

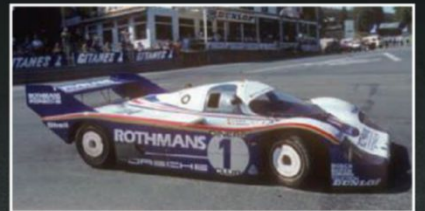
KUBICA ON LE MANS 'I WANT TO TEST MYSELF'

AUTOSPORT

SPECIAL ISSUE

THE GREATEST ALL-ROUNDERS

Who is motorsport's most versatile racer?



STARRING

**MARIO ANDRETTI JIM CLARK JACKY ICKX
NIGEL MANSELL WALTER ROHRL AND MORE**

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We salute motorsport's greatest all-rounders

VERSATILE DRIVERS ARE EASY TO ADMIRE. NOT ONLY do they demonstrate their abilities in different machinery and a variety of series, they also tend to be among the most passionate and enthusiastic of racers. They love doing what they do.

Trying to pick out the greatest all-rounders in motorsport history created some enthusiastic debate in the office, and we are sure you will be able to come up with some alternatives to the choices made in this issue. But we think we've come up with a pretty definitive selection, many of whom would also qualify for that old pub debate on who is the greatest driver ever.

When talking about stars such as Stirling Moss, Jim Clark and Mario Andretti, it's easy to lament the fact that top drivers rarely do more than race outside their main championships these days. That is partly an inevitable consequence of the increasing professionalism and quality of top series. Jumping in and taking on the specialists is no easy task and requires proper commitment.

But it's also an issue of perception. As Marcus Simmons shows on page 28, there are plenty of current drivers who successfully jump in and out of different cars. And we're not just talking about Nico Hulkenberg's 2015 Le Mans victory.

One of the potential drawbacks of such an approach is the possibility of an accident in a 'lesser' event. Formula 1 lost one of its brightest talents when Robert Kubica suffered his rally accident in 2011, so it's great to see him coming back to circuit racing in the World Endurance Championship (see pages 4 and 6).



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McKlein; LAT

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NIGEL ROEBUCK

A fearless talent lost to Formula 1

WHEN FORMULA 1 RECONVENES AT Melbourne, Felipe Massa will be on hand, back in the Williams he never wanted to vacate in the first place, but many paddock fixtures will not. I allude not to Jost Capito, who departed from McLaren almost before he had arrived, but to such as Ron Dennis, Fred Vasseur, Pat Symonds, Jenson Button – as well as reigning world champion Nico Rosberg, and overwhelmingly Bernie Ecclestone, who ran the whole thing for more than four decades.

Dennis, as we know, lost control of McLaren some time ago when Mansour Ojeh and the Crown Prince of Bahrain declined to renew his contract, while Vasseur left Renault after a long battle with Cyril Abiteboul, most feeling that the wrong man was pushed out.

Symonds's planned retirement was brought forward a year by Williams, where Paddy Lowe – his gardening leave from Mercedes pruned by Toto Wolff's need to sign Valtteri Bottas – assumes control of all technical aspects of the Williams group, as well as becoming a shareholder and director.

Already Lowe has a significant history with Williams, not least as the man behind the active suspension system that made the FW14B way superior to its rivals, and took Nigel Mansell to the world championship in 1992. Thereafter Paddy worked at McLaren

for 20 years before – to the surprise of Ross Brawn – being appointed executive director of Mercedes in 2013.

Perhaps remarkably, Lowe's departure from Mercedes was not at his own behest, in the sense that when it came time to discuss a new contract (for 2017 on), he found that Wolff's estimation of his financial value differed rather widely from his own. True, James Allison was in the wings, but Paddy, the essence of calm in what could be a volatile environment, had a genius for correlating the technical aspects of the team, and I suspect that, as time goes by, his absence will make ever more apparent his worth.

Although with Fernando Alonso, Sebastian Vettel, Daniel Ricciardo, Max Verstappen and Carlos Sainz firmly contracted for 2017, this is not a vintage year for the drivers' market, still it's interesting to note that while Lance Stroll will be the sole debutant in Melbourne, only three of the 10 teams – Ferrari, Red Bull, Toro Rosso – remain unchanged.

Nico Hulkenberg is the new man at Renault, and if it pleases me to see him – at last – in a factory team, I'll admit that mention of Renault still occasionally induces in me a certain wistfulness, which came strongly to the surface recently when Sky reran the 2010 Australian Grand Prix. The race was



"Not ideal" was how Kubica described his Canada 2007 impact

won by Button, but second – for Renault – was Robert Kubica, after memorably getting the best of a scrap with Jenson's McLaren team-mate, Lewis Hamilton.

It was a year later that Kubica, indulging in his favourite hobby, suffered dreadful injuries – notably the partial severing of his right



Kubica fought hard for second place in 2010 Oz GP



FERRARO/LAT

forearm — in a minor Italian rally. Although he was restored to health, and went rallying again, the legacy of the arm injury, he said, would almost certainly rule out a return to F1.

Now it has been announced that Kubica will drive for the Kolles team in 2017. “I’ve been looking for something as close to F1 as possible,” he said, “and this is exactly what I’ve found in LMP1.”

Many who had dealings with Colin Kolles in F1 will murmur, ‘Well, you can’t have everything’, but it’s good that Kubica finds himself back in a properly quick race car.

He has been missed in the F1 world, and not only for his droll sense of humour: his pal Alonso once told me, in terms of talent, he thought Kubica the best, and the belief was that, after Renault, he would go to Ferrari. Had he not hit that guardrail in February 2011, who knows what he might have achieved in the last six years?

As it is, Kubica will always have but one grand prix victory to his name, this for BMW at Montreal in 2008. At the same circuit, a year earlier, he survived a huge accident, following a touch with Jarno Trulli’s Toyota at the approach to the hairpin. Robert’s car hit a concrete barrier at close to 190mph before somersaulting back across the track

“Kubica has been missed in F1, and not only for his droll humour: Alonso once told me he thought him the best”

and into a wall on the other side.

Astonishingly, after a single night in hospital, he was discharged, and although precluded from racing at Indianapolis the following weekend, he nevertheless showed up there for a press conference. When someone started going through the details of the shunt, Kubica interrupted him: “I know — I was there...”

He was similarly laconic when talking to me about it. “The problem was that all four wheels were in the air, so there was no deceleration at all. The first wall I just shaved really — but then the second impact was quite big, believe me. I was still travelling at 260km/h — so from 260 to zero into the wall was not ideal.”

At Indy in 2014 Dario Franchitti asked me if I’d seen the in-car footage of Kubica on the Janner Rally, and I said no. He rolled his eyes: “You just won’t believe it...” I watched it on YouTube, and didn’t.

By any standards, Kubica was always considered brave, but this footage is even more startling than Sebastien Loeb ascending Pikes Peak. For one thing, it’s raining; for another, it’s at night — and on top of that his M-Sport Fiesta has lighting problems, one lamp flopping around uselessly, occasionally blinding him. All this at up to 130mph.

Even more fearless, you would have to say, was the man next to him, Maciej Szczepaniak, who somehow retained the gift of speech and continued to read the pace notes before presumably retiring to a darkened room with a bottle of scotch.

Kubica won this round of the European Rally Championship, and what makes it the more remarkable is that he took the lead on this, the 18th and final special stage. I suggest you seek out the movie and rejoice that Robert, if not in F1, is still around. 🍀



WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Why Robert Kubica has

FORMER GRAND PRIX DRIVER ROBERT Kubica has earmarked 2017 as a learning year as he makes a full-time return to the race tracks in the World Endurance Championship with the ByKolles privateer LMP1 squad.

The 32-year-old, who has only raced four times since the rallying accident that curtailed his Formula 1 career in 2011, has joined the German-based team after testing its CLM P1/01 at last November's WEC rookie test in Bahrain (above). Oliver Webb has been named as Kubica's first team-mate in the car, which will be powered by a NISMO-badged Nissan V6 twin-turbo engine rather than its original AER unit.

"It's a challenge, with many questions that will be answered on the track," said Kubica. "The first question is related to myself, because I am a rookie in the context of endurance racing. This will allow me to develop the characteristics required of an endurance driver."

Kubica revealed that he had other targets for the coming season as he sought a future back in car racing as a result of the funding issues that halted his World Rally Championship programme after last year's Monte Carlo Rally.

"Some negotiations weren't realised as hoped," he explained. "Then came this opportunity, and I decided to get involved."

He suggested that driving the only privateer P1

car on the WEC grid was preferable to competing in LMP2 as he makes his circuit-racing comeback after focusing on rallying since his accident.

"It is a works programme that allows a driver to give the input to the team, trying to make progress together," he explained. "In LMP2 maybe I would have had a better time, but it's a class where you buy a car and you go on the track – it's a different approach."

He added that he expected ByKolles to make progress during the 2017 season and that he hoped the drive would open doors. "I believe that for myself there's a chance – I want to do well, then we'll see if it moves something in the market for the future," he said.

Barrichello Le Mans debut confirmed

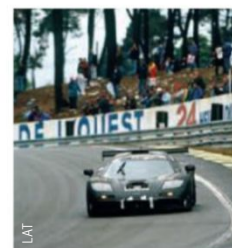
Eleven-time grand prix winner Rubens Barrichello will race at the Le Mans 24 Hours for the first time after the confirmation of Racing Team Nederland's entry for the French enduro.

The Dutch squad will field a Dallara-Gibson P217 LMP2 car in the European Le Mans Series for Jan Lammers, who will be making his 23rd Le Mans start, and amateur driver Frits van Eerd. Barrichello will then join them for the blue-riband round of the WEC.

The Brazilian, who has raced in the Brazilian V8 Stock Car Championship since 2013, has



EBREVILAT



LE MANS 24 HOURS

MCLAREN UP FOR LE MANS RETURN

NEW MCLAREN BOSS ZAK Brown wants to take the marque back to the Le Mans 24 Hours.

He explained that a return to the race won by the McLaren F1 GTR in 1995 (above) would fit with his remit of promoting the brand following his appointment as executive director of the McLaren Technology Group, which incorporates the car-making division.

"We have won Le Mans and the race is in our history, and part of my job is to decide where the McLaren brand should race," he said. "Going back to Le Mans is something we have identified and are discussing."

"Personally, I would love to see us go to Le Mans, and I'm not the only one with those views."

The ultimate decision on a return would be made by McLaren Automotive, Brown stressed. He explained that a Le Mans comeback would most likely come in the GTE ranks but, when asked if McLaren could build an LMP1 prototype in an attempt to repeat its outright 1995 triumph, he replied, "never say never".

Brown said that a GTE programme involving a World Endurance Championship assault "would take several years to put together". He added that it was "to be determined" if developing a GTE car would be handled in-house or by McLaren GT, the independent company that has produced the manufacturer's GT3 and GT4 machinery since 2011.

GARY WATKINS

joined the WEC ranks

already tested the car, undertaking two days at the Dunlop tyre test in Sebring at the end of last year. It appears unlikely that Barrichello will contest any ELMS races with the team.

Lammers, who won at Le Mans with Jaguar in 1988, said: "I'm delighted to hear that we have been accepted for my 23rd Le Mans and Racing Team Netherlands' first entry."

"We are extremely proud to enter some Brazilian flavour into Le Mans."

Derani gets Ford deal

Brazilian Pipo Derani, overall winner of the Daytona and Sebring enduros last year, has joined the Chip Ganassi WEC team for Le Mans. The 23-year-old will compete alongside Andy Priaulx and Harry Tincknell in the #67 Ford GT in the 24 Hours, plus the Silverstone and Spa rounds of the WEC as preparation.

"To compete for a team like Ford Chip Ganassi Racing has been one of my aims since starting in racing and to be recognised and selected by them is a big deal for me," said Derani, who also raced in the WEC's LMP2 class last season.

American Billy Johnson will remain the third driver in Ford's sister WEC entry alongside Olivier Pla and Stefan Mücke, while Sebastien Bourdais and Scott Dixon complete the Le Mans line-ups in the two US entries.

● The British Jota Sport squad will remain in the WEC after parting company with Russian entrant G-Drive Racing, with which it claimed three LMP2 class victories last season. It will field a pair of ORECA-Gibson 07s under the banner of the team involving Hollywood action hero Jackie Chan. Ho-Pin Tung and team co-founder David Cheng are the first two confirmed drivers for the Jackie Chan DC Racing ORECA.

● Former European Le Mans Series champion TDS Racing is moving up to the WEC with a pair of ORECA. One will be run for G-Drive and a line-up including Roman Rusinov and Pierre Thiriet. A second car will be entered for amateur driver Francois Perrodo, who is moving up to P2 after winning the GTE Am title last year.

● Debutant teams at Le Mans this year include the British Tockwith and TF Sport squads, which have solo entries for an LMP2 Ligier-Gibson and a GTE Am Aston Martin Vantage GTE.

● Two-time WEC GT champion Gianmaria Bruni was not listed against either of the AF Corse factory Ferrari team's entries for the WEC and appears set to join rival Porsche after a period of gardening leave.

GARY WATKINS AND ROBERTO CHINCERO



CAR GIANTS VETO POST-BERNIE F1 RETURN – FOR NOW

LIBERTY MEDIA'S takeover of Formula 1 is not going to bring the manufacturers flooding back to the pinnacle of the sport – not in the short term at least.

Ford, Toyota and BMW have all sent signals in the past week dampening speculation that they were weighing up returns to F1.

That is despite the FIA hoping that car makers not currently involved in F1 can play a part in discussions to frame the engine rules beyond 2020, when the future of the current 1.6-litre turbo-V6 concept will be evaluated.

Ford has not had an F1 presence since it powered the Jordan team in 2004, and Ford Performance director Dave Pericak hinted that this is unlikely to change.

"We're not really looking at F1," said Pericak. "F1 is so expensive. If you look at every series we are in right now, there is a relevance to all the goals and objectives we have, in developing our tools, technology and people, and translating that into road cars."

"That's working well, not just on the GT [which competes in the World Endurance Championship and IMSA SportsCar Championship] but other products as well."

BMW wasted little time in adding its voice to those not seeking to

re-enter F1. "When we decided to pull out of F1 in 2009 it was a long-term strategic decision of the company," the German make told Autosport in a statement.

"We wanted to put some of the F1 resources into the research and development of alternative powertrain solutions – and so BMW did. We established ourselves as the leading premium car manufacturer in the field of electric mobility."

"We are watching the developments in the world of motorsport, but currently we have no plans to re-enter F1."

BMW's current programmes are in the DTM and GT racing, and it is also a technical partner of the Andretti Formula E team.

While Ford dominated F1 in the late '60s and throughout the '70s – and last won the title in 1994 with Michael Schumacher and Benetton – and BMW won a title in '83 (above) and races in the 2000s, Toyota was winless in its 2002-09 F1 programme.

Autosport understands that the Japanese giant has no plans to add to its World Endurance, World Rally and domestic programmes.

**LAWRENCE BARRETTO,
CHARLES BRADLEY AND
JONATHAN NOBLE**

F1's biggest transfer coup

No, it's not Bottas to Merc... The imminent arrival of Paddy Lowe at Williams will be a big plus for the team

W

ILLIAMS'S SIGNING OF PADDY LOWE TO BE ITS new technical chief is the most significant team transfer of the Formula 1 off-season.

For in hiring Lowe from Mercedes, Williams will gain invaluable inside knowledge of precisely what has made F1's recently most-dominant team tick.

While Lowe, 54, who left his position as executive director (technical) of Mercedes F1 last month, will not be able alone to make mid-pack Williams an immediate frontrunner, he will be a reference point

for the team's technical operation, as well as its leader.

He will know precisely what aerodynamic targets Mercedes has set to meet the new 2017 technical regulations, and how Williams's own compare against those. Lowe, who is expected to join on March 1, will also bring operational insights from what is widely regarded as the best-funded team ever to have competed in F1. Williams's F1 budget is barely one-fifth of Mercedes', so to expect Lowe to turn Williams into a frontrunning team, without a dramatic increase in funding, is unrealistic. As a technical talisman, however, Williams could not have hoped to secure a more significant figure – apart, perhaps, from Red Bull's Adrian Newey.

Lowe, whose appointment has yet to be announced, will replace Williams's departed technical chief Pat Symonds – himself one of F1's leading technical figures of the past 20 years. Unlike Symonds, however, Lowe will become a main board director, having bought an undisclosed shareholding in the team. Autosport understands that acquisition of a 'stake' was fundamental to Lowe's joining, as he had previously been at odds with Mercedes over the structure of his remuneration package.

Despite Mercedes' domination of F1 since 2014, relations between Lowe and Toto Wolff, fellow Mercedes executive director, became strained during 2016, resulting in Lowe's departure.

Lowe's return to Williams marks a homecoming for an engineer who started his F1 career with the team in 1987 as an electronics ace. He was responsible for leading the design of Williams's active-suspension systems, which were a key element of the dominant performance of the 1992 FW14B – a world-title winner for Nigel Mansell.

Autosport understands that Lowe's role at Mercedes will be taken by James Allison, who split with Ferrari as technical director last August. The imminent announcement of Lowe's appointment at Williams is expected to clear the path for Mercedes to conclude negotiations with Allison.

In a further boost to its strength, Williams is expected shortly to announce the appointment of ex-Ferrari aerodynamicist Dirk de Beer in a senior role. It is likely Lowe will seek to recruit further engineers from Mercedes as part of a predicted technical restructure at his new team.

ANTHONY ROWLINSON





Alonso was 10th in Abu Dhabi on last race for MP4 nomenclature

FORMULA 1

New tag for McLaren

McLAREN HAS DROPPED THE MP4 NAME from its Formula 1 cars as it enters a new era without previous chief Ron Dennis.

The team has announced that its 2017 challenger, which will be launched later this month, will be known as the MCL32.

Dennis, whose Project 4 Racing team was successful in the European Formula 2 Championship from 1976-80, was parachuted into McLaren in '80 at the behest of long-time sponsor Marlboro in a bid to turn around the team's decline. The first car to carry the MP4 – which stood for 'Marlboro Project 4' – tag was the '81 design.

The MP4 name was then maintained for 36 years through to last year's MP4-31. MP4 cars carried Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna to three world titles each, Mika Hakkinen to two and Niki Lauda and Lewis Hamilton to one apiece.

The new designation is part of a freshening up of the brand image by new McLaren executive director Zak Brown. As well as the MCL name change, this will include a return to the papaya-orange that was synonymous with the team's early years in F1 and Can-Am.

The original McLaren naming system ran from M1 to the M30 F1 car of 1980.

JONATHAN NOBLE

EARLY DAYS

How the MP4 story began

When Ron Dennis took over at McLaren, he brought the legacy of his successful Project 4 Racing team with him



#1 FORMULA 2

Ron Dennis's Project 4 F2 team succeeded Project 3 in 1976, and was a leading runner until '80. Eddie Cheever, pictured above in his March in '78, was the team's first race winner.



#2 CHAMPION TEAM

Project 4 expanded into the new BMW M1 Procar series in 1979, running Niki Lauda to the title. That same year it ran Chico Serra to the British F3 crown, ditto Stefan Johansson in '80.



#3 INTO FORMULA 1

Dennis was installed at McLaren late in 1980, and John Barnard designed the first MP4 F1 car. The maiden victory was taken on home ground in the British GP with John Watson at the wheel.

IN THE HEADLINES



GIOVINAZZI GETS FERRARI FIORANO RUN

New Ferrari reserve driver Antonio Giovinazzi took to the track in a Formula 1 car for the first time at Fiorano last week (above). The GP2 runner-up drove the 2015 racer as part of comparative tests between the simulator and track. "It was a great thrill," said Giovinazzi. "For an Italian, leaving the garage in a Ferrari is a fantastic experience."

F1 WEIGHT LIMIT GOES UP AGAIN

The minimum weight limit in F1 this season has been adjusted upwards by 6kg in order to allow for the wider Pirelli tyres mandated for 2017. It is understood that the rear tyres are just over 1.5kg heavier than last year's, and the fronts slightly over 1kg heavier. The weight limit was already 20kg heavier than in '16, due to increases in bodywork and fuel-tank size, and now stands at 728kg.

CAPITO OUT OF McLAREN TEAM

Former Volkswagen rally chief Jost Capito has split from the McLaren F1 team after just five months. "Regrettably, we have not been able to find common ground with Jost with regard to what is and will be needed to make the team successful again," said a McLaren spokesman.

NECK WORRIES FOR WEHRLEIN

New Sauber signing Pascal Wehrlein may have to miss the opening F1 test as concerns grow in the wake of his Race of Champions crash. Wehrlein has had mixed results from medical checks on his neck since the accident.

ALESHIN STAYS ON IN INDYCAR

Mikhail Aleshin has retained his seat at Sam Schmidt Motorsports for his third season in the IndyCar Series. The Russian had a best result of second at Pocono last year. Meanwhile, Sage Karam has concluded an Indy 500-only deal with Dreyer & Reinbold Racing.

ORUDZHEV SWITCHES TO AVF

Russian Egor Orudzhev, who won more races than anyone else in Formula V8 3.5 last year, has switched to AVF, which won the 2016 title with Tom Dillmann. Another addition to the V8 field is Mexican Diego Menchaca, who steps up with Fortec Motorsport.

NATO AND GELAE FOR ARDEN

GP2 race winner Norman Nato has returned to his 2015 team Arden International for his third season in the series. The Frenchman will move onto the Jagonya Ayam scheme that supports Indonesian Sean Gelael (both pictured below), who will partner him in the line-up.





Q&A

JANN MARDENBOROUGH TEAM IMPUL SUPER FORMULA SIGNING



**The Nissan GT Academy
protege will get his debut at
Japan's top level alongside
Yui Sekiguchi (pictured
above) at Team Impul.**

Your Super Formula drive is a pretty big deal...

I've known about it for a while, and keeping quiet about it has been hard. It's a championship that I've wanted to do ever since I got into motorsport. Sometimes on F3 weekends when I was in Japan last year I'd go on the grid and look at the SF cars, and the wings are massive, the tyres are huge, and it makes an F1 car look a bit... tame in comparison. The speed they carry through sector one at Suzuka, it's just mental. The owner of Impul is Kazuyoshi Hoshino – he's very passionate about motorsport. As long as you're pushing 100%, he's happy.

Japan is re-emerging as a viable pathway to Formula 1; is that part of your plan?

My focus is having a career. The ladder [to F1] is broken; it's been broken for many, many years. If you asked Stoffel Vandoorne about how GP2 and Super Formula compare, I'm sure the answer would be pretty clear. You can push, every lap, because the tyres hang on [in Super Formula]. The ladder in Japan works. It works in DTM as well; it's quite similar. I just want to have fun, driving cars and make a living from it. If the car is really fun to drive, I'd rather be doing that.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

SUPER FORMULA/SUPER GT

Nakajima GT return as new stars join

WHILE THE RACING WORLD WAITS to see which team Red Bull Formula 1 driver-in-waiting Pierre Gasly will join for his 2017 Super Formula campaign, Toyota's announcement of its race programme for this season last week at least allowed a partial completion of the Japanese motorsport jigsaw.

While Toyota has given fully deserved Super Formula breaks to Nick Cassidy and Kenta Yamashita – the Japanese Formula 3 champions of 2015 and '16 respectively – and '16 runner-up Jann Mardenborough, the big Super GT story is the return of Kazuki Nakajima.

The 32-year-old ex-Formula 1 racer has rejoined the TOM'S Lexus line-up to partner James Rossiter, who has been promoted back from the #37 car to the #36 that has always been the prestige number of Lexus parent Toyota.

That revives a line-up that claimed four race wins (below) across the 2013 and '14 seasons, and means a busy season for Nakajima, who also competes in SF for TOM'S, as team-mate to Andre Lotterer, and the World Endurance Championship with Toyota.

"Kazuki and I were pushing for a while, if he was going to come back, for the two of us to race together," said Rossiter. "We feel we have unfinished business and it's something [Nobuhide] Tachi-san [TOM'S boss] agreed with."

Rossiter and Nakajima have immediately picked up where they left off, with the Super GT teams testing at Sepang. "The thing that makes us so compatible is our driving styles are so identical – you can't even tell which one of us it is if you look at the data," added Rossiter. "That makes it very simple in terms of set-up and tyre choice, and that's what makes us so strong. Already

from the first days of testing that's been confirmed immediately."

Ex-champion Daisuke Ito has stood down from full-time driving at TOM'S, and will act as director of the #36 car, with 1995 Le Mans winner Masanori Sekiya focusing solely on the #37 – which will be driven by Cassidy and Ryo Hirakawa – instead of across the whole team. Ito will also drive with Rossiter in the Fuji May round, when Nakajima is committed to the Spa 6 Hours.

But Rossiter has lost his SF drive as Toyota-backed youngsters Cassidy and Yamashita fill the seats at his old team, Kondo Racing. "It was kind of a joint decision," he explained. "It was proving challenging in a team that was struggling financially. It's good to give the young drivers an opportunity, and if I have to take a year out to get a top drive in Super Formula I'm OK with that. I love driving the cars and would love to be in it again, but this wasn't the perfect scenario."

Also in SF, ex-F1 racer Kamui Kobayashi has moved across from the LeMans team to the relatively well-resourced KCMG in place of Yuichi Nakayama, who scored just one points finish in three seasons.

Mardenborough gets his break with the Team Impul squad of Japanese racing hero Kazuyoshi Hoshino in place of Brazilian veteran Joao Paulo de Oliveira. The Welshman, who has starred with Hoshino's son Kazuki in the GT300 class, is also tipped to join Impul's GT500 Nissan line-up. De Oliveira is expected to switch to the Nissan team of Kondo.

Toyota left one seat vacant in its SF line-up, with no driver yet nominated to join series returnee Kazuya Oshima.

