 2016.

Champion for a fourth time in succession he may be – and with two rounds to spare – but this has been a dark year for Ogier, one that has taken him to the brink of despair with the sport he loves so much.

Rarely has one regulation been so firmly directed at one driver. To the untrained eye, nothing had changed from last season: like 2015, the championship leader would run first on the road, but this year returning Rally 2 (superally in old money) crews would not go ahead of the championship leader.

Ogier bore the brunt of the season's gravelliest roads and the podiums he scored in Mexico, Argentina, Portugal and Sardinia were as much a part of the foundation of his title as any of the six wins.

No current driver can match Ogier's ability for making time where, logically speaking, there's no time to be made. Running in the worst of the gravel generally



allows Ogier to use a softer compound of tyre on the first loop of stages – the lack of contact with mother Earth means they don't get as much heat in them, but conversely spinning through the loose doesn't generate much in the way of forward motion.

Time after time he brought his Michelins back to service with an indecent amount of life left in them.

Tyre conservation was key to his undoing of the FIA's dastardly plan. This year Ogier came armed with his own three-point plan. It was a simple one: less steering input; braking a fraction earlier to avoid locking the wheels or generating any more temperature than was strictly necessary; and being more progressive on the throttle at the exit of every bend. All year long he stuck rigidly to that plan, steadfastly refusing to get ragged.

Self-control in every way was the key to Ogier's latest and arguably greatest season.



3

**MAX  
VERSTAPPEN**

5th in Formula 1 World Championship

UP7

Max Verstappen is sending shockwaves of fear through the Formula 1 establishment. He drives in a way that challenges convention – but that's hardly surprising given his unconventional rise towards superstardom.

There are few who balance on the knife edge between inspiration and disaster so precariously as Verstappen. There is no better example than November's Brazilian Grand Prix, where he charged brilliantly from 14th to third in atrocious weather during the final 16 laps of the race.

Esteban Gutierrez, Pascal Wehrlein, Valtteri Bottas, Daniel Ricciardo, Daniil Kvyat, Esteban Ocon and Felipe Nasr all dispatched in seven laps, then Nico Hulkenberg (an acknowledged wet-weather master), four-time world champ Sebastian Vettel, Carlos Sainz Jr and Sergio Perez.

The way Verstappen carved through the pack, finding grip on alternative lines where others feared to tread, was the nearest thing F1 has seen to the Norising Formula 3 display that convinced Red Bull motorsport advisor Helmut Marko he had to sign this driver.

"It looked like he was cruising. The others were locking wheels, sliding off, understeer, oversteer, all over the place, and he was in a rhythm, like dancing. It was clear there is something different, something special."

That's what Marko said of Verstappen's wet-weather driving in F3, and it's the same in F1. He is brilliantly creative in the car, unafraid of negative consequences, and always prepared to risk everything for the potential reward.

Remember how close he came to stuffing his Red Bull into the barriers in Brazil? Verstappen is a daredevil.

But this creative flair is not why Verstappen has earned the monicker 'Mad Max' among some of his F1 peers, including Nico Rosberg. The origins of that label stem from the darker flipside to his genius – an impulsive and particularly aggressive brand of no-holds-barred racecraft employed in service of his iron will to win at all costs.

The way he repeatedly jinked sharply to block rivals in braking zones while defending position earned significant criticism, and gave the FIA cause to clarify its own rules regarding the acceptable bounds of defensive driving.

But the significance of this aspect of his driving has been overblown. Like any young driver still feeling his way (Verstappen has only been racing cars for three seasons, remember) he is impetuous at times, particularly in the immediate aftermath of a mistake or setback.

His collision with Nico Hulkenberg's Force India at Turn 1 after a bad start in Abu Dhabi is a good example of why Red Bull would like him to be a little more patient.

Verstappen's gambles are calculated with a killer instinct. Like Ayrton Senna or Michael Schumacher before him, he pushes the rules to their limits and dares the world to stop him.

Some may well call him mad, but Max knows exactly what he is doing and at present that largely consists of repeatedly giving F1's big names a bloody nose.







ETHERINGTON/LAT

2

## LEWIS HAMILTON

2nd in Formula 1 World Championship

### DOWN 1

Lewis Hamilton ultimately missed out on a fourth F1 World Championship by five points this year, but he drove well enough to win it, scoring 12 pole positions and 10 race wins. But for some bad starts and mechanical misfortune, he would be celebrating a third straight title success with Mercedes. Sadly for him, it just wasn't meant to be this year.

#### Hamilton on... His own performance in 2016

I learned a lot about myself this year. I understood where the weaknesses are that I can improve for next year, although actually I did part way through the season. I read somewhere that Baku was obviously a bad race for performance. Qualifying was the bad performance; in the race I was stuck with a [engine] setting the team had set. Hindsight is always a great thing, and I can look back and think, 'If I could've done this, done that, maybe I would've got a better start – or if I'd done this, maybe I would've won'. But that's not something I ever try to

do in a season, because in the heat of the moment you do the best you can. I think I ultimately performed pretty well through the year to get the number of wins I had, considering also I didn't compete in three qualifying sessions. I won the last four races. It was still a very, very positive year.

#### Battling against the odds

I drive pretty well every year. I probably drove with more heart this year, basically with a lot more challenges along the way. I had to dig deep – deeper than other years where I've started first and disappeared. So it's taken a lot more heart and a lot more courage to face the challenges.

#### How Mercedes handled things

There have been instances that have felt a bit odd. There have been some uncomfortable scenarios. But I should expect that. I think that comes with the territory when

you've competed at the front for some time. It's a tricky scenario for a team when they've got two drivers fighting for a championship. But what doesn't kill you only makes you stronger, so through those experiences you learn about different characters and also about yourself.

#### His rivalry with Nico Rosberg

This year has probably been the best [in F1]. We kept to ourselves and did our jobs. Apart from Austria and Barcelona, we've not had any real issues. It's been straightforward.

#### Looking to the future

I don't like to look back, but I always try to take the positives. I came out with more wins and more poles [than Rosberg] this year, which is great. An incredibly successful year for the team, growth as a driver, but also the bond that I have built with my guys is something that really strengthens me going into next year.





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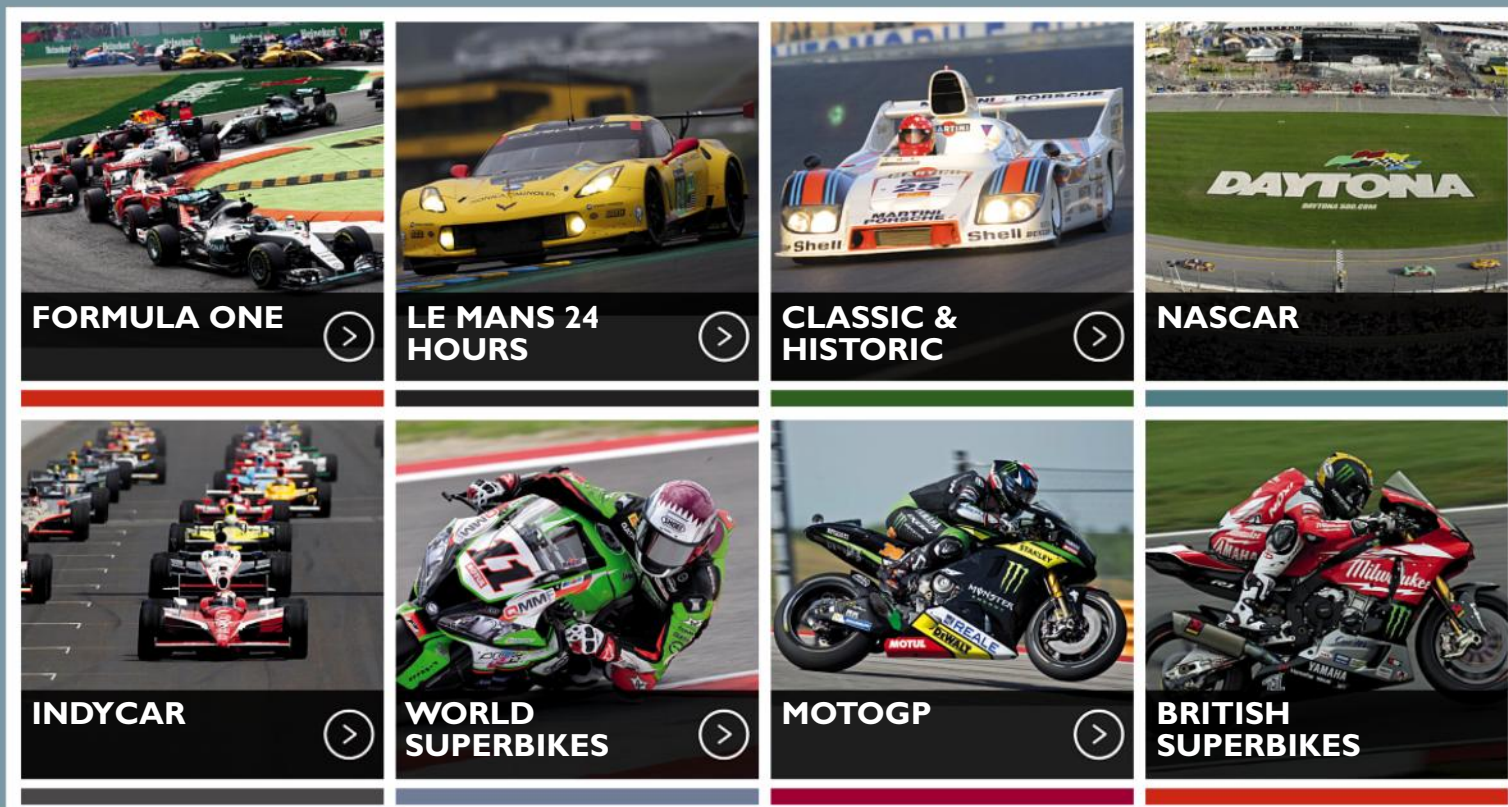


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# #1

## DANIEL RICCIARDO

UP5





# THE BEST DRIVER OF 2016

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

[@BenAndersonAuto](#)



**NICO ROSBERG WON THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, LEWIS HAMILTON WAS THE** best performing Mercedes driver overall, and Max Verstappen created headlines as his ascent to the top of single-seater racing continues, but Daniel Ricciardo was the best racing driver in 2016.

Ricciardo has been here before, of course, topping Autosport's rankings in 2014 (he recalls this as we sit down for an interview) after winning three races and finishing third in the world championship in the underpowered Red Bull-Renault RB10.

This season he performed similar heroics, rediscovering his best form as both he and Red Bull recovered from a disappointing 2015 to outwit Ferrari and become best-of-the-rest behind Mercedes again.

Ricciardo only won once this year, inheriting victory when Hamilton's Mercedes blew its engine in Malaysia, but could easily have matched his 2014 tally with slightly sharper strategy and better pitwork from Red Bull.

The Australian led the first part of May's Spanish

Grand Prix, after Hamilton and Rosberg took each other out on lap one, and should have won two weeks later at Monaco, where Ricciardo became the only non-Mercedes driver to take a pole position this season. He also scored more points than he managed in 2014 too. Ricciardo feels this was his best season yet in Formula 1, and Autosport agrees with that assessment.

"That's the cool thing — a lot of people have had good years, but you don't always have to be winning to still get noticed," he tells Autosport as we reflect on a campaign that has underlined Ricciardo's status as one of F1's truly elite performers.

"I'm very happy. I feel deep down that it's been a very strong year, and even if the result's only been a fifth place or something, I feel as if there's been a bit more behind that.





FERRARO/LAT

“Do I get like a nude cover shot now or something? A Christian Horner one? Maybe not nude...”

The world is probably not ready for that yet. But Ricciardo does perform one of his signature ‘shoey’ celebrations in recognition of being hailed Autosport’s best driver of 2016. He looks happy and relaxed – perhaps not surprising for someone who is generally considered to be permanently smiling.

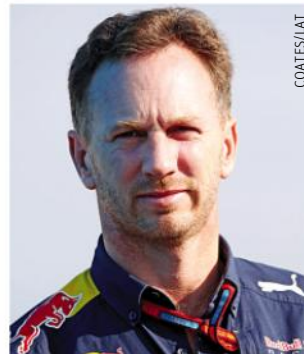
But behind that grinning facade lurks the determination and steel of a fierce competitor. He is archetypically the ‘honey badger’ – an outwardly harmless, cuddly creature capable of turning viciously and fearlessly against much larger animals when cornered.

Ricciardo felt somewhat cornered himself in the middle of last year, as he found his burning competitive desire to become world champion snuffed out by an underperforming car. He harboured ultimately unrealistic hopes of challenging Hamilton and Rosberg for the title after that breakout winning season of 2014, and his form dipped amid the dawning realisation that these expectations would not be realised.

The important thing is he’s rebounded. Red Bull-Renault >>

Ricciardo’s Monaco pole was the only time in 2016 that a Mercedes did not qualify fastest

## Q&A



COATES/LAT

### CHRISTIAN HORNER RED BULL TEAM BOSS

**Daniel said he could look back on the season quite fondly. How would you rate his season?**

I think it’s been his best season in Formula 1 so far. I think he’s driven very, very well this year. He’s produced some outstanding races, some sublime qualifying, and he’s been right at the top of his game. A stronger season for him than in 2014, I think.

**Has he become mentally stronger in 2016?**

Absolutely. He turns up in Barcelona and there’s a pack of photographers outside Max’s garage and none outside the front of his. Psychologically he’s dealt with that incredibly well, and risen to the challenge of Max. I think he’s enjoyed and relished it. There’s been a great rivalry between the two in a very healthy manner. I think there’s a lot of respect between them. They actually quite like each other.

**Anything that’s stood out in particular for you?**

His performance under pressure. His racecraft has again been first-class this year. Some of his overtaking moves have been mighty, and as he’s gained experience and matured he’s become very much a complete driver. Dan does have that amount of experience now. This year for Daniel has been an amazing season.



INTERVIEW BY LAWRENCE BARRETTO





Ricciardo and Verstappen have pushed each other on at Red Bull, and have mutual respect

has improved greatly this season, but nowhere near to the extent of becoming title challengers again. The key difference this season is that Ricciardo has worked brilliantly within the limitations of the car, and not allowed frustration to get the better of him as it did in 2015.

"I think it's a bit of maturity, after last year," he reckons. "It's not always a fairytale. You can get your hopes up pretty easily, and after 2014 I was like, 'Man, if I had a Mercedes I'd be world champion!' And obviously you build a confidence, but then you have to be careful that doesn't build into too much expectation.

"I think this year was good [in how] I put all the things that I learned into work – maturity and still that confidence. I had

a really good Christmas, a really good end of season last year, and as soon as January came I was keen. I had a really good pre-season, really good intensity – just ready to go!

"I think it goes back to just appreciating the position I'm in. OK, we don't have a Mercedes right now, but I'm still racing for a top team, the team has a budget, I'm getting paid to race, I don't have to check the [pay cheque] is coming in every week – little things like getting to see some awesome parts of the world.

"So all these things put together, there's not so much weight on my shoulders. I'm able to race with a lot of freedom and happiness, and the results come."

As Rosberg has proved this year, state of mind is a crucial aspect of a driver's performance. Rosberg delved deep into the world of mental coaching and meditation in his efforts to overcome Hamilton this season.

But mentality is a very personal thing – some need a fastidious rehearsal routine to get into shape, others prefer to go with the flow and trust more in their instincts. Ricciardo has learned what works for him, which has helped mould him into one of F1's most consistently effective operators.

"It's been an evolution over the last few years," he explains. "I've tended to ride it a bit more as opposed to having something structured and all these deep preparation procedures.







## RICCIARDO ON THE 'SHOEY'

“Some Aussie surf/fisherman dudes, ‘the Mad Hueys’, started really getting out of hand with it. Seeing [MotoGP rider] Jack Miller do it when he won in Assen made it even more appropriate. It’s a way of Australians embracing the weird. I figured it would liven up the podiums too. Which it looks like it did”

“Don’t get me wrong, I’m still prepared, but I’ll change it up a little bit. It all depends on the time of the season – my mood as well, because things change and there are always variables. If you’ve got a set routine it’s hard to always follow that.”

Ricciardo is a driver of deep self-belief, seriously quick but most impressively able to access this speed at the crucial moments under pressure. He is a scintillatingly good qualifier in the Hamilton mould, and some of his performances this season – putting Red Bull on the front row in China, beating Max Verstappen to third on the grid in Spain, taking pole position at Monaco, splitting the Mercedes drivers in Singapore – were truly outstanding.

“I thought I was driving really, really well in 2014, but this year there are still things I’ve learned and I’m discovering,” Ricciardo says. “You’re constantly learning, and that’s something I really am pleased with this year.

“I had some really strong qualifying this year, but I look at the thing [qualifying comparison] with Max [Verstappen] and – I’m not sure what the score is [11-6 to Ricciardo] – I’m thinking, ‘Ah, I shouldn’t have let him get that many!’ It wasn’t a perfect year for qualifying, but I learned some things, and when I did put those things in place the lap came.”

Ricciardo appears to have developed a knack with the Pirelli

tyres; he’s able to work within their limitations to extract the best overall performance through a qualifying lap without undercooking the rubber beforehand or overstressing the tyres through a lap so they give up before he’s finished.

“These tyres are interesting – sometimes they just don’t work and you don’t have an explanation, but when you feel like you do it right it makes sense,” he explains. “There are a lot of occasions where you can easily overdrive this tyre, even in qualifying. You’re still 90% on a qualifying lap.

“But then there’ve been other times [good laps] where I’ve felt like I was probably under it and the tyre could have handled more – and it’s like, ‘Well, how does that work?’

“It’s a bit of trial and error. Some things I’ll try, but that’s where a good team helps out – they’ll throw ideas in and always create that other opinion or voice in my head, and then we’ll try things. A few things worked this year, which was cool.”

Ricciardo readily admits the arrival of the phenomenon that is Max Verstappen in the team four races into the season forced him to raise his game, helping him discover fresh levels of performance he wasn’t sure lurked within him.

“The positive about him coming in was that he jumped in the car and ‘bang’ – he didn’t really make excuses or anything, he just got on with it,” Ricciardo says. “He was quick out of >>



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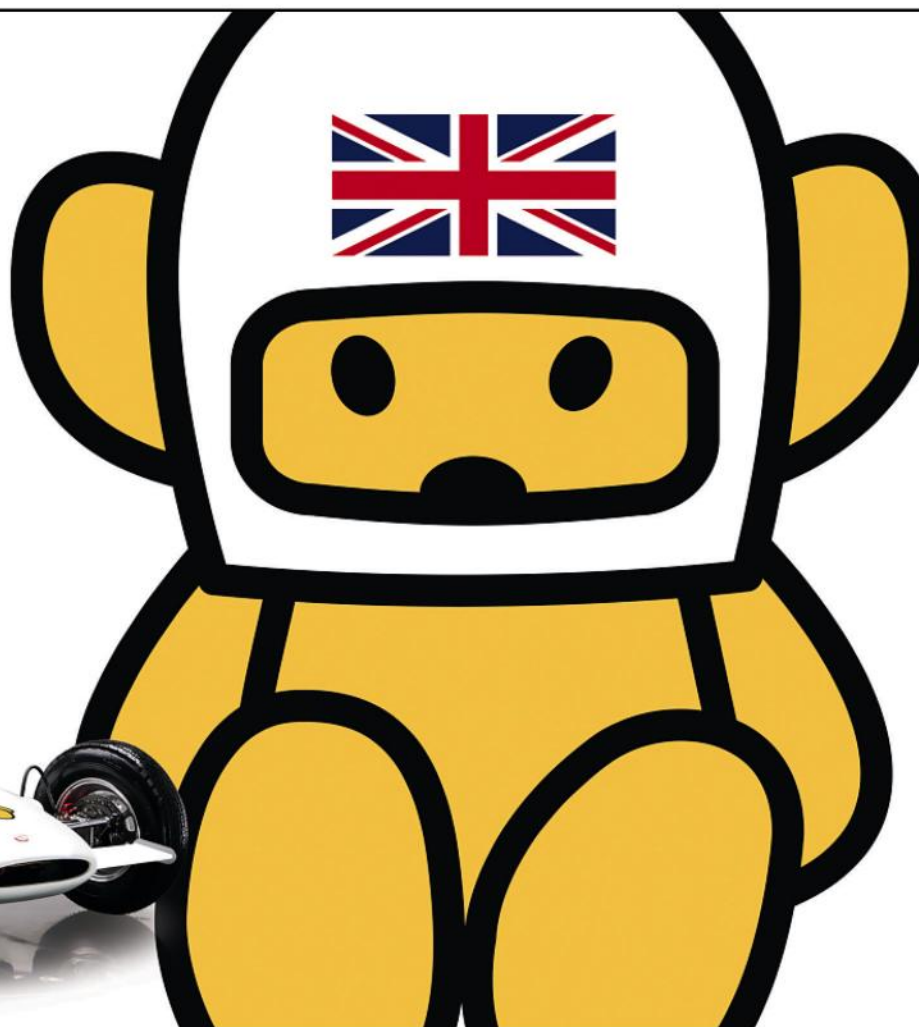
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Ricciardo starred at Monaco but a poor Red Bull strategy call meant he missed out on victory

the box, so already we're both looking at each other, seeing each other's times.

"You do a good lap, and then they'll match it, or he'll do a good lap and I'll match it, then you're constantly pushing each other more and more — he's quicker on a few corners, I'm quicker [on others], so then I'll match his corners, he'll match mine, and all of a sudden we've both gone a tenth or two quicker.

"We sort of know that it needs a pretty good lap to beat each other, so it adds a bit of pressure, but it makes us more... I don't know if the word is 'diligent' — a bit more precise.

"It's cool, it's fun; there's nothing crazy with driving styles, but it's just getting out of the box and not needing 10 laps to run around and get up to pace. It's like 'bang' — first lap, we can both do it. I know now that if I'm having an average day it's very likely he'll be in front of me, where maybe a few times in the past I could get away with not the perfect lap and still be in front.

"That's why I say there were a few times this year I didn't get the most out of my lap, [because] then obviously it would show — Max would get me and [you think], 'I could have done a little bit better there; that wasn't bad but wasn't my best' and that sort of stuff.

"There's obviously still places I can improve, but I'm happy about that in a way, because I know there's still growth. So it's a very good year, but still not perfect; it probably never will be perfect, but it's getting better."

Verstappen has rightly earned plaudits for the way he's arrived at one of F1's biggest houses and begun shaking up the foundations. He's fast, aggressive and controversial.

Ricciardo feels he set a trend for young drivers with the way he raced F1's established stars in 2014, prepared to always have a go rather than settle for what was in hand. This racer's instinct was on display again this season with the way he repeatedly tried (though ultimately failed) to ➤

## DANIEL RICCIARDO'S F1 CAREER SO FAR



2011

Spends the first eight races of the year completing Friday practice runs for Toro Rosso, alongside a sophomore campaign in Formula Renault 3.5. Outpaces regular drivers Sebastien Buemi and Jaime Alguersuari several times before taking over Narain Karthikeyan's race seat at HRT for the final 11 rounds. Shows increasingly strong form against team-mate Vitantonio Liuzzi, and earns promotion to a Toro Rosso race seat for 2012.



2012

Is outscored 16-10 by fellow rookie team-mate Jean-Eric Vergne in the championship, but finishes inside the points more often and destroys the Frenchman in qualifying — winning the intra-team battle 16-4, and making Autosport's top 10 driver rankings at the end of the year. The highlight is a stunning performance to put STR sixth on the grid in Bahrain, behind only the Mercedes, McLaren and Red Bull machines.



Will the new rules and wider tyres help Red Bull give Ricciardo a title challenger?



pass former team-mate Sebastian Vettel for third in Spain, dived past Valtteri Bottas at Monza's first chicane, and fought with Vettel again in the closing stages in Mexico.

At present Ricciardo is generally faster than Verstappen and capable of racing just as hard, but extra experience makes his approach more measured and consequently less controversial. Fernando Alonso was a big fan of the way Ricciardo drove in 2014, and the man who many still reckon is the absolute best on the grid thinks Ricciardo is the driver currently most deserving of that tag.

"I thanked him on the driver's parade actually, in Brazil," Ricciardo says, "because I heard some people mention the comments, so I said, 'Thanks a lot, man' and he said, 'You don't have to thank me, it's just what I feel, it's my opinion'."

"It's nice — especially [coming from] someone who's been there, done it and knows what it takes to be a champion. On Sunday, sure you're out there and you're racing for yourself, but you can't deny getting a compliment from a competitor is a nice feeling."

"A couple of little things recently: after winning in Malaysia and getting out of the car and having [Felipe] Massa and Jenson [Button] waiting to give me a hug and pat me on the back —

that's cool. A lot of love and respect from these, let's say, 'older champions', is a nice feeling. I'm a nice guy and I get on with them, but I think they respect me as a driver, which is cool."

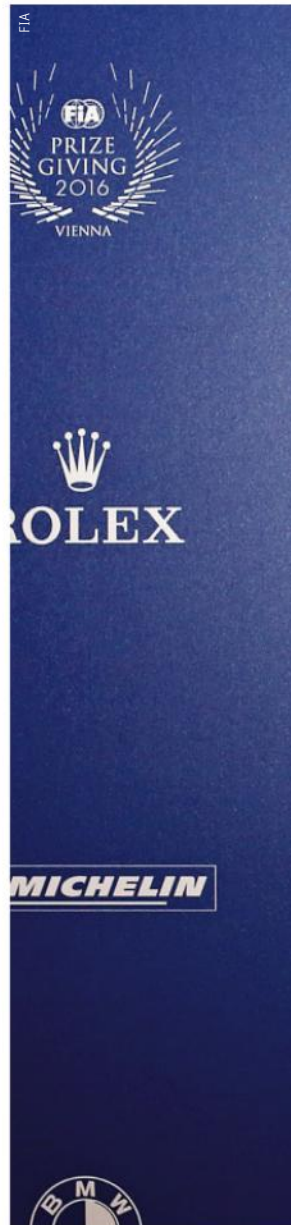
The respect of one's peers should not be underestimated. Winning is the name of the game, of course, but the manner of that victory is also important. Ricciardo has yet to have the chance to test his mettle in a full-blooded F1 title battle, but he's driven well enough since joining Red Bull to deserve that shot, and shown repeatedly that he possesses the requisite speed, racecraft and mental resilience.

"I've made peace with whatever the equipment will be, it'll be, and I'll try to get the most out of that," Ricciardo says. "I really hope next year can be the first real chance we have to fight for a world title, but if it isn't I'll have faith that it'll be 2018."

"I think the progress speaks for itself. We've overcome Ferrari this year, but Mercedes is still the team right now. I think we can make a step next year, and hopefully that's good enough."

"I'll keep chipping away at it [but] if you expect too much it's easier to get let down, so we'll see. But I've extended a couple more years [of my contract] with Red Bull [and] I do believe that within those two years we should get at least one chance."

"That's all I need." *W*



## 2013

In a difficult season for Toro Rosso, Ricciardo underlines his credentials as a potential star of the future, beating Vergne in the championship with seven points finishes to Vergne's three, and obliterating him in qualifying again (15-4 this time), making Q3 eight times. Vergne reaches some impressive peaks on occasion — particularly in mixed conditions — but Ricciardo's qualifying speed and consistency earn him the chance to replace Mark Webber at Red Bull for 2014.



## 2014

Enjoys a breakout season at the top level, winning three races amid Mercedes' general domination of the first year of Formula 1's V6 hybrid turbo era. Ricciardo outperforms four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel, beating him convincingly in the drivers' championship, and 12-7 in the intra-team qualifying battle. Ricciardo is a strong third in the points table, and Red Bull hands him a contract extension and a pay rise, as Vettel departs for pastures new at Ferrari.





Ricciardo and Rosberg both had their best F1 seasons in 2016, but only one will be back next year

## 2015

A disappointing season by Ricciardo's high standards. Comes into the campaign expecting to fight for the world championship, but is left frustrated by Renault's lack of progress with its engine, and Red Bull's difficulties unlocking performance from the tricky RB11 chassis. Ricciardo struggles to come to terms with this, and is narrowly outscored by teammate Daniil Kvyat, but overall remains the faster and more consistent performer of the two Red Bull drivers.



## 2016

Delivers what he describes as his best season yet in Formula 1, returning to the winner's circle at last when Lewis Hamilton retires from the lead of the Malaysian Grand Prix. Ricciardo readjusts his expectations to Red Bull's competitive standing and finishes third in the championship again, behind only the Mercedes drivers. Withstands the extra pressure created by Max Verstappen's arrival at Red Bull, puts the car on pole at Monaco, and accrues the largest points tally of his career so far.





FORMULA 1

## The F1 driver market

VALTTERI BOTTAS HAS EMERGED AS THE new key to the Formula 1 driver market, even though he already has a drive for 2017.

Williams announced before the end of the season that Bottas would be one of its 2017 drivers, alongside Canadian rookie Lance Stroll. But when Nico Rosberg decided five days after winning his maiden world championship that he would retire with immediate effect, he also gave fresh impetus to a driver market that appeared to be largely settled. Mercedes found itself with little time to find a new team-mate for Lewis Hamilton - and a very small pool of drivers who could extract themselves from existing ties.

It is understood Mercedes contacted Williams to discuss the possibility of releasing Bottas. The Finn has existing links with Mercedes chief Toto Wolff, who has an involvement with his management team. As part of the package, Williams was offered a reduction in the cost of its 2017 engine supply - around £10m - as well as the opportunity to run Pascal Wehrlein.

That offer was rejected; it is understood that a second proposal is being formulated. When contacted by Autosport, a Williams spokesperson said: "We announced our 2017

drivers as Valtteri and Lance, so we have no comment on anything else."

The team is keen to hold on to Bottas and his experience next year, given that his 18-year-old team-mate Stroll will be making his F1 debut.

Pairing him with Wehrlein would mean its drivers only have one year's F1 experience between them, and risks it dropping further down the constructors' championship, having slipped from third to fifth in 2016.

The Williams team's primary sponsor, Martini, is also known to have concerns about the prospect of having one driver under 21 and the other not yet 23, since it must comply with alcohol marketing regulations in a number of territories with tight age restrictions.

Wehrlein insists he is ready to step up to replace Rosberg, following a strong rookie F1 season with Manor. "The team knows I would love to drive for them, the tests I did were great," Wehrlein told Autosport. "I cannot call them every day to say 'what's happening?' I don't want to be annoying."

"I'm there if they think I'm the right person for the team. I will do whatever is necessary to deliver. I just have to wait now."





XPBIMAGES

## FORMULA 1

# 2017 F1 TEST WILL 'DESTROY' DRIVERS

Force India's Sergio Perez is predicting Formula 1 drivers will be "destroyed" after pre-season testing with next year's heavily revised cars, arguing that the additional performance will increase the physicality required to a level that is difficult to train for.

The 2017 cars will sport wider bodywork and tyres, and significantly increased downforce levels. Shorter braking distances and higher cornering speeds will subject the drivers' bodies to much higher g-forces. On each of the eight days of pre-season testing, which begin at Barcelona on February 27, drivers will regularly clock up more than 100 laps, providing reliability is good enough.

Many have spoken about modifying their winter fitness regimes.

"I'm sure that when we start testing everyone will be destroyed," Perez told Autosport. "It's very difficult to simulate the same force you get in a car where you train, so you always suffer with the neck. But it'll be fine by Melbourne."

Perez said he was impressed by drawings of Force India's 2017 challenger, but is less certain about the effect the changes will have on the show.

"I'm a bit concerned about the spectacle, and how difficult the cars are going to be," he added. "They will be more physically demanding, but that's something we all can get used to."

**BEN ANDERSON**

# springs back into life

But Mercedes is uncertain if he has the necessary experience to step into a top car.

Another Mercedes junior, Esteban Ocon, recently signed a deal with Force India, which is keen to keep hold of Ocon for next season. Carlos Sainz Jr has also emerged as a contender for the vacant Mercedes seat.

The Spaniard has a contract with Red Bull to continue with Toro Rosso for a third season in 2017. However, Autosport understands there is the possibility of him being released from that seat, should an offer come from Mercedes.

If Mercedes fails to lure Bottas away from Williams, it remains unclear who its next target will be. Fernando Alonso's long-time confidant Flavio Briatore has ruled out the notion of Alonso leaving McLaren to replace Rosberg.

Alonso still has one year left on his McLaren deal. Briatore, Alonso's former manager and boss at Renault when he won his two world titles, said Alonso will respect his contract.

Alonso did end his Ferrari contract two years early to join McLaren in time for the 2015 season. But Briatore said the two scenarios were different because a special agreement had been made with the president Luca di Montezemolo that if he didn't win the title in 2014, he would be free from the contract.

Meanwhile, Ferrari says Mercedes has made no contact regarding Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen filling the void.

Sauber and Manor are now the only other teams with vacancies, and Wehrlein is the frontrunner to get the remaining seat at Sauber if he does not go to Mercedes.

That would just leave Manor to finalise its line-up for 2017. Esteban Gutierrez is pushing hard to secure a berth there, with Rio Haryanto and Felipe Nasr also in contention.

Nasr is held in high regard by Williams, having spent a year there as a reserve in 2014, and this, together with his experience, could make him a candidate if Bottas does leave.

**LAWRENCE BARRETTO**

**"Ferrari says Mercedes has made no contact about Vettel"**

ETHERINGTON/LAT



## SCHNITZER TO RETURN 'HOME' IN ENDURO RACING

IT'S DIFFICULT NOT to interpret it as a homeward step for Schnitzer Motorsport. The Bavarian squad may have won DTM titles in two different eras, but the team is surely best known for its successes in long-distance racing, and it will have a chance to add to them in 2017 when it returns to the Nurburgring 24 Hours.

Schnitzer has been moved out of the DTM after five seasons as part of a reorganisation following the reduction in each manufacturer's line-up to six cars. BMW will now rely solely on the RBM and RMG squads in the German touring car series. That means Schnitzer moves over to the GT3 ranks, with an attack on the 24-hour race at the 'Ring and the full ADAC GT Masters series in Germany with the M6 GT3, while MTEK will begin preparations for BMW's entry into the World Endurance Championship with an all-new GTE Pro class contender in 2018.

BMW has talked about a return to GT racing for Schnitzer, but its long-distance heritage runs much deeper than that. Three of its five 24-hour victories at the 'Ring came in the GT era, the others when the race

was a touring car fixture. All four of its wins at the Spa 24 Hours came long before the race switched from tin-tops to GTs in 2001. And that's without mentioning its Le Mans 24 Hours victory with the V12 LMR prototype in 1999, or its straight-out-of-the-box triumph with the car in that year's Sebring 12 Hours.

The question is whether Schnitzer will get a chance to return to the North American arena in 2018 when the new GTE contender – details of which still remain a secret – comes on stream. The Rahal team has masterminded BMW's Stateside campaigns in the GT ranks since 2009, but as recently as the end of '13 BMW put the deal out for tender.

● Martin Tomczyk and Alexander Sims have joined Rahal's IMSA SportsCar squad for next season. Tomczyk moves over from the DTM, while Sims moves up from the factory Rowe team with which he won this year's Blancpain GT Series blue-riband at Spa. They respectively replace Lucas Luhr and Porsche-bound Dirk Werner alongside John Edwards and Bill Auberlen in the two Rahal BMW M6 GTLMs.

**GARY WATKINS**



## Ogier signs with M-Sport

Four-time champion Sebastien Ogier will contest the 2017 World Rally Championship in new Ford Fiesta

# S

ebastien Ogier will defend his World Rally Championship crown at the wheel of an M-Sport Ford Fiesta RS WRC.

The Frenchman agreed terms with the British squad on Monday and was expected to take the wheel of the all-new Ford in Sweden yesterday (Wednesday).

Ogier tested the new-specification Fiesta RS WRC for the first time in Wales last month and was sufficiently impressed with the Cumbrian-built car to finalise lengthy negotiations for a 2017 deal this week.

Ogier said: "There's not long before we line up at the start of the Monte Carlo Rally and we've not had a lot of seat time with the Fiesta, but we'll give it our best."

"We're aware of the challenges and I can see how hungry Malcolm Wilson and his team are for success. I'm looking forward to working with M-Sport and we'll certainly be aiming to return them to the top step of the podium."

M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson said: "This is fantastic news. I've made no effort to hide how much I wanted to sign Sebastien and we've worked very hard to put this deal together. I can fully understand why he's a four-time world champion. His attention to detail is quite exceptional."

"The whole team is hugely excited about the chance to work with these guys – it's the opportunity we've been waiting for."

Ogier wasn't the only person impressed with the new car: Henry Ford III was at M-Sport last week and also gave the Fiesta his seal of approval. The great-great grandson of Henry Ford visited M-Sport's Dovenby headquarters last week, where he met with Wilson.

Wilson was quick to scotch talk of a full-time Ford return to the world championship: "That's not on the cards, not in any way, shape or form."

"It was fantastic, a real honour to have Henry Ford III in the office. He was here in his capacity as head of Ford Performance and came with Mark Rushbrook [Ford Performance motorsport engineering manager]. We talked about the Fiesta rallycross car – a project we're fifty-fifty involved with Ford Performance on, but naturally we talked about the new rally car too. They were very pleased with the way it has come out. We also talked a lot about the wider world of rallying beyond the world championship."

Ogier's decision to join M-Sport leaves a big question mark over the future of his former team-mate Andreas Mikkelsen, who had been poised to join Wilson's team if the Frenchman said no. Mikkelsen, who had been in line for a Toyota drive until Jari-Matti Latvala signed, now has limited options. His remaining hope appears to be a deal with the DMACK World Rally Team. Welshman Elfyn Evans was, however, reported to have been signing for a full season with the DMACK squad earlier this week.

**DAVID EVANS**



# Safari Rally to return?

THE WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP could be on the verge of its first return to Kenya since 2002.

The Kenya Motor Sports Federation is working on a plan to be back on the WRC calendar for 2019. Both the FIA and WRC Promoter are keen to see the Safari Rally back.

Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta made the Safari's WRC return part of his election pledge when he was voted into power in 2012. Kenyatta has since had discussions with FIA president Jean Todt, who is keen to see Africa back in the WRC.

Kenyatta and KMSF chairman Phineas

Kimathi are now working on ways to finance the event's return.

Since 2002, the Safari has slipped further and further off the rallying radar. It twice ran as a round of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge, in 2007 and '09, but since then has been a staple of the domestic series.

Like the 2002 rally, the candidate event currently being worked on would run out of Nairobi on closed roads around the Rift Valley.

Funding remains at the heart of Africa's return. The event will have to demonstrate a solid safety plan and be able to pay its way.

DAVID EVANS



## TOP 3

## Greatest Safari Rallies

There have been plenty of epic moments since the first event in 1953. Here, we pick out the best



1961

Circuit racer John Manassis turned rally driver to thwart Bill Fritschy's efforts to land the first Safari hat-trick. The Mercedes 220SE pair was tightly matched in one of the hardest-fought Safaris.