MARCUS SIMMONS



ISHIHARA/LAT



MOTOGP Honda has launched the largely unchanged colours that MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez and team-mate Dani Pedrosa will carry in 2017. The Japanese manufacturer is on the back foot after the first of three pre-season tests at Sepang, despite Marquez finishing with the third-fastest time. Yamaha recruit Maverick Vinales led the way ahead of Suzuki's Andrea Iannone and Marquez, but Honda is evaluating which version of its heavily revised engine to move ahead with and suffered electrical dramas in Malaysia. Pedrosa was fifth, splitting Ducati's Andrea Dovizioso and Yamaha's Valentino Rossi, with Phillip Island to host the second test from February 15. **Photograph by Honda**

WORLD RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

DTM ace Scheider gets rallycross deal

DTM REFUGEE TIMO SCHEIDER HAS made a full-time switch to the World Rallycross Championship for 2017.

Scheider won DTM titles for Audi in 2008 and '09, but retired from the series at the end of last season after being informed by the Ingolstadt manufacturer that his contract would not be renewed.

The 38-year-old has made four starts to date in WRX with the Audi and SEAT machinery of Munnich Motorsport, but now moves to MJP Racing Team Austria to drive a brand-new Ford Fiesta Supercar.

MJP, the Max Pucher-run squad formerly known as World RX Team

Austria, is building its new-spec Fiesta contenders.

"We've been talking for some time but now we've agreed on a great partnership," said Scheider. "For me, rallycross encompasses the great passion of motorsport."

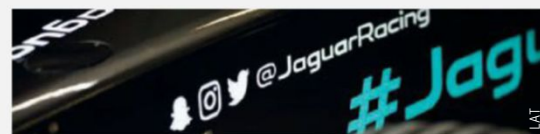
"The level of the championship goes up this year with more manufacturers entering, but MJP Racing has built a new car that will be a serious contender. They not only have great dedication but also employ a high-tech approach to designing and building race cars that is unique. We have found ourselves to be very compatible as partners."

I look forward to a fantastic rallycross season."

HAL RIDGE



FORMULAE



MASSA GETS RUN IN JAGUAR FORMULA E

WILLIAMS DRIVER FELIPE MASSA HAS DESCRIBED DRIVING A Jaguar Formula E car as "completely different" to Formula 1.

The Brazilian completed a one-day test last week with the team, which is run in cooperation with his F1 team's sister company Williams Advanced Engineering.

Massa had targeted racing in Formula E later this year before he went back on his decision to retire from F1.

"It's something completely different to anything I've driven previously," he said. "The different power, brakes, tyres and downforce mean it requires quite a different driving style."

Details of the test are being kept confidential, although Autosport understands it took place in Spain on Wednesday.

Jaguar used one of its 15 allowed manufacturer test days, reserved for developing next season's powertrain, to carry out the test. That means the car had to be substantially different to the homologated I-type 1 – for example, a new inverter, motor or gearbox.

SCOTT MITCHELL



WILL FORD REALLY REJOIN THE WRC?

There are mixed messages regarding Ford chief Dave Pericak's enthusiasm for rallying. But what does our man on the spot think?

Ford's return to the World Rally Championship is a works entity is back on track. Finally.

The only downside to the return is we're not entirely sure how long the track is.

When Ford head of global performance Dave Pericak joined M-Sport to celebrate a Monte Carlo Rally win for the Fiesta WRC last month, two and two were inevitably totted up.

There was plenty of bonhomie between M-Sport team principal Malcolm Wilson and the big Blue Oval cheese. That feeling was echoed in Pericak's words. "We work closely with Malcolm and M-Sport," he told motorsport.com.

"I know a lot of people want to see this big banner that says 'Ford is back in'. But, to be honest, I don't think Ford ever got out. We've been helping him along, we've got a great relationship with him and so we're a part of it."

At the moment, Ford's involvement with M-Sport is some way short of what it was back in the halcyon days of Colin McRae, Carlos Sainz and Martini-liveried, gold-plated Focus WRCS.

But there's no reason to believe it won't get back there. Everything is dovetailing nicely towards a full-time Ford return as a manufacturer. The series' stock is rising, it has mass appeal and relevance to the marketplace, and the Fiesta is set for a starring and central role in this year's series.

All of those elements are starting to build an irresistible momentum. It's not going to happen overnight, but it may happen in time to keep Sebastien Ogier behind a Ford badge next year...

DAVID EVANS

McKLEIN/DE



BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Sutton with Plato in Subaru line-up

THE RISE TO THE TOP TABLE IN THE British Touring Car Championship of new Team BMR Subaru signing Ash Sutton has been rapid, but fully justified.

BMR confirmed this week that Sutton will join the factory-backed Subaru team alongside Jason Plato and James Cole.

Sutton came to prominence with some stirring drives in the British Formula Ford Championship. That was on the BTCC package and, helpfully for him, under the nose of tin-top entrepreneur and BMR boss Warren Scott.

Scott signed him up for the newly formed BMR Academy, and put Sutton in Clio. He won the title at his first attempt and, on his graduation to the BTCC with MG in 2016, took his first win and the rookie Jack Sears Trophy.

In truth, the 23-year-old's path has been eased by Scott's patronage, but Sutton has shown himself worthy of the chance. "I joined BMR by signing a two-year deal to race in the Clio Cup. That two-year deal soon turned into one, and last year I was sat in a BTCC car," says Sutton. "Not for one second did I think that two years down the line I would be a part of the BMR factory team, let alone with such a newly bred BTCC manufacturer as Subaru."

"I thought I had hit the jackpot in my debut season in securing a manufacturer drive with MG, but now being a part of Subaru, and the package that comes with that, has certainly topped it for me."

While Plato's and Cole's signatures were not unexpected, there remains a question mark surrounding the team's fourth machine. Last year it was driven by Scott himself, but sources say that the team principal is reluctant to return to the hot seat.

Team BMR has four licences to

compete, and those stipulate that it must field a car at each of the 10 events throughout the year. If it fails to do so, the fourth permit to compete will be returned to series director Alan Gow.

All change for MG squad

There is a fresh pairing at the Triple Eight Racing-run MG squad in the wake of Sutton's departure.

Aron Taylor-Smith (who previously raced under his unmarried name of Aron Smith) has switched over from the defunct Team BKR and will handle one of the cars. The four-time race winner will be joined by Dan Lloyd in the other.

It will be Lloyd's first full campaign in the BTCC after flirting with the category before, including a three-round stint with a Eurotech Racing Honda in 2016.

Triple Eight team principal Ian Harrison said: "I'm happy that these guys will deliver some solid results for the team. Aron is a proven race winner, and we know Daniel has the speed. With more BTCC race experience under his belt, he will be running at the front."

The MG6s ran a hybrid of older-spec GPRM parts and newer RML kit in 2016, but this has now been outlawed, meaning both machines will be fully upgraded.

Josh Cook, who drove for MG in 2016, has yet to reveal his plans for this year.

Jelley back on BTCC plate

Team Parker Racing will run former Porsche racer Stephen Jelley in 2017. Jelley, a BTCC race winner in 2009, will drive the Ford Focus ST used last term by Alex Martin. Jake Hill has also confirmed his return for his second full season. The Kent racer stays at Team Hard but switches to a Volkswagen CC.

MATT JAMES



WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Ogier nearly joined Prokop Polo team

THE FULL EXTENT OF SEBASTIEN OGIER'S desire to remain in a Volkswagen Polo R WRC this season has been revealed through an enlightening interview with Martin Prokop – the man who would have been his team-mate this season.

The Czech privateer had put together a deal with Mads Ostberg for the pair to hire three Polo R WRCs from Volkswagen Motorsport. Ogier was in on the deal, which came with VW blessing.

Autosport understands that a late bid for sponsorship from Qatar tipped negotiations over the deadline for homologation. Four-time champion Ogier had already accepted missing the season-opening Monte Carlo Rally in order to stay aboard a VW.

Prokop said: "Everything was arranged. The project had involved Red Bull, which is a partner of Sebastien. Ogier agreed with the fact that we would skip Monte Carlo. He said it'd give at least 14 days more time for family.

"Just before signing the contract, Volkswagen [was] promised money from Qatar. Everything was jammed. Ogier showed generosity and twice extended the deadline for contract conclusion. It was a beautiful idea."

Instead the newly formed Onebet Jipocar World Rally Team will run Ford Fiesta WRCs. Ostberg starts this weekend in Sweden and tested the M-Sport-built car (below) last weekend.

DAVID EVANS



GP2 SERIES

F2 revival moves closer

NEWS OF THE FIA'S PLANNED REVIVAL of Formula 2 hasn't exactly been in abundance over the past year, with the governing body reaching an impasse with the GP2 Series on its intended rebranding of what has been the final step on the ladder to Formula 1 for the past 12 years.

But information reached Autosport's ears last week to the extent that, with Liberty

Media having bought the shares of F1 commercial-rights holder CVC – which had GP2 and GP3 as part of its portfolio – and Bernie Ecclestone now effectively off the scene, the wheels are back in motion.

Ecclestone opposed a GP2/F2 link-up, telling the FIA World Motor Sport Council last spring that GP2 was better off being able to govern itself.

One source from the GP2 paddock told us last week it was 'fifty-fifty' that GP2 will become F2 in time for the 2017 season, with another telling us it was 'more than a 50% chance'. Any such move would almost certainly have to go through a World Council vote – the next one is in Geneva on March 9, just over a month before the season kicks off.

The F2 name has not been used since the end of the PalmerSport-run series in 2012.

MARCUS SIMMONS



IN THE HEADLINES



PRODRIVE BUILDING RX MEGANE

Prodrive will build a Renault Megane RX Supercar (above) for Guerlain Chicherit to drive in this season's World Rallycross Championship. Prodrive chairman David Richards said: "It has long been an ambition of ours to compete in the FIA World Rallycross Championship."

PANIS MAKES SWITCH TO WTCC HONDA

Formula V8 3.5 race winner Aurelien Panis has made a surprise switch to the World Touring Car Championship this season. The son of 1996 Monaco Grand Prix winner Olivier Panis will be the first non-Hungarian to line up for Zengo Motorsport in one of its Honda Civic WTCCs. Fellow Frenchman John Filippi stays in the WTCC, but switches to Sebastien Loeb Racing to drive a Citroen.

MULLER TESTS FOR VOLVO

Four-time WTCC champion Yvan Muller set the series' rumour mill buzzing last week when he tested a Polestar Cyan Racing Volvo S60 at the Algarve circuit. The team would not comment on the test. Muller announced his retirement from the series at the end of last season.

HUGHES TAKES HELM OF NEXTEV

The NextEV Formula E team has confirmed that Gerry Hughes has replaced the late Martin Leach as team principal. Hughes, previously the team's chief race engineer, took on the role of acting team principal when Leach passed away just before last November's Marrakech ePrix.

LEIST GOES TO INDY LIGHTS

BRDC British Formula 3 champion Matheus Leist has moved to the US for this season. The Brazilian has joined the Indy Lights squad of Carlin, where he will line up alongside second-year Lights racer Zachary Claman DeMelo and USF2000 graduate Garth Rickards.

ALBUQUERQUE WITH UNITED IN ELMS

Daytona 24 Hours runner-up Filipe Albuquerque has joined sportscar newcomers Hugo de Sadeleer and Will Owen in United Autosports' maiden Ligier-equipped attack on the LMP2 class in the European Le Mans Series and Le Mans 24 Hours. United has also announced historic racers Shaun Lynn and Richard Meins for its attack on the LMP3 class of the ELMS-supporting Michelin Le Mans Cup.

KUJALA GETS LAMBORGHINI PROMOTION

Lamborghini Super Trofeo star and ex-GP3 racer Patrick Kujala gets his break with the Italian manufacturer in the Blancpain Endurance Cup this season. The Finn, the overall 2015 Lambo champ, joins Barwell Motorsport to share a Huracan GT3 with fellow 2016 Pro-Am champ Adrian Amstutz and ex-Formula Renault ace Martin Kodric. World GT1 race winner Miguel Ramos joins Barwell to share the other Huracan with team regulars Richard Abra and Leo Machitski. Each car will run in the Pro-Am class.



F1's fighting chance

Formula 1 must rethink its outdated approach to broadcasting, and it could learn valuable lessons from an unlikely sporting/showbiz source

By Glenn Freeman, Autosport.com Editor

[@glenn_autosport](#)

FORMULA 1 HAS A LOT OF CATCHING UP TO DO ON the broadcasting front in the wake of Bernie Ecclestone being moved aside by new owner Liberty Media. While Ecclestone was once a pioneer in that field, thrusting F1 to the fore in the days of limited TV channels to give it a huge chunk of available airtime on a Sunday afternoon, his overreliance on an outdated business model resulted in F1 falling from its previously dominant position.

So what should happen next? The lazy answer is 'give it all away for free on YouTube and social media'. While Ecclestone was overly cautious of these areas, he was right to question where the real value is – and tearing up multi-million-pound contracts in the hope of chasing down 'internet dollars' based on high 'free' viewerships would be foolish. That's not to say his policy of not allowing any current-season footage on F1's official YouTube channel was smart: that's still lunacy.

F1's real challenge online is to find the golden goose that can one day replace the traditional TV deals that will inevitably diminish over the coming years. And it can find one of those where many wouldn't think

to give a second glance.

Step forward World Wrestling Entertainment – better known as WWE, or WWF if you are of a certain age and not a big supporter of the wildlife charity. Don't scoff: just

because the sporting element of this form of wrestling is fake (the matches are predetermined and largely scripted, although its competitors still get hurt) should not cloud the fact that its big bosses have turned it into a very serious player on the business side. F1 would do well to leave its ego at the door if it's ever invited in to see how to properly run a modern sporting and/or entertainment product in the 21st century.

In 2014 WWE launched its own online streaming service, called the WWE Network. For a monthly fee (\$9.99 or £9.99 in the US or UK), fans got unlimited access to the company's archive, bespoke programming and its then-monthly mega-shows (there are now 16 per year) that were previously only available on pay-per-view at significantly higher prices.

Essentially it's the most full-on attempt at a Netflix for sport, and less than a year after its launch it had a million subscribers. That number has ebbed and flowed in the two years since that landmark moment, peaking at 1.8m in April last year (including people on a free 30-day trial) and sitting comfortably at 1.45m paid users the last time

official figures were divulged in late 2016.

Even if all of those people were only paying in US currency, that's more than \$14 million of revenue being generated every month, which isn't a bad way to offset the likely decline in conventional TV deals.

F1 doesn't need to reinvent the wheel here – all it needs to do to get started is copy a model that already exists. When WWE launched its network in 2014 it was largely populated by a mammoth archive dating back decades and 12 previously PPV-only events per year. F1 doesn't need to look very far on the archive front – it already has a huge one of its own that hardcore fans would love to get their hands on.

While there were some complaints that WWE's offering initially felt a little lightweight once the novelty of the archive wore off, it was just getting started, and it's when we get to copying the other areas of its service that F1 will have some tough decisions to make.

Firstly, putting every live race exclusively on such a service would be a huge risk that would almost certainly

backfire. F1 needs to maintain some discoverability – a way to get people interested for the first time – to make sure it keeps generating new fans (another area gravely overlooked in recent years).

WWE gets away with this because it has other major

shows every week that are broadcast live on conventional TV, which are designed to push people towards the stuff you have to pay for. Maintaining the current split of races on free/paid-for services would be one way for F1 to do this, or it could look to shake up its weekend format and come up with something more meaningful than a qualifying session to put on free TV as a precursor to the main event of the grand prix. That way you also still have something broadcasters will be prepared to pay for.

The third pillar of such a service is arguably the toughest – original programming. WWE has experimented with reality shows based around its stars, documentaries with stunning production values, chat shows and even series focused on key topics from its history, as well as more YouTube-friendly content such as 'greatest-moments' countdowns. It's not all to everybody's taste but, the more variety you have, the more people you are going to please somewhere along the line.

F1 has dipped its toe in that side of things as a way to fill its YouTube channel – now it's time to go for a swim. ❄

“F1 needs an online golden goose to replace traditional TV deals”

FEEDBACK

Quick fix for the new F1 season

If someone had the balls to make a bold change, I believe there is a way to improve the chances of the 2017 Formula 1 regulations actually improving the 'show'.

Now, immediately, before the first test, mandate simple, narrower three-element front wings mounted high enough to reduce ground effect. All teams would be in the same boat so the pecking order should not change much, but instantly: better-looking cars; less-sensitive aero allowing closer following through corners; vast reduction in costs and accident damage in the races.

Plus it *may* scramble the order a bit! What's not to like?

Guy Dormehl
South Africa

Silverstone memories stirred

The motorsport memory of Group C at Silverstone by Kevin Turner (February 2) evoked vivid memories of my own from that day. The speed and noise (the

Mazda was ear-splitting), and not least the astonishing acceleration of those cars was something to behold. I recall that Eddie Cheever tried to take Copse in top gear at some point, probably during practice, somehow avoiding disaster!

I remember Martin Brundle's fabulous drive and seeing him in the paddock after the race, white-faced from the effort it had taken. I always enjoy articles like this; you have a memory, but sometimes a trigger is needed to get a clearer recall and more details come to mind.

Neil Davey
Ivybridge, Devon

Don't forget loyal older fans

I can't begin to tell you how much I agree with Richard Hargrave's letter last week. His last paragraph hits the nail squarely on the head! Although many of us can see the need to encourage the next generation of F1 fans, I hope Mr Carey and his team don't forget the loyal older fans who don't 'do' social media,

Editor Turner sparked memories of Jaguar driver Brundle's epic Silverstone stint



or have a smartphone — like me!

Viewing-for-all TV is essential. Extended highlights are absolutely great — better than now! I've been a big F1 fan since the first race I saw (1966 British GP) and I don't want to give up now.

Mr Carey is obviously the person to contact, but as I don't know how, I hope he gets this message through Autosport.

John Graham
Radcliffe-on-Trent, Notts

Lessons from Daytona

Having watched a gripping Daytona 24 Hours, it's clear that IMSA has formulated a set of rules that ensures close racing. The ACO should take note and quickly invite IMSA prototypes to Le Mans in the near future, which would bring much-needed works entries during a time of uncertainty for LMP1.

The best sportscar racing that I have seen for years.

Jeremy Elliott
London SW2

Rallycross needs a better billing

I was pleased to see the article noting the re-emergence of rallycross and how it is likely to eclipse even the glory days of the Group B cars (February 2). Does this mean you'll give it the proper attention that an FIA series merits rather than the lip service, if you can call it even that, that you have shown in recent years?

Stewart Moore
Runcorn

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THE DEBATE

Is Stirling Moss motorsport's greatest all-rounder?



YES

KEVIN TURNER

Editor

🐦 @KRT917



NO

EDD STRAW

Editor-in-Chief

🐦 @eddstrawF1

Many drivers have competed across different motorsport categories and a select few have been successful in multiple disciplines. But only Moss was so consistently the benchmark whatever he got into.

There's little doubt that Moss was the world's best sportscar driver by the mid-1950s, underlined by the significant advantage he had over Mercedes team-mate Juan Manuel Fangio during '55. How he stacked up against the Argentinian – who must still be regarded as one of the top 10 Formula 1 drivers ever – over the next two F1 campaigns is open to debate, but once Fangio retired Moss became the undisputed top dog.

He famously never won the F1 world title, but his peers knew he was the man to beat. From the start of 1958 to the end of '61, Moss won more world championship grands prix than anyone else (10, to second-best Jack Brabham's seven), despite missing some of the '60 season and driving for Rob Walker's privateer squad against factory teams. He was thus the best in both F1 and sportscars, which at that time was virtually on a par with grand prix racing.

But that is only part of the argument for Moss. He also won the first saloon car races in the United Kingdom at Silverstone – events that led to the formation of what we now call the British Touring Car Championship – and was an ace in F2 and 500cc F3 machines, taking on and beating the category specialists. He often won multiple races in different cars on the same weekend.

One of the reasons he was able to do this was that Moss could win in inferior equipment. He could jump in, get on the pace quickly and maximise what he had, surely essential traits for any potential 'greatest all-rounder'.

He was, simply, versatile at a higher level than everyone else.

Most of what is said about Moss is indisputable; he was one of the all-time greats in Formula 1 and sportscars, supported by great success in other machinery. But this was predominantly within one racing culture, even though he did also have some success in rallying.

We are talking about the greatest all-rounder here, and Moss's body of work is not quite broad enough for that accolade. A great all-rounder? Yes. The greatest all-rounder? No. That accolade can only go to Mario Andretti.

Did Andretti quite reach the heights of Moss in Formula 1? Despite winning the world championship that Moss never did, no. He never was indisputably the very best in GP racing in the same way Moss was, but it was precisely because of his versatility that he was rarely dedicated to F1. It wasn't until his ninth season that he contested a full campaign. You could argue that his pursuit of the F1 title was simply a sideline to his American career. And what a sideline.

But Andretti is a contender for the greatest of all Indycar drivers, winning four titles and 52 races, including the Indianapolis 500. He was also a force in sprint and midget cars and excelled on dirt tracks. And did I mention he also won Pikes Peak, and even a drag race?!

Sportscars? Well, he was a serious force there, winning the Daytona and Sebring classics a combined total of four times, and the Brands Hatch 1000Km in 1972.

Not convinced? He was also a force in stock cars, winning the 1967 Daytona 500 with a gamechanging performance, and taking the 1979 IROC crown.

Andretti probably could have been the best had he focused on any of these areas. Instead, he left his mark in more forms of four-wheeled competition than anyone else before or since. ➤➤

MOSS

IN NUMBERS

ANDRETTI



16 world championship grand prix wins 12

12 world sportscar championship race wins 7

OTHER SUCCESSES

7 Tourist Trophy wins
4 **Nurburgring 1000Km wins**
3 Coupe des Alpes en Or (Alpine Rally)
2nd Le Mans 24 Hours (1953 and '56)

F1 world championship 1
Indycar wins 52
Daytona 500 & Indianapolis 500 wins 1
USAC dirt track championship 1



YES

There is certainly no arguing with Andretti's breadth of achievement, but I think Edd underestimates that trait for Moss.

It's true that his successes were largely achieved in one racing culture, but within that was greater variety than you might see today, or even in Andretti's era. For example, road-racing epics such as the Mille Miglia, Targa Florio and Dundrod Tourist Trophy were very different to circuit events of the time. Moss won at all three, with his 1955 Mille Miglia success being one of the greatest motorsport performances of all time, while Andretti has no equivalent on his admittedly impressive CV.

You would need to combine several of the categories in which Andretti was successful to reach the range of challenge faced by sportscar competitors of the '50s, such was the variety of events.

I think it's also worth pointing out that Moss's rallying ability was outstanding. Outside of his normal comfort zone, he won the coveted Coupe des Alpes en Or for three consecutive penalty-free Alpine Rallies. That's not a bad sideline either.

Would Andretti have been a successful rally driver? Probably. But I'd argue that Moss would have been incredible in an Indycar.

The point is that Moss was the best whatever the challenge, whether it be a non-championship half-hour F1 encounter at Goodwood or a 10-hour test of endurance around Italy.

If no driver had ever been the benchmark across so many categories, then Andretti's breadth of success would surely make him the greatest all-rounder. But Moss, as Edd agrees, still stands as one of the all-time greats in F1 and sportscars, before you even get onto his other triumphs. Andretti *could* have been the best had he focused on one area, but Moss *was* the best even though he didn't. His depth trumps Andretti's breadth.

NO

There's no underestimation of the breadth of Moss's achievements. And while there's no doubting how different the road-race events Kevin mentions were, they remain firmly the same European culture and Moss never encountered anything like the hostility Andretti did in NASCAR – it was clear the stock-car establishment was desperate for this open-wheel upstart not to win the Daytona 500.

It's not that Moss's achievements were narrow, it's simply that Andretti's were far broader. Moss never won a race on the dirt, he never won on a one-mile oval, he never won on a superspeedway – and while it's unfair to hold this against him, Moss never actually managed to win the F1 title, which Andretti did.

Kevin is absolutely right that this argument is rooted in depth versus breadth, but the very nature of searching for a greatest all-rounder means it's the latter that has to be the overriding factor.

Hypothetically, both Andretti and Moss would surely have been very successful in any form of motorsport they turned their hands to. Indeed, they probably could have thrived in plenty of other non-motorsport endeavours. But Andretti is the one who had the more diverse career by an enormous margin.

Had Andretti simply turned up in some of these areas and done

“Mario Andretti's unique career is streets ahead”

OK, the Moss argument would prevail. But Andretti was a relentless winner during a career that stretched from 1959-94 and is regarded by most as the greatest North American racing driver in history. So let's not paint him as anything less than an incredible driver.

In a greatest-racing-driver argument, depth would trump breadth. But not in the all-round argument. There, Andretti's unique career jumping from road courses to ovals, from paving to dirt, open-wheelers to stock cars to sportscars, is streets ahead.



ROBIN MILLER

Andretti (far right) starred on the dirt (above) and won the Indy 500 (right) in 1969



FRIEDMAN/LAT

Moss proved adept at rallying (below) and took three Monaco GP wins (1960, right) in stellar F1 career



LAT



YES

We'll have to agree to disagree on the depth-versus-breadth argument, or risk going round in circles! But there is another element to Moss's versatility we have not yet explored.

He showed an ability to move with technological change, or even make the most of engineering cul-de-sacs. Moss was the first driver to win a world championship GP in a mid-engined car – one giving away 500cc to his rivals – and remains the only driver to have won an F1 race in a four-wheel-drive car, thanks to his 1961 Oulton Park success in the Ferguson P99.

He was also one of the first, along with Jim Clark, to truly start exploring rotating a mid-engined single-seater on the brakes, a style now essential for any professional racing driver.

Andretti did have to get on top of downforce, but all the top drivers managed that, including Moss's old rival Jack Brabham. In short, Andretti was very good at understanding and perfecting what was required. But Moss was capable of moving the parameters of what that actually meant.

I'd also take issue with the argument that Andretti was a relentless winner throughout his career. In both F1 and Indycar, he had barren spells while he manoeuvred himself into the right car/team. That he was able to do so several times underlines his status as a great, but you won't find such spells on Moss's CV once he became established.

One last question: if you had to pick a driver to race for your life, without knowing where the event would be or which cars were

“If someone had to race for your life, who would you choose?”

in play, who would you choose? Moss won nearly half of all the races he contested, a remarkable statistic in the days when cars were less reliable than they are today, so would you really put your life in Andretti's hands? Or Moss's?

NO

If you're using the mastering of technological change as an argument against Andretti, that's a spectacular own goal. During Andretti's 41-year career he raced and won in a far broader range of machinery than Moss did, albeit not through any fault of Moss, whose frontline career did end prematurely. Downforce, non-downforce, front-engined, rear-engined, slicks and treaded tyres, midgets and stock cars, he was the first proper ground-effect F1 champion – the list goes on. He won races in the '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s, '90s and had his last outing in a Panoz Roadster at Le Mans in 2000!

Inevitably, in that period there were times when Andretti wasn't winning, but Moss on his best day wasn't going to win a grand prix in an Alfa Romeo 179C or a Parnelli VPJ4.

As for changing the game, he barely raced in NASCAR but still managed to create and popularise a 'loose' driving style. And he was the gold standard in Indycar in the 1960s.

As for Kevin's final question, the hypothetical one-off race is not fit for purpose. For the greatest all-rounder, this should be a series of four or five races across multiple disciplines, including ovals and the loose. Both Moss and Andretti would excel at two or three, but there'd be no weak points for Mario because of his breadth of experience.

To conclude, the term all-rounder is derived from cricket. You can be a great all-rounder without necessarily being the best batsman or bowler. It's been argued very well that Moss was an all-time great with the bat in various different conditions, but not with the ball.

You can argue that Moss is the greatest racing driver, but Andretti's longevity, his success across multiple different types of cars, technologies and in different racing cultures, makes him the greatest all-rounder. 🏆



HAVE YOUR SAY

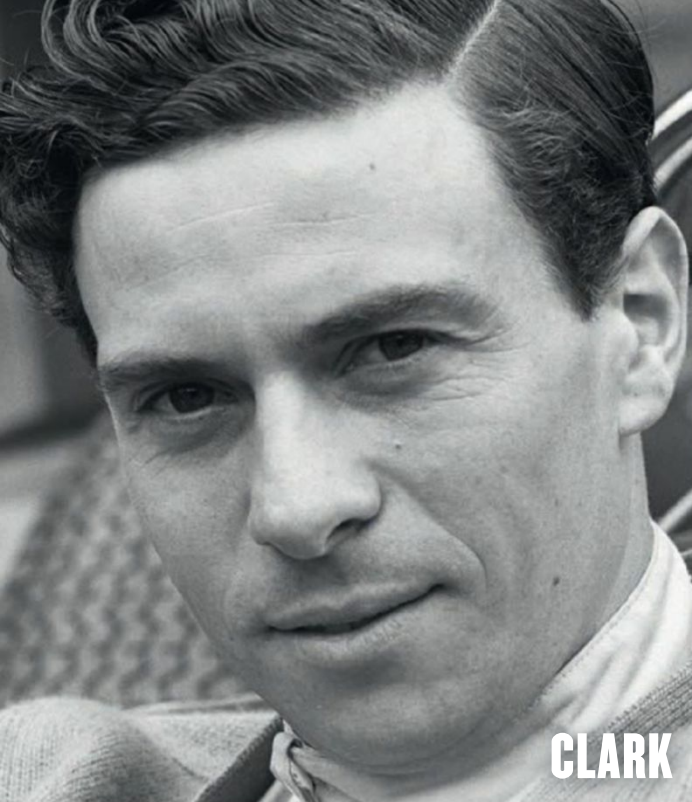
You've heard the arguments, but what do you think? Write to us at magazine@autosport.com, tweet us on [@autosport](https://twitter.com/autosport) or head to our Facebook page to tell us whether you agree with Kevin Turner that Moss is the greatest all-rounder, or Edd Straw that it's Andretti. Or maybe you'd advocate someone else...

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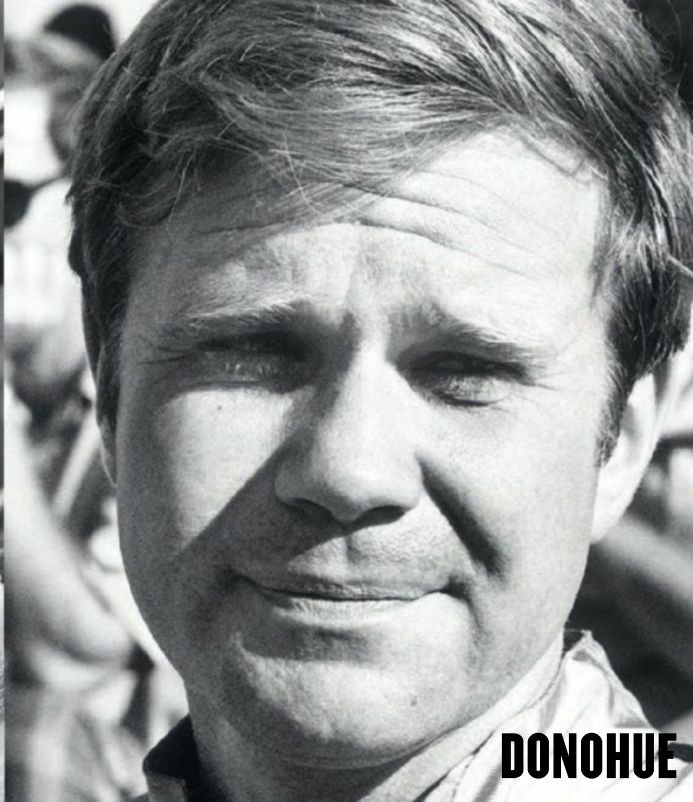
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DONOHUE

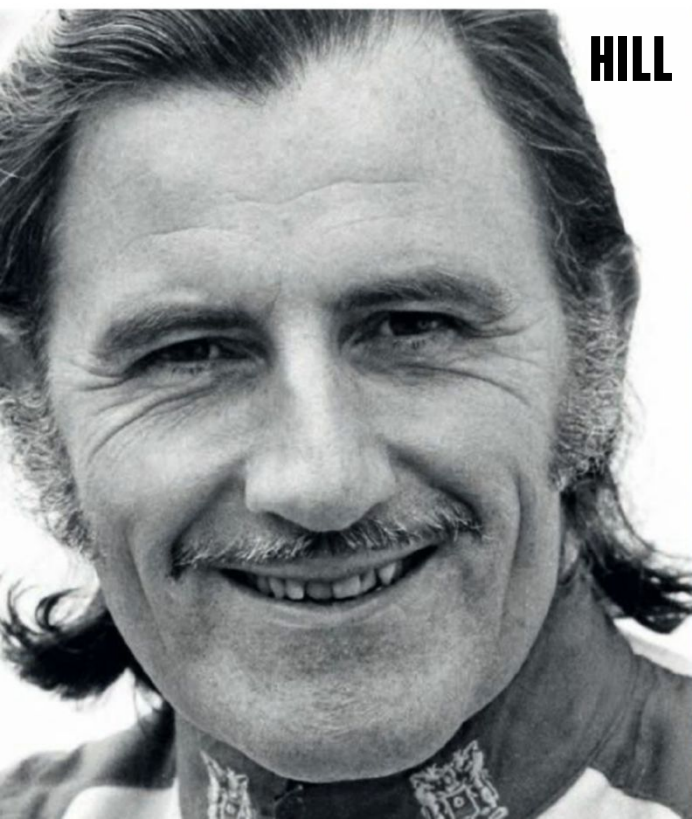


The versatile greats

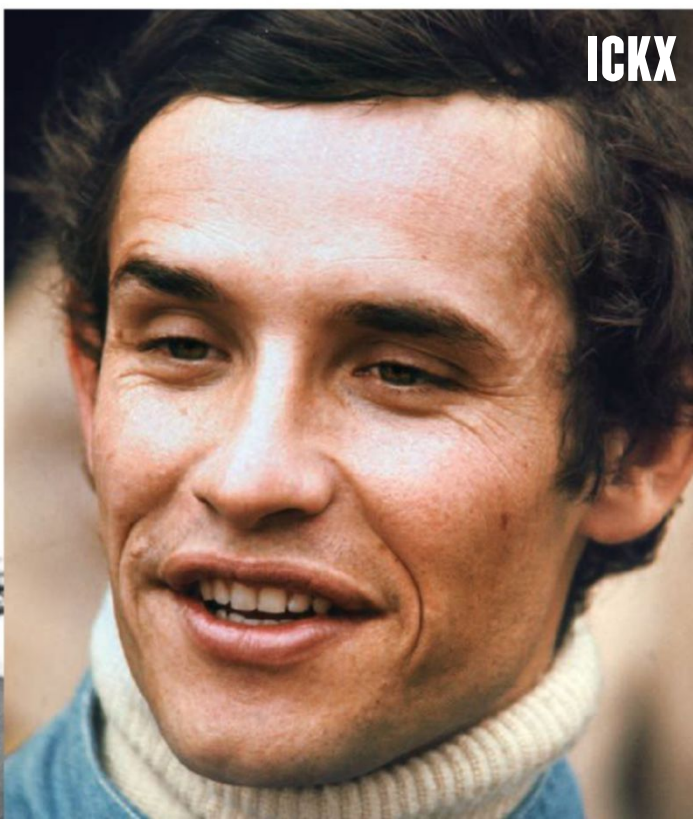
Beyond Stirling Moss and Mario Andretti, there have been a handful of stars who have excelled across a number of motorsport disciplines

Compiled by Kevin Turner, Editor

[@KRT917](#)



HILL



ICKX

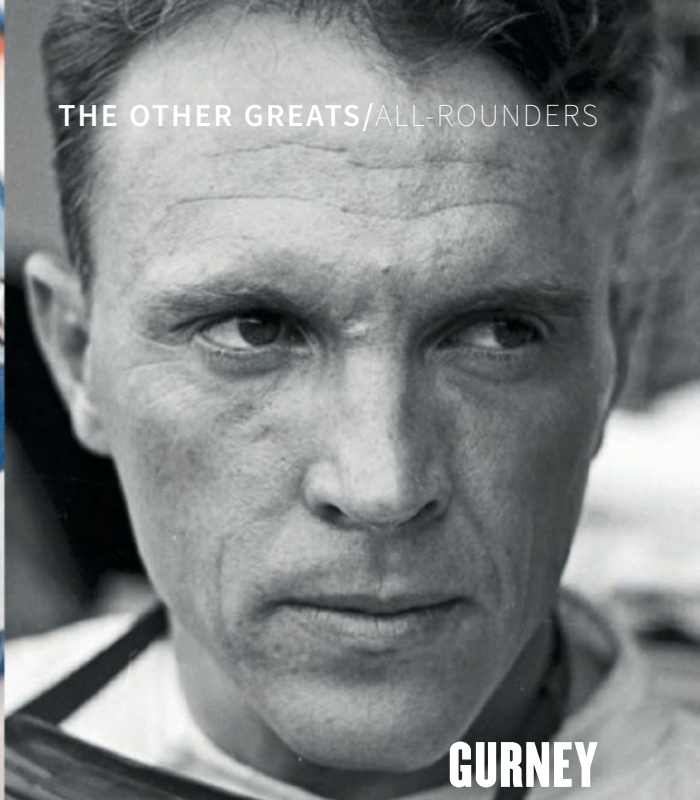




JONES



FOYT



GURNEY

THE OTHER GREATS/ALL-ROUNDERS

Jim Clark

He may have scored all his major successes in cars designed by Lotus boss Colin Chapman, but within that spectrum Clark proved his versatility.

Between Stirling Moss's career-ending Goodwood shunt in 1962 and Clark's death at Hockenheim in '68, the Scot was the dominant force in Formula 1. He took two world titles and, but for some mechanical misfortune, probably should have taken three others ('62, '64 and

'67). He was also a three-time champ in the Tasman series, essentially a winter world championship Down Under.

Perhaps more impressive was his success in Indycar. Apart from nearly winning the Indianapolis 500 on his first visit, Clark and the Lotus 29 triumphed on the challenging Milwaukee Mile, becoming the first rear-engined winner at the pinnacle of American single-seater racing. The bigger prize was yet to come

and, forsaking the Monaco GP, Clark dominated the 1965 Indy 500 to become the first non-American to win since 1920.

He also proved his class in tin-tops, being the only man to take outright British Saloon Car (now BTCC) race wins in the Ford Lotus Cortina (right), as well as the 1964 crown.

In short, he was the benchmark whatever he drove.

KEVIN TURNER



**CLARK
STATS**

25

world
championship
GP wins

2

F1 world
titles

3

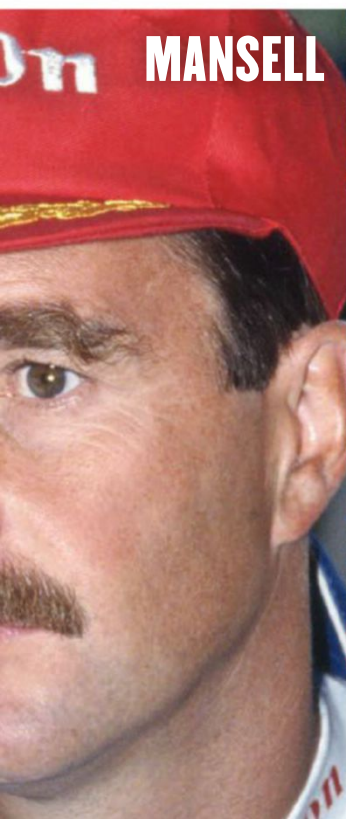
Tasman
titles

1

Indy 500
win

1

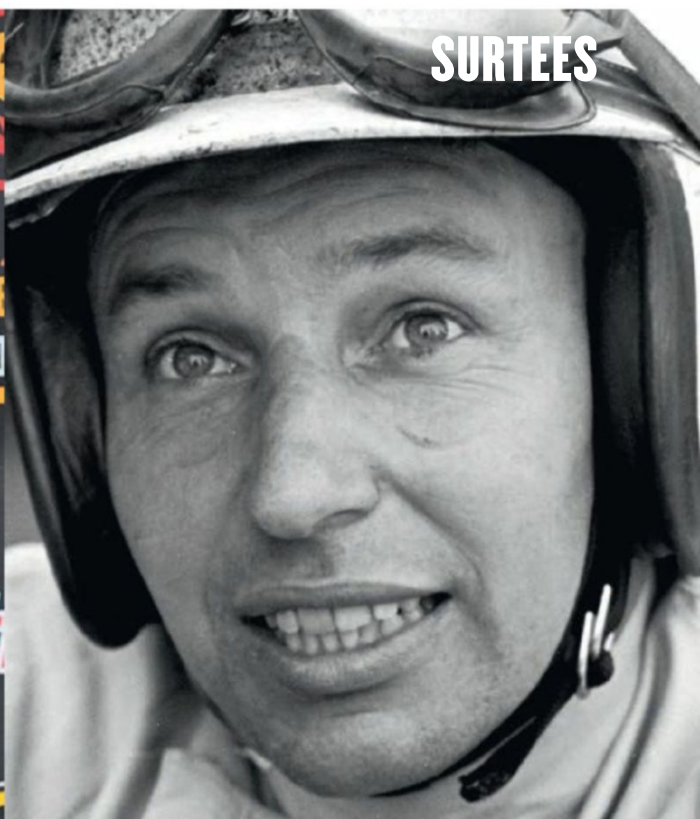
BTCC
title



MANSELL



MONTAYA



SURTEES

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Mark Donohue

Donohue is one of those drivers who is difficult to pin down, precisely because of his versatility during a career that stretched from 1959 until his death as a result of a head injury suffered in a crash in practice for the '75 Austrian Grand Prix.

Best known as the winner of the 1972 Indianapolis 500, he was also

a podium finisher in Formula 1, the inaugural IROC champion (run with Porsche 911s), a NASCAR road-course race winner, a North American Road Racing champion and a three-time Trans-Am title winner. Oh, and he was Can-Am champion in 1973 for good measure. Not bad at all.

What made him an even worthier

all-rounder was his technical expertise and the way he redefined the way drivers and teams interact. It's not without reason that he struck a remarkable working relationship with Roger Penske.

Anybody who doubts just how sharp Donohue was must read *The Unfair Advantage*, which stands as

one of the most fascinating pieces of motorsport literature ever published.

Donohue was rarely absolutely the fastest, but his ability to master the characteristics of a car through intelligence and application, attached to genuine driving ability, made him formidable in anything with wheels.

EDD STRAW



A J Foyt

The most remarkable aspect of 82-year-old Foyt is that he doesn't understand why people think it's such a big deal that he could drive anything and everything quickly.

SuperTex says everyone was doing it in the 1960s and early '70s – and sure, many drivers were – but few as successfully as him. The first driver to win four Indy 500s, Foyt is also the only driver to have conquered IMS in both a roadster and a rear-engined car. The year Jim Clark won Indy, 1965, the guy who beat him to pole was Foyt – in an older Lotus.

Then there were his sportscar triumphs at Le Mans (1967), Daytona

('83 and '85) and Sebring ('85), which endorsed his abilities on road courses. On dirt, too, he was exceptional and scored countless victories in sprints cars and midgets, and he could handle a stock car – 41 USAC Stock Car wins, as well as seven NASCAR victories, including the '72 Daytona 500.

It's as Indycar racing's most successful driver – 67 wins and seven championships – that Foyt is best known, but the truth is that, whichever branch of racing he'd chosen to focus upon, he'd have been at or near the top of the stats list.

DAVID MALSER



Dan Gurney

Gurney's world championship Formula 1 record of four wins and three poles from 86 starts does not do him justice. One of America's all-time greatest drivers, Gurney overshadowed team boss Jack Brabham (another contender for this list) in 1964 and would surely have achieved more with his own Eagle effort but for poor reliability.

Outside of F1 Gurney was a contender in just about everything he tried. He was a race winner in Trans-Am and British Saloon Car Championship tin-tops, Can-Am monsters, Indycars and the world sportscar championship. He was also almost unbeatable in the NASCAR visits to Riverside, where he took all five

of his top-level stock-car victories.

Often the pacesetter for Ford in its massive sportscar effort of the 1960s, he also demonstrated mechanical sympathy when he shared '67 Le Mans success (above) with AJ Foyt.

An Indianapolis 500 win is absent from his CV, but three consecutive podiums from 1968-70 show Gurney was still a threat on ovals.

His achievements as a team owner with All American Racers and technical prowess – he originated the gurney flap – demonstrate that Gurney's versatility even went beyond his skills behind the wheel.

KEVIN TURNER

Graham Hill

The only driver to have scored the Triple Crown of Monaco Grand Prix, Indianapolis 500 and Le Mans 24 Hours wins had to be on this list. The double F1 world champion was also a winner in sportscars and touring cars.

HILL STATS

1 1966
Indy 500
winner

14 world
championship
GP wins

1 1972
Le Mans
winner

2 F1
world
titles

8 BTCC
race
wins

5 Monaco
GP
wins

4 world
sportscar
championship
race wins



Hill completed his Triple Crown with 1972 Le Mans success, driving for Matra

MCKLEIN/DE

Jacky Ickx

Best known as one of the great sportscar drivers, with six Le Mans 24 Hours wins, two world titles and a Can-Am crown to his name, Ickx's talents extended much further.

He narrowly missed out on catching the late Jochen Rindt to take the 1970 F1 title, was twice runner-up in the drivers' standings and scored eight world championship grand prix wins. He also excelled in the wet – his first F1 success came in appalling conditions at the 1968 French GP, a race he finished nearly two minutes earlier than second-placed John Surtees.

Before all that he had won the bigger-engined class in the 1965 European Touring Car Championship in a Ford Mustang, and tasted Spa 24 Hours success, sharing a BMW 2002ti with Hubert Hahne. He underlined his tin-top talent with victory in the 1977 Bathurst 1000, driving a Ford Falcon with Allan Moffat, becoming only the third European to win Australia's greatest race.

Ickx also tried his hand at the epic Dakar Rally. He won for Mercedes in 1983, the same year he successfully defended his world sportscar crown, and was second in a Porsche (below) in '86. Truly an all-round talent.

KEVIN TURNER



FRIEDMAN/LAT

Parnelli Jones

The racer who left Jackie Stewart in awe at his mastery of ovals and who Mario Andretti describes as the greatest Indycar driver of the '60s – those two endorsements should be enough. But like his Indycar statistics – just six wins and 12 pole positions because he rarely bothered racing a whole season – anecdotes don't do justice to Rufus 'Parnelli' Jones.

He became the first driver to lap Indianapolis Motor Speedway at over 150mph, and took part in just seven Indy 500s. Yet he led laps in five and woulda/coulda/shoulda won four...

But there's much more. Parnelli was a true great in a midget and a sprint car yet also fine with a roof over his head too. He conquered the Pikes Peak Hill

Climb in 1963 driving a Mercury Marauder, breaking the stock-car record, and the following year he took the USAC Stock Car championship.

He was startlingly good in his occasional NASCAR drives too, interrupting Dan Gurney's long run of success at the Riverside road course, and this agility on tracks that contained right as well as left turns translated perfectly into Trans-Am. Parnelli and his Ford Mustangs became legendary and he took the 1970 title.

And then there was the fact that he won the Baja 1000 twice after he'd retired from racing on track to run his own hugely successful team. Parnelli is a unique and also a versatile genius.

DAVID MALSHER



MCKLEIN/DE



Nigel Mansell

Mansell's achievement in winning the F1 world championship and the Indycar title in back-to-back seasons in 1992-93 remains one of the most remarkable feats in motorsport history.

His CV might not have the breadth of his Newman/Haas team-mate Mario Andretti, but he nevertheless demonstrated his ability to adapt to

changing circumstances. The Lola T93/00 (above) was far removed from the high-tech Williams FW14B he had been driving, and the CART championship's combination of ovals, tight street tracks and road courses presented a new challenge in itself.

A heavy practice accident at Phoenix gave the sceptics ammunition,

but he went on to win four oval races.

"I rewrote the rules on oval racing," he told Autosport in 2014. "Everyone said you couldn't do this and you couldn't do that. Some of them were right, hence my crash at Phoenix. But in that crash I learned to do things a different way, and at New Hampshire I passed Paul Tracy on the outside in Turn 2. It was an

amazing move that no-one had ever seen before in their racing.

"I enjoyed the challenge, I enjoyed the engineering and setting up the car, because it's totally different to an F1 car."

Mansell also dabbled in touring cars, showing well in the wet at Donington Park in the BTCC in 1998.

ADAM COOPER

Juan Pablo Montoya

People may bang on about the versatility of Tony Stewart, a man who has endeavoured to try to emulate his hero AJ Foyt, but in fact it's Montoya who has proven the modern-day equivalent of the versatile '50s and '60s heroes such as Stirling Moss, Jim Clark and Parnelli Jones.

His Formula 3000 brilliance carried directly into CART Indycars in 1999, where he became the man to beat on

any given weekend, even in his rookie season, and he dominated the IRL-spec Indy 500 in 2000. By the second race of his 2001 transfer to Formula 1, he was muscling past Michael Schumacher to lead the Brazilian Grand Prix, and went on to score seven F1 wins.

People may accuse Montoya of feeding off the NASCAR gravy train for too long but he scored two wins and nine poles, despite Ganassi not being

a top-tier Cup team, and this renewed partnership with Chip allowed him also to compete in, excel at and win the Daytona 24 Hours three times.

His return to Indycars with Penske earned him another Indy 500 victory and very nearly another title. Who'd bet against him turning his one-race deal with Roger's squad this May into a third 500 win? The guy remains astounding.

DAVID MALSHER



John Surtees

Despite being a Formula 1 and Can-Am champion, Surtees has perhaps fewer car-racing successes than some of the others on this list, but in one area he is streets ahead. As one of the greatest motorcycle riders ever, with four 500cc and three 350cc world championships to his name, he had to be here.

Still the only man to win world titles on two and four wheels, Surtees was the rider to beat when he made the switch to cars in 1960. He was immediately impressive and by '63 was leading Ferrari's F1 attack, taking his first world

championship grand prix win at the Nurburgring. He won there again in '64 on his way to the world title and would probably have repeated that success in '66 had he not left mid-season amid political in-fighting.

Even after that he still won races with Cooper-Maserati and Honda machinery before setting up his eponymous team. That didn't achieve the success he might have hoped for, but Surtees had left a big impression on the sport long before he hung up his helmet in 1972.

KEVIN TURNER

SURTEES STATS

15

350cc
motorcycle
grand prix
wins

22

500cc
motorcycle
grand prix
wins

6

Formula 1
world
championship
GP wins



The unsung multitalent

Vic Elford never won a grand prix or the Indy 500, but there was no doubting his adaptability, as rallying and sportscar successes showed

By David Evans, Rallies Editor

[@daviddevansrally](#)

Approaching Campofelice on Sicily's northern coast, Vic Elford knows he's making time. *He just knows it.*

It's 1968 and his Targa Florio couldn't have got off to a worse start: a puncture and subsequent wheelnut problem have dropped his Porsche 907 18 minutes behind the leader in the 10-lap, 450-mile race.

Out on the open road, there's not much to choose between the frontrunners. But in the towns, it's all Elford.

"When I got the puncture, my first thought was, 'Hell! I'm not going to win now. But I'm sure as hell going to have the lap record,'" recalls Elford. So he did — on virtually every one of the remaining six laps he drove (Umberto Maglioli drove three laps).

"The roads outside of the three little towns were normal, but as soon as we got into the towns — Cerda, Collesano and Campofelice — the roads were covered in polished marble dust from Sicily's big export earner. They were as slippery as ice.