1972

Pre-1972, Safari winners had been local (even if Tanzanian Bert Shankland was born in Scotland). Ford's Hannu Mikkola changed all that following a brilliant run in the dark to win.



2002

The 50th Safari Rally came 49 years after the first event to celebrate the Queen's Coronation. Colin McRae dominated what was Kenya's last appearance in the WRC.

## IN THE HEADLINES



### JACKSON CONFIRMED AT MOTORBASE

Mat Jackson will remain with the Motorbase British Touring Car Championship team for an eighth season. Jackson finished third in the 2016 standings racing the Kent squad's Ford Focus. The team, which has inked a sponsorship deal with the Shredded Wheat brand, has two other grid slots for the 2017 campaign.

### MERCEDES REGRETS INTERVENTION

Mercedes regrets giving Lewis Hamilton team orders during the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, according to team boss Toto Wolff. In the immediate aftermath of the race Wolff said Hamilton's go-slow tactics in the face of instructions to speed up had set a precedent and would need to be reviewed internally. But he now says Mercedes should not have interfered. "We should have communicated differently, and in hindsight let them race in the way they deemed to be appropriate," he told Sky Sports F1.

### MASSA WANTS FULL-TIME RACING IN '17

Felipe Massa wants to race full-time in 2017, after retiring from F1. "I'm working for a proper championship, a full season," he said. "I have not decided yet but I have some strong ideas." Massa said he would be "interested" in doing one-off events, such as the Le Mans 24 Hours, but ruled out the Indianapolis 500.

### GROSJEAN TO MAKE ICE-RACING RETURN

Haas F1 driver Romain Grosjean will contest this weekend's round of the Andros Trophy ice-racing series. Grosjean will race an Elite Class Renault Clio for DA Racing in the December 16-17 round at the Alpe d'Huez ski resort in south-eastern France, partnering 2015-16 champion Jean-Baptiste Dubourg.

### CHILTON STAYS AT GANASSI

Ex-Formula 1 driver Max Chilton has been confirmed at Chip Ganassi Racing for his second IndyCar campaign. Series veteran Oriol Servia will again return to the Indianapolis 500 with Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing.

### DUVAL MOVES TO DTM

Former World Endurance champion Loic Duval has joined Audi's 2017 DTM line-up, along with GT ace Rene Rast, as Miguel Molina and Adrien Tambay are dropped. BMW keeps six of its eight 2016 drivers, with Martin Tomczyk and Antonio Felix da Costa switching series.

### SARRAZIN JOINS REBELLION LINE-UP

Toyota-contracted Stephane Sarrazin will join fellow World Endurance Championship LMP1 racers Sebastien Buemi and Neel Jani, and team regular Nick Heidfeld, in Rebellion's entry for next month's Daytona 24 Hours.

### NORRIS FOR CARLIN IN EURO F3

McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner Lando Norris has been confirmed with Carlin for the full F3 European Championship in 2017, having contested the '16 finale and the Macau Grand Prix with the team.





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# FEEDBACK

## Juniors the only choice for Mercedes



I can't understand why Mercedes is hesitating over replacing Nico Rosberg. The big names — Sebastian Vettel, Fernando Alonso, Daniel Ricciardo, Max Verstappen — are all under contract elsewhere, and Mercedes has two F1-blooded juniors in Pascal Wehrlein and Esteban Ocon. If neither of them gets the seat, you start to wonder how good Mercedes really thinks it is.

**Eliot Wilson**  
By email

### Look closer to home...

I seem to remember Williams had a very quick female test driver last year, Susie someone or other, an ideal replacement for Nico Rosberg. I am sure if Toto Wolff doesn't have her number, Williams would furnish him with it.

**Alan Harding**  
Aldwick

### Bring back Zandvoort

With the good news that the French

Grand Prix is back in 2018, would it be too much to hope for that the Dutch GP makes a return?

**Ronnie Boyd**  
Newry, Co Down, N Ireland

### Rosberg will be missed

It's not too hard to understand why Nico Rosberg's decided to call it a day after winning the world championship. Bowing out when you're on top — even if it may seem a tad premature — is a surefire way to preserve your legacy.

But looking at how he's been received on the awards circuit, and his easy, charming demeanour, I feel the sport's going to miss him as an ambassador.

**Frances Stewart**  
London SE12

### Top 10 scores a zero...

What F1 season was Ben Anderson watching? To put Sergio Perez 10th in the top 10 behind Nico Hulkenberg makes no sense (December 8). Who got the most

Forget big-name signings — the choice is obvious for Mercedes, says reader Wilson

points? Perez. Who got the two podiums? Perez. Results are all that matter and if Hulkenberg can't get to the end of a race, why should his team-mate, who seems to be able to, not get credit?

What does Autosport have against Perez? Given the criticism of him in the past when he was at McLaren, it's clear you don't like him. I don't understand why a driver who finished seventh overall barely seems to get a mention in your pages.

And don't even get me started on Kimi Raikkonen not being in the top 10. He finished sixth in the world championship — how can he not even be in the top 10? I hope that next year you actually bother to watch the races rather than coming up with this nonsense.

**Derek Smith**  
By email

### ...full marks for top 10

I thoroughly enjoyed your top 10 drivers of the F1 season and was amazed to see how well Carlos Sainz Jr had performed. At first, I couldn't believe he was in sixth place given he didn't take a single top-five finish. It didn't seem to make sense.

But looking at the reasoning, including the high praise of comparing him to Fernando Alonso, was a reminder that results on paper don't mean everything.

So please keep it up Autosport — this is the kind of in-depth reporting that sets you apart from the rest.

**Robert Kellow**  
By email

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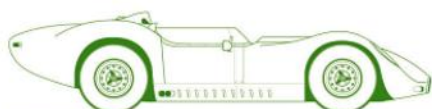
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# Honda's second team

Originally set against the idea of supplying a second team, Honda is making preparations now its form is improving – but who will it be?

By Lawrence Barretto, F1 Reporter

[@lawrobarretto](#)

## WHEN HONDA REFORMED ITS ALLIANCE WITH

McLaren ahead of the 2015 Formula 1 season, an agreement was made whereby the approval of McLaren would be required for the Japanese manufacturer to supply a second team.

Initially, there was no real interest from either side to do so, given Honda's struggles for performance and reliability in the first season of the renewed partnership.

When Red Bull needed an engine for 2016, having fallen out with Renault, McLaren Technology Group CEO Ron Dennis blocked the move. He said that his team didn't want more pressure on the system as Honda was trying to get on top of its difficulties. He later said that only once McLaren-Honda had won the world championship would his team think of allowing a second squad.

But since then the regulations have changed. The FIA can now compel the manufacturer with the fewest customers to supply a team that needs an engine. At this stage that would be Honda. But it should be noted that we've yet to see this rule in action, as every team has its own engine deal for 2017.

It would be fair to say that Honda wasn't particularly enthralled by the prospect of being "forced" to offer a supply, but said it would abide by the regulations should the situation arise.

More importantly, though, Honda's and McLaren's view on taking on a second team has softened. Some of that will be down to the Japanese manufacturer's improved showing in 2016, making both parties feel better about the situation.

Honda also feels obliged to do so for the good of Formula 1. This summer it accelerated its preparations, expanding its Milton Keynes base to provide the space to accommodate a second team.

Honda chief Yusuke Hasegawa says the decision to supply for 2018 must be made by next May in order for the company to get everything in place. "That is the latest timing for us," he said. "That's when Red Bull and Toro Rosso announced they would use the Renault engine. But the earlier we know, the better."

Honda has had interest from rival teams following its upsurge in form this year. Hasegawa insists that this interest has been informal, and it appears that a deal for supply has yet to be signed, but it is gearing up to take on one more team in 2018. The question is, which one?

Mercedes, Ferrari and Renault are ruled out for obvious reasons. Red Bull and Toro Rosso have signed deals with Renault up until the end of 2018. Williams and Force India

have long-term arrangements with Mercedes, while Haas has its technical partnership – which includes a supply of the latest specification of engine – with Ferrari.

That just leaves Sauber and Manor. It is believed that the former is keen on a deal, with its Ferrari contract concluding at the end of 2017. The Swiss team has had a long partnership with Ferrari but, in recent months, cracks have begun to appear in the relationship. Sauber is ready for a change.

The deal would make sense for all three parties (McLaren is included, of course), particularly as a long-term arrangement would give stability. Sauber would break free from a partnership that it was growing frustrated with, given the level of performance and unreliability this season. The team would gain from working with a manufacturer that is hungry to succeed and appears to be going in the right direction on development and performance.

Also, with Haas developing increasingly strong ties with Ferrari, Sauber is down to third in the pecking order at Maranello. It would be second with Honda. Meanwhile,

McLaren would likely not see Sauber as a serious threat to its ambitions to once again become a race winner and title contender.

Honda is on a better footing now, having had two seasons back in F1, and naturally has more control

over its supply chain. Taking on a second team is within its capabilities and the addition will generate more data for it to work with, increasing the chances of it spotting a failure.

The regulations are written in such a way that if Sauber and Ferrari successfully part ways at the end of their agreement next year, Honda would theoretically be obliged to supply Sauber, as it is the manufacturer that supplies the fewest teams. The deal would require a set of criteria to be met, including paying instalments for engines on time.

Both parties will want to avoid a scenario of appearing to be forced to partner up, given the image it would create. So it makes sense that discussions, regardless of whether they are being described as informal, are under way.

Honda could be concerned about payments for the supply, given Sauber's recent financial situation. But Sauber is a professional squad and one of F1's longest-standing teams. It is on stronger footing now with its new investors and, it is believed, paying for its Ferrari engines has not been an issue.

A partnership is logical so it would not be a surprise if the two were to reach an agreement for 2018. *MB*

**“Honda is on a better footing now after two seasons back in F1”**





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# In on the joker

Can a gimmick borrowed from rallycross help to bolster the fortunes of the World Touring Car Championship?

By Jack Cozens, WTCC Correspondent

[@JHCozens](#)

**WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT THE WORLD TOURING CAR Championship.** No, really. How much do you care about the 2016 season? If you've read any reports from this year, you've probably grown weary of the number of times we've compared it favourably to the two that preceded it.

But here it is once more: 2016 was a genuinely entertaining season. I'm not about to argue that it was as gripping as the British Touring Car or Australian Supercars campaigns but, while the records will show that Jose Maria Lopez won the title once again, he and Citroen were both given a run for their money at times this year, and the racing was much improved.

Moreover, the competitiveness among those behind the departing Citroen works team pointed to an entertaining 2017 campaign, with three manufacturers – Honda, Lada and Volvo – plus the independent Citroen cars and the leading Chevrolets all at largely the same level of performance.

I can only imagine how disappointed WTCC head Francois Ribeiro and those at Eurosport Events must have been, then, when news of Lada's plan to join Citroen in heading for the exit surfaced on November 3.

Out of the blue, that news left the WTCC in an uncertain state – so big changes are planned for 2017. Of the changes to come out of the World Motor Sport Council meeting in Vienna a fortnight ago, let's address the elephant in the room first: joker laps. I have nothing but admiration for Ribeiro and his commitment to finding solutions to the championship's perceived image problem. But as soon as the announcement dropped about the possibility of joker laps being used on street circuits, my head fell into my hands.

Why bring a gimmick from rallycross into circuit racing? There's a clue in the name, too, about why reaction in some quarters has been less than complimentary.

"The 'joker' lap works so well in rallycross, so why would it not open up strategies in WTCC street races?" asks Ribeiro. "We think the local promoters will have enough space to implement an alternative route without compromising safety."

"The world is changing and I see nothing wrong to dare and bring in innovations for the benefit of the fans."

That attitude is what's great about Ribeiro and why, despite every part of me cringing at the idea of joker laps in circuit racing, I'm prepared to keep an open mind until the plans come to fruition – if they do at all.

While we shared the last dregs of a beer at the second round of this season in Slovakia, he exuded a great sense

of vindication. His decision to switch the order of the races – with the partially-reversed-grid race taking place first and the 'main' one second on the timetable – had paid off, with entertainment in mind at least.

"Everyone said changing the order of the races wouldn't do anything," he said with a wry smile. "But look: you have close racing, you have Pechito [Lopez] having to come through the pack in race one."

Despite those efforts, there must have been a feeling that he was swimming against the tide. Ribeiro and Eurosport have put so much into improving the appeal of the WTCC over the past 12 months, from rule shake-ups to an overhaul of the series' social-media strategy, but even those appear not to have been able to stabilise the championship in its TC1 era.

Upwards of 25 cars have been built to TC1 regulations, but with Lada's exit the grid would drop to 15 cars for 2017 based on this year's numbers (assuming all of Citroen's privateer cars stay on the grid). Article 15 of the championship's sporting code allows for the cancellation of an event if fewer

than 16 cars are entered – so the next big move, the introduction of a 'WTCC2' class, is necessary.

The addition of TCN2 machinery (built largely to TCR regulations) had been mooted in the weeks before the WMSC meeting

and, while the second class will be significantly slower than TC1 machinery, it could be just the trick to keep the ship afloat.

All of this has been going on against the backdrop of the seemingly relentless rise of the TCR formula. TCR International has had its setbacks – notably its messy announcement of a round on the Monaco Grand Prix support bill that was quickly refuted by the Automobile Club de Monaco – but as a low-cost alternative it's caused quite a stir.

The key positive that the WTCC has in its corner is its (relative) longevity, so if TCN2 (based on the TCR rules) helps to keep the championship going – and at the top of the pecking order – it's a good move for all those concerned.

With the returns to Macau and Monza for 2017 too, it's not all doom and gloom. The Monza comeback is a well-crafted one, scheduled to mark 30 years since the WTCC (in its original guise) held its first race at the Italian circuit.

If the WTCC can find a position for itself over the next three years – those remaining in its current rules cycle – that time could be pivotal to the future health of the championship. I hope it hasn't come too late. 🍀

**"Returns to Macau and Monza mean it's not all doom and gloom"**



# Pictures of the year

Our intrepid photographers capture some incredible moments across the motorsport season. Here's their best work from 2016







### **EVANS' FULL MONTE**

Briton Elfyn Evans navigates part of the Monte Carlo Rally on his first WRC2 start of the year.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY MCKLEIN.DE**



**BRIGHT SAINZ**

Carlos Sainz Jr leaves a trail of sparks behind his Toro Rosso STR11 at the Sepang circuit in preparation for the Malaysian Grand Prix.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM BLOXHAM**



**MERCAGEDDON!**

Team-mates Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton fly into the gravel trap after colliding on lap one in Spain.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY ZAK MAUGER**







#### **YACHT VIEW**

Lewis Hamilton and Daniel Ricciardo exit the tunnel on the way down to the chicane during the Monaco Grand Prix.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM BLOXHAM**



## JUST DESERTS

Phoenix ended a decade-long absence of IndyCar racing when the Arizona track hosted round two of the 2016 season.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT R LePAGE







### 1 ROSSI MILKS IT

Rookie Indianapolis 500 winner Alexander Rossi celebrates with his IndyCar team boss Michael Andretti in Victory Lane after a shock fuel-mileage-inspired success.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL L LEVITT**

### 2 BLAZING SQUAD

Aric Almirola's Ford Fusion goes up in flames during the closing stages of the Atlanta NASCAR Sprint Cup round. The Richard Petty Motorsports driver was classified 15th.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSSELL LaBOUNTY**

### 3 HEARTBREAK AT LE MANS

Kazuki Nakajima is consoled by his Toyota team after the Japanese driver was forced to park the TS050 HYBRID and give up victory on the final lap of the Le Mans 24 Hours.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY ZAK MAUGER**









**MEXICAN MAELSTROM**

On-the-road winner Lucas di Grassi celebrates on the spectacular Mexico City ePrix podium.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM WARNER**



**PRECISION DRIVING**

Alex Lynn flirts with the Monaco barriers in his GP2 machine, but leaves the Armco wanting more.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM BLOXHAM**







### 1 THAT'LL WASH OUT

Sebastien Loeb moved into the World Rallycross Championship this year, and lost none of his spectacular sideways speed.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MCKLEIN.DE

### 2 MAGIC MEEKE

Britain's latest World Rally Championship ace weaves past some rocks on his way to his second WRC win on Rally Portugal.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MCKLEIN.DE

### 3 HAVE YOU SEEN MY FANS?

Valentino Rossi celebrates with a horde of yellow-clad fans of the good doctor after the San Marino Grand Prix at Misano.

PHOTOGRAPH BY YAMAHA











### 1 AS USEFUL AS AN F1 DRIVER'S MIRROR

A Manor mechanic reflects as they reflect the image of Esteban Ocon in Mexican Grand Prix action.

PHOTOGRAPH BY XPB IMAGES

### 2 WILD BOY DORAN COMES UNDONE

Britain's Liam Doran suffers a pretty Hellish roll in his World RX JRM Mini. Norway he came back from that.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MCKLEIN.DE

### 3 MIKKELSEN'S LEAP OF FAITH

Andreas Mikkelsen flies through the Australian air en route to Volkswagen's last WRC victory. For now.

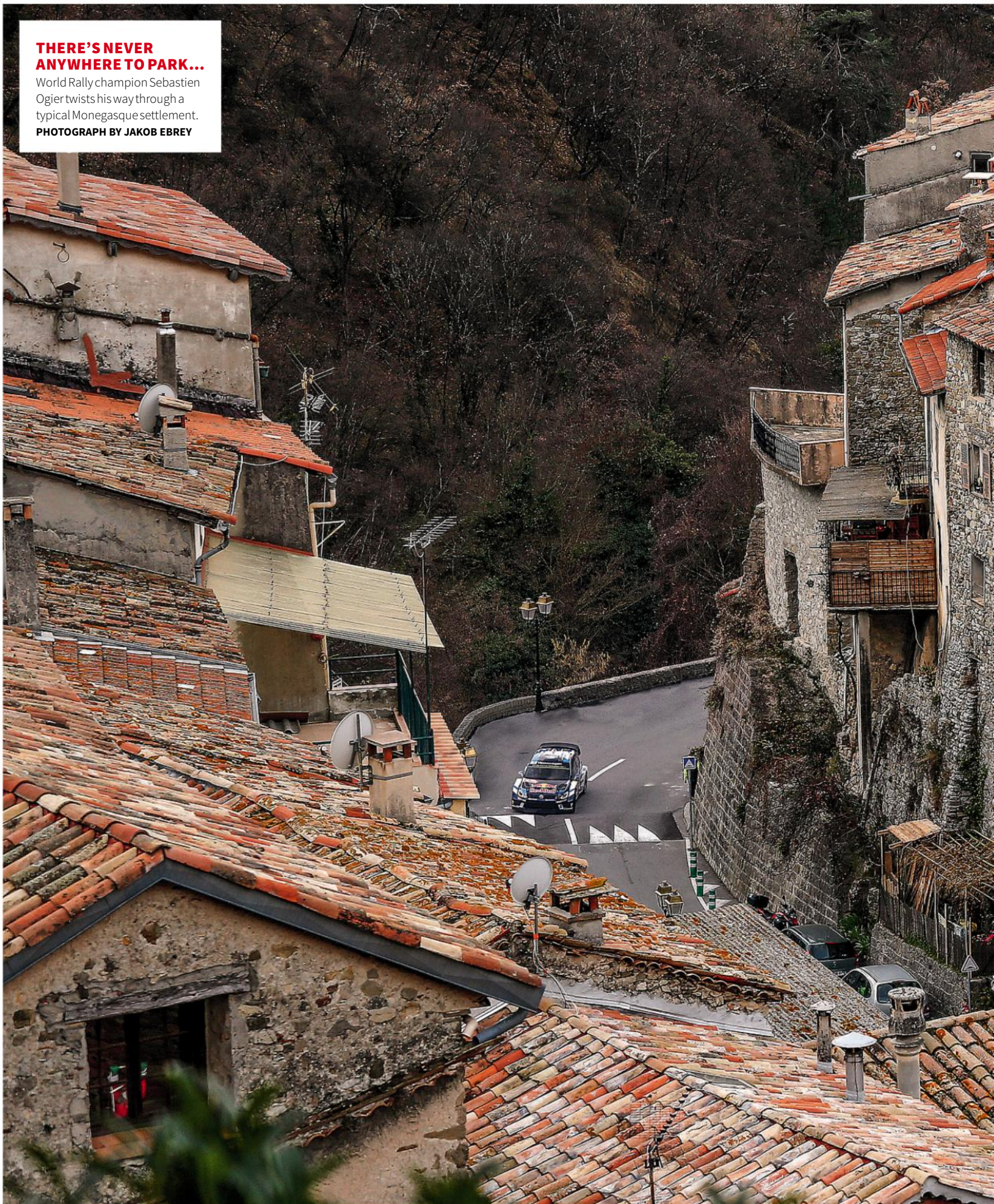
PHOTOGRAPH BY MCKLEIN.DE



**THERE'S NEVER  
ANYWHERE TO PARK...**

World Rally champion Sebastien Ogier twists his way through a typical Monegasque settlement.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY JAKOB EBREY**















### THAT'S A BAAAAAD LINE

Jamie Whincup takes a minor trip off line, much to the displeasure of the grazing bovidae in the background.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL KALISZ



### 1 McLAUGHLIN CUTS LOOSE

Volvo star Scott McLaughlin attacks Pukekohe in the Australian Supercars round. He's never been afraid to give it some jandal.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL KALISZ

### 2 ON THE FRINGES OF FRIJNS

Sebastien Buemi won the 2015/16 Formula E title, but here he gets an overtake on Robin Frijns all wrong in Long Beach.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW FERRARO

### 3 PIQUET THE PYRO

Nelson Piquet Jr's Global Rallycross Ford Fiesta gets a bit hot under the collar at the Washington round.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY CHEN



# Fastest laps of 2016

Winning is all very well, but there's plenty of kudos in being fastest. These guys set the quickest laps in races on each track in the British Isles this year

**Compiled by Marcus Simmons**

Interviews by Jack Cozens, Tom Errington and Scott Mitchell

## SNETTERTON 300

**Ricky Collard:** "I feel like I've really improved this year as a driver; I was always quite fiery and having to come through the field, and this year I made it a little bit easier for myself by qualifying better. I'd say Snetterton was one of my favourite qualifying results. We had an issue with the steering wheel in qualifying and had to come in and reset, then went back out and got pole. That really set me up for the weekend, and was pretty crucial because it's so difficult to overtake there. I was able to get a good start, and the gaps fluctuated a bit, but I'd managed the car enough to just push it towards the end. It's so hard to put a finger on a key point, and if I could we'd do the same every weekend, but we just got the set-up spot on. We focused so hard on getting the weekend right; it's one of our main test tracks, and we race at this circuit twice so it's the most important." *JC*



Collard was on form at Snetterton

EBREY/LAT

## BATTERSEA PARK

When Lucas di Grassi crashed into the rear of Sebastien Buemi at the start of the 2015-16 Formula E season finale, it set up a bizarre fight for the title. With the duo tied on points, and both drivers able to return their damaged cars to the pitlane and get into their second chassis, the race turned into one for fastest lap – and the two points on offer for it. Buemi eventually got it, while di Grassi fell half a second shy. "It's an amazing achievement but I'm so sad the way it happened," said Buemi. "I wanted to win the race – I had the speed. Then with the fastest lap, he waited for me each time I tried to go for it. He was slowing me down. I had to go through the pitlane three or four times just to shake him a little bit. I could not believe it." *SM*

## MONDELLO PARK LONG

**Hywel Lloyd:** "You really have to have your wits about you at Mondello – there weren't many error-free laps. I've got an F3 car that's as current as you can get, and the challenge is that the aero only works at high speed and Mondello has a lot of really low-speed corners. The track is quite a bit narrower than most circuits in the UK – you're in second and third gear an awful lot. The first complex is second gear and you almost drop to first. There's a great left-hand sweeping corner where I was almost flat out onto the next straight. It gets a bit tricky at Turn 3 – it's all about braking and turning at the same time and there's a crest on the exit. In the next few corners the aero kicks in as it gets a bit high-speed and there are some really nice corners at the end. It's a track with a great mix of high-speed and low-speed corners and it's old-school. It's so bumpy too – we had to raise the rideheight to cope but it's so rewarding in an F3 car." *TE*

TRACK, DRIVER AND CAR	TIME	SPEED	DATE
<b>SILVERSTONE GRAND PRIX</b> Nico Rosberg (Mercedes F1 W07 Hybrid)	1m35.548s	137.92mph	July 10
<b>ROCKINGHAM OVAL</b> Paul Tompkins (SHP Pickup-Exon)	40.049s	132.94mph	April 10
<b>SILVERSTONE HISTORIC GRAND PRIX</b> Nathan Kinch (Lola-Judd T92/10)	1m50.875s	118.17mph	July 30
<b>THRUXTON</b> Craig Dolby (Lamborghini Gallardo)	1m13.172s	115.91mph	July 3
<b>DONINGTON PARK NATIONAL</b> Shane Kelly (Dallara-Mugen Honda F308)	1m02.856s	113.34mph	April 24
<b>SILVERSTONE NATIONAL</b> Graham Cole (Jade-Millington Trackstar)	53.016s	111.39mph	May 8
<b>MALLORY PARK</b> Neil Harrison (Dallara-Toyota F302)	44.352s	109.57mph	September 25
<b>BRANDS HATCH GRAND PRIX</b> Nick Padmore (Williams-Ford/Cosworth FW07C)	1m20.133s	109.31mph	May 28
<b>SILVERSTONE INTERNATIONAL</b> Duncan Williams (Juno-Honda CN2012)	1m01.672s	108.04mph	October 15
<b>OULTON PARK INTERNATIONAL</b> Ricky Collard (Tatuus-Cosworth F4-016)	1m30.535s	107.04mph	May 30
<b>CASTLE COMBE</b> Craig Fleming (Juno-Ford/Duratec TR250)	1m02.507s	106.54mph	May 30
<b>DONINGTON PARK GRAND PRIX</b> Martin Stretton (Tyrrell-Ford/Cosworth 012)	1m24.468s	106.01mph	July 3
<b>GOODWOOD</b> Frank Stippler (Ford GT40)	1m21.607s	104.99mph	March 19
<b>OULTON PARK FOSTERS</b> Jason Timms (Dallara-Suzuki F311)	56.861s	104.72mph	March 28
<b>SNETTERTON 300</b> Ricky Collard (Tatuus-Cosworth F4-016)	1m43.884s	102.88mph	August 6
<b>SNETTERTON 200</b> Ben Cater (Dallara-Toyota F301)	1m10.109s	101.87mph	March 19





Lucky Padmore played Alan Jones in FW07 at Brands

## BRANDS HATCH GRAND PRIX

**Nick Padmore:** "Brands Hatch GP is my favourite circuit in the UK, but it was something else in a historic Formula 1 car and just so quick. You're in fifth gear through Paddock Hill Bend and you feel the downforce. You're straight on the throttle into Druids and the dip just hits you with the compression. You just feel the car going down into the Tarmac. It's tricky at Druids though as there's not a lot of mechanical grip. It gets quicker at Graham Hill Bend and Surtees is so exciting – so is the whole GP loop, and you have to get good exits and maintain speed. I think through Hawthorns it's hitting 158mph, and once you're past Surtees it's entirely about full throttle and not stopping the car. The whole lap is about carrying speed as much as you can and the car just wants you to go for it." *TE*

## SILVERSTONE HISTORIC GRAND PRIX

**Nathan Kinch:** "It took a year and a half to rebuild the car, and we'd only had the one race weekend at Dijon, but we knew it would be quick. Qualifying didn't quite go right for us, but we improved from there. The car is just incredible through the fast sections – it does Maggotts and Becketts virtually flat. It might not quite have the grunt on the straights, but it makes back all the time in the corners. You just have incredible downforce thanks to the spoiler and aerodynamics. That straightline-speed deficit is helped by the lag the turbocars have – I used that to get some clear track space. The V10 engine is low and forward in the car too, so it's all set up to get fastest laps, and we didn't have much traffic, which helped, but of course you don't want to go too fast with all the off-track politics!" *TE*



Kinch flew at Silverstone in 1992 Group C Lola


TRACK, DRIVER AND CAR	TIME	SPEED	DATE
<b>BRANDS HATCH INDY</b> Daryl Jones (Dallara-Volkswagen F308)	42.719s	101.79mph	May 15
<b>KIRKISTOWN</b> Jonathan Fildes (Ralt-Mountune RT4)	54.946s	99.061mph	May 28
<b>BISHOPSCOURT</b> Cian Carey (Tatuus-Renault RC00)	1m07.345s	97.50mph	May 8
<b>OULTON PARK ISLAND</b> Jamie Caroline (Mygale-Ford/EcoBoost M14-F4)	1m23.293s	96.20mph	June 4
<b>CADWELL PARK</b> Jason Timms (Dallara-Suzuki F311)	1m22.665s	95.24mph	May 1
<b>ROCKINGHAM INT'L SUPER SPORTSCAR</b> Lando Norris (Tatuus-Cosworth F4-016)	1m13.574s	94.92mph	May 1
<b>CROFT</b> Zane Goddard (Mygale-Ford/EcoBoost M14-F4)	1m20.978s	94.47mph	June 18
<b>KNOCKHILL</b> Luis Leeds (Mygale-Ford/EcoBoost M14-F4)	49.814s	91.56mph	August 14
<b>ROCKINGHAM INT'L LONG</b> Graham Cole (Jade-Millington Trackstar)	1m23.627s	88.24mph	June 12
<b>PEMBREY</b> Keith White (BMW-Vauxhall Z4)	1m00.584s	86.51mph	May 15
<b>ANGLESEY COASTAL</b> Phil Cooper (Radical-Suzuki PR6)	1m05.97s	84.58mph	July 17
<b>MONDELLO PARK LONG</b> Hywel Lloyd (Dallara-Mercedes F308)	1m32.979s	84.28mph	September 17
<b>MONDELLO PARK SHORT</b> Jonathan Fildes (Ralt-Mountune RT4)	51.711s	80.028mph	April 17
<b>ANGLESEY INTERNATIONAL</b> Aaron Head (Caterham-Ford/Duratec R300-S)	1m35.043s	79.54mph	May 8
<b>BATTERSEAPARK</b> Sebastian Buemi (Renault Z.E.15)	1m24.150s	77.75mph	July 3



# Ogier dynamite as the bell tolls for Volkswagen

A fourth World Rally Championship title came in spite of anti-Sebastien Ogier regulations — but 2016 was often overshadowed by off-stage goings-on

By David Evans, Rallies Editor

 @daviddevansrally







**I**t comes as no surprise that Sebastien Ogier provided the lasting image from this season. It's what champions do. But which picture stood out? Was it the winning start in Monte? His first Corsican success? Most likely that fourth title celebration shot in Spain? Actually, none of the above.

The shot that cut to the heart of what Ogier's really about came from a field in Poland. And there wasn't a car in sight. But there was an Estonian on his shoulders. When Ott Tanak missed out on the win that was supposed to be his, he crossed the finish line and sought shelter from the television cameras and iPhones following him.

Ogier wasn't having that. Even though his Volkswagen team-mate Andreas Mikkelsen won the event, Tanak was the real hero. And Ogier wanted the world to know. That moment offered a different take on Ogier. His warmth towards a rival so bereft at losing his first WRC win demonstrated a generous and genuine side to his nature.

There's never been any doubting the steel that runs through Ogier — he's competitive to the very core. And the emotion that accompanies such dedication lay bare on occasion this season. Like on Saturday night in Argentina, when he and Hayden Paddon almost came to blows in full view of the spectators in the Villa Carlos Paz service park. This season has been a toughie for the Frenchman, or as tough as a season's ever going to get for a well-paid world champion in the fastest car.

His problem? Point 45.2 of the general principles of the 2016 World Rally Championship Sporting Regulations. Or, to be more precise, the passage that ought to have been labelled 'Slow Ogier

Down'. SOD summarises the governing body's notion that a championship leader running first on the road for two days would undoubtedly mean a more interesting and closer title race.

How did that work out? Oh yeah, Ogier won with two rounds to spare...

From the moment the decision was announced last year, Ogier was vehemently against it. Victory, he reasoned, for the driver first down the road in places like Mexico, Sardinia and Australia would be impossible. And so it turned out.

For an astonishing run of six rallies in the early to middle of the season — from Sweden in February right through to Poland at the start of July — we had a different winner on each event.

SOD certainly delivered the sort of unpredictability promoters dream of. Trouble is, the teams and drivers at the front of the field hate unpredictability. By its very nature it can't be controlled. And that, for them, is a bad thing.

Regularly criticised by his colleagues for bemoaning the situation, all Ogier was after was a level playing field. Instead, the dice were constantly loaded against him on gravel roads the world over. The only time he stood a chance on the loose was in Wales, where the usually damp conditions favour being first in. Predictably he celebrated his sole gravel success on Llandudno seafront.

There was little sympathy for Ogier. Any effort to establish a defence of his position would be greeted with 'If he doesn't like it, slow down and let somebody else lead the championship'; or 'It can't be that bad, he's still leading'; or 'Can't he see how good it is to have other people winning?'

He couldn't. Instead, he was disappointed at his rivals' apparent comfort in winning a contest that was, to his mind, so skewed. >>



## Monte Carlo Rally

- 1 Sebastien Ogier
- 2 Andreas Mikkelsen
- 3 Thierry Neuville

Ogier and Kris Meeke race each other through the Alps for a day and a bit, until a rock rips a hole in the bottom of the DS 3. Ogier comfortably heads home Mikkelsen, who edges Neuville in a final-day fight.



## Rally Sweden

- 1 Sebastien Ogier
  - 2 Hayden Paddon
  - 3 Mads Ostberg
- Ogier and Meeke make the early running again, until another rock rules out the DS 3. Ogier then fights heavy snow and an impressive Paddon to score two from two. Ostberg takes his first podium since returning to M-Sport in third.

## Rally Mexico

- 1 Jari-Matti Latvala
- 2 Sebastien Ogier
- 3 Mads Ostberg

Not even Ogier can overcome the disadvantage of running first on the road for the first two days — he finishes a minute behind team-mate and winner Latvala. Ostberg scores a second podium after Dani Sordo's brakes wilt.



## Rally Argentina

- 1 Hayden Paddon
  - 2 Sebastien Ogier
  - 3 Andreas Mikkelsen
- Paddon enjoys a preferable place on the road for the first two days, but just 2.4 seconds splits him and Ogier going into the rally's final test and the Hyundai holds firm. Mikkelsen defeats Sordo for the final podium spot.

## Rally Portugal

- 1 Kris Meeke
- 2 Andreas Mikkelsen
- 3 Sebastien Ogier

Meeke returns from two rallies off to dominate, building a minute-strong lead by the mid-point then controlling things perfectly. Ogier drops behind Mikkelsen with a puncture on the final day.



## Rally Italy Sardinia

- 1 Thierry Neuville
  - 2 Jari-Matti Latvala
  - 3 Sebastien Ogier
- Neuville and Latvala battle early on, but the VW settles for second place as a delighted Neuville claims Hyundai's second win from three rallies. Ogier is a distant third, but extends his championship lead on the Italian island.



Ogier and co-driver  
Julien Ingrassia  
celebrate a fourth  
straight title after  
winning in Spain



## Rally Poland

**1 Andreas Mikkelsen**

**2 Ott Tanak**

**3 Hayden Paddon**

Tanak drives superbly to lead after two days, but is cruelly robbed of his maiden WRC win by a final-day puncture. That hands the win to Mikkelsen, the sixth different winner in as many rallies. Paddon beats Neuville to third.



## Rally Finland

**1 Kris Meeke**

**2 Jari-Matti Latvala**

**3 Craig Breen**

Meeke makes history with a first British win on the world's fastest rally. Latvala offers little in the way of defence of local honour, driving for points after a rare mistake puts Ogier off the road. Breen turns in an inspired drive to clinch third.

## Rally Germany

**1 Sebastien Ogier**

**2 Dani Sordo**

**3 Thierry Neuville**

After six rallies off the podium's top step, Ogier is back in charge for VW's home event in Germany. He is too strong for the flying Hyundais and leads Sordo home with Neuville just a tenth of a second behind.



## Tour of Corsica

**1 Sebastien Ogier**

**2 Thierry Neuville**

**3 Andreas Mikkelsen**

Ogier scores his first WRC win on the French island to move within touching distance of a fourth title. Meeke hustles him early on, but drops back with a puncture. Neuville drives well to split the VWs.

## Rally of Spain

**1 Sebastien Ogier**

**2 Dani Sordo**

**3 Thierry Neuville**

Ogier is crowned world champion for the fourth time after elbowing his way past Spanish star and fan favourite Sordo once the event moves to asphalt on the second day. Neuville beats Mikkelsen to third after the latter crashes heavily.



## Rally GB

**1 Sebastien Ogier**

**2 Ott Tanak**

**3 Thierry Neuville**

Ogier dominates the final European round of the season. Tanak threatens to take it to the wire, but a puncture and damper conditions than predicted mean he can't take advantage of dynamite DMACKs. Neuville is on the podium yet again.

## Rally Australia

**1 Andreas Mikkelsen**

**2 Sebastien Ogier**

**3 Thierry Neuville**

Mikkelsen and Ogier go head-to-head, and a final-day spin from the champion gives his team-mate an emotional last victory for VW. Neuville edges early leader Paddon for third after the Kiwi also makes a last-day error.







## THE WRC'S DREAMS WILL SOON BE REALITY

THIRTY YEARS AGO THE WORLD RALLY Championship took an enormous step backwards in terms of performance, passion, poise and appeal; Group B to Group A was a regulatory shift made with furrowed brows. Next season, it's back to Group B.

At least that's the philosophy. In 2017, World Rally Cars will be wider, wilder, faster and more visibly furious than ever before.

Oh, and they'll be a good bit noisier and look less like each other. Great chunks of 2016 have been lost to YouTube as the WRC collectively huddled around laptops across the world, watching what Tommi Makinen had dreamed up for his Toyota or what #Test7 meant for Citroën's C3 WRC.

And then there was that ferocious footage of Marcus Gronholm invading Finnish airspace as he sent Volkswagen's Polo ballistic over jump after jump.

Three decades ago, rally watchers feared the humdrum, mundane and dull Delta HF 4WD that lined up at the start of the 1987 Monte Carlo Rally. Just a month or so before, Markku Alen had pedalled a Delta S4 to Olympus Rally victory in a spectacular supercar swansong. Lancias both, but only in name. It's the other direction this time around – the good times and great cars are ready to rock the championship again.

Undoubtedly, by the time the Monte arrives you'll be fed up to the back teeth with references to the return of Group B – but the WRC genuinely has that sense of adventure about it. Only this time we'll be going back without deathtrap cars guided by drivers perched on fuel tanks – and

fuel tanks loaded with Avgas.

At the time of writing, Volkswagen's Polo R WRC may not see the light of day if a privately financed deal to run the cars can't be agreed in time – a tragedy having plotted the development course of a worthy successor to the version that has just won four straight makes' races.

But the others will more than make up for it. M-Sport's Ford Fiesta RS WRC looks stunning, while Toyota's Yaris WRC comes complete with some of the wildest-looking aero in years. The Citroën's pre-season testing pace is shocking – even from the outside the speed of the car forces a mental step back – and Hyundai's i20 WRC will be the biggest evolution yet of what has become one of the service park's most potent servants.

We're in for a treat from round one forwards.

On top of the new-spec cars up front, there will be additional category changes to the Junior WRC and the all-new FIA WRC Trophy, which should bring out some of the world's quickest privateers in 2016 World Rally Cars. Retaining the confusing and borderline-pointless WRC3 category for R2 cars shows the FIA hasn't lost its ability for questionable calls.

And then there's a big push coming from DMACK. Last year we saw the Cumbrian-cooked covers showing Michelin a clean pair of heels in places like Poland and Finland. For next season, it's going to be Elfyn Evans driving the DMACK Ford Fiesta RS WRC, but he'll be doing it with tyres apparently more capable than ever of challenging across the spread of a season.

It's been a while since we had a tyre war in the WRC. War might be stretching the point, but there's certainly going to be a scuffle or two.



SOD's off for next season, when the championship leader will only have to start at the front on day one.

Talking to Ogier about that in Australia, he smiled: "That's the only piece of good news – not that it makes much difference now I don't have a car!"

Such was Ogier's disquiet, at SOD's mid-season peak, that there were those – including his then team principal, Jost Capito – who admitted they could see him walking away if change didn't come for next year.

The potential for a disillusioned and disaffected world champion turning his back on the WRC was, predictably, a fairly sizeable news story that bubbled under for much of 2016. Ultimately, it was trumped – by the news that Ogier's employer would be the one walking away.

Volkswagen's departure from the world championship was as shocking and surprising as it was entirely unsurprising and not shocking in any way, shape or form. As the bill for potential litigation over the VW road-car emissions scandal built towards the billions, how could the firm's WRC programme be expected to survive? Especially after Audi canned its Le Mans effort. Seven days later Volkswagen Motorsport's full-time four-year tenure in the WRC was done.

But still, when Wolfsburg actually communicated the boardroom decision it stopped you in your tracks. The decision was bad enough, but the fact that the vast majority of the team found out via the internet did little to soften the blow.

The Volkswagen-Ogier partnership is the yardstick by which everything in the world championship has been measured for the last four years. And everything has come up short. The only thing capable of undoing this most successful of joint ventures was the German







Meeke (left) and Neuville (above) were among the victors as the non-VW brigade had several moments in the spotlight



## “Everything has come up short against the Volkswagen-Ogier partnership for four years”

manufacturer's own answer to customer-pleasing diesel emissions. When the wider automotive industry goes through the gears, you soon realise just what a minuscule part rallying plays.

If there is comfort to be taken from Volkswagen's departure, it comes in the knowledge that the WRC did nothing wrong. Quite the opposite, actually. WRC Promoter looks to have taken the lead and built on foundations laid in Hannover, when Volkswagen appeared to take on the role of promoter as well as speed standard-

bearer in its early days in the series.

WRC's television offering has improved considerably over the past 12 months. The arrival of new blood in the shape of content director Florian Ruth, a man who'd previously spent much of his time overseeing the production of some epic Red Bull Media House films, has helped bring a fresher feel. There's still work to do, but the programmes are eminently more watchable than they have been in the recent past.

While the TV product continues to improve, the promoter has yet to find

the perfect balance for the calendar. This world championship remains on one continent for 10 of its 13 rounds. The Americas are covered with Mexico and Argentina, but the Far East remains far away. China came close to its first world championship action since 1999, but ultimately the Huairou-based event was binned. Official reason? Storm-damaged roads, but there are plenty around the service park who question whether the event was ever genuinely capable of running – a consideration strengthened in some part by the rally's absence from the 2017 calendar.

It could be back in 2018, but then again it could well have been overtaken by any number of rival events coming to the fore in the Asia-Pacific region. New Zealand, Japan and Korea are all coming to the boil.

And what of the European rounds? Sweden came closer than ever to being cancelled in February – freezing conditions and snow arrived at the 11th hour to save the event. Again. A move north to Torsby is reckoned to be the answer for next season. We'll see.

Island events Corsica and Sardinia appear to have both had new life breathed into them, while lingering doubts over the commercial viability of Poland – following the loss of its principal sponsor – and some concerns over certain aspects of spectator safety look to have been solved for another season. Mikolajki's back again in 2017.

Otherwise, the events worked well. Moving Corsica to April frees up a horrible logjam in October. But many still question the sense in shifting Australia to the final round. This year's world championship came to its conclusion while Europe slept soundly; without being hemisphere-ist, would >>



that be the best plan if we were in the middle of a massive four-way fight for the title? Many (most) think not.

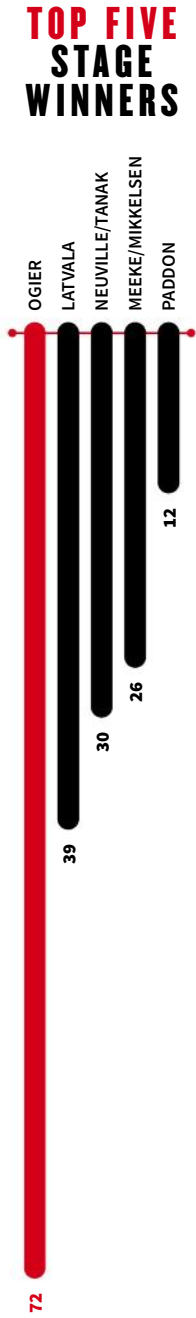
But were we ever in line for a four-way fight for the title? Not a hope this year. Running-order regulations aside, Ogier and Volkswagen were just too far ahead of anybody else for the direction of the drivers' and manufacturers' titles to be called into question. Even when he was having a bad day, the champ was still able to bag points and extend his advantage at the top of the table.

Once again, his team-mate Jari-Matti Latvala should have been his closest competition, but this was the year from hell for the Finn, culminating with his worst ever championship position as a professional driver. And the irony is, this time it really wasn't all Latvala's fault. On the back foot from Monte Carlo onwards – remember his incident when he hit a fan in the French Alps – he suffered transmission and suspension problems on more than one occasion. And when the Polo was working, his confidence was so shot that he struggled to drive with anything like the verve he usually possesses.

The low point for Latvala was his submission to Kris Meeke at home in Finland. J-ML had no answer to the Northern Irishman's spellbinding pace at the WRC's annual summer speedfest. And neither did he look for one.

Such was Ogier's superiority in the Polo that adding Latvala's end-of-season tally to that of third VW driver Andreas Mikkelsen still didn't top the champion's total of 268 points.

Hyundai's resurgent Belgian Thierry Neuville stole second from Mikkelsen after the Norwegian crashed in Spain. The runner-up spot was decent reward for a driver coming back from the brink and a team demonstrating continued improvement through 2016. The i20 WRC was still lacking rear-end grip, but



The season was a tough one for Ostberg and the M-Sport Fiestas

it's a major step on from where it was. M-Sport's challenge was blunted by a troublesome season for Mads Ostberg, who was simply unable to get as comfortable in the Fiesta as he had once been. The Cumbrian team's hopes of a starring role in the manufacturers' championship were lost to a development season for Eric Camilli. The selection of the Frenchman ahead of Elfyn Evans was a controversial one 12 months ago, and it became increasingly hard to defend as the year unfolded and Camilli lurched from one crash to the next. Citroen's decision to suspend its WRC programme for a year wasn't the best start to the season – even if it committed to fielding a PH Sport-run Abu Dhabi-backed DS 3 WRC on a selected schedule. In reality, the DS 3's not the car it once was. Missing the development required – especially in terms of suspension, with the dampers' lineage traced back to the

Xsara – the car was rarely going to pose a threat to Volkswagen's machine. Meeke's win in Portugal was helped no end by his position on the road, but in Finland it was quite different; faster stages don't clean in the same way. Meeke was inspired in Jyväskylä, as was his brilliant team-mate Craig Breen, who finished third. At times this season it was hard to focus on the here and now, such was the intrigue and interest in what lingers around the corner with 2017 and its next-generation World Rally Cars. The season's end was, of course, blighted by news of Volkswagen's demise. That will undoubtedly enhance the competition in the new year, but it will also cheapen the prize slightly. If a manufacturer has to go, going out on the back of four titles in four years is the way to do it. And 2016 should be remembered as Volkswagen's crowning glory. 🏆

RESULTS																
POS	DRIVER	TEAM	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
1	Sebastien Ogier (F)	Volkswagen Motorsport	Volkswagen Polo RWRC	1	1	2	2	3	3	6	24	1	1	1	1	268
2	Thierry Neuville (B)	Hyundai Motorsport	Hyundai i20 WRC	3	14	DNF	6	29	1	4	4	3	2	3	3	160
3	Andreas Mikkelsen (N)	Volkswagen Motorsport II	Volkswagen Polo RWRC	2	4	DNF	3	2	13	1	7	4	3	DNF	12	154
4	Hayden Paddon (NZ)	Hyundai Motorsport	Hyundai i20 WRC	25	2	5	1	DNF	DNF	3	5	5	6	4	4	138
5	Dani Sordo (E)	Hyundai Motorsport N	Hyundai i20 WRC	6	6	4	4	4	4	DNF	-	2	7	2	6	130
6	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN)	Volkswagen Motorsport	Volkswagen Polo RWRC	DNF	26	1	16	6	2	5	2	48	4	14	7	112
7	Mads Ostberg (N)	M-Sport WRT	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	4	3	3	5	7	DNF	8	6	6	9	5	8	102
8	Ott Tanak (EST)	DMACK World Rally Team	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	7	5	6	15	DNF	5	2	DNF	23	10	6	2	88
9	Kris Meeke (GB)	Abu Dhabi Total WRT	Citroen DS 3 WRC	DNF	23	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	16	DNF	5	64
10	Craig Breen (IRL)	Abu Dhabi Total WRT	Citroen DS 3 WRC	-	8	-	-	-	-	7	3	-	5	10	DNF	36

11 Eric Camilli (M-Sport WRT Ford Fiesta RS WRC) 28; 12 Esapekka Lappi (Skoda Motorsport Skoda Fabia R5) 16; 13 Stephane Lefebvre (Abu Dhabi Total WRT Citroen DS 3 WRC) 14; 14 Henning Solberg (M-Sport WRT Ford Fiesta R5) 14; 15 Martin Prokop (Jipocar Czech National Team Ford Fiesta RS WRC) 12; 16 Kevin Abbring (Hyundai Motorsport N Hyundai i20 R5) 10; 17 Pontus Tidemand (Skoda Motorsport II Skoda Fabia R5) 8; 18 Teemu Suninen (Team Oreca Skoda Fabia R5) 8; 19 Jan Kopecky (Skoda Motorsport Skoda Fabia R5) 7; 20 Elfyn Evans (M-Sport WRT Ford Fiesta R5) 6; 21 Marcos Ligato (Citroen DS 3 WRC) 6; 22 Lorenzo Bertelli (FWRT Ford Fiesta RS WRC) 5; 23 Armin Kremer (BRR Baumschlagler Rallye & Racing Team Skoda Fabia R5) 2; 24 Nicolas Fuchs (Skoda Fabia R5) 2; 25 Valeriy Gorbun (Eurolamp WRT Mini John Cooper Works WRC) 1.



## AUTOSPORT'S TOP 10 DRIVERS



### 1 SEBASTIEN OGIER

We witnessed the full gamut of emotions from the champion this year. Anybody who thought they'd seen Ogier frustrated before 2016 was forced into a rethink in the middle of the year. His stock line was: "I am happy with my drive." And that was about all he could say. Bitterly opposed to the running-order rule change that left him first on the road every Friday and Saturday, he overcame it with some staggering performances on roads that should have beaten him. Across the spread of the season, the Ogier-Polo combination was untouchable.



### 2 KRIS MEEKE

Becoming the first British winner in Finland is something Meeke will never forget, but there was so much more to this season. With a three-year deal in his pocket, everything clicked for him this season. Genuinely unlucky on the first two rounds, Meeke won the next two and then collected more valuable experience towards the end of the year. When Meeke was around, Ogier always had a genuine competitor. All the more impressive when you consider he was driving a private, year-old car with no development.



### 3 OTT TANAK

Is third a bit high for a driver who only scored two podiums and no wins in a season featuring the most victors since 2001? No. At times Tanak's speed was breathtaking. Some point to fairly specific tyres from DMACK, offering the Estonian an edge on certain stages. But that's harsh. And the DMACKs were often as much a hindrance as a help. Regardless, Tanak still had to guide his Fiesta RS WRC between the trees and he did that at some speed in Poland, Finland and Wales. There's still work to do on asphalt, but he's fast becoming the real deal.



### 4 THIERRY NEUVILLE

Probably the most improved driver in the past 12 months – which sounds strange for a guy who's been around the WRC service park for so many years. Not only is that a reflection on how well he's driven this season, it's also a timely reminder of just how bad he was in 2015. Appears to have found the plot again and a safe and speedy win in Sardinia helped rebuild that confidence. Since the summer he's gone from strength to strength, bringing his year to a close with a succession of podiums demonstrating the full-time return to the speed and consistency he's capable of.



### 5 ANDREAS MIKKELSEN

In years gone by Mikkelsen has shown a massive turn of speed, the kind even Ogier would struggle to pull from a Polo. There wasn't so much of that in the first half of the year and, frustratingly, he spent much of the second half in a title-fight mentality when, in reality, there wasn't really that much of a fight (apart from the race for second, which isn't really a race, is it...). His Poland win had the look of a season highlight, until he got to Australia and did a serious number on Ogier. He was inspired and delivered the drive of a champion.



### 6 HAYDEN PADDON

Shone in Sweden, where Paddon belied his lack of experience on snow (even if there wasn't much to start with) to hassle Ogier until the final day. Two rounds later he was showing the world champion the way home over the legendary El Condor stage to beat him to Rally Argentina victory. A fiery crash in Portugal forced the team to build him a brand new i20 for Sardinia, which he crashed as well. Afterwards, he was a close third in Poland, struggled a bit on asphalt, but learned plenty and got quicker. Genuine contender next season.



### 7 CRAIG BREEN

Before the start of this season Breen had never driven a factory World Rally Car in his career. Yes, yes, I know the DS 3 was run by PH Sport, but it was as good as a works car – admittedly one lacking recent development. Breen took to it like a duck to water. A solid eighth in Sweden, he showed genuine pace in Poland then stunned the world with third in Finland. And he deserved it. He took his maiden WRC podium on the fastest and toughest stage of the series. Then there was pace aplenty on asphalt, enough to land him a proper job for next season.



### 8 ESAPEKKA LAPPI

The rest of the WRC2 pack stole the march on Lappi, who sat out much of the first half of the season. But his fightback began with a repeat of his Finland class win of last year and continued with victories in Germany and Wales – both of which were arguably the most impressive aspects of his season. A Finnish victory on asphalt is always good news for a nation comparatively starved of black-top wins in rallying, while his Welsh debut was sublime. He whacked the Skoda Fabia off a tree on the opener, but never looked like losing afterwards. Took the WRC2 title last time out in Australia.



### 9 JARI-MATTI LATVALA

Quite horrendous season for Latvala – by his own admission it was worse than the lowest of low times at Ford. And they were pretty low. It's fair to say Latvala has suffered more mechanical issues than any of his teammates this year: driveshaft in Sweden and Wales, suspension in Argentina (admittedly, he did give it a whack), powersteering in Portugal and gearbox in Germany. Where the car didn't let him down, he let himself down. Utterly devoid of confidence, J-ML was a shadow of the driver we've seen in the past; losing Finland was a particular low point.



### 10 ELFFYN EVANS

Started the season with two points to prove. Malcolm Wilson wanted Evans to show the world a Ford Fiesta R5 remains more than a match for a Skoda Fabia R5. Box ticked. Evans wanted to prove his worth to Wilson. Another box ticked. Were it not for a dodgy fuel-pressure sensor in South America, Evans would have won the WRC2 title. Showed the kind of fighting spirit needed at the sport's highest level and will open the door of a 2017 World Rally Car as a more complete driver. Teemu Suninen was also brilliant this year, and if this was a top 11...



# RACECENTRE

## 2016 REVIEW • SEPANG 12 HOURS • V8 STOCK CAR



DTM

## Wittmann holds cha

THE CHAMPIONSHIP'S MOST EXCITING driver, with more wins than anyone else in 2016, faced a tough task in the final race, but the destiny of the title was as much in the hands of others as himself. He had to win, and hope that his super-consistent German rival – with very few mistakes during an impeccable campaign – was shuffled down the order by others.

Forget Abu Dhabi and Formula 1 – this was the Hockenheim finale of the DTM. The packed Sachsenring grandstand roared the wildly popular Edoardo Mortara on as he blazed his Audi from a lowly grid position into the lead, but the 17-point advantage of Marco Wittmann was too much to overcome, especially when the 2014 champion had a bevy of BMWs to protect him as he ended a nervous race to claim title number two.

It was classic DTM: spikes of ferocious and thrilling racing; periods of tense strategic manoeuvring. Despite BMW's pre-season break from the rulemakers in response to its disappointing 2015, it's difficult to argue against Wittmann – run once again by RMG – being a deserving double champion.

Audi's Jamie Green – an outside title contender going into the final weekend, and who finally finished third in the points – likens DTM to playing for a football team, where the strategy of each manufacturer's eight drivers is motivated by the desire to put its best title hope into the most advantageous position. If you compare the qualifying times of each driver from the 17 dry sessions against their manufacturer stablemates, with the fastest of each make being 100%, then across those 17 sessions Wittmann has an incredible season average of 100.093% among the BMW drivers, with the next best Munich man the impressive Tom Blomqvist on 100.257%. In a series where the median average of the entire grid in qualifying was 0.934 seconds, that can mean a difference of several places on the grid. So, easy for BMW to support Wittmann.

Compare with Audi, where Mortara (100.145%) edged Green (100.155), with Mattias Ekström (100.244) close at hand – much harder for Ingolstadt to put its eggs into one driver's basket.

Over at Mercedes, it was a tough season with the new-shape bodywork on the C63, the





Wittmann leads next-best BMW man Blomqvist

# rging Mortara

knock-on effect of developing new aero creating inconsistency. Robert Wickens (who like Wittmann was clearly ahead of his stablemates — a 100.183% qualifying average against the other Mercedes drivers) moved into title contention with two wins in a strong mid-season, but the Canadian's year faded badly with just six points from the final three weekends.

Wickens clung on to fourth in the points from team-mate Paul di Resta, who grabbed a podium in the Hockenheim finale to add to his win at the same venue at the start of the year. Di Resta and Blomqvist both overhauled Ekstrom, who was absent from the final round to cement his World Rallycross title.

As usual in a series with such incredible quality throughout the field, there were others who had their days in the sun to win: for Audi, Miguel Molina took two victories and Nico Muller one; the entertaining Timo Glock triumphed for BMW; and Lucas Auer scored for Merc.

## POINTS

**1 Marco Wittmann (BMW M4 DTM) 206;** 2 Edoardo Mortara (Audi RS5 DTM) 202; 3 Jamie Green (Audi) 145; 4 Robert Wickens (Mercedes C63 DTM) 124; 5 Paul di Resta (Mercedes) 116; 6 Tom Blomqvist (BMW) 113; 7 Mattias Ekstrom (Audi) 107; 8 Maxime Martin (BMW) 90; 9 Nico Muller (Audi) 88; 10 Timo Glock (BMW) 84.

## TCR INTERNATIONAL

# Comini's Golf at the final tee

AFTER AN INAUGURAL SEASON that relied heavily upon SEAT's one-make Leon Eurocup racer, TCR snowballed in 2016, but the identity of the champion remained the same. Stefano Comini had used a Target Competition-run SEAT to claim honours in 2015, and a move to the Leopard Racing team — run by Audi GT3 powerhouse WRT — and the new built-for-TCR Volkswagen Golf GTI failed to prevent the bearded Swiss-Italian from making it two in a row.

Leopard signed not only Comini, but also rapid-and-versatile Frenchman Jean-Karl Vernay to complete the best driver line-up TCR has yet seen. But it was far from easy for them...

Craft Bamboo Racing retained Pepe Oriola and took on former BTCC racer James Nash, and both were in title contention right up until the Macau finale in their SEAT Leon TCRs. The consistent Nash won only twice — to the four victories of Oriola — but led the points into the last round, only to be eliminated from the first race by an apologetic Mato Homola. All Comini had to do from pole was finish ahead of the back-of-the-grid Nash in the sequel to wrap up the title.

Slovak Homola was the best of a trio of rapid Eastern Europeans driving SEATs for Hungarian team B3 Racing, the ETCC convert taking fifth in the points.

Gianni Morbidelli led the way in the points for West Coast Racing's Hondas, while Mikhail Grachev, Kevin Gleason and Macau guest Tiago Monteiro also won races with the Swedish squad.

## POINTS

**1 Stefano Comini (Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR) 267.5;** 2 James Nash (SEAT Leon TCR) 264; 3 Jean-Karl Vernay (WV) 246; 4 Pepe Oriola (SEAT) 241.5; 5 Mato Homola (SEAT) 175; 6 Gianni Morbidelli (Honda Civic TCR) 174; 7 Dusan Borkovic (SEAT) 173; 8 Mikhail Grachev (Honda) 145; 9 Sergey Afanasiev (SEAT) 141; 10 Davit Kajaia (VW) 80.



Comini at the 'other' Bus Stop (Macau, not Spa)

## THE CHAMPIONS



### JAPANESE FORMULA 3

Kenta Yamashita



### EUROFORMULA OPEN

Leonardo Pulcini



### GERMAN FORMULA 4

Joey Mawson



### ITALIAN FORMULA 4

Marcos Siebert



### SMP & SPANISH FORMULA 4

Richard Verschoor



### JAPANESE FORMULA 4

Ritomo Miyata



### US FORMULA 4

Cameron Das





## Cameron and Curran crowned

THE INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SPORTS Association's sportscar championship underwent some subtle changes in its third season, including a new title sponsor in WeatherTech and the introduction of FIA GT3 specifications to its entry-level GT Daytona class. The enhancements led to another step forward in terms of its popularity and competitiveness. Crowds increased at the majority of its high-quality venues, and once again the principal championship honours for Prototype and GT Le Mans cars remained undecided until the closing stages of the final race.

In the swansong for the Daytona Prototypes prior to their replacement by a new DPi-and-LMP2 category in 2017, three Chevy-powered pairings remained in contention for the traditional Petit Le Mans finale at Road Atlanta. Dane Cameron and Eric Curran held a solitary one-point lead over their more celebrated Action Express Coyote Corvette team-mates (and two-time reigning champions) Joao Barbosa and Christian Fittipaldi, while brothers Ricky and Jordan Taylor were just six points further adrift and with momentum

on their side after guiding their father Wayne's Dallara Corvette to victory in the previous race at Austin.

All three cars held the advantage at one time or another and, while they were upstaged overall by the Michael Shank Racing Ligier-Honda of Olivier Pla, Ozz Negri and John Pew – who secured a narrow triumph over the similar JSP2 of Pipo Derani, Scott Sharp and Johannes van Overbeek – ultimately it was the underrated Cameron and steady Curran who avenged an agonising defeat in 2015 to emerge as worthy champions.

GTLM continued to provide spectacular action. Surprisingly, the latest breed of cars, which featured significantly more downforce, didn't prove to be much faster than their predecessors, but that didn't matter one iota as attention was focused on a classic Chevy v Ford (v Porsche v Ferrari v BMW) battle for supremacy.

Even though Chip Ganassi Racing's potent and purposeful new Ford GT came on strong after a historic and triumphant visit to Le Mans, the redoubtable Corvette team already held a handy advantage

thanks to an impressive double victory at the iconic Daytona and Sebring endurance races by Oliver Gavin, Tommy Milner and visiting Audi regular Marcel Fassler. Later wins for Gavin/Milner at Lime Rock and Road America meant they required just a solid finish at Road Atlanta to clinch a well-deserved title over the leading Ford pair Richard Westbrook and Ryan Briscoe.

The PC category ended with Dutchman Renger van der Zande and Venezuelan Alex Popow claiming the title for Starworks Motorsport on a tiebreak by four wins to three over PR1/Mathiasen pairing Tom Kimber-Smith and Robert Alon.

Meanwhile in GTD, Denmark's Christina Nielsen and Italian Alessandro Balzan put in a stellar campaign in their Scuderia Corsa Ferrari 488 GT3. Their consistency proved decisive during a fascinating season in which Audi secured the GTD manufacturers crown, while representatives from Porsche, Dodge SRT, BMW and newcomer Lamborghini also claimed race wins.

**JEREMY SHAW**

### POINTS

**1 Dane Cameron/Eric Curran (Coyote Corvette DP) 314;** 2 Joao Barbosa/Christian Fittipaldi (Coyote Corvette) 311; 3 Jordan Taylor/Ricky Taylor (Dallara Corvette DP) 309; 4 Oswaldo Negri (Ligier-Honda JSP2) 282; 5 Marc Goossens (Coyote Corvette) 273; 6 Tom Long/Joel Miller (Lola-Mazda B12/80) 258.

**GTLM 1 Oliver Gavin/Tommy Milner**

**(Chevrolet Corvette C7.R) 345;** 2 Richard Westbrook/Ryan Briscoe (Ford GT) 328; 3 Jan Magnussen/Antonio Garcia (Chevy) 319; 4 Earl Bamber/Frederic Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR) 313; 5 Toni Vilander/Giancarlo Fisichella (Ferrari 488 GTE) 305; 6 Dirk Muller/Joey Hand (Ford) 301. **PC 1 Renger van der Zande/Alex Popow 355;** 2 Tom Kimber-Smith/Robert Alon 355; 3 Stephen Simpson/Misha Goikhberg 317. **GTD 1 Alessandro Balzan/Christina Nielsen (Ferrari 488 GT3) 332;** 2 Jeroen Bleekemolen/Ben Keating (Dodge Viper GT3-R) 303; 3 Bryan Sellers/Madison Snow (Lamborghini Huracan GT3) 293.

### PORSCHE SUPERCUP

## Porsche junior has a Svensational Supercup season

SVEN MULLER HAS GOOD REASON to thank a Porsche fuel pump. Not the one that helped to propel his Lechner Racing 911 to Supercup glory and promotion to Porsche's GTE ranks for 2017, but the one that effectively cost fellow Porsche Junior Matteo Cairoli the title by failing while in the lead in the penultimate race at Austin.

They were embroiled in a duel for the crown from the start, with Cairoli dominating at Barcelona and in Monaco before Muller went on a run of three consecutive victories at the Red Bull

Ring, Silverstone and the Hungaroring. The Hungary victory was particularly significant, as Cairoli's bad start meant he finished only seventh (although this was nothing compared to the damage his hopes would have sustained had his exclusion from second in Austria for being underweight not been overturned on appeal), while title outsider Mathieu Jaminet bounced off a kerb on the run to the first corner and triggered an accident that left him pointless, and relegated on the grid for the following race.

Muller would have made it four in a

row had he not been rightly penalised for passing Cairoli outside of track limits at Hockenheim and relegated to second.

Jaminet won three of the final four races, but it was too little too late. Muller went into the season-ending Austin double-header two points clear and, once Cairoli had retired in race one, needed a point in the last race to guarantee the title. A conservative eighth was sufficient.

Muller also won the German Carrera Cup for Konrad Motorsport, winning 10 times to beat Christian Engelhart, with new Porsche junior Dennis Olsen third.

### POINTS

**1 Sven Muller 162;** 2 Matteo Cairoli 151; 3 Mathieu Jaminet 146; 4 Michael Ammermuller 129; 5 Robert Lukas 118; 6 Jeffrey Schmidt 114; 7 Christian Engelhart 76; 8 Philipp Frommenwiler 67; 9 Steven Palette 57; 10 Zaid Ashkanani 52.



# Kunimoto team can't stop winn-Ing

YET AGAIN JAPAN'S PREMIER SERIES went down to the wire with a multitude of drivers in contention at the Suzuka finale, and this time it was Yuji Kunimoto who claimed the second successive title for the Toyota-powered Cerumo-Inging team to follow Hiroaki Ishiura's 2015 success.

In his sixth season at this level, the 26-year-old Kunimoto – younger brother of 2008 Macau Grand Prix winner Keisuke Kunimoto – had taken his maiden victory at Okayama in September. A further win in the first leg of the double-header final round at Suzuka propelled him to the top of the points, and his score would not be beaten in the season-closing race.

Andre Lotterer came closest. The German once more joined forces at TOM'S with Kazuki Nakajima. He won once, and was within a second of race winner Stoffel

Vandoorne in the final race – if Lotterer had got past, he would have been champion.

While attention was naturally on McLaren F1 protege Vandoorne, he was beaten to the honour of top rookie by Team Impul's Yuhi Sekiguchi. Twice a winner, Sekiguchi led the points heading to Suzuka but had a disastrous finale.

Vandoorne still impressed to finish as the top Honda runner with Dandelion Racing. The Belgian, like Kunimoto, took his two wins in the two double-header events, at Okayama and Suzuka.

Ishiura won the earlier Okayama, which offered only half-points as the field trailed round behind the safety car in torrential rain. Other winners were Team Mugen's Naoki Yamamoto in the Suzuka opener and evergreen Brazilian Joao Paulo de Oliveira with Team Impul at Fuji.

## POINTS

### 1 Yuji Kunimoto

(Dallara-Toyota) 33;

2 Andre Lotterer (D-T) 30;

3 Yuhi Sekiguchi (D-T)

28.5; 4 Stoffel Vandoorne

(D-Honda) 27; 5 Hiroaki

Ishiura (D-T) 27; 6 Kazuki

Nakajima (D-T) 22; 7

Naoki Yamamoto (D-H)

15.5; 8 Joao Paulo de

Oliveira (D-T) 15.5;

9 Tomoki Nojiri (D-H)

14.5; 10 James Rossiter

(D-T) 12.



Kunimoto claimed his first top-level crown

## SUPER GT

# SARD graft pays off for Kovalainen

HEADING INTO THE SUPER GT finale at Motegi – a rare double-header with the first race run in lieu of May's earthquake-cancelled Autopolis event – you wouldn't have put much yen on a title success for SARD Lexus duo Heikki Kovalainen and Kohei Hirate.

The Finnish ex-grand prix victor and his former F3 Euro Series race-winning cohort sat fourth in the points, without so much as a pole position or win during their two-year partnership.

Then Kovalainen took a superb pole for race one at Motegi, despite 45kg of ballast, and fell just a quarter of a second short of Kondo Nissan pair Daiki Sasaki and Masataka Yanagida at the finish. Hirate, the 2013 champion, then claimed

pole for the finale – in which no-one ran ballast – and the SARD duo held on from the TOM'S Lexus of Andrea Caldarelli and Kazuya Oshima for their first win, and the title.

Ronnie Quintarelli and Tsugio Matsuda headed to Motegi with the series lead, but the NISMO Nissan pair would be denied a hat-trick of titles, having to make do with third behind Caldarelli and Oshima.

Yuji Kunimoto and Yuhi Sekiguchi scored the first win for the Bandoh Lexus team at Buriram and took fourth in points from the second TOM'S Lexus of Nick Cassidy and Daisuke Ito. Honda had a disaster, its NSXs finishing 11th to 15th out of the 15 cars in the team points.

## POINTS

### 1 Heikki Kovalainen/

Kohei Hirate (Lexus RC

F) 82; 2 Andrea Caldarelli/

Kazuya Oshima (Lexus)

69; 3 Ronnie Quintarelli/

Tsugio Matsuda (Nissan

GT-R NISMO) 62; 4 Yuhi

Sekiguchi/Yuji Kunimoto

(Lexus) 58; 5 Nick

Cassidy/Daisuke Ito

(Lexus) 54; 6 Hiroaki

Ishiura/Yuji Tachikawa

(Lexus) 52; 7 Daiki Sasaki/

Masataka Yanagida

(Nissan) 43; 8 Joao Paulo

de Oliveira/Hironobu

Yasuda (Nissan) 43;

9 James Rossiter/Ryo

Hirakawa (Lexus) 38;

10 Satoshi Motoyama

(Nissan) 36.



Title was SARD's first in Super GT history

## THE CHAMPIONS



### INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

Thomas Biagi/Fabrizio Crestani



### GT3 LE MANS CUP

Viktor Shaitar/Aleksey Basov



### ADAC GT MASTERS

Christopher Mies/  
Connor de Phillippi



### PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE

Alvaro Parente



### ITALIAN GT

Mirko Venturi/Stefano Gai



### ASIAN GT

Edoardo Liberati/Andrea Amici



### EUROPEAN RALLY CH'SHIP

Kajetan Kajetanowicz



## FORMULA V8 3.5

# Wily Dillmann denies Deletraz

THE FORMULA V8 3.5 SEASON produced a climax to rival any in the 11-year history of its Renault Sport-supported precursor, Formula Renault 3.5. That it did so helped to offset greatly the inevitable slip in perceived prestige from the withdrawal of the French manufacturer's backing, as hungry single-seater perennial Tom Dillmann pipped leading rookie Louis Deletraz to the crown.

Seven drivers went into the last meeting at Barcelona with a mathematical chance of championship success, but only Dillmann and Deletraz were left in contention for the decisive final race.

Renault Formula 1 Academy-backed Deletraz had momentum conspicuously in his favour. The Swiss lined his Fortec Motorsport car up on pole, six grid spots ahead of his adversary, and carried the advantage of a six-point lead.

A week earlier at Jerez the pair had crashed, with Deletraz controversially handed a 10-second penalty post-race that dropped him out of the points. Fittingly, the squabbles had rescinded by Barcelona for the crown to be decided sportingly on track. A flying start from Dillmann and a poor one from Deletraz put both men immediately in direct confrontation. Assisted by a pitstop undercut, a resilient Dillmann showed a champion's character to come through with the victory he required to lift the title.

Mulhouse racer Dillmann disagreed



with the analogy of the season as one of strong, experienced drivers in less-established teams, versus outsiders or rookies in top equipment. Although Adrian Valles's AVF squad had not registered a win since entering the series in 2013, Dillmann maintained that he had been impressed by the car's speed from first acquaintance in pre-season testing.

After three consecutive poles, a maiden series win for both team and driver was scored at a soaked Hungaroring in April. A 40-point lead was accumulated ahead of the Monza meeting five months later, but handling issues and wilting pace, believed to stem from a broken component, gradually eroded Dillmann's once-bountiful advantage. Only at the Barcelona finale, when a spare chassis was used — along with new engine, gearbox and suspension — did Dillmann recapture his early-season form.

Polished in and out of car, Deletraz would have made a worthy champion. The 2015 FR2.0 NEC title winner produced his standout performance en route to a triumph at Paul Ricard, and earned kudos

by his mettle in driving to the podium at the Hungaroring while bathed in fuel.

Egor Orudzhev scored more wins — five — than any of his rivals on his way to third in the points. But the SMP-backed Arden racer's hat-trick of non-scores in the first three races proved critical. Roy Nissany produced consistently accomplished racecraft during a breakout season, and the Lotus racer won dramatically at Silverstone. Less spectacular but, at times, equally effective was Aurelien Panis, who eclipsed expectations at Arden.

Matthieu Vaxiviere's paid-up seat at newcomer SMP Racing yielded two wins, but results were repeatedly lost with tyre-management issues. The appointment of engineer Miguel Jose Clara Flor in September appeared to improve matters and the Red Bull Ring round coincided with SMP's second driver Matevos Isaakyan taking pole. The teenaged GP3 racer would come good at Jerez, while the other winner was RP Motorsport's early-season recruit Johnny Cecotto Jr at the Hungaroring.

PETER MILLS

Dillmann leads Deletraz at the Hungaroring start

## POINTS

- 1 Tom Dillmann 237;
- 2 Louis Deletraz 230;
- 3 Egor Orudzhev 197;
- 4 Roy Nissany 189;
- 5 Aurelien Panis 183;
- 6 Matthieu Vaxiviere 175;
- 7 Rene Binder 161;
- 8 Yu Kanamaru 85;
- 9 Matevos Isaakyan 70;
- 10 Pietro Fittipaldi 59.

## INDY LIGHTS

# Carlin reshuffle helps Jones to the crown

THEY PROBABLY WON'T BE ROLLING out the red carpet in Uruguay any time soon for Ed Jones or Felix Serralles.

The South American nation's Santiago Urrutia looked to be heading for Indy Lights title glory with Schmidt Peterson Motorsports on the final lap of the last race at Laguna Seca. That was until Serralles moved over and let Carlin team-mate Jones grab fourth place — and the three extra points the Anglo-Emirati needed to defeat Urrutia.

The Indy Lights field wasn't gigantic in 2016, but the quality was good, including two star European immigrants. Brit Dean Stoneman won on the Indianapolis road

course and oval on his way to fifth in the standings with Andretti Autosport, while Sweden's European F3 champion Felix Rosenqvist won three times on street tracks before calling time on his season with Belardi Auto Racing to focus on his other umpteen commitments.

Belardi's other driver Zach Veach, back from a one-year layoff, benefited from Rosenqvist's presence to take three wins and fourth in the points, narrowly failing to pip Juncos Racing's Kyle Kaiser.

Kaiser made a big step forward in his sophomore season and was twice a winner. He led the points briefly early in the season, as did fellow race winner Serralles.



Jones gave Carlin its first US racing title

## POINTS

- 1 Ed Jones 363;
- 2 Santiago Urrutia 361;
- 3 Kyle Kaiser 334;
- 4 Zach Veach 332;
- 5 Dean Stoneman 316;
- 6 Felix Serralles 311;
- 7 Andre Negrao 268;
- 8 Shelby Blackstock 227;
- 9 Zachary Claman De Melo 199;
- 10 Dalton Kellett 193.



# Norris does the Renault double in style

TO SAY THERE WAS NO STOPPING Lando Norris in 2016 would be only a slight overstatement, as the diminutive Brit claimed not only the Formula Renault Eurocup title but also the second-tier NEC – against largely the same opposition – with German team Josef Kaufmann Racing.

Norris had good rivals in both, with rapid long-haired Walloon Max Defourny returning for more FR2.0 action with R-race GP (formerly ART Junior Team) and French youngster Dorian Boccolacci stepping down from a fast-but-erratic F3 campaign with Tech 1 Racing.

The consistent Defourny scored 17 podiums across both series and was runner-up in NEC, but a bad final weekend in the Eurocup at Estoril – including a tangle with an aggressive Norris – cost him second in the series to Boccolacci.

Another Brit, Harrison Scott, shone in

a Eurocup-only campaign with Spanish team AVF. He won three races – more than anyone bar Norris – and finished only just adrift of Defourny in the points.