Out on the road I drove like a race driver: on rails, never getting sideways, and under total and smooth control. But in the towns that didn't work. The dust meant the car wouldn't turn in and had total understeer. So there I was, a rally driver, sideways the whole time, steering with the throttle and leaving all the 'normal' race drivers behind."

Elford moved into the lead of the 1968 Targa Florio on the penultimate lap and went on to win by three minutes. He lowered the lap record by a minute.

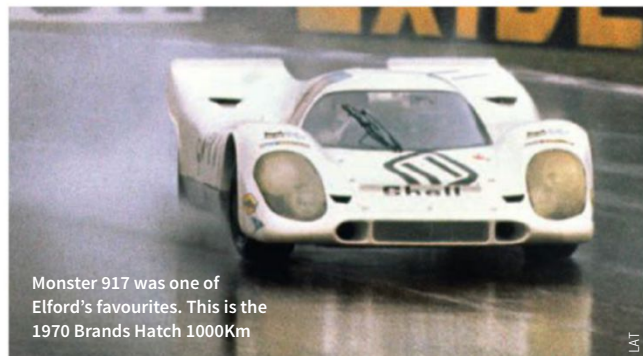
Elford's career began at the dawn of the 1960s, co-driving David Seigle-Morris in a Triumph TR3A. Convinced he could do a better job, he set about the stages from the other seat and success wasn't long in coming: he won the 1967 European Rally Championship in a Porsche 911.

That year marked Elford out as a driver with truly universal skills. He won the first-ever rallycross event at Lydden Hill and then took victory on the epic Marathon de la Route, an 84-hour race at the Nurburgring. For four nights in succession, Elford powered his team's Porsche through the rain and mist in seven-hour stints to carve out an astonishing win. His record at the greatest circuit in the world was first-class and would eventually include three wins in the Nurburgring 1000Km.

With his multi-faceted abilities well publicised in 1967, Elford was in demand the following year. And what a year it turned out to be, starting with an unforgettable fortnight in January, when he won the Monte Carlo Rally in a Porsche 911, then took the German manufacturer's first Daytona 24 Hours victory.

Later in the season he made his F1 debut in a Cooper-BRM, finishing the French Grand Prix behind Jackie Stewart's Matra in fourth place. Twelve more grands prix followed in the next couple of seasons, but that Rouen result remained his best.

"Formula 1 was always my goal," he says, "but back then there were no race schools or any other stepping stones and the only



Monster 917 was one of Elford's favourites. This is the 1970 Brands Hatch 1000Km

The genius on wheels

The computer. That was what they called Walter Rohrl during his time in rallying. A calculated yet committed style gave rise to victories on rallies as disparate as the Acropolis and Monte Carlo, in cars as different as a Group 2 Opel Ascona and a Group B Audi Quattro. Rohrl's talent as a rally driver is well known.

But what about Rohrl the racer? Well, there was that class win at Le Mans, in a Porsche 944 in 1981. There were also those Stateside successes at the wheel of a fearsome-looking Audi 200 Quattro Trans-Am.

And then there are Niki Lauda's words. What was it he called Rohrl? "Genius on wheels."

Lauda wasn't the only Formula 1 world champion to recognise the ability of the two-time World Rally champion.

A number of years ago, Rohrl recounted a story that told everything you needed to know about what he could do with a car.

It was a story about what was, for him, a fairly mundane run around the Nordschleife. Lapping The Green Hell is a regular part of his development work for Porsche. On this occasion, he found himself on the tail of



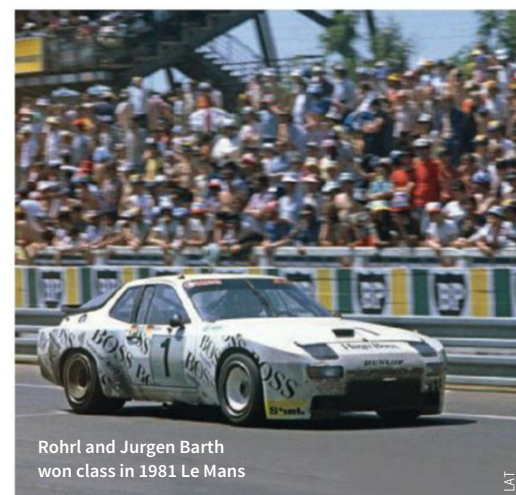
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what was clearly a well-driven supercar. While focusing on the task in hand, Rohrl engaged the other car, finally sending one up the inside in the last few corners to cross the line ahead of the other precisely matched motor.

Exiting the track, Rohrl was going through his cooling-off procedure and stopped at some traffic lights. His rival was right behind him and concern grew when he saw the driver's door open.

Moments later a furious-looking Michael Schumacher banged on Rohrl's window.

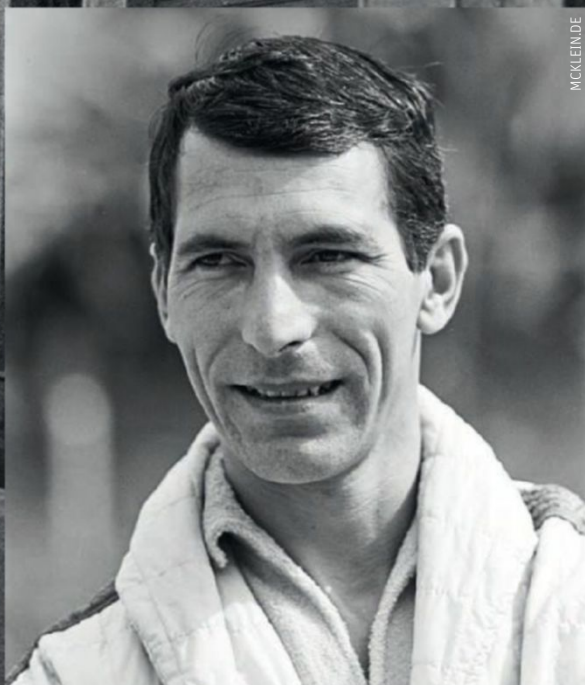
The look of relief when he saw who was behind the wheel tells us everything about how good Walter Rohrl was – and is – on track.



Rohrl and Jürgen Barth won class in 1981 Le Mans

LAT

Elford (inset) used race and rally approaches to star on 1968 Targa Florio



MCKLEINDE

LAT



people who could race were wealthy young gentlemen. I did get to F1 – just – but never had a good car."

So, if he'd had to choose just one discipline, would Elford have gone for F1? There's a pause. Still he can't decide.

"Actually," he says, "I really enjoyed international rallies and I was very much at home in big powerful cars like the 917. I guess it would have been one of those two. Which one? I honestly don't know!"

His 1968 Monte and Targa Florio wins are the standout career moments for him, but Le Mans will always hold great memories. And never more so than in 1969, when he shared a 917 with Richard Attwood and his quality as a rally driver shone through.

"That very first 917 was unloved," he says, "and it was difficult to drive. On the Mulsanne Straight it wandered all over the road at high speed, but since I was used to rally cars, which are often inherently unstable, I was relaxed about this. Getting sideways at 220mph really didn't bother me too much. And I loved to drive in the rain. In 1970, in the longtail, after losing time early on for some little problem, I was taking back almost a lap an hour at night in the rain."

And there we have it: "Getting sideways at 220mph really didn't bother me." The sentence of the year.

And final justification for Quick Vic's presence here. 🍷

Monte Carlo success was the start of a great 1968 for Elford

The modern all-rounders

Think racing drivers are all one-trick ponies these days?
Think again. Outside of F1, they're diversifying more
than at any time since the 1960s

By Marcus Simmons, Deputy Editor

[@MarcusSimmons54](#)

Everyone's heard the 'it-was-better-in-the-old-days' motorsport bores reminiscing about the era when Formula 1 stars used to compete in every race on the support programme to grands prix. The fact that this pretty much died out from the '70s – the BMW M1 Procar series of 1979-80 excepted – was an inevitable consequence, not only of F1 drivers' contracts becoming increasingly exclusive and their salaries ever greater, but also the vast rise in professionalism of most high-profile series demanding their own specialists. Not to mention that the enormous improvements in safety meant that the pool of top-line drivers across all disciplines grew exponentially simply because they were enjoying longer careers.

That's begun to change over the past decade. OK, F1 drivers remain mostly F1-only, but look beyond the sport's pinnacle to the top tiers of professionals and they're becoming increasingly versatile. Partly, this has been a product of the logjam of drivers and high costs at GP2/Formula V8 3.5 level, together with the collapse of several F1 junior-driver programmes. The effect of this has filtered ever lower down the ladder, and now even Formula 4/Renault 2.0 graduates are jumping over to GT and tin-top categories in a bid to become a professional driver rather than forlornly chase the F1 dream.

"It was simply a case of taking any and every opportunity, and trying to make the most of it all the time to see if anything gave me the chance to do something professional," says BMW IMSA

factory driver Alexander Sims, who in his spare time pounds around deserted Welsh tracks helping Formula 3 teams, as well as being a regular in the Macau Grand Prix. "I did LMP2 with Status – my first foray into sportscars – and some GTs with McLaren, and then T-Sport called me up for some European F3. It wasn't, 'OK, I've got a chance of getting to F1 again'. It's just weighing up the pros and cons, and when you don't have a factory deal the pros usually outweigh the cons. That was the driving factor in doing different things. I wasn't chasing, say, World Touring Cars and that's the only thing I wanted to do – it was LMP2, GT, whatever."

More recently, Felix Rosenqvist has made the same transition as Sims from a linear – and rather momentum-lacking – single-seater career to trying anything anywhere during 2016. "The hope was that I would do DTM but the opportunity wasn't there [at the start of the season], so basically I tried to do whatever I could in terms of being a professional driver," he explains. "In formula cars you have to find the budget, and last year was the first when I really wanted to be officially a professional driver."

Alongside an Indy Lights drive, Rosenqvist – then the reigning Euro F3 champion – also earned a place in Mercedes' GT3 line-up. Then came his belated DTM chance, a Formula E full-time role with Mahindra, and a return to F3 in Macau. "The first thing you have to prove is that you can drive any car that's given to you," he says. "A good driver should be able to adapt in different scenarios."

This trend in European-based racing is merely mirroring the

From left, Rosenqvist raced last year in Formula E, DTM, GT3, Legends(!), and was on Macau podium with fellow DTM/FE racer Antonio Felix da Costa





EBREV/LAT



ISHIHARA/LAT



EBREV/LAT

“In Japan it’s more courage than technique to do the lap time”

long-established culture in Japan. For decades, the majority of top-liners in the country’s premier single-seater series have dovetailed this with other programmes. Andre Lotterer competed successfully in Formula Nippon (now Super Formula) alongside Super GT from 2003-11, then became a full-time member of Audi’s World Endurance Championship team from ’12, and has combined this with his Japanese single-seater campaign.

“The biggest test of versatility is Japan,” says Lotterer, now a factory Porsche LMP1 driver and continuing in Super Formula with the Toyota-affiliated TOM’S team he has raced for since 2006. “Every weekend you’re going from Super Formula to GT and back.

Lotterer (above) is equally at home in Super Formula (top right) and LMP1 (above right)

“Actually it was very natural, because the Super GT cars are very quick as well. In my case, both championships had similar tyres because I was on Bridgestones, so the characteristics and the grip levels were similar. It was not such a big deal, to be honest. The biggest thing was in the stick-shift days – the formula car was on the right and the GT on the left, so you’d go to the shifter and it wasn’t there! But it [swapping between cars] became really natural, and a good school to adapt quickly to different situations. This helped me a lot in my career – it makes you more complete.”

Lotterer believes that the biggest difficulty is moving from a car that runs on the high-grip tyres used in Japan, or the Michelin rubber he’s used to in LMP1, to series that do not offer so much grip. “I realised that when I did the 24 Hours of Spa [he is a regular in the Blancpain GT blue riband],” adds the Belgo-German. “That’s the biggest challenge. In Japan you have to go beyond your capability to do the lap time – it’s more courage than technique, and that makes it a bit easier. Then you go to a spec tyre and it’s more applying yourself and technically being correct with the way you drive the car. That’s why the specialists do so well.”

That’s a good point, but one driver who has shone on the Blancpain-spec Pirelli is reigning Endurance champion Shane van Gisbergen, who not only won that title with McLaren in 2016 but also in the very different arena of the red-hot-competitive Australian Supercars series with the Red Bull/Triple Eight Holden team.

McLaren GT boss Andrew Kirkaldy first properly got to know van Gisbergen when they raced as co-drivers in the 2014 >>



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Sims is a BMW man, but loves the odd F3 outing (bottom)



Bathurst 12 Hour race. "I kind of subscribe to the old way of thinking that if you can drive one thing you can drive anything," says Kirkaldy. "The cars are not easier today, but they are quite well refined racing cars, regardless of what you do. If you're a good professional driver, you can jump in and do a good job. From V8s [Supercars] it's probably somewhat easier, but nevertheless you've got to get in and get on with it, and he's outstanding."

Kirkaldy is also heavily involved in the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award, where the single-seater tyros are let loose in Formula 2 cars and DTM Mercedes and GT3 McLaren machinery. Most recently, 2014 and '15 finalist Ben Barnicoat earned a place on the McLaren GT Driver Academy after his single-seater career ran out of steam, and is on the eve of his first full season in Blancpain GT.

"It's more important from a judging perspective, getting a view of the drivers in a situation that's not

Racing's kings of versatility

#1

The Super Formula boys

Of the 19 drivers who raced full-time in Japan's premier single-seater series last year, 13 combined it with a Super GT programme, three with the WEC and one with an F1 reserve deal. "Some do better in one series than the other, but they're all definitely able to adapt – all the drivers are good talents," says Andre Lotterer.

Intriguingly, the last time anyone did the Japanese title double in one year was way back in 2004, and that was Richard Lyons.

#2

The Formula E brigade

Only three of the 20 drivers who started the current season had no other programme in 2016. Eight raced regularly in WEC, three in GT3, and then you had all-rounders Nelson Piquet Jr and Felix Rosenqvist. "The fact that I'd done so many series helped me adapt," says Rosenqvist. "But it's very different to DTM, which has so much sensitivity to how you set the car up, with the massive aero and downforce. In DTM one driving style can be quick one day, and it has to be a completely different style the next day. Some drivers still don't know how to drive a DTM car and they've been there 10 years."

#3

'The Giz'

A unique Aussie Supercars/Blancpain Endurance title double in 2016 marks Kiwi Shane van Gisbergen out as a master of car-hopping. McLaren GT boss Andrew Kirkaldy, who shared with him at the 2014 Bathurst 12 Hour, says: "I didn't know a huge amount about him, and he went out and his first flying lap was our quickest of the weekend so far."

#4

The BTCC battlers

Tom Ingram is a regular in the Spa 25 Hours Fun Cup race for Beetle clones, Rob Austin finished on a 2016 Legends podium, and Andrew Jordan is a dab hand in a variety of historic machinery, including the family Austin A40.



Van Gisbergen (with Rob Bell on left) is champ in GT3 and V8s



comfortable for them," says Kirkaldy of the Award tests. "There tends to be a bit of a stigma of what GT3 is, but when they jump in, it opens their eyes. You've got a pro who does a benchmark time, then a bunch of kids massively eager to see what they can achieve. And they get very close – they do incredibly well."

Once that professional deal is in place, the drivers don't want to stop diversifying. "Macau... that bloomin' race still eludes me and I feel there's unfinished business," jokes Sims. "That's the main driving force."

And Lotterer doesn't want to stop his Super Formula exploits any time soon, for all the prestige and reward of his LMP1 deal. "I do it because I love formula cars and there are so many great circuits," he says. "When you have Suzuka as your garden, and get a chance to drive these cars, it's a privilege. A lap in a winter test there, in the 1m36s... it's a drug. Nothing compares to that."





**The toughest
championship you
know little about**

A champion's guide to Super GT

After his Formula 1 career fizzled out, Heikki Kovalainen found a new lease of life in Super GT with Lexus. He talks through the finer points of one of the world's hardest racing categories

Heikki Kovalainen didn't want his Formula 1 career to end after 111 grands prix. But a two-race, point-less swansong in late 2013 with Lotus after the rest of the year had been spent on the sidelines was no precursor to a full-time comeback. Instead, it led to one year out of racing entirely.

That downtime was not wasted. Kovalainen engineered a switch from grand prix to grand touring – a 2014 Super GT test led to a race drive for '15, at Lexus with Team SARD.

But his debut season was disappointing. "It was quite a difficult step, probably more difficult than I anticipated," he says. "The first year that I went over there I thought we would quite quickly pick up the pace to a level where we could start racing near the front. It took for me a good six months to really get up to speed."

After ending his first season 13th in the points, the 2008 Hungarian GP winner turned it around in style to seal the '16 Super GT crown with Kohei Hirate at the very last round.

So what makes the Japanese category one of the world's toughest, and most underappreciated, disciplines?

EDD STRAW

HEIKKI KOVALAINEN ON...

...the tyre war

It's at a very high level and very complicated [Team SARD uses Bridgestones, while Yokohama, Michelin and Dunlop all supplied teams last season]. There are a lot of choices and a lot of discussions. Most of the time while we're testing we don't do a lot of set-up work. It's just on the first practice on Saturday morning you do a little bit of set-up work because by the time you've got to the race weekend you've narrowed the tyre

selection quite a lot. It's very complex – I'd say it's at the level it used to be in Formula 1 when I was a test driver for Renault in 2006. I remember we did a lot of tyre work in those days and it's almost on a similar level in terms of the options available and the decisions we have to make.

It's complicated, but at the same time it's also a very interesting part of the championship. I really enjoyed working with the tyre company, and you can find a lot of performance there. But if you make the wrong choice you can really ruin a good car for the weekend if the tyres are not performing.

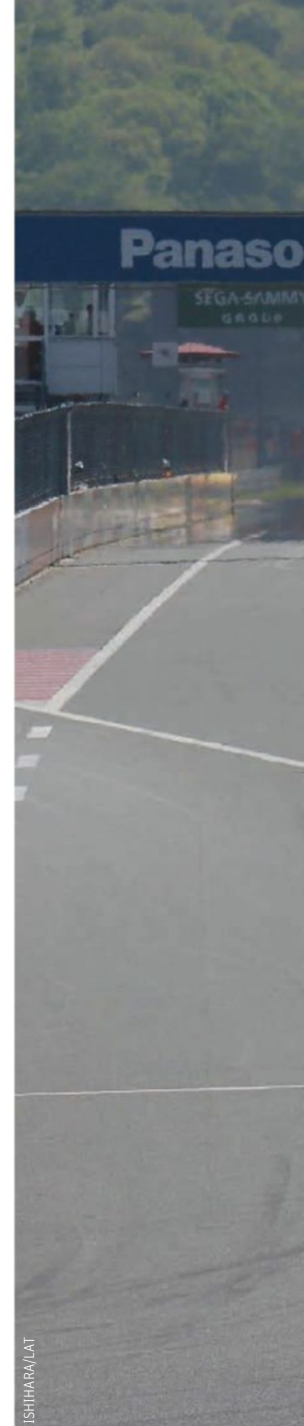
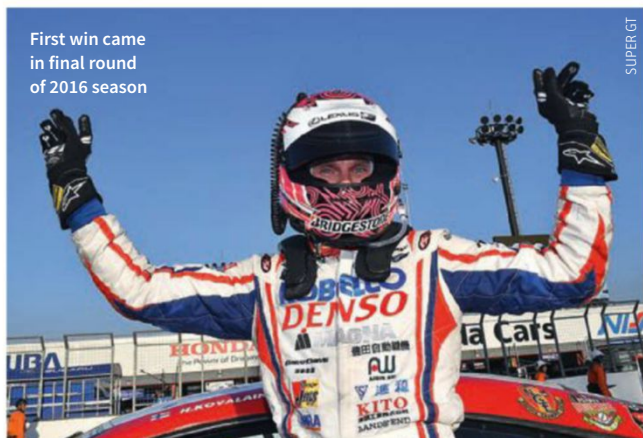
I had [a lot of motorsport] experience, but it still took me a while to really understand what I needed from the car. Qualifying is very important. Our races are sort of endurance races, but they are sprint races at the same time, so it's very important to qualify at the front. You must have a tyre that's quick but at the same time can do half of the race or, say, one third of the race at least. So it's trying to find a compromise.

When you get it right, you have a really good qualifying tyre and a really good race tyre at the same time, so it can be done. But it requires a lot of work and it takes a while to understand what kind of tyre it needs to be.

...becoming fluent in Japanese

I'm not, actually! One of the reasons I struggle to learn Japanese is that everyone in the team speaks such good English that I'm

Multi-manufacturer involvement in Super GT's premier class keeps competition high





not even trying. I guess I should probably make some effort to greet people in Japanese, but I have a very narrow vocabulary. So that could be improved.

Transitioning to working in Japan was not that difficult. Because all the key people speak very fluent English, we could communicate. The procedures before, during and after the race are pretty much the standard things I've done in previous categories. It was pretty easy to settle in. There was nothing that surprised me, nothing I thought was particularly difficult in terms of culture. So it worked very well.

The first year I was going there and back quite a lot; I didn't stay a lot between the tests and the races. I got to a point where I thought it was a bit too much and I didn't feel fresh coming back.

Last year I changed, so I stayed for longer periods. I had three to six or even seven weeks in a row there and I organised the schedule so that I could do the tests and the races that were close together on the same trip. I was hanging out in Japan with the team and some friends I have out there. I felt much better in myself and much fresher at the races.

It's definitely better this way. There's a lot of jetlag to deal with if you go there and back all the time.

...rapid locals

It's always hard to compare; you need to see drivers compete in categories driving the same cars to really see what the level is. I certainly see that the competition is tough and you have got all the little details right to be able to get pole position or win the race.

The margins are always small, which tells you most of the guys are driving at the limit. People don't know much about [Super GT] and maybe the Japanese drivers are underestimated a little bit. There have been a few [Japanese] in F1 that haven't been that successful and people have got this idea that they are not quite as good as the best [drivers]. But my experience so far is that they are pretty good drivers with a lot

of experience of the local circuits, about the local racing generally, about these cars. So they can extract the performance out of the car surprisingly well.

Anyone going [to Japan] or looking over there should not underestimate the level of competitiveness. When I first went there I perhaps underestimated it a little – I thought it would be easier, that I'm coming from Formula 1, I know how things work and I can get to the top easier. >>

“It was pretty easy to settle in. There were no surprises”

Kovalainen is paired with Kohei Hirate



But I quickly found that I needed to work on every detail to be able to beat these guys.

...old-school circuits

They are very narrow, with very small run-off areas, so there's the potential for a big accident if you go off. I've had a few offs myself. Definitely the circuits are the kind where you can't just take a chance and try to go flat-out, and then if you don't make it you just go around the big gravel areas or the Tarmac run-off.

You've got to build up your pace and be quite confident to be able to do good times on some of the circuits. That's another challenge for rookie drivers coming from Europe – the circuits are very difficult and it takes a while to understand them.

That's why it's old school. The cars are high-performance and the grip of the tyres is very good – and some of the circuits would not be allowed on the F1 calendar by the FIA.

...testing

I'd say it was probably 20 days during the year. Before the season I think we've got maybe eight or 10 days, something like that. And then during the year maybe another eight or 10.

The test days are always very busy and intense, with a lot of tyre work taking place and a lot of laps. So both drivers are driving all day long.

It's a significant amount of driving compared to a lot of championships. There are many categories with not much happening outside of the races. But Super GT has a reasonable amount of testing, so that's positive.

...the chance of a real career

I really enjoy working with the Japanese. They are very reliable and loyal and that's something I was missing, especially towards the end of my career in F1.

It's a good alternative [career]. The championship is healthy, with manufacturers involved, and the organisation is very professional. It's very popular in Japan, the competition level is high, and also the challenges that you face mean you are going to learn a lot by doing it, that's for sure.

The cars are not easy to drive on the limit, and the professionalism of the teams is high. It's just that in Europe not many people know much about it. I didn't know a lot about it before I went over there, but now I look at it from



a different perspective. It's not a bad choice — and I'm not just saying that because I won it!

...becoming champion

It was very satisfying. There are a couple of reasons why. The first year was a much bigger disappointment than I anticipated — than everyone anticipated — and I felt I and the team let Toyota down. We didn't perform on the right level, made some silly mistakes and just didn't get our car good enough — and we weren't driving well enough either. It just didn't work.

Then, to turn it around the second year just gave me the extra satisfaction that we were able to find the right way. It's many years since I won a championship. Over the years you wonder many times if it's ever going to happen again.

I know it's not an F1 championship, it's not the same. But still from what I've experienced and the years that I worked over there, it takes a lot to win the championship and you've got to perform at a high level all the way through the year. All the things that slow you down in the middle of the year, like the ballast, you've got to get on with it and find your way through — it demands a lot from the whole team and the drivers. 🍀

How Super GT offered redemption – eventually

WHAT'S THE PERFECT way to take your first win in a new category? A dominant performance from pole, probably. That applies to any driver, but it's particularly useful when you're a Formula 1 refugee.

But when that's not possible, you try again in race two. Another fifth. OK, keep trying. It'll come soon. Seventh? This isn't quite going to plan. Try, try, try again. Err... the season's over. Your best result is fifth, on your debut. You're 13th in the championship.

So, what's the second-best way to take your first win? Do it to clinch the title and make your sophomore season as sweet as possible.

"We had quite a lot of troubles," says Heikki Kovalainen of his switch to Super GT. "It probably looks worse than it was. Our team was new, we had new mechanics, the drivers were new."

But Kovalainen admits his performances were not up to scratch "even if the team had been the level that they were when I won the championship". That shows in the results. Kovalainen and 2013 Super GT champion Kohei Hirate's brace of fifths from the opening two races were solid, but they were a minute behind the race-winning Lexus at Okayama and lapped at

Fuji. It tailed off thereafter, with the nadir three point-less races mired in the midfield. Sixth in the finale at least was a late tonic.