Apart from Norris, the best driver stepping up to this level was French F4 graduate Sacha Fenestraz, who was fifth in both series with Tech 1 and won on the category's truncated – and very soggy – return to the streets of Monte Carlo.

A strong early run propelled JKR-run Indian Jehan Daruvala into the NEC series lead, but his form faded later in the year.

Other race winners in Eurocup were Swiss category veteran Hugo de Sadeleer (Tech 1) and reigning BRDC Formula 4 champion Will Palmer, who improved and won at the Estoril finale with R-race GP.

In NEC, Russian Robert Schwartzman (JKR) and Australian James Allen (JD Motorsport) also topped the podium.

## POINTS

- 1 Lando Norris 253;**  
 2 Dorian Boccolacci 200;  
 3 Max Defourny 178.5;  
 4 Harrison Scott 172;  
 5 Sacha Fenestraz 119.5;  
 6 Hugo de Sadeleer 89;  
 7 Will Palmer 76;  
 8 Robert Schwartzman 75;  
 9 Jehan Daruvala 62;  
 10 Ferdinand Habsburg 58.  
**NEC 1 Norris 326;**  
 2 Defourny 285;  
 3 Boccolacci 226;  
 4 Daruvala 223;  
 5 Fenestraz 207;  
 6 Schwartzman 206;  
 7 James Allen 177;  
 8 Alex Gill 176;  
 9 de Sadeleer 162;  
 10 Bartek Mirecki 137.



Norris presses on at Casino Square

## AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS

# 'The Giz' is the whizz down under

SHANE VAN GISBERGEN TOOK LESS than a year to unseat Jamie Whincup as Red Bull Racing's, Holden's and Supercars' top driver.

The Kiwi arrived at RBR Australia at the end of 2015 after several successful seasons in privateer terms, but stepped up his game to win the crown that Whincup has worn six times. At the same time, Whincup raised his performances, though there were some key moments that went van Gisbergen's way.

One came at Bathurst, where Whincup and co-driver Paul Dumbrell dominated the race in a way rarely seen for a decade, until a controversial late-race multi-car clash that saw them penalised, in spite of crossing the line first. Van Gisbergen and his co-driver Alex Premat were brilliant in all three endurance rounds, and that counted for much in the final tussle.

Triple Eight, which runs the RBR squad, was the class team, and went within a few placings of a historic 1-2-3 result in the series. In a single-car 'satellite' team Craig Lowndes was mightily competitive, but Volvo's Scott

McLaughlin had a strong weekend in the Sydney finale to take third overall.

Behind that duo was Will Davison, who won the blue-riband Bathurst 1000 in the Tekno Autosport Holden previously driven by van Gisbergen, while reigning champion Mark Winterbottom wound up sixth overall. His Prodrive Ford team had an up-and-down year, and 'Frosty' lacked the consistency of the top three.

## PHIL BRANAGAN



'Giz' clinched gold on Sydney Olympic site season finale

## POINTS

- 1 Shane van Gisbergen (Holden Commodore) 3368;** 2 Jamie Whincup (Holden) 3168; 3 Scott McLaughlin (Volvo S60) 2806; 4 Craig Lowndes (Holden) 2770; 5 Will Davison (Holden) 2589; 6 Mark Winterbottom (Ford Falcon) 2489; 7 Chaz Mostert (Ford) 2361; 8 Tim Slade (Holden) 2263; 9 Garth Tander (Holden) 2252; 10 Michael Caruso (Nissan Altima) 2239.

## THE CHAMPIONS



**V8 STOCK CARS**  
Felipe Fraga



**EUROPEAN TOURING CARS**  
Kris Richard



**SCANDINAVIAN TOURING CARS**  
Richard Goransson



**SUPER TC2000**  
Agustin Canapino



**RENAULT SPORT TROPHY**  
Endurance: Markus Palttala/  
Fabian Schiller



**RENAULT SPORT TROPHY**  
Pro: Pieter Schothorst



**WORLD RALLYCROSS**  
Mattias Ekstrom



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## NASCAR SPRINT CUP

# Joyful Johnson equals Petty and Earnhardt

AFTER FAILING TO MAKE IT INTO the 'Round of 8', let alone the final four, in the first two seasons since the new Chase format was introduced by NASCAR, Jimmie Johnson must have wondered whether he would ever join Dale Earnhardt and Richard Petty as a seven-time champion.

While perhaps not as overtly flamboyant as the two legends he now finds himself in the esteemed company of, Johnson's title campaigns have been built on quietly pumping in the wins and getting the results. This year was no exception.

A win in round two at Atlanta for the Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet star eased the pressure early on, but it was the

familiar Chase faces of reigning champion Kyle Busch, the Penske pair of Joey Logano and Brad Keselowski, Martin Truex Jr and a resurgent Carl Edwards who were arguably more on the money for the title.

Even Johnson's crew chief Chad Knaus later admitted that Johnson's 24-race dry spell from Fontana to Charlotte was "pretty bleak at that point" for the title. But a patchy 'Round of 12' for Keselowski and Truex left them out of the hunt. In both this phase and the 'Round of 8' Johnson made sure of getting the first win to comfortably progress to the finale.

With Johnson joined by Logano and Joe Gibbs Racing duo Kyle Busch and Edwards,

the Homestead finale was never going to be a straightforward race.

Johnson had to start last after race officials deemed the team to have made changes to the Chevrolet after pre-race inspection. He was in the top five after 50 laps, but his four title rivals were all ahead. Edwards seemed in control throughout until 11 laps from the end – his aggressive defence from the quicker Logano on the restart after the sixth caution ended his hopes. Johnson's perfect restart for a final caution in overtime vaulted him into the lead and a seventh title that just 30 minutes before looked all but lost.

So what made the difference when it mattered most? According to Johnson himself it was a "crazy-weird calmness" in the face of adversity: "There was just something really interesting and different about my calmness and the relaxed nature that I had in the car. I didn't know what the outcome would be, but I was very content and peaceful with whatever was coming my way, and then it ended up being the greatest thing in the world."

Few could argue. And, under the current rules, what are the chances of seeing another seven-time champ any time soon?

## POINTS

**1 Jimmie Johnson (Chevrolet SS) 5040;**  
2 Joey Logano (Ford Fusion) 5037; 3 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry) 5035; 4 Carl Edwards (Toyota) 5007; 5 Matt Kenseth (Toyota) 2330; 6 Denny Hamlin (Toyota) 2320; 7 Kurt Busch (Chevy) 2296; 8 Kevin Harvick (Chevy) 2289; 9 Kyle Larson (Chevy) 2288; 10 Chase Elliott (Chevy) 2285.



## EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

# Jota gets a mean tune from its old Gibson

RUNNING UNDER THE G-DRIVE banner, Jota Sport finally managed to win the European Le Mans Series despite not having the fastest car. A new Dunlop control tyre introduced for 2016 played to the strengths of the coupes and caused Jota's venerable Gibson 015S to suffer from a nervous rear. Added to that, the greater aerodynamic efficiency of the coupes meant Jota were regularly giving up 6-7 km/h on the straights.

As a result, even after dominating the season opener at Silverstone and finishing second at Imola, Harry Tincknell, Simon Dolan and F1 refugee Giedo van der Garde still weren't favourites for the crown. While the TDS by Thiriet Racing ORECA 05 came on strong in the middle portion of the season with three wins in a row, Jota hit patchy form.

Tincknell lost a potential victory at the Red Bull Ring when the hapless Remy Striebig spun into him in the final hour, before a wrong tyre choice at Paul Ricard left van der Garde a sitting duck in the closing stages and dropped him to fifth. Spa was another race there for the taking, but a strategy blunder left them down in fifth and 13 points behind TDS heading into the final round at Estoril.

But even with the odds stacked against them, Sam Hignett's boys never gave up

hope. When TDS – led by Mathias Beche and Pierre Thiriet – lost drive at its pitstop, Jota was on hand to take full advantage and seal the championship, a fitting farewell for the storied 'Mighty 38'.

LMP3 averaged just 4.8 cars – almost exclusively Ginettas – in 2015, but the car count soared into the high teens for much of this year, with the Ligier JSP3 the machine of choice. United Autosports is Onroak's official UK distributor, so it was little surprise to see Richard Dean's team come out of the blocks quickest. Alex Brundle, Christian England and Mike Guasch took command of the championship with three wins from three races and never looked back thereafter. Graff Racing trio Paul Petit, Eric Trouillet and Enzo Guibbert kissed

goodbye to the title with an exclusion at Imola, but recovered to second with wins at the Red Bull Ring and Spa.

Andrea Bertolini, Rory Butcher and Rob Smith were the team to beat all year in GTE, but fell at the final hurdle when their JMW Motorsport Ferrari 458 suffered a gearbox failure at Estoril. As at Silverstone, when JMW was thrown out for running a non-homologated front splitter, the chief beneficiary was Beechdean AMR. Andrew Howard planned to treat 2016 as a year to learn the championship, but his Aston Martin's second victory of the year at Estoril handed the 2015 British GT champion a surprise title with co-drivers Darren Turner and Alex MacDowall.

**JAMES NEWBOLD**

## POINTS

**1 Harry Tincknell/Giedo van der Garde/Simon Dolan (Gibson-Nissan 015S) 103;** 2 Pierre Thiriet/Mathias Beche (ORECA-N 05) 96; 3 Stefano Coletti/Andreas Wirth (BRE-N BR01) 83; 4 Ben Hanley/Nicolas Lapierre/Henrik Hedman (O-N 05) 76; 5 Ryo Hirakawa (O-N 05) 70; 6 Julian Leal (BRE-N BR01) 60. **LMP3 1 Alex Brundle/Christian England/Mike Guasch (Ligier JSP3) 109.5;** 2 Eric Trouillet/Paul Petit (L JSP3) 93; 3 Enzo Guibbert (L JSP3) 81. **GTE 1 Darren Turner/Andrew Howard/Alex MacDowall (Aston Martin Vantage GTE) 98;** 2 Rory Butcher/Andrea Bertolini/Rob Smith (Ferrari 458 Italia) 93; 3 Alexander Talkanitsa/A Talkanitsa Jr (Ferrari) 79.



Jota's Gibson (centre) bowed out on a high





AUDI AG

# Vanthoor ends Audi life on a high

**INTERCONTINENTAL GT CHALLENGE**  
**SEPANG 12 HOURS (MAL)**  
**DECEMBER 10**  
**ROUND 3/3**

A COMBINATION OF RAIN, PROBLEMS for the opposition and shrewd pit strategy gave Audi Sport Team Phoenix honours in the Sepang 12 Hours, and outgoing Audi gun Laurens Vanthoor the inaugural Intercontinental GT Challenge title.

The Audis had looked modest in qualifying and expectations looked bleak when Vanthoor's car, shared with Christopher Haase and Robin Frijns, needed a late power-generator change, forcing a pitlane start. Haase had the R8 LMS up to seventh by the end of the opening hour, half a minute away from the leading car.

That was the Manthey Racing Porsche 911 GT3-R, with Earl Bamber doing a mega job in the first hour to grab the lead at Turn 1 from third on the grid. He then opened a gap as a battle raged behind, with the second Porsche of Richard Lietz attacking Alvaro Parente (K-PAX Racing McLaren 650S GT3, which was delayed

later by suspension failure and a trip into the gravel) and defending from Alessandro Pier Guidi's Spirit of Race Ferrari 488 GT3, which had started 15th after electrical gremlins in qualifying.

Bamber relayed Nick Tandy, who continued to lead, despite a 30-second cushion being wiped out by a safety car, with Fred Makowiecki in the sister car moving up to second as Pasin Lathouras took over the Ferrari and struggled to match the pace of the pros around him.

But in the fifth hour the pendulum swung in favour of Audi. First, Haase made a quick stop for fuel under the second safety car, which bought him a chunk of time. Then, as the rain came, his was one of the first in to change to Yokohama's rain tyre. That, coupled with new leader Pier Guidi and Tandy staying out too long on slicks (and Tandy having two offs on his in-lap) meant that the Audi was in a lead it was never to lose. In contrast, Porsche's race started to unravel as Tandy had a wiper problem in the wettest part of his double stint and then Patrick Pilet had a drying — and hence greasy — surface to contend with. The

Above: Phoenix Audi took the spoils.

Bottom left: Lietz had mega early scrap with Pier Guidi

Porsche, its handling sensitive to tyre pressure, hated those conditions and lost over a minute in the sixth hour. It wasn't until the rain became heavy again late-race that the 911s found conditions to their liking. Added to this was a brake problem for the Lietz/Makowiecki/Michael Christensen car, which prompted a caliper and disc change on the sister car as a precaution. More time lost by both 911s...

As they struggled, so the Frijns/Haase/Vanthoor Audi led the sister car of Pierre Kaffer/Markus Winkelhock/Rene Rast, but Bamber was able to work his magic to grab second in the penultimate hour with a stunning move around the outside of Kaffer into Turn 1 — in the wet, and the dark! It was a great charge, but the leading Audi still had a one-lap advantage as Haase brought the car home to secure his and Vanthoor's second event wins and another title for the Belgian.

**DAVID ADDISON**

## RESULTS

### 1 Laurens Vanthoor/Robin Frijns/Christopher Haase

**(Audi R8 LMS)** 305 laps in 12h01m33.824s; 2 Earl Bamber/Nick Tandy/Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 GT3-R) -1 lap; 3 Rene Rast/Pierre Kaffer/Markus Winkelhock (Audi); 4 Alessandro Pier Guidi/Michele Rugolo/Pasin Lathouras (Ferrari 488 GT3); 5 Richard Lietz/Frederic Makowiecki/Michael Christensen (Porsche); 6 Hiroki Yoshimoto/Shinya Hosokawa/Hiroki Yoshida/Morris Chen (Ferrari); 7 Carlo van Dam/Tanart Sathienthirakul/Frank Yu/Piti Bhirom Bhakdi (Ferrari); 8 Adrian Zaugg/Manabu Orido/Kazuki Hiramane (Lamborghini Huracan GT3); 9 Garnet Patterson/Dominic Ang/Adrian D'Silva (Ferrari 458 Italia GT3); 10 Alvaro Parente/Shane van Gisbergen/Come Ledogar (McLaren 650S GT3). **Points**  
**1 Vanthoor 58**; 2 Rast 44; 3 van Gisbergen 42; 4 Parente 40; 5 Steven Kane/Guy Smith 26; 6= Jono Webb & Felix Rosenqvist/Renger van der Zande/Tristan Vautier 25.







Newey heads  
Mawson around  
the desert sweeps

## Newey double; Mawson to top

**MRF CHALLENGE**  
**DUBAI (UAE)**  
**DECEMBER 9-10**  
**ROUND 2/4**

HARRISON NEWEY WON TWICE, BUT IT WAS final-race victor Joey Mawson who left Dubai with the championship lead.

German Formula 4 champion Mawson took pole and led the first race initially, but European F3 regular Newey passed the Australian on the fourth lap and set a string of fastest laps as he pulled away. The Brit left Mawson to fend off Mick Schumacher for second place.

Sixth place gave Juri Vips reversed-grid pole, but the Estonian lost the lead on lap one to Felipe Drugovich. Mawson carved up to second and tried everything to pass Drugovich, but the Brazilian held on. Vips fended off Schumacher for third.

Newey led race three, only for a shunt between Schumacher and Vips to bring out the safety car. Mawson got the jump on Newey at the restart, but ran wide, allowing Newey and Drugovich past.

Mawson wasted little time passing early leader Rinus van Kalmthout in the finale and won from Drugovich and Zane Goddard. Newey (technical problem) and Schumacher (puncture) retired.

### RESULTS

**Race 1 1 Harrison Newey** 10 laps in 19m46.499s; 2 Joey Mawson +2.572s; 3 Mick Schumacher; 4 Pedro Cardoso; 5 Felipe Drugovich; 6 Juri Vips. **Race 2 1 Drugovich** 10 laps in 19m47.022s; 2 Mawson +0.712s; 3 Vips; 4 Schumacher; 5 Cardoso; 6 Newey. **Race 3 1 Newey** 10 laps in 26m47.300s; 2 Drugovich +1.767s; 3 Mawson; 4 Cardoso; 5 Rinus van Kalmthout; 6 Dylan Young. **Race 4 1 Mawson** 10 laps in 19m45.654s; 2 Drugovich +4.685s; 3 Zane Goddard; 4 Vips; 5 Young; 6 Kimi Schramm. **Points 1 Mawson 141**; 2 Newey 113; 3 Drugovich 105; 4 Schumacher 102; 5 Vips 75; 6 Ralf Aron 72.

## Fraga vanquishes Barrichello

**V8 STOCK CARS**  
**INTERLAGOS (BR)**  
**DECEMBER 11**  
**ROUND 12/12**

AT THE SAME CIRCUIT WHERE HE STARTED his V8 Stock Car career with a debut win in 2014, 21-year-old Felipe Fraga became champion for the first time despite the best efforts of ex-Formula 1 hero Rubens Barrichello.

Cimed Racing Peugeot driver Fraga needed only to finish in the top 12 even if closest title rival

Barrichello won the race, and he narrowly outpaced the veteran in qualifying by 0.011 seconds to take pole position.

Barrichello then wasted his front-row position by dropping to fifth at the start, as Fraga led and Valdeno Brito, Daniel Serra and Diego Nunes fought for second. It got worse for Barrichello: after an early safety car, he dived inside Nunes for fourth at the Senna S, but had no grip as he gunned the throttle and spun, dropping to 18th as Fraga ran free in the lead.

But the race would take another turn. Rain started falling and, as it became heavier, Fraga opted to pit for wet-weather tyres just after half-distance. But Barrichello stayed out. As the rain eased off, he began to lap one second faster than everybody else as he moved up to second.

Barrichello slashed the gap to race leader Serra and eventually fell just half a second short of victory as Serra grabbed his first victory of the season. Meanwhile, Fraga drove a controlled race and came home in 10th place – easily sufficient for him to become champion.

### LITO CAVALCANTI

### RESULTS

**1 Daniel Serra (Chevrolet Cruze)** 23 laps in 42m03.324s; 2 Rubens Barrichello (Chevy) +0.619s; 3 Ricardo Mauricio (Chevy); 4 Caca Bueno (Chevy); 5 Julio Campos (Chevy); 6 Guilherme Salas (Chevy). **Points 1 Felipe Fraga 309**; 2 Barrichello 295; 3 Serra 229; 4 Valdeno Brito 229; 5 Marcos Gomes 212; 6 Mauricio 205.



Fraga leads,  
but Red Bull car  
of Serra would win

CARSTEN HORST

## IN BRIEF

### BRAZILIAN FORMULA 3

Champion Matheus Iorio ended his season with his 10th victory from 16 races at Interlagos. Iorio led the first race from start to finish and crossed the line almost seven seconds ahead of Cesario team-mate Guilherme Samaia and Christian Hahn. Artur Fortunato made good use of his reversed-grid pole to win the finale from Iorio and Igor Fraga after a processional race.

### BRAZILIAN TOURING CARS

Veteran Nono Figueiredo had to use all his experience to beat no fewer than seven other contenders to the title in the final round at Interlagos. Figueiredo kept his Onze Competicoes Chevrolet Cruze in second place early in the first race, but was spun around by an overaggressive Thiago Marques and fell to eighth at the flag, as Gustavo Martins won in his JLM Racing Honda Civic. But that eighth place meant reversed-grid pole for Figueiredo, who led race two from lights to flag to defeat Martins to the crown by five points.

### SOUTH EAST ASIAN FORMULA 4

"A good way to end before Christmas," was Australian Jordan Love's assessment of five wins from six starts at Sepang. Four of his victories came from pole, one from fifth, and only Singaporean Danial Nielsen Frost bettered him all weekend to win race six. Indian Akash Gowda, Indonesian Presley Martono and New Zealand Maori Faine Kahia also visited the podium during round four of the series, which is centrally run by the Meritus GP operation.

### ANDROS TROPHY

Jean-Philippe Dayraut (below) retains a narrow lead in the points after sharing the overall wins in the second round in Andorra with Benjamin Riviere. On the first day of action, Riviere and his Mini Countryman pipped the BMW M2 of Dayraut by a tenth in qualifying (which offers the bulk of the points), and Riviere also won the new-for-this season super pole. Despite constant attacks from the Audi A1 of Olivier Panis, Riviere held on to win the final, with Franck Lagorce (Mazda 3) winning the scrap for third. On day two, Dayraut got the better of fast-improving Andros newcomer Benoit Treluyer (Audi) to top qualifying, before Treluyer won the super pole. It went wrong for Treluyer in the final – he dropped to last in a first-lap incident, as Renault Clio driver Jean-Baptiste Dubourg passed Dayraut to win, with Panis third.

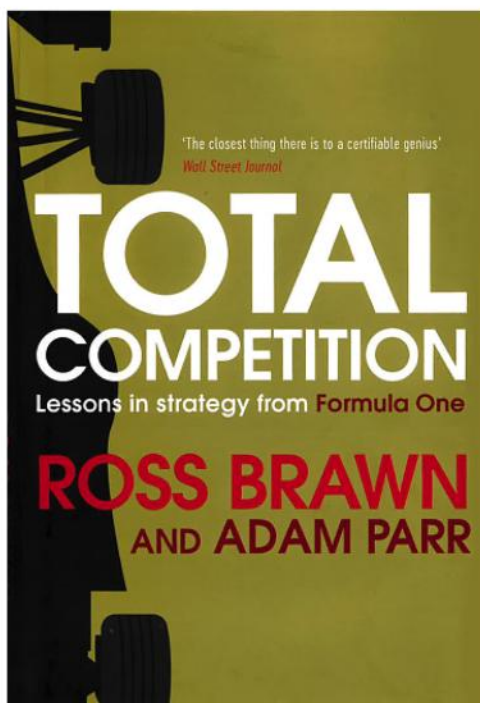


B. BADE



# CHRISTMAS

## GIFT GUIDE



### TOTAL COMPETITION: Lessons in Strategy From Formula One

This was the book that first propelled Ross Brawn back into the Formula 1 limelight earlier this year, before rumours of him having a role with the sport's new owners surfaced. The former Mercedes team principal made some pretty scathing remarks about his old team. "I was beginning to deal with people who I didn't feel I could ultimately trust; people within the team, who had let me down already in terms of their approach," Brawn writes. But this book is about much more than Brawn's views on his former bosses. It is co-written with ex-Williams chairman Adam Parr and focuses on strategy, not just in terms of winning races in F1, but in terms of being successful in the sport and business more generally. It begins with a detailed look back at technical legend Brawn's career, which alone is a must-read for any F1 fan. Then the bigger revelations come when the focus switches to management, and it's in this section where the excerpts that hit the headlines can be found. For a book whose title is a perhaps a little bland, it makes for a compelling read.

RRP £20. ISBN 9781471162350

### FORMULA 1: The Pursuit of Speed

This is a greatest-hits collection of father-and-son photography team Bernard and Paul-Henri Cahier, splitting the images across three different thematic groups.

RRP £30. ISBN  
9781781315835

### MASERATI 250F: The Autobiography of 2528

Very often a sportsman will, after a long and successful career, release a memoir. This tome takes that approach to Fangio's 1957 Monaco GP winner.

RRP £60. ISBN  
9781907085383

### WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU...

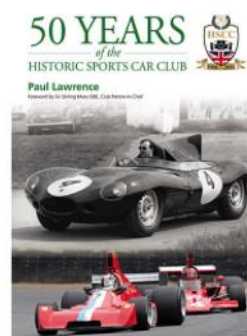
Johnny Herbert's autobiography is unsurprisingly packed full of tales, including his season spent as Michael Schumacher's team-mate at Benetton.

RRP £20. ISBN  
9780593078389

### OFFICIAL MOTOGP SEASON REVIEW

Unpredictable became the norm in MotoGP in 2016, as nine riders won. BT Sport commentator Julian Ryder dissects every race, and there is a detailed look at each bike.

RRP £35. ISBN  
9781910505151



### 50 YEARS OF THE HISTORIC SPORTS CAR CLUB

The HSCC celebrated its 50th birthday in 2016 and the book details the history of the club from the very race at Castle Combe back in 1966 up to the title battles of this anniversary season.

RRP £30 + £5 P&P.  
Contact HSCC: 01327 858400



### AUTOCOURSE

Autocourse is regarded as the definitive record of Formula 1 and global motorsport having been published every year since 1951. This year's edition is the biggest ever, with over 400 pages on high-quality gloss paper.

RRP £45. ISBN  
9781910584224



### LIONHEART: Remembering Dan Wheldon

Andy Hallbery and Jeff Olson have assembled memories from those who knew Wheldon best, to create a tribute to the much-missed two-time Indy 500 winner.

RRP £37.50. ISBN  
9780992642198

## CALENDARS

### AUTOCOURSE

It once again captures the essence of this year's F1 World Championship.

RRP £10.19. [www.autocourse.com](http://www.autocourse.com)



### MCKLEIN

Decorate your walls with this WRC photographic genius. If you don't have wall space, go for the desktop version.

Available online via Amazon. Calendars from £34.99, desktop calendar £8.99.

### JAKOB EBREY

Re-live this year's BTCC title battle. Next year's dates are pre-marked.

RRP £12.00 + £3.30 P&P.  
[www.jakobebrey.com](http://www.jakobebrey.com)



### DREW GIBSON

A must for any sportscar fan as 12 atmospheric shots taken by Gibson from this year's WEC form a stunning A2-sized calendar that really catches the eye.

RRP £40. [www.drew-gibson.co.uk](http://www.drew-gibson.co.uk)

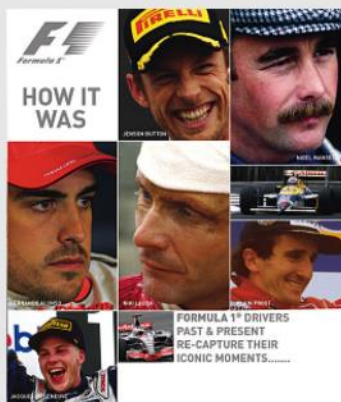


## DVDs

### F1 HOW IT WAS

Mixing some of the greatest moments in the history of the world championship with insight and fascinating analysis from the men involved, this DVD takes viewers on a trip down memory lane from Niki Lauda's narrow championship victory in 1984 to Jenson Button's last-gasp move on the seemingly invincible Sebastian Vettel during the lengthy Canadian GP at Montreal in 2011. Featuring previously unseen footage and revealing interviews.

Available from Duke, RRP £16.99



### SEASON REVIEWS

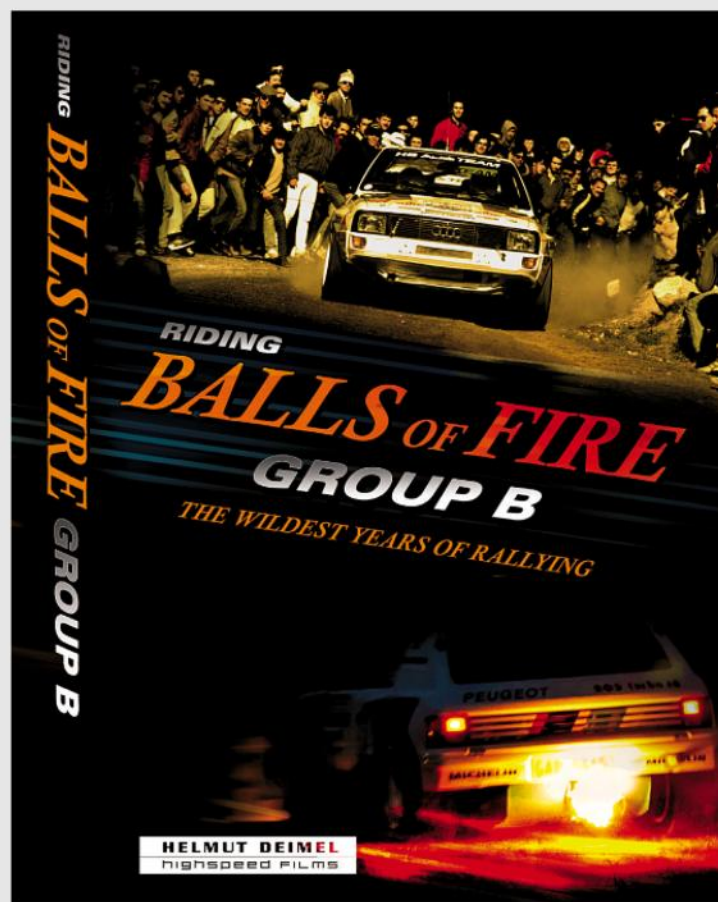
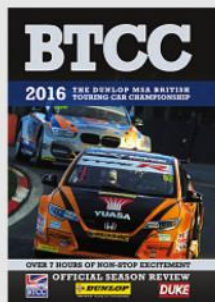
Duke's season-review DVDs are a staple of this time of year. Over three decades after his father Keke claimed the F1 drivers' title in 1982, Nico Rosberg was crowned champion, narrowly edging out Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton by five points in a scintillating finale at Abu Dhabi. Now you can revisit the record-breaking 21-grand-prix season that led him to motorsport's biggest prize. The DVD features in-depth analysis, as well as never seen before footage and audio.

The British Touring Car

Championship again delivered a fascinating title battle as Gordon Shedden beat Sam Tordoff in the final round; 30 action-packed races line the bill of this DVD but the devil is in the detail, with plot lines at every turn.

For sportscar fans, this year's Le Mans 24 Hours was a classic, and you can relive Toyota's heartbreak and Audi's last outing with Duke's DVD. Those who like bikes can be satisfied by the MotoGP review, and there's a WRC one too.

Available from Duke, with prices starting at £16.99.



### RIDING BALLS OF FIRE: GROUP B The Wildest Years of Rallying

The Group B period may only have lasted from 1983 to 1986, but it's widely regarded as a golden era of rallying. Now, to mark 30 years since these monsters were forcibly tamed, a special film has been produced to chronicle this incredible era of WRC history.

The documentary is the work of Helmut Deimel – who was behind the successful *Evolution of Rallying* film – and features archive footage of the

500bhp machines in action, tracing the evolution of the cars, supported by interviews with key figures, including Walter Rohrl and Ari Vatanen.

Inevitably, there are tragic elements to the story – Henri Toivonen was among those to lose their life in a Group B car. But this DVD is more of a celebration of the positive aspects that made this such an incredible period. A must-see for any rally fan.

Available from Duke, RRP £21.99

## GAMES

### VALENTINO ROSSI THE GAME

Don't be misled by the title on the box – this is the official MotoGP 2016 game, but bears the name of its most famous champion, and has additional game modes to match that reference. As well as being able to make your impression on the 2016 season through the career mode, there's also the chance to retrace the steps of Rossi's career to date – be it through his historic battles in MotoGP, or through his rallying and drifting exploits. Those additions mark it out from the crowd of other championship games, and it's even available in a collector's edition.

RRP £49.99.

Available on: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC.  
[www.motogpvideogame.com](http://www.motogpvideogame.com)

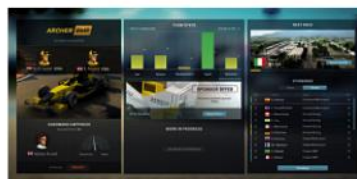


### F1 2016 GAME

The latest instalment in Codemasters' series provides players with their most realistic simulation yet. New features include manual race starts, the safety car and its virtual counterpart, and the opportunity to interact with your engineer and agent. There's also a wide-ranging AI opposition to suit all abilities and the inclusion of Haas and the Baku street circuit. Up to 22 players can race on-line.

RRP £54.99.

Available on: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC.  
[www.formula1-game.com/uk/home](http://www.formula1-game.com/uk/home)



### MOTORSPORT MANAGER

If you've read any of Autosport's review pieces so far this year, you may have noticed our writers have been excited about Playsport Games' offering. Having started life as a mobile game built by a group of enthusiasts, it has been built into an immersive experience. Options range from a single race to a single career as the world of the Global Motorsport Association develops around you.

RRP £24.99.

Available on: PC, Mac, Linux.  
[www.motorsportmanager.com](http://www.motorsportmanager.com)



### WRC 6

Tackling arguably the most challenging discipline of motorsport in real life, WRC 6 aims to replicate the pressure-cooker arena of top-level rallying in the most realistic and intense offering of the WRC series of games to date. It's based on the 2016 season, with cars from the three main classes all ready to play, while Toyota's 2017 WRC car is also available as a downloadable extra.

RRP £39.99.

Available on: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC.  
[www.wrcgame.com](http://www.wrcgame.com)





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- Columns from the best coaches and drivers
- Bespoke features on technique, fitness, nutrition and more...





# EXPERIENCES

## KNOCKHILL

If you're north of the border and don't fancy the trek to England, or you're keen to experience driving around one of the nation's most spectacular circuits, Knockhill has plenty of experiences on offer for 2017. In the run up to Christmas, the circuit has a weekly rota of deals on its driving and track experiences, whether it's karting, racing or rally cars that take your fancy.

Packages from £75.

01383 723337, [www.experiences.knockhill.com/offers](http://www.experiences.knockhill.com/offers)

## SILVERSTONE

Silverstone may not be the motorsport venue you'd first associate with rallying, but the circuit's dedicated experience is a great opportunity to experience some sideways action. With three different sessions, including an introductory 15 minutes of technique practice, then a second skills lesson before a full out attack on a dedicated stage, grab your crash helmet for a thrill ride.

Packages from £149.

[www.silverstone.co.uk/experiences/driving-experiences/silverstone-rally-experience/](http://www.silverstone.co.uk/experiences/driving-experiences/silverstone-rally-experience/)



## F4 MASTER

Make no mistake, this is the best single-seater driving experience around. Nowhere else in the UK does a similar experience use such modern machinery as that raced in BRDC F4 as recently as 2015 – it even features a paddle-shift gearbox.

For anyone uncertain about stepping into the confines of the cockpit on their own, an orientation session with a driver coach in a BMW M4 – a great driving experience in itself – should settle the nerves, before being unleashed on the Brands Hatch Indy Circuit. Any fears should be dispelled the moment you've squealed your way out of the pitlane at 5000rpm and down

through Paddock Hill for the first time. Fifteen minutes doesn't sound like a long stint, and you may well be left wanting more when you step out of the car, but the whole experience should be more than enough to give you the thrill of being a single-seater ace.

The experience ends with a high-speed passenger lap, to show you just where you were going wrong.

Purchasing the package before Christmas will enable you to book a free ticket for a BTCC or British Superbike event during the 2017 season.

Packages from £229.

0843 453 1000, [www.msvdrivinggifts.com/f4-master](http://www.msvdrivinggifts.com/f4-master)



## CROFT AND THRUXTON SUPERCAR EXPERIENCES

Thruxton and Croft offer experiences to cater for any budget, ranging from a three-lap Porsche Cayman ride at Croft to the lavish Ultimate Supercar Driving Experience (which clocks in at just under £1000), which offers 32 laps in supercar heavyweights such as the Lamborghini Aventador SV Roadster, Lamborghini Huracan V10, Jaguar F-type S or 2017's latest home-grown addition in the form

of McLaren's carbonfibre 570S. If you're a young petrolhead, those 12 and over can learn all the basic skills to impress in a Porsche Cayman or a Mini Cooper S. All experiences include specialised tuition.

Packages from £100.

01325 271815 (Croft), 01264 882222 (Thruxton)

[www.croftcircuit.co.uk/experiences](http://www.croftcircuit.co.uk/experiences)

[www.thruxtonracing.co.uk/experiences](http://www.thruxtonracing.co.uk/experiences)

# OTHER GIFTS

## TICKETS

There's nothing like getting out trackside to watch some racing. UK circuits offer plenty of great racing options, whether it's weekend tickets for the British Grand Prix, or one-day entry for a classic club meeting.

Contact individual circuits and organising clubs

## LETS RACE

Sussex-based Lets Race is about as close as you can get to driving an F1 car without spending millions. There are several single-seater options on offer, as well as the opportunity to enter sim endurance (which uses the F2 model) or BTCC on certain dates. With single-session options under £50, it's pretty decent value too.

Packages from £14.95.

01293 826800, [www.letsrace.co.uk](http://www.letsrace.co.uk)



## PETTER SOLBERG FAN CLUB

Here's something a little left-field. The perfect gift for all those 'Hollywood' fans out there. Join Petter's band of merry men, women and children to get an exclusive cap, superfan membership card, regular news from Petter and the team, meet-and-greet opportunities with the three-time FIA World Champion, and a merchandise discount.

RRP £30.

[www.performance-clothing.com/hats/psrx-2016-fan-club](http://www.performance-clothing.com/hats/psrx-2016-fan-club)



## SCALEXTRIC FORD RS500

The British Touring Car Championship of the late 1980s featured superb battles at the front, generally involving a phalanx of Fords. The Blue Oval successfully campaigned the Sierra RS500 worldwide, racing in the UK and across Europe, not to mention Bathurst and the Australian scene.

This year Scalextric has done a super job of replicating the Sierra RS500 in several liveries. You can now be a slot-car champion driving either Robb Gravett (1990 Trakstar) or Steve Soper (1988 Texaco) cars. Alongside these,

you can buy a limited-edition two-car box set enabling you to re-enact the 1990 interim season of Group A cars (with Andy Rouse's ICS Ford) and the new Super Tourers (Frank Sytner's Mobil 1 BMW E30 M3).

All these model slot cars drive well straight out of the box, and just like their real counterparts have tail-happy corner exit. Magnets are added for extra traction, but once you are up to speed you can remove these for a greater challenge.

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# The Formula 1 driver draft

More young drivers are making their names in grand prix racing, but the system does not guarantee opportunities for those who deserve it. In this hypothetical world, things are about to change...

By Scott Mitchell, Features Editor

[@ScottAutosport](#)

**F**or the 2017 season, the Formula 1 World Championship will adopt a driver draft for the first time. In our universe, anyway. The purpose is to create a system whereby the opportunities exist for young drivers to secure seat time in an F1 car.

In this world teams will have to register two race drivers, plus a third and fourth pilot for the entire season.

Much like the National Football League or National Basketball Association in the US, it's all about placing emphasis (and in

F1's case, getting seat time) for young sportspeople.

Teams may, at their discretion, place draft picks immediately into a race seat. Nominated third drivers must take part in Friday practice sessions in a third car, and act as the official reserve. Fourth drivers must take part in two additional two-day tests outside of pre-season testing and grand prix weekends.

Teams can commit to driver line-ups before the draft itself. Those that do so will have had until October 1 2016 to name any race drivers or third/fourth driver slots. The draft would have filled slots that were not taken by October 1. It would have taken place the evening after the final round of the 2016 F1 season.

## HOW WOULD IT WORK?

### ASSIGNING DRAFT PICKS

Each team receives one pick in each of the two rounds of the F1 draft. The first round is devoted only to young drivers emerging from junior single-seater formulas. The second round is devoted to 'out-of-contract' drivers and those not picked in the first round. By the end of the process every team must have a completed four-driver roster (if any team is missing a driver after the second round, they keep picking from the list until all positions are filled).