Kovalainen also points to his GT inexperience and learning the nuances of the series' tyre war as contributing factors to his struggles. While stability for Team SARD was a key factor heading into 2016, Kovalainen did shake things up on a personal level, spending more time in Japan.

The Finn last won a championship in 2004,

"You wait for a new chance, but things don't work like that in F1"

taking the World Series by Nissan crown before being pipped by Nico Rosberg in the inaugural GP2 title fight a year later. Heading to Motegi's final races in 2016, he was far from nailed on to end that barren streak.

A solid season — including back-to-back second-place finishes at Fuji and Sugo — meant Kovalainen and Hirate went into the double-header fourth in the points, 11 behind the lead held by Nissan's reigning champion duo Tsugio

Matsuda and Ronnie Quintarelli.

Second place in Saturday's first race put them into the points lead. Hirate took pole for the second race, which Kovalainen won by just 0.472 seconds to take the title, delivering SARD's first in 23 seasons in the category and, for Kovalainen, some closure after F1.

"It's a long time since I fought for victories in my F1 career, so I enjoy being at the front," says Kovalainen. "My early years in F1 were interesting and somewhat successful, but then the McLaren stint didn't quite go to plan, then the step back didn't work out like we all hoped it would.

"Some of that time was definitely wasted. But at that time you don't see it like that. You wait for a new opportunity and you think it's going to happen, but things don't work like that in F1.

"That's all in the past and I'm glad actually that when Caterham didn't renew my contract I had to sit out 2014 completely. I'm quite glad I wasn't there then and was able to go and test a [GT] car and that the people at SARD took notice.

"Hopefully there are still many years to come. I'm enjoying it more at the moment than I was at the end of my F1 career."





LEXUS LC500 RC F TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Body size	4960x1950x1220mm
Minimum weight	1020kg
Wheelbase	2750mm
Transmission	6-speed sequential
Engine specifications	Two-litre, four-cylinder direct-injection turbo
Power output	600bhp



Anatomy of a Super GT monster

GT500 USES GT3-HOMOLOGATED MACHINERY, WITH LEXUS, Nissan and Honda all represented with factory entries. The cars are extremely fast – when Autosport published its special report comparing the performance of different series last year (March 17), Super GT came out at 115.697% compared to Formula 1. That makes it the fastest GT series in the world, and slotted it between GP3 and LMP2 – not bad for a tin-top.

Reigning champion Heikki Kovalainen will drive the new LC500 RC F this season. Here he outlines the key parts of the Super GT machine and what to expect from 2017.

“They are very modern, very nicely designed and built cars.

Comparing this to an F1 car, the weight is the biggest difference. The car moves around more than an F1 car, it has less power, and it doesn’t stop as well or accelerate as well.

“A modern Super GT car has relatively good downforce and good grip from the tyres, so actually the corner speeds are pretty high. It’s just compared to F1 it requires a different driving style, and during my first year it took a while to adapt to it and to find the right style to make the car and the set-up work.

“It’s not an easy car to drive and the competition is extremely close. In qualifying it’s very tight – one or two tenths can drop you out from a Q2 position. One-off details, fine-tuning and small gains



make a big difference so we are working – and all the teams are working – on very small issues all the time.

“The tyres make the general performance of the car very good – sometimes if you have set-up problems they are not that visible when you put the new tyres on because the new tyres often cover some small issues. And it’s the small issues that you need to work on and that’s probably the biggest challenge – finding the last little bits that give you a position in the top three or four in qualifying to give yourself a good opportunity to fight at the front in the race.

“At the moment it looks like there isn’t actually that much

difference in lap time with less downforce [there has been a 25% drop in downforce for this year due to changes to the diffuser and other aero tweaks]. It’s a bit slower in the corners and you can feel that it’s moving around a bit more, but the Lexus is significantly quicker on the straights. So that compensates for almost all of the time that’s lost in the corners.

“I don’t think we’ll actually see lap times dropping off that much this year. Maybe a little bit – partly because we’ve had to fit slightly harder tyres at some of the circuits because of tyre wear – but we’re not talking about many seconds. You’re talking about a tenth or maybe a second, max.”

The making of Audi's sleeper hit

Before Audi came calling, Rene Rast's talents went unrewarded for a long time. After proving himself over and over in GTs, he's got a dream drive in the DTM – and the chance to show just how good he is in yet another category

By Gary Watkins,
Special Contributor

[@gazzasportscars](#)

It was a lucky break by any standards. Rene Rast's mid-meeting call-up to Audi's DTM line-up at Zandvoort last summer owed a lot to chance. Yet it wasn't just by chance that the 30-year-old German had made himself an obvious candidate for the vacancy. It was all part of a plan.

Rast had made a decision at the start of the 2016 season that he needed to speculate to accumulate in order to further his career. It was he who pursued the plan to race in the World Endurance Championship, not Audi. A stellar start to the season with the Jota Sport-run G-Drive LMP2 squad resulted in the call to replace the injured Adrien Tambay for the final day of the Zandvoort meeting in July. Less than five months later, he was celebrating a full-time DTM ride for 2017.

The unexpected move to LMP2 had been motivated by the downsizing of Audi's Le Mans 24 Hours squad. Rast had joined its LMP1 World Endurance Championship team in 2015 for Spa and the French enduro, only for the axe to fall on the third car for the following season in the wake of the diesel-emissions row that engulfed the Volkswagen group. That meant he was facing another year as an Audi GT 'pool' driver.

"I didn't want to only do GTs again; doing another full year would have meant nothing," explains Rast, who'd notched up a pair of victories in the Spa 24 Hours and one at the Nurburgring 24 Hours in his first three seasons with Audi. "I felt I needed to prove myself, and the WEC looked like the best opportunity for me, so I started looking for a full-time drive."

A call to Jota early last year resulted in a quick 'thanks but no thanks'. The team was looking for €1 million for the season, but when it came back with a revised offer in March for a deal covering the the first four races, Rast and manager Dennis >>



Second DTM outing came in Hockenheim finale. Rast held back BMWs to aid Mortara's vain title bid

zteile24



Rostek, a V8STAR driver back in the early 2000s, decided to get on the phone to potential sponsors.

Going out looking for money to fund a drive was a big step for a driver who'd been a paid professional almost since his earliest days racing in the Porsche Carrera Cup in Germany and the Supercup. But he admits that he was "kind of desperate".

"I didn't want to lose another year of my career," he explains. "I wanted to drive a car with downforce. It [funding the LMP2 drive] turned out to be a good investment."

Rast impressed at every opportunity at the wheel of the G-Drive Racing ORECA-Nissan 05 in what turned out to be a golden season for him. There was a strong performance on a Formula E one-off in Berlin, not to mention a top six on his second appearance as a stand-in at the DTM Hockenheim finale. Then there were his appearances at the wheel of Audi's R8 LMS GT3 contender, including a class win at the Daytona 24 Hours.

Nor should it be forgotten that he'd never driven the RS5 DTM contender prior to arriving at Zandvoort. So much so that he didn't know how to engage first gear. "The engineer said 'go, go, go' at the beginning of free practice, and I just sat there while I tried to find a gear," recalls Rast.

At Jota, he claimed pole together with Russian driver Roman Rusinov in each of the first four WEC rounds, Le Mans included, and starred in each of the races, even if a class win proved elusive for any number of reasons, malfunctioning fuel pumps and exploding gearboxes among them. He made himself an indispensable part of the team, and was retained for the second leg of the championship without having to fund his seat. A first victory only came in the series finale in Bahrain after Rast had missed two races – one to contest the Hockenheim DTM finale, the other to attend the birth of his first child – but he had still made his mark.

The world always knew Rast was good. He had, after all, claimed a hat-trick of Porsche Supercup titles in 2010-12, notched up that trio of victories in the big GT3 enduros at Spa and the 'Ring, and looked impressive at the wheel of the third Audi R18 e-tron quattro in 2015. Yet what he did at the wheel of the Jota ORECA was something else again. His qualifying lap

"All I had to do was deliver on the first lap. If you nailed it, the time was there"

at the Nurburgring, for example, was a second faster than his closest rival by all but a few hundredths.

There's no doubt that Jota, more often than not, gave Rast the most competitive P2 in the field. "One of the strengths of the team in terms of set-up was to optimise the tyres," says David Leach, who engineered the team's ORECA last year. "We gave Rene the potential to deliver some exceptional qualifying performances, but he always had to maximise what we gave him."

Rast believes that his experience from the Porsche Supercup stood him in good stead in qualifying last year. "The car was always on point, it was outstanding, and all I had to do was deliver, and deliver on the first lap," he explains. "That's something I learned from the Supercup. If you nailed it, the time was there on the first lap, because there was a big drop-off in the tyres. It was the same last year in LMP2."

You'll find a line of engineers and team bosses queueing up to eulogise about Rast's talents. Jota boss Sam Hignett describes Rast as having "a huge natural ability", while Mark Preston, team principal at the Aguri FE squad (now Techeetah), just remembers thinking "wow" when he jumped in his car for the first time in Germany. And WRT Audi team boss Vincent Vosse just mentions his second-place finish in the FIA GT World Cup at Macau in 2015 on his first acquaintance with the daunting Guia street circuit when talking about the talents of the guy.

Rast combines his natural ability with what Hignett calls "a good understanding of why he is quick and what he has to do to be quicker still". He points out that such is "not always the case with very gifted drivers". Leach agrees, saying he has "an appreciation of the bigger picture, which allows him to pick out things that will make him better than others around him".

That analytical approach allowed Rast to keep improving through his solo Formula E weekend in what was his first single-seater drive since 2005.

"It was a bit of a risk putting someone in the car who hadn't tested, but Rene was quick straight away," remembers Preston. "He didn't qualify very well because we didn't get a quali sim in beforehand and then he got caught up at the first corner. We thought we might as well try to go for the points for fastest lap. He kept getting quicker and quicker, and we ended up pretty close."

Rast held the best race lap on two occasions during the closing stages. He ended up fourth quickest, less than three tenths off best lap and behind only Bruno Senna, Jerome d'Ambrosio and Sebastien Buemi.

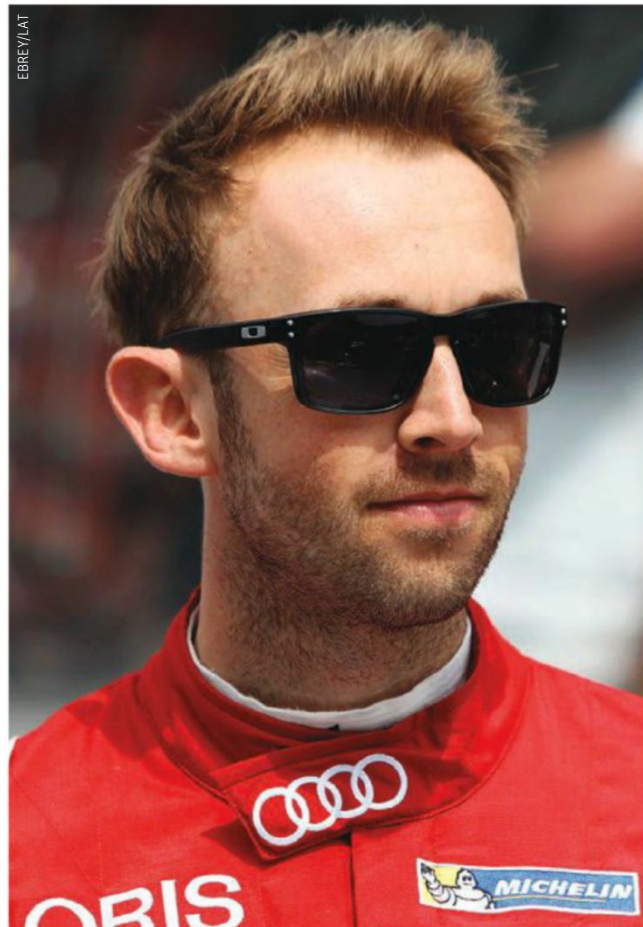
Joest Racing boss Ralf Juttner suggests that Rast's natural talent is complemented by his laid-back attitude. "He's very easy going and has a great approach," he explains. "That means he never puts himself under pressure."

Juttner reckons it was a travesty that Rast never got more of a chance in P1 during Audi's involvement. "We should have had him in our cars more," he says.

Rast was promoted to the P1 squad for 2015 without so much as sitting in an R18. He'd already done Le Mans in 2014 aboard a Sebastien Loeb Racing ORECA LMP2 car, another occasion on which Rast opted to invest in his future.

"You need experience at Le Mans," he says, "and no one takes you for free if you don't have experience." But perhaps just as crucially, he'd starred on the way to a thrilling victory in the Spa 24 Hours that year. Vosse believes this was the turning point in a career at Audi that had begun in 2012.

Rast hauled the WRT Audi R8 LMS ultra shared with »





S. BLOXHAM/LAT



Left: In spite of limited prototype experience, Rast was fast enough in the R18 for team chiefs to wish they had given him more opportunities

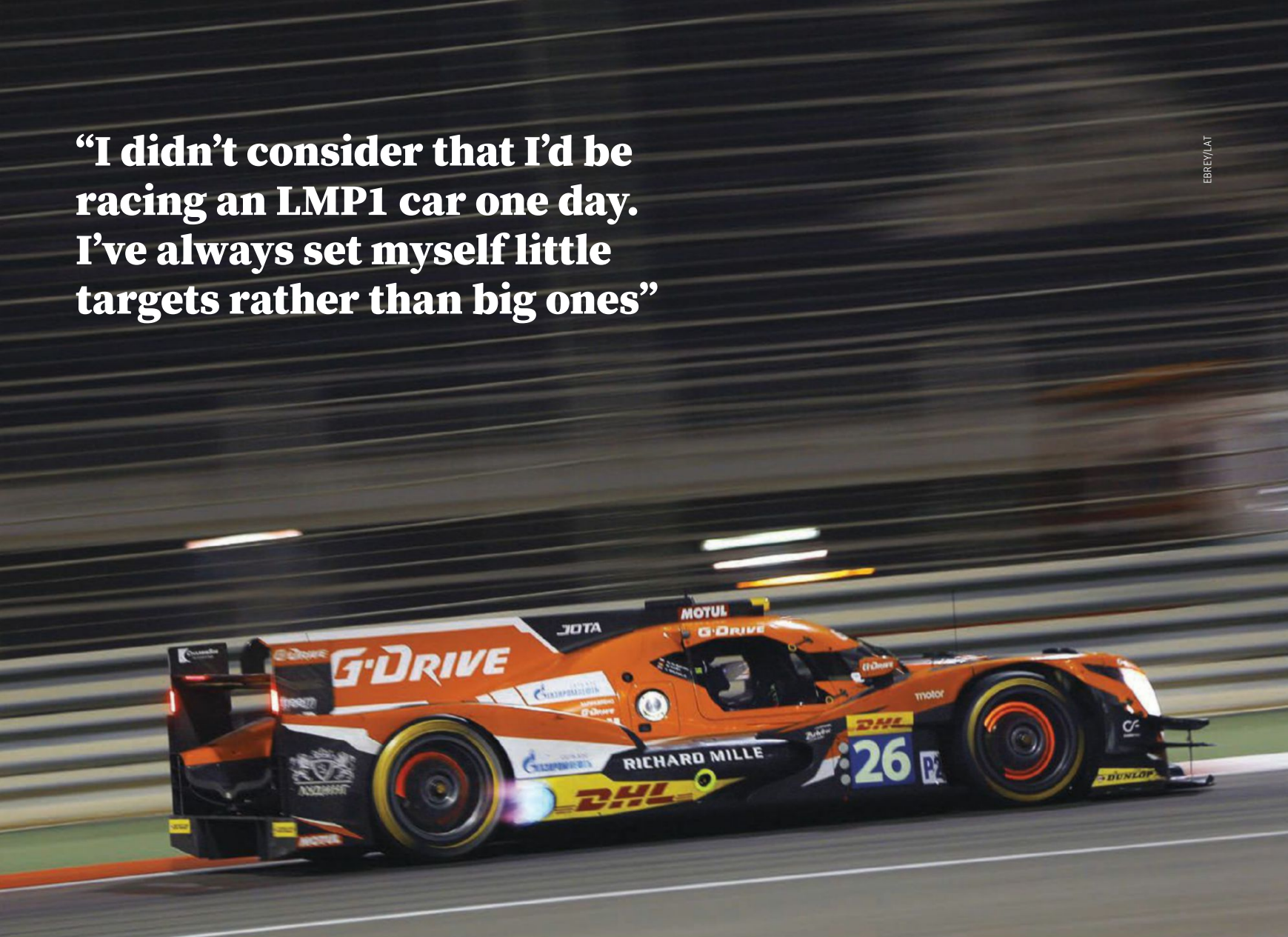
Above: Zandvoort DTM call-up was so late he borrowed Mortara's suit. Below: Rast took a class win aboard Magnus Racing Audi R8 in the 2016 Daytona 24 Hours



WILLIAMS/LAT

“I didn’t consider that I’d be racing an LMP1 car one day. I’ve always set myself little targets rather than big ones”

EBREY/LAT



EBREY/LAT

Left and above: G-Drive’s well-prepared ORECA LMP2 enabled Rast to fly, and he and team-mates Alex Brundle and Roman Rusinov made up for Le Mans disappointment with Bahrain class win

Below: Rast became synonymous with success in the Audi R8 as part of the WRT squad. His exploits included second place in the inaugural GT World Cup on his first visit to Macau in 2015

XPB IMAGES/LAT



Laurens Vanthoor and Markus Winkelhock ahead of the leading Marc VDS BMW Z4 twice in the final hours to take victory by just seven seconds.

"That was something special," says Vosse. "I think it was the first time that the eyes of Dr Ullrich [then Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich] really focused on Rene Rast. That performance from Rene really caught his attention."

When Rast joined Audi in 2012, he had a factory contract for the Nurburgring and Spa enduros in the final year of his Supercup hat-trick. The next season, he had a full deal with the German manufacturer, racing and winning in both the FIA GT Series and the ADAC GT Masters.

It was a strange progression to the holy grail of a factory drive. Despite his successes with Porsche, he never landed a works deal. Rast insists he doesn't know why to this day. "Maybe you should ask them," he says. It seems that his face didn't fit and that the then head of Porsche Motorsport, Hartmut Kristen, wasn't a fan.

Rast had ended up racing in Porsche's cups after falling off the single-seater ladder after his second season in Formula BMW in Germany in 2004. Two accidents at the championship opener at Hockenheim resulted in a halt to his campaign, though he then returned later in the year with a different team.

"Two times I was in the wall at the hairpin and two times the chassis was broken," recalls Rast. "That was like half my budget used in one weekend. The money was gone and Formula 3 would have meant finding even more money. The Volkswagen Polo Cup was the only thing that I could afford with some sponsorship and family money."

Rast would win the Polo Cup in 2005 before progressing to the SEAT Leon Supercopa in his homeland the following year. A near-miss in the championship was followed by a move to the Porsche Carrera Cup in Germany.

During this early phase of Rast's career, the DTM was very much his target; GTs were a means to an end. "DTM was my dream because I was always racing on its programme and I looked up to all the drivers, but to be honest I never really thought about becoming a professional driver," recalls Rast. "I didn't know about anything else outside of the DTM; I certainly didn't know what an LMP1 car was. Only when

I started earning a little bit of money in the Carrera Cup did I think there was a chance to be a pro."

In the same way, he never thought about racing an LMP1 car for Audi when he first signed up with the marque. "I didn't consider that I'd be racing an LMP1 car one day," he says. "My first goal was to become a factory driver and then to win at the Nurburgring and Spa. Only when I won those races did I start thinking about the R18 programme. I've always set myself little targets rather than big ones."

Rast will fulfill his youthful ambitions this year in the German touring car series. He calls it "one of the hardest championships in the world" and appears unperturbed by the turbulent politics of the series.

"If you do well, score points and are among the best Audis, you'll get all the support you need," he says. "You have to maximise everything in the first few weekends, because it doesn't make sense for one manufacturer to have too many drivers going for the title. That's how it is – that's the DTM."

Rast hasn't given up on his aspiration to win Le Mans outright. He describes it as his "ultimate goal" and says he wants to complete the quadruple at the big 24-hour races with an overall victory at Daytona too. That explains why he ended up at the Spirit of Daytona squad with which he finished third last month.

There will be no Le Mans return this year. There's a calendar clash that precludes it, but he says he's happy to focus on the DTM and the revised cars introduced for the coming season. "I need to get familiar with the car and gain experience of racing in the DTM," he says. "I know I have a lot to learn."

Not quite as much as he had back in July.

There's another element of good fortune in the story of Rast's promotion to Audi's DTM squad. He was at a party celebrating his girlfriend's 30th birthday when Audi needed someone to replace Tambay for the Sunday race after the Frenchman had sustained hand injuries in the opening encounter. The good fortune was that he wasn't the worst for wear.

"It was after 8pm when I got the call," recalls Rast.

"Luckily I hadn't had too much to drink, but enough that I couldn't drive to Zandvoort that night. Luckily my manager could come over and drive me there..." ❧

DEFYING PORSCHE TO TRANSFORM HIS TECHNIQUE

THE CAREER OF RENE RAST HAS AN unlikely link with that of another driver who has landed the biggest drive of his life for 2017. Rast and new Mercedes Formula 1 signing Valtteri Bottas had the same engineer in their respective Porsche and Formula Renault campaigns in 2008. And both would make the switch to left-foot braking under the guidance of Frank Funke that season.

Rast had what he describes as "an average season" in his first year in the Porsche Carrera Cup Germany with the MRS Racing squad in 2008. By his own admission, he struggled with the heel-and-toe technique in the 911 GT3 Cup.

"At the time, you had to blip on the downchange, so you were using two feet for three pedals," he says. "I was pretty crap at it, or at least not very consistent."

Porsche had issued an edict

banning left-foot braking and clutchless gear changes in the name of gearbox life, but Funke decided that Rast should give it a go.

"I was engineering Bottas at the

Motopark team that year and we had been working on left-foot braking in the FRenault," recalls Funke. "That's how it came about with Rene. I thought we might as well try it.



"Rene went out in testing at Hockenheim before the season and gained three tenths immediately. He went back to right-foot braking and lost those three tenths. We went to the first Supercup race in Bahrain, and no one knew who he was, and bang – he had two pole positions."

Rast wouldn't win races in the Supercup that season, but he did take the title in its national equivalent in Germany. He'd win more races than anyone else in the Supercup on the way to second position the following season. It was only over the course of 2009 that MRS Racing team boss Karsten Molitor found out that his star driver was defying Porsche's instructions.

"When he found out, he said I would destroy the gearbox," recalls Rast. "But when our mechanics checked the 'box, it was the best they'd ever seen."

FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP/**DAN TICKTUM**



Out of the ashes of Dan T's inferno

Dan Ticktum was in the circles of hell when he was banned from the sport for a year. As a new Red Bull junior set for the Formula Renault Eurocup, is his rehabilitation complete?

By Marcus Simmons, Deputy Editor

[@MarcusSimmons54](#)

Dan Ticktum smiles. "At the end of 2015 I had to ring Helmut Marko and tell him what happened," he says. "And his exact words were, 'You're a silly boy'. And then he laughed, me and dad sent him a couple of emails talking about it, and he said, 'Call me next year when you have your licence back'."

From March until September 2015, Ticktum had carried Red Bull Athlete colours in his MSA Formula (now British Formula 4) campaign. Now, he's chatting to Autosport as a fully fledged member of Marko's Red Bull Junior team, looking forward to a season in the Formula Renault Eurocup. In between, he became the whipping boy of British racing, the 'burn-him' witch on trial across forums and social media. "He should never be allowed to race again," they bayed.

The reason for the derision was his actions at Silverstone, where he illegally overtook a stream of rivals behind the safety car and crashed into Ricky Collard to avenge an earlier collision between the two. For this hot-headedness, he was banned from competing by the MSA – British motorsport's governing body – for 24 months, with the second year suspended. In other words, he is still 'on probation' until September this year.

In order to understand Ticktum's moment of madness and his rehabilitation, we have to look into the pre-Silverstone background. It started conventionally enough, with a car-mad boy who was taken to his local kart track – Filching Manor near Eastbourne – and was soon breaking lap records. He rose through the national karting scene and onto the international level, and at 15 was among the first crop of drivers racing in

British F4, in his case with Fortec Motorsport.

Ever since a super-successful karting season in 2011, he'd been invited to the Red Bull simulator, "going on and off" over the next four years. Sim chief Andi Scott was an ex-Fortec engineer, and put Ticktum together with the team, starting with a Formula Renault test programme in '14, before the F4 campaign the following season. It went well, up until the summer...

"The first half of the season, the car was very good," recalls Ticktum. "I think the reason is all the cars were new, and the teams hadn't really figured out which knack worked for the car and which didn't. So everyone was very similar, and that's the time I shone. After Donington [the second weekend] I was 27 points in the lead. But then the summer break happened, and Carlin managed to work out how the tyre worked for the car a lot better than Fortec did."

By then, Ticktum's hopes were already in tatters. Entering the fifth round at Croft, he was close to Collard and Lando Norris in the points. But a controversial collision at the end of the first race, where Ticktum bumped Norris out of the way to take victory, led to his exclusion. That was appealed, so he raced *sub judice* from the eighth place on the reversed grid for race two that his earlier 'win' had earned him. Then, in the third race, with the grid formed by qualifying times, he won. The appeal ended with a draconian exclusion from the whole weekend – even his win in the final race, which had not been affected at all by the collision.

"People are fifty-fifty on how they viewed that move," says Ticktum. "And I'm fifty-fifty. At the time I was thinking, 'It's about to go into the summer break, I can't let him get ahead anymore, points-wise'. At the last corner he left the door completely open so I decided to go down the inside. »"



Karter Ticktum (right) at 2011 Autosport Awards. Callum Irott on left



Red Bull Athlete colours were worn during 2015 season

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“I won’t change how I race, but I will never do anything like that again”

I don’t think it was particularly reckless, literally all I thought was, ‘That’s it, I’m going to try and overtake.’ Simple as that, really.”

Did such a harsh punishment put Ticktum in a bad place as far as his morale was concerned? “It was ridiculous,” he responds. “At that point I’d lost faith in the championship. I was very upset because I knew, as a Red Bull Athlete, if I did well I could get on the Red Bull programme and that could really start my career. I was putting pressure on myself, as was dad. He was saying, ‘If you don’t get on the Red Bull programme, I might not have the money to continue.’”

A month before Silverstone, Ticktum was taken out of the race—one lead at Knockhill in a clash with Collard, which left him at the back of the grid for the second race: “He got absolutely nothing [penalties] for that, and at that point I was pretty wound up by the fact that the championship hadn’t decided to take action on a move that was completely worse than the one I did on Lando at Croft. Another pressure was I had all my GCSEs, which I took nine of – luckily I did quite well, but that was difficult. There were family problems – I won’t go into the details – and my grandad was showing signs of being ill [sadly, he passed away from cancer last year]; he was a very big supporter right from the start of my career and used to take me to races in Honda Cadets when I was young. I can remember him saying, ‘You’re going to make it, son’. So that was a major worry as well.

“Not any of this is an excuse for what I did at Silverstone, but being only just 16 years old, when Collard hit me off again I just reacted in a way I never have done before. I think it’s important to say at this point: I learnt a massive amount from not racing for a year and I won’t change how I race, but I will obviously never ever do anything like that again. I’ve learnt my lesson.”

The initial ban was for a month; then came the heavier punishment. “I just thought, ‘Well, whatever happens happens. I’ve done something very stupid. If I get the book thrown at me, I’m not going to be surprised,’” he says. “I was obviously worried because I thought it [a career] was completely gone. When I did get the two-year ban, we thought we might try to go to the States [and race under an American licence], just weighing our options, but that would have been a very stupid thing.”

In the end, the decision was made to concentrate on a private-testing programme in an FIA-spec Formula 3 car with Double R Racing. And, as the tests went well, the idea of a Macau Grand Prix assault hatched. “It was nice to have no pressure,” he says of those days pounding around Pembrey and Anglesey. “It really meant that I could enjoy driving.”

Double R boss Anthony ‘Boyo’ Hieatt, who had observed Ticktum through his team’s involvement in F4, knew he had a talent on his hands. “In my opinion three drivers stood out in 2015 – Norris, Ticktum and [Matheus] Leist,” he offers. “Dan was a little more up and down, but I wasn’t sure whether that was the car or him. But I always enjoyed watching him: nice, aggressive. You want a fighter, and he was fighting the car and was on it. There was something about him.

“In a fit of rage he did something you should never do in a race car, and I think the punishment fitted the crime. Respect to the MSA people: they had the balls to go out on a limb, and I think Dan came out the other side a more-balanced person.

“We did a test at Anglesey. Sometimes I like the lads to do ‘smokies’ out of the pitlane, and on new tyres Dan did the best opposite-lock slide I’ve ever seen in my life. The Carlin engineers were standing there shaking their heads!”

In order to qualify for Macau, Ticktum had to contest the F3 European Championship finale at Hockenheim, which he did with Carlin. After this, the FIA accepted him onto the entry list. Apart from a clang into the wall on the second morning of Macau, he did a quietly impressive job, qualifying just outside the top 10, and finishing the qualification race in eighth – one spot ahead of Double R team-mate Alexander Sims. He was eliminated in the final when “David Beckmann stormed down the outside and then I got hit by Pedro Piquet, so it was just a complete mess.”

But Hieatt was impressed: “The boy is a mega-talent. I wouldn’t have picked him to go to Macau if I didn’t think he’d do well. He did a great job and that vindicated my decision to take him and the pressure I put on the FIA to accept him. »

Flashpoint at Silverstone came between Ticktum (27) and Collard





Race win but no title
in BRDC F3 Autumn
Trophy at Snetterton

“There are highs and lows in racing but now it’s become too sterile, so it’s nice to see a character out there. There’s no doubt about Dan – there’s always a story to tell about him. He’s a welcome shot in the arm.”

Ticktum had also contested the BRDC F3 Autumn Trophy at Snetterton with Double R, leaving Hieatt raving about his cold-tyre pace as he opened a three-second gap on the field on the first lap of race two. But any title shot in this mini-series evaporated with a first-lap clash with Enaam Ahmed in the third race. There was also the question of the atmosphere in the paddock on Ticktum’s first race weekend in the UK since his ban.

“I could sense some sort of tension,” he admits. “I just ignored it – it’s the only way to deal with it. You just have to keep it at the back of your mind that people are going to be watching you but that’s it. Apart from that, just race how you race.”

In the meantime, he was also getting on with a Euro F3 test programme and looked set to graduate with Motopark. But with the Red Bull deal brewing, and Marko having a downer on FIA F3 due to his Junior drivers having so many engine problems in 2016, Ticktum was pushed into FRenault 2.0 with series newcomer Arden. In the end, Marko’s decision was positive, with six strong F1 race weekends working in the Red Bull sim in 2016 helping Ticktum’s cause.

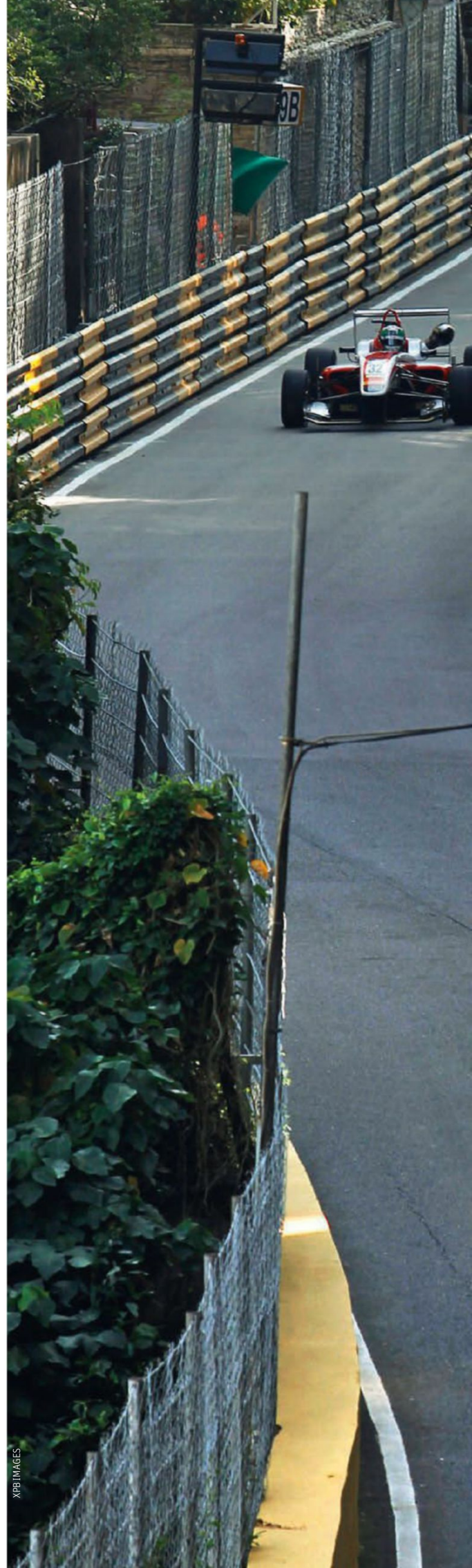
“It was about a month of not knowing what’s going on and waiting for him to make his decision,” he says. “It came out that he was still interested in me. I’ve got to be on my best behaviour, and now I’m on the Red Bull programme I’ll be under constant pressure. I’m very thankful for the opportunity and I’m very keen to show everyone I can be professional, calm and a very

“Helmut’s my type of person. There’s no bullshit at all and he likes a bit of spark like Senna”

good racing driver, and hopefully make him proud.”

With Max Verstappen as the Red Bull poster-boy, does Ticktum think Marko actually prefers a passionate driver who can sometimes get into trouble? “Helmut’s my type of person,” he agrees. “There’s no bullshit at all. He likes a bit of spark. The best racing drivers – Senna, all these kinds of guys – they’re all born with this spark and you can’t teach that; you can’t teach someone to be passionate and driven, but you can hone it. I was born with it, and I know it’s about honing it. I know for a fact Helmut likes drivers who are going to take risks and not just be like a robot. You’ve got a lot of guys in F1 and lower formulas who just drive round and round, and that’s the problem with the sport at the moment.

“He obviously won’t have liked what I did in 2015. I was





A solid job at the Macau GP, which he started from eighth on grid

wearing Red Bull at the time; that will have made him look stupid. But I also think he thinks, ‘This kid has got something about him, and as long as he learns his lessons I’m not going to rule him out.’”

Hieatt thinks along the same lines. “Drivers today... they’re all corporate, all the hangers-on, throwing tennis balls and skipping before races. It makes me cry. All they have to do is get in and drive. Ultimately, Dan’s not complicated; there’s no bullshit. He’s just natural – rain, shine or whatever, I’ve not seen anyone in a long time who can get on it so quickly. For me, the British drivers at the forefront for the next decade are Dan and Lando.”

Sims, who worked with Ticktum in testing and in Macau, points out: “When he got to Macau he did a pretty damn good job. He’s on a path of rehabilitation and there are perhaps some bits to be done in certain areas over a race weekend. But he’s a young guy still in some ways – he’s being exposed to adult situations. You have a period of learning and he’s still in that phase in some areas.

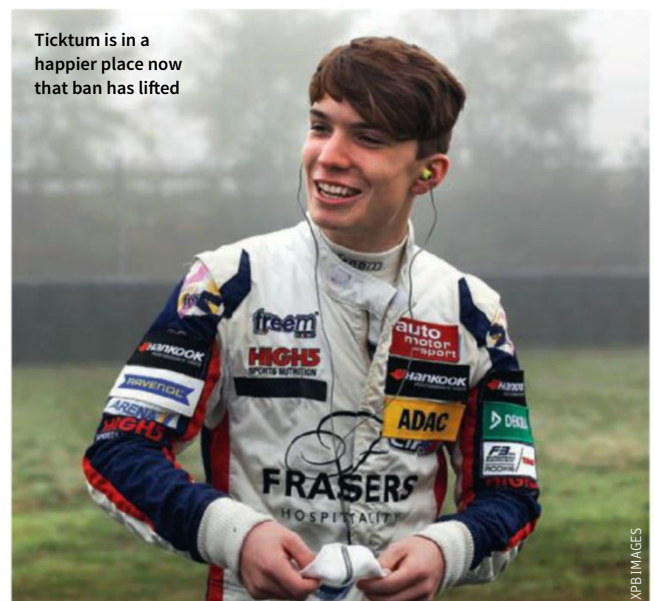
“To be a professional it’s more than just you and your racing – you’ve got to be smart and understand the team’s interests. That’s something I’d say Dan is still in the process of, but I would have been the same too! But then your horizons broaden and you understand the aspects of being a professional racing driver.”

So Ticktum still has plenty to learn, but does he deserve his second chance to do so? Hieatt is in no doubt. Of those who called for Ticktum to be banned for life, he says: “They’re idiots. Why would you ban someone [permanently] because he had a little moment? Let’s not forget it’s not like 15 years ago – we’re putting them into the situation where at the age they are now they’re not as emotionally equipped. They’re not yet fully formed in the brain, and they’re getting pressure from parents, sponsors, managers, and they reach boiling point.”

Will he feel pressure in F1 with Arden? New to the category the team may be, but Ticktum says: “If anyone’s going to come in with a bang, it’s them. They’ve got very good people working for them.”

And he believes a year racing outside the UK will allow the dust to settle: “As time passes, people will forget about it more and more, and when I start to do good things people will focus on that. I think people understand that young people make mistakes. I made mine in a very bad way. People will try and wind me up about it and people might think, ‘He’s still on a ban, he might be driving differently’. But no-one’s going to be able to wind me up – I’ll tell you that, so good luck. I’m going to race hard but fair. When I’m sitting in the car I won’t let it affect me.”

Any parent of teenagers knows they can do reckless things in their lives that they instantly regret. Ticktum, as do most who offend, deserves a fresh start. If all goes well, he could be just the kind of colourful, outspoken talent the sport needs. 🍀



Ticktum is in a happier place now that ban has lifted

XPG IMAGES



McLAREN
AUTOSPORT
A W A R D

Why Norris won a McLaren F1 test drive

Lando Norris became the 28th winner of the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award in December. For the first time, we reveal how the young-driver contest was decided

By Kevin Turner, Editor

[@KRT917](#)



Every year a new conspiracy theory is born to explain how the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award was decided. 'Driver X won because he is wealthy and will make it anyway.' 'Driver Y got the prize because he has little backing and needs the help.' 'Driver Z was chosen because of his father/management team etc.'

Since I joined the judging panel in 2008, I've heard all the above and more. While that is deeply frustrating to those involved in the process, it's perhaps understandable given how little information is publicly available about the tests themselves. In our post-truth world, rumours and falsehoods propagate easily and are difficult to eradicate.

So, over the following pages, I'll detail what is actually an entirely rigorous and impartial process, and demonstrate what the previous winners – most recently Lando Norris – have had to do to claim the ultimate prize. In Norris's case, that included a Formula 1 test and a paid simulator role with McLaren.

The contest

The McLaren Autosport BRDC Award has evolved a great deal since David Coulthard became its first winner in 1989. The 2016 contest was fought between four drivers – Ricky Collard, Sennan Fielding, Toby Sowery and Norris – and included simulator sessions, fitness tests and interviews at McLaren. And, of course, the main element of the assessment: two days on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit in Formula 2, Mercedes DTM and McLaren GT3 machinery.

Alongside me on the judging panel, chaired by BRDC president and former F1 driver Derek Warwick, were



successful ex-McLaren designer and engineer Mark Williams, double British Touring Car champion Jason Plato, McLaren GT boss Andrew Kirkaldy (himself a former Award winner), experienced trackside commentator Ian Titchmarsh and Autosport Features Editor Scott Mitchell.

Following previous criticism from without, the panel also invited a guest judge to improve transparency and provide views on the process itself. Le Mans winner David Brabham was the 2016 guest judge and brought a fresh perspective.

"When I was at the Autosport Awards in 2015 and Will Palmer was announced as the winner, it was the second time in a row the winner was from the BRDC F4 Championship," says Brabham. "On the night the video and messaging had a lot of BRDC in it, with club president Derek Warwick at the forefront. I then started to have a concern for its credibility

in the future if, in year three, the Award was given to another driver in a BRDC championship.

"I wrote a letter to Derek and the club explaining my concerns and how I thought the BRDC looked too closely associated to the Award on the night, and that a third winner from a BRDC championship might stir up a hornet's nest.

"My comments were discussed internally with McLaren, the BRDC and Autosport. It was decided that they needed to bring in an outside judge so someone else could see how the Award was run — judge the drivers, but also judge the judging and its process. Having someone from outside involved would also help with how people perceive the Award. Who better to ask than the person who threw the spanner in the works?!"

Simulator and fitness

Fitness is now an established part of a professional racing driver's armoury, while simulator work has become more relevant in recent years. Although the finalists were assessed by McLaren on both these elements, the results are useful as much to provide feedback to the drivers on where they need to improve as they are for the competition itself.

Norris was quickest in the simulator and was one of two drivers, along with Collard, praised by the Human Performance Centre at McLaren Applied Technologies. The Centre's report to the judges said: "Each candidate demonstrated that they have an above-average level of fitness and clearly conduct some form of regular fitness training, with or without a trainer.

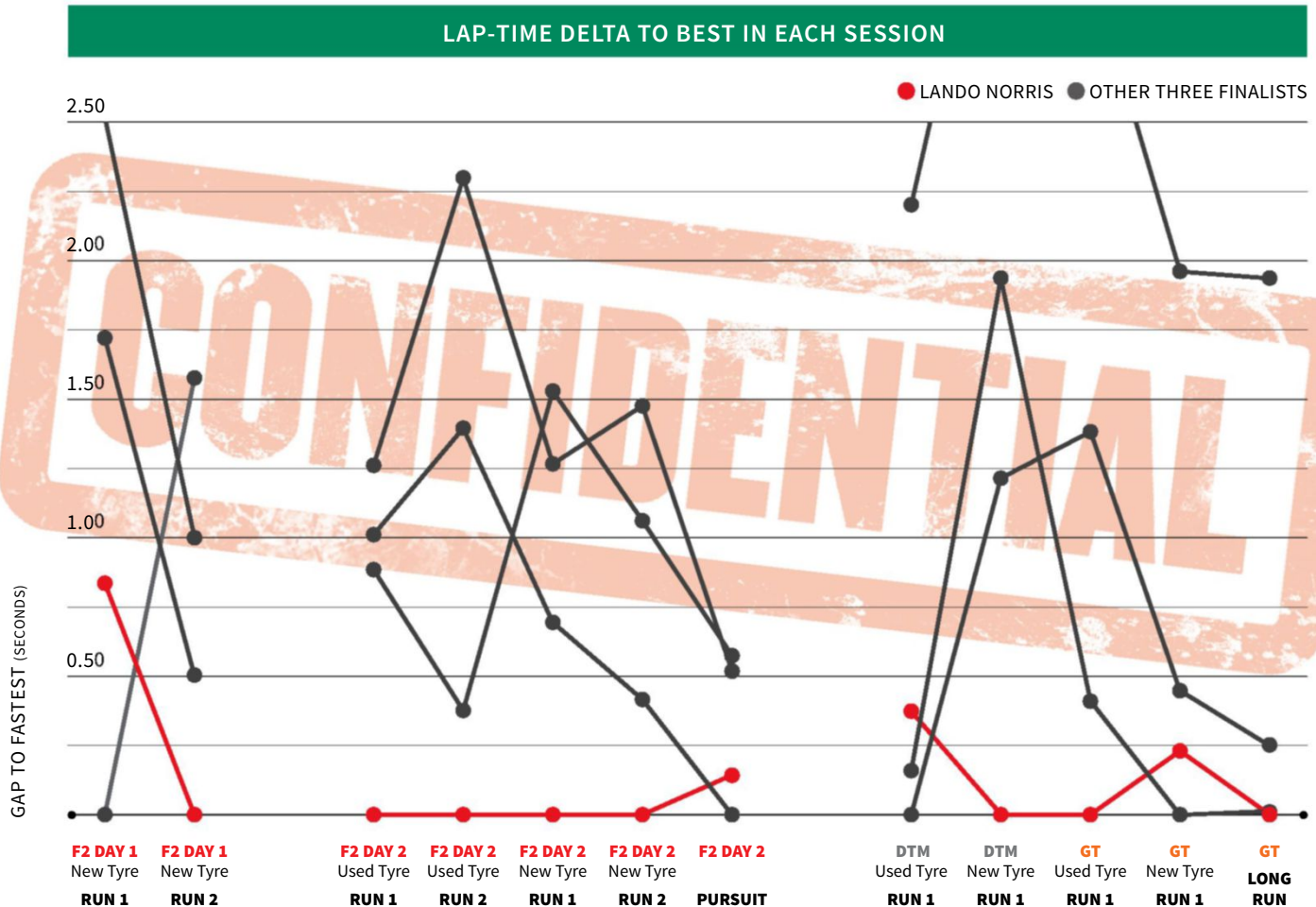
"Lando was an outstanding candidate for his cardiovascular fitness and anthropometry [certain physical measurements] score, and is supported by a very good personal trainer."

That was an impressive start for Norris, who was 16 years old at the time of the tests, four years younger than his rivals. »



Norris excelled on his final DTM run

MAUGER/LAT



Silverstone pace

The meat of the Award is undoubtedly the on-track running at Silverstone. This year, after sighting laps in PURE McLaren road cars, the drivers started day one with a familiarisation session in the F2s. Each driver got their own car and an engineer, picked at random, for the two days.

The graph above shows how the timed sessions played out over the next two days, over the F2s, DTM and GT. We've 'anonymised' the other three finalists for clarity, in order to focus on Norris and to avoid highlighting any weaker performances put in by any of the other drivers.

A perfect result would essentially be a line following the x-axis, a lap-time delta of 0.00 seconds. That would mean being fastest in every session.

As can be seen, Norris was fastest in the second F2 run on the morning of day one, having been second in the first.

The DTM and GT runs were conducted on the afternoon of day one. The top three were very close

on used tyres, with Norris recording his only run outside of the top two across the entire test, even though he was less than 0.5s off the fastest. But he found much more time on the new-tyre run, and ended up 1.2s quicker than the second-fastest finalist.

Since the drivers were out at different times – unlike the F2 runs, when they were all on-track simultaneously – possible track evolution had to be accounted for. The judges therefore used the benchmark drivers – Maximilian Gotz in the Mercedes and Rob Bell in the McLaren – a number of times to ensure no driver was at a disadvantage.

Each finalist made a run on old tyres in the GT before moving to fresh rubber. They also had to complete a final,

longer run to test their consistency. On the new-tyre run Norris wasn't the quickest, but the top three were within 0.5s.

Day two was all about the F2 running, with the drivers now allowed a limited number of overboosts, giving them an extra 75bhp. This put an emphasis on nailing the lap not only when the Pirelli tyres were at their best, but also when the boosts were used.

Since the drivers were now more familiar with the cars, this was when they recorded their fastest times. Two of the other finalists stepped up and showed flashes of pace, but Norris was untouchable. On both new-tyre runs with boost allowed – the closest equivalent to a qualifying session – he set two laps good enough to be fastest, his advantage being 0.7s in run one and 0.4s in the second.

The only session in which he was not fastest, labelled as 'Pursuit' on the graph, was the final run without boost. This was a 10-lap test in which the quickest total time was the target, rather than simply recording a best lap.

Pirellis are new to the Award, so there were two possible ways of approaching the run. One, favoured by Norris, was to tread carefully early on to protect the rubber, in theory allowing better pace at the end. The other possibility, adopted by Collard and which proved quicker, was to go out harder and then hang on to the car as the tyres wilted. Although he took the wrong approach, Norris was still second fastest.

The overall picture

As the graph shows, Norris was on, or set, the pace in all three cars, and was the dominant force in the F2 running. His DTM performance on new tyres was outstanding and the Mercedes team ranked him highest in the feedback session to the

“Norris was on, or set, the pace in all three cars and dominated in the F2”



Norris was at home in the F2 car and was consistently fast



The McLaren was a new test for Norris and he adapted well

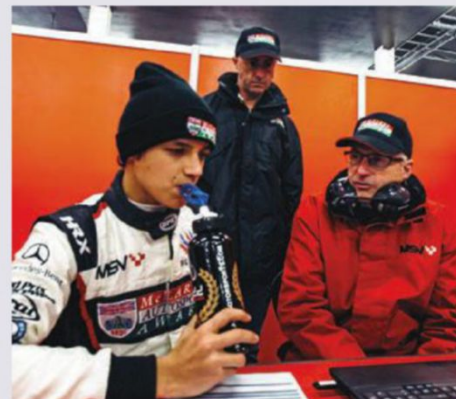
Judging the Award itself

GUEST JUDGE DAVID Brabham on the Award process:

"Now that I have seen the Award from the inside, I have a better understanding of how it works and the challenges the judges face – not only with finding four drivers to begin with, but the potential backlash and politics that come from those drivers' backgrounds and their series.

"I have always respected the Award but now, having seen first-hand what a judge goes through, that respect is even higher. The incredible amount of data available to back up what you see on track is so meticulously looked at, and the data doesn't lie.

"Of course, we also received comments from the engineers, so there is a lot of information available for the judges to make a decision. This year Lando made it



GRIFFITHS/LAT

"There is a lot of information available to help make the decision"

pretty easy. I am not sure I would want to be involved if all the drivers were really close; that would be a real headache!

"I now see why I got an angry response from Derek Warwick when I first wrote to him, as the passion, professionalism, commitment from all involved is top class.

"This experience

reminds me again how complex life can be. It's all too easy to make a judgement about something from the outside and it's only when you experience it yourself your view changes. If people out there think it's rigged, favoured in any way, which they do, then they are very much mistaken."

judges. Norris was also consistent across all the tests, whereas the three other finalists fluctuated to one degree or another.

He also impressed from trackside. "We have all been around the business a long time and it really doesn't take long for you to see the talent quickly on track," says Brabham. "You could almost say in the first lap or two it becomes obvious. What we saw on track translated to lap time, as Lando's commitment, braking technique and lines just stood out straight away. He was very consistent, unflustered throughout the whole test, and very mature for his age.

"It was funny when Mercedes wanted Lando to go last in the DTM, as they were quite nervous a 16-year old was going to drive a very quick DTM car, and the possibility of the car being thrown off was likely in their minds. We did say that they might be surprised and, when Lando finished his new-tyre run after nailing such a quick time, their view changed.

"After Lando's run, Max did another base-time run to make it a proper comparison and I could see the very confident Max at the beginning of the day now looking under pressure to perform in front of his bosses."

Norris the victor

When it comes to deciding the winner, certain factors outside of the panel's control are always taken into account. For example, Norris's extensive 2016 seat time – in the Toyota Racing Series, Formula Renault Eurocup and NEC, and BRDC Formula 3 – was an advantage over those with smaller budgets who had to focus on one category. On the other hand, Norris was the only 2016 finalist not to have been through the process and driven the test cars before.

As is often the case, all the finalists impressed at some point, but Norris was the only one consistently in the top two and set the pace more often than not.

His performances during the 2016 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award showed he deserves the chance of making it to F1, and the potential to truly deliver when he gets there. 🌟



Brabham (left) and Warwick compare times

GRIFFITHS/LAT

Maranello Motorsport
Ferrari was in the hunt
throughout the race



Whincup holds on with Ferrari

BATHURST 12 HOUR
MOUNT PANORAMA (AUS)
FEBRUARY 5
INTERCONTINENTAL GT CHALLENGE, ROUND 1/4

MARANELLO MOTORSPORT HELPED JAMIE Whincup make a dream debut in GT3 machinery at Mount Panorama, the six-time Supercars champ combining with Craig Lowndes and Toni Vilander to win a tense Bathurst 12 Hour.