The order of selection is determined by the reverse order of the constructors' championship in the previous season. Each round starts with the team that finished lowest in the constructors' championship and ends with the title-winning team.

If teams finished the previous season with the same number of points, the determination of draft position is decided by officially recognised budget – and the team with the lower budget will be awarded the higher pick. Unlike in the States, there will be no trading of pick positions (ie bigger teams swapping cash/engines for an earlier pick in the draft).

### DRIVER ELIGIBILITY

Drivers must be 25 or under and no more than two years out of eligible categories: GP2, GP3, European F3, Indy Lights, Formula V8 3.5, National F3, Super Formula. Drivers who have been officially affiliated to an F1 team for at least two full seasons that precede the draft are ineligible.

This will protect the longer-term investment teams may wish to put into talented drivers by allowing them to continue owning the rights to the driver instead of helping them reach the summit of the ladder and then have the driver taken from them by a rival team in the draft.

If a driver is selected in the draft, they will not need to satisfy the minimum points requirement to attain a superlicence. Drivers not selected in the draft will have to accrue 40 points to attain a superlicence.

An independent panel will compile the final draft list after considering the leading drivers from all eligible series. The final list will be capped at 20.

### OUT-OF-CONTRACT PICKS

The second round will be an 'out-of-contract' pick. All drivers not affiliated to a team by October 1 will be placed in the out-of-contract pool. Drivers who have been out of contract for no more than two years and are under the age of 30 may nominate themselves for this list.

Draft-eligible drivers not picked in the first round will still be available for the second round, to maximise the potential for them to be picked.

### WHAT NEXT?

Draft picks immediately receive a base one-year contract with the team, in their assigned role. Additional elements may be structured into the deal, while contract extensions will be at the discretion of the team and driver.

Teams that do not deploy their third drivers in Friday practice sessions will be fined \$500,000 per session missed (so a maximum \$1 million fine per round if both sessions are missed). Teams that do not participate in the in-season tests with their drivers will be fined \$500,000 per missed test (maximum \$1m fine if both tests are missed).

### HELPING WITH COSTS

Based on drivers needing to bring an estimated \$10m of sponsorship to the smaller teams, an additional \$20m payment is assigned to the lowest-funded teams if a driver from the original draft list (not an out-of-contract pick) is placed in a race seat.

If teams draft youngsters into third/fourth driver roles, they will receive \$10m to help fund the third car in practice and the in-season test days. Teams eligible for the booster funds are: Force India, Williams, Manor, Sauber and Haas. This could come predominantly from a net \$90m reduction in heritage payments:

- Reducing Ferrari's heritage payment to \$50m would save \$47m.
- Reducing Red Bull's heritage payment to \$40m would save \$34m.
- Reducing McLaren's heritage payment to \$30m would save \$4m.
- Reducing Mercedes' heritage payment to \$30m would save \$4m.





## HOW THE DRAFT FOR 2017 COULD GO

In our simulation, the initial submissions from the 11 teams fill the majority of the race-driver slots and more than half the third-driver positions by October 1. Force India commits to Esteban Ocon early, so Mercedes gets Pascal Wehrlein in at Manor for a second season.

Away from the race seats, Briton Oliver Rowland's many days in the simulator in 2016 translate into a Mercedes third-driver role, while European Formula 3 racer George Russell, tipped for a junior role at the Silver Arrows anyway, gets the fourth-driver slot.

Red Bull appoints GP2 title challenger Pierre Gasly as its third driver and F3 racer Sergio Sette Camara in the same role at Toro Rosso.

Another of its F3 proteges, Niko Kari, becomes Red Bull's fourth driver. ➤

### OCTOBER 1

TEAM	RACE DRIVER #1	RACE DRIVER #2	THIRD DRIVER	FOURTH DRIVER
Mercedes	Hamilton	Rosberg	Rowland	Russell
Red Bull	Ricciardo	Verstappen	Gasly	Kari
Ferrari	Vettel	Raikkonen	Leclerc	
Force India	Perez	Ocon		Celis
Williams	Bottas	Stroll	Lynn	
McLaren	Alonso	Vandoorne	de Vries	
Toro Rosso	Sainz	Kvyat	Sette Camara	
Haas	Grosjean		Ferrucci	
Renault	Hulkenberg			
Sauber	Ericsson		Matsushita	
Manor	Wehrlein		King	

Getting an F1 drive might be trickier for older drivers, but youngsters would benefit from a draft



Ferrari finally does something useful with its Driver Academy and Charles Leclerc gets the third-driver role alongside an anticipated GP2 graduation, while McLaren junior Nyck de Vries is named third driver at the British team. Alex Lynn cements a deal with Williams to guarantee Friday mileage in 2017. Fellow Briton Jordan King does likewise with Manor, Haas junior Santino Ferrucci gets a full-time role with the US team and Alfonso Celis Jr nets more Force India time.

Nobuharu Matsushita gets handed Sauber's Friday honours ahead of a potential Honda engine supply deal for 2018.

## “The first pick in the draft is Giovinazzi. GP3 man Albon is a surprise second”

### ROUND 1 OF THE DRAFT

TEAM	RACE DRIVER #1	RACE DRIVER #2	THIRD DRIVER	FOURTH DRIVER
<b>Mercedes</b>	Hamilton	Rosberg	Rowland	Russell
<b>Red Bull</b>	Ricciardo	Verstappen	Gasly	Kari
<b>Ferrari</b>	Vettel	Raikkonen	Leclerc	Ghiotto
<b>Force India</b>	Perez	Ocon	Gunther	Celis
<b>Williams</b>	Bottas	Stroll	Lynn	Hughes
<b>McLaren</b>	Alonso	Vandoorne	de Vries	Dennis
<b>Toro Rosso</b>	Sainz	Kvyat	Sette Camara	Ilott
<b>Haas</b>	Grosjean	Rossi	Ferrucci	
<b>Renault</b>	Hulkenberg		Sirotkin	
<b>Sauber</b>	Ericsson		Matsushita	Albon
<b>Manor</b>	Wehrlein	Giovinazzi	King	

The first pick in the draft ‘proper’ is GP2 frontrunner Antonio Giovinazzi, who nails an immediate graduation to an F1 race seat with Manor. Another runner-up gets a boost fresh from a title defeat, as GP3 man Alex Albon is a surprise second pick – Sauber chooses the Anglo-Thai as its fourth driver, with an eye on the out-of-contract drivers to fill its second seat.

Sergey Sirotkin had completed some Friday mileage with Renault in his first year as a ‘junior’ in 2016 and the French marque places him as a third driver. Indianapolis 500 winner Alexander Rossi returns to the grand prix fold, thankful his GP2 form from ’15 snuck him into the list as he benefits from Gene Haas’s desire to have an American in a race seat.

Briton Callum Ilott’s European F3 form prompts Dr Helmut Marko to make a shock U-turn on a driver previously dumped by Red Bull. Ilott slots into Toro Rosso’s vacant fourth-driver role. The middle portion of the draft is good for Brits, as Jake Dennis gets the same role at McLaren and friend-of-Alex-Lynn Jake Hughes is brought in at Williams.

Force India’s Mercedes engine deal is a likely factor in German Maxi Gunther’s appointment as third driver in the next pick, while Ferrari gives Italian Luca Ghiotto a dream shot at Maranello by choosing him as its fourth driver.

### ROUND 2 OF THE DRAFT

TEAM	RACE DRIVER #1	RACE DRIVER #2	THIRD DRIVER	FOURTH DRIVER
<b>Mercedes</b>	Hamilton	Rosberg	Rowland	Russell
<b>Red Bull</b>	Ricciardo	Verstappen	Gasly	Kari
<b>Ferrari</b>	Vettel	Raikkonen	Leclerc	Ghiotto
<b>Force India</b>	Perez	Ocon	Gunther	Celis
<b>Williams</b>	Bottas	Stroll	Lynn	Hughes
<b>McLaren</b>	Alonso	Vandoorne	de Vries	Dennis
<b>Toro Rosso</b>	Sainz	Kvyat	Sette Camara	Ilott
<b>Haas</b>	Grosjean	Rossi	Ferrucci	Pigot
<b>Renault</b>	Hulkenberg	Gutierrez	Sirotkin	Deletraz
<b>Sauber</b>	Ericsson	Palmer	Matsushita	Albon
<b>Manor</b>	Wehrlein	Giovinazzi	King	Haryanto



Five unfilled positions bring the ‘out-of-contract’ drivers into play. These are Jolyon Palmer, Felipe Nasr, Esteban Gutierrez, Rio Haryanto, Will Stevens and Roberto Merhi. The undrafted Raffaele Marciello, Norman Nato, Matthieu Vaxiviere, Louis Deletraz, Jack Aitken, Nick Cassidy, Joel Eriksson, Ed Jones, Santiago Urrutia and Spencer Pigot are added to the ‘out-of-contract’ drivers for round two.

Manor opts to hand Haryanto another chance in the hope that Indonesian money will surface, while Sauber jumps at the opportunity to hire Palmer, who the Swiss team had considered for a race seat prior to the October 1 deadline. Esteban Gutierrez heads to Renault to partner old Sauber team-mate Nico Hulkenberg, with the well-backed Mexican benefiting from uncertainty around Nasr’s Brazilian sponsor to land a spot with the French manufacturer.

Haas gives 2015 Indy Lights champion Spencer Pigot the chance to impress in an F1 car by naming him its fourth driver, and with all other teams finished the final pick goes back to Renault. The French marque plumps for Louis Deletraz, like Sirotkin a junior who was at risk of being ‘stolen’ because he had only been with Renault for one season. Jean-Denis’s son is relieved to sneak the final fourth-driver slot on the list.

### COULD THE DRAFT HANDLE ROSBERG RETIRING?

A shock twist! Five days after the inaugural draft, champion Nico Rosberg announces his retirement. The officials frantically flick through the supplementary regulations to work out what to do in cases of force majeure. The upshot is the affected team – Mercedes – being able to enter a 48-hour period of negotiation regarding drivers it has under contract. In this case, that’s Manor-based Wehrlein and its third/fourth drivers Rowland and Russell.

A reshuffle occurs. Wehrlein finds himself moving from one end of the grid to the other to partner Lewis Hamilton, while Rowland sacrifices a year driving the best car on the grid on Fridays for his

In a draft-based world, there’s still a chance for younger ‘hangers-on’ like Gutierrez





# Does the Formula 1 world need a draft?

FORMULA 1 HAS DONE a good job of bringing in young drivers in recent years. The rise of Max Verstappen has been the most prominent example, but Daniil Kvyat and Esteban Ocon also made their respective debuts before their 20th birthdays. Take a look at the list of debutants in the past five seasons – 10 of the 21 come from young-driver programmes.

That may suggest that F1 is in pretty decent health for getting its best young talent onto the grid. But that's a bit naive.

Of those 10, McLaren ditched Kevin Magnussen after one season because the board wanted to retain Jenson Button (12 years Magnussen's senior), while Jean-Eric Vergne left F1 after three years at Toro Rosso.

Vergne is one of four from the Red Bull stable to have debuted in the past five seasons – without Dietrich Mateschitz's energy-drinks company, F1 would be in much poorer health on the driving front.

Mercedes juniors Pascal Wehrlein and Ocon made their grand prix debuts this season, while Stoffel Vandoorne gets his chance in 2017 with Button finally edged towards the McLaren

exit door. Valtteri Bottas, a long-time Williams protege, and the late Ferrari junior Jules Bianchi are the other recent 'team' rookies.

Of the 'others', they are drivers with plenty of junior single-seater success on their CVs: GP2 champion Jolyon Palmer, inaugural GP3 title winner Esteban Gutierrez and F3 champions Roberto Merhi, Marcus Ericsson

**“You’re either racing in F1 or not driving at all. It’s tough to impress”**

and Felipe Nasr.

Generally speaking, there are two paths into F1: be on an F1 team's books already, or have strong personal backing. But the world of grand prix racing is so tilted that you're either racing an F1 car or you're not driving one at all. It's tough to impress, as there's little chance to get a foot in the door, let alone achieve the preparation levels of the mid-noughties, when testing was a free-for-all.

And what happens when Mateschitz finally cries enough? Or Mercedes pulls the

plug and the end goal for its junior programme switches back to the DTM? Suddenly the (relatively) open road to F1 has a couple of lane closures, and the structure does not have a strong support system.

That's where something like the draft could help. The impact is threefold: first, in the short term, it guarantees seat time for a good number of young drivers. Second, and this is longer-term, it incentivises teams to invest more in youngsters earlier on – if they have a junior programme, they can hand-pick their own talent and not leave it to chance.

Finally, it could encourage external investment in smaller teams – the knowledge that Manor would have the best pick of the younger drivers for the next two or three years could be a pull factor for an investor to put money into the team infrastructure or design of the car.

This sort of system is designed to encourage F1 teams to embrace young talent. What those drivers do with those opportunities is down to them, but it's time grand prix racing was overhauled to at least give them the chance.

race debut alongside GP2 rival Giovinazzi.

Russell gets promoted to the third-driver slot at Mercedes, while European F3 rookie Mick Schumacher is surprisingly drafted into the vacant fourth-driver slot. Rival teams question the suitability of a driver who has only contested Formula 4 until this point, but the curators of the draft (Autosport) and the sport's governing body the FIA allow it on the grounds of 'cool' and 'quite a nice touch'...

Returning to a serious note, the inaugural draft (or our simulation at least) has promoted GP2 runner-up Giovinazzi, 2015 GP2 driver-turned-IndyCar rookie Rossi and '15 Formula Renault 3.5 champion Rowland to race seats. Underwhelming? Not so. The world of the draft has also facilitated season-long Friday running for the '16 GP2 and GP3 champions (Gasly and Leclerc), and handed a host of other category race winners valuable on-track running. That's pretty win-win. 🏆

## FINAL 2017 GRID AND RESERVES

TEAM	RACE DRIVER #1	RACE DRIVER #2	THIRD DRIVER	FOURTH DRIVER
Mercedes	Hamilton	Wehrlein	Russell	Schumacher
Red Bull	Ricciardo	Verstappen	Gasly	Kari
Ferrari	Vettel	Raikkonen	Leclerc	Ghiotto
Force India	Perez	Ocon	Gunther	Celis
Williams	Bottas	Stroll	Lynn	Hughes
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Renault	Hulkenberg	Gutierrez	Sirotkin	Deletraz
Sauber	Ericsson	Palmer	Matsushita	Albon
Manor	Rowland	Giovinazzi	King	Haryanto





# 10 of the worst F1 winners

Not every car that wins a grand prix is brilliant. We pick out the worst of those that scored success despite themselves

**Kevin Turner and Edd Straw**

 @KRT917 and @eddstrawF1

**B**y definition, most cars that win a world championship grand prix are pretty special. The level of competition ensures that genuinely poor cars rarely get near a podium. But sometimes, through circumstances, luck or inspiration, cars that would otherwise be considered midfielders have their day in the sun.

In compiling this list, we looked at the overall pace of the cars across the season, reliability, how difficult they were to drive, and the circumstances of their success. Was it luck, or did they have genuine competitiveness on that particular day?

Here's what we came up with...

## 10 **Ferrari F60**

**Victory** 2009 Belgian GP, Kimi Raikkonen

**Best other finish** 2nd

**Constructors' championship** 4th

FERRARI'S CAR FOR FORMULA 1'S NEW 2009 REGULATIONS was poor. Not only did the team miss the double-diffuser trick, most effectively pioneered by Brawn, but the F60 also lacked the ideal weight distribution thanks to its KERS, although a longer wheelbase introduced at the British Grand Prix in June helped matters.

Ferrari didn't agree with the legality of the double diffuser and, with testing restrictions, didn't respond as quickly as it might have done previously. It also sometimes struggled to get the best out of the Bridgestone tyres.

The top eight cars scored points in each race that season, and it took Kimi Raikkonen and Felipe Massa four races to get Ferrari off the mark.

A safety car he helped cause plus KERS enabled Raikkonen to snatch victory at Spa from Giancarlo Fisichella's KERS-less Force India during a strong four-race run, but the woeful (and point-less) performances of Luca Badoer and Fisichella – both of whom stepped in after Massa's serious Hungary qualifying crash – underlined how difficult the car was.

"We didn't have enough downforce or efficiency," said then team manager Chris Dyer in the official 2009 F1 season review. "Both Luca and Giancarlo found the car hard to balance under braking with KERS."

Had Toyota been more operationally savvy, it's possible that Ferrari would have finished fifth in the constructors' table, having taken the crown in 2008.



Raikkonen took his chance at Spa to give the F60 its one win



Jones quickly made progress through the pack in the wet





## 8 Toro Rosso STR3

**Victory** 2008 Italian GP, Sebastian Vettel  
**Best other result** 4th  
**Constructors' championship** 6th  
 (STR2B used at some venues)

THE STR3 WAS, TO PUT IT SIMPLY, A 2008 RED BULL WITH A Ferrari V8 rather than a Renault. The first half of the season was difficult for Toro Rosso, which started off with a B-spec of its '07 car, then when it did get the new design for the sixth race in Monaco it lagged behind on upgrades. But seven points finishes in the final nine races, including Sebastian Vettel's sensational victory from pole at Monza, realised its potential and allowed STR to finish sixth in the championship, ahead of Red Bull.

But there was more to this story than just putting a different engine in a Red Bull. Under technical director Giorgio Ascanelli, once Ayrton Senna's race engineer at McLaren and a very savvy racing man, the package was made to work well.

"I don't think the [engine] advantage was as big as perceived," said Ascanelli at the end of the season. "It was probably a bit more powerful than the Renault, but it's more difficult in terms of the vibration and exhaust. It required larger quantities of coolant, more radiator size and more installation space."

Of course, what power advantage there was proved especially beneficial at Monza. But there were two other keys to that victory. Firstly, at that time teams attempted to move weight distribution and aero balance far forward to try to take the load off the overworked Bridgestone tyres. Ascanelli felt that Red Bull had gone too far, shifted it back a little and, as a result, gained traction. Off the Monza chicanes, that helped hugely.

Secondly, a look at the weather forecast showed rain was anticipated for Sunday, thus eliminating the imperative created by dry conditions to try to seize an advantage by running longer in the first stint, because the intermediate tyres lost performance at a greater rate than the grooved slicks.

All of this, combined with the fact that Ascanelli's team hit upon a set-up that made the car good and stable under braking, made it ideal for Monza and that special day.



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## 9 Shadow DN8

**Victory** 1977 Austrian GP, Alan Jones  
**Best other result** 3rd  
**Constructors' championship** 7th

INITIALLY DESIGNED BY TONY SOUTHGATE AND completed by Dave Wass in 1976, the DN8 scored points in each of its three F1 seasons. But it was never cutting-edge.

On a good day in 1977 Shadow could get one of its cars into the top six, usually driven by future world champion Alan Jones. On a bad day – and there were a few – it posted a double retirement and Shadow was only seventh in the constructors' championship.

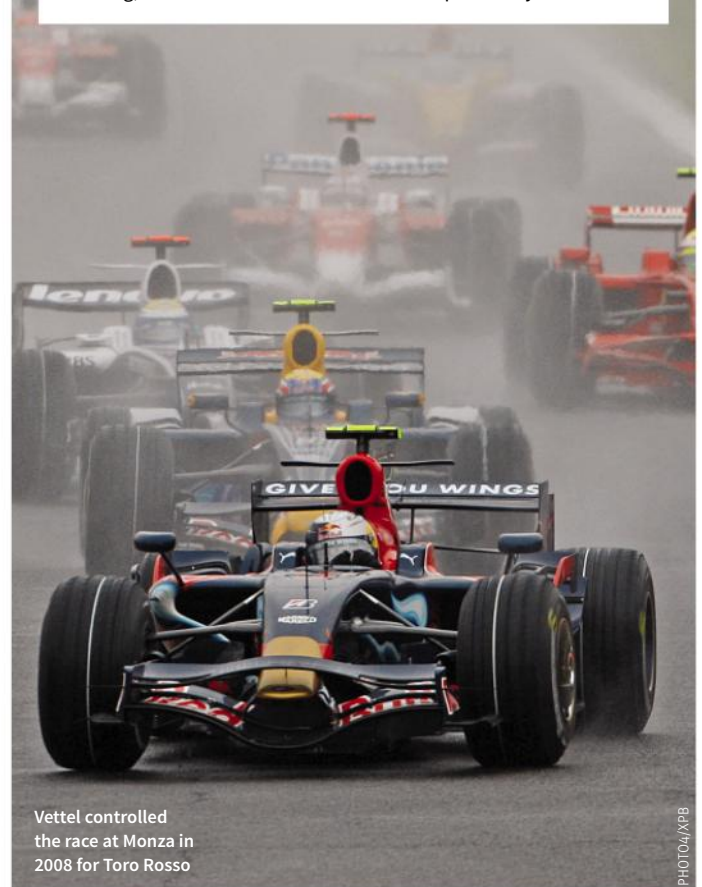
That would have been eighth had it not been for a remarkable day at the Österreichring. Jones started 14th in a DN8 with revised bodywork, but a wet track on race day provided an opportunity.

Most runners started on slicks, including Jones, and the Aussie made impressive progress in the early slippery conditions. After 16 of the 54 laps Jones was second, with only James Hunt ahead.

Hunt nevertheless looked in command until his McLaren's Cosworth DFV cried enough with just 11 laps to go. Jones, who had been saved from a potential Gunnar Nilsson challenge when the Lotus driver's engine failed, was left to beat Niki Lauda's Ferrari by 20 seconds to secure Shadow's only F1 world championship victory.

"I knew it was a fluke; winning had to be a fluke in the car I had," said Jones in his autobiography, *Driving Ambition*. "I knew there wasn't much we could do short of a new car.

"The one we had was overweight and very slow in a straight line. I think I was rated at Shadow by what I could do within the limitations of the machinery at my disposal."



Vettel controlled the race at Monza in 2008 for Toro Rosso

PHOTO4/XPB



## 7 Tyrrell 011B

**Victory** 1983 Detroit GP, Michele Alboreto  
**Best other finish** 5th  
**Constructors' championship** 7th  
 (Tyrrell 012 used at some venues)

KEN TYRRELL'S EPONYMOUS SQUAD WAS A BASTION OF THE normally aspirated Ford Cosworth DFV engine against the turbo hordes in the early '80s. To call the 011B a bad car may be rather harsh as it was always going to be outgunned, but in truth it was not normally on the pace.

A development of the reasonably competitive 1982 011, the flat-bottomed B version ended up with the ultimate DFV variant of Cosworth's legendary powerplant, but it struggled to finish in the top 10 on the occasions that it actually reached the chequered flag in 1983.

Tight street tracks, which minimised the power advantage of the turbos and highlighted their problems of lag, were the only venues where the Cosworth still had a chance.

In Detroit, Michele Alboreto qualified sixth, second fastest of the Cosworth runners. He jumped Marc Surer on lap one, gained another spot when Elio de Angelis's Lotus suffered crown-wheel-and-pinion failure, then lost it as Keke Rosberg's Cosworth-engined Williams flew by. Alboreto overcame the Alfa Romeo of Andrea de Cesaris to run fourth again, but Rosberg, Nelson Piquet (Brabham) and Rene Arnoux (Ferrari) seemed out of reach.

The Tyrrell got ahead of Rosberg when the Williams made a refuelling/tyre stop, which proved to be slow, and moved into second when fuel-system problems put out runaway leader Arnoux. Although Alboreto kept the pressure on Piquet, it wasn't until the Brabham picked up a puncture with 10 laps to go that the non-stopping Tyrrell first hit the front.

Apart from Alboreto's win – Tyrrell's last – the 011B's best 1983 world championship finish was fifth, and it was replaced by the 012 before the end of the campaign.

## 6 Ferrari 126CK

**Victories** 1981 Monaco and Spanish GPs, Gilles Villeneuve  
**Best other result** 3rd  
**Constructors' championship** 5th

THE FIRST TURBOCHARGED FERRARI WAS ALL ABOUT A POWERFUL engine strapped into a chassis nowhere near as good as most of its rivals. Ferrari, coming off the back of one of its worst seasons in 1980, eventually finished fifth in the constructors' table and scored just three podiums. But two of those were victories.

Remarkably, they came at two of the season's three slowest venues. The first was made possible by one of the greatest qualifying laps in F1 history, as Gilles Villeneuve put his Ferrari second on the Monte Carlo grid, 2.5 seconds faster than team-mate (and 1980 Monaco polesitter) Didier Pironi.

Poleman Nelson Piquet's nimbler Brabham inevitably pulled clear of Villeneuve in the early stages and the Ferrari soon had to make way for Alan Jones's charging Williams. Jones edged towards Piquet, who was still 3.4s ahead when he crashed in traffic. Jones inherited the lead, 32.9s clear of Villeneuve, but he was already suffering from fuel-system problems and decided to stop for more petrol. He rejoined with a much-reduced lead, only to find the engine still spluttering. Villeneuve swept by with four laps to go to take victory, finishing a lap clear of fourth-placed Pironi.

Villeneuve qualified seventh, 'only' 0.7s ahead of Pironi and 1.2s off pole next time out at Jarama. But Villeneuve rocketed off the line to reach the first corner in third, then drove around the outside of Carlos Reutemann's Williams at the start of lap two.

Reigning champion Jones nevertheless looked out of reach until he inexplicably went off on lap 14. For the rest of the 80-lap event, Villeneuve defended the lead, holding back an ever-growing gaggle of faster cars thanks to careful placement of the Ferrari and its prodigious straightline speed. The result was the top five finishing within 1.24s of the winner.

Neither win could detract from the fact that Ferrari was generally outpaced by the turbo Renaults and the Brabham and Williams cars that led the DFV brigade in 1981. The 126CK was also unreliable, 10 of Ferrari's 15 retirements in 15 races being due to mechanical problems.



**“The Ligier was as far off the 1996 Williams as the Haas was from the Mercedes in 2016”**







Spanish GP was Villeneuve's second miracle win on the trot



## 5 Ligier JS43

**Victory** 1996 Monaco GP, Olivier Panis

**Best other result** 5th

**Constructors' championship** 6th

OLIVIER PANIS'S DAY OF DAYS DELIVERED THE JS43 A SHOCK victory in one of those crazy Monaco GPs that occasionally crop up. On average, the Mugen-Honda-powered Ligier was the seventh fastest car of 1996, 2.502% off the Williams FW18. To put that into perspective, that's very similar to the difference between the Mercedes and Haas machines in 2016.

Panis qualified 14th in Monaco, two seconds off Michael Schumacher's acrobatic Ferrari pole. But the wet race proved to be one of attrition, and Panis was inspired.

Multiple shunts, including Schumacher on the first lap, helped Panis, but he was also prepared to make some aggressive passes. Perhaps the boldest was his move on Eddie Irvine at Loews hairpin, which briefly left the Ferrari stationary.

By the time the remaining runners had switched to slicks, Panis was up to third, behind Damon Hill's Williams and the Benetton of Jean Alesi. Hill was 26.3 seconds clear – and 48.5s ahead of Panis – when his Renault engine blew up on lap 41 of what would be a 75-lapper thanks to the two-hour rule. Alesi then led until, with 16 laps to go, he retired with suspension damage.

Panis took over at the front and successfully kept David Coulthard's McLaren at arm's length to record his only world championship victory, and the ninth and last for the French team. Ligier only scored five points in the other 15 races of 1996, but the 10 from Monaco allowed it to finish sixth in the constructors' table in Ligier's final season before being renamed Prost.



## 4 Williams FW09

**Victory** 1984 Dallas GP, Keke Rosberg

**Best other result** 2nd

**Constructors' championship** 6th

A REMINDER THAT HONDA TOOK TIME TO GET THINGS right before its pre-eminence as Formula 1's leading engine manufacturer of the 1980s.

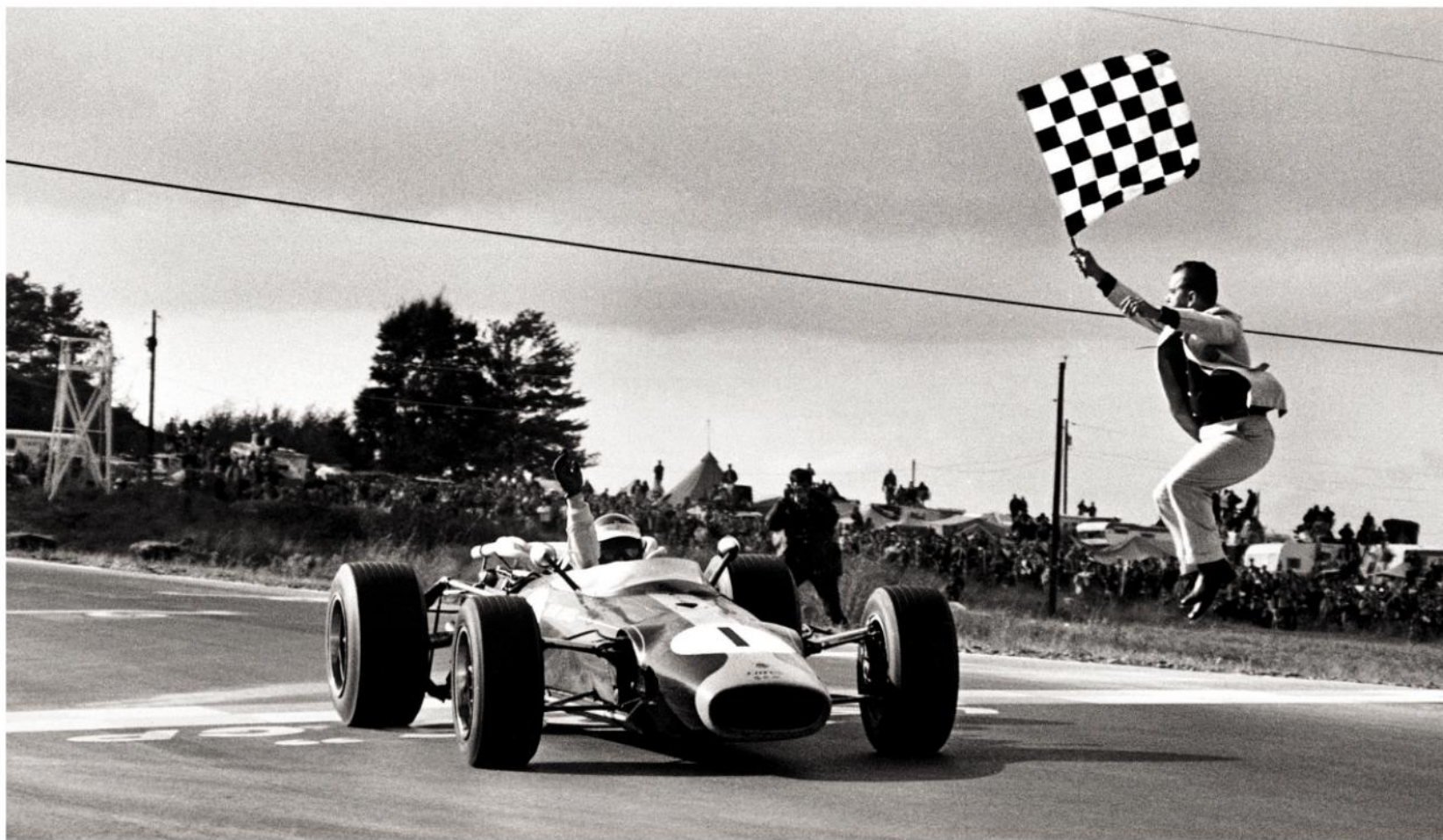
After getting things started with the minnow Spirit squad, Honda joined forces with Williams at the end of 1983. The FW09 was Williams's first turbo car and struggled to deal with the Honda's abrupt power delivery.

As with several entries on this list, the car's victory owed a lot to the man behind the wheel. Keke Rosberg was better prepared for the heat of Dallas than his rivals, having a water-cooled skullcap for round nine of the 1984 F1 season. He started only seventh (fourth-place qualifier Rene Arnoux having been forced to the back) but moved forward immediately.

After Derek Warwick crashed trying to take the lead, Rosberg – having already overtaken Niki Lauda's McLaren – moved forward to challenge the Lotuses of Nigel Mansell and Elio de Angelis. Rosberg quickly got into second, but Mansell proved tougher, the Williams not grabbing top spot until just after half distance.

Alain Prost's McLaren then emerged as Rosberg's main challenger and the Frenchman seemed to have the race won after he moved ahead and started to draw away. But with the track surface deteriorating, many drivers ended their day in the wall and Prost was one of them. Rosberg thus coolly came through to record the first turbocharged Williams victory.

The FW09B was introduced immediately after Dallas, but only managed two finishes – neither in the points – in the remaining seven races. The 1985 FW10 would be the first truly successful product of the Williams-Honda relationship.







MCKLEIN/DE

### 3 Lotus 43

**Victory** 1966 United States GP, Jim Clark  
**Best other result** no other finishes  
**Constructors' championship** 5th  
 (Lotus 33 used at some venues)

THIS HAD TO BE HIGH ON THE LIST. THE 43 FAILED TO FINISH ALL five GPs it started, apart from Jim Clark's Watkins Glen success.

In terms of pace, the successor to the title-winning 33 was in the ballpark. Clark qualified in the top three every time he raced the car, indicating that the chassis was not a bad one, and it was the same at the 1966 United States GP.

Clark qualified second, behind recently crowned world champion Jack Brabham, but his BRM P75 H16 engine failed at the end of practice and Lotus had to borrow BRM's spare motor! Clark initially followed the fast-starting Ferrari of Lorenzo Bandini, but soon fell behind Brabham and John Surtees's Cooper, dropping him to fourth.

Then Surtees clashed with a backmarker and Bandini's engine blew. Brabham was left with a comfortable lead, only to hit engine troubles of his own. In a race of attrition, Clark was thus left to cruise to victory by a lap.

Elsewhere, the 43 would not hold together, with gearbox gremlins among the car's woes. The main issue, however, was the engine, which was too heavy, unreliable and not as powerful as hoped under the new three-litre regulations. It was an interim measure for Lotus, following Coventry Climax's F1 withdrawal and before the new Cosworth was ready. BRM's own struggles with the unit underlined the fact that it was too complex for its own good. Indeed, Clark's success was the powerplant's only world championship victory; the best BRM could manage with it was Jackie Stewart's second at Spa in 1967.

Colin Chapman would soon solve the engine problem for Lotus in 1967 with the iconic Cosworth DFV, which powered the 43's successor, the legendary 49.



LAT



Trintignant took lucky win at Monaco in 1955

### 2 Ferrari 625 (555)

**Victory** 1955 Monaco GP, Maurice Trintignant  
**Best other result** 2nd  
**Constructors' championship** N/A

THE 1955 F1 SEASON WAS ALL ABOUT THE MERCEDES-BENZ W196s of Juan Manuel Fangio and Stirling Moss, with the superb but underfunded Lancia D50 showing hints of its potential.

A second and a third in the first race of the season and a victory in the second do not indicate that the 625 with the 555 four-cylinder engine was too bad. But in truth it was outclassed by the straight-eight Silver Arrow and straight-six Lancia.

Maurice Trintignant qualified as the fastest Ferrari in Monaco, but that was only good enough for ninth, 3.3 seconds behind polesitter Fangio. The Mercedes ace made the early running, before going out with transmission problems. Moss took over, but he suffered a rare Mercedes engine failure with 20 laps to go. Alberto Ascari would have taken the lead but instead had his famous dip in the harbour with his D50.

All that left Trintignant to take his first world championship GP win by 20s, from the Lancia of Eugenio Castellotti.

Thereafter the gap between Mercedes and Ferrari at the flag could normally be measured in minutes, with Maserati's new 250F sometimes getting in between. It's fair to say that Ferrari lacked a top-line driver for much of the season, but the margins indicate that wasn't the team's only problem.

It took Mercedes' withdrawal from motorsport, and the beleaguered Lancia handing its D50s over to Enzo Ferrari, to put the Scuderia back on top in 1956.





# And the worst...

Former Jordan linchpin **Gary Anderson** recalls how the terrible 2003 EJ13 managed to become a winner in a chaotic Brazilian Grand Prix

1

## Jordan EJ13

**Victory** 2003 Brazilian GP, Giancarlo Fisichella  
**Best other result** 7th  
**Constructors' championship** 9th

WHEN I RETURNED TO JORDAN IN 2002 AS HEAD OF RACE AND TEST engineering after a year in America working for Reynard, there were a lot of things that weren't right. Eghbal Hamidy was technical director and some strange decisions were made on the car that we had to fix, such as the fact that the front of the chassis was too narrow to be legal and the wishbones didn't comply.

Eghbal's argument was that 'they never checked these things', but mine was that the car must be fully compliant. He left during the season and Henri Durand replaced him; since his time at McLaren he had worked for the Prost team, which didn't make it to the 2002 grid.

We also switched from Honda to Cosworth engines for 2003, and once Henri had got his feet under the table he decided we should switch our car-development direction based on the philosophy he would have taken with the 2002 Prost. He suggested that way we could have a car that could challenge for the world championship!

So we tried his ideas in the windtunnel, and ended up with 10-15% less downforce than what was being worked on already. This took away about three months of development time and you can imagine how pissed off this made the mechanical and aerodynamic design teams. But he was confident we would end up better off than we were originally, and we ended up with a mixture of Henri's ideas and what we were already working on.

We qualified eighth with Giancarlo Fisichella in Brazil for round three. That was at the time when you ran in Saturday qualifying with the fuel on board that you started the race with. We were obviously on fairly low fuel and, if the race was dry, we would be stopping by about lap 10.

When I saw it was going to be wet on Sunday, I went to see race director Charlie Whiting and ask him if we could adjust the front ride height because the conditions were dangerous. He agreed.

Then, either he changed his mind later or no-one else requested a set-up change, because when I told Ferrari technical director Ross Brawn, just to wind him up, he was furious.

This next bit sounds too unlikely for the story, but it's true – my dad had died the week before the race and I am sure from up above he played a big part in the outcome. The night before, I had a dream that we won the race. The question was how could we achieve that? It came to me that if it was wet and the race started behind the safety car and we pitted after about five laps we would have enough fuel to take us past lap 54, which was the point where full points would be awarded in the case of a red flag. So I had in mind a strategy built on being as high up as possible at that point.

It poured down and the race started under the safety car. When we got to five laps we called Fisi in. He refused because he wanted to go racing when the green flag was thrown, so I had to get on the radio and tell him that he definitely was going to come in, which after some discussion eventually happened after seven laps! The race got under way a lap later and Fisi and team-mate Ralph Firman were running at the back.

Ralph might also have got a good result, and he was behind Fisi at the start of lap 18 when a front wishbone failed. He spun, thankfully Fisi saw him and avoided being collected into Turn 1. And very usefully, Ralph collected Olivier Panis's Toyota, which has been holding Fisi up!