On paper it was a straightforward day for Maranello's Ferrari 488 GT3, winning by more than a lap after starting from pole. The reality, however, was something far different. Yes, the Ferrari did have a pace advantage over the field for the majority of the race, but a resilient showing from the leading Mercedes-AMG GT3 – run as a joint venture between local team Scott Taylor Motorsport and German squad HTP Motorsport – made it a genuine two-way fight right up until the last stint.

Having traded blows at the front of the field all day, the Ferrari and the Mercedes emerged as the key contenders for the final two stints. To that point there had been little between the two crews, until Vilander started to use the Ferrari's superior speed – particularly on the two main straights – to devastating

effect three hours from the end.

The Finn's remarkable stint didn't just put the Ferrari in the box seat when Whincup jumped in a little over two hours from the end, but gave the Maranello crew, bolstered by a number of key personnel from Triple Eight Race Engineering, the freedom to take on new tyres at the last stop before Whincup's run to the flag.

That was a freedom that STM/HTP just didn't have. With Shane van Gisbergen in the car to double-stint at the end, the team's best chance was to not take on new tyres and hope that track position would pay off. It didn't. Whincup quickly ate into the narrow advantage that van Gisbergen had created, breezing past the Mercedes down Conrod Straight – the two Supercars team-mates touching panels in the process – with 40 minutes to go.

The pressure was suddenly on van Gisbergen to try to run with the quicker Ferrari and, by his own admission, it led to him overdriving. With at least second place safely locked away, van Gisbergen made two key mistakes. The first was tipping a lapped Class B Porsche off the road at the exit of The Chase, which led to a penalty. But before the crew could even radio through to SVG he made his second – much more significant – mistake, slamming into the

wall as he came through The Esses.

It was game over for van Gisbergen, Maro Engel and Craig Baird just 19 minutes from the end of the race, Engel storming out of the garage before giving an extraordinary TV interview where he laid the blame for the retirement squarely at van Gisbergen's feet: "I've got to watch out what I'm saying, but all I've seen this weekend is a lot of mistakes from Shane," was the direct quote.

Engel later said that "he's apologised to me for basically ending the race, and I've apologised to him for blowing up on TV. He's an amazing driver, everybody knows that. But probably by his own standards this weekend he couldn't be happy with the mistakes he's made."

Van Gisbergen confirmed that he had indeed apologised to all concerned, Engel included, and added: "I really hate making mistakes and letting the team down. I'll put it down to experience and make myself better from it, but it shouldn't happen. I tried too hard and dropped it."

The end result was a comfortable victory for Whincup/Lowndes/Vilander, the final margin standing at over a lap. "You know sometimes you have those days – I just felt really comfortable in the car," said Vilander. "Even all the traffic seemed like it was dropping in the right places with the right timing. When we did have clear



Mistakes ended the hopes of HTP Mercedes



Brit-crewed Bentley finished on the podium

in dramatic finish

air with the car it felt like it was working perfectly. Even the tyres, I never had to go off line. Sometimes when you're fast it feels like it's easier, so today was definitely one of those days.

"There are still races for me to win: Sebring, Daytona — and this was one of those as well and now this is done."

The late drama was good news for semi-private Porsche squad Competition Motorsports, which popped up in second place for Marc Lieb, Patrick Long, Matt Campbell and David Calvert-Jones. Young Queenslander Campbell almost binned it at the end, grazing the back of a lapped Lamborghini at the first corner with just over an hour to go. But after avoiding serious damage and serving a penalty, the 911 GT3-R made it to the end in second outright, first in the Pro-Am class.

Third went to the M-Sport Bentley of Steven Kane, Guy Smith and Oliver Jarvis, who enjoyed a largely untroubled Sunday, after a difficult build-up, to snatch the last spot on the podium.

Fourth, and best of the all-Am entries, was the Walkinshaw Porsche of John Martin, Liam Talbot and Duvashen Padayachee. The Tekno Autosports McLaren of Alvaro Parente, Rob Bell and Come Ledogar recovered from early engine dramas to claim fifth and salvage a tough weekend for the team: the sister 650S was

sidelined in qualifying when GT newcomer Ben Barnicoat crashed heavily, ruling himself, Jonny Kane and Will Davison out of the race.

Another young Brit in the wars was Ricky Collard, whose BMW M6 GT3 was eliminated as a result of a qualifying crash caused by an error from Audi driver Lee Holdsworth. The race was tough for BMW too. Chaz Mostert qualified the MARC Cars M6 on the front row and led early on, but the car didn't finish. Marco Wittmann ran well in the lead SRM machine until power-steering problems intervened, and the sister car with Timo Glock on the driving strength crashed out with Russell Ingall at the wheel.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

RESULTS

1 Toni Vilander/Craig Lowndes/Jamie Whincup (Ferrari 488 GT3), 290 laps in 12h00m36.966s; 2 Patrick Long/Marc Lieb/Matt Campbell/David Calvert-Jones (Porsche 911 GT3-R) -1 lap; 3 Steven Kane/Guy Smith/Oliver Jarvis (Bentley Continental GT3); 4 John Martin/Duvashen Padayachee/Liam Talbot (Porsche); 5 Alvaro Parente/Rob Bell/Come Ledogar (McLaren 650S GT3); 6 Steve Owen/David Russell/Roger Lago (Lamborghini Gallardo R-EX); 7 Matt Halliday/Daniel Gaunt/Ash Samadi (Audi R8 LMS); 8 Jann Mardenborough/Florian Strauss/Todd Kelly (Nissan GT-R GT3); 9 Lee Holdsworth/Dean Fiore/Marc Cini (Audi); 10 Ivan Capelli/Dean Canto/Ryan Millier/Jim Manolis (Lamborghini Huracan GT3).



Armstrong was the star of penultimate round

CAMERON

Prancing foal's Hulme Trophy

TOYOTA RACING SERIES

TAUPO (NZ)

FEBRUARY 4-5

ROUND 4/5

GOING INTO TAUPO FIFTH ON points, Marcus Armstrong had decided the TRS title was out of reach. Ahead of the Ferrari protege, the battle was between rookie Richard Verschoor, Tom Randle and Jehan Daruvala.

But three races at Taupo wrought massive change. With a pole and a second from qualifying, Armstrong inserted himself into the points tussle, as Red Bull junior Verschoor came under attack from Randle as never before.

Starting on the 'dirty' pole line in race one, Armstrong held the lead, while Brendon Leitch swooped past Daruvala and turned the 15-lapper into an all-Kiwi battle. Leitch went past when Armstrong slid wide at 105mph, then led him home with Daruvala third, Randle fourth and Verschoor eighth. That slashed Verschoor's points lead to five.

Pedro Piquet made the best start to the reversed-grid race from second on the grid. The Brazilian went on to win as Randle sliced through to second to take the championship lead.

In the feature race for the Denny Hulme Memorial Trophy, Armstrong made a perfect start from second and surged away, putting three car lengths on Daruvala out of Turn 1.

Daruvala and Ferdinand Habsburg both pursued the flying Kiwi but to no avail. Habsburg fell back as his tyres faded, while Daruvala flat-spotted his left-front and then slid off the track on the penultimate lap, leaving Armstrong to win by more than six seconds.

Randle was fourth to extend his points lead over seventh-placed Verschoor.

MARK BAKER

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Brendon Leitch 15 laps in 21m16.000s; 2 Marcus Armstrong +1.536s; 3 Jehan Daruvala; 4 Tom Randle; 5 Pedro Piquet; 6 Kami Laliberte. **Race 2 1 Piquet** 15 laps in 23m01.308s; 2 Randle +0.563s; 3 Daruvala; 4 Armstrong; 5 Leitch; 6 Richard Verschoor. **Race 3 1 Armstrong** 20 laps in 29m57.431s; 2 Daruvala +6.723s; 3 Ferdinand Habsburg; 4 Randle; 5 Piquet; 6 Taylor Cockerton. **Points 1 Randle 692**; 2 Verschoor 665; 3 Piquet 661; 4 Armstrong 598; 5 Daruvala 597; 6 Enaam Ahmed 496.

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2017	Count	Venue / Event	Track Capacity	Content	Content	Format	ACD	ALL	ASC	TG/TC63	JAG	COYS Pre-'66
11-Feb		Eastbourne	180	Dinner/Dance	ALL HRDC	Evening	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
06-Mar	✓	Goodwood	35	Track Day	ACD	Full Day	✓					
30-Mar	✓	Goodwood	35	Track Day	TG	Full Day				✓		
09-Apr	✓	Brands Hatch BRSCC	Indy 34	Race	ACD / ASC	30/15	✓		✓			
09-Apr		Brands Hatch BRSCC	Indy 34	Race	TG/TC63	45/25	✓			✓		
* 23-Apr	✓	Silverstone VSCC	Nat 40	Race	JAG	30/15					✓	
Apr 28-30	✓	Donington Festival	Nat 40	Race	TG/TC63	45/25	✓			✓		
Apr 28-30		Donington Festival	Nat 40	Race	COYS	45/25	✓			✓	✓	✓
28-May	✓	Silverstone BRSCC	Nat 40	Race	ALL / ACD / ASC	30/15	✓	✓	✓			
28-May		Silverstone BRSCC	Nat 40	Race	TG/TC63	45/15	✓			✓		
11-Jun	✓	Snetterton BRSCC	(300) 45	Race	ALL / ACD / ASC	30/15	✓	✓	✓			
11-Jun		Snetterton BRSCC	(300) 45	Race	TG/TC63	45/15	✓			✓		
16-Jul	✓	Castle Combe BRSCC	42	Race	ALL / ACD / ASC	30/15	✓	✓	✓			
16-Jul		Castle Combe BRSCC	42	Race	COYS	45/25	✓			✓	✓	✓
16-Jul		Castle Combe BRSCC	42	Race	JAG	30/15					✓	
* July 28-30	✓	Silverstone Classic	Hist GP 58	Race	ACD	2-part	✓					
24-Sep	✓	Mallory Park BRSCC	30	Race	ACD / ASC	30 /15	✓		✓			
24-Sep		Mallory Park BRSCC	30	Race	COYS	45/25	✓			✓	✓	✓
15-Oct	✓	Donington BRSCC	Nat 40	Race	ALL / ACD / ASC	30/15	✓	✓	✓			
15-Oct		Donington BRSCC	Nat 40	Race	TG/TC63	45/25	✓			✓		
15-Oct		Donington BRSCC	Nat 40	Race	JAG	30/15					✓	

* Please note these date changes!

KEY:

ACD:	ALL:	ASC:	COYS:	TG:	JAG:	TC63:
ACADEMY	ALLSTARS	A-SERIES CHALLENGE	COYS TROPHY	TOURING GREATS	COOMBS	TC63

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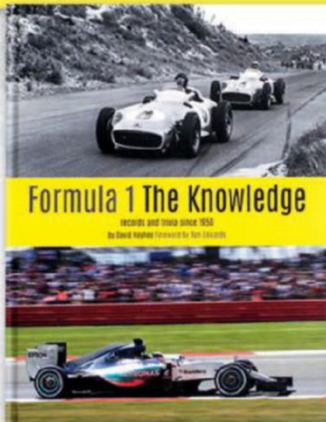
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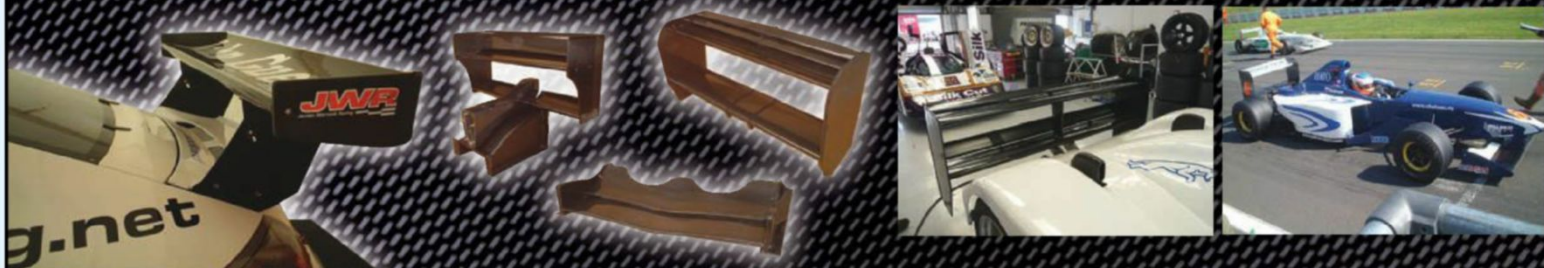
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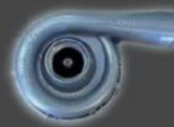
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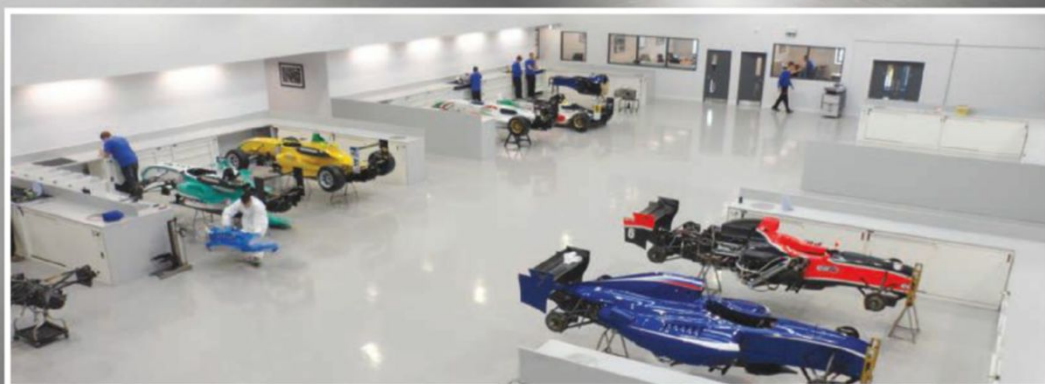
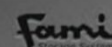
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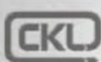


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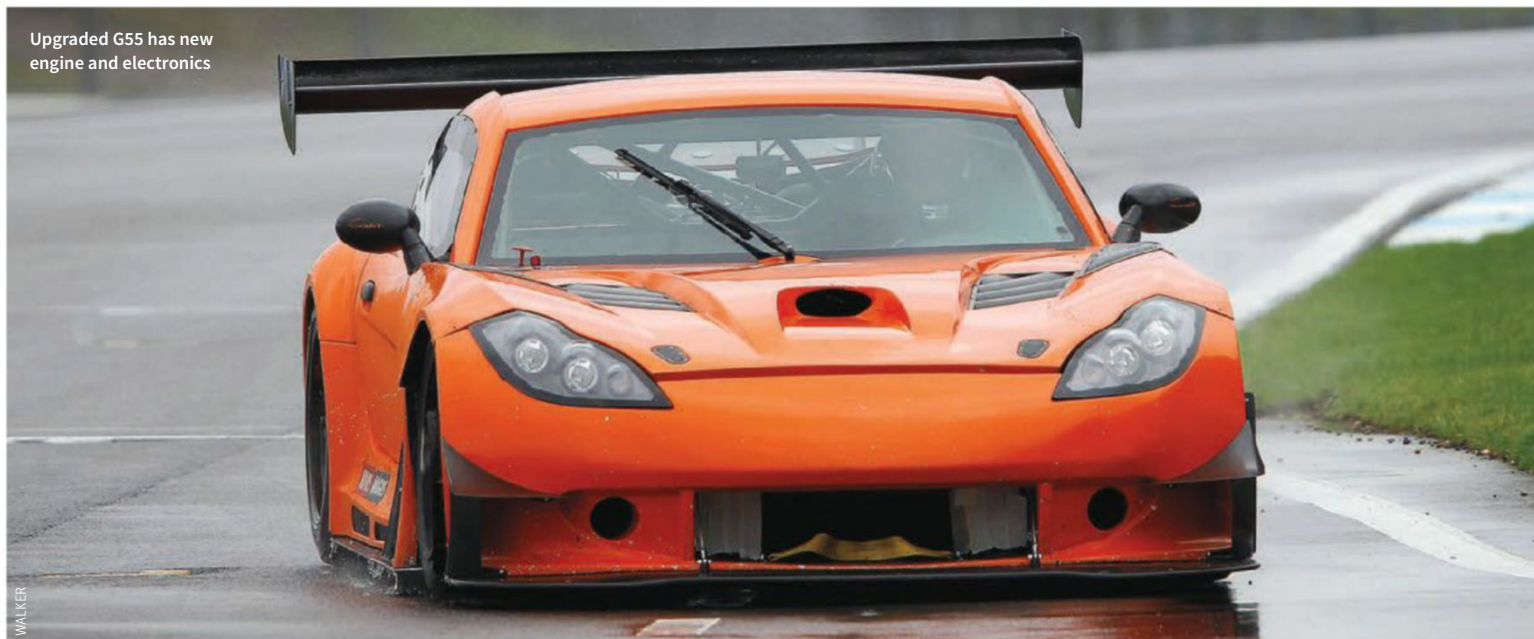


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Century to run Chevy-powered Ginettas

EX-BRITISH FORMULA FORD AND Ginetta G50 champion Nathan Freke will step up a class in British GT this season to lead his Century team's factory-backed Ginetta GT3 programme.

Freke has raced mainly in the GT4 class and will partner American Harry Gottsacker, who is a member of Ginetta's new young driver programme. Gottsacker, 17, joins from the Pirelli World Challenge, where he raced a GT4 G55.

Century, which is a race winner in British GT4, is taking over the deal to field Ginetta's works GT3 assault from Tolman, which will switch to McLaren.

"This is a really exciting year for both Century and Ginetta as we're mounting a serious attack on British GT," said Freke. "We helped run the GT3 car when it first came out in 2011, but this year marks the first time we'll be involved with a properly competitive GT3 machine."

The team will run two of the new G55 GT3s, which have undergone a substantial

mechanical redesign as Ginetta aims to break its GT3 duck. The car features a new engine, the same 6.2-litre Chevrolet LS3 unit used in the G57-P2 prototype, replacing the Nissan-derived 4.35-litre V8. There have also been changes to the control electronics.

Ginetta technical director Ewan Baldry said: "The Nissan was a very aggressive engine and we had some vibration issues with it. The Chevy is a lower-revving unit with a wider torque band. The investment in GT3 this year is a big one as we want to get that [first] win, and also use what we find to build toward new plans for 2018."

Nissan returns in British GT4

Nissan will return to British GT for the first time since 2014 with a two-car attack from the UltraTek Racing team.

UltraTek has run Lotus machinery in the past but will now work with long-time Nissan squad RJN Motorsport to field two 370Z GT4s.



Nissan will be back in British GT for the first time since 2014 with UltraTek

Richard Taffinder/Martin Plowman will crew one car, while ex-British Touring Car driver and actor Kelvin Fletcher and Tim Eakin will share the second.

Former Ginetta Junior racer Charlie Fagg will also race a Nissan in select rounds with Sean Walkinshaw Racing.

Academy Motorsport is another returnee for 2017, with the team running an Aston Martin Vantage GT4 for boss Matt Nicoll-Jones and Will Moore.

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BRITISH F4

Carlin adds recruits, testing resumes

TITLE-WINNING BRITISH FORMULA 4 TEAM Carlin has signed two more drivers to its line-up for 2017, and its new recruit Logan Sargeant topped the timesheets in the series' first collective test of the year.

Carlin announced late last week that it had recruited the 16-year-old American, winner of numerous karting titles and currently second in the United Arab Emirates F4 standings.

Sargeant will be joined by German dressage convert Lucas Alecco Roy in the team's line-up this year, and the previously announced Formula Ford 1600 graduate Patrik Pasma.

"Carlin have won the championship two years in a row, so they are the obvious team to

compete with in British F4," said Sargeant. "It's going to be a very exciting year, and we are all going to be pushing to make it three titles in a row – I will do everything possible behind the wheel to make that happen."

Sargeant had already tested with the squad last year. He was immediately on the pace in the championship's first collective test, after the January ban ended, at Oulton Park last week. In both the morning and afternoon sessions he was quickest, beating Arden's Oscar Piastri each time. Pasma was third fastest.

F4 race winner Jamie Caroline also tested with Carlin, setting the sixth fastest lap, but has yet to sign a deal to compete this season.

Another driver at Oulton was Irish karter Lucca Allen, who has become the first person to enter the new Challenge Cup.

The 14-year old, son of TV chef Rachel Allen, will be too young to start the season and will instead take part in the Cup. This allows drivers to compete on a limited budget and participate in up to seven of the 10 F4 rounds.

Allen will race for Falcon Motorsport as the team makes a return to the series after only taking part in two events in 2016 with Alexandra Mohnhaupt.

In total, 11 drivers were at the opening test, and the next session is scheduled to take place at Brands Hatch on February 16.

CLIO CUP

McCarthy and Harrison to Pyro and Jamsport for Clio Cup



BRITISH KARTING CHAMPION Jack McCarthy (left) will graduate to car racing this season in the Renault UK Clio Cup after deciding against a move into single-seaters.

The 16-year-old tested a British Formula 4 car with Fortec but, after a run in a Clio, he decided that was the better option. He will now compete in the British Touring Car Championship support series with the frontrunning Team Pyro squad.

McCarthy's karting record includes winning the Super One Senior Max title last season and the Junior crown the year before. He was also invited

to attend the Ferrari Driver Academy at Maranello in 2015.

"I had done junior and senior karting and couldn't really do much more, so I thought this was the right time to move on," he said. "I had a go in a Clio and I loved it straight away – I preferred it to the F4 car. I'm 16 already and thought it would be the best way to go and develop."

Pyro team boss Mark Hunt added: "We're really pleased to have attracted Jack to our driver line-up for 2017 – he is a phenomenal talent, as his records clearly show."

McCarthy will be joined in the Clio Cup by 2016 Mini Challenge

runner-up Nathan Harrison, whose planned switch to the British Touring Car Championship didn't come to fruition.

The 20-year-old took three wins in the Mini series last season after claiming the Cooper class title the year before. He will compete in the Clio Cup with the title-winning Jamsport squad.

"We thought we'd do Clios as it's a great stepping stone to the BTCC and it gets my name around the paddock," he said.

"Jamsport won the championship last year and they're only half an hour down the road from us."

MIGHTY MINIS

Moore returns to race Mighty Minis

GINETTA JUNIOR CHAMPION SARAH Moore will return to full-time racing this season in the Mighty Mini Championship after a year on the sidelines.

Moore, 23, claimed the Ginetta Junior championship title in 2009 with Tockwith Motorsports. She also won the Autosport Club Driver of the Year Award.

Having last contested a full campaign in 2015, Moore will race alongside Alice Hughes for Agouti Motorsport in the Mini series.

"I am delighted to be getting back behind the wheel again after a frustrating year on the sidelines," said Moore.

"I can't wait for the season to begin; the calendar is a great mix of high-speed circuits like Thruxton and more technical ones like Cadwell Park."



IN BRIEF



WOOD TO HHC FOR GINETTA JUNIOR

Ginetta Junior podium finisher Tom Wood will switch to the title-winning HHC Motorsport squad for this season. The 15-year-old took two podiums in the category last season, in his first year of car racing after winning the now-defunct Formula Kart Stars Junior title in 2015.

FLORESCU TESTS F3 WITH DOUGLAS

Romanian Petru Florescu tested one of Douglas Motorsport's British F3 cars last week. Florescu finished sixth in the British F4 standings in 2016, but was excluded from the Knockhill meeting last year for punching Carlin team-mate Devlin DeFrancesco. He has already signed to race in Euroformula Open with Campos this season.

GT CHAMPION TILLING IN COMEBACK

Multiple Castle Combe GT champion and OSS regular Simon Tilling will return to racing this year after taking a break in 2016 to go air racing in his ex-RAF Bulldog aircraft. He will enter OSS in a Radical PR6 run by Hayabusa race engine specialist RLM Racing.

MINISTOX'S GRENSINGER TO CATERHAM

Former Ministox racer Tom Grensinger will graduate to circuit racing this season with a campaign in the Caterham Academy. Grensinger, son of BTCC team Speedworks Motorsport owner Christian Dick, spent two seasons in Ministox but has now hit the retirement age of 16.

CROSSE ADDS HISTORIC SCHOOL CAR

The Crossle Car Company will launch the world's first dedicated classic racing school car at Historic Motorsport International later this month. The car will reflect styling cues from Crossle's top-selling cars of the early '70s. The cars will be operated by the Classic Racing School at Charade (part of the Clermont-Ferrand GP circuit).

MICKEL NOT AN ABSENT LEGEND

Reigning UK Legends champion John Mickel will not be absent from the Legends Championship, as suggested in last week's Autosport feature on the UK racing scene. He plans to contest the season and will help drivers with set-up.



CASTLE COMBE GT

Krayem switches to race-winning Viper

CASTLE COMBE GT frontrunner Dave Krayem has swapped his Ginetta G50 for an ORECA Dodge Viper GT3 for 2017.

Krayem has bought the ex-Craig Wilkins/Aaron Scott car, which he ran for a customer last year. He is planning to appear in a number of different

championships.

"It's an ORECA Viper that has won races in British GT and was then heavily developed for Dutch Supercar in 2013 or '14," said Krayem.

"It also won the Britcar Endurance championship and we were running it for a customer last year.

I enjoyed it so much that I bought it for myself.

"We'll run this in various things, maybe Dutch Supercar, Britcar, GT Cup, club racing. I do something and get bored, so we'll do different things."

Krayem shook down the Viper at Donington Park last week.



HISTORIC F3

Brabham F3 car in Walker's hands

FIFTY YEARS AFTER HE LAST RACED IN 1000cc Formula 3 as a rising star, Mike Walker, 71, will race a period car this season.

British Racing Drivers' Club member Walker and fellow Worcestershire racer Andrew Tart have acquired the ex-Mike Knight Brabham BT21, chassis 28, from Chris Holland.

Walker raced chassis 29 in period for Frank

Manning Racing, scoring a best result of third place at Brands Hatch. He was subsequently a frontrunner in F5000 and 1600cc F3.

The Brabham will be rebuilt before Walker's comeback, but 2013 Lurani Trophy FJ champion Tart plans to be out in Historic F3 from the start of the season in his ex-John Fenning Merlyn Mk9.



HISTORICS The Lola T70 in which Michiel Smits had a violent accident at Goodwood last March (inset) is expected to be racing at this year's Members' Meeting after a total rebuild by Complete Motorsport Solutions. The ex-John Mecom Racing T70 Spyder was very badly damaged when Smits flew off the road at Woodcote during the Bruce McLaren Trophy race. Smits is still recovering from the crash and is not expected to race the car at the Members' Meeting. It was tested at Donington Park last week. **Photographs by Paul Lawrence and Mick Walker**

COMBE HOT HATCH

Combe adds Hot Hatch race

THE CASTLE COMBE RACING CLUB HAS SCHEDULED an extra event for its new Hot Hatch Series this season, since more than 30 competitors have already registered an interest in the category.

The series was launched late last year and has been designed to cater for non-turbo cars that were no longer competitive in the CCRC's Saloons Championship, as well as older saloons that are no longer eligible for the Saloons category. An additional race has therefore been added to the timetable for the May 1 Bank Holiday weekend, taking the total number of events to five.

Headlining the early registrations are a trio of Peugeot

205 entries, which are set to be driven by Saloons frontrunners including Dave Scaramanga and former champions Gary Prebble and Will Di Claudio.

Championship coordinator Jo Lewkowicz said: "The popularity of our new Hot Hatch Challenge Series has proven extremely pleasing. It usually takes a bit of time to grow a new series."

"Being a same-circuit category is definitely a huge benefit, making it fantastic value for all of our drivers."

"With so many current registrations and so much more interest in the series, we are all hopeful it will be a long-term success and evolve into something great."

LYDDEN HILL

CIRCUIT RACING RETURNS TO LYDDEN

CIRCUIT RACING WILL return to Lydden Hill this summer with a full race meeting organised by the Classic Touring Car Racing Club.

No car club race meetings took place at the Kent venue last season. The last such meeting at Lydden was a BARC South Eastern Centre event, held in June 2015. Activities at the circuit last year were restricted to British and World Rallycross championship rounds – as well as track days and sporadic drift events.

The CTCRC is heading to Lydden for a one-day meeting on August 12 with a full programme of events for Classic, Historic, Group 1 and Production Touring Cars, as well as Blue Oval and Thundersaloons, and rounds of the Classic VW, Smart 4Two Cup and VTEC Challenge.

Circuit director Pauline Gevaux said: "We are delighted to have motor racing back at Lydden. We hope to have even more events next year."

Silhouette saloon stalwart Robert Knox and former saloon champion Bill Richards have expressed an interest in taking part.

FORMULA FORD

Ellis's rare front-engined Formula Ford Mallock restored

FORMER RISING SINGLE-SEATER star Phil Ellis has just had a rare Mallock Formula Ford restored, nearly 50 years after his uncle Paul raced it when new.

The Mallock Mk9 was one of very few front-engined Formula Fords ever built, and Paul raced it in 1969 and '70 after Phil's father Peter built it. After being untouched for decades, it has now been totally rebuilt by

Mallock Sports. Only four or five were constructed in period.

"It sat in dad's garage for a long time then he transferred it to me," said Phil. "It was then stored in a barn untouched for 25 years, deteriorating. I finally decided to do something with it and took the sorry remains to Mallock. It's now better than when it was new."

Ellis is undecided about the

car's future: "The big question is whether to race it. Seeing it finished, I was completely amazed about the job they have done."

Ellis raced in Formula First and won the 1990 Winter Series. He was chief instructor for PalmerSport for 13 years and is now chief instructor at the Yas Marina race school in Abu Dhabi.



Rare Mallock could race again with Ellis

LAWRENCE



David Good's work led to sport for all

By Marcus Pye, the voice of club racing

[@Autosport](#)

FRENCHMAN FREDERIC SAUSSET'S PARTICIPATION IN last year's Le Mans 24 Hours shines like a beacon, but modern motorsport is graced by an increasing number of competitors who have lost limbs.

Phenomenal advances in prosthetic engineering and compatible in-car systems are just part of the story. It is the extraordinary determination of the aspirants themselves, demanding changes in the medical criteria for licensing – pioneered within Great Britain's governing body the RACMSA by triple amputee David Butler, who rallied and hillclimbed, then raced – that has thrown open the doors to sport for all.

Like other sports, motoring has long had its courageous individuals, whose indomitable spirit and achievements have inspired and amazed their peers. Born with major limb deformities, Lister sports car ace of the '50s Archie Scott Brown was one. Alan Stacey, who lost his lower right leg as a teenager through a motorcycle accident, then started racing and became a grand prix driver, another. Tragically both lost their lives, two years apart, following unrelated crashes on the fearsome old Spa-Francorchamps circuit.

When I was a lad, hillclimber David Good was a hero who displayed these qualities. Born without a right forearm, the former ERA tamer – who died on January 29, aged 83 – was intensely competitive.

Third in the RAC British Hillclimb Championship in 1958 and runner-up in '59 and '60, he finally landed the title with his trusty 1100cc JAP vee-twin-engined Cooper Mk8 in 1961. Towards the end of David's sporting career, I watched in awe as he wrung giant-slaying performances from Chevron and Martin sportscars, but it was in big single-seaters that he left the greatest impression on spectators.

Witnessing Good shoot down the tree-lined run to the banked right-handed first corner at Great Auclum, at Burghfield Common near Reading (his local hill, and ours too) as a kid invariably brought a frisson of fear. Particularly in one of his later steeds.

I would hold my breath as the big red Formula 5000 McLaren M10B (with 'stretched' 5.5-litre Chevrolet engine to almost obviate troubling the left-hand gear lever) or Cosworth DFV-powered Lynxcar MS4 blasted into and quickly out of sight between the trees, David's hand wrestling with the steering.

I was privileged to see David win on the tight 440-yard Berkshire hill in 1970 with the Ski McLaren, and finish a brilliant second in the Lynxcar in '73. Then his remarkable 18.03s shot was beaten only by future double champion Chris Cramer's record-breaking 17.65s run in his Grunhalla Lager March-Hart BDA 723.

That was Good's penultimate season. He finished sixth in the championship in which he'd played a leading role since 1957 – when he also set BTM in the inaugural Chateau Impney sprint, now revived and run each July on a longer hillclimb course he loved.

A former stockbroker who forged his international career with Express Dairies and Grand Metropolitan Hotels, David won seven RAC national hillclimb rounds: Stapleford Tawney airfield's 1959 finale; at Prescott and Westbrook Hay in his championship year; a sensational hat-trick at Prescott, Wiscombe Park and Barbon Manor with a four-wheel-drive BRM P67 V8 in '67; and that famous McLaren victory at Great Auclum in '70. Elated, he autographed my programme.

I treasure it to this day as the sport gathers in Bray, Berkshire, to celebrate a remarkable life supremely well lived. 🍷



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WILLIS WINS TASMAN FORMULA 5000 FINAL AT RUAPANA

Kiwi Brett Willis landed his first SAS Autoparts/MSC New Zealand Formula 5000 Tasman Cup Revival title with a best finish of third among the stock-block brigade, which faced five visiting F1 cars at Ruapuna's Skope Classic finale last weekend. Driving the ex-Colin Hyams/Trevor Twaites/Brendan McInerney Lola T330 HU6, Rotorua-based Willis shaded Australian Paul Zazryn (ex-Evan Noyes Lola T332 HU32) to seal the crown in Christchurch, a reward for contesting all five rounds, starting in Australia last October. Period F5000 champion and four-time historic series winner Ken Smith (Lola T332 HU54) qualified 2.4 seconds clear of his 15 rivals and won two of the three races. Smith also led Michael Lyons (F1 Hesketh 308E) in the match-race finale before the Briton howled past. Missing Barbagallo and Sandown Park's legs hit Smith's points tally, while work commitments denied Aussie Match pilot Bryan Sala – the Trans-Tasman Challenge sub-series victor – an overall title shot. Kiwi Frank Karl won the early class in his ex-Mike Walker McLaren M10B and earned the Stan Redmond Memorial Trophy.

Much more than just a prize drive

Seb Morris won the chance to race in this year's Daytona 24 Hours thanks to the Sunoco Challenge, and he quickly became more than just a guest driver

By Gary Watkins, Special Contributor

[@Autosport](#)

You might have thought this was a pinch-yourself moment for a young driver. You're 15 laps into your maiden Daytona 24 Hours — your first international sportscar event of any kind, let alone your first 24-hour race — and you find yourself in second, behind NASCAR legend Jeff Gordon and ahead of Christian Fittipaldi, in the safety-car crocodile. Not for 21-year-old Seb Morris.

The latest winner of the Sunoco Whelen Challenge was far from overawed when he climbed aboard his mount for the first time in the race at Daytona late last month. And a restart in such exalted company was all in a day's work for a driver who had won a prime seat at the IMSA SportsCar Championship opener in the Action Express Racing Cadillac DPi-V.R entered under the Whelen Engineering banner.

Morris calmly moved his Cadillac past

Gordon's Wayne Taylor Racing Caddy when the race went green and then pulled a gap on Fittipaldi in the sister Action Express entry, which had followed him through into second place. And he knew exactly who he was racing against.

"The spotters let me know who was driving, so I knew I had Gordon ahead of me and Fittipaldi behind, and, to be honest, I wasn't fazed," said the Briton, who is entering his second season in sportscar racing after switching from single-seaters to the British GT Championship last year.

"I don't feel pressure because it's not something wired into my brain, but I did fully understand the significance of where I was and what I was doing. I'd never done a restart like that, but I instinctively spotted the gaps."

When Morris got out of the car after a triple stint, he was more than 20 seconds ahead from the ex-Formula 1 driver and two-time IMSA champ Fittipaldi, though part of that advantage was gained in the pits. Not a bad start to a young driver's international sportscar career.

"I really didn't feel that I was pushing that hard," says Morris, a McLaren Autosport BRDC Award finalist in 2013 and '14. "I felt comfortable in the car and just got into a nice rhythm, really. Taking the lead and extending our advantage will go down as one of the biggest moments, if not the biggest, in my career to date."

That might have been that for Morris. He was in the entry that had won last year's IMSA title with Dane Cameron and Eric Curran — the #31 car had been a Corvette DP last year — who have been joined this year for the IMSA enduros by Toyota World Endurance Championship driver Mike Conway. Prize-winner Morris was very much the fourth driver in the car, so it wasn't initially planned that he'd do more than the minimum two hours required of a silver-rated driver.

But Morris got the chance to climb behind the wheel of the Cadillac Daytona Prototype international once more. The way the full-course-yellow periods had fallen meant that his was a 'short' triple. Not having completed his two hours, >>



Left: Whelen team-mates for Daytona: Conway, Cameron, Morris and Curran

Right: Winner of the chance to compete at Daytona, Morris rose to the challenge



the team put him back in the rotation on Sunday morning long after the car had fallen out of contention for the win.

This time the conditions were foul. The track was wet and temperatures low, but Morris was quick again. Very quick.

"There were times when he was two or even four seconds faster than everyone else on the track," explains Simon Dowson, who engineered the Whelen Action Express entry. "Before he got in the car, he told us he was better in the wet than he was in the dry. I was a bit worried when he said that, but, to be fair, he spanked everyone.

"A lot of drivers were far too hesitant in the conditions and had trouble getting the tyres up to temperature. Seb just jumped in and got on with it. He stayed calm and took on board whatever we were saying on the radio when we had to rein him back a bit."

Getting temperatures into the spec Continental tyres in the IMSA Prototype class was crucial in the conditions. More than one big-name driver fell foul of the combination of a wet track and low temperatures on an out-lap.

"I had a play with the rollbars and the brake bias, and it really paid off," explains Morris. "I got the tyres into a brilliant window."

That pace brought Morris onto the tail of the other two Cadillacs, which battled it out at the front of the field all through the 24 hours. The novice then asked his pit what to do next.

"Seb came up to Joao [Barbosa], who let him past, and that put him behind the WTR car," recalls Dowson. "He asked what should he do? I told him to just go for it and try not to influence the race in any way."

The Whelen car moved past the Caddy that would go on to win the race to claw back one of its lost laps.

There was no fairytale result for Morris and his team-mates in the Whelen entry. The clash with a Prototype Challenge car on Saturday evening had resulted in a broken steering arm that meant a trip back to the paddock for repairs. Gearbox issues on Sunday



Above: Morris finished third in British GT title race last year in Bentley GT3

Right: Morris was McLaren Autosport BRDC Awards finalist in 2013 and '14



resulted in the loss of more time and a 14th-place finish, exactly 20 laps down on the winners.

Morris had impressed from his first run in the new Cadillac in an official IMSA test at Daytona back in December. It was important that he did. The Sunoco Challenge may be sponsored by Whelen, but there was no guarantee that the winner would get his bum in its DPi for the 24 Hours.

"It wasn't a given that our winner would be in the Whelen car," explains challenge prime mover Anders Hildebrand, boss of Anglo American Oil, the European importer of Sunoco race fuels. "The team has the right of refusal and then it would be our job to find the winner another seat."

The team admitted that it had concerns about Morris ahead of his first run in the car. After all, his immediate predecessors



Bladon won '16 Cooper class

From a Mini to an

IT WAS QUITE A JUMP BY ANY STANDARDS. Last year, Max Bladon was racing a 160bhp front-wheel-drive Mini and this year he started his season at the wheel of a 400bhp-plus Aston Martin Vantage GT4. But the Sunoco 240 Challenge gave the 20-year-old just that chance.

Bladon's prize drive came in the four-hour Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge opener, the traditional Friday-afternoon support race to the Daytona 24 Hours. And the mechanical-engineering

student, who won his seat courtesy of a dominant season in the Mini Challenge UK Cooper class, proved more than capable of making that jump.

It wasn't a straightforward transition for Bladon. The Aston he first sampled at the official pre-Daytona test – the so-called 'Roar before the Rolex' – at the start of January was of a different specification to the one he raced. The try-out came in a later-spec Vantage with paddleshift, but for the race he was in an older car

“Morris told us he was better in the wet... he spanked everyone”



as winners of the challenge, Jonny Adam and Phil Keen, were each much more of a known quantity when they headed Stateside to begin testing at the wheel of the Action Express Coyote-Chevrolet Corvette DP. The 2016 winner had only one year of sportscar racing under his belt prior to his big opportunity.

Morris felt well prepared for the test, however, courtesy of his single-seater experience that took him through the BRDC Formula 4 Championship and Formula Renault into GP3 in 2015.

“The high-downforce stuff I’ve done definitely helped me,” he explains. “As well as racing in GP3, I did quite a lot of testing in a Formula Renault 3.5 car when I was deciding what to do for 2015. That means I’ve driven a single-seater with the most downforce outside of F1. I felt at home straight away in the DPi, so all those miles in a 3.5 car paid off in the end.

“It always helps when the team gives you such a good car. It’s confidence-building and means it’s easy to be there or thereabouts.”

Dowson admits that his doubts were quickly eased: “We didn’t know much about Seb, but he was straight on the pace in December and grew into the team.”

Morris reveals that the Sunoco Whelen Challenge was very much on his radar when he called time on his single-seater career after a disappointing season of GP3 with Status Grand Prix.

“I couldn’t believe that you could win this by doing British GTs — the challenge is a golden ticket to one of the biggest races in the world,” explains Morris, who finished third in the championship aboard the Team Parker Racing Bentley Continental GT3 he shared with Rick Parfitt Jr. “I always tried to collect as many points as possible and was

Morris shone in Cadillac, especially in wet conditions

constantly on the phone to Anders asking where I was or getting my dad on the calculator to work out the positions.”

The main focus for Morris in 2017 will be a second season of British GTs. “We’re finalising a deal to do the same thing again,” says Morris.

The plan is that he will take in at least one round of the Blancpain GT Series — although he’s not saying which one as yet — and he is also exploring options to race in its blue-riband Spa 24 Hours. And he wants some more outings in the IMSA series following his Daytona performance.

“This can’t do my career any harm and hopefully the phone will start ringing,” he says. “I’d love to drive with the Action Express guys in the future and keep coming back to Daytona year after year.

“The only problem is that you’re only allowed to win the challenge once.” ❧

Aston Martin

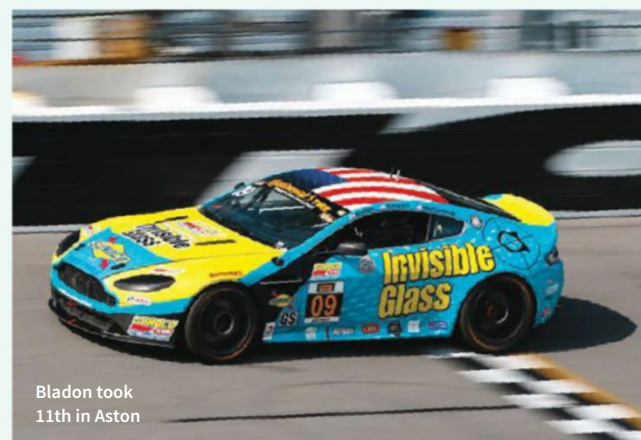
with an H-pattern gearbox.

“It was a bit frustrating not having the paddleshift, which is definitely worth time around here, but the transition to rear-wheel drive wasn’t too bad because I’ve only recently come out of karting,” says Bladon. “Other people made more of the switch from front-wheel drive than I did. The Aston definitely feels much more of a race car than my Mini.”

Bladon qualified the Aston, run by Racers Edge Motorsports, 15th and was up to 12th

when he got out of the car, after an hour and a half in the cockpit. Team-mates Ramin Abdolvahabi and Chris Beaufait brought the car home in 11th, though a top 10 looked possible before a spin and a late puncture.

Bladon was content with his performance. “I’m quite happy with 11th and feel I learned a lot,” he says. “I set my fastest lap of the weekend today in the race, which proves I was getting quicker and quicker as I became more comfortable in the car. I just wish I could do it all over again.”



Bladon took 11th in Aston

WHAT'S ON



Keeping up with racing on the other

IN THE DOG-EAT-DOG WORLD OF sports marketing, you might think holding a highly competitive racing series in January, when demand for motor racing is high and frankly very little else is going on, would be an easy sell. Easier said than done, it appears.

New Zealand's Toyota Racing Series and India's MRF Challenge won't be familiar to many, but to young drivers from across the world they are two of the standout junior single-seater categories of the traditional winter off-season.

Both deliver terrific racing and attract a plethora of exciting talent. Past TRS champions include Nick Cassidy, new Williams recruit Lance Stroll and McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner Lando Norris, while this year Mick Schumacher and Harrison Newey are going wheel-to-wheel in MRF.

The two championships were in

action a fortnight ago, but how easy was it to follow them?

First things first: neither series has a high profile, so it's hardly surprising that no lucrative prime-time TV slot was available. But it was a surprise that one series seems to sell its product perfectly,

While TRS has a strong social media presence, live coverage of races is impossible to find



while the other is, through little fault of its own, left somewhat trailing in the other's wake.

The MRF Challenge Formula 2000 – founded in 2012 – is brilliant entertainment, consisting of four races per weekend for the 2000 category (two-litre Renault engines bolted onto a Dallara chassis) and two for the 1600s (1.6-litre Fords). The latest round took place at the Buddh Circuit, the former home of the Indian Grand Prix, with Schumacher Jr taking a brace of wins and the other two split between his German F4 nemesis Joey Mawson and Newey.

The entire weekend's track action – practice and qualifying included – was streamed live on the category's YouTube channel, with the affable Jack Nicholls on commentary duty and Louise Beckett in the pitlane, delivering a polished, professional and thoroughly enjoyable

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HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube RELIVE THE DRAMA OF F1 2016

Search for: Max Verstappen's Brilliance In Brazil

The future of Formula 1 broadcasting, both online and on TV, has been the subject of much recent discussion (see Glenn Freeman's take, on page 14), with the F1 YouTube channel receiving its share of both backslaps and brickbats. For now, enjoy a selection of last season's most dramatic moments.



All MRF Challenge races are streamed via YouTube, making it easier to follow

side of the world

viewing experience – the sort that makes a first-time viewer, just as I was, want to come back for more when the series finale takes place in Chennai next weekend. Live Twitter commentary, images, results and video add to the overall experience.

TRS was in Hampton Downs for round three of its season. During my research, my delight at seeing NZ Racing Series highlights in the TV guide turned to frustration when I discovered they were from round one in Ruapuna a fortnight earlier and not the Waikato-region circuit. Watched it I did, with enjoyment, but I couldn't help feeling a little disappointment with the lack of live coverage.

Motors TV does have the rights to show delayed highlights – a real coup, given that the series serves up exciting racing on historic tracks like Tereonga

and Taupo. The downside to delayed programming is that, by the time viewers see the races, they will have likely read about them in these pages.

On the day, TRS makes the most of live-timing screens (available either through the Race Monitor website or mobile app) and Twitter commentary to compensate for the lack of TV coverage. The level of social-media promotion around the events is impressive and the amount of online engagement by fans suggests the series is in rude health.

MRF clearly leads the way based on its live action, while TRS compensates with a far more comprehensive social media presence. Ultimately, these are two hugely enjoyable series with a small but dedicated and informed fan base. The clout of live TV could help them reach their deserved audience.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON

TV PICK OF THE WEEK

RALLY SWEDEN

BT Sport 1
Thursday 1900

Monte Carlo certainly provided a dramatic start to the World Rally Championship's new era. Now, attention switches to Sweden. Can M-Sport and Sebastien Ogier (who won the event last year) continue to lead the way, or will Citroen or Hyundai fight back? Motors TV, BT, Red Bull TV and Channel 5 all have live stages or highlights, so there's no excuse for missing out.



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INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

RALLY SWEDEN WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd 2/13

Karlstad, Sweden

February 9-12

WATCH ON TV

Live BT Sport 1, Thursday 1900; BT Sport 2, Saturday 1400; BT Sport 1, Sunday 1100; Red Bull TV, Saturday 1350

Highlights Motors TV, Friday 2235; Saturday 2235; Sunday 2235; Channel 5, Monday 1900

TOYOTA RACING SERIES

Rd 5/5

Manfield, New Zealand

February 11-12



McKLEIN/LAT

RALLY SWEDEN





THE ARCHIVE

Michael Schumacher makes a heroic save on his way to victory in the 1995 Monaco Grand Prix. The Benetton B195 driver started second on the grid behind the Williams FW17 of Damon Hill, but used a one-stop strategy to leapfrog ahead.

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TOP FIVE

F1 CONSTRUCTORS WE'D LIKE TO SEE RETURN

Thanks to buyouts, the lineage of some Formula 1 teams is blurred. But let's say 34 entries have won in the world championship. One of them – BMW – has joined Ford and Toyota in ruling out a return to grand prix racing. But which former constructors would we like to see return? For clarity, we've excluded the likes of Kurtis Kraft (winner of five of the anomalous points-paying Indianapolis 500s of 1950-60) and entries that have continued in some other form (such as Tyrrell and Jordan).

LAT



1 PENSKE

The ultimate American racing operation? Not when it first appeared in Formula 1. But the US megateam has come a long way since its F1 debut as a constructor in 1974. John Watson delivered Penske's only GP win in the 1976 Austrian Grand Prix, but the PC4 was only a hint of what the operation would be capable of with a proper effort. Twelve American single-seater drivers' titles since 1979 – and cars including the Penske PC23 – ram home how cool it would be to see what it could do in F1 with a fully resourced entry. Maybe it could bring Chevrolet along for the ride...



McKLEIN.DE

2 LIGIER-MATRA

Ligier's enduring success in sportscars (thanks to links with LMP2 constructor Onroak) shows the French constructor can still 'build' top-performing race cars. Why not try a modern revival of its partnership with Matra? Is there a place in modern F1 for a three-litre V12? Maybe not... but if a modern V6 turbo-hybrid could come remotely close to that iconic Matra noise, we'd love to hear it.

3 ALFA ROMEO

Ten victories in the opening two years of the world championship, which delivered the drivers' titles for Giuseppe Farina and Juan Manuel Fangio, and then a near-three-decade disappearance mean the marque is forever etched into F1 folklore. So we'd like to see it return to the fray. Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne has even said Alfa needs to seriously consider coming back. Fingers crossed.



McKLEIN.DE

4 BRM

The most successful team here in terms of its previous F1 efforts. Reviving BRM would be to bring back a name not seen in F1 in decades. Given BRM's penchant for complicated engines, the thought of it coming into a genuinely complex engine era is an entertaining one. It was never afraid to think outside the box – although it would have to fix its propensity to be late with new developments.



McKLEIN.DE

5 MARCH

A constructor with which Jackie Stewart won a race and one that Ronnie Peterson finally took victory with after many near-misses (and a stint with Lotus). The British team was never short of confidence and ambition, and created iconic cars such as the tea-tray 711. And it gave Adrian Newey scope to begin designing F1 cars. Plus, without March's 721, we'd never have had the Eifelland 21. Bring it back!



LAT

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A Ginetta GT400 race car, white with orange and black accents, is shown from a rear three-quarter view as it drives on a paved track. The car features the number 55 on its rear and side, and various sponsor logos including 'RA RACING', 'LIQUI MOLY', and 'EuroMechanica'. The track is bordered by a white wall with 'LIQUI MOLY' and 'EuroMechanica' branding, and a black 'sparesbox' sign further back. The background shows a vast, hilly landscape under a dramatic sky with dark, heavy clouds and a bright sunset or sunrise glow on the horizon.

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