There was then a nervous time when I had to decide whether or not to keep Fisi in the race with a potential wishbone problem. We checked the life of the components, and Ralph's wishbone was a new part whereas Fisi's wishbones had done over 2000km and been proof tested before the weekend. I decided to keep him out as the presumption was





Above: Dramatic crashes caused the red flag that ultimately gave Fisichella victory, after some arguing

Above right: Eddie Jordan and his team didn't have much to cheer about during a tough 2003 campaign

Right: The EJ13 was so shocked that it set itself on fire after the race

Bottom right: McLaren handed over the silverware two weeks later at Imola



there was some kind of assembly error on that wishbone – it turned out a mechanical fixing had not been put in place properly.

Fisi drove very well in a chaotic race. As people went off and made their pitstops we kept an eye on them and no-one seemed to stop for long enough to take on a full fuel load, so they were still planning two stops. On lap 53, he was up to second behind Kimi Raikkonen's McLaren but a mistake from Raikkonen allowed him to get ahead and cross the line to lead lap 54. When Mark Webber had his big accident and Fernando Alonso collected one of the wheels from the crashed Jaguar in his Renault, the race was red flagged.

This is where it became messy. We thought we had won but the stewards decided to set the countback to lap 53 on the basis that you go back two completed laps. They thought Fisi was still doing lap 55 when the red flag came out. Subsequently, it went to Paris the Friday after the race and it was proved that he had just started lap 56. So the countback went to lap 54, and Fisi won the race.

It probably is fair to call it the worst car in recent times to win a grand prix, and it seemed that the car even knew it as it caught fire as Fisi stopped in the pitlane at the end of the race. It was only a small oil fire from a breather pipe that was too close to the exhaust system, but it would have been enough to prevent us restarting.

Although I'm often credited with the design, all I ever did was try to make the best of it because my main job at the factory was to justify and authorise the spend on developments, while Henri Durand and the design team were tasked with coming up with them.

We had many reliability problems early in the year and the lack of development just meant that, as the season progressed, we were on a hiding to nothing and we only managed two more points finishes – a seventh and an eighth place.

Once you've got a car like that, all you can do is make the best of it. And that's exactly what we did at Interlagos. 🍀



# Audi's greatest sportscar moments

As one of the great marques leaves sportscar racing's top flight, we pick out its best races

By Gary Watkins, Special Contributor

[@gazzasportscars](#)

## Le Mans

2000

THE FIRST IS ALWAYS THE SWEETEST. So says Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich when looking back on the marque's sportscar successes and its impressive run of 13 victories in the Le Mans 24 Hours.

"My favourite will always be the first because winning Le Mans was the big goal when we started the project," he says. "We could never have thought that we could win Le Mans 13 times, because there was a time before 2000 when we didn't know how to win it once."

Audi, of course, dominated Le Mans on its second attempt on the French enduro. Its trio of R8s claimed a one-two-three finish, led home by Tom Kristensen, Emanuele Pirro and Frank Biela, and its nearest rival was more than 20 laps back at the finish. But Audi Sport Team Joest didn't pitch up at the Circuit de la Sarthe believing it was a shoo-in for victory.

"It's not that I didn't believe in our preparation, it was more that I had a lot of respect for the race," says Pirro. "We'd never completed a 30-hour test without any problems, so I didn't dare think we could win."





## Mosport

### 2000

A TENTH AND A HALF WAS ALL THAT separated Audi driver Rinaldo Capello and Jorg Muller's BMW V12 LMR after nearly three hours of racing in the

Mosport American Le Mans Series round in August 2000. The Italian and team-mate Allan McNish looked on course to win easily until a late rain storm and the wrong call on tyres.

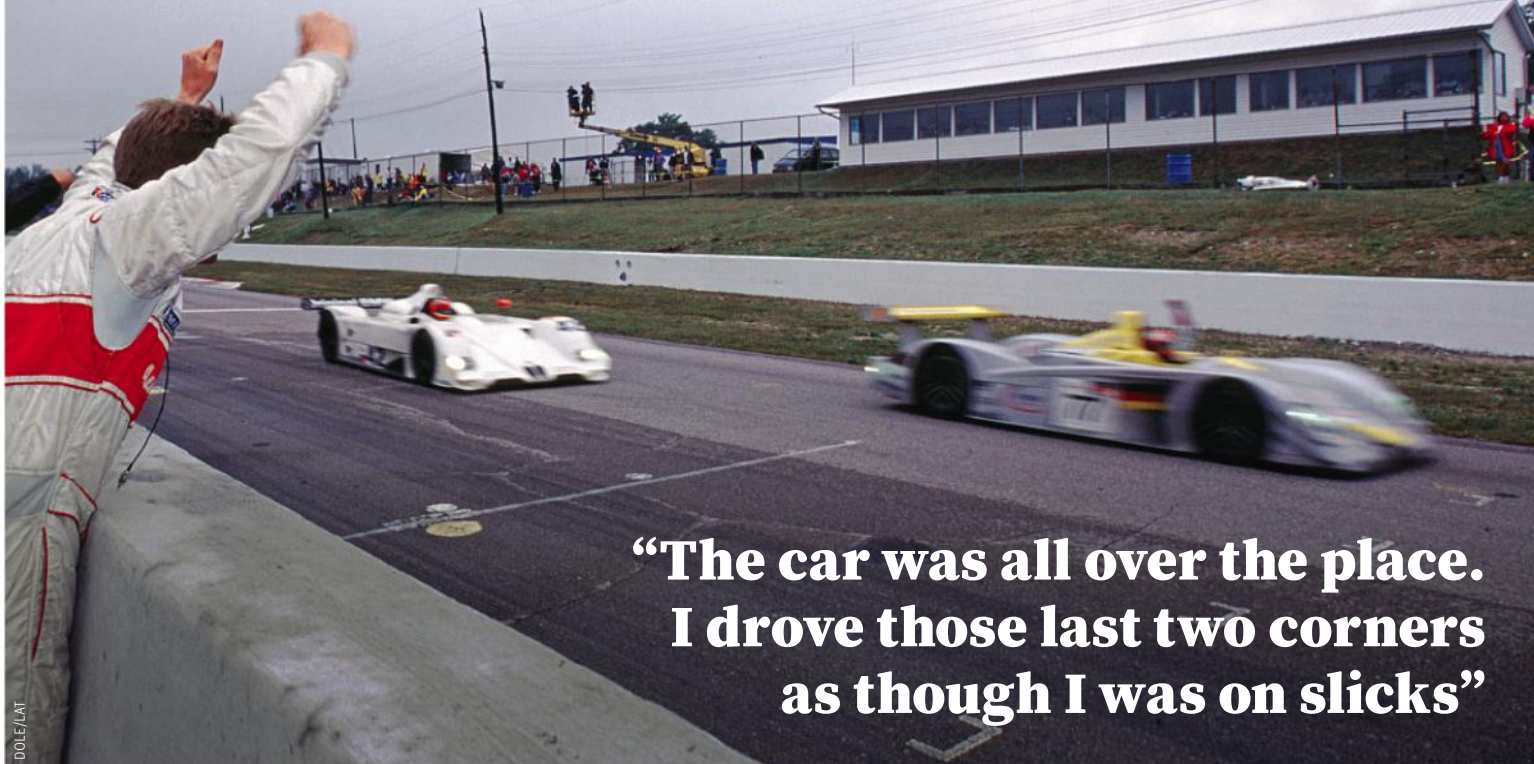
Muller, who shared the Schnitzer-run BMW with JJ Lehto, had opted

to change to slicks on a drying track with 20 minutes to go. And it looked like the tactic was going to work as he closed down the wet-shod Audi R8.

Muller took seven seconds out of Capello on the penultimate lap and, as he started the final tour four seconds

down, it looked like he'd done enough.

"I thought I had no chance," remembers Capello. "The car was all over the place, but Muller didn't catch me until Turn 9 on the final lap. I drove those last two corners as though I was on slicks."



**"The car was all over the place. I drove those last two corners as though I was on slicks"**



## Monza

### 2004

THERE WAS LITTLE TO CHOOSE between the two Veloqx Audis in the 2004 Le Mans Endurance Series opener at Monza. It was nip and tuck all the way, the outcome being decided by an opportunist manoeuvre during which Johnny Herbert took to the grass on the exit of the Ascari Chicane.

Herbert, who shared his R8 with Jamie Davies, was trailing Pierre Kaffer in the car started by Allan McNish three and a half hours into the race. The Briton knew he was quicker, but just had to find an opportunity to pass. He saw it coming when he spied a Ferrari GT1 car 200 yards up the road as they exited the second Lesmo.

"I knew he was going to catch the Ferrari on the exit of the chicane and

I needed to keep my momentum so I could get the run down to the Parabolica," recalls Herbert. "It was more or less planned and I thought that I'd have to put a couple of wheels on the grass as I went around the outside of the Ferrari."

Kaffer had to jink inside the GT car, but the Ferrari didn't move left quite as much as Herbert was expecting.

"I knew the grass was flat and no drop

from the kerb, so I changed up early to avoid spinning up the wheels, just kept my foot in and put all four off the track," continues Herbert. "The grass, as I'd hoped, was like a bowling green and my momentum allowed me to pass."

But the race wasn't over. A late rain storm gave McNish the chance to come back at Herbert. He caught the leader, despite two offs at the first chicane, to finish a scant six tenths behind.



# Sebring

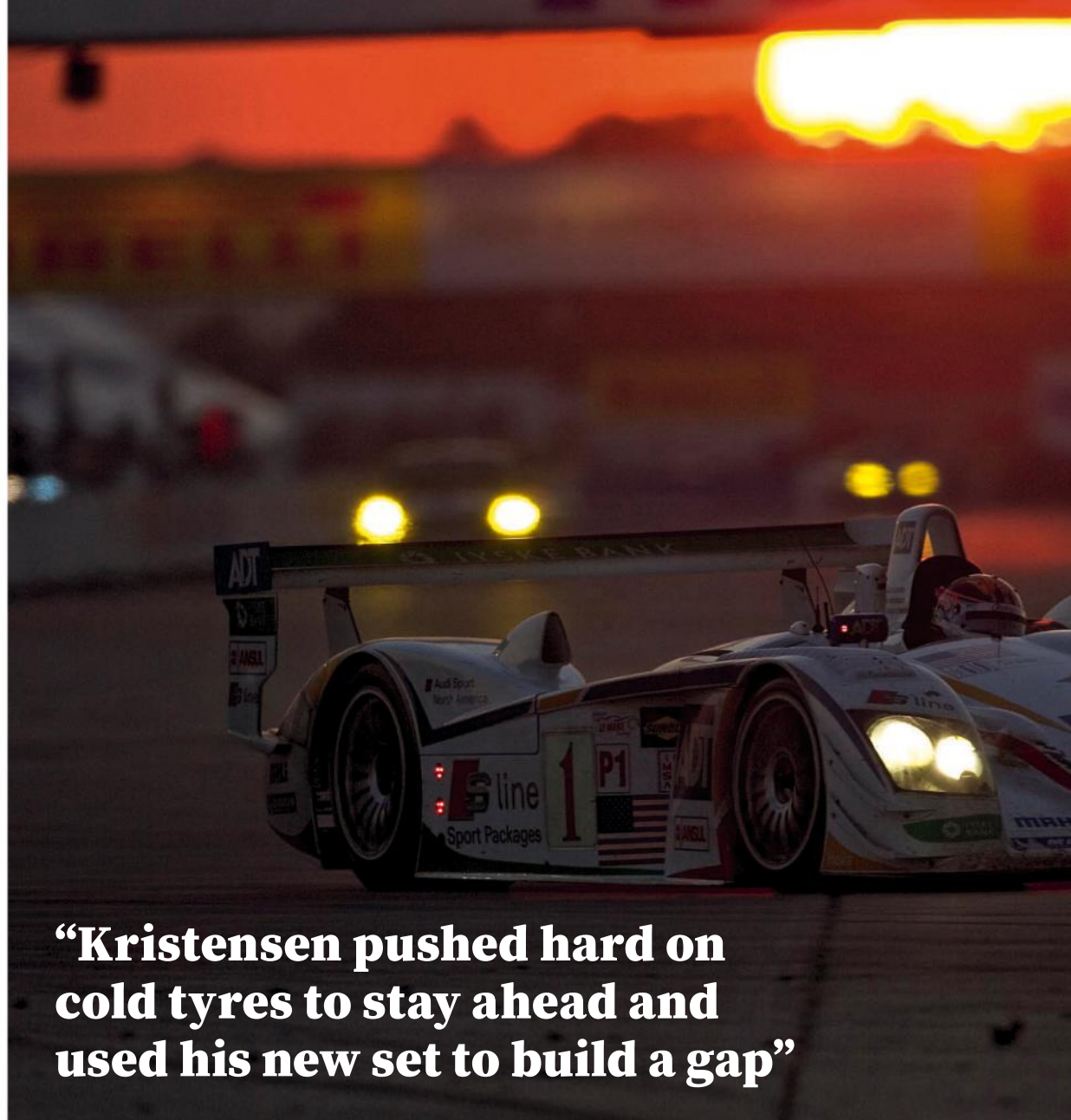
2005

THIS WAS AN ENTIRELY INTERNECINE Audi affair, but the battle fought out between the two greatest sportscar drivers of their generation made it a classic. And for many it is the greatest Sebring 12 Hours.

There was little to choose between the two Champion Racing Audi R8s with driver line-ups led by Tom Kristensen and Allan McNish at Sebring in 2005. It was a thriller that could have gone either way, but it ultimately turned on a tactical masterstroke on the part of Brad Kettler and Mike Peters in the pit of the winning #1 car Kristensen shared with Marco Werner and JJ Lehto.

Werner had a 12-second lead over McNish when he handed over to Kristensen, who was on course to lose the lead at the next round of stops because he would need a new set of tyres and his pursuer wouldn't. But Champion opted to short-fuel the leading car. Somewhere between seven and nine seconds were saved, which – combined with a delay for McNish caused by an errant camera crew – resulted in Kristensen coming out with a couple of seconds in hand.

Kristensen pushed hard on cold tyres to stay ahead and then used the advantage of his new set of Michelins to build a gap. "Whoever was on new tyres was absolutely flying in the cool conditions," remembers the Dane. The advantage was reversed at the next stop and McNish came back at the leader on fresh rubber, but the damage had been done and he fell short by a shade over six seconds.



**“Kristensen pushed hard on cold tyres to stay ahead and used his new set to build a gap”**



# Le Mans

2008

WAS THIS THE BIGGEST HEIST IN the history of the Le Mans 24 Hours? Possibly, because Audi really did steal victory from Peugeot.

Peugeot's 908 HDi was the faster car, at least in the dry, but Audi's forecast said rain was coming. It knew its chance might come on a wet track; it just needed to stay in contention until then.

"We gambled everything from the start," recalls McNish. "We were on

the limit in every way to try to hang on to the Peugeots. We were even going onto the safety car fuel map from Karting [now Chevrolet Curve] to make sure we went a lap longer than we should have."

Audi was still in touch when the rain came, but McNish and his team-mates

were never quite in control of the race.

"I remember looking at the strategies of the two cars on the computer and the two lines were basically on top of each other after 24 hours," explains McNish. "Tom was in the car at the end and I have never been so nervous."



## Le Mans

2006

AUDI'S DECISION TO RETURN TO Le Mans as a factory with turbodiesel technology was a step in the dark. No one had built a bespoke diesel racing engine before and many – some of the manufacturer's suppliers included – didn't believe it was possible. Audi proved the doubters wrong with the R10 TDI, but it wasn't as easy as the 2006 results might suggest.

The new R10 carried a serious glitch with the fuel injection electronics through pre-Le Mans testing into race week. So much so that Audi Sport engine boss Ulrich Baretzky was in constant contact with supplier Bosch during race week.

"Every morning out in the car park we were having a conference call to Bosch in Stuttgart," he recalls. "We knew what the problem was, but we didn't know how to fix it."

So pessimistic was Audi that it opted to stick with a pair of engines that seemed to have the least problems. It took the unprecedented step, according to its own practices at the time, of running one engine per car through the two qualifying days and into the race. It was a case of better the devil you know.

Fuel injection problems did rear their head in the race, delaying the car shared by Tom Kristensen, Allan McNish and Rinaldo Capello. But the sister car came through to take a four-lap victory in the hands of Emanuele Pirro, Frank Biela and Marco Werner.



DOLE/LAT



FERARRO/LAT

## Petit Le Mans

2008

VICTORY FOR AUDI, AT LEAST THE R10 TDI SHARED BY ALLAN McNish, Rinaldo Capello and Emanuele Pirro, looked unlikely half an hour or so before the start of the Petit Le Mans 1000-mile race at Road Atlanta in 2008. The #1 Audi R10 TDI was in the paddock for repairs after McNish looped it into the wall on his reconnaissance lap. Yet it came back to beat Peugeot in a thriller.

The car started the race two laps late after the repairs. It was quickly up onto the lead lap, only to fall back in the middle of the race. McNish was still a lap down on the solo Peugeot 908 HDi of Nicolas Minassian, Stephane Sarrazin and Christian Klien when he got back in the car for the final time.

The race turned during the penultimate safety car. Audi brought McNish into the pits twice, once for fuel and once for rubber, a tactic that clawed back the lead deficit.

"I remember I could see the leader for the first time," recalls McNish. "That was when I actually started to think about winning the race. For whatever reason, the car was understeering like a pig – probably because I'd clouted the wall, and it was definitely a bit better on the soft tyre."

McNish had to pass two LMP2 cars and team-mate Marco Werner before beginning the chase of Klien. McNish made it past after getting the better run out of Turn 5 and then used the traffic and the full width of his R10 to stay ahead.



DOLE/LAT



# Sebring

2009

THE R15 TDI AND ITS DERIVATIVES ARE the forgotten Audi prototypes. They weren't the most successful, but the debut of the car at the 2009 Sebring 12 Hours suggested a bright future for the ugly duckling of the German manufacturer's line of LMP machinery.

Yet the R15 didn't look as though it was going to notch up a debut victory in the American Le Mans Series opener that year. The Peugeot 908 HDi looked to be in control of the race.

That is until night fell and with it the temperatures.

The Peugeots, which went two stints on a set of Michelins right through the race, had the edge on the single-stinting Audis during the daylight hours. The balance changed as day turned to night. The R15 came alive and the car driven by Allan McNish, Tom Kristensen and Rinaldo Capello started to put pressure on the French cars.

"Everyone slates the R15, but at Sebring that year I had the best-balanced sportscar I've had in my career," recalls McNish. "It was the

first time I'd ever gone around the outside of someone at Turn 1. You have to have a lot of confidence in the machinery underneath you to do that."

Victory still appeared to be a long shot for McNish and his team-mates as the race entered its final phase. And not only because the Audi would need a late splash of fuel, whereas the Peugeot out front shared by Sebastien Bourdais, Franck Montagny and Stephane Sarrazin would not.

"I remember getting in for my final stint and 'H' [engineer Howden Haynes] came on the radio and said,

'Allan, Bourdais has just done a 43.5s', and I had done a 45.2 or something up to that point – and had been straining my nuts to do that.'

But the Audi liked the soft-compound Michelin more than the Peugeot and McNish set about building the lead of 50 or so seconds he would need to be able to make a late splash-dash stop.

He was just 36s ahead of the Peugeot when it exited the pits for the final time with Montagny at the wheel, but after a string of laps below the pole mark, the Scot had the lead up to more than a minute.

**"Everyone slates the R15, but at Sebring  
I had the best-balanced sportscar  
I've had in my career"**





## Le Mans

2011

THREE YEARS AFTER ITS CLASSIC 2008 victory, Audi pulled off an equally dramatic victory over Peugeot in very different circumstances.

The Audi R18 TDI was equally matched with the second-generation Peugeot 908, but it was going one lap fewer around Le Mans on each tank of diesel. What's more, two of the German manufacturer's entries were out of the race early, leaving its victory hopes on the shoulders of Andre Lotterer, Benoit Treluyer and Marcel Fassler.

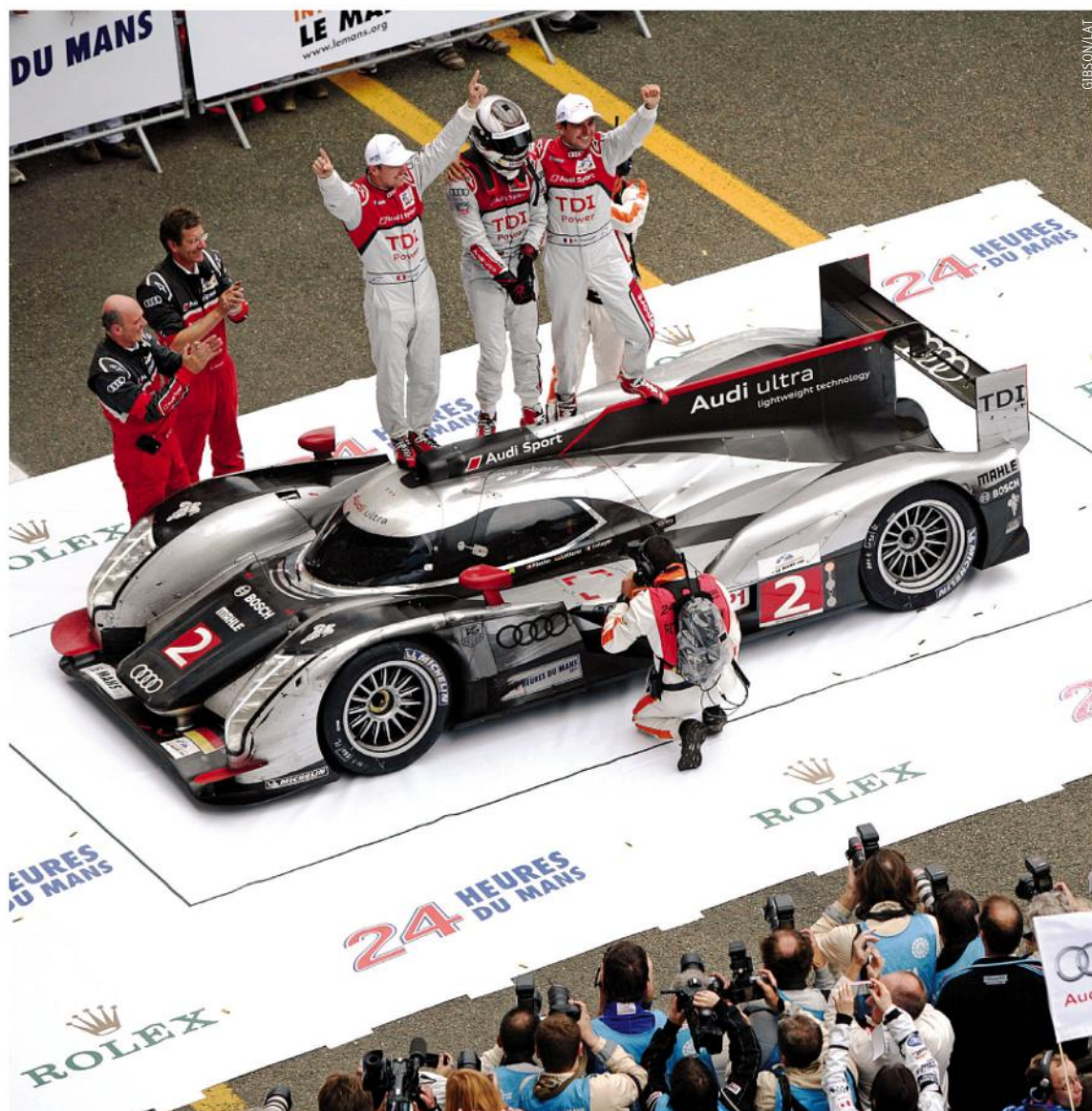
"It was flat-out all the way and I think we changed lead over 40 times," recalls Lotterer. "It was a thriller."

The Audi ended up triumphing over the Peugeot shared by Sebastien Bourdais, Pedro Lamy and Simon Pagnaud by just 13s. What's more, Lotterer had been just six seconds ahead after the final round of stops.

Joest Racing boss Ralf Juttner picks 2011 as his favourite Le Mans victory. "I was less involved in the running of the car that year and seemed to spend most of my time in the stewards' room," he recalls. "We managed to get away with no penalties whatsoever even when we did things that I was sure would get us a drivethrough or a stop/go."

"We had overtaking in the pitlane – Mr Lotterer. Overtaking with all four wheels off the track – Mr Treluyer. And we got away with all of them. Just one penalty would probably have cost us the race."

"I regard that one as *my* Le Mans win. I thought after that race that I should have become a lawyer."



GIBSON/LAT



XPBIMAGES

## Silverstone

2015

AUDI HAD THE FASTEST CAR AT THE 2015 WORLD Endurance Championship opener at Silverstone. But the Porsche 919 Hybrid had the advantage in terms of hybrid power. And it made for a fantastic spectacle.

The latest Audi R18 e-tron quattro was racing in the four-megajoule hybrid class, while Porsche had just moved up to 8MJ for its second year back in the top class. That would make overtaking difficult.

The race came to a head in a thrilling battle leading up to the halfway point of the six-hour encounter. Marcel Fassler moved the #7 Audi onto the tail of leader Neel Jani in the #18 Porsche. He could pass, but he couldn't make it stick.

Andre Lotterer, who shared the Audi with Fassler and Benoit Treluyer, caught Romain Dumas on the Porsche driver's second lap after taking over the car and hung him out wide on the exit of Village.

"It was a little bit cheeky, but I had to make him lose momentum," recalls Lotterer. "I knew that if I was still in front by the time we got to Copse and then Becketts, I would be away."

Lotterer took third, behind the two Toyotas, which had double-stinted their tyres, and was gone.



# Is this the greatest junior grid of all time?

Schumacher and Hakkinen had the headline battle, but buried in the field of the 1990 Macau Grand Prix was a galaxy of future stars

By Marcus Simmons, Deputy Editor

[@MarcusSimmons54](#)

**M**ichael Schumacher led Mika Hakkinen past the old pits for the last time, and the Finn, surfing the crest of a wave after winning the British Formula 3 Championship, was tucked right in the slipstream of the German F3 champion. That, thought the West Surrey Racing team that ran Hakkinen, was surely enough to give him Macau Grand Prix victory.

Back then Macau was very different. The start-finish line was after the Reservoir kink – rather than before, as it is today – and the event was run to an aggregate of a two-heat format. Hakkinen had 2.66 seconds in his pocket – the margin by which he'd beaten Schumacher in the first part. All he had to do was sit right behind the WTS Motorsport man. And off they headed into the kink then known as Yacht Club Bend, now Mandarin Oriental...

"They went out of sight at 'Mandarin,'" recalls WSR boss Dick Bennetts, whose team as usual in Macau bore Marlboro Team Theodore branding in deference not only to its drivers' regular tobacco sponsorship, but the Theodore patronage of Macau GP godfather Teddy Yip. "There was a sudden, huge cheer from the crowd.

I thought, 'Something's going on, he's got back past Michael', and suddenly I ran upstairs – we didn't have a TV on the pitwall – and here's our Marlboro car in the Armco..."

Hakkinen had tried an ill-advised move on Schumacher, who moved to block. The impact sent Hakkinen ricocheting into the barrier on the left, before bouncing back towards the right. Out of the Ralt-Mugen Honda sprang its desolate driver, punching the Armco with his fist. On sped Schumacher, the rear wing of his Reynard-Volkswagen seriously damaged – but with only one lap remaining there was enough of a buffer for him to be able to hang on.

It was a famous victory, one made more famous still in hindsight by the stunning accomplishments in Formula 1 of the two main protagonists. Was this the greatest junior single-seater field of all time? Hakkinen-versus-Schumacher is a good place to start, but consider also the other future superstars among the 30-car field.

As it had in 1989, WSR brought Eddie Irvine back from Formula 3000 – at the behest of Marlboro – to partner Hakkinen. Also stepping back from F3000 was Heinz-Harald Frentzen, joining British F3 Championship runner-up Mika Salo at the Camel-liveried Alan Docking Racing. Rickard Rydell, who had starred in British F3000, was another F3 returnee, lining up with the Bertram Schafer Racing-run Volkswagen Motorsport. Fellow future touring car superstar Laurent Aiello switched from his regular French-championship mount to British team Bowman Racing, where current F3 team bosses Trevor Carlin and Anthony 'Boyo' Hieatt (Double R Racing) were on the staff. Italian F3 Championship frontrunner Alex Zanardi piloted his regular RC Motorsport Dallara, and French series ace Olivier Panis lurked way down the grid in his KTR Reynard. Add in top F3 pedallers such as Bowman's Steve Robertson and Philippe Adams, and then five further champions – Roberto Colciago (Italy), Eric Helary (France), Naoki Hattori (Japan), Fredrik Ekblom (Sweden) and Jo Zeller (Switzerland) – and you begin to understand how tough it must have been to pick the field.

"The choice was far greater then – we always went for the best we could get," explains Motor Race Consultants' Barry Bland, who from 1983 to 2015 built the race into junior single-seater racing's single most prestigious event. "There

were a lot more cars around than now, and one of the priorities was to always take every championship winner and work it back from there. The quality was very high and that was probably attributable to the fact that there were more championships and a lot

more cars. We had potentially 60 to choose from, so it's no surprise the majority of the drivers went on to greater things."

Hakkinen and Schumacher had also been selected as F3 rookies for participation in the previous Macau GP, and it is generally lost in the mists of time that Schumacher had been desperately unlucky not to win the 1989 event. With the country's predilection for sportscar and touring car racing, German F3 had been considered the poorer relation alongside the British, Italian and French championships. But, while Jo Winkelhock was winning the '88 German title for WTS, the team's co-founder Willi Weber – the 'W' from WTS – had discovered a rare talent in the form of Schumacher in the junior ranks, and signed him to a management contract. Engineer >>

**"There was a sudden, huge cheer – then I saw our car in the Armco"**









Schumacher held aloft by engineer Trella (left) and Weber

Klaus Trella — the ‘T’ of the team, with the ‘S’ standing for Stuttgart — ran Schumacher in ’89, and he narrowly lost out on the crown after a battle with Frentzen and eventual champion Karl Wendlinger. All three would form part of the new Mercedes junior team in Group C in 1990, but before then Frentzen and Schumacher starred in Macau, proving that the German championship was now at least the equal of the others.

“Heinz-Harald was in front, and Michael behind,” remembers Trella of the first heat of the 1989 Macau GP. “Heinz-Harald goes in the wall, and we win the first race. For the first heat Michael had older tyres, while for the second he had new [from the allocation of 14 for the weekend], so we saw it was no problem to win the second heat.

“After the first lap he had a big lead, and on the second lap it was the same, and the third the time difference was smaller. I could not see what the problem was. I saw the car was not so fast on the straight — it was OK in the city section, but on the straight he had a problem with top speed. He began losing places, and after the eighth lap he came to the pits and said, ‘I have no more gears — only first and fifth.’ They were broken. At the end of the second lap, he had broken third gear so he was having to go from second to fourth, and that was why he was losing time on the straight. On the monitor I couldn’t see that.”

Schumacher went on to win the German title in 1990, but it was possibly the appearance of interloper Hakkinen at the Hockenheim finale that allowed the WTS star to find further pace that would aid him in his quest for Macau. “Philip Morris Europe [the Marlboro parent company] were querying why they

were spending so much money on a driver doing British F3 when we had to cover up the branding [due to tobacco-advertising laws],” explains Bennetts. “So to prove a point, one of the bosses at Morris UK said, ‘Right, we’ll do a couple of European rounds with Mika and WSR and see how they get on.’

“We won the Italian round at Imola, and then we did Hockenheim. We had problems — we had a test on Friday and the thing was misfiring, and we’d spoken to a German team to ask about gear ratios and they were miles out. We were like 20th quickest, and it was embarrassing. We’d brought the Leyton House car [driven during the season by Minoru Tanaka], took every conceivable electrical component off it, we

rang Neil Brown [Mugen builder] about the engine, changed the gears, the set-up, the springs, the bars, and he went out on an old set of tyres on Saturday morning. He came back in, thumbs up, and went back out with new rubber.

“Meanwhile, Michael was sitting in the pits, arms folded, and of course Mika blitzed his pole time, and then we won the race by five seconds.”

Hakkinen’s pole lap on the old — ‘proper’ — Hockenheim was 1.01s quicker than Schumacher, who in turn had gone considerably quicker than he had done while taking pole for the early-season race at the same venue. “This was a very big, very fast circuit then,” says Trella. “Mika was very fast, and this situation I think made Michael two seconds faster.”

But still he wasn’t quite fast enough. On the first day of qualifying in Macau, Schumacher lapped 0.38s quicker than Otto Rensing’s 1989 pole time... but he was 1.12s slower than the extraordinary Hakkinen. “I think too many people are tense

**“Mika was very fast. This situation made Michael two seconds faster”**





and aggressive,” Hakkinen explained that evening. “They grab the wheel tight and they clench their teeth. But although my arms are hard and moving quick, the rest of my body is totally relaxed and that’s what helps me.”

“What we always say is, ‘Go carefully on your first day, just build your pace up slowly,’” explains Bennetts. “Mika didn’t know the word ‘slow’ and straight away got out there and on it. The problem in those days was you didn’t have proper data logging like now, and Mika’s feedback was difficult to interpret; you had to second-guess. But he had the raw talent – it was unbelievable.”

Schumacher closed the gap on day two, winning a fight with Aiello for the front row. But with the field split into two groups for qualifying, Hakkinen’s session was affected by oil on the track at Lisboa and Frentzen’s crashed Ralt at Maternity Bend – no red flags in those days – which dictated a less-than-ideal line. He felt he could have been a second quicker.

In heat one, Hakkinen and Schumacher both jumped forward before the start, and since Schumacher’s foot was still on the brake pedal at the crucial moment he was swallowed up by Irvine and Aiello. When Aiello had a moment under braking for R Bend, Schumacher was able to slipstream past into third. Then, when Irvine missed the apex at the narrow Police bend, Schumacher somehow squeezed his Reynard into a tiny gap to grab second at Moorish. He set off after Hakkinen who, to Bennetts’s anger, lifted off on the final lap and diminished his advantage going into the second heat.

“I said, ‘Mika, what did I say? Win by the safest, biggest margin you can and have something up your sleeve for race two in case you have a problem,’” says Bennetts. “So of course, in race two Michael slipstreams past him and... I’d explained to Mika, because we didn’t have radios in the cars, only the old-fashioned Peltor plug-ins when you’re stationary, ‘If Michael does get past you, as long as you stay within one >>

Devastated Hakkinen with PA commentary veteran Ian Titchmarsh

## THE GRID



1

**MIKA  
HAKKINEN**

Became a superstar of F1, taking two world titles with McLaren

2

**MICHAEL  
SCHUMACHER**

Colossus of F1; seven world crowns with Benetton and Ferrari

3

**LAURENT  
AIELLO**

Stunning tin-top career with Audi, Nissan and Peugeot; Le Mans win

4

**EDDIE  
IRVINE**

Runner-up in 1999 F1 standings as Schuey’s back-up at Ferrari

5

**RICKARD  
RYDELL**

Touring car superstar with Volvo, Ford, SEAT and Chevrolet

6

**ALEX  
ZANARDI**

Hero of Indycars – with two CART titles – and the Paralympics

7

**MIKA  
SALO**

Podium finisher in long F1 career followed by long sportscar stint

8

**GIUSEPPE  
BUGATTI**

Took a podium as an F3000 rookie but career never took off

9

**ERIC  
HELARY**

Le Mans winner with Peugeot; Spa 24 Hours victor with BMW

10

**PETER  
ZAKOWSKI**

Brief DTM stint; now Zakspeed’s ADAC GT Masters team boss

11

**JEROME  
POLICAND**

Long sportscar career; now runs ASP team in Blancpain GT

12

**STEVE  
ROBERTSON**

Won Indy Lights title, then managed Button and Raikkonen

13

**PHILIPPE  
ADAMS**

Briefly got to F1 with Lotus, then decent tin-top career in Belgium

14

**NAOKI  
HATTORI**

Raced many years at top level in Japan, also competed in Indycars

↓ Grid continues on next spread





## “The underwing was broken on Michael’s car. It went up at an angle of 30 degrees”

second, you’ve won the Macau Grand Prix.”

But Hakkinen wanted to win on the road too. The pace of Schumacher and Hakkinen was astonishing. Hakkinen set a fastest lap even quicker than his pole time, and a whole four seconds faster than David Brabham’s best on the way to winning the previous year, but his was a desire that had terrible consequences. “When he came back he was in tears, poor bloke, and I actually gave him a bollocking,” says Bennetts. “He just chucked it away.”

Further down the pitlane, WTS was celebrating. The Reynard 903 Schumacher drove was renowned in the UK as a poor car – it lost the constructor pretty much all its customers for 1991 – but it had a very quick Spiess-tuned VW engine. “Mika had a better car, a little bit faster,” says Trella, “which was not a problem to overtake us.

“The problem was... Mika looked to his left, Michael goes left and then right and it was too late. He touched the front wing on Michael’s rear wing and crashed. The underwing was broken on Michael’s car, on the right side. The left was OK but the wing went up at an angle of 30 degrees.”

Was Trella surprised that Schumacher coped with this for one lap? “It was no problem,” he says. “To the next car was a big, big difference. Between five and eight seconds, so no problem for one lap.”

“I think he was crazy,” Schumacher said in the immediate aftermath. “Nobody takes anybody on the last lap, not without a fight. I spent the whole race thinking he would win, so I’m even more delighted now.” A desolate Hakkinen replied: “I am



disappointed with what he did – it’s shocking when you’re going at nearly 150mph. I was very surprised when he changed the line. I knew I had an excellent chance to pass, but he moved inside me. I thought I was going to die.”

Bennetts had no sympathy. “There was a big argument afterwards,” he says. But I said, ‘Back to principles, Mika – you didn’t have to pass him.’”

Even with the damage, Schumacher finished eight seconds clear of second-placed Aiello, who had thoroughly disproved the conventional wisdom that his wet Monaco GP support-race win had been a fluke. Unlike compatriot Hakkinen, Salo was canny and sat dutifully behind Aiello, knowing his first-heat advantage was enough for second on aggregate.

Irvine was also close enough behind to demote Aiello to fourth in the overall result. Completing the top six were Rydell and Zanardi, after Frentzen’s charge from his qualifying crash-enforced poor grid position came to an end when his car began jumping out of third gear. What a remarkable collection of future racing superstars.

Bland doesn’t recall thinking that year was particularly special, saying, “They all sort of mix together in a haze! It’s five-plus years on when you see how good they are.” But he does recall the spectacular denouement of the lead battle: “Did he [Schumacher] brake-test him as karters do? There was an awful lot of talk that he’d just backed off a little bit, otherwise Hakkinen wouldn’t have run into the back of him, but Hakkinen should have used his brain properly.”

What made the shunt even more aggravating for WSR was that the following weekend the field was in action again, this time at Fuji in Japan. A prize fund of £20,000 had been on offer for anyone doing the Far East double, and Hakkinen had not





only thrown that away but he'd also given his team a lot of work by destroying the chassis – not to mention having to re-livery the car for its Japan-only Casio backing.

It was a tough time between driver and team. Hakkinen had won the European Opel Lotus title with Dragon Motorsport in 1988 and had a difficult season with the same team in British F3 in '89. But he had Keke Rosberg advising him, and Rosberg had been run by Bennetts when the Kiwi worked for Fred Opert Racing in Formula Atlantic and F2 in the 1970s. Even when it wasn't certain that Hakkinen would retain Marlboro backing, Rosberg promised Bennetts he would underwrite a season with WSR if necessary. His protege went on to deliver in Britain, but not Macau...

"I gave him a real hard time because a) he'd written off the chassis and b) he'd lost that year's special prize," says Bennetts. "That £20,000 was massive for F3. And it wasn't until we checked in to the hotel in Fuji... Mika had a telex, and I said I'd take it to his room, so I had a nosey and it was from the Lotus F1 team, and then suddenly the penny dropped. He was trying to impress at Macau by winning both races and beating Schumacher, because he was in dialogue with Lotus F1."

With a swarm of extra cars – mainly from Japanese F3 – joining the field at Fuji, it was run as two heats and a final. Schumacher won – and claimed the big double-header prize money – after a seesaw slipstreaming battle in the final with the underrated Robertson. Hakkinen crashed early in his heat, and sat out the final. An ignominious end to a glittering season, as he watched Schumacher's star rise yet further.

"Mika was not so strong as before," says Trella, who draws comparisons with Hakkinen's famous tears-at-Monza gaffe in 1999. "He was broken in the head." ❧

Hakkinen was super-fast, but lost victory to wingless Schumacher (bottom left pic)

15

**JACQUES ISLER**

Swiss rocker focused on his instrument-importing business

16

**KLAUS PANCHYRZ**

Finished second in Monaco F3 1991; raced tin-tops for a while

17

**MAX ANGELELLI**

Big star in the States with Daytona 24 and Grand-Am victories

18

**NAOHIRO FURUYA**

Did Japanese F3000 before long innings in Super GT series

19

**ROBERTO COLCIAGO**

Just resumed touring car career, claiming 2016 TCR Italy crown

20

**HEINZ-HARALD FRENTZEN**

F1 race winner – and title contender – of the late 1990s

21

**JO ZELLER**

F3 junkie still going strong at helm of his Jo Zeller Racing team

22

**PEDRO CHAVES**

Disastrous F1 stint with Coloni preceded national rally success

23

**HISASHI WADA**

Still takes to the cockpit today in Super GT at age of 54

24

**OTTO RENSING**

Big German hope. Career ran out steam and now runs kart track

25

**OLIVIER PANIS**

F1 career highlighted by opportunist 1996 Monaco GP victory

26

**FREDRIK EKBLOM**

Swedish touring car star and Volvo loyalist is still a force

27

**OLIVIER BERETTA**

Brief F1 career preceded numerous titles in sportscars

28

**CHRIS SMITH**

Successful in Formula Atlantic in the States, winning 1992 title

29

**KEIICHI TSUCHIYA**

Came close to 1999 Le Mans victory, taking second with Toyota

30

**MIRKO SAVOLDI**

A dab hand in sportscars, winning FIA SR2 titles in 2002/03



BEHIND THE PSEUDONYMS

# THE MASKED







# CRUSADERS



It's often said that professional racing drivers are an egotistical bunch – but there are plenty who did their utmost to avoid the glare of publicity. Step forward, our pseudonymous racers...

By Charles Godfrey

[@WhoDoYouThinkYouAreKidding](#)

## JOHN WINTER



### A Winter's tale

THAT WELL-KNOWN STORY ABOUT THE IDENTITY of 'John Winter' being blown when his family spotted his photo in the newspapers is only half-right. They could barely have missed him up on the podium with Klaus Ludwig and Paolo Barilla after winning the 1985 Le Mans 24 Hours. But his relatives did know that 'Winter' – AKA Louis Krages (pictured left of the three below) – *had* raced in the past.

The late Krages, who was from a wealthy family of wood merchants in northern Germany, started competing covertly in domestic German events in 1977 with an alias that alluded to that business. 'Peter Wood' came clean when he moved up to the DRM Group 5 series the following season, but news of his racing exploits under his real name met with the manifest disapproval of his mother.

A new moniker was devised, apparently by Manfred Kremer from the Kremer team with which he raced from mid-season, and 'John Winter' was born. Krages opted to retain his alias even after he was outed eight years later. Only in his final season of racing in the DTM with the Zakspeed Mercedes team in 1995 did he use his own name again.





## CLAUDE QUENTIN

### Apartheid racers unmasked

A STRING OF PSEUDONYMS HAD TO BE INVENTED on the hoof ahead of the 1988 Kyalami 500Km non-championship sportscar race. The French government decided it was going to get tough on anyone breaking the United Nations sporting embargo on apartheid South Africa. And that's why you'll find the names 'Claude Quentin', 'John Romano' and 'Justin' on the entry list for that race and no others.

'Claude Quentin' was actually Le Mans veteran Claude Ballot-Lena, while his team-mate Jean-Louis Ricci opted for 'John Romano'. Jean-Claude Justice, another stalwart of the sportscar scene, came up with the less-imaginative 'Justin' for his weekend moniker.

There was also a mysterious 'Sumre', sometimes referred to as 'Jean Sumre', in the race aboard a Chamberlain-run Spice-Hart Group C2 car. Team owner Hugh Chamberlain has no recollection of this person, and nor does his team-mate that weekend, Nick Adams.

There's a suggestion that the real name of 'Sumre' was Jean or John Summer. Another theory is that he was actually Patrick Oudet or Jean Messaoudi, two Le Mans regulars. Answers on a postcard please.

## JJ LEHTO

### Who invented 'JJ Lehto'?

IT'S NO SECRET THAT THE REAL NAME OF 'JJ Lehto' is Jyrki Jarvilehto; it was emblazoned on his self-run Reynard when he pitched up at the Formula Ford Festival in November 1986. That was half the problem. "It took up half the car," he says.

The idea of changing his name, though, came from the management team that signed up the Finn shortly after he'd rounded off a phenomenal season in an unfashionable Reynard 86FF. Victories in the Finnish and EFDA series, plus a starring performance in the Festival, had attracted the attention of ex-Formula 1 world champion Keke Rosberg and his business manager, Ortwin Podlech.

"It was actually Ortwin who came up with the idea, because he couldn't say 'Jyrki Jarvilehto' properly," recalls Lehto (pictured right). "We decided on the 'JJ' bit because my middle name is Jyka."

Exactly when the switch was made isn't clear. Lehto thinks it was ahead of his successful season of Formula Ford 2000 in Britain and Europe with Pacific Racing in 1987. Reports in Autosport appear to disagree: he was still being referred to as Jarvilehto until mid-season.

After that he was always 'JJ Lehto' – and it said so on his licence – through a career that took him to F1 and a pair of Le Mans victories.



'Tony Nickname' was not supposed to be a pseudonym



## ANTON SOBRIQUET

### The curious case of 'Tony Nickname'

IT STARTED OFF AS A KIND OF WORKING TITLE, but somehow it stuck. Tony Smedley began calling himself 'Anton Sobriquet' in his mind while making preparations to graduate to British Formula 3 in 1984 and ended up deciding that he quite liked it.

"I decided I wanted to race under a pseudonym, but couldn't think of one," recalls Smedley. "The name 'Anton Sobriquet' started out as a bit of joke. But it had a certain ring to it, so I kept it."

And he stayed with it right through two years in the Class B ranks of British F3 in 1984 and '85. Smedley, an insolvency practitioner at the time, opted to compete under a pseudonym for professional reasons.

"I had a professional practice at the time and didn't want people to think that I was promoting it through my racing," recalls Smedley. "I adopted Anton as my alter ego. It was such a change from what I did in the week that I found it really refreshing being 'Anton Sobriquet'."

"I think I actually preferred being Anton to Tony."





LAT

## JAMES BALD



### The bald truth

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW WHO HAS RACED under the most pseudonyms during their career. That's not actually the point, is it? But Fritz Glatz had the distinction of using four different monikers, all with the same meaning.

Each of the surnames of the quartet of aliases employed by the Austrian through a 25-year amateur career meant 'bald'. In fact, the first he used was 'James Bald', which he employed while racing a BMW M1 in the DRM and elsewhere in 1980. He subsequently opted for Italian, French and German variations on the theme with 'Umberto Calvo' in F3, 'Pierre Chauvet' in Formula 2 and Formula 3000, and finally 'Frederico Careca' in Interserie and EuroBOSS.

The reason for his choice was simple, explains Walter Lechner, who ran Glatz in F3 in 1981: "His family ran a big trading business



LAT

and his father objected to him racing, so he didn't want anyone back in Vienna to know about it.

"He chose names that meant bald because, like me, he was bald. I don't know why he kept changing the language. We never discussed it."

**Fritz Glatz raced under four linguistic versions of the name 'Bald'**



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## STINGBRACE



### Hotel man checks back in

STEFANO SEBASTIANI HAD RACED REGULARLY IN Italy – and contested the Targa Florio road race on multiple occasions – under his own name in the 1970s, but he took a break from the cockpit when he landed a job as general manager of the venerable five-star Berkeley Hotel in London at the end of the decade. When he fancied a return to the tracks in Britain, he knew he faced a problem.

“My position as general manager at the Berkeley Hotel was a very senior one for someone who was only in his thirties,” recalls Sebastiani. “The chairman of the Savoy group, Sir Hugh Wontner, even told me to tell people I was a few years older. He didn’t have a problem with me racing, but he was old-fashioned and didn’t want to face any criticism

if something happened, so he asked if I could change my name.

“Because I wanted to race in Britain, I came up with ‘Stingbrace’, which means ‘Stefano in Great Britain Race’. It’s that simple.”

‘Stingbrace’ started racing again in 1984 aboard his own Chevron B36 Group 6 in Thundersports, ultimately switching to a March 827 Can-Am beast, before graduating to world championship sportscar events in Group C machinery. He even became an entrant of sorts, racing a Spice in the World Sports-Prototype Championship under the Berkeley Team London banner, while retaining his pseudonym.

Sebastiani still holds a licence in the name of ‘Stingbrace’, though these days it’s issued by the Italian federation rather than the MSA in the UK.

‘Stingbrace’ worked for a respectable London hotel whose proprietor did not wish to be associated with his on-track exploits

## PIERRE LEVEGH



### A kind of Mors code

THE LE MANS EXPLOITS OF ‘PIERRE LEVEGH’ – or simply ‘Levegh’ – are well known. He was on course to win the 1953 race in a solo attempt aboard a Talbot-Lago T26GS when a missed gear resulted in a broken engine, and in 1955 he died when his Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR crashed into the crowd, killing more than 80 people. But less well known is how Pierre Bouillin ended up with his pseudonym.

Bouillin was an all-round sportsman who took his alias from his uncle, a pre-World War I racer. He was regaled as a child by tales of Pierre Veghle and his antics behind the wheel of a Mors in the 1901 Coupe Internationale, and fashioned his alias from the same letters.

Why he chose to hide his identity, and why he opted to use his uncle’s name in anagram form, have been lost in the mists of time.





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## NOSHUN-TING

Take it away...

ALEX POSTAN RECKONS HE “TRAINED A LOT OF future world champions in the art of lapping backmarkers” over an ongoing 40-year career that has encompassed British F3 and a single start at Le Mans. That sense of humour is where his short-lived racing moniker of the late 1970s – ‘Noshun-Ting’ – came from.

Having noted that many of his rivals had something called sponsorship when he was racing a Royale RP24 in Formula Ford 1600, he decided to cover his car in Chinese lettering. “I claimed I had sponsorship from my local takeaway,” he says. The next step was to replace his name on the side of the car with that of the mythical ‘Noshun-Ting’.

Postan doesn’t remember actually applying for a racing licence under that comical name. He does, however, recall Brands Hatch commentator Brian Jones liking the joke – recognising the homage to 1930s music-hall star ‘Nosmo King’ – and mentioning him by his alias over the PA.

The Briton wasn’t the first driver with a moniker intended to make people laugh. Lucien Langlois, who raced at Le Mans in the 1930s, called himself ‘Jacques Seylair’. Say it correctly and it sounds just like *j’accelere*.

**“‘Noshun-Ting wasn’t the first driver with a moniker intended to make people laugh”**



Postan’s mythical Chinese sponsor led to his brief racing alias



‘Pal Joe’ raced in this Osella in 1980

## PAL JOE

More friends than Gianfranco

THERE’S A RICH SEAM OF PSEUDONYMS RUNNING through the Italian motor racing scene of the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s. Think of ‘Geki’ and ‘Gimax’ – two drivers who just about made it to Formula 1 – and the likes of ‘Apache’, ‘The Tortoise’, ‘Ben Hur’ and ‘Mickey Mouse’. And then there was ‘Pal Joe’, a handy European Touring Car driver who ultimately reverted to his given name of Gianfranco Palazzoli when he became team manager of the Osella F1 squad.

Palazzoli, like most adoptees of a pseudonym from Italy, wanted to keep his racing secret from his family – including his wife!

“I just thought it would be easier, so that’s where ‘Pal Joe’ came from,” Palazzoli recounts. “I’d seen the film *Pal Joey* – based on the Broadway musical *Pal Joe* – and liked it. And given that my surname starts with ‘Pal’ and Gianfranco is Giovanni Franco, it fitted well. It didn’t take me very long to think of it.”

The disguise wasn’t quite as good as he had thought, however.

“I was unmasked when I won a race at Vallelunga and left without going to the prizegiving. Someone came round to my house with the trophy!” explains Palazzoli. “Once my secret was out, I thought that I might as well race under my own name, but then when I tried to do that, many race organisers said, ‘Nobody has ever heard of you, but they *have* heard of Pal Joe.’ So it stuck!”





## JOHN B-AND-Q



### Don't just do it, B&Q it

WHEN THE LATE JOHN BATCHELOR WAS LOOKING for the money to graduate from the club ranks to Ford Fiestas on the TOCA package, his search didn't start far from home. The idea of approaching the well-known food brand with which he shared his name ultimately set him on the path to two changes of name by deed poll.

Long-time British Touring Car Championship commentator Alan Hyde, who got to know Batchelor well when he made him York City's stadium announcer on his acquisition of the football club in 2002, takes up the story: "He went to Batchelor's and said, 'You should sponsor me because we've got the same name.' He got nowhere with them, but that was where

the seed was sown. He thought that if he didn't have the same name as a sponsor, he could rectify that by deed poll."

Thus John Batchelor became 'John Top Gear' for his assault on the Fiesta one-make series in 2000. The deal was not with the TV show, but with the spin-off magazine of the same name, though what the arrangement involved – and if any money changed hands – isn't clear.

Batchelor went back to the deed-poll office for his move to the BTCC with his own team and a pair of Honda Integras in 2001. This time he became 'John B-and-Q' in deference to the B&Q DIY chain.

At one stage during his York City tenure, it was said he was planning to incorporate the names of 11 first-team players into a new moniker.

John Batchelor changed name twice by deed poll to suit racing sponsors

## WILLIE ECKERSLYKE



### An 'eck of a tricky one

SOUTHERNERS PROBABLY WON'T GET THE joke in the racing pseudonym 'Willie Eckerslyke', or at least it will require a bit of head scratching. Your writer, born and bred in London, had to have it explained to him.

'Willie Eckerslyke' was the creation of historic and sportscar racer Nigel Moores, who chose to compete under an alias to avoid drawing attention to his membership of the family that owned the Littlewoods football pools. 'Paul Kelly', the name of his mechanic, was another pseudonym he used when racing.

**"Southerners probably won't get the joke in this pseudonym"**

Say it slowly, and you'll probably understand this piece of northern humour. Will-he-'eck-as-like! Geddit? A direct translation into a southerner's vernacular would probably involve the f-word.





Robert Manwaring gave up correcting people who thought his name was Rupert

## RUPERT MANWARING

### The memorable Rupert Manwaring

'RUPERT MANWARING' ISN'T A DRIVER, OF COURSE, but he has enjoyed a long and successful career in motorsport during which he had spells as team manager at Lotus, Tyrrell and Minardi. And all the while he's been going under a pseudonym.

Manwaring isn't actually Rupert at all. His name is, in fact, Robert. Rupert is an elongation of a nickname he acquired at the very start of his career. Manwaring had worked at Team Surtees in his holidays from university, and ended up landing a permanent job as a draughtsman at the Kent-based team in 1976. He quickly started running the production side of the team, which is where Rupert came from.

"I used to rush around the factory a lot, and the two machinists started calling me Super-Roo after a cartoon character of the time, which was a sort of bear in a cape. That was quickly shortened to Roo, which in turn sometimes became Roops."

That's where it might have ended had not Manwaring moved over to race-team duties early in the 1977 season.

"Jarama was my first race and someone from another team asked who the new guy was," continues Manwaring. "F1 was a lot smaller and more close-knit back then, so new faces stood out. They were told I was Roops. They presumed that was short for Rupert – and Rupert I became."

"For 18 months or so I tried to fight it, but in the end I gave up correcting people. I also realised that Rupert was more memorable than Robert."

There's a hilarious postscript to the story.

"There's a tradition in our family that the sons have the initials RLM," explains Manwaring. "My father was Ronald Luke Manwaring and I'm Robert Luke Manwaring. I thought I may as well make my son a real Rupert, so he's Rupert Luke Manwaring."

He's also working in motor racing: the real Rupert Manwaring is currently the fitness trainer to Toro Rosso driver Carlos Sainz Jr.

## WHY IT CAN'T HAPPEN TODAY

THE SAD NEWS IS THAT YOU CAN'T RACE UNDER A pseudonym at international level today. The FIA demands that the name on a driver's racing licence is the same as the one on his or her passport.

That's why the winner of this year's World Endurance Championship GTE Am class is Francois Perrodo (pictured below) and not 'Francois Glenmore' (pictured below). The Frenchman used that alias in the VdeV sportscar series in France, but was told he would have to race under his own name ahead of his graduation to the European Le Mans Series in 2013.

Alfonso Toledano Jr, son of the early 1980s star of British Formula Ford of the same name, had to become Alfonso Diaz Guerra for the same reason when he joined the Manor LMP2 squad for this year's Mexico City WEC round. That created the absurd situation of one name appearing on the entry list and a different one on the side of the car.



## KEEPING IT SECRET

THERE IS ANY NUMBER OF EXAMPLES OF TITLED RACING drivers opting for more manageable names to go on the side of the cockpit. Prince Birabongse Bhanudej Bhanubandh of Thailand competed as 'B Bira', while our own 'Johnny Dumbfries' was really John Crichton-Stuart. The Earl of Dumbfries before his accession as Marquis of Bute, he incorporated this into his pseudonym to help promote the illusion that he was a painter and decorator from London.

Two Parisian bankers raced together with a pair of matching pseudonyms at Le Mans in the 1930s. Pierre Louis-Dreyfus raced as 'Ano' and Antonie Schumann called himself 'Nime'. *Anonyme* in French means anonymous. Louis-Dreyfus would also compete as 'Helde' and, after fighting with the resistance during the second world war, as 'Ferret'.

Gunther Bechem competed in the World Drivers' Championship under his own name and using the pseudonym 'Bernhard Nacke'. The German's two starts came in his home grand prix at the Nurburgring, the first as Herr Nacke in 1952 and the second as Herr Bechem in '53.

Sometime Belgian tin-top driver Serge Vanbockryck paid homage to 'John Winter' with the pseudonym he used in the Belgian Touring Car Championship in the noughties. He raced as 'Bob Winter' after Bob Wollek and 'John Winter'. As well as being Chevrolet's racing's PR rep in Europe – hence his desire to keep his competition exploits aboard a Volkswagen low key – he happens to be a leading expert on the Porsche 956/962.

Novelist Nevil Shute didn't compete under a pseudonym as some believe. Nevil Norway, which he used when racing a Jaguar XK140 in Australia in the late 1950s, was actually his real name, and Nevil Shute was a literary *nom de plume* incorporating his real middle name.





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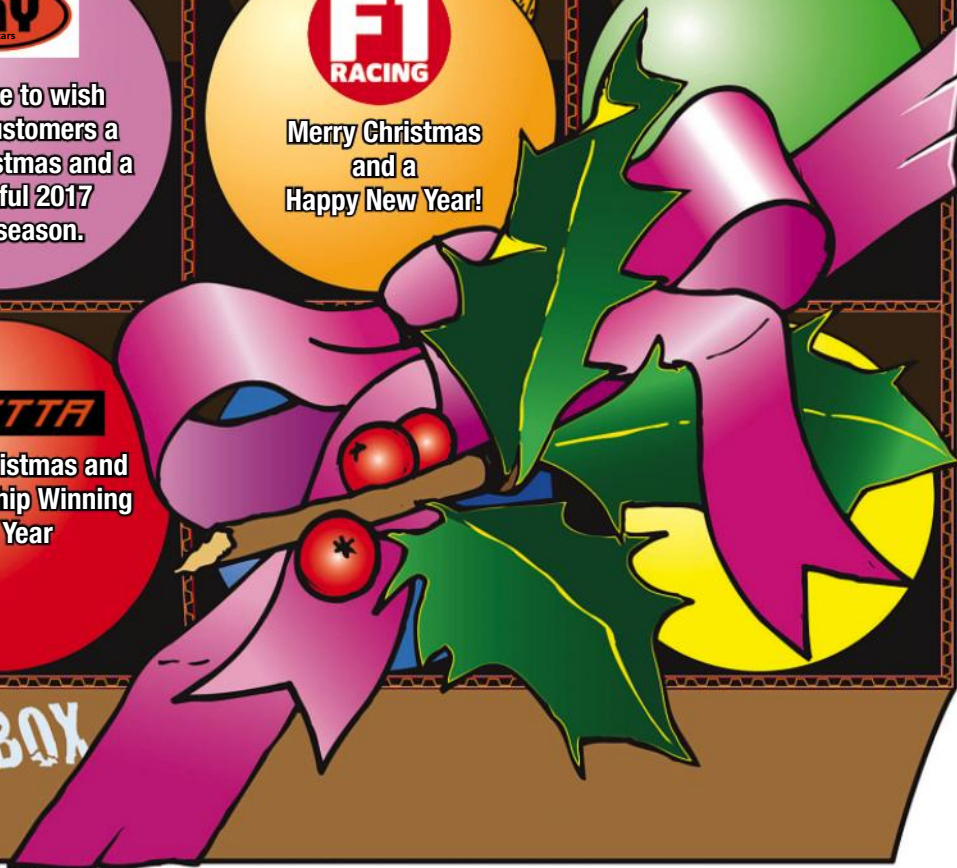
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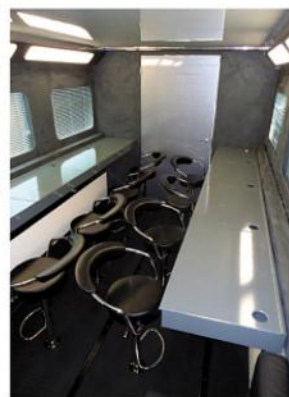
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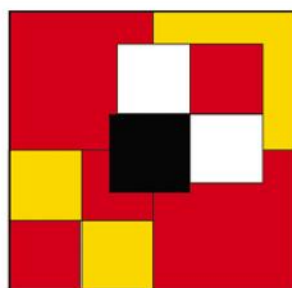
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TCR International has proved a hit, and could come to the UK

## TCR investigating launch of UK series

OFFICIALS WORKING WITH THE TCR International Series are investigating the viability of bringing the touring car formula to the UK.

TCR promoter Marcello Lotti confirmed to Autosport that the idea of launching a UK series was being discussed.

Since its launch as a low-cost formula in 2015, TCR has grown rapidly. After a successful first international season, series have started in Asia, the Benelux countries, Germany and Thailand over the past 12 months – while the regulations also form a basis of classes in other national series and events. Notably, the World Touring Car Championship will adopt modified TCR regulations (TCN2) in 2017.

TCR regulations are third in the FIA's tier of touring car technical regulations, below the WTCC's TC1 and NGTC British Touring Car Championship blueprints.

### Interest prompts investigation

While Lotti initially dismissed talk of bringing TCR to the UK given the popularity of the BTCC, interest in TCR made it an idea worth pursuing.

"We have some requests from different groups of people to establish TCR in the UK. I think it would not be before 2018, but nobody knows

– could be never, could be 2017," said Lotti.

"When these people called us, the first thing I said is, 'Look, you have a fantastic touring car championship [the BTCC] – I don't see there is space for a different touring car championship'.

"But the BTCC has works teams and TCR is for customers – maybe they can cooperate.

"We have two serious groups working on it and why not? If they have the credentials, we are happy to give the rights to it."

### Gow rules out place alongside BTCC

BTCC series director and Motor Sports Association chairman Alan Gow said a prospective TCR series would likely get an MSA permit, but ruled out any talk of cooperation between the BTCC and TCR.

"It's just a series like any other, so I don't see why it wouldn't get a permit if they fulfil all the normal criteria," he said. "Anyone can start a series in the UK. I can't remember the amount of saloon car series that have started over the last 20 years.

"Of course, it's not a threat to the BTCC. It's in a totally different [lower] league. It's a much more standard production-based formula, to a much lower level and profile than the BTCC. In fact, it's much like that SEAT Cupra Championship

we once had here and on which the TCR cars were actually originally based.

"Our support races are fully contracted for many years. I imagine they will have to look at somewhere like the British GT or suchlike to find a slot on a support-race programme. But, of course, I wish them luck."

### The difficulties facing TCR

One of the biggest challenges for any potential TCR series in the UK will be working out where it sits and marketing itself appropriately.

Establishing itself as a rival against the BTCC is likely to be tough, given its historic and current popularity, while the appetite in the UK for touring cars away from the BTCC is questionable. It must be remembered, too, that the UK has one of – if not the – most saturated motorsport markets in the world.

But TCR has had huge success in attracting manufacturers as well as demand from customers. That has spilled over into the UK being identified as a viable market for TCR to move into, and in pointing out the difference between the BTCC and TCR models, Lotti has recognised the key selling point that his concept can use to its strength.

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## FORMULARENAULT

# Fewtrell gets Tech 1 Eurocup deal

BRITISH FORMULA 4 CHAMPION MAX Fewtrell will step up to the Formula Renault Eurocup next season with Tech 1 Racing.

Fewtrell joined the French team for the series' rookie test at Estoril in October (pictured above).

The 17-year-old's move coincides with an increase in investment for the category from Renault, which has announced that the top two drivers in the 2017 standings will become members of the Renault Sport Academy.

"It's exciting news; I'm looking forward to it but it's going to be a challenge," said Fewtrell. "It's a really high-level championship and it's the best option around. The benefits of winning it are great and it would be good to have on your CV."

"It's a very attractive championship but it will be really hard racing against second-year drivers."

Fewtrell will aim to succeed 2016 champion Lando Norris in lifting the crown, but conceded that it would be tough to repeat the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner's feat in claiming the championship in his first year.

"A solid target would be top three [overall] but it's going to be hard," he said. "I want to win it, of course, but you have got to be realistic."

Fewtrell will be joined at Tech 1 by Australian Thomas Maxwell, who finished seventh in the 2016 BRDC British Formula 3 Championship, along with the returning Gabriel Aubry and series newcomer Thomas Neubauer.

Tech 1 has been a leading team in the series for many seasons. It ran Pierre Gasly on his way to the 2013 Eurocup crown, and Dorian Boccia to the '16 runner-up spot.

● Formula Renault race winner Will Palmer will return to the Eurocup for a second campaign in 2017. Palmer secured his first victory at the final round of the season at Estoril, and finished seventh in the points.

The 2015 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner will again link up with R-Ace GP.

"I'm delighted to be staying with R-Ace GP for a second season," said Palmer. "I've learnt a huge amount in my first year racing in Europe, and after a strong end to the year, as well as a very promising post-season testing programme, I'm very confident of fighting for the title."

"I worked well with R-Ace GP this year and I have absolute confidence in everyone in the team to give me the best opportunity possible to deliver next year."

## ROAD TO INDY

# Scholarship winner Askew praises UK racing for development

OLIVER ASKEW SAYS THE EXPERIENCE he gained while racing in the UK played a key role in his winning of the Mazda Road to Indy Shootout and \$200,000 towards a USF2000 campaign in 2017.

Askew, who won a place on the Team USA Scholarship to compete at the Formula Ford Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy, beat SuperSeries racer

Ollie White in the Road to Indy final race at Laguna Seca last Thursday to secure the scholarship fund to be used towards a step on the IndyCar ladder.

The 19-year-old was on course to score a podium at the FF Festival in what was only his fourth race in a car before a puncture curtailed his efforts. In his first drive in the wet, he was

second in the Walter Hayes final.

"Competing in the UK definitely helped in that last race," said Askew. "I had flashbacks to racing in England because it was the same, Ollie [White] has a lot of experience. The UK was incredible for me, I learned so much. Racing in the wet was another thing to get used to,

adapting to new situations and getting the best out of it."

Also competing in the MRTI final were BRSCC FF1600 champion Niall Murray, Team USA Scholarship driver Kyle Kirkwood, Canadian F1600 champion Trenton Estep and Australian Formula 4 title winner Will Brown.



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#### CARRERA CUP GB

## Wrigley switches to Carrera Cup

**GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP CHAMPION**  
Tom Wrigley will race in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB next year with In2 Racing.

Wrigley, 24, makes the move after already testing with the team. "I found it difficult at first, but the more I did I got to grips with the driving style," said Wrigley, who won the 2014 Kumho BMW title before moving to Ginettas.

In2 won the Pro-Am1 title with Euan McKay this year and team boss Nick Dudfield

added that Wrigley is set to be one of two Pro drivers in the line-up for 2017.

"Tom has caught the eye and I'm pleased with his pace in testing," he said. "He has achieved a decent amount in a short space of time. We are working to try and secure him a team-mate to help push him on."

Wrigley follows in the footsteps of 2015 Ginetta champion Tom Oliphant by switching to Porsches.

## IN BRIEF



#### CHEVRON BRAND CHANGES HANDS

WDK Motorsport, which has won the past two Masters Historic F1 titles with Nick Padmore, has acquired the Chevron Racing Cars business. Formed in 2009 by Ian Cox, Kevin Drew and Simon Turner, WDK was acquired last year by Nicola Foulston's W Capital LLP. Cox said: "WDK is committed to doing things properly; running cars, supplying parts worldwide and operating a spares service at Masters, CER and HSCC events." WDK also plans to manufacture B8 and B16 continuation cars.

#### SWR ADDS NISSAN GT4 PROGRAMME

BRDC British Formula 3 team Sean Walkinshaw Racing will add a GT4 campaign to its single-seater commitments in 2017, running a pair of Nissan 370Zs in the GT4 European Series Northern Cup. It will make its endurance racing debut with a full campaign in the six-round SRO-organised series, and plans to contest selected British GT rounds.

#### PIDGLEY LINKS BACK UP WITH PYRO

Ollie Pidgley will return to Team Pyro in the Renault UK Clio Cup next year. Pidgley, who raced for the team in the Michelin Clio Series in 2013 and '14, finished 16th in the standings with Ciceley Racing in '16 after making the switch from MSA Formula.

#### TEAM HARD EXPANDS INTO SUPERCUP

Team Hard will compete in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup for the first time next year. The squad plans to run two cars in the TOCA support series and will also enter Ginetta G55s in the Britcar Endurance Championship, alongside its commitments in the British Touring Car Championship, British GT, Volkswagen Racing Cup and VAG Trophy. It has signed Daniel Kirby as its first driver in the Supercup.

#### OWEN MAKES F3 MOVE WITH HILLSPEED

BRSCC Formula Ford 1600 runner-up Chase Owen has confirmed that he will step up to British F3 in 2017 at Hillspeed with Cliff Dempsey Racing. American Owen, who raced with Dempsey in FF1600, tested one of the team's F3 cars during the autumn (below).



#### FORMULA FORD 1600

## Scotland, Ireland back on schedule

THE BRSCC NATIONAL FORMULA Ford 1600 Championship has unveiled its provisional calendar for the 2016 season, which includes a return to Knockhill and Kirkistown.

The championship has also changed the format of its meetings, which will now comprise a 15-minute qualifying session followed by three 15-minute races.

That change will apply to all but the Oulton Park round,

which will remain a double-header event. Castle Combe, Kirkistown and Knockhill all return to the calendar, with Croft, Rockingham and Zandvoort making way.

"It's more of a true national championship now – it's British-based whereas last year we went places like Zandvoort and Croft where there haven't been regular races in recent years," said Oldfield Motorsport manager James Oldfield.

"We're going where there's a source of local competitors, which will boost grids on the weekend we go, with people doing individual rounds as well."

The championship has also introduced incentives for drivers competing for a part-season. The most notable of those is the new Tourers Trophy, which will be scored across four rounds in the UK at Oulton Park, Anglesey, Knockhill and Kirkistown.

#### DUBAI 24 HOURS

## Moffat to Dubai for 24H debut



BRITISH TOURING CAR RACER AIDEN Moffat will make his endurance racing debut in next month's Dubai 24 Hours, teaming up with Century Motorsport.

Scotsman Moffat will share one of the British GT squad's Ginetta G55 GT4 racers with team head Nathan Freke, Ben Green and Jack Mitchell.

The January 13-14 event will be Moffat's first endurance outing. While he will return to the BTCC with Ciceley Racing next season, Moffat is keen to add more sportscar outings.





# Memories of 2016

From ancient VSCC bolides to modern RGB screaming demons, our guru of historic and club motorsport has loved his latest eclectic season

By Marcus Pye

**ANY SEASON ENCAPSULATING FOUR OF THE WORLD'S** finest racetracks – Phillip Island, Zandvoort, Spa and the Algarve International Circuit – plus the best in Great Britain can't be bad. Sensational action and rising stars also coloured the 30 events I covered for Autosport in 2016. But it was a year tinged with sadness with the passing, among many, of early tin-top star Jack Sears, 1966 Le Mans winner Chris Amon, BMW Motorsport engine guru Paul Rosche and our own Peter Foubister. Here are some highlights...

## Phillip Island Classic Festival

Carved into land overlooking the sea by exhaust-muffler king Len Lukey in the 1950s, Victoria's glorious circuit – a couple of hours' drive from Melbourne – harbours pure delight on the fringes of the holiday island's road course of the '20s. A demanding track near the holiday resort of Cowes, it has hosted the country's biggest historic racing event, the Victorian Historic Racing Register Classic Festival of Speed, for 27 years.

My third visit was made more special as I stayed with Brian and Tony Lawrence (brothers of '70 Tasman Cup champion

Graeme and sons of racer Dougie, who turned 100 in January) and pals. The Kiwis' memories of 'real-time' Formula 5000 races, running Graeme's Lolas, added insight as his period rivals Kenny Smith and Alfie Costanzo battled anew in the mighty V8 machines. Chatting to Joe Ricciardo, Daniel's papa, a week before the F1 grand prix in Albert Park was another treat after he had switched Costanzo to a second McLaren M10B.

Superb touring car action – embroiling genuine cars of 1973-92, with Jim Richards reunited with his JPS BMW 635CSi and Ed Singleton's magnificently restored ex-John Goss Ford Falcon XC – plus a massive Formula Ford grid will long detail memories of a wonderful event.

## Brabhams and Kristensen at Goodwood

Three days after I returned from Oz, the temperature had been turned down dramatically for Goodwood's 74th Members' Meeting. Have I ever felt as cold? As lead commentator in the pit tower, huddled round a heater between track sessions, my thoughts turned to Captain Oates on the ill-starred Antarctic expedition of 1912. Call of the weekend was brother Bill's to



Touring car action at picturesque Phillip Island was a joy





J BLOXHAM/LAT

Ferrari pilot Kristensen starred at Goodwood Revival again

invite legendary designer Gordon Murray and his wife to the box during the Formula 1 demo. With warmth on offer, the professor duly explained his glorious Brabham BT49 brainchild on track.

Thankfully, things hotted up for June's Festival of Speed, where Murray's turbocharged Brabham-BMW BT52 (Nelson Piquet's '83 F1 championship winner) and Duncan Pittaway's 105-year-old FIAT S76 – the 28-litre leviathan driven from Bristol to the event – perfectly illustrated the 'Full Throttle: The Endless Pursuit of Power' theme as the world of motorsport's most distinguished dramatis personae played in Lord March's front garden for the 24th successive year.

September's Revival at the nearby motor circuit had a soggy centre, Lord March's conduit to the weather gods having had a rare glitch for the 1948-66 retrospective. Tom Kristensen's mastery of the ultra-fast airfield course was again evident, this time in a Ferrari 250 GT Berlinetta rortier than Stirling Moss's 1960 and '61 Tourist Trophy winners. Onlookers also watched agog as the year's largest set of British Racing Drivers' Club members slugged it out in Austin A30s and A35s.

### 750 Motor Club RGB

The 750 Motor Club's Road-Going Bike-Engined (RGB) racing shifted up another gear in its 16th year, the 1000cc sports-prototypes lapping faster still. In a modern version of the hallowed North v South marque rivalries between Derek Bennett's Chevron (Bolton) and Eric Broadley's Lola (Huntingdon) of the 1970s, Paul Nightingale's Derbyshire-based Spire Sports Cars – working with the brilliant Tim Gray – and Ian and Scott Mittell's eponymous Hampshire-based enterprise locked horns again with new cars in the rear-engined division.

Trumped by Scott Mittell in 2015, numerically dominant Spire reclaimed its previous pre-eminence, winning all bar one of the 12 rounds completed. But despite seven race victories it was not the mercurial Billy Albane who won the class title but team-mate John Cutmore, who snatched it with his fourth in the finale. But the overall champion came from the front-engined split, where Matt Higginson (victor in 2013 and '14 in Spire GT3s) was unbeaten in the works AB Arion S2. With new machines in build, expect 2017 to be tougher. >>



JONES

Spire (leading) and Mittell battled it out in RGB





### Cadwell Park joy

Two visits to MotorSport Vision's Lincolnshire Wolds outpost in five weeks involved long treks from the south coast, but were worth every mile. Having done the old Touraco School there decades ago, I loved racing at Cadwell Park in Formula Ford, Formula Vee and Clubmans (in which I finished on the podium!), but in recent years have arrived with notepads and lap charts for commentating. Although Oulton Park's Knickerbrook box runs it close, the Charlie's 'out' cabin boasts the best view in Britain.

The Vintage Sports-Car Club's annual Shuttleworth and Nuffield Trophies meeting offers an unmissable opportunity to watch ancient bolides competing against an unspoiled backdrop. This year's marked the 40th anniversary of the Club's first visit and was made for me by Tom Walker's thumping victory in the extraordinary 11.7-litre Amilcar-Hispano Special – surely the most beautiful aero-engined concoction of recent times? Talking hybrids, the VSCC's annual Edwardian race at Mallory Park in September was sensational too.

### Sports-prototypes at Silverstone

Sports-prototype racing is enjoying a bumper period at national level. The BRSCC's OSS championship, evolved from the series first run in 2009, had another strong year. I was delighted to see its single-day triple-header season opener at Silverstone, which illustrated the breadth of spectacular machinery in the field.

Sponsor Excool's Duncan Williams (Juno-Honda), Graham Cole (Jade-Millington Trackstar turbo) and birthday boy Josh Smith (Radical-Suzuki PR6) won a race apiece that day. If the speed of the top cars impressed, the talent of young drivers Jordan Sanders (who drove Williams's Juno in the finale) and Craig Mitchell (Ligier JS49) also shone through.

Smith, 27, and Bridgwater College's young technicians emerged worthy champions over Cole at the end of the five-meeting, 15-race programme in which 36 competitors scored. Mitchell pipped Mike Jenvey (Jenvey-Gunn) to Class B honours and third place overall by a point.

### Chateau Impney Hillclimb

Last year's return of speed eventing to Droitwich landmark Chateau Impney, built by salt baron John Corbett in 1875, recaptured the spirit of sprints there from 1957-67, bringing a fun historic hillclimb to the contemporary sport's ultra-competitive Midlands heartland. This season's second event was slicker and ended with another gripping run-off for a Midlander, this time Martin Jones in his Brabham BT21B.

Without a championship class structure the choice of entries

is particularly eclectic, spanning vintage machinery, spartan 'Shelsley Specials', 500cc F3 cars through to touring cars, GTs and single-seaters, reflecting the hill's past. For July 8-9 2017, 50 years after Chateau Impney's final period event, a BRM P48 (sister to Tony Griffiths's old course-record holder) has been invited. And the British GP's date change means that if you've not been to a CI retrospective you can do both.

### Classic Sports Car Club at Thruxton

The Classic Sports Car Club's maiden visit to Thruxton, in August, was one of my seasonal highlights, taking me back to the circuit I first visited for the BARC's Championship Finals meeting in October 1973. That event was the catalyst for many more trips and my career path.

Central to the CSCC programme was its Special Saloon and Modsports series, which continues to delight those of us who watched the machines in their heyday and relative newcomers able to contrast the homebuilds of yesteryear with some beautifully engineered modern hybrids.

As well as commentating with Mark Werrell, I very much enjoyed doing Motors TV slots with veteran Ian Hall – whose Mini Jem antics at Thruxton and elsewhere I remember from the 1970s – and watching Paul Sibley's Cosworth BDG-powered Lotus Elan (based on Rob Cox's 'Black Bullet', which I raced in '83) and Craig Percy's fabulous Morris Minor-Chevrolet, built by drag racer and 750F racer Chris Isaac.

### Historic Sports Car Club at 50

I have attended the majority of Historic Sports Car Club race meetings for the past 25 years and more, going back to when the late Brian Cocks was at the helm, and its 50th Anniversary season was a special accolade worth celebrating with a different calendar.

Current CEO Grahame White thus brokered the opportunity to take it back to Castle Combe, where the inaugural Griffiths Formula race for '50s sportscars drawn together by Guy Griffiths and Betty Haig in May '66 (weeks before England's football World Cup triumph) focused the enthusiasm that spawned what we know today.

Re-engaging pioneers of that race with the HSCC added immeasurably to the season. Although winner Neil Corner (Jaguar D-type) was unable to attend, Stephen Curtis, Fred Damodaran, Chris Drewett, John Le Sage, Philip Martino, Frank Mockridge, Ivan Sharrock, Geoff Thomas, Graham Walker and Bernard Worth were reunited at Combe – with Griffiths's daughter Penny (Woodley), who dropped the Union Flag – or during the year.

The Club's history is chronicled in a fine book written by long-time Autosport contributor Paul Lawrence, launched





HSCC returned to Castle Combe in its 50th Anniversary season

at last month's awards dinner – where White was honoured with a this-is-your-life interlude – and available through the HSCC office or directly from TFM Publishing.

### Vintage year for young talent

The cost of contesting current professional single-seater racing championships may not match wealthy dads' spends on international karting for their sons and daughters, not to mention supporting PR, but sadly preclude the vast majority of youngsters from getting a foot on the ladder no matter how talented they may be.

Fortunately, 'grass-roots' Historic classes are more accessible and family friendly and the racing – most do it on a relative shoestring – is as close and competitive as you will see anywhere. I venture that all bar a few Historic Formula Ford (pre-1972) and FF2000 ('75-'81) racers completed the season for less than the cost of repairing the damage from one relatively innocuous crash in a current winged 'pro' car.

HFF saw young talent shine brightly. Benn Tilley (16 until the final round) set numerous fastest laps and claimed two second places and six thirds en route to fourth in the HSCC championship at his first attempt. The motorsport engineering student from Bourne will start among the favourites in 2017 and thoroughly deserves backing, as does Ed Thurston, 17, who bagged a heat win at Croft and a third in Silverstone's finale.

Another immensely able 17-year-old who broke through, in continental historic events, was Dutchman Oliver Hart, who took second behind Oliver Bryant at a horrendously slippery

Spa in his father David's Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe evocation. With budgets seemingly not an issue, expect Hart to go as far as he wants in the sport.

### Spa Six Hours

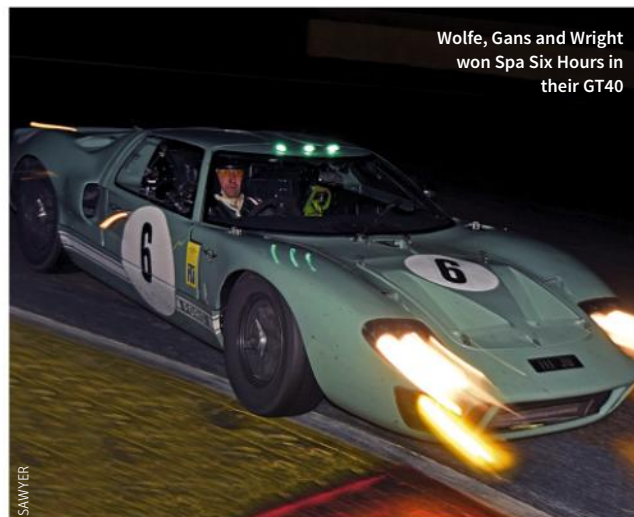
I adore the Spa Six Hours, the world's greatest endurance race for pre-1966 sports racing, GT and Touring cars, founded by Belgian enthusiast Alain Defalle in 1993. This year's 24th edition marked my 20th successive trip to the Ardennes marathon that, having started small, now pitches more than 100 crews into a tactical inter-team battle from daylight to darkness on what most competitors consider to be the finest racetrack on earth.

Mirroring the modern World Endurance Championship, Spa's 'oldtimer' showpiece has become a sprint race. Ford GT40s – the majority late-built replicas/continuation cars conforming to the FIA's Appendix K regulations – have long ruled the densely forested roost. Not since 2010, when Jon Minshaw led a Jaguar E-type team to its third victory, has a chink in their armour been exposed, but it doesn't stop rivals trying.

This September, Briton Andy Wolfe and Americans Jason Wright and Michael Gans joined the event's roll of honour after many years of trying. Their crown will come under fire in 2017 when the 25th Spa Six Hours is bound to be fully subscribed earlier than ever. Hats off to Roadbook's Defalle and Vincent Collard, working harder than ever to make the weekend a very special celebration. 🏆



Benn Tilley was a young star in Historic Formula Ford



Wolfe, Gans and Wright won Spa Six Hours in their GT40



# Top 10 club drivers of the year

Standing out from the crowd during a crammed racing season can be tough for many club drivers. Here Autosport's contributors pick out their most impressive drivers of the year

Compiled by Jack Cozens

Entries by Jack Benyon, Stephen Lickorish, Kevin Turner, Ian Sowman and Dom D'Angelillo

## 10 Tom Roche

**MX-5 CHAMPIONSHIP  
OVERCAME MID-SEASON DISAPPOINTMENT WELL**

Heads, shoulders and seconds above the rest of the field. It's clichéd, but that's probably the best way to describe Tom Roche's Mazda MX-5 Championship campaign. Roche breezed comfortably to the 2016 title and won all but three races – his only blip coming heartbreakingly at Anglesey when an engine failure dropped him out of the lead of the championship, which meant he missed a spot in the shootout for a drive in the MX-5 Global Cup races at Laguna Seca. Nevertheless, Roche bounced back from that disappointment to claim 12 more wins on his way to the title.



## 9 Calum Lockie

**GOODWOOD TROPHY/JAGUAR CLASSIC CHALLENGE  
HISTORIC EXPLOITS WERE A HIGHLIGHT**

Calum Lockie's 2016 sportscar exploits alongside David Mason may not have lived up to his usual high standards, but he made up for any shortcomings with some stellar historic outings. His victories in Sean and Laura Danaher's 1938 Maserati 6CM undoubtedly stole the show, and included a win in the Goodwood Trophy race at the Revival in September, Lockie becoming the first man to defeat an ERA to victory in the event in 10 years. He was also a standout winner in the Jaguar Classic Challenge, where he shared Julian Thomas's E-type.



## 8 John Mickel

**LEGENDS CHAMPIONSHIP  
SEALED HAT-TRICK IN CLOSE FIELD**

The Legends Championship might not be the conventional picking ground for a top-10 driver of the year, but John Mickel's efforts to claim a third crown in the category were deserving of recognition. The unique systems employed by Legends organisers to determine grids – including ballots and reversed grids based on points standings – meant more often than not that Mickel had to race his way through the field. Despite trailing main rival Connor Mills after the opening round, Mickel recovered immediately with five wins from six races at Pembrey and went on to defend his 2015 title.



## 7 Scott Moran

**BRITISH HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP  
MULTIPLE CHAMPION COLLECTED SIXTH TITLE**

Adding to an already impressive collection of titles, Scott Moran returned full-time to the hillclimb fold in 2016, after a part-campaign a year earlier, and largely ran away with things. Winning the second run-off of the opening round at Prescott set the scene and, although he was often given a tough time by nearest rivals Trevor Willis and Wallace Menzies, more often than not it was Moran who was king of the hill. His 2016 triumph – his sixth British championship success – was sealed with two rounds to spare, affording Moran the luxury of skipping the penultimate event at Doune.





## 6 Ben Rushworth

**MGCC METRO CUP**  
SELF-TAUGHT CAR BUILDER WON IN SECOND YEAR

In the first year of the Metro Cup's single-class era, Ben Rushworth marked himself out as a convincing champion. Having joined the series in 2015 as a complete novice, Rushworth finished that season second in Class C and third overall, but he trumped all in 2016. Six wins from 10 races, including the season finale at Snetterton, handed him a comfortable crown. To add to his remarkable story, the 34-year-old taught himself computer-aided design to help him build his Rover 100 before embarking on his racing journey.



## 5 Mark Charteris

**CLASSIC CLUBMANS CHAMPIONSHIP**  
SPANKED RIVALS WITH PERFECT RECORD

One of the HSCC's champions to make the cut, Charteris was a cut above his Classic Clubmans opposition once again in his Mallock Mk20/21 in 2016. Incredibly, this enthusiastic and very rapid racer has now made it seven class championship titles on the trot, and as ever he was devastatingly effective this year. He won every race to achieve more than double the final points total of his nearest rival Spencer McCarthy. Charteris was also able to spar with the leading runners – in powerful single-seaters – in his select outings in the HSCC's Derek Bell Trophy races.



## 4 Paul Smith

**FORMULA VEE CHAMPIONSHIP**  
VEE CHAMPION OUTCLASSED RIVALS

The statistics from the 2016 Formula Vee season will tell you that Paul Smith dominated the championship on his way to a fourth title in his AHS Dominator – which he has since put up for sale – having won 13 of the 14 races. But as is so often the case, those statistics don't paint the full picture. Smith was involved in some huge battles along the way, including a virtual dead heat at Snetterton where he beat Adam Macaulay to victory after driving through the field from a lowly grid position, and maintained a level across the season that was simply too good for any other driver.



## 3 James Dorlin

**CLIO CUP SERIES**  
YOUNG CHAMPION CONTINUED TO INCREASE STOCK VALUE

As far as feats go, claiming a second car-racing title at the age of 17 is not a bad one to have achieved. Two years after his Junior Saloon Car Championship success, James Dorlin clinched the Clio Cup Series title with a race to spare to notch his second major piece of silverware. Sure, the series' grid was at times a little meagre, but that didn't mean Dorlin was without competition this year, making his eight wins all the more impressive. Historic success too, which included victory in the 'celebrity' side of the St Mary's Trophy races at Goodwood, made this a standout year for the teenager.



## 2 Callum Grant

**HISTORIC FORMULA FORD**  
CAME THROUGH ULTRA-COMPETITIVE FIELD TO WIN

Historic Formula Ford is fast gaining a reputation as one of the toughest club categories around at the moment, but Callum Grant was its standout star across the 2016 campaign. Despite plenty of stiff competition, particularly from Rob Wainright (see club rivalries of the year), Merlyn Mk20A driver Grant took nine wins – a dominant showing considering the standard of opposition in the HSCC championship's ranks – on his way to the title, ahead of a field that included former champions and winners from elsewhere.



## 1 Niall Murray

**FORMULA FORD 1600**  
FORMULA FORD DOMINATION SET MURRAY APART

What Niall Murray was able to achieve this season across Formula Ford 1600 – winning the Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy showpiece events, plus the Martin Donnelly Trophy and BRSCC National Championship (which he utterly dominated) – is unprecedented. Murray has his detractors, which some previous tactics and results possibly justify, but he came of age in 2016. The 21-year-old simply shrugged off allegations of cheating that at times bordered on the aggressive and threatened to overshadow the season, and comprehensively beat everyone who stood in his way.





# Top 10 club rivalries of the year

Motorsport is full of intense rivalries and there is certainly no shortage of them in the UK. Here we pick out the close driver battles – some even turned violent – that have really caught our attention over the past 12 months

Compiled by Stephen Lickorish

Entries by Jack Benyon, Kevin Turner, Ian Sowman and Dom D'Angelillo

## 10 Priest v Horrobin

**BRSCC FIESTA CLASS C**  
**'SPECIALIZED' RIVALRY BETWEEN TEAM-MATES**

Rivalries are often at their strongest when it's team-mates battling for the title, and a good example of that was in the BRSCC Fiesta Championship this year. Class C Specialized Motorsport racers Sam Priest and Simon Horrobin exchanged plenty of blows throughout the season. Horrobin often had the advantage in qualifying, but a string of mid-year retirements dented his charge. This meant it all came down to the final race at Brands Hatch where, despite Horrobin taking a narrow win, third place was enough for Priest (leading Horrobin, below) to seal the class crown.



## 9 Wrigley v Burns

**GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP**  
**FROM DOMINANT LEADER TO CLOSEST OF TOCA SUPPORTS**

This was a bizarre rivalry as it should never have existed. Tom Wrigley was unstoppable in the first half of the Ginetta GT4 Supercup season and seemed destined to wrap up the title early, with Will Burns almost 100 points adrift. But that all changed as dismal races for Wrigley at Rockingham and Silverstone brought Burns right back in contention. In the end, Wrigley only won by three points after a dramatic finale, and the series was the closest of the TOCA categories. Burns (leading Wrigley, below) was devastated to come so close but miss out; Wrigley just about dealt with the pressure to triumph.



## 8 Milner v Zanetti

**JUNIOR SALOON CAR CHAMPIONSHIP**  
**RIVALRY SETTLED IN COURTROOM**

When a title is decided in an MSA courtroom you know there's a pretty strong rivalry. That was the case in the Junior Saloon Car Championship. While Katie Milner took the most wins with eight, it was Matteo Zanetti who left the Silverstone finale with the title, despite Milner triumphing in the last race. But that result was only provisional. Milner had been excluded from Knockhill in September with an engine-seal irregularity, before a successful appeal last month meant those points were reinstated, handing her the crown. Zanetti (leading Milner, below) won the battle but Milner won the war.



## 7 Murray v all FF1600 drivers

**NATIONAL FORMULA FORD 1600**  
**DOMINANT DRIVER UNDER ATTACK FROM ALL ANGLES**

Accusations of cheating flying around Formula Ford 1600 paddocks are nothing new. And with the way Niall Murray (leading, below) dominated his opposition this year, he came in for a fair amount of criticism. Many rivals argued that his Van Diemen RF99 was not completely legal and he faced a barrage of discontent throughout the year. His car was extensively checked after he claimed the National title and nothing suspect was found. He then delivered the perfect riposte by comfortably winning the Walter Hayes Trophy final in the wet, when driver skill is more important than the car.





## 6 Grant v Wainwright

**HISTORIC FORMULA FORD 1600**  
THRILLING RACES AND A CLOSE TITLE BATTLE

Formula Ford 1600 has produced a plethora of close rivalries over the years and this particular one came in the Historic category. The racing between Callum Grant's Merlyn Mk20A and the Elden Mk8 of Rob Wainwright was often very close, but there was a host of other protagonists who joined in the fun, with former champions Benn Simms and Sam Mitchell, along with Benn Tilley, also among the lead scraps. Ultimately, Grant's (left of pic) nine wins netted him the title and he finished with a flourish at Silverstone, winning the finale as Wainwright (right of pic) could only manage sixth.



## 5 Cutmore v Albane

**REAR-ENGINE CLASS OF RGB**  
CONSISTENCY AGAINST RAW SPEED

Billy Albane should've taken the rear-engine RGB title. The Spire GT3S driver won the most races, but team-mate John Cutmore proved how crucial consistency is. A gearbox issue and a clash with 2015 champion Scott Mittell at the penultimate Rockingham meeting left Albane on the back foot. But he was still on course to take the crown in the finale until he threw it all away with a spin at the penultimate corner of the year, allowing Cutmore (#2) to triumph. It wasn't the first time an error cost Albane (#33) dear as he'd outbraked himself in the Oulton Park curtain-raiser.



## 4 Orgee v Moyers

**CASTLE COMBE FORMULA FORD 1600**  
TEAM-MATES AT WAR WITH COLLISION IN CRUCIAL FINALE

It's surprising how many collisions there have been between team-mates in single-seaters this year. But few have had such a significant impact on a title battle as this one. Kevin Mills Racing duo Roger Orgee and Michael Moyers headed into the final round of the Castle Combe FF1600 season with the title up for grabs. The pair had been evenly matched, with Moyers playing catch-up after a clash in the first round. But an error from Moyers (leading Orgee, below) on the opening lap led to a collision that forced both drivers out and let Orgee claim a dramatic second successive crown.



## 3 Whorton-Eales v Bushell

**RENAULT UK CLIO CUP**  
QUALIFYING KING VERSUS FAST-STARTING ACE

There were controversial passes (think Silverstone race one at Luffield). There were sublime passes (think Snetterton race two at Riches). Quite simply, many Renault UK Clio Cup races featured an Ant Whorton-Eales-versus-Mike Bushell battle for the win. The two were the class of the field. Bushell's advantage was in qualifying, while AWE made better starts. It created an incredible rivalry, with Whorton-Eales (right of pic) eventually victorious after an inadvertent clash with Bushell (left of pic) in the Brands Hatch finale when a Paul Rivett lunge sent AWE wide.



## 2 DeFrancesco v Florescu

**BRITISH FORMULA 4**  
RIVALRY THAT LED TO PUNCH-UP CAUGHT ON CAMERA

Whenever two team-mates collide, things can get heated. But when the rivalry is as fierce as it was between Carlin racers Petru Florescu and Devlin DeFrancesco it can boil over into physical violence. DeFrancesco inadvertently punted Florescu into the barriers when battling across the Knockhill pit straight. This prompted a furious reaction from Florescu, who stormed over to DeFrancesco and punched him. This may have not been the closest on-track rivalry but it certainly had the biggest consequences, with Florescu excluded from the meeting, dashing his title hopes.



## 1 Fletcher v Bark

**CLIO 182 CHAMPIONSHIP**  
RIVALS HAVE A SECOND INCREDIBLY CLOSE TITLE DUEL

Any two drivers who finish tied at the top of the standings are sure to be big rivals. And when those two drivers then fight for the crown for a second year, it takes that rivalry to a whole new level. James Bark managed to clinch the 2015 Clio 182 title by virtue of taking more wins than Patrick Fletcher. This year the duo were neck and neck again, and it came down to the penultimate lap of the season when Fletcher (leading Bark, below) made a decisive move on Bark to seal the win by five points. So it's one-all now – will 2017 prove to be the decider?









# National pictures of the year

Our army of snappers has traipsed from Knockhill to Lydden, and Anglesey to Snetterton. Here's their best work of a sometimes soggy yet spectacular season



## **GOLD CUP GLORY**

Peter Horsman leads away a magnificent field of pre-'66 grand prix cars at Oulton Park.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY MICK WALKER**





#### GOOSE HAS A GANDER

Senna Proctor has an unimpressed onlooker as he crashes in a Renault Clio Cup race at Donington Park.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAKOB EBREY





### IT'LL POLISH OUT...

George Douglas and Anthony Taylor give the Oulton crowd something to 'ahh!' about as they crash just before Cascades.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICK WALKER



### (FUEL) CAN-DO ATTITUDE

British Touring Car legend John Cleland goes back to basics and fuels his own car ahead of a Historic Super Touring bout at Knockhill.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM MOIR

### SPLASH AND DASH

Clive Tonge heads for a Swinging Sixties series victory in the pouring rain at Donington Park.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICK WALKER





### HURACAN FORCE

The Lambo of Jon Minshaw/Phil Keen (#33) leads the field away as the Brit GT pack prepares to do battle at Oulton.

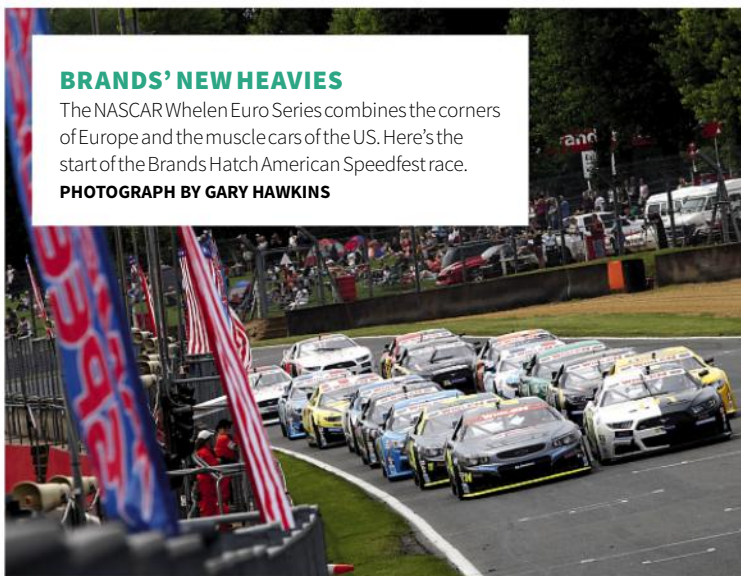
PHOTOGRAPH BY JAKOB EBREY



### BRANDS' NEW HEAVIES

The NASCAR Whelen Euro Series combines the corners of Europe and the muscle cars of the US. Here's the start of the Brands Hatch American Speedfest race.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY HAWKINS



### TWO WHEELS BETTER?

Jeff Kite has an interesting method of cornering at Silverstone in the Hyundai Coupe Cup as Will Taylforth takes a more conventional line.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE JONES







#### ON THE LIMIT OR OVER IT?

Benn Simms gets out of shape trying to follow Sam Mitchell in Historic Formula Ford 1600.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL LAWRENCE



#### THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

The Michael Squire/Frank Stippler AC Cobra lights up its rear tyres to entertain the Goodwood crowds.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF BLOXHAM/LAT





# WIN

## TWO VIP PASSES FOR THE BTCC

Autosport's Christmas Quiz – the best excuse to forget about vacuuming pine needles this week

### A TOURING CARS IN 2016

- 1** Which two Mercedes drivers led the DTM points standings during the 2016 season?
- 2** Who was the highest-placed driver in the final BTCC table not to have won a race in the series during 2016?
- 3** Who set the fastest race lap over the two races in this year's WTCC round on the Nurburgring Nordschleife?
- 4** Name the drivers to take more than one race-one pole position in the 2016 TCR International Series.
- 5** How many drivers scored a fastest lap in this year's BTCC races, and which drivers tied for the highest number of fastest laps during the course of the season?
- 6** Who was the highest-placed Nissan driver in the final Australian Supercars rankings in 2016?
- 7** For which two manufacturers did Brazilian V8 Stock Car racers Ricardo Zonta and Max Wilson drive when they contested ITC races as young up-and-comers in 1996.
- 8** Which Honda driver was drafted in for the final ETCC round at Imola and helped Kris Richard's title bid?
- 9** Miguel Molina scored two wins and a third in this year's DTM. What was his next best result?
- 10** How many big races at Bathurst's Mount Panorama did Australian Supercars part-timer and team owner Jono Webb win this year?

### B FORMULA 1/SINGLE-SEATERS IN 2016

- 1** How many drivers with at least one Finnish parent finished in the top eight of the F1 standings?
- 2** Which Dutchman not to be a member of the Verstappen family has the highest number of points finishes in F1 history?
- 3** Which two grands prix had the highest number of constructors scoring points in 2016?
- 4** Name Stoffel Vandoorne's team-mates from the 2016 racing season.
- 5** Which full-season driver spent the highest number of laps in 22nd – and last – position in this year's grands prix?
- 6** Who scored the most points over the final four rounds of this year's GP3 Series?
- 7** Name the drivers who won rounds of the Formula 3 European Championship this year.
- 8** Who scored the highest number of GP2 points finishes in races this season?
- 9** Who was the highest-placed driver born in the UK in this year's IndyCar standings?
- 10** Who won races in the Toyota Racing Series, Formula Renault Eurocup, Formula Renault NEC and BRDC British Formula 3 this season?





## THE BTCC VIP EXPERIENCE

Our winner will receive two VIP experiences for Sunday of a BTCC round of their choice, a prize worth over £600. Includes pitlane access plus hot meal and bar.

EBREVILAT



## WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Name the street circuits





## D MOTOGP IN 2016

**1** From which position on the grid did Moto3 champion Brad Binder take his first win, at Jerez?

**2** Which Andrea ended Ducati's MotoGP victory drought dating back to Casey Stoner in October 2010?

**3** Before Cal Crutchlow won the Czech Grand Prix, how many years had it been since a Briton last won a premier-class race?

**4** Name all of this year's MotoGP race winners.



**5** How many MotoGP starts did 2006 world champion Nicky Hayden make in 2016?

**6** At which track did Marc Marquez seal the 2016 MotoGP championship title?



**7** Who was Suzuki's last MotoGP winner before Maverick Vinales took the British Grand Prix?

**8** How many 2016 Moto2 racers will step up to MotoGP for next season?



**9** Which Yamaha rider claimed more MotoGP poles in 2016?

**10** Who rode for KTM when it made its MotoGP debut in Valencia's finale, and who will ride for the team in 2017?

## E SPORTSCARS IN 2016

**1** Audi took its second victory of the WEC season in its farewell race in Bahrain. How many wins has it taken since the series began in 2012?

**2** In how many WEC races did Signatech-Alpine not finish on the podium in LMP2 this season?

**3** Alexander Wurz came out of retirement to contest the Daytona 24 Hours with Brendon Hartley, Andy Priaulx and which other driver?

**4** Who set Ford's fastest lap at the 2016 Le Mans 24 Hours?

**5** Corvette Racing achieved its 100th competition victory this season. At which IMSA SportsCar event did it reach that milestone?

**6** Maxime Martin followed in the footsteps of his father Jean-Michel Martin by winning the Spa 24 Hours. In which year was the most recent of Martin Sr's four wins?

**7** Phil Keen and Jon Minshaw won both British GT races at Snetterton, becoming the first pair to win twice on a weekend since 2010? Who were the drivers who last managed that feat six years ago?

**8** Andrea Bertolini, Rory Butcher and Rob Smith gave JMW Motorsport its first ELMS class win in four years at the Red Bull Ring. Which drivers scored the previous victory, and where?

**9** Shane van Gisbergen won the Blancpain Endurance Cup despite missing the final round at the Nurburgring. In which position did his car finish?

**10** Adam Christodoulou became the first British driver to win the Nurburgring 24 Hours since Sean Edwards in 2013. Can you name the other two Brits who have won the event, and in which years?

## F WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN?

Name the drivers, cars, series, venues, dates





## G RALLYING IN 2016



**1** Six different drivers won a round of the World Rally Championship. When was the last time more than six drivers won?

**2** How many times did Ott Tanak fall into a Mexican reservoir in 2016?

**3** On how many stages did Kris Meeke not hold the lead of this year's Rally Finland?

**4** Sebastien Ogier scored the most WRC podiums this season with 11. Who had the second-highest number of podiums?

**5** Two drivers scored their first stage win in Sardinia this year. Name them.

**6** Of the four factory Peugeot 2008 DKRs that started this year's Dakar Rally, how many made the podium?

**7** How many Dakar Rally stages did Mikko Hirvonen win this year?

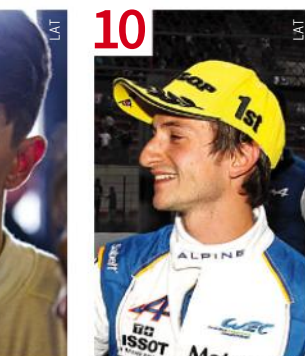
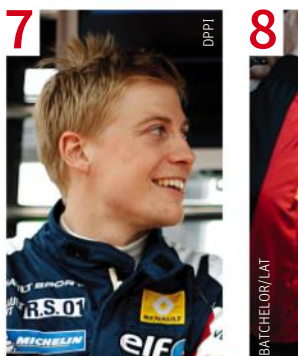
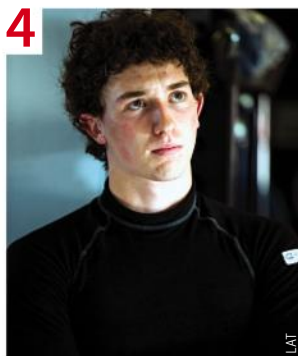
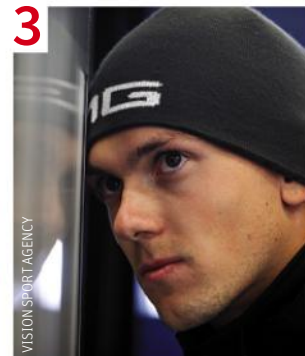
**8** Name this year's DMACK British Junior Rally champion.

**9** Thirty years ago this month, the Group B era ended with which WRC event?

**10** Which Welshman took a WRC-based title in a Ford Fiesta this season?

## H WINNERS' GALLERY?

See if you can work out who these 2016 champions are



# HOW TO ENTER

**ENTRIES CLOSE**  
Friday January 6, 2017

In the event of a tie, the winner will be drawn by random from the correct entries

Send your answers via email to [autosport@autosport.com](mailto:autosport@autosport.com) and include Christmas Quiz as the subject line or send in your answers on a sheet of paper to:

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# WHAT'S ON

EVERY YEAR THERE ARE HUNDREDS of hours of motorsport shown on television. From that coverage, there are moments that will stick in the memory, be they particular races, incidents or interviews. So we asked our contributors to pick out their highlights from 2016.

## LE MANS 24 HOURS FINISH

It wasn't just one of the most dramatic motorsport moments of 2016, it was one of the most incredible sporting stories ever. When Kazuki Nakajima's Toyota ground to a halt in the last five minutes at Le Mans and handed victory to Porsche, it brought sincere sympathy from the entire sportscar community.

*Kevin Turner*

## JENSON'S NOTEBOOK

Once Channel 4's F1 coverage of the Abu Dhabi GP ended, I switched over to Sky F1 and witnessed Ted's Notebook being transformed to Jenson's Notebook. It was a hilarious bit of spontaneous TV, perfectly showing off Button's personality and his upbeat nature despite a disappointing DNF in what may well be his last F1 race.

*Jack Leslie*

## MONZA BLANCPAIN GT SERIES

The opening round of this year's Blancpain Endurance Cup was one of the closest in GT history. The McLaren 650S piloted by Come Ledogar, Rob Bell and Shane van Gisbergen edged out the Mercedes of Dominik Baumann, Jazeman Jaafar and Maximilian Buhk for victory by a mere 0.341s after 96 laps of racing around the historic Monza circuit.

*Jordan Harvey*

## VERSTAPPEN IN BRAZIL

Without doubt the TV highlight has to be Max Verstappen's drive to third in the Brazilian Grand Prix as he danced



his way through the field in the rain. A performance that will be rewatched thousands of times, and one that can only be compared with Ayrton Senna at Monaco in 1984 in its significance.

*Christopher Sharp*

## BRABHAM BOYS ON SKY F1

Twenty-five minutes simply wasn't long enough for this rather special look back on the careers of some of F1's most prominent figures. Charlie Whiting,

Clockwise from above:  
Le Mans, Mercedes' Spanish GP shunt, Blancpain at Monza and Massa's sign-off

Herbie Blash, Bernie Ecclestone, Nelson Piquet, Niki Lauda and Martin Brundle are all invited to my Christmas table!

*Rory Mitchell*

## MASSA'S FAREWELL

Felipe Massa wandering down the pitlane to a 'guard of honour' during a soggy Brazilian Grand Prix after crashing out by the pit entry was exactly the type of fitting send-off one of F1's true gentlemen deserves. Seeing him applauded by all





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## HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

### You Tube FORMULA 1 UPS ITS GAME

#### Search for The F1 Story Of 2016: 8-Bit, Video-Game-Style!

Formula 1's YouTube channel gets all end-of-term, replaying the 2016 season in the style of an old-school 8-bit video game. The almost unanimously upbeat and hate-free response from that toughest of tough crowds below the line begs the question: when's the game going on sale?



the teams, Brazilian flag draped over his shoulders and tears in his eyes, was an extraordinary moment that proves F1 is as much about people as it is technology. *Jason Noble*

### OGIER CARRYING TANAK

The World Rally Championship television cameras picked up one of the most emotional moments on TV this year at Rally Poland. Sebastien Ogier – known for his self-confidence and determination to win – held Ott Tanak on his shoulders and paraded him around the stage end of the final test of the rally after Tanak's puncture had cost him a certain first win. *Jack Benyon*

### MURRAY AND HUNT

For Murray Walker, whose commentary double-act with James Hunt is fondly remembered, to interview James' son Freddie was truly remarkable. Freddie really does resemble his father in looks and speech. Furthermore, he got the special chance to drive James' 1976 world

title-winning McLaren around Silverstone, where he was victorious in 1977. *Rian Hoskins*

### WORLD RX AT HOCKENHEIM

The second World Rallycross semi at Hockenheim was motor racing at its absolute finest. Johan Kristoffersson clung on to the lead on three wheels while his rivals destroyed themselves in search of a win. Liam Doran's victory in the unfancied 1.6-litre Mini and Andrew Coley on comms capped off a bonkers race. *Stephen Brunsdon*

### HAMILTON AND ROSBERG CRASH

Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg's first-lap crash at this year's Spanish Grand Prix is one of 2016's defining moments. The wipeout created a major headache for Mercedes and sent shockwaves through the paddock. It also paved the way for one of the most remarkable moments in F1 history, as Max Verstappen became the youngest-ever grand prix victor. *Lewis Larkam*



TV PICK OF THE WEEK

### F1 SEASON REVIEW

Channel 4  
Sunday 1230

We all know Nico Rosberg emerged triumphant from the battle with team-mate Lewis Hamilton for this year's F1 title, but here's a chance to remind yourself exactly how the season unfolded. Expect interviews with the two protagonists and Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff, which should add interesting nuances to the tale.

## INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

### GULF 12 HOURS

Yas Marina, United Arab Emirates  
December 17

### ANDROS TROPHY

Rd 3/7  
Alpe d'Huez, France  
December 16-17

## NATIONAL MOTORSPORT

### MALLORY PARK BRSCC

December 26  
Sports Cars, Open Saloons, motorbikes





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## THE ARCHIVE

Arturo Merzario extricates himself from his Iso Marlboro (Williams-Ford FW03) after crashing out of fourth place on lap 38 of the 1974 Spanish Grand Prix at Jarama. The race was won by Niki Lauda, driving a Ferrari 312B3 – his first Formula 1 victory.

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# HAVE-A-GO HERO

WHEN DRIVERS  
CROP UP IN  
UNEXPECTED  
PLACES



## JORGE LORENZO

**T**HREE-TIME MOTOGP WORLD champion Jorge Lorenzo has had a few big crashes in his motorcycling career. It's probably fair to say he's not won any of those races. His fledgling car-racing career is another story.

Lorenzo took a class win on his Ferrari GT debut in the 2013 Gulf 12 Hours, despite crashing out late on. The Spaniard shunted the Kessel Racing Ferrari 458 Italia he was sharing with Liam Talbot, Marco Zanuttini and Jacques Duyver 40 minutes from the finish of the race at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix venue.

Fortunately, the quartet already had a sufficient lead over the Villorba Corse Ferrari that formed their only opposition in the Gentlemen's class and, with the rules not requiring the car to take the flag, the win was secure.

A little under three years later and Lorenzo was making his Formula 1 debut.

Lorenzo tested an F1 car for the first time in October this year when he did some running in a 2014-spec Mercedes, which he prepared for with mileage in one of MotorSport Vision's Formula 2 cars from the 2009-12 FIA series.

"It is the same adrenaline, and it's different, it's a new thing," says Lorenzo of his car-driving exploits. "When I'm home I don't want to ride bikes, I want to drive another thing."

The opportunity to drive a Mercedes F1 car was some way from his Fiat 500 race debut in the Aragon 3 Hours in 2010.

"The power of the engine was amazing, but especially the grip in the corners – the way you can brake so late because there is so much grip in the car," he says.

"I expected it to be much harder to drive. The steering wheel was so smooth, the power delivery was very constant, very electric, and I imagined that in the corners the car would be very easy to spin, to lose control, but it was very grippy and very easy to be fast.

"If they give me the opportunity again, for sure I will accept it – if I have time. For the moment I'm quite busy, but when I retire I would like to race more in cars." ❧

LAWRENCE BARRETTO AND SCOTT MITCHELL



Lorenzo had  
his first taste  
of an F1 car  
testing a  
Mercedes  
in October

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Thank you for your support throughout 2016, we look forward to working with you in 2017! Visit us at Autosport Show Stand 2500 12th-15th January – as well as the latest information, we have refreshments available and plenty of space to sit down, relax and meet other fellow racers. See you there!



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# They Did Their Best...

